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ABSTRACT

This publication is designed to broaden exposure to the ideas presented at the 2001 International Career Development Conference. It provides authors with an international forum for communicating their current research, proposals, and projects to the international career development community. The articles in this symposium include: (1) "Chaos, Complexity and Cognitive Psychology: New Ways to Look at Career Development" (Cal Crow); (2) "After Trauma: Rebuild a Life through Career Narratives" (Sally D. Gelardin); (3) "Competency-Based Behavioral Interviewing: How To Prepare and Win!" (Steven E. Beasley and Tom Washington); (4) "SkillScan Online: Have Skills, Will Travel" (Lesah Beckhusen); (5) "Career Coaching: The New Methodology for Maximizing Personal Fulfillment and Human Capital" (Marcia Bench); (6) "The Majors Fair: Helping College Students Decide on Majors" (Helene Berg-Kolin, Gretchen Krueger, Cheryl Thomas-Clark, and Brian Finck); (7) "Executive Report: Amazing New Job-Search Tool Gets Ten Times the Response and a Hundred Times the Impact of the [Internet-Gutted] Resume" (Jack Chapman); (8) "Further Exploration of the Emotional Avenues of Career Change" (Robert C. Chope); (9) "Surviving or Thriving?" (Diane Crist and Becky Durham); (10) "Integrating Psychology and Spirituality during Career Exploration" (Anne Greenblatt and Paul Greenblatt); (11) "Creating Career Kaleidoscopes" (Liz Harris-Tuck and Annette Price); (12) "15 E-Resume Myths: Do's and Don'ts for Preparing and Sending an Electronic Resume" (Susan Ireland); (13) "Leveraging Change for Career Success: A South-East Asian Experience" (Han Kok Kwang); (14) "When Assessments Fail: Using Alternative Approaches to Career Exploration" (Cindy Lewis and Cynthia Sabedra); (15) "Improving Career Self-Efficacy in Emerging Adults with Limited Life Experiences" (Lea Beth Lewis, Monica H. Schneider, and Claire Sham-Choy); (16) "Seniors Are Not Only Hirable, They're Sought After" (Bradley Marston and Tracy Marston); (17)

"Determining Return on Investment for Career Development: The Bombardier Aerospace Inc. Experience" (Catherine Mossop); (18) "Career Optimism: Strategies for Reenergizing Workers in Times of Change" (Roberta Neault); (19) "The Cutting Edge for Counselors: Licensure" (Dean Porter); (20) "No Frames, No Boundaries: From Job Box to Niche" (Shirley Porter and Keith Porter); and (21) "Coaching Clients on Career Opportunities in Entertainment and New Media" (Vivian VanLier). (Contains 70 references.) (JDM)

Staying Innovative and Change-Focused in the New Economy

A COLLECTION OF SPECIAL PAPERS GENERATED FOR THE 2001 INTERNATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Edited & Developed by
Garry R. Walz
Richard Knowdell
Chris Kirkman

Produced by
ERIC Counseling and Student Services Clearinghouse — ERIC/CASS
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

ERIC CASS

A book of papers generated by the
year 2001 International Career Development Conference

EDITORS & DEVELOPERS
Garry R. Walz, Dick Knowdell & Chris Kirkman

DESIGN & LAYOUT
Kaye Davis

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CONTRIBUTORS

Steven E. Beasley
Lesah Beckhusen
Marcia Bench
Heléne Berg-Kolin
Jack Chapman
Robert C. Chope
Diane Crist
Cal Crow
Becky Durham
Brian Finck
Anne Greenblatt
Paul Greenblatt
Sally D. Gelardin
Liz Harris-Tuck
Susan Ireland
Gretchen Krueger
Han Kok Kwang
Cindy Lewis
Lea Beth Lewis
Bradley Marston
Tracy Marston
Catherine Mossop
Roberta Neault
Dean Porter
Keith Porter
Shirley Porter
Annette Price
Cynthia Sabedra
Monica H. Schneider
Claire Sham-Choy
Cheryl Thomas-Clark
Vivian VanLier
Tom Washington

Preface

This publication is the result of a unique, continuing collaboration between ICDC and ERIC/CASS. The intent of this collaboration is to broaden the dissemination of the ideas presented at the 2001 ICDC Conference to the international career development community. It also provides the authors of the papers with an international "platform" for communicating their ideas.

Several sources will be used to disseminate these papers. The first is the distribution of this booklet to all attendees of the 2001 ICDC. Secondly, these papers will be entered into the International Career Development Library (ICDL) making it possible for career development specialists around the world to download and print each paper in full text. A short description of the ICDL is contained in the back of this booklet. A third source will be an expanded edition of this booklet into a soft cover monograph which will appear in 2002 and contain the present papers (some of which will be revised and expanded) along with many new papers as well. Fourth, selected authors of the papers will be invited to submit their work for inclusion in ERIC – the world's largest educational database. As you can see, the authors will get a lot of "bang for their buck," and career development specialists around the world will be the better for it.

We are especially appreciative of the work of the authors who, under stringent time restrictions, produced the papers they did. We were pleased again with both the quantity of papers received (well in excess of what the usual call for papers produces) and their general quality. The papers for this conference required less editing and, in our judgment, were both interesting to read and contained useful ideas. Some of the authors availed themselves of a writing aid we introduced called QUIKWRITE which they reported assisted them in getting their ideas down on paper. We were pleased to hear that!

The papers received a "light" editing to ensure that the material was fully readable. (The 2002 soft copy edition will be more extensively edited). Otherwise, the papers are basically as written when sent to us and then formatted by us and printed by ICDC.

As a second time venture, we are pleased with the response of the resulting publication. It will undoubtedly be useful for many people. We wish to thank Dick Knowdell and the Conference Planning Committee for their willingness to stay with this innovative publication product. Is it worth continuing to do? You be the judge! Please communicate your thoughts to Dick Knowdell, the Conference Planning Committee, and to me. We all would welcome hearing from you.

Garry R. Walz, Ph.D., NCC
Co-Director, ERIC/CASS & Professor Emeritus, University of Michigan
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
School of Education
210 Ferguson Building – PO Box 26171
Greensboro, NC 27402-6171
800-414-9769 336-334-4114 FAX 336-334-4116
email: grwalz@aol.com

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Chaos, Complexity and Cognitive Psychology: New Ways to Look at Career Development

Cal Crow, Ph.D.

In her 1992 blockbuster, *Leadership and the New Science*, Margaret Wheatley observes that most of our institutions and organizations reflect three hundred- year-old thinking.

> *Each of us lives and works in organizations designed from Newtonian images of the universe. We manage by separating things into parts, we believe that influence occurs as a direct result of force exerted from one person to another, we engage in complex planning for a world that we keep expecting to be predictable, and we search continually for better methods of objectively perceiving the world.*

To illustrate her point, Wheatley describes a typical planning meeting. Sound familiar?

People gather in a room with large sheets of chart pad paper and multi-colored markers. Ideas are brainstormed, plans are generated, flow charts are developed, timelines are determined, schedules are made, responsibilities are assigned, and "to do" lists are dutifully recorded in everyone's planner. The walls are covered with paper. Everyone feels productive. And when it is over, nothing really changes. Wheatley's exasperation with the process is clear.

> *I am weary of the lists we make, the time projections we spin out, the breaking apart and putting back together of problems. It does not work. The lists and charts we make do not capture experience. They only tell of our desire to control a reality that is slippery and evasive and perplexing beyond comprehension. Like bewildered shamans, we perform rituals passed down to us, hoping they will perform miracles. No new wisdom teacher has appeared to show us how to fit more comfortably into the universe. Our world grows more disturbing and mysterious, our failures to predict and control leer back at us from many places, yet to what else can we turn? If the world is not linear, then our approaches cannot work. But then where are we?*

Wheatley is not alone. In *Birth of the Chaordic Age*, Dee Hock, founder and CEO Emeritus of VISA International, cites his struggles in getting management to break out of their traditional modes of thinking, i.e., committees, task forces, flow charts, etc. He understood clearly that an old map is of limited use when navigating uncharted waters.

Long before the VISA project, Hock had formulated three questions reflecting his observations of the world.

1. *Why are organizations, everywhere, whether political, commercial or social, increasingly unable to manage their affairs?*

2. *Why are individuals, everywhere, increasingly in conflict with and alienated from organizations of which they are a part?*
3. *Why are society and the biosphere increasingly in disarray?*

Hock believes the answers to these questions lie in long-held beliefs that organizations must be linear, structured and predictable, with strong people-managing mechanisms. Like Wheatley and other observers of the "new sciences," Hock is convinced that this mechanistic, industrial age paradigm has never worked very well because it violates what we know about the natural order of things. Even as a youngster, he wondered why school was so boring, when it could and should have been fun.

Because Hock couldn't find words to describe the new organization he had in mind, he coined the word **chaord** to indicate an entity that blends chaos and order, and **chaordic** as the adjective to describe its behavior. He strongly believes that organizations wishing to thrive and survive should be **chaordic**, based on "the fundamental organizing principles of evolution and nature."

Three decades ago, H. B. Gelatt was a national leader in decision making. His booklets, *Deciding* and *Decisions and Outcomes* were used throughout the country to teach a linear, step-wise decision-making process. By century's end he had repudiated most of his earlier writings. According to Gelatt,

> *I have changed my mind. What used to be the way to decide now isn't. It isn't because things aren't the way they used to be. Even science isn't what it used to be.*

Gelatt's conversion is reflected in his 1991 book *Positive Uncertainty*, which he describes as "a balanced, versatile, whole-brain decision strategy featuring the creative tools of flexibility, optimism, and imagination." Gelatt's later thinking supports much of the research from the cognitive sciences, which tell us that the human brain is a meaning seeker, often more interested in connections and relationships than in sequence and order.

Another perspective on learning comes from Reuven Feuerstein, an Israeli psychologist and educator who developed learning strategies for children with Down syndrome, autism, and other learning difficulties. To pull this off, he had to discard the same centuries old thinking that concerned Wheatley, Hock and Gelatt. For example, Feuerstein couldn't accept the premise that one or two assessment instruments could determine a person's learning capability. For years, Feuerstein's students have been graduating from "regular" high schools, driving, marrying, and landing good jobs. Feuerstein's philosophy is fairly simple. Provide learning experiences that enable people to make connections and create meaningful conclusions, and they can learn very well. His point: Stop making assumptions about people and spend your time creating meaningful learning experiences for them.

The work of these four individuals raises important questions for career development professionals.

If the world is not linear, what is it? How is influence exerted, if not from one person to another? Is it possible to explain things clearly if we cannot break them down into manageable parts? Do

we believe that good planning helps us "control a reality that is slippery and evasive and perplexing beyond comprehension?" Are we often "bewildered shamans," hoping to perform miracles?
Where is career development as a profession today? Where has it been? Where is it headed? What philosophical foundation supports it? What would a **chaordic** approach to career development look like?

What beliefs and assumptions drive our views of career development? How accurately do they reflect what we know about the universe? About learning?

How influential are assessment instruments in the career development profession? Do we believe all individuals will benefit from career development assistance, or only those who are "capable?"

Do we view career development as a brain-centered learning activity or as a process for maintaining order and control? When nothing seems to go right for an individual who has "done all the right things," is the problem with the person, or with a system that does not reflect the way things really work? How can we be programmed to look for themes and patterns rather than pieces and causes?

Can we really teach people "three proven techniques" or "five foolproof strategies" that will lead them to career success and happiness?

These questions have no easy answers. Addressing them adequately requires an understanding of chaos, complexity and the cognitive sciences. It also requires familiarity with such terms as strange attractors, the butterfly effect, self-correcting systems, complex adaptive systems, initial conditions, bifurcations, and constructivist learning. Without using knowledge and insights from these new sciences, we may find ourselves designing programs and creating resources that do not reflect the way things really work.

Not all responses to these new ways of thinking are questions. There are some things we know "for sure," all with implications for career development.

We know that everything is connected, and that we can never control enough variables to make things predictable.

We know that the very act of trying to control things changes them, and the interactions among them.

We know that chaos and order are mirror images. We can't have order without chaos. Total order leads to stagnation, which eventually leads to extinction.

We know that energy is everywhere. There is no such thing as "empty space."

We know that every influence is both cause and effect. Nothing is ever influenced in just one direction.

Our knowledge of the universe is changing regularly. We (career development professionals) must keep up with these changes, or will go the way of buggy whips and slide rules. Career development is far too important to let that occur.

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International Career Development Conference 2001

After Trauma: Rebuild a Life through Career Narratives

Sally Gelardin, Ed.D.

The Presentation and Its Importance

As a result of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in which over 6,000 people were missing and assumed dead, people throughout the world were fearful and traumatized. Narratives, or life stories, can help people cope with trauma and fear.

Traumas can bring up memories of past situations arousing fear or trauma, such as natural disasters, abuse, violence, and illness. The terrorist attack affected many sectors of the economy, including personal careers and family income. For one family or person, the recovery may be quick; for another, the recovery may be a lifelong journey.

Although we can't control the world, we can learn to manage our fear. Our experiences are the "building blocks from which vocational identities and career choices are constructed" (Savickas, 2000). By reflecting upon the strengths that we have gained through our life experiences, we can manage our fears and trauma and reconstruct meaningful lives.

Course of Action and Results

Participants in the presentation will define career narratives and related terms.

Participants will identify the ways that career narratives can help people manage traumas and fears.

Participants will learn activities that they can do themselves and share with their clients to help manage career-related trauma.

Participants will explore the future of narrative counseling.

Participants will receive a career narrative list of resources.

Adults Who Have Experienced Trauma

Adults, who have experienced traumas that have affected their livelihood and current job situation, can re-examine their lifework goals.

Career professionals can help themselves and their clients manage trauma in their home and work lives.

Career professionals who work with children can help children move beyond fear and trauma to reconstruct their lives.

Putting Narratives to Work

Career narratives and related terms are defined:

Narrative counseling: Counselors help clients define, organize, interpret, and evaluate their experiences, values, interests, and skills.

Biological hermeneutics model of careers. People organize information in their own way. They construct the world so that it is congruent with their own beliefs. The constructivist approach originated with Super's life history model for career pattern counseling. Hermenuein is a Greek word meaning to interpret. This method recognizes the significance of person's experience and helps clients to understand their actions and choices from their own point of view.

Contextualism. People construct their lives with the knowledge that they have at hand; i.e., in the context of their own lives. Contextualism is the relationship between people and their environment (Siegelman & Shaffer, 1995).

Bricolage concept of career development. Bricolage means "constructing something new with whatever is at hand." The French definition is "do it yourself." You can see the word bricolage in a French hardware store. Through biographical bricolage, we can learn to solve problems and make decisions by viewing our attitudes, beliefs, competencies, and coping behaviors within the context of our own life.

The reader can learn about activities that demonstrate the theory.

For example, people who have experienced trauma may be filled with negative thoughts. Focusing on a favorite image can put one in a more positive frame of mind. On September 11, 2001, a college student saw the World Trade buildings go down. Weeks later, she is afraid of leaving her apartment or using the New York City subways. To combat her fear, she recalls the image that her mother shared with her when she was young, of an angel on her shoulder. Do you have a favorite image? Do you surround yourself with this image? How do you feel and what happens to your frame of mind when you contemplate this favorite image?

The future of narrative counseling lies in the past.

Professor Mark Savickas (2000) said that our early experiences are the basis for our life's work. Our family stories are the basis of our mission in life. NCDA established a committee to write a paper on how to prepare counselors for career development in the new millennium. The paper highlighted the use of narratives and storytelling in career counseling. To read a copy of the document, call the NCDA : (918) 663-7060. NCDA also produced a videotape on "Career As Story."

Narrative activities need to be designed to help people with career development. Exercises, poems, and lifework book clubs can help people reflect upon their past so that they can make sense out of their work and home life and plan what they want to do and how they want to lead their lives in the future.

Professor Joan Avis at USF suggests that career counselors invite their clients to involve family members in their counseling sessions. You can read her article and other articles on family influences on career development in the Summer 2001 issue of the Career Planning and Adult Development Journal. For a copy, email NETWORK@psctr.com.

We can incorporate other career development theories into narrative counseling. We can write books, present at workshops and conferences, and bring narratives counseling into our work with clients and students.

Before using career narratives in their practice, career development practitioners need to:

Read more in depth about career narratives (see Bibliography).

Identify one's own interests, values, skills, and strengths by reflecting on past experiences (for examples of narrative activities, see http://www.gelardin.net/lifeworks/pages/narrative/exercises).

Unify one's own experiences to create a life story. Keeping a daily journal and writing down one's dreams directly after they occur can be helpful.

Read the NCDA guidelines (http://www.ncda.org/ncdaps) to understand the parameters of the rolesof career practitioners.

"Narrative" (or "Life As Story") Theory

"Narrative" or "life as story" theory is described by Professor Larry Cochran (1997). Cochran said that the two basic reasons for exploring a person's life history are: (1) Past experiences provide information about a person's interests, values, abilities, motives, and character strengths. (2) The way experiences are selected and organized expresses a unifying life story.

We construct personal meanings from past and present actions as well as from subsequent experiences. In narrative counseling, clients and counselors together define, organize, interpret, and evaluate human actions. "Counselors can (a) be aware of clients' conceptualizations, concepts and constructs; (b) help clients become aware of their constructs by offering support; (c) assist clients in constructing a narrative to discover the context of their lives; (c) with their client, develop joint goals that emerge from the joint activities" (Zunker, 1998) .

Telling one's own story allows one to "interpret, evaluate, appreciate, and relate events" (Cochran, 1997) and to build a house that we carry inside. We become the heroes and heroines of our own story, instead of being controlled by outside forces (i.e., family members; social, political, and religious institutions, our work, the physical environment, the media).

The thoughts and feelings that result from trauma are normal, though they may be painful and perplexing (Ochberg, 1988) . These thoughts and feelings may not surface for a while. The healing process often includes "re-experiencing, avoidance, sensitivity, and self-blame." By telling one's story, a person who has been traumatized can feel more powerful. The career professional can offer exercises that help people identify their interests, values, abilities, motives, and character strengths. People who have been traumatized can be liberated from fear and can love life.

A Recommended Course of Action

Attend further workshops, classes, and seminars on this topic.

A person who has been traumatized may need more help than you can provide. Refer the person to experienced professionals as needed. View the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) web site on Responding to Tragedy (http://www.nbcc.org/memo.htm).

Summary of Presentation

The following career narratives and related terms are defined: (a) narrative counseling, (b) biographical hermeneutics, (c) constructivism, (d) Hermenuein, (e) contextualism, (f) biographical bricolage.

The reader can learn about activities that demonstrate the theory of career narratives, or "life as story." Career narratives help people understand their skills, interests, values, and goals by viewing them within the context of their lives.

The future of narrative counseling lies in the past. Our family stories are the basis of our mission in life. Narrative activities need to be designed to help people with career development. Family members can be invited to counseling sessions. Other career development theories can be incorporated into narrative counseling. We can write books, present at workshops and conferences, and bring narratives counseling into our work with clients and students.

Before using career narratives in their practice, career development you can read more about career narratives, identify your own interests, values, skills, and strengths by reflecting upon one's past. Then you can organize these experiences to create a life story in which you are the hero or heroine. Read the NCDA guidelines to understand the parameters of your role in helping clients.

Conclusion

The meaning of fear in our home and work lives was posed in a question by Fanita English, who survived the Holocaust. She asks, "What stitches do we have to keep repeating meticulously in order to complete a meaningful pattern for the cloth of our lives, whereby the past can be enveloped and still offer something for the future?" To collectively work through their fears, women throughout the country are weaving together stories of the recent disaster in quilts.

Within English's question lies the answer. The search for answers keeps us going. We can model the behavior that we want to pass on to our children. We may not be in control of what is happening around us, but we can observe what is happening and the reactions of our children, as well as our own reactions. To combat fear and to recover from trauma, we can ask questions, share stories and listen to our children, to others, and to ourselves. Only then will layers of fear unfold, giving way to inner and outer peace.

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Web Resources

After a Disaster: Steps You Can Take to Cope with a Stressful Situation:
http://www.wright.edu/sopp/cps/TraumaticStress.html

The Child Survivor of Traumatic Stress:
http://users.umassmed.edu/Kenneth.Fletcher/kidsurv.html

Helping Children After a Disaster: Facts for Families from the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry:
http://www.aacap.org/

Coping with Emotions after a Disaster:
http://www.psychworks.com/PTSD%20response.htm

Managing Traumatic Stress, American Psychological Association:
http://www.apa.org

After a Disaster: Steps You Can Take to Cope with a Stressful Situation
http: //www.wright.edu/sopp/cps/TraumaticStress.htm

National Center for PTSD has a large literature base
http://www.ncptsd.org/

School Mental Health Project/ Center for Mental Health in Schools
UCLA Dept. of Psychology,
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563,
(310) 825-3634 / Fax: (310) 206-8716,
Email: smhp@ucla.edu
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

In response to the Columbine tragedy, Sesame Street Workshop developed a website, "Tragic Times, Healing Words" website on helping children cope with disaster. The site is still a useful tool for parents and teachers.
http://www.sesameworkshop.org/parents/advice/article/0,4125,49560,00.html

Where Was God? Minnesota Public Radio: First Person. 9/23/01.
http://www.acommonplace.org/.

The U.S. Education Department's web site features suggestions for parents & educators trying to help their children understand the terrorist attacks" (September 14, 2001)
http://www.ed.gov/inits/september11/index.html

The New York Times articles
http://www.newyorktimes.com/ :

- Word for Word/Young Voices: In the Shadow of Tragedy: 'My World Got Shut Down'. The New York Times, September 23, 2001.
- To fill a club, just tell a story. The New York Times, May 2, 1999. Art and Architecture Section, p. 9.
- Taking refuge on the Internet, a quilt of tales and solace. New York Times. September 20, 2001. D3.
- Rituals for grieving extend past tradition into public displays. The New York Times. A Nation Challenged: Critic's Notebook. September 18, 2001.

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Competency-Based Behavioral Interviewing: How to Prepare and Win!

Steven E. Beasley
Center for Career Growth and Development
Tom Washington
Career Management Resources

Understanding Competencies as Skills, Knowledge, Experience

Competency-based behavioral interviewing is used to allow a candidate to demonstrate through examples certain skills they have used in the work place. The candidate answers questions about how they have reacted to and dealt with previous work place situations. By using such past experience, an employer hopes to predict future behavior, by eliminating misunderstandings and preventing personal impressions from interfering. You will be asked to give an example of a situation or task which led you to take a certain course of action. Probing questions will then be used to determine the course of action you took, what changes were created by those actions, and the effects of those actions on others.

What is a competency?

Competencies can be derived from experience, skills, knowledge, values, attitudes, personal attributes or distinguishing qualities and motives of a person, as demonstrated through behaviors which contribute to excellence in job performance.

What is the value of the competency approach to the employer?

Companies which utilize the competency-based selection interview style usually continuously evaluate an employee's competencies. This competency assessment helps a company implement its strategy. Companies which want to maintain a competitive advantage use competencies for selection, assessment, training and development, succession planning, and supporting organizational change efforts. In all of these areas, competencies form the foundation of these efforts. The company will gain an advantage if it decides to invest in using and assessing competencies.

Competency models are developed by companies to help them set the standard for each position they fill. These competency models guide the selection and skill development of a person in an organization. "A competency model defines core competencies for all persons in a specific area. This is the minimum knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to enter and remain in the discipline and serve the needs of the firm" (London, page 171).

What the Job-Seeker Needs to Know About Modern Business Requirements

In competency-based behavioral interviewing, the use of emotional intelligence concepts, as formulated by Daniel Goleman in his books *Emotional Intelligence* and *Working With Emotional Intelligence*, is gaining widespread use in employment interviewing.

Emotional intelligence has gained broad acceptance as a means for assessing the most critical skills and qualities required for high work performance. Goleman identifies five key areas of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills.

The research performed by David McClelland, Richard Boyatzis, Daniel Goleman, and others, indicates that IQ and technical skills have been overrated in terms of importance to success. Intelligence and technical strengths can be viewed as threshold requirements. Once a person meets the minimum requirements for IQ and technical knowledge, emotional intelligence becomes the deciding factor in career success.

Because employers are acknowledging this observation, many are looking less to college GPA and pure intellectual horsepower, and more to social and interpersonal skills.

While employers have always looked for such qualities as integrity, initiative, ingenuity, and dedication to a task, the research that Goleman has pulled together, has given hiring managers the confidence to actively seek and recruit for emotional intelligence. As a result, job seekers today should understand the concepts of emotional intelligence, and develop techniques, as well as personal anecdotes, to convince employers that they indeed possess the required emotional intelligence to be effective.

Self-Analyze

Analyze yourself to determine your strongest competencies, and your weakest.

For a list of the 67 competencies considered important in today's business environment, see *For Your Improvement,* by Michael Lombardo and Robert Eichinger. This a coaching guide to competency-based improvement among employees. Each person can learn more about personal growth potential by reading this book. Also recommended are the three exercises in the appendix to this article.

Maintaining Your Achievements Records

Constantly collect and maintain records of your achievements which prove your competencies. "Bio Data" is the human resources phrase of choice today, but it only means paragraphs which describe achievements. We recommend that you regularly write down as many of your lifetime achievements as you can remember, perhaps keeping a journal for this purpose. These can be events from any aspect of your life--work, school, community, home and hobbies, community activities, volunteer work, charitable good works, church group activity, and so on. You can annotate these paragraphs with details as to when, where, who witnessed your contribution, what outcome you caused to happen. It is important to assemble these "stories"-- as they are sometimes called--as they happen, or soon afterwards. Then the memory is fresh, and you can recall most of the details. It is also important to arrange to have documented proof of the achievement [letters of commendation, reports, diplomas and certificates, photos, and news media stories]. Assemble and organize these artifacts of your good works in a portfolio collection, with a front-end annotated index referencing each item. These collected evidence items should be the basis for your analysis in a careful, honest manner of your skills, your knowledge, and your experience.

Build a Chart of Paragraphs about your Achievements that Match a Specific Position's Competency Model

After you perform a skills analysis, knowledge analysis, and experience analysis on yourself, you are ready to enjoy the prospect of a successful competency-based behavioral interview. Get a copy of the competency model for the kind of position for which you are applying. This data can be obtained from the professional society which supports your profession or career field. For example, the professional organization in accounting provides its members with competency models for careers in accounting. Set up a chart, listing the required competencies on the left side, and for each competency, select your best achievement paragraph which you can document that matches that competency. This gives you a powerful tool for the interview. We call this tool a "Power Chart." Use it as a talking paper, in order to present yourself effectively in the competency-based behavioral interview.

Appendix—Competency Indentification

Exercise 1. Team Work Exercise in a Workshop Setting

Team up with a partner in the room here. We will be using examples of events in your life.

I am handing you a list of more than 60 competencies for your use in this exercise.

One of the partners now reads out loud [soft voice] one example of an event in your life to your partner. The other partner listens.

Then the two of you discuss the event, and name the competencies the event demonstrates.

Write these down on your individual work sheet. These are your competencies to start with, and many more will be identified as we progress today.

Now switch tasks between partners, so that the first "listening partner" reads an example, and the other partner listens. Discuss the event, identify competencies that are evident. Write these down on your work sheet.

Now do this for all life events for both partners.

Exercise 2. Competency Tally, Competency Ranking
Now work as individuals and count how many times you have identified **the same_competency** in multiple events in your life. Add up and rank the most-used competencies, in descending order of frequency on your tally sheet.

Exercise 3. Ranking Your Enjoyment of Each Competency
Now work quickly to rank your competencies a second time, according to how much you enjoy using each of your competencies.

Put all the highly frequent, most enjoyed competencies on your work sheet.

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SkillScan Online: Have Skills, Will Travel

Lesah Beckhusen

Introduction

SkillScan Online: Have Skills, Will Travel is a web-based skills identification process that helps clients identify their core strengths, skill sets and areas needing development. The program can be accessed through the Internet at www.skillscan.net. Organizations can offer it through an internal website for their employees, students or alumni. SkillScan Online is a self-directed process that enables clients or employees to assess skills and competencies, explore career options that match their skill sets and plan skill development activities to keep pace with changing work demands. In the Managing Career Roadmap section of the program, SkillScan Online offers a diagnostic exercise to troubleshoot career issues and features websites, book recommendations and other tools to enable clients to take steps toward their goals.

Today's fast moving economy places tremendous stress on organizations and individuals to keep pace with change. This new workplace requires workers to possess multiple skill sets, take ownership of their work, continually acquire new skills, learn new technologies, employ best practices and think creatively about how to add value to their organization. The last ten years of economic expansion followed by contraction has forced many workers to change careers, jobs and companies and become contractors or self-employed. These realities require counselors to gain the tools and knowledge necessary to assist clients in capitalizing on their strengths and repackaging their skills and experiences for new employment opportunities.

SkillScan Online

SkillScan Online was designed for career counselors, career coaches and human resources professionals to use with clients in a wide variety of settings including colleges, adult career centers, military transition centers, corporate employee development programs and government-based employment centers. A typical client is an adult who is planning his/her first career, undergoing a career change, planning a lateral move or seeking advancement opportunities.

SkillScan Online is based on the original SkillScan Professional Pack© color-coded card-sort system that was first published in 1987. The system was designed to quickly get to the heart of client competencies and preferences. It contains 64 skills that group into 7 color-coded skill categories; Communication, Humanitarian, Leadership/Management, Mental Analytical, Mental Creative, Creative Expression and Physical. The skill categories combined with the individual skills enable the client to assess work functions that best match his/her profile. SkillScan categories connect to Holland-based interest and Jungian-based personality themes to facilitate clients in seeing the pattern between their skills, interests and personality. This functionality has proven to be a useful tool for clients and counselors in enhancing the meaning of seemingly disparate self-assessment information. SkillScan is considered an intuitive-based assessment tool. It draws directly upon the client's self-perception of his/her abilities and preference for using a particular skill without reference to other's perceptions or norms.

The world of career counseling has changed in significant ways for the counselor. The world of technology offers numerous ways to assist clients with their career development needs. Given the access to the Internet, email and the older technologies of telephones and fax machines, clients can complete assessments online, gather information on jobs and careers in minutes and conduct the counseling session by phone or email.

An online skills assessment tool such as SkillScan Online, permits counselors to offer clients a tool that doesn't require the physical presence of the counselor. Within 35 – 60 minutes, clients gain a rich and comprehensive picture of their skills, strengths and areas of challenge. Clients can review and distill much of the information on their own while utilizing the counselor's objectivity and expertise to connect the information with other assessment results and client preferences to create an integrated career profile. Although SkillScan Online is a self-directed tool, the role of the counselor is critical in adapting it and applying it to the specific needs of the client.

The online program gives the client opportunity to identify and review potential career options and skill development activities prior to counseling. When the client meets with the counselor they often bring an expanded awareness about themselves and the possibilities that interest them. This increased self-awareness and knowledge of options can expedite the focusing and exploration process.

As the client internalizes the information gained from the online program he/she acquires a mental map of skill development goals and develops and a rich language for articulating strengths. This results in an increased ability to communicate strengths in resumes, cover letters, interviews and performance discussions or appraisals.

In the Managing Your Career Roadmap section of SkillScan Online, the client is directed through a needs-assessment process to troubleshoot the primary career development issue. Here the client determines if he/she is off-track, stalled on the track, or on-track with his/her career goals. Once a selection is made the program directs the client to specific strategies for taking action. At the next stage the client is guided to useful websites, book recommendations and other aids to meet their needs. Counselors have the option to direct the client to this section or simply instruct the client to stop at the report generation phase of the program.

Clients that use web-based technology to gather assessment and career exploration information are more likely to receive current data with server-side content updates along with new sources of information in the form of websites, books and other useful resources.

Adult clients often have limited time and money to devote to career assessment and counseling. Online tools such as SkillScan Online, allow the client to work at his/her own pace from home, a library, college computer center, career center workstation or the office. He/she can spend as long as he or she likes on the program without the constraints of a 50-minute counseling session or a time-limited group workshop. Because the client completes the assessment prior to the counseling, the counseling session can focus on practical ways the client can integrate and apply the information.

SkillScan Online is accessible by the internet at www.skillscan.net. Counselors can refer a client to the site or purchase a number of uses to distribute accordingly. SkillScan can also be purchased as a site license where the program resides on an organization's server and can be made available to all employees or students via a link on the organization's web page. Counselors who would like to review the program can obtain a free 14 day trial of SkillScan Online by contacting SkillScan at (SkillScan@hotmail.com). Counselors do not need specialized training to administer SkillScan Online. But as with any instrument, it takes time and experience using it with a variety of clients to maximize its effectiveness.

Conclusion

Counselors today have the good fortune of a wide variety of choices to make in working with their clients. In the assessment arena there is a vast array of hard-copy exercises, books, software and online assessment tools to choose from. Counselors are challenged to select the most time and cost effective ways to work with clients given client's financial and time constraints. They must keep current of the many information resources available in a constantly moving job market. SkillScan Online, was designed as a counseling tool to provide timely and critical skill assessment information that can be immediately applied to client goals.

SkillScan Online: Have Skills, Will Travel leverages the power of the Internet, using a highly interactive and proven skills identification process to get to the heart of client skills, competencies and preferences. Career mobility in this fast changing world, puts effective skills identification in the drivers seat for adapting with change.

Resources

SkillScan Online: http://www.skillscan.net/

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Career Coaching: The New Methodology for Maximizing Personal Fulfillment and Human Capital

Marcia Bench, MCCC, CBC, CMP
Career Coach Institute

Career coaching is a profession that is both rapidly growing and greatly misunderstood, both among practitioners in the U.S. and around the globe. The purpose of this paper is to provide a working definition of career coaching, to distinguish it from other related professions such as career counseling and mentoring, and to dispel myths about qualifications for and roles of career coaches.

What Career Coaching Is

Career coaching can be defined as follows:

> "Career coaching is an interactive process of exploring work-related issues – leading to effective action – in which the coach acts as both a *catalyst* and *facilitator* of individual and, in turn, organizational development and transformation. Career coaches connect people with their passion, purpose, values and other critical aspects of their ideal work. They build capability in their clients, thereby increasing the client's awareness, purpose, competence and well-being regarding their desired work. They also facilitate the client's process of developing and implementing a job search or business start-up plan to activate the client's Authentic Vocation™."

There are several critical elements here:

- **"Interactive"** – Unlike some of the related roles such as consulting and managing, coaching is characterized by its interactivity. Client and coach have what are referred to as "strategic conversations" in which the coach asks probing questions of the client about what is most important to him/her and how he/she wishes to be assisted in moving forward. Like tennis, coaching is very much a partnership in which both coach and client design their next move in tandem with and flowing from the other party's last "play" or movement – or in the coaching interaction, their last statement.
- **"Work-related issues"** – This distinguishes career coaching from other types of coaching such as life coaching, business coaching, executive coaching, spiritual coaching, and the like in that career coaching specializes in work-related issues. These may include both determining one's overall career direction as well as job search techniques such as resume-writing, interviewing practice, negotiation assistance, and the like. Internal coaches as well as external coaches may also assist with enhancing work

satisfaction, career development planning, and similar issues (see the last section of this paper for specific functions fulfilled by career coaches).

- **Catalyst** – The dictionary defines "catalyst" as "one that precipitates (brings on or begins) a process or event." A coach, therefore, precipitates the process of learning at three levels: performance, change, and transformation (otherwise stated as behavior, beliefs, and identity). In chemistry, the catalyst usually does not break down during the chemical process, but rather stimulates, by its very presence, a change in the nature of the other compounds present. This analogy is quite apt for a coach.
- **Facilitator** – To turn again to the dictionary, to "facilitate" means "to make easier." All of us have what in coaching are referred to as "blind spots" resulting from self-defeating beliefs, childhood messages, role models or experiences, and past disappointments that make it difficult for us to see life as it is. An effective coach makes it easier to see both the blind spots and the strengths that the client has and thereby furthers the process of transformation as the client moves through those hindrances and fully leverages their strengths.
- **Ideal work** – Most career coaches (and their clients!) are not content to help people find "just another job." Rather, they seek to help the client find work that is truly fulfilling, that allows them to make the contribution they believe they have come to earth to make. This emphasis on "ideal" work, rather than "suitable" or "acceptable" work, sets career coaches apart from employment agencies, many career counselors, and the purveyors of skills-based assessments which ignore life purpose and deeper motivators in suggesting next career moves to a client. Since most workers will change careers 5-10 times during their lives, and many of those transitions are during midlife when priorities are shifting, the focus on ideal work is an important part of the life journey for career coach and client to explore together.
- **Build capability** – I believe it was Jesus who first made the comparison between giving a man a fish so he can eat for a day versus teaching a man to fish so he can eat for a lifetime. The appropriate goal of the coach, unlike the consultant, is to help the client learn to self-coach, to learn skills they can use again when similar situations arise, and to play a role in a developmental process that results in the client's growth. That is the key reason why the best coaches are known for asking the right questions, not giving the right answers.
- **Authentic Vocation™** – At Career Coach Institute, we teach the Authentic Vocation™ Model of career development and career coaching. Other models begin by evaluating the client's skills, interests and experience to advise them on the best job or career. By contrast, the 8-fold Authentic Vocation™ Model begins by exploring the client's life purpose, continuing with their values, and motivators, and *then* their skills, experience, desired job/industry, and work environment. The final test of whether the client's desired work is truly their Authentic Vocation™ is subjecting it to the filter of Business Reality: is it a financially viable field and position? Can the client attain their desired lifestyle in that field? Is there future growth in the field? By thus aligning their work and their identity through the phases of their Authentic Vocation™, work satisfaction naturally increases. But there is also a benefit to the company: when workers enjoy their work and find meaning in it, they are more productive and it significantly impacts the bottom line. A recent Gallup poll showed that companies in which employees are "engaged" (meaning

fulfilled and satisfied in their work) experience higher sales, profits, retention and customer loyalty than those who are not.

Dispelling the Myths

There are a number of common misconceptions about career coaching that need to be "debunked" and the truth clarified.

Myth #1: A career coach must have a Master's Degree in counseling.

Currently, there are no educational requirements in most states in the U.S. for coaches. (However, some states subject some coaches to state regulations; check with your state's employment or labor department to see what the requirements are where you live.) Career coaching is *not* the same as career counseling, as we will see below. If one were going to be a counselor, they should certainly get a degree in that field! But career coaching is a discrete skill, the primary prerequisite for which is specific coaching training and a knowledge of career development principles. Whether practicing in the U.S. or abroad, degrees in counseling or psychology are *not* required to be a highly effective coach.

Myth #2: If I can talk to people about their job-related issues, I am (or can be) a career coach.

Career coaching requires training in coaching knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's). A coaching interaction is much more than a mere conversation; it has a strategic component and a transformational impact that puts it at a much higher level than a mere conversation. And the client's professional future is at stake; are you willing to risk giving uninformed "advice" versus becoming (through training and experience) a trained professional – or referring the client to one?

Myth #3: I'm already a coach, so when people come to me about a job-related issues, I can call myself a career coach.

This myth may be partly true. If the coach has received formal coach training and has an effective coaching model that they are using, their coaching skills may be transferable. However, to coach individuals in career issues also requires knowledge of career development theories and principles as well as the science/art of resume writing, helping a client capitalize on their strengths and minimize weaknesses in an interview, components of an effective job search campaign, and the like. Specific training in these areas is needed to supplement coaching skills for one to truly call themselves a career coach.

Myth #4: Other kinds of coaching are more "advanced" and require more specialized training than career coaching. It's just a point to begin one's practice; career coaching by itself isn't a substantial enough specialty area on which to build a practice

To put it simply, career coaching isn't as easy as it looks! But it *is* a viable practice specialty. The best career coaches make six-figure incomes. Some of them choose to supplement their actual 1:1 coaching with writing books, e-zines and articles, teaching, training, teleclasses, or speaking because they enjoy the variety of activities around the career development theme. But far from being a "basic beginning" for a coaching practice, it is a very viable ongoing business.

Myth #5: I don't think career coaching would be right for me because I don't enjoy writing resumes, practicing interviewing, and helping the client with negotiations.

This is one of the best things about career coaching: you can do it in whatever way fits your personality and preferences! Some career coaches prefer to focus on the "direction-setting" or personal exploration part of the process, helping clients figure out "what they want to be when they grow up," as we like to put it. Others prefer the tangible, immediate-results work involved in designing a job search strategy, writing (or critiquing) resumes, role-playing interviews and negotiation sessions, and the like. And still other independent practitioners do all of this! As we will see at the end of this article, internal career coaches (employed by an organization) may have additional responsibilities still. So career coaching is a field that can be tailored to the individual coach's preferences.

Myth #6: The best career coaching approach is to start with what the client is good at, their skills (KSA's) in designing their new job/career.

This is a premise of many career development theories. It can be effective with new graduates or new entrants to the workplace, or to those wishing to find a new job within the same industry and/or position they have held in the past. However, for the majority of people who will seek out career coaching (having exhausted their own resources and ideas about what would most fulfill them), a skills-based model will not achieve their desired result. Instead, the process must begin at a deeper level with their overall life purpose or mission, values, and the like in order to match what they do with what they love and what has meaning for the client. CCI's Authentic Vocation™ model does this.

Myth #7: You can't make much money at career coaching, especially during tough economic times.

On the contrary! Career coaching is the one specialty in the coaching field that is recession-proof and actually expands during economic downturns. Why? When the economy turns down, companies lay off workers, requiring outplacement services (and these firms have added coaching as one of their services to such companies) as well as career centers (which can be set up and/or staffed by career coaches). In addition, there are more individuals in job or career transition at these times, and those who are not are overworked and worried if they will be the next to be laid off. So while the independent practitioner may find that they need to offer fee incentives and/or affiliate with an outplacement firm or other organization to serve the clients who have needs during the economic lows (if we assume individual clients have less disposable income to invest in coaching), they will find a lot of work to be done!

Myth #8: I can get helpful advice about my career from my family and friends.

Remember the old saying, "you get what you pay for?" There are several reasons family and friends' advice may not be in your best interest regarding your career. First, they lack the objectivity that a coach can provide. And second, even if the change you're considering is good for you, it may impact them in a way that is uncomfortable, causing them to discourage or sabotage you. And finally, they may be unwilling to provide the unconditional support (even "cheerleading") that a coach will do as you pursue your dreams.

Myth #9: I've been doing career counseling or career consulting for years; I'll just start calling myself a career coach now.

See the response to Myths #2 and 3 above. Career coaching requires specific training and knowledge!

Myth #10: Career coaching can only be done in person.

One thing that is fascinating to most people when they first discover coaching (as a prospective coach or a client) is that most coaching is done by telephone. This is appealing to the coach because it allows them a flexible lifestyle. But it is also appealing to the client because of its convenience! In fact, if you receive training via teleclass (a kind of conference-call format used by Career Coach Institute and some other coach training programs where class members gather "virtually" over the phone for the weekly sessions), you are receiving the very best preparation to be a highly effective coach – over the phone! Coaches learn to hone their listening abilities to listen "between the lines" to the client's energy shifts, hesitations, excitement, style, and other cues that lead to deeply thought-provoking questions from the coach. Coaching in person is done by some (though a minority of) coaches, but between the logistics required to physically get together and the sometimes distracting visual cues that are added with in-person coaching, telephone coaching can be an even superior medium to use!

Distinguishing Career Coaching from Other Roles

Coaching vs. career counseling

Though the lines can become blurred between career coaching and career counseling, there are some distinctions that can be made. Coaching is generally more results-oriented, less structured, and guided by the client's agenda in comparison to counseling. Another distinction is that counseling (and therapy) often seeks to fix pathology, whereas coaching focuses on developing possibilities and leveraging the client's strengths.

Laura Berman Fortgang puts it well in *Take Yourself to the Top* (Warner Books 1998):

"A coach's main job is to help you to take action to close the gap between where you are and where you want to be. A career counselor may be the perfect person to help you figure out where you want to be. Counselors can administer personality and capability assessments and help you determine what is an appropriate career for you. A coach might help you determine your next step, but is more likely to help you do so by exploring your needs and what you truly value in life."

James Waldroop of Waldroop Butler Associates agrees:

> "I think of career counseling as more the direction-setting part of things and coaching as the execution – whether [and] how to interview, developing networks, or how to enter an organization, how to gain and use power, or how to work as a woman in male-dominated organizations." (Barbra Lewis, "Hiring a Career Counselor: How to Be Effective Behind the Desk.")

Career counselors may get more in-depth training in the use of psychological assessments, and will typically use a battery of such assessments at the outset of the counseling relationships. While career coaches may be trained in and/or use some assessment tools, they only do so as the client's presented needs appear to require it.

Coaching vs. consulting

The simplest way to distinguish coaching from consulting is this: coaching focuses on asking the right questions; consulting focuses on solving problems through providing the right answers. "Many coaches are consultants, but not all consultants are coaches," to again quote Laura Berman Fortgang. Consultants are experts in a specific topic area and are paid to provide advice, do analyses, write reports and make recommendations within that subject area. The consultant typically has business experience and/or education in the client's business or in the discipline about which they are consulting (marketing, operations efficiency, etc.).

A coach, on the other hand, needs not to have had experience in the client's business at all. The primary experience they need is practice doing coaching using an articulated model that leads to the client obtaining results. Period.

See also http://www.coachfederation.org/natureofcoaching.htm for the International Coach Federation's comparison of coaching and consulting.

Coaching vs. therapy

This recent article accurately summarizes the distinction between coaching and therapy:

> "Coaching is not the same thing as therapy, experts agree. One is an open-ended exploration of the origins of emotional makeup; the other is usually short-term and focused on achieving concrete goals, often in the context of career." Benedict Carey, "Mentors of the Mind," *L.A. Times* 6/18/01.

The differences between coaching and therapy can be a trap, particularly for personal coaches, who in some states such as Colorado may be subject to the regulations governing psychotherapists even though coaches lack equivalent credentials.

> "Therapists address major emotional issues and try to help clients find context and understanding, based on the past. If a client is in emotional pain, therapy is a better choice than coaching. Coaches will take business and personal issues and explore them

in a framework that is action oriented...We look for the source of obstacles as a therapist might, but do not deal in introspection." Laura Berman Fortgang, *Take Yourself to the Top* (Warner Books, 1998)

See also http://www.coachfederation.org/natureofcoaching.htm for the International Coach Federation's comparison of coaching and psychotherapy.

Coaching vs. mentoring

Mentoring is a related skill to coaching which nevertheless can be distinguished in several ways.

> "Mentoring is a method of teaching and learning that can occur among all types of individuals across all kinds of knowledge bases and settings. In the workplace, mentoring normally consists of teaching, giving feedback, coaching on the job, counseling through change, and structuring ongoing contact over a designated time period." "Mentoring for Performance Improvement," Great Circle Learning (www.gclearning.com)

Mentoring is somewhat more directive than coaching in that a goal of most mentoring programs or relationships is to pass on information or knowledge from the mentor to the mentee. However, because the ultimate goal is to "build capability" as it was explained above, the mentor may use coaching techniques and questions to help the mentee think for him/herself about the skills or situations which are the subject of the mentoring relationship.

Coaching vs. managing with a coaching approach

Thomas Crane, in his book *The Heart of Coaching,* defines transformational coaching for managers to use like this:

"a comprehensive communication process in which the coach provides performance feedback to the coachee [employee]. Topics include broad, work-related dimensions of performance (personal, interpersonal, or technical) that affect the coachee's ability and willingness to contribute to meaningful personal and organizational goals."

It is increasingly accepted that coaching has a place in the management toolkit. However, one critical difference between an independent coach and a manager as coach within an organization is that the manager has "R.A.A.," or responsibility, accountability, and authority, for the employee/client's performance. Therefore, the employee/client is constrained from being completely candid with the manager/coach in the coaching interactions because the manager has another (even if silent) agenda.

The following chart outlines the above distinctions for those professions most commonly compared with career coaching:

Factor	Career Coach	Career Counselor	Consultant	Manager as Coach
Focus	Questions	Q&A	Answers	Q&A
Agenda	Client's	Shared	Consultant's	Company's
R.A.A.?*	No	No	No	Yes
Orientation	Process, what's possible	Process, next logical step	Results, solving problems	Results
Education	Coach training	Master's degree preferred	Varies	Varies
Voluntary?	Yes	Usually	Sometimes	No
Time perspective	Present, future	Past, present	Present, future	Present, near future
Use of Assessments	Yes, as appropriate	Yes, standardized	Sometimes	360 most common
Time to results	Quickly!	Slower than coaching	Sometimes never!	Varies
Ownership of results	Client	Counselor	Consultant	Manager and employee

* = Responsibility, Accountability and Authority

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International
Career
Development
Conference
2001

The Majors Fair: Helping College Students Decide On Majors

Heléne Berg-Kolin, M.S
Gretchen Krueger
Cheryl Thomas-Clark
Brian Finck

What Is The Majors Fair?

The Majors Fair is a campus event that showcases academic departments and programs for undergraduate college students deciding majors and minors. Including elements of career counseling, academic advising, and peer mentoring, the purpose of the Majors Fair is to provide information needed for decision-making through easy access to faculty, staff, advisors, and committed students in a convenient one-stop setting. In addition to information concerning academic departments, programs, degree requirements, and possible career options, the Majors Fair also includes representatives from essential student service areas on campus such as the Career Center and Counseling with the goal of promoting awareness and use of such services.

The presentation of a Majors Fair type-of-event is well-established on many campuses throughout the United States. The history of the event's success at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) clearly demonstrates the value of the Majors Fair as an effective tool in the process of choosing majors and minors. This paper will provide an overview of the Majors Fair as it exists at CSUN with general event-planning guidelines applicable to other college and university campuses.

The Majors Fair, Major Selection, & Career Counseling

Choosing a major is a primary task for some 13 million undergraduate students enrolled in over 10,000 institutions of higher learning nationwide. It is estimated that 20-50% of students entering college are undecided about a major and that 75% change their major one or more times during their academic careers (Gordon, 1995). At California State University, Northridge, approximately 2,000 undergraduate students of the total 30,000 are officially undecided at the present time. In addition to those officially listed as undecided in the campus record system, a significant portion of the first and second year students, as well as some third year students, remain uncommitted in terms of academic major, with an unknown number of students considering the possibility of completing a minor.

Most students directly relate college majors to professional work after college, making the decision regarding a major a complex career and occupational decision rather than a short-term commitment to courses. Because the selection of a major represents the beginning of career planning for most college students, effective methods and strategies to assist exploring students are urgently needed. The Majors Fair has proven to be helpful to CSUN students who are exploring and deciding majors and minors by providing access to the information, people, and resources to facilitate decision-making; given its history of success at CSUN, the Majors Fair is certainly worthy of consideration by other campuses seeking to assist their students with major selection.

Career development strategies are integrated into three specific components of the Majors Fair. Pre-event workshops, a program/handout distributed to each student as they enter the event, and a designated "Help Station" located within the event all reflect established career counseling methodologies to assist students to negotiate the Majors Fair and maximize the event's usefulness. The one-hour pre-event workshops involve the introduction of the Holland RIASEC system through a modified version of Bolles' Party Exercise (Berg-Kolin, 1997) and related materials in order to suggest academic areas for exploration at the Majors Fair. An event program is distributed at the entrance to the Majors Fair with a listing of all the campus majors and minors by college division and the college sign color key. With the program, students can begin to understand the campus thematic organizational and interest area structure. In addition, the inclusion of a "Help Station" staffed by career graduate students and career counselors can provide immediate, individual, one-stop assistance to students requiring help with exploration plans and resources for follow-up.

A Brief History Of The Majors Fair At CSU Northridge

CSU Northridge has offered a Majors Fair in its present format each Spring semester since 1998, with a precursor of the event ("Undeclared Majors Day") offered in 1992. The event has been refined over the past four years, with significant revisions from the first presentation to the second, and fewer, though still constant, revisions during the past three years. The Majors Fair is recognized campus-wide as an essential student service, and enjoys wide support from students, administrators, faculty, and staff. The event typically attracts an audience of 350-600+ students from the campus of 30,000 students; this is considered a significant turnout on this public commuter campus in the San Fernando Valley area of southern California. Coordinated by the Advising Resource Center/EOP (the academic advising center for undecided undergraduate students at CSUN), the Majors Fair targets the wider population of all students making decisions concerning the 135 majors including departmental options and 54 possible minors available on the campus. Attendance statistics demonstrate that the event attracts a surprisingly wide cross-section of the university population in spite of consciously-targeted outreach to the freshman and sophomore students who would be expected to be exploring majors. Most of the attendees are listed in the campus records system with declared majors, and a significant number have earned sufficient units for junior, senior, and even graduate class standing, statistics which have remained fairly constant throughout the event's history.

Planning The Majors Fair – Critical Elements For Success

Campus Support

Support and participation by faculty, staff, and students in the various majors is crucial to the success of the Majors Fair. Gaining the support and participation of the campus requires awareness of campus politics and campus culture, especially if the Majors Fair is in the introductory phase or if significant changes are in process from previous formats. Obtaining the backing of the most influential people, whether in formal or informal positions of authority, can significantly facilitate the event planning process and contribute to a successful outcome. The student audience expects knowledgeable, friendly, and helpful representatives from each department and program to be available at the Majors Fair, and it is the responsibility of the event planners to deliver the promised resource individuals. At CSUN, support for the event is generated through the clout of the highest ranking members of the campus community –Provost, Vice Presidents, Deans, Department Chairs, Directors, and Coordinators, with representatives from each of the eight academic colleges being responsible for the confirmation of participants. The Director of EOP, the primary sponsor of the event, presents the concept at meetings such as the Deans Council and sends follow-up letters to the Deans. The event coordinator subsequently appears at the Council of Department Chairs meeting with flyers announcing the date and the college representatives and sends follow-up letters to each Department Chair. In order to maximize participation, announcement of the date is publicized several months in advance of the event, allowing support networks to build. At CSUN, the announcement process begins early in the Fall semester for the annual Spring Majors Fair (see the Timeline – Appendix A).

Support by general faculty members is also important if class outreach publicity for the Majors Fair is conducted. At CSUN, a carefully selected group of courses common to first and second year students is identified for class mailings of flyers which are dependent upon the instructor's willingness for distribution. The reputation of the event can provide support if the previous events have been successful and well-received; for first-time events, education about the goals and purpose of the event will be required. Support from high level administrators can flow throughout the colleges, departments, programs, advisement centers, and student service areas for both active participation and general support in the form of allowing posters or stacks of announcement flyers to be available for distribution in high traffic areas. For example, at CSUN, support by dorm staff translates into posters with reminder flyers mounted in each dorm hallway. Support can also mean direct funding or lobbying for funds for the event expenses. The Majors Fair at CSUN also builds support through its commitment to requesting feedback and evaluation from its participants and its efforts to continually improve and refine the event. Campus members are most apt to support and participate in an event that very obviously demonstrates its commitment to high quality student service.

Funding

Advanced planning for funding for the Majors Fair is crucial to its success, and the drafting of a detailed budget proposal represents one of the first tasks in the planning process (see the Timeline – Appendix A). Researching the actual costs for anticipated expenses is critical, as is the determination of policies and procedures for obtaining funds and securing supplies, all of which is very campus-specific. Creative sources for funding and cost-effective means of achieving desired results can be particularly useful in planning a successful Majors Fair.

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Enlisting the assistance of people with creative talent for poster design and graphics, as well as those with significant knowledge of campus policies, procedures, history, and culture, can greatly facilitate the Majors Fair planning process.

At CSUN, direct funding for the Majors Fair is provided through three primary sources: the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP); the academic affairs division of Undergraduate Studies; and the campus student government, Associated Students. Individual departments and programs provide their own printed materials for distribution at their tables as well as any visual aids or displays, and also cover salaries as applicable for their personnel. At the present time, direct funding for the Majors Fair runs approximately $7500 per event, with the majority of costs represented by publicity and handout materials (approximately $3900 including paid ads in the campus newspaper) and refreshments (approximately $3000 including box lunches for the faculty and other event staff). Additional funding needs at CSUN include: room and equipment, sign language interpreting services, signs and tape, tablecloths, staff and faculty nametags, balloons, and photography processing. Need for funding on other campuses may vary considerably.

Funding through the CSUN student government requires a structured lobbying process and is usually secured with the co-sponsorship of the career graduate student organization, the California Career Development Association/CSUN Student Chapter (CCDA/CSUN), whose members function as volunteer staff for the Majors Fair, earning academic fieldwork credit. Additional support for the Majors Fair is supplied by the local and campus business community in the form of donated door prizes such as gift certificates for meals, books, and actual products such as clothing or gourmet food items. Donors are acknowledged in paid ads in the campus newspaper on the day of the event and in the event program distributed to each attendee.

Timing

The timing of the Majors Fair can greatly contribute to its overall success. The ideal date would have a minimum number of competing events and commitments for students and event staff. Regardless of whether the event takes place in the Fall or, as at CSUN, in the Spring semester (which permits a useful several-month planning process that begins with the start of the academic year in the Fall), it is advisable to schedule the Majors Fair comfortably after the start of classes but before midterm exams begin. The day of the week is also important; events held on a Monday or a Friday may be less likely to attract optimal attendance. Midweek dates have proven to be the most successful at CSUN and allow for adequate last-minute publicity. However, always check for competing events on any given day. Particular note should be taken of events that may pull away students in targeted populations such as first year students or events that may impact campus staff's ability to participate. Time of day for the event also must be considered; at CSUN, a four-hour block of time on the same day as a noontime music series has been effective. Weather is also a factor worthy of consideration; cold or rain may attract people indoors, as has been the case at CSUN for two of the four Majors Fairs scheduled in late February.

Site/Facility

Selecting the location for the event may be one of the most important decisions involved with planning a campus Majors Fair. Regardless of the size and scope of the event, a successful location will be in an area where students regularly circulate or pass, with foot-traffic often a main source of attendance. Making a list of all of the different activities and services and their timing within the event can help determine a suitable location that will support all of the components in the best possible way. Also worthy of consideration is the flow of foot traffic throughout the room during the event with attention to the prevention of bottlenecks and isolated tables.

At CSUN, the Majors Fair is held in the University Student Union building, in the same site as the job fairs, in the only room on the campus that is really feasible in terms of size and accessibility to student traffic. Because this large multipurpose room is used daily for a wide range of events, advanced reservation several months ahead is required. Room arrangement at CSUN is determined by the campus organizational structure into eight academic colleges comprised of all of the majors and minors. The academic areas are situated around the perimeter of the room with wall space for signs, leaving the center of the room for student service area representatives. Registration is conducted at the room's entrance, and exit is restricted to allow for maximum flow into the evaluation station.

Materials & Supplies

The Majors Fair requires an extensive array of materials and supplies, some of which may be provided by the event organizers, and some by the campus participants. Cost is certainly one consideration, as is convenience, and a desire for standardization or control. At CSUN, it has been the practice of the event organizers to provide all publicity and signage for the Majors Fair, with table staff from the academic and student affairs areas providing any materials that they wish to distribute or display. The use of creative visual displays is encouraged and it is worthy of note that the displays have become significantly more elaborate over the years. Most areas find that they can use their displays in various open house events throughout the year, and consider the time, energy, and cost expense worthwhile. Publicity materials prior to the event are made available through the college representatives. At CSUN, the event organizers also provide the refreshments, tablecloths (necessary for both coverage & to provide standardization of appearance), personalized nametags (a project requiring a significant amount of effort) for expected staff, and audio-visual equipment if requested in advance. Certainly, the responsibility and expense for any of these items might be distributed to areas other than the event organizers; for example, one office might offer to prepare the nametags or perhaps the signs.

Refreshments

Providing refreshments at the Majors Fair is an excellent way to encourage student attendance and express appreciation to event staff. Including the mention of refreshments in all publicity materials is suggested, and the provision of simple snack foods such as cookies and drinks is usually worth the expenditure of funding. Coffee service will be much appreciated for early-arriving staff members and hot drinks on colder days can be a welcoming feature of the event. Consider individual serving packaged snack foods and fresh fruits which students can easily take with them and which do not require utensils. For campuses with culinary arts programs, consider enlisting the services of the students to showcase their talents to provide some or all of the refreshments. Campus catering services can provide attractive arrangements for beverage service and can be supplemented by warehouse purchases for quantity discounts. Some vendors both on and off campus may be able to provide donated items. A recent addition to the Majors

Fair at CSUN is the provision of simple boxed sandwich lunches for event staff (controlled by limiting serving to those with official nametags) ordered through the campus catering service. Although the cost can be quite significant in providing lunches (approximately $9 per person at CSUN for example), the goodwill generated may be well worth the expense, and may also reduce the need for some staff rotation if the event covers the lunch hour. Be sure to consider in advance any campus rules and regulations concerning the serving or purchasing of food which may impact your event. Plan ahead for disposing of or donating any left-over perishables.

Staff

People are of vital importance in most aspects of the planning and presentation of the Majors Fair. In addition to academic area representatives to interact with the students regarding the various majors and minors, CSUN also includes staffed tables from essential student services such as the Career Center, Counseling, Library, Student Health Center, etc. Participation of academic areas is coordinated by a representative from each of the eight colleges at CSUN, usually a staff member from one of the advisement centers, and often an EOP staff member. The event coordination staff organizes participation of student service areas directly, usually through email communication from the event coordinator to site Directors or previous participants. In addition to the event coordinator, who is at CSUN, a career counselor and academic advisor in the advisement center/EOP satellite office for undecided majors, the Advising Resource Center/EOP, the primary event staff includes 2-4 part-time graduate career interns from the same office supplemented by additional assistance from the office's advisors, peer advisors, and student assistants.

Staff is needed to perform a variety of pre-event tasks including: planning and preparing publicity materials including letters to department chairs; class outreach mailings; distributing and posting event announcements; securing event coverage by the campus newspaper; placing notices in various campus publications; obtaining door prize donations; determining room arrangement and preparing signs; determining and purchasing food and refreshments; preparing tablecloths, name tags, and handout materials; securing funding; and recruiting graduate student and other volunteers to assist on the day of the event.

Day of event tasks are quite complex for an event such as the Majors Fair, and require a staff of approximately 20-25 people. Day of event tasks include: setting out standing posters, banner, and balloons to attract attendees; setting up the room with signs and balloons; arranging stations for faculty and staff check-in, student registration, help/counseling/advising, exit evaluation/door prize entry, food and refreshments; coordinating space assignments and equipment requests. During the event, personnel is needed to staff the various stations, monitor traffic flow and refreshment supplies, and provide technical assistance for equipment, space, and sign problems. Due to the nature of their class schedules, most faculty, staff, and student participants will have rotating assignment times at the event, significantly increasing the numbers of event staff entering and leaving the location. Coordination of rotating schedules in order to insure coverage at all stations can be quite challenging, and it is suggested that schedules be planned in advance and be the sole responsibility of one individual who can be available throughout the day. Stations work well with team leaders who train and supervise the other staff. The Majors Fair at CSUN usually involves the participation of 550-800 people throughout the day: 25-30 general event staff, 150-175 staffing academic or student service tables, 10 campus administrator visitors, 350-600+ student attendees.

The Majors Fair also involves interaction with a number of campus service staff including those with meeting services, catering, the campus newspaper, sign shop, copying/print services, student government, and campus vendors for door prizes in addition to off-campus vendors for balloons, banner preparation, and additional door prizes contributions. In the early years of the Majors Fair at CSUN, a campus-wide committee was responsible for the event, with many areas involved in the planning and production, and that may remain a feasible model for some campuses. Be aware, however, that committee work can mean a significant amount of time and energy spent in arranging meetings and sometimes decisions need to be made immediately; the designation of a single person or small group housed in one location may prove to be most efficient and effective.

Publicity

Publicity represents one of the most vital elements for success in any event planning process. Without effective publicity, the most outstanding program will not reach its audience and is destined for failure. Because each campus is so unique, knowledge of communication channels as they exist at each college or university is necessary for planning the outreach process, and only very general guidelines can be discussed. It also must be noted that technology and structural changes to the physical layout of the campus may impact established communication patterns, and must be considered and accommodated. For example, at CSUN, wide destruction from the 1994 earthquake has resulted in extensive reconstruction and reconfiguration of the campus with many new buildings and changing traffic patterns. Technology has added new sources of communication on most campuses. At CSUN, the dorm cable TV channel, web site listings, and new closed circuit TV monitors sponsored by the student government all must now be considered in addition to the traditional flyers and posters, newspaper ads, articles, and event notices, newsletter inserts, mailings, class announcements, etc. A general guideline might be to consider every possible venue that can be identified and use as many as possible depending upon budget, time, and energy.

Evaluations & Gathering Data

In order to determine the success of any event, some form of evaluation process is required. Although a qualitative judgment can be obtained by informal observation of the number of attendees, the atmosphere in the room, and overheard interactions, a more quantitative approach to the Majors Fair evaluation can be implemented. At CSUN, attendance is recorded through the use of "contact cards" which each student completes as they enter the event. The cards include the student's name and campus identification number (completed by the student at entry); class standing, major, ethnicity, and EOP program affiliation are completed later through use of the campus computer records system. Through this process, valuable demographic information can be obtained on the student attendees.

To supplement the demographic information provided by the contact cards, an exit evaluation was developed. The exit evaluation addresses issues such as the rationale for attending (to explore majors only, to explore minors only, to explore both majors and minors), publicity venues which were most effective (how did you know about the Majors Fair - large poster, newspaper ad, flyer from class, etc.?). The exit evaluation also includes the student's name and student identification number in order to permit cross-referencing with the demographic information for a more complete profile and serves as an entry into the door prize drawing. In the interest of traffic flow and consideration for students needing to leave the event for classes, both the entry contact card and the exit evaluation are kept as brief as possible in formats that can be read and responded to quickly. The evaluation form also includes room for a ranked opinion on the usefulness of the Majors Fair (very/some/little help), and a request for suggestions for improvement (what would make the event better?).

The door prize is an important component of the Majors Fair. In addition to expressing appreciation to the students for participating, it provides an incentive to complete the evaluation. The door prizes are obtained from local businesses, are usually valued at $20-50, and are seen as a way to foster community goodwill and as a marketing tool. Door prize sponsors are acknowledged in newspaper ads and on the event program distributed to each attendee. Door prizes can be awarded during or after the event; at CSUN, students are notified by letter during the week following the event and collect their prizes at the coordinating office.

Staff and faculty evaluations of the event are also encouraged, although this remains a component yet to be refined at CSUN. Past practice has involved a printed form sent after the event with thank you letters or inclusion of a request for feedback by email, both of which have resulted in sparse response. Response was understandably greater during the first years of the Majors Fair at CSUN, and perhaps an on-site evaluation process for faculty and staff as well as students might be considered.

Post-Event Tasks

The Majors Fair requires a number of post-event tasks. Once the students and campus representatives have left, supplies must be collected and returned to storage. For supplies such as signs, which can be used for future events, some type of inventory system is useful; at CSUN, numbering and labeling the signs and making their collection the responsibility of the college representatives has worked well. The college representatives are also responsible for compiling a list of the actual participants from their area to facilitate the thank you letter and evaluation process.

Tally of the number of student attendees is also an important post-event task. The contact cards are counted on a rolling basis throughout the event, with the final total communicated by email to the EOP Director for eventual communication to upper administration. The graduate interns complete the contact card demographic information which is added to the evaluation results in a one-page summary of data. The data report is included with the personalized thank you letter sent to each faculty, staff, and student representative; copies are also sent to the individual's immediate supervisor or, in case of students, department chair. Although this is a very time-consuming task, it is an expectation at CSUN, and is certainly worth consideration in terms of building support and maintaining goodwill for any event on any campus. A more detailed data summary is prepared for the EOP Director and selected campus members. Thank you letters are also sent to all campus visitors and event supporters, including off-campus door prize donors and supply vendors. An extra personal touch at CSUN is the distribution of small candy thank you gifts to the college representatives, the event staff, and volunteers by the event coordinator.

Closure of the financial files for the Majors Fair is the final event task. Bills from campus and off-campus vendors often take some time to be received, and the payment processing system often involves complicated procedures and the observation of deadlines for use of funds. It is advisable to become aware of any policies and procedures far in advance of the event and to be prepared for the financial issues to linger (sometimes from one year's event to the next).

Summary & Conclusions

The Majors Fair has proven to be a popular and useful event for colleges and universities interested in assisting their students with major selection in a convenient, one-stop setting. The model presented from California State University, Northridge has proven itself over the past four years, and can be adapted to a wide range of institutions.

Although the Majors Fair requires a significant expenditure of time, resources, and energy, as well as organizational skill, the benefit to students has certainly been evident at CSUN. We hope that you will also be inspired to help your students get the information they need for major decision-making in this very effective way.

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Appendix A

CSUN Majors Fair Planning Timeline

Date of Event: Wednesday, February 27, 2002 (5th week of Spring Semester)

September 2001	Identify event date & reserve room Begin date announcements Create "Save the Date" announcement flyer Draft & submit budget proposal Review previous year's event evaluations Identify campus college representatives Begin graduate student volunteer recruitment
October 2001	Send announcement letter to Department Chairs Draft Associated Students budget proposal & develop sponsorship & strategy plan Plan pre-event workshops Attend Council of Chairs Meeting for event announcement & distribute notice of college representatives
November 2001	Submit Associated Students budget proposal Present A.S. budget proposal to Finance Committee Lobby for A.S. budget proposal support Confirm A.S. budget support Confirm Departmental participation through college representatives with table & sign requests (before semester ends)
December 2001	Order banners, signs, office supplies Develop mailing & publicity materials Order "save the date" notice for Finals Week newspaper edition
January 2002	Identify classes for direct mailing Prepare class mailing (20,000 flyers) Prepare & distribute large posters to dorms Distribute/post flyers on campus before beginning of Spring semester Prepare newspaper ads for welcome week edition & future weeks Contact student service areas for participation Place refreshment & balloon orders; cut tablecloths Develop & begin door prize outreach
February 2002	
2 weeks before	Confirm department & student service participation Confirm & prepare signs; confirm AV equipment requests Confirm staffing & volunteer plan; collect door prizes Present pre-event workshops
1 week before	Send out direct & class mailings to students
week of event	Final publicity including newspaper insert (8,000 flyers) Confirm names & prepare nametags
February 27	MAJORS FAIR 2002
March 2002	Complete demographic information on student attendees Notify winners & distribute door prizes
April 2002	Prepare & send thank you letters with summary report Process payment of bills

International
Career
Development
Conference
2001

Executive Report: Amazing New Job Search Tool Gets Ten Times the Response and A Hundred Times the Impact of the [Internet-Gutted] Résumé

Jack Chapman

Yesterday's resume: beautiful linen finish paper, typeset with just the right bold, italic, and underline highlighting to feature what you want to "sell."
Today's resume: reduced by the internet to a text file searchable by keywords! All the wordcrafting and wordsmithing to get your point across are boiled down to ten words on a head hunter's search criteria.

The "Amazing New Job Search Tool..." title on the cover page promises you something better than a résumé. If you are a job hunter, it probably got you wondering, "What could be better than a résumé?" and, "Is my résumé now gutted by the internet?"

Even if you're skeptical, you're reading this "just in case."—you don't want to miss anything.

What is this "Amazing new tool"? It is an "Executive Report." An Executive Report is a collection of some common sense ideas which you put into a few pages that attract the attention of executives. While this article is not exactly an Executive Report, it does have some of the elements: interesting title, common sense content, practical application, and written to entice someone involved in your industry to read.

And you *are* reading, aren't you! You're saying to yourself, "Hmm, I'm not convinced résumés are gutted by the internet, but I'll read just a little further to find out more."

Let's compare an Executive Report with a résumé for a moment.

What if, instead of the title,

> "Amazing New Job-Search Tool Gets Ten Times the Response, and A Hundred Times the Impact of the [Internet-Gutted] Résumé,"

I had a résumé type of title like,

> "Bottom-line results-oriented project manager seeks challenging position with growing company to increase sales, efficiency, and profitability."

Blech.

Nobody (probably not even Mr. Results-Oriented Manager himself) would be motivated to read past the first five words. Yet we expect people to read résumés with that kind of language!

Résumés are basically boring! That's why they get, on average, only twenty seconds' attention.

A résumé is okay to use to answer an ad, apply for a vacancy, or post on the internet. In fact, an Executive Report does not usually replace the résumé for this function. But when you're introducing yourself for a networking relationship, the résumé is a yawner, a ho-hummer, a here's-another-job-hunter piece of boredom.

New Job-Search Technology

Since 1988, many of my clients have experimented using an Executive Report to replace the résumé as a way to introduce themselves on their career marketing campaign. It doesn't replace the résumé altogether, only as a tool for networking introduction. It is an information-based job-search technology born of the information age. As of 1994, I have used it with clients about fifty times. Sometimes it did better than résumés. Sometimes it didn't. But the good news is that an Executive Report has *never under-performed* a résumé.

In other words, it always did as well or better. What does "better" mean? *Better* is measured by the questions "Did your contact know who you were?" and "Was your contact receptive to meeting with you?"

It is remembered a hundred times more than a résumé.

For instance, in your job search, how many times do people *initiate a call to you* in response to your having mailed a résumé? Few to none, I'd bet.

Executive Reports have generated those inbound calls! [This does NOT mean that you can send them out and wait for the phone to ring – a good job search is still a pro-active venture.]

What Is an Executive Report?

It is a few pages describing some simple but essential how-to information. Whatever your profession, you have some wisdom about how to make things run smoother, better, easier, more profitably, etc. Your Executive Report shares that wisdom.

You may be wondering, "How could li'l ol' me ever come up with a report that could make employers call me?" We'll get to that. Not everyone can do an Executive Report, but if it does fit your situation it's not really very hard to do.

You may recall the book, "Seven Habits of Highly Successful People" by Steven Covey. Very powerful book, but... think about it. How much "rocket science" does it take to tell people to... 1. Be Proactive, 2. Begin with the End in Mind, 3. Put First Things First, 4. Think Win/Win, 5. Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood, 6. Synergize, and 7. Sharpen the Saw. YOU could have written that book, couldn't you? The ideas there are simple; they are as old as

Napoleon Hill's "Think and Grow Rich." Yet this was a multi-million copy best-seller. That's the power of an Executive Report. Simple ideas that work.

Why Does an Executive Report Work?

It works better than a résumé because it:

1) emphasizes your contribution,
2) positions you as an expert,
3) is an interesting new format, and
4) has substantive value.

1) Emphasis on Contribution

Unlike a résumé (which, no matter how well you craft it, screams, "ME, ME, ME, I want a job!"), an Executive Report emphasizes a candidate's ability to contribute to, not take from, the contact. Your contacts can read the report without having their attention distracted by your job-hunting needs. Instead, their attention will focus on their own businesses and the ideas you present to help them make or save money.

2) Positioning as Expert

Writing a résumé full of achievements gives one kind of credibility as being an accomplished person, but it is not as convincing as an Executive Report, because most people discount résumés. They believe that job hunters inflate position responsibilities, hide failures, touch up results, and otherwise doctor their résumés to look as flawless as possible. A résumé positions you as a job hunter. All the attention is on how great you think you are, so the résumé reader uses a magnifying glass to uncover flaws, gaps, and cover-ups.

By contrast, a well-thought-out Executive Report immediately positions you as accomplished in a different way. You're speaking the language of the industry; you're communicating information that works to produce results. The fact that you can compose such a piece gives you more credibility than a résumé (which, unlike an Executive Report, any résumé service can write *for* you).

3) Interesting New Format

When have you ever said to yourself, "Hmm, I'm bored. I think I'll read a résumé?" Let's face it, a phone book is more interesting reading than most résumés.

The Executive Report works partly because it's just plain different and more interesting. People remember receiving an Executive Report! Even if they don't read it!

4) Substantive Value

Executive Reports give money-making or time-saving information. They don't have to be blockbuster ideas. All you need are a few common-sense ideas that can make or save a bundle of time or money. If readers actually implement any of the ideas, they'll be ahead of the game with respect to improved productivity, service, quality, or some other business-enhancing results.

A couple of examples follow.

From "31 Ways to Profit from the Coming Boom: the Shift from Sick Care to Well Care":

#1 Uncover the real community health needs.

#7 Create visibility for the wellness services you already undertake.

#14 Include a "Better Health" response card with all outgoing mailings.

#29 Sponsor "Healthy Citizen" awards.

From "Little Used Sales Technique..."

•Follow-up Consistency #1: ANSWER THE PHONE (BY A REAL PERSON)

•Follow-up Consistency #2: RETURN PHONE CALLS.

•Follow-up Consistency #3: SEND THE MATERIALS.

Because the reader can actually benefit from the ideas, an Executive Report is better received than a résumé. A résumé can focus only on the past—what you, the candidate, have done in the past for some other employer. An Executive Report can focus on the future, specific benefits the reader can reap now and forever just by reading and using your ideas.

Who Can Use an Executive Report?

Executive Reports are generally used only by those who have several years' experience in their field. If you've run an MIS department, a warehouse, or a restaurant for many years, you know tips and techniques that can make the difference between success and failure.

With one exception, career-changers can't use Executive Reports. It would, for instance, be presumptuous for someone changing from teaching to sales to do an Executive Report called "Ten Top Sales Techniques."

The exception is a Research Report. For example:

> I once had a client who wanted to join an outdoor-adventure company with a personal-growth component. She had no experience in the field and, indeed, didn't even know how she'd get a list of companies to approach. So she approached a new-age magazine and got it to endorse her to research an article for them.
>
> She called and interviewed people to gather information on these operations, especially on which marketing techniques they found successful. By the end of her research she had become an expert in these organizations' identities and the "Ten Most Powerful Marketing Techniques for Outdoor-Personal-Growth Organizations." She also became well known and highly visible in the field.

Her social-worker résumé would never have had the impact her article and research did.

What Goes into a Good Executive Report?

An Executive Report has five main elements:

1) a benefit-oriented title and subtitle,
2) an introduction,
3) quality information beneficial to the reader, usually in the form of five to twelve "tips" or "mistakes,"
4) author information: name and phone number on each page (footer) and full information about the author in the back, and
5) a binding of some sort.

Benefit-oriented Title
The title of the Executive Report should be an advertisement for the Executive Report that states or implies that the reader will get a specific benefit from reading it. We call that its claim or promise.

By applying the ideas contained in your Executive Report, readers should be enabled to either make money (example: An International Trade Trend Opens a Brief Window of Opportunity to Double Your Margins *and* Under price Your Competition at the Same Time) or avoid losing money (example: Ten Biggest Marketing Mistakes and How to Avoid Them).

The Executive Report you're reading now has a title with three interest grabbers: an "approach" benefit (new job-search tool), an "avoid" benefit (internet-gutted résumé), and a claim (ten times the response).

Introduction
The introduction should emphasize that you are writing this out of your own experience, and explain that many of the items are common sense, but exactly the common sense that people ignore, forget, or overlook. It should allude to your belief that, when the reader implements any of these suggestions, benefits will result.

Quality Information
Here's the guts of the Executive Report: *interesting information.*

Search your experience for the simple principles that make your job or business successful. Remember, they don't need to be earth-shattering revelations; basics are fine.

The Bible's Ten Commandments are a good example of simplicity. Would you be curious enough to open a report entitled "Ten Simple Principles of Human Interaction that Can Practically Guarantee World Peace"?

Couldn't you write a few words about how easily the world could be a better place to live if we just went "back to basics" for a while: Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery?

You can do this in your career field if you take a moment to think of principles, rules, mistakes — the basics of making your job work. Formulate them in four to twelve sentences and you have the outline of your Executive Report.

To flesh them out, talk to a friend about them and tape record what you say. You can also try using what I call "The P.I.Q. format": Principle, Illustration, Question.

The Principle

The Principle is a statement of something that is a mistake to avoid or an activity to undertake. It should be one sentence, two at the most. Just make a point that is easy to grasp.

The Illustration

The Illustration is a few paragraphs long. With a story or illustration, it illustrates how important the Principle is. Use short paragraphs.

Keep the personal tone—you're writing from your own experience; this is how it is for *you,* and readers can make up their own minds about its applicability.

The Question

The Question asks readers to examine their own behavior around the Principle. Preferably, it should be a practical question answerable in measurable terms.

Here is an example from an Executive Report quoted earlier.

Follow-up consistency #1: Answer the phone.

Seems simple, right? But how many places do you call nowadays that have a *human being* answer the phone? More likely you're sent through a maze of phone numbers extensions, voice mails, fax numbers, "press the pound key…," "your call is important to us," [yeah, sure it is!], etc.

You can *double* your sales by having a dedicated line that is consistently answered by a knowledgeable, helpful, cheerful human being. Not every line needs to be answered this way, but calls from potential customers need this follow-up consistency. Why is that so important? The key to making sales is making the customer feel like they'll be taken care of.

On one of my calls a telephone operator informed me she could not take my name and address for information – that would have to be handled by a salesperson. She then informed me that she could not transfer me to a salesperson because they were all gone for the rest of the day. This call was made at 11 a.m. E.S.T.!

Question: Have you called *your own inquiry* number recently to see how well a prospect is welcomed and well-treated?

Information about Author
Author's name and phone number on the cover and each page's footer. In the back you can have a section "About the Author." This should say enough to give readers a sense of your background, like a summary on a résumé. You can use your resume, itself, if you wish.

• Professional Binding
This has a *lot* to do with being remembered. When clients had pages simply stapled together, it was not as effective as when it was bound. On the other hand, this is *not* to be or look expensive. The idea here is that it should look and feel like a specially prepared report, not just some papers stapled together. It should *not,* though, make it appear that you wasted money making it look fancy.

Miscellaneous
How long? Don't worry about length.

People will tell you, "It's too long. No one will read all this. Make it shorter." They are wrong. Every day, people read hundreds and hundreds of pages of things that interest them.

Consider the daily paper. For some people the sports section is too long—they won't read it. For others it is too short. They not only devour the whole section, but read *Sports Illustrated* too! Still others read only the scores of last night's game because that's all they're interested in. Each reads as much as they want and no more.

Remember, people will read *War and Peace* if it captures their interest. Why wouldn't they read your report?

Here's what actually happens when your contacts receive the Executive Report. They read the report's title; within five seconds they decide whether it's of interest or not; if it is, they either begin reading it or they put it in a get-around-to-it pile. [Notice… They *don't* treat it like a resume – it's more valuable.]. Whether they read it right away or later, whether they ever finish it or not, or whether they read a couple pages and then skip to the back, doesn't matter. The impression that "you know what you're talking about" is firmly set in those five seconds. So you see, it doesn't make any difference how long it is.

Make the Executive Report as long as you need for providing interesting information. An Executive Report is only as long or as short as the reader's interest makes it. By that standard, how long is your current (boring) résumé?

This Executive Report of his is not copyrighted. You may copy and distribute it to your heart's content as long as you acknowledge Mr. Chapman as the author by including the footer information and this About the Author section. Jack is also the author of his own Executive

Report used as an "advertorial" to generate career consulting and outplacement business, entitled, "Twelve Biggest Mistakes Job-Hunters and Career-Changers Make and How to Avoid Them." He's happy to share that with you if you think it would be helpful in your own personal marketing efforts.

Jack welcomes opportunities to discuss the ideas in this Executive Report and other aspects of career advising. You can contact him by calling (847) 251-4727 or <jkchapman@aol.com>

P.S. Reader, please take note: To evaluate the effectiveness of an Executive Report, reflect on your reactions to this one. The author acknowledges that it is not in the P.I.Q. format, nor about the "basics" except as "Résumés are usually boring" is a basic concept. Still, it is an Executive Report designed both to inform and also to give you some sense of the author. Answer these questions:

- Although Jack's résumé is not in front of you, how well positioned is he in your mind as an accomplished Career Advisor?
- Do you think this Executive Report works as well as, or better than, a résumé?
- A résumé is one or two pages. This is a dozen-plus pages. Was it too long?
- If it was too long, did you skip to the back to read this?
- Did it make a favorable impression on you even if you didn't read it all?

I hope you enjoyed and profited from this Executive Report. —Jack

International
Career
Development
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Exploration of the Emotional Avenues of Career Change

Robert C. Chope, Ph.D.
San Francisco State University

Introduction

As I've pointed out earlier (Chope, 2000) emotions color the job search, job change and job placement process every step of the way, often blocking individual effectiveness. Emotions always have. But, in today's economy, "dot coms" have become "dot bombs" turning to "dot compost." Many unemployed job seekers look to the "not coms" for their future. Ominous newspaper headlines share gloomy reports: unemployment is up, webvan and wine.com are gone, prestigious companies like Goldman Sachs invested poorly. And Compaq merges with Hewlett Packard marking a potential layoff of 15,000 workers.

The emotional fallout from rapid, dramatic job market changes like these can severely and adversely affect the job search and job change process. It can cause inappropriate, precipitous emotional reactions that can block a job seeker's effectiveness at different times and stages of each job search.

This paper will demonstrate how individuals can find their way during emotionally difficult, uncertain times. It begins with an update on the new paradigmatic shifts that are taking place in the career world that make emotional balance more essential than ever. Then, there are some examples of counterproductive beliefs that develop during a difficult job search. Finally, the paper advocates the understanding of the importance of one's career identity in eliminating negative emotional reactions like self doubt, fear, rage, anxiety, and depression.

The material should assist business and career consultants to become sensitive to the emotional issues of the job search process. Career counselors will be offered strategies to assist clients with defining and utilizing their "career identity" while helping job changers discover their own adverse emotional reactions and counterproductive career beliefs.

Paradigmatic Career Shifts resulting from the New Economy

Last year, at the 17th California Career Conference, I pointed to nine major paradigmatic shifts that have taken place in the past few years that have not only affected how many workers feel about their jobs but have confronted the foundations of traditional theories of career and life planning. The following briefly describes those shifts and adds eight new ones to the list. Each of these affects the work of the career counselor and coach.

1. Millions of new jobs with new titles are now developed over the short term. An unpublished report released by Anderson Consulting in 2000 predicted that 10 million people will be in

internet related jobs by the year 2002. That contrasts that with the 2.6 million workers in internet related jobs in 1998. With the dot com downturn, that may not be as accurate as once was thought. But if you add the telecom industry to the mix, the 10 million may be seen as even conservative.

2. Job searchers are now using the internet in astounding numbers. There are thousands of currently available career web sites. Individuals search, post resumes, apply for positions, and can even be interviewed on the internet. The traditional face-to-face interview is giving way to new corporate interview strategies whereby potential employees are invited to a central location where they enter a kiosk with a computer screen and respond to interview questions given forth by a "talking head." For many, this will be frightening. Career counselors will need to be practiced in advising clients how to partake in this new process.

Curiously, the internet has become a quietly effective social psychological equalizer. On the internet everything is free from age discrimination, ethnicity, social status, and religious affiliation. When potential employees send e-mails, the quality of the application, resume, and answers to e-questions are the variables that are evaluated.

3. People are tethered to their jobs and some families go so far as to suggest that they are "shipwrecked" by the new technology. The "at home" availability of broadband, fax machines, cell phones, laptops, and pagers have created a blur between work time and non work time and a gray line between work and home. More than a few stories are unceremoniously suggesting that work in the new economy is never finished.

New workaholic behavior has demonstrated a lack of balance that many people share. Ironically, one of the silver lining benefits of the slowing of the new economy has been the increase in the amount of time that aggressive workers have been willing to put into their families and relationships.

4. Work has become the "new neighborhood." We work at home and relax at work with our friends and colleagues. Some companies like the Ford Motor Company even approved of workers blending some personal issues like making childcare arrangements and phoning for doctor's appointments as they blend the work place and the home life.

Now, to be sure, this appears to be changing in 2001. Workers are going on the chopping block and screaming, "there goes the neighborhood." Workers who are left, are upset and bitter because they may need to work harder and more efficiently. And they miss their old neighbors.

5. The willingness to take risks on the job continues to be an important credential in the new economy, as companies struggle to stay competitive. Further, "failure" such as job loss or outplacement has also become an odd new credential as companies seek competitive intelligence from rivals or new upstarts who have failed. There's a premium in knowing what should not be done; workers from failed concerns have that knowledge and can assist with competitive intelligence.

6. Whether young or old, the entrepreneur continues to have a power base. Independent work has become the subject of a surge in development. 15% of today's work force now files a Form C with their yearly income tax return. College students spend some of their networking and term time work efforts in developing their own products or small businesses. Ivy league colleges are perceived as breeding grounds for new entrepreneurs and CEOs.

The new buzz word these days is that girls don't "wanna" just have fun, they "wanna" have their own businesses. A survey by Arthur Anderson suggested that only 50 percent of teen girls wanted a career in a large corporation. Rather, they want independence.

7. Reputation today may be more important than making money. Many workers want to establish a solid new reputation for themselves, where they can be characterized as visionaries. The proliferation of new computer hackers illustrates the point. As they develop their own reputations, they are also redefining success in the new economy. Reputation, not income, is their trophy.

8. With the rapidly changing economy, the tasks individuals are hired for may not necessarily be what they end up doing. Workers need a new flexibility. They need a willingness to upgrade skills through continuing education, modeling, mentoring and on the job training. While technological savvy and knowledge are important, adaptability may be the most important characteristic of the new worker. Counselors must help them with this.

The work place has become an avenue to new learning and the purveyor of continuing education. The most prosperous workers will be those who can" learn how to learn" and then apply what they've learned in imaginative ways.

9. Today's clients seem to want to work less, retire earlier, and engage in different activities which do not demand earning potential. People profess an interest in entering politics, volunteering, or serving as community agency advocates after they make their "killing" with a new IPO.

This exemplifies the "in and out" experiences of the new economy. People now go in and out of work, in and out of school, in and out of retirement, in and out of poverty, in and out of cohabitation, in and out of caregiving. Planning is more demanding than ever. Life does not seem to move in well defined stages.

10. Job changers may be shifting their companies more frequently than before, in good times and bad. But those who are shifting tend to be hired for projects as full time, but temporary employees. We've become a project driven economy. Employees are akin to external suppliers and vendors.

In California, in particular in the Silicon Valley, new employees were drawn to the soaring internet, biotech, and communications companies. Like the "49ers" and the "Oakies" before them, workers were willing to pack up and transplant themselves to find a dreamy pre IPO company. Many were sorely disappointed when venture capital funding dried up. Others were infuriated when "let go" prior to their stock options vesting. The disappointed workers may have more trouble finding new employment; they're also becoming wary of receiving their promised compensation rights. Many are legally let go "at will" under Labor Code section 2922 which allows an employer to release an employee "with no notice and no reason."

Today's workers want a fair deal. That's the motivator. They want to feel valued and that they can have cordial relationships with their immediate bosses.

11. The new worker wants alternative scheduling, greater autonomy, more recognition, flex time, telecommuting time, health benefits for domestic partners, day care and little interference. The new manager wants to hire on the basis of the honesty and integrity of the employee first. And managers want motivated, passionate employees who understand the impact the company can have in the new economy.

To prevent burnout, older workers and baby boomers are finding ways to limit overworking and are instead becoming more planful and less reactive. They want to impact the world through their work but also with their families as well. And as they prepare for the empty nest, they want to make sure that their primary relationships are in tact.

12. The new catch phrase describing the young modern worker is that they are "lean and meaningful." With the prestige of Covey's "seven habits", a new social movement has entered the work place. Individual workers as well as their employers are bringing spirituality into the office complex. Consultants willingly address work place spirituality directly and, furthermore, there are now approximately 80 new books on the subject. Companies may offer time for community service (pro bono work), office space for spiritual meetings at work, and even time off for far ranging spiritual treks to wilderness areas and religious holy sites.

13. Organizational structures have become less hierarchical and more like a matrix. Career tracks move vertically, horizontally, in lines and in spirals. With this organizations will respond better to employees who want alternative work schedules and a greater degree of time and energy flexibility on the part of their employers.

14. The availability of the internet and the worries about the economy have led to a new type of career search called the "never ending passive job hunt." Monster.com as of this writing has over 12 million resumes on line. Job seekers keep the bait out, even when they're happy with their current job. Career counselors can take advantage of this fact with new models like Jane Goodman's "Dental Model."

15. New workers will require more due diligence before signing up with a new company. Job seekers will not only want to know how a company is performing now but how it will be performing in six months to a year from now. They will want to know what visions the investors and executive chiefs have for the company. Are the leaders trying to grow the business or sell it?

16. Todays workers may need to plan more for corporate down time. Charles Schwab has asked thousands of executives to take some time off without pay. New workers may need to plan differently.

17. Many workers, especially those with computer "know how" will remain in demand. What they will need to adjust is a lack of loyalty in the corporation. But then, many of these workers, genxers and nexters, weren't thought to be loyal in the first place.

These are major paradigmatic shifts that all career counselors, coaches, and job changers will need to attend to. But in the meantime, the shifts are eliciting a variety of negative emotional reactions.

Counterproductive Mind Sets

The rapidly changing career world and the paradigmatic shifts noted above have led to a series of potentially vexing counterproductive mind sets. Among them are feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, overwhelmingnesss, and low self esteem.

Over the years, many career counselors have felt more comfortable referring these issues to others in the mental health professions rather than rightfully assuming that this material is the bailiwick of the career counselor. Below are seven examples of the beliefs that I have thought (Chope 2000) career counselors could help clients to confront.

"My career search is a hopeless, oppressive endeavor." This seems to be a common complaint. Job seekers become paralyzed and are unable to engage in meaningful job search activities. Counselors can help clients to understand how they developed this mind set. They need to have clients give them the evidence their circumstances are hopeless. Counselors using cognitive behavioral techniques can switch roles and argue that there really is no hope while they force their clients to find areas to disagree with them.

"I'm helpless, who would hire me?" Counselors have heard this argument before but still may not assist the client in confronting it. Clients can confront this belief by partaking of one productive activity each day. Further, clients should keep a record of those activities to confront the helplessness belief. Clients can also be encouraged to try new activities that appear to be unrelated to the search. Improving eating habits, losing weight, or exercising may be suggestions to confront helplessness. Volunteering at a service club, hospital, or library may also help and these activities will serve to further cultivate the clients's network.

"I can't start at the bottom again." Job searchers need to be able to focus upon what they're going to contribute, not where they're going to start. Job changers should frame themselves as innovators. With this attitude, the changer will not be focused upon position but rather upon problem solving.

"I'll never get work." Clients tend to make the job search process a game that is either won or lost, evaluated with an all or nothing outcome. Counselors should encourage their clients to evaluate the change process. During the search, clients tend to learn more about themselves than at any other time. This is the experience they should take account of.

"I need to be certain about my search techniques." Clients need to recognize that there are no certainties in the career change process. What may emerge as the strongest asset that a client develops is the capacity to change and to be flexible, creative, fluid, and less rigid. Real learning can take place when change is embraced. There will be a new vision and a willingness to not accept things as they are.

"I feel as if I failed." Failure is almost always a part of every career search. Most are looking for a new job because they lost the one they had or there were reasons for them to make a change. To address these feelings, clients can be taught to break heir search into controllable activities, much like learning any other new activity. Most successes have come about after significant failures. Failing is simply a part of moving forward.

"I feel worthless." During the job search it's important for clients to not evaluate their self worth with other kinds of worth. Counselors can encourage clients to separate their value as a human being from their net worth . Counselors can also help clients to take a complete inventory of themselves, including a host of attributes that they probably have not considered.

By confronting counterproductive beliefs like these, career counselors can inculcate a new sense of hope in the client. A good career counselor will always and forever have one more good idea that can be a part of the change process. And while they inculcate hope, they can also help clients confront their own feelings of helplessness.

Career professionals can assist those who feel overwhelmed. Overwhelmingness can be addressed by giving up the idea of trying to accomplish every career related task at once. Clients can be taught to handle activities related to their search one step at a time. Activities can be broken into their lowest common denominator and addressed as a series of simple, discrete steps. Small changes eventually lead to larger changes. Appropriate goals can be set while avoiding the tendency to seek perfection.

There is the unfortunate tendency for career clients to undervalue their potential. The new career terrain has made many feel like they can't compete or that they will join the "wrong" firm. In order for clients to make appropriate decisions and avoid the dot bomb, they're going to have to learn a new style of research and study. They will need to screen companies, their corporate revenues, and their boards of directors. They will also need to explore and evaluate any new product or service and determine through due diligence and networking whether it appears to be something worthwhile. Curiously, they will need to learn to not jump at the first opportunity that they are offered.

With this new kind of model building, clients will experience fewer fears. These new learning strategies will address their fears of failure while preparing them for better positions in the future. While these are certainly strategies that can help career clients wade through the murkier parts of the new landscape, perhaps the two most important components to address are the establishment of the career identity and the development of the portfolio career.

Career Identity and the Portfolio Career

Two very powerful means of confronting the current job market and the emotional reactions to the job search are in the establishment of the client's career identity and the development of a portfolio career for the client.

The career identity is a somewhat complex concept that is focused upon an individual's calling. Career identity is the "kernel of all that you hope to become...the nucleus of work place confidence" (Chope 2000). It represents the accrual of experience, skills, interests, values and personal characteristics. But most people can't define who they are in the work world. If they were suddenly stopped with video camera rolling and asked to say in thirty seconds who they are in the work world, most could not.

But a strong, focused career identity, the capacity to define who you are in today's economy is empowering. A well articulated career identity can assist is preserving both interest and excitement in pursuing work in the new economy.

It can be a most interesting exercise to have clients discover their career identity. I suggest seven different approaches to the process. In sum, the equation that emerges gives a sense of purpose to a job seeker's immediate task. Knowing one's own career identity is perhaps the strongest defense against inappropriate emotional reactions during the job search process.

The following techniques can help in understanding a person's career identity:

1. Create a thirty second advertising sound bite describing who you are in the work world. This can be used to describe oneself to potential employers but can also be used to identify who you are to those who are best able to help you. After developing the sound bite, practice it so that it flows with distinction and comfort as it is passed on to others.

2. Clearly name the position you are looking for. This naming of the position ensures that you have researched the job market through resources like the web and can easily identify the kind of work that is suitable. This is the application of the identity to a specific career position.

3. Create a career genogram. The career genogram is like a family tree that shows you how and where career choice fits into the family system. It can aid in developing the career identity because it can be used to understand the origins of family expectations and judgments about careers, as well as the family's definition of success. It can help job seekers note the congruence between their expectations and those of their family. It can also suggest how the different patterns of career choice within the family have affected the choices that the job seeker has made.

4. Career identity can also be understood by determining how it was shaped through different critical life events. Using a life stage developmental approach, job seekers can examine the particular driving and restraining forces that have had an impact in developing a career identity. Within this same exercise, it is possible to explore different types of life fantasies that affected the fledgling career identity.

Fantasized careers can often resemble the idealized self. The narrower the chasm between the idealized self and the real self, the greater the possibility of experiencing both career and personal satisfaction.

5. Career identity can also be discovered through the use of the career as a developing story, sometimes referred to as the narrative approach. Basically, this approach consists of writing or tape recording your career journey as an interesting novella. The career as a story can be useful in helping a job seeker define aspirations and interests. It can also be edited and rewritten, much like a journal. And, if need be, you can write the idealized ending.

6. A study of leisure activities can serve to understand a career identity. What people love to do, they often do in their leisure time. This material can help with career exploration.

7. Finally, career identity can be explored by asking a simple question. What would you do if you won a seven million dollar lottery? Expectations of yourself, what you want to do and who you want to do it with are all wrapped up in the answer to this question.

The seven exercises that help to establish the career identity can be used in different ways during the search to eliminate self doubt, manage rage and anger, and overcome career barriers. But another component of a good career search can emerge from the career identity. This is the conceptualization and development of the portfolio career.

The portfolio career has been characterized as a composite career consisting of more than one income stream. In truth, people have had these for years. For example, people with day shift jobs may also "moonlight" from time to time. Students may work several different jobs while also attending classes in high school and college.

Developing a portfolio career allows individuals to become more flexible and less fearful in the job market. In a project driven economy they can work several projects at once.

Psychologists, for example, who have developed portfolio careers have been able to avoid some of the hassles that have resulted from the impact of the managed care industry. To illustrate, some psychologists have one income stream from practice, then add another by teaching. They may also have a third stream in executive coaching and consultation. A fourth may develop from writing while a fifth may emerge from public speaking or the delivery of keynote addresses.

As this illustrates, a portfolio career model allows for the increased security of employment. There is greater diversification, greater flexibility and a direct confrontation of anxiety and self doubt through the pinpointing of clearly identifiable market niches.

Summary and Conclusions

This paper attempts to demonstrate how emotional reactions to the job search, especially in the new economy, can adversely influence an individual's effectiveness. The paper further suggests that career counselors and coaches can assist clients with some of the emotional aspects of the job search without referring these people to other mental health professionals.

There are new paradigmatic shifts in the career world that can have the impact of eliciting inappropriate emotional responses. Some of these major shifts are noted herein. Only by addressing the emotional barriers of the career search will people be able to be employed in the jobs they want.

A discussion of some of the emotional reactions that individuals have in the career search resulted in offering two remedies for assisting people to break through their emotional barriers. One method is the development of the career identity. The second is the establishment of the portfolio career to adjust to the new economy.

As demonstrated, therefore, career counselors need to feel that some of the emotional issues of their clients can be handled by them rather than referring them out to others. I hope this paper is a step in assisting them in that direction.

Reference

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Surviving or Thriving?

Diana Crist
Becky Durham
University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN

Career professionals deal with clients on a daily basis who are coping with organizational changes that often leave them feeling surprised and out-of-control. Change can be stressful, but can also provide us with growth and renewal if we can deal with the emotional discomfort and identify potential opportunities in the process. There is always some choice during the change process, but individuals must be open in order to envision possibilities. It is dangerous to judge change based on our fear of loss and doing so prevents us from experiencing what might be gained. By looking at the possibilities during the time of change one can see the opportunity to thrive, not just survive!

Discussing different perspectives on the transition process is helpful for clients we serve. Career development professionals may also benefit from thinking about the way change affects their professional and personal lives. The business world often changes at a more rapid rate than non-profit or educational settings. However, few of us are not affected in some way by today's evolutionary work world. When transition does knock either by choice or necessity we want to thrive and not merely survive. Hopefully, the following discussion will provide helpful insights into how to process and move through change.

Following is a case study that begins an experiential exercise and discussion about managing workplace change. Put yourself in this situation as you read. Following the case there will be questions to answer.

Case Study

Between 1990 and 1998 the staff of a centralized career services department at a private liberal arts university had experienced stability and a positive working environment. The career staff consisted of seven professional members and five support staff that felt valued and respected as professionals.

Unexpectedly, in the late summer of '98 the well-respected director of Career Services gave a two-week notice that he was leaving the university. An internal staff member in Student Affairs with additional full-time responsibilities was appointed interim director. He held a strong background in personal counseling and some experience in the career field. The director's work was redistributed amongst all staff members for the year and basic services were maintained. Tentative plans were made to do a national search in the spring of '99. Career staff members were asked to review and rewrite the director's job description. They completed this task, including mapping out a plan for a hiring timeline, suggesting publication recommendations for advertising, and researching upcoming conference placement centers for recruitment.

Simultaneously, the university was expanding to another geographic location. Career staff members were told that they would need to provide a minimum of 40 hours of staffing for that site. The staff made recommendations on ways to get the work accomplished while maintaining the existing organizational structure. Those recommendations were not accepted and in the summer of '99 three full-time career staff members were relocated to another campus location. The interim, acting director was also assigned additional duties to oversee the development of the new center. Staff members disagreed with the decision, but there was no recourse. Messages were mixed and unclear regarding direction and organizational structure. Staff was described in diagnostic and negative terms. Staff felt their work was criticized unfairly and office moral was low. The office that once had twelve employees was reduced to a staff of four due to reorganization and job changes.

In the spring of '99 an assistant director's position was created. An internal career staff member was appointed into this position. There continued to be no word on the candidate search process for the director position. The following year brought heightened tension regarding lack of staffing, unclear communication regarding direction, and lack of a solid organizational structure for the department. Spring 2000 once again brought changes for the staff. The interim director was moved into a full-time position in the new campus location while the assistant director was assigned to acting director. Two new staff positions were approved. An Employer Relations Specialist and Technical Support Specialist were hired late in the year.

Technology advancements were a positive focus for some team members during the transition phase. A comprehensive web site was developed. Software packages were purchased and implemented to electronically streamline career development resources and on-campus interviewing.

Questions

What is the main issue that needs to be addressed in the case study?

How would you feel as a staff member?

What information would you want in order to manage this situation?

Where would you put your energy in this situation?

What framework would you put into place to manage this situation?

How did you arrive at your answer to the previous question?

The case study is a short summary of what our Career Services Office did experience. There were some very positive outcomes and most staff members successfully adapted to changing roles. We've learned from our transition and can use that knowledge to the benefit of those we serve.

The case study and questions provide an experiential framework for participants to identify their strengths and preferred approach to this type of change. It is an opportunity to utilize an individual's expertise and personalize the process. As in narrative career counseling, we aren't looking at an assessment to validate our direction. Models and theories can provide a useful framework to use as tools throughout the change process.

William Bridges' stages of transition were helpful as our office moved through several changes. In his book, *Transitions*, he describes three parts to any transition: endings, the neutral zone and beginnings. The model states that we need to experience all stages if we are to truly experience transition. When we introduced the Bridges' model at a staff meeting it created the space for staff members to openly share their remorse for the changes they were experiencing. It became clear that we were not all at the same point in the change process. Some staff members were ready to explore new possibilities while others were grieving and angry. The model gave us common ground to communicate and permission to be at different points. This was probably the beginning of the healing we so badly needed. We needed the endings, but first had to acknowledge common, as well as individual losses.

It was difficult for our office to let go of relationships and the ways we had worked because were extremely successful in previous years. The history of the center and staff members that had played significant roles deserved respect. One thing we did to move from endings into new beginnings was to videotape and watch interviews with past directors. This helped us pause and acknowledge the past. The messages they shared about the creation and development of the center clarified for the staff the importance of the work being done. It also allowed us to identify common and valued themes that others had begun and we chose to continue.

There was a lot of work to be done in our office during our transition. We hung on to the services that were basic and focused on our students. We tried some new things like a "Career Expo" for our students. A couple of the staff members put energy into developing technology for the department because we determined that was a priority. The use of technology could provide some of the resource sharing services to alleviate high demand for counselor appointment times. Some work fell by the wayside like maintenance of our Career Resource Center. It was a conscious decision that we could drop that area for a year. All of the staff had to be engaged or the work would not have gotten done. We worked hard. Some of the transitional structure stayed in place and some of it was discontinued. There wasn't clarity as to when we were in the beginning or when we were ending something. People tried things out of their comfort zone. Staff knew each other well and liked one another, which smoothed the path for a part of the transition. We laughed together and stayed respectful under stress.

*Myers-Briggs Type*s played out during the transition process. Some staff members were off to the next phase, while others held back questioning the motives and reasons for change. There were also the people who kept the day-to-day business going, making sure nothing fell between the cracks. Others were more reflective in the process and took time to stand back and assess the situation. Types gave our group common language to recognize and discuss differences without it becoming personally charged. As noted in the opening paragraph, a time a change often brings stress. Stress is one of the four factors that causes us to fall into the grip of one's inferior function as noted in, *In the Grip: Our Hidden Personality.* When stress occurs it drains our conscious energy resources and then unconscious parts of one's personality become energized to take over. We had used *MBTI Type* dynamics for each staff member previously, but this shed a new light on using type during a time of change and stress. With the use of the *In the Grip* resource we were able to identify what our triggers were for provoking the inferior function, how our own type manifests when in the unconscious, and ways of returning to equilibrium. It became easier to understand why behaviors or reactions were occurring for individuals or as a group that we had not previously seen or experienced through the good years.

Models and theories gave our staff a context for change, provided some new ideas and normalized experiences. We were trying to find equilibrium when it felt like there was nothing to hang on to. Real change is a very personal and individual process. It's not easy. Some people jump into new things, while others crawl. Growing into it is perhaps the easiest way and yet we may have to leap if it is in our best interest. With luck we get a little help form friends, maybe some valuable input from professionals, read a good book, or try things in a new way that moves us forward. Life experience helps. Time helps.

As professionals we have skills and theories when is comes to facilitating change. However, this is always more difficult when it is a personal situation. Like so many clients, our staff was experiencing changes in their work life and their personal lives. Outside of work there were things happening like; difficult health issues, divorce, dogs dying, turning 40 and 50, aging parent's issues and numerous child-rearing events. Work cultures have different levels of tolerance for our personal lives especially during times of transition. We maintained support for the personal lives of staff members during our change because of a strong value system in place.

Most people hope to thrive. Focusing on what we really want out of life is a huge part of thriving and maybe the most complicated. Often times we aren't sure what we want. Sometimes it changes without our being conscious of it. If we know what we really want, we can sort through all the information coming at us during transition and determine if possibilities exist to get what we want in the given situation or not. The majority of staff members stayed through the transition, but a couple did leave because they were dissatisfied with what had happened. Some who stayed will always think of the past as better than now.

People beginning careers in or out of educational institutions are often wonderfully idealist about their professions and how the world works in general. Hopefully, we maintain at least a portion of our idealism and hope for better things. We also learn that there are many good agendas for accomplishing work and various methods available to meet our intended goals. Whether we agree with them or not there are many different ways of serving student and client needs. When we're in the throws of transition some of these different ways of working may clash, but this can be a growth point when we may feel forced out of the box.

The last few years there has been discussion that the typical career assessments that served us so well no longer fit for many students and clients we serve. They come to us with such a wide variety of experiences and backgrounds and so much diversity that it is more helpful to make the client the expert. Career counselors might better serve clients in transition by exploring their world through a story approach (Brott, 2001). This approach involves the client and counselor in a collaborative relationship to create and reconstruct career and life stories. Our career services office successfully reconstructed our work story to fit a changing university and environment.

I recently worked with a female sophomore student who was under great stress about choosing a major. She was definitely in a much more difficult spot than the majority of her peers. I wondered why. The only hints I got were that she was a high achiever and that success had come easily to her. She was looking for the "right" answer and a guarantee that she would be happy while pursuing her major and get a good job after graduating. Her hope was that someone would tell her what to do. At one point I experienced her anger because I wouldn't meet her expectation. We sat with her anger awhile. The basis was fear of the unknown. We discussed that. This felt like the most important decision she had ever made and she was very afraid she would blow it.

Students are experiencing transition on many levels. Living conditions sometimes change annually, values and ideas are change, friends change, family relationships change, part-time jobs change, classes change, economies change and schedules change. Education costs a lot and the stakes are high. Students live in an in between world that lasts four or five years. Time is spent studying and preparing for the big transition into the world of work. They are becoming adult and responsible for making life decisions which they hope will work for them long term. They hope to thrive. The ambiguity and uncertainty can be uncomfortable.

There are few guarantees but one of them is that we will all experience change in our life times. Each of us can benefit from gaining understanding of the transition process. We can learn to manage change and look beyond merely surviving. As we become more comfortable with the process and more knowledgeable of our own transition style, we will have more to offer our students and clients.

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Integrating Psychology and Spirituality During Career Exploration

Anne Greenblatt
Paul Greenblatt

Psychosynthesis provides a coherent theory for framing the self assessment and career exploration process, and helps clients understand and honor their conflicting needs and desires, develop their connections to intuitive wisdom, and actively respond to calls that draw them toward more authentic worklives.

For the past five years, we have worked to integrate the theory and techniques of Psychosynthesis, which we studied in a 5-year formal training program, into our work as career counselors in private practice. This paper presents an overview of the aspects of Psychosynthesis theory and practice that we have found most relevant and useful in our work with clients in both individual sessions and groups, as they crystallize their visions and translate them into reality.

Psychosynthesis is an approach to personal growth that integrates psychology and spirituality. First set forth in 1910 by Italian psychiatrist Roberto Assagioli, it involves a conscious attempt to cooperate with the natural process of human development – the tendency in each of us to harmonize and synthesize the aspects of our lives at ever higher levels of organization. Assagioli noticed that a great deal of psychological pain, imbalance, and meaninglessness are felt when diverse inner elements exist unconnected side by side or antagonistically within us. He also observed, however, that when they work synergistically, we experience a release of energy, a sense of well-being, and a greater depth of meaning to our lives (Ferrucci, p. 22). He also observed that this process is often blocked, and developed Psychosynthesis as a process for clarifying the internal elements which may be in conflict, and facilitating our conscious acceptance and synthesis – the individuation process.
The conceptual framework and techniques of Psychosynthesis allow us to guide clients in moving away from the distractions of everyday reality into a more sacred frame of mind, to listen and respond to "callings" from their inner wisdom, from that which is greater than themselves. Specifically, we have found it useful in helping clients address three questions:

- How do I listen to my inner wisdom, and recognize a "calling?"
- How do I distinguish it from other messages from voices, both internal and external?
- How do I handle internal and external obstacles?

In Psychosynthesis, the counselor's role is that of a guide who follows the client's inner wisdom. This is the basis for respecting and clarifying the boundaries between career counseling and psychotherapy. This approach has been especially useful for people who already have some exposure to guided imagery work, although this is not necessary. It is not appropriate for clients experiencing severe depression or personality disorders. We have used these techniques in one-on-one sessions with a wide range of clients, and in workshops with 6-10 participants. The approach can be very effective for clients who are concurrently seeing a therapist with whom they share their exercises, but few of our clients have been in this situation.

Psychosynthesis involves four important concepts especially relevant to career counseling:

1) We have multiple voices within, or *sub-personalities*, which represent different facets of our personalities, and can often give us habitual or conflicting messages. Each sub-personality has a style and motivation of its own, within the overall medium of our personalities. For example, my high-achieving sub-personality might urge me to work overtime to finish a project and make a great impression in the meeting the next day. My nurturing sub-personality might urge me to leave work at 4:30 PM to play soccer with my child. This multiplicity within can usually be recognized if we recall the ease with which our outlooks can change – the world may appear full of promise and adventure one day, and the next, a dull treadmill or even a nightmare. Psychosynthesis involves honoring and listening to all parts of ourselves.

2) The personal self, or identity (called "I") – the one who observes and responds. According to Ferrucci (p. 61), the self is the only part of us which remains forever the same. The personal self is the one who can step outside one's different sub-personalities and observe them. This process is called "dis-identification," and is central to Psychosynthesis. It refers to the tendency we all have to identify with – or become one with – our dominant sub-personalities. We can believe we *are* a sub-personality when it is activated. Dis-identification returns us to our true self, our core individuality. Our conscious awareness of self makes it possible for us to love, to be aware of past and future, to plan and be conscious of our own evolution, and to develop a relationship with something greater than ourselves.

3) The transpersonal Self is a presence or power greater than oneself. The Self lives at the level of universality, and each of us may conceive of this in different ways, with different names. As counselors, we carefully attune to each client's language and sense of Self, and use that language where it feels appropriate. If it is not apparent, we use phrases such as "intuitive wisdom" to point toward this larger presence. The personal self is a reflection of the transpersonal Self. The conscious experience of relationship between I and Self is the experience of being "called" to something larger than oneself. This is the classic meaning of the word "vocation," an age-old phrase referring to a religious calling. However, calls from the Self can also be held as calls to a more authentic way of life, fulfilling the destiny that James Hillman refers to as "the soul's code" — the invisible mystery at the center of every life that speaks to the fundamental question "What is it, in my heart, that I must do, be, and have? And why? " (Hillman)

4) A unifying center is a thing or person through which transpersonal Self reaches toward the individual self. As children, anyone who can see us for who we truly *are* (a parent, teacher, neighbor, etc.) can serve as a unifying center. A unifying center could also be a place in nature or a pet. As we mature, developing a unifying center which is internal brings a more certain sense of one's own center and inner wisdom. As career counselors, we often serve as external unifying centers for our clients, since the empathic

relationship between client and counselor is vitally important. However, as counselors our goal is to support the client in strengthening their own internal unifying center, with the counselor facilitating the relationships between sub-personalities, individual self, and transpersonal Self.

Work with clients using Psychosynthesis involves progression through four stages of development, which may not be sequential. Much of our work involves use of the client's active imagination to focus inward and get in touch with a "felt sense." This ability to engage active imagination takes practice, and one way we begin is to ask them to close their eyes, or allow them to move into soft focus on the floor, relax, and imagine holding a lemon. "Notice how it feels in your hand, how it looks, its texture and color. Squeeze it gently and smell the lemon oil. Imagine cutting it open and tasting it.... When you're ready, return to the room and open your eyes." The ability to step into active imagination, ask questions, and listen for responses is vitally important and seems to be possible for most people, when done carefully and with respect for their experiences. Taking time to write or draw experiences from guided visualization before talking helps the client process the experience

Stage One

This stage involves gaining a thorough knowledge of one's personality and the multiplicity of voices, or sub-personalities, within. This means turning inward to listen to, identify, and accept them. In career counseling, we usually ask the client in a guided visualization to attend to "those voices within you which have something to say about your worklife."

Common techniques include recalling dreams, creating a collage of parts of oneself, writing an autobiography, or constructing a lifeline. A simple technique can involve asking the clients to close their eyes, imagine a quiet place in which they feel completely themselves, and to ask for the parts of them selves that have something to say about their worklives to be with them. Invite them to notice each part carefully, what it is saying, how it looks and acts. Ask them to check for parts that may be in the shadows. Then ask the clients to open their eyes and draw themselves and each part, or sub-personality. We usually give clients a small box of crayons for drawing, explaining that this drawing is not about fine art, but a way to gain a window to their inner world. Crayons remind most of us of our childhoods and elicit less self-consciousness about our artistic abilities. After the client describes each part, we may ask "What does this part want?" "What does it need?" "What positive quality does it bring to your life?"

All sub-personalities are expressions of vital elements of our being and our hidden potential, however negative they may seem at first. Taking actions in our lives which are intended to meet the needs of a sub-personality lets them know you are taking them seriously, and builds trust. For example, a client with a strong need to be appreciated by a critical supervisor can begin to find ways to give himself this appreciation, or perhaps ask for it in a different way, as in positive feedback in a performance review, that might work better with the supervisor's style.

Deeper work with sub-personalities can point toward unresolved childhood wounds, which tends to move into a therapeutic direction and suggests referral to a psychotherapist. Since the client leads the process and goes to the level that feels appropriate within the career counselor-client relationship, and with the guidance of the client's intuitive wisdom, we have found this boundary to be clear-cut.

Stage Two

The second stage involves dis-identifying, stepping back from the parts of our personality into our sense of "I am," distinct from these parts, or sub-personalities. When we can identify with this witnessing core, or self, we are less likely to be pulled around by parts of ourselves, or driven primarily by a dominant part. Techniques in this stage involve discussing the witnessing self, and using guided imagery to evoke it. One guided visualization exercise involves imagining one sub-personality with something to say about a particular issue on the client's right. Ask them to step into that part and notice how it feels...what it needs. Then suggest stepping back into "self" and notice how that feels. Do the same for another part that may be in conflict with that part, on their left. Then again ask clients to step back into "self" and notice how each part appears now. Ask what each has to say to the other, and then listen. Conclude by asking them to "notice anything else that needs to happen between the three of you, before taking your leave, knowing you can return anytime." This exercise tends to work best when clients physically assumes the position of each sub-personality.

Stage Three

This stage involves connecting to our inner wisdom, or deeper Self. We begin to engage in a dialogue with Self, and become aware of Self calling us in a direction or pulling us upward to resolve and transcend conflict or roadblocks within. We often ask clients to close their eyes and imagine the wisest, most loving being or figure of wisdom they can. This can be a real person or imagined being. We then suggest that they ask this Wise Being a question about the issue or conflict they are addressing, and then silently listen for any kind of response - verbal, a "felt sense," an image, whatever happens is fine. Other techniques to access this inner wisdom can include prayer or meditation, encouraging the client to design a ritual or build an altar, working with dreams, and journal writing. Important questions to suggest are: "How do I wish this situation to be?" "What am I called to express in the world?" An equally important question is "What's in the way of my doing this?" After taking time to engage with the roadblock, or fearful sub-personality that appears, ask the Wise Being for guidance, or perhaps suggest asking "What do I need to develop in myself to move past this?"

Stage Four

Stage four involves learning to honor and respond to calls of the Self. This includes developing the will to take action. Asking clients to ground the work you have done together is vitally important. Useful questions are: "What would your life be like if this vision took shape?" "What can you do in the next two weeks to explore this idea (or to make more space in your life for this part of you)?"

It takes time to discern the true voice of the higher Self, to perceive the larger patterns of our lives, and understand what we need to do to live more authentic lives, and help our spirits grow. Supporting clients to develop their own simple rituals or practices which can connect them to transpersonal Self over time is vitally important.

We have found that growth happens not only during the self assessment phase but often more intensively during the career exploration phase, as we support clients to pursue their vision, listen deeply to themselves and to others, address obstacles, and take action. More linear approaches to problem-solving and goal-setting definitely have their place in the career exploration phase. However, we have found that using Psychosynthesis concepts and techniques to facilitate clients in attending to their inner world, facing inner obstacles, and attuning to their inner wisdom, facilitates their growth into new areas. They learn to distinguish calls from the Self from the conflicting, habitual voices of their inner sub-personalities, they can respond from their true self, which will take them into new territory exploring the world of work and their evolving place in it.

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Creating Career Kaleidoscopes

Liz Harris-Tuck, MA
Annette Price, MA

At the end of the twentieth century a flood of new terms describing the world of work were coined: the new world economy, globalization, the technological transformation, the information age, multinational corporations, and so on. The upheaval produced parallel events that changed personal work lives: downsizing, outplacement, contingency work, free agency, etc. This time of tumultuous and confusing change left many individuals – including career practitioners – adrift and uncertain. One way to handle change is to deny its impact, cling to old myths, and continue living as though nothing is different. As career practitioners, we have a responsibility to understand how the world of work has changed, think about the impact of these changes, and pass this understanding on to our clients. Only in this way can we adequately prepare clients for the reality of today's work world and the new ways personal lives are affected.

What is different?

In every age, society strives to make sense of our world – we create shorthand concepts to understand events and call it conventional wisdom. We believe conventional wisdom can help us manage our lives, but when the world changes, the old wisdom turns out to be myth. One way to help clients adapt to change is to help them distinguish between myth and reality. Listed below are some of the changes we discuss with our clients.

Old Myth	New Reality
• Good workers won't get fired	• Anyone is vulnerable. Market conditions trigger layoffs, not employees' work habits
• Hard work and company loyalty result in job security	• You will be employed as long as you add value to the organization
• Good-paying jobs are available without a college education	• The earnings gap between college graduates and non-graduates continues to widen
• The best jobs are in large corporations	• Since 1980, the proportion of jobs in Fortune 500 companies has shrunk by 25%
• Find the hot industry and you'll always be in demand	• Hot industries come and go (think dot coms)
• Go to work for a good company and move up the career ladder	• Few companies have career ladders now; employees are more responsible for developing skills to remain employable

We find that most people recognize the reality of each individual statement; rarely, however, have they considered all the facts or connected them together. This insight into the depth of change sets the stage for a new way of thinking about careers and career planning.

A New View For Career Planning

Traditionally, as career counselors, we have given ourselves the task of helping people identify one career the matches their preferences. We're then concerned ourselves with helping the client plan their preparation and entry into the career field. Once this happens, we believe that we've successfully helped clients in their exploration or job search. In today's rapidly changing workplace, this approach has short-term value. Clients also need assistance preparing for long-term career management.

To meet the demands of today's workplace clients need help learning a flexible approach to career planning. No one – even mid-life career changers – is likely to maintain employability in one job for the duration of their career. Rather than corroborate the myth of "one job for life" by guiding clients to look for one career choice, we encourage them to develop flexible career plans. We help clients and students develop flexible career plans because careers themselves are shifting and evolving. While clients may still want a single answer, an important part of our work is to educate them about how work life has changed.

Flexible career planning is...

- Continually shifting and evolving
- Considering alternative work options
- Balancing planning and flexibility

In the past, companies promised lifetime security for loyalty. As we have seen in recent years, that contract no longer exists. Today, job security results from developing new skills and in the ability to market those skills to find new employment. Employees who stay loyal to their profession, but who change jobs every few years, earn on the average 70% more than their colleagues who stay with one company.

One aspect of flexible career planning is to encourage clients to consider alternative work options. These options are especially useful for people starting out in new career fields.
It's often hard to find permanent full time work in a new field – but these alternative ways of working provide valuable work experience. Alternative work options include contingent workers (dependent on the economic market), contractors, free agents, job sharing, and concurrent workers (an option for artists and others who need regular income while they build their renown).

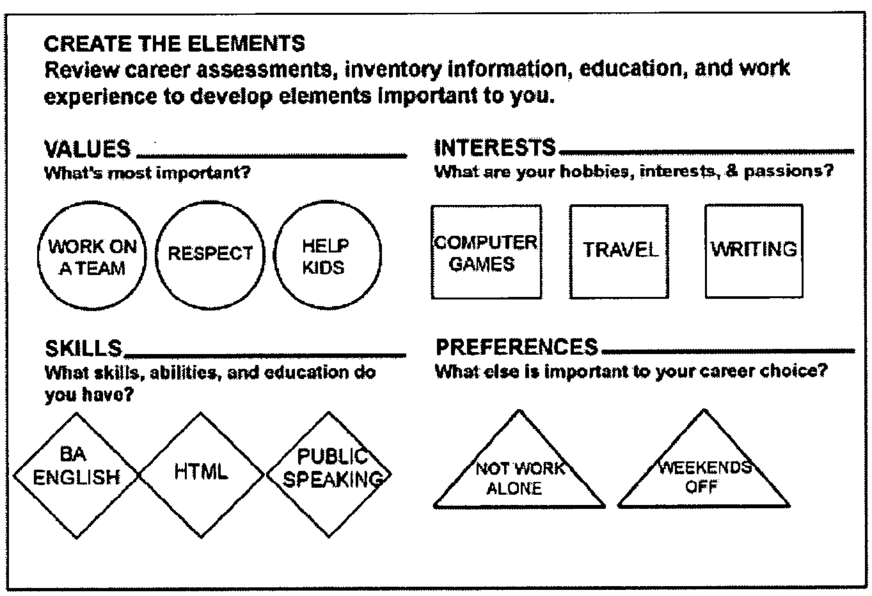
An important role we can fulfill is to help clients learn to balance planning and flexibility. We are not advocating the end of planning. We are advocating flexibility. In this fluid world, clients who take a flexible approach will be open to new opportunities that can't be foreseen.

Building a Career Kaleidoscope

The career kaleidoscope is a career planning tool to:

- Integrate assessment data
- Generate multiple options over a lifetime
- Promote creative thinking
- Evolve continually

We chose the kaleidoscope as a metaphor for career planning because kaleidoscope images are ever changing and evolving. As a kaleidoscope is rotated, the objects rearrange themselves, creating an array of new patterns. Although only a few pieces of glass are contained in a kaleidoscope, endless patterns can be created from them. Creating a career kaleidoscope embodies the same process – instead of colors evolving into visual patterns, work elements (values, interests, skills, and preferences) combine to form many patterns of work options. These elements are a reflection of the individual and his or her potential contribution to the world of work. By emphasizing different elements within the kaleidoscope, different career patterns emerge. The client may choose to delete elements from the kaleidoscope or add new ones, based on experience, education, and training. This flexibility reflects the changes in values, interests, and skills that may occur over a lifetime. A career kaleidoscope is a mental model to display each individual's unique attributes as s/he searches for ways to express self through work.



As a tool for career planning, the kaleidoscope helps the client integrate assessment data by visually displaying all the assessment information in one place. The client actively participates in the process by deciding the elements that make up the kaleidoscope. The career kaleidoscope is a tactile, hands-on activity. When we use this process with clients, we either cut out the shapes or write their elements on cards or use post-it notes so they can move various elements in and out of the kaleidoscope. When the client has identified all their kaleidoscope elements, he or she can try out various ways the elements can be arranged. Just as a real kaleidoscope creates unlimited patterns with colored glass, career kaleidoscope elements can be rearranged into many career options. As the elements are arranged and rearranged, look for:

- What stands out?
- What connections are there among the elements?
- What patterns emerge?

Themes may be repeated throughout, or perhaps one element jumps out from all the others. Seeing the connectivity between values, interests, and skills provides ideas for the types of work that will bring satisfaction.

Rob Decker's interest in photography began when he was in high school. After graduate school, with an MFA in Photography, he wanted to teach photography at a college. During job search, he learned that the only opportunities for teaching were one-year contracts, which might require moving annually. He decided to open a chain of one-hour photo labs with a partner. After a few years, Rob noticed that photography was changing. Some of his customers were going next door to use color copiers rather than paying for photo reprints. He knew photo processing was being hit hard by Japanese competition and changing technologies but was unsure about his next career move. Rob began developing knowledge about digital imaging and became an expert in this growing field.

To determine potential career opportunities, Rob created his kaleidoscope. The elements included the following values: helping others, problem-solving, expert at photo processes, living in the Southwest, variety, and imaging. His skills included: teaching, marketing, BFA Art, MFA Photography, designing, imaging software; Rob enjoys computers, historical photography, learning new things, community, and art. The data in Rob's kaleidoscope came from various assessment activities.

The elements in Rob's kaleidoscope hold the key to potential careers. We explain to clients that elements define what you want from work, what interests you, and what you want to do. By rearranging and combining elements into three different kaleidoscope views, the client creates new career patterns and discovers careers that match what is important.

Rob began the process by selecting shapes (squares, circles, triangles, and diamonds) to represent his values, skills, interests, and preferences and placing the shapes into a large circle. Rob's first lens included Art, Teaching, Helping Others, Managing, MFA in Photography, Expert at Photo Processes, Images, Creative Environment, and BFA in Art. The next step is to analyze the elements and create work patterns. Brainstorm and record as many career ideas that flow from the element combinations. Rob identified College Professor, Imaging Software Trainer, Art Director. When he saw a connection between teaching and images Rob thought of sales in E learning.

Rob continued to analyze the patterns in his kaleidoscope for opportunities, needs he could fulfill in the workplace and professions and occupations related to what's most important to him. His second kaleidoscope lens included some of the same elements as the first lens but he also added some new ones including: Selling, Marketing, Variety, Imaging Software, Computers, and Problem Solving. This time Rob and his partner identified Digital Imaging Equipment Sales, Imaging Software Marketing, and Sales of Multimedia Training.

The third lens included other important elements including, living in the Southwest, learning new things, and Rob's interest in historical photos. This view helped Rob consider owning an art gallery.

The kaleidoscope process helped Rob see an opportunity to help companies digitize their photographic operations, so he sold his interest in a declining photography business to begin selling digital imaging systems. Rob is already anticipating the next shift in his kaleidoscope, consulting for graphic arts departments to resolve imaging problems. The key to Rob's success is his ability to reframe his work options by rearranging his kaleidoscope elements into new options.

The kaleidoscope process works effectively whether the client, like Rob, is facing a midlife career change or a college student trying to decide a major field of study. Anyone struggling with what work to choose at anytime in their life benefits from a creative method for discovering new work ideas.

Liz Harris-Tuck, M.A. and Annette Price, M.A. are co-authors of *Career Patterns: A Kaleidoscope of Possibilities* published in 2000 by Prentice Hall. This text is appropriate for college-level career planning classes, job search classes, and workshops. Many of the ideas and activities can be easily adapted to working with individual career clients.

International Career Development Conference 2001

15 E-Resume Myths: Do's and Don'ts for Preparing and Sending an Electronic Resume

Susan Ireland

"An electronic resume is an essential tool for almost every job search," says Rodney Lam, Manager of the Employment Response Center at Hewlett-Packard. Because for-profit and nonprofit organizations more frequently request applicants to submit their resumes through Web sites and email, a job seeker's success may lie in his or her ability to get a resume formatted correctly and sent on its cyber-way. "At Hewlett-Packard," says Lam, "we receive close to 2,000 resumes a day. Approximately 38% come to us through HP's Web site (www.jobs.hp.com), 24% are delivered through major third-party Web sites, 9% are sent to us via email, and 29% arrive as hardcopy, which get entered into the company's database through scanning devices."

Tens of millions of resumes are currently posted on Internet third-party resume boards, where they compete for comparatively few jobs. According to a June 29, 2001 press release from TMP Worldwide Inc., the newly combined Monster.com and HotJobs.com recruitment force alone will stable a total of 14 million resumes. Millions more resumes are emailed directly to employers and recruiters every day.

As job seekers rush to grab the attention of Internet-recruiting employers, they sometimes fail to grasp some important concepts that could make their electronic job search more effective. In fact, many operate under some well-circulated misinformation.

Following are 15 common myths about how to prepare, post, and email an electronic resume.

About E-Resumes

Myth #1: Less is more.

The "less is more" adage that kept hardcopy resumes to one or two pages does not apply to electronic resumes for two reasons. First, there are no actual pages in an electronic document because it appears as one continuous scrolled page.

Second, electronic resumes are usually "read" by search engines, which look for specific keywords and terms that have been keyed into the engine. The search engine uses its search capability to identify all resumes in the database that contain those keywords and rank them according to how many keywords each resume has. The #1 ranking resume will hold more keywords than its competitors. In order to have all the necessary keywords, an e-resume may need to be longer than the old-fashioned hardcopy resume created for human eyes only. For that reason, it is acceptable and advisable for an electronic resume to be longer and more detailed than its hardcopy counterpart.

Myth #2: Electronic resume processing is a cold, inhuman process.

Not necessarily. Although e-resumes are handled by computers, there are human beings operating those computers.

Companies with electronic resume processing systems hire data entry professionals to carefully receive, review, clean up, and enter each resume. This involves creating a database file for each applicant, organizing information on the applicant's e-resume into logical groups, copying and pasting that information into specified fields in the database file, and even correcting spelling.

Although resumes may not get as much personal attention at public resume banks such as Monster.com and CareerBuilder.com, the systems at these public sites do identify and redirect problem resumes (such as those with jumbled formatting) to data entry processors who clean up the documents before entering them.

So why all the hubbub about formatting e-resumes correctly if they get worked on by data entry folks anyway? A well-formatted e-resume can sail into a resume database in minutes, while a problem resume could sit in an error queue for weeks before it gets into the database. In today's job market, that's way too long.

Myth #3: Traditional bullet points work.

The bullet point is a terrific tool for breaking information into bite-sized pieces on a hardcopy resume, but not on an electronic resume. Bullet points on e-resumes often lose their effect simply because they don't transfer reliably when the resume is posted on Web sites or sent through email channels. That nifty little dot usually gets transformed into something weird like an ampersand followed by four digits, a single parenthesis, or even a little thumbs-up symbol.

So as not to lose the effect of the bullet point, it's recommended that a standard keyboard symbol such as the asterisk, double asterisk, dash, or plus sign be substituted for each bullet point.

Myth #4: Keyword searches are an exact science.

Some believe that there is a prescribed set of keywords for each professional job title, and that success in getting considered for a job lies in discovering a standardized list of keywords for that profession. Not so.

The database keyword search is largely subjective. After all, it's human beings—hiring managers and recruiters—who input those keywords into the search engines. The keywords each of those managers or recruiters list will depend on how he or she defines the qualifications for the job. For example, the keyword list for a sales executive for a retail shoe chain could be very different from the one for a sales executive in financial services. Likewise, the keyword list for a sales executive in a financial services firm might vary from the list of keywords for the same position in another financial services firm simply because the firms have different corporate cultures, technical operations, management styles, or clientele.

The list of required keywords for a resume also depends on the sophistication of the employer's database search engine. Some engines have synonym-search capabilities so that they locate similar words as well as exact words that are being searched for and can identify acronyms as well as the spelled-out versions of acronyms. Less sophisticated engines look for the exact words input by the manager, and only those words. Because an applicant probably doesn't know how sophisticated the search engine is at the company where he or she is submitting a resume, it's best to include as many synonyms as possible.

Each submission of an e-resume requires the job seeker to research the keywords most likely to be sought by the hiring manager for that particular job. The applicant should also be sure to use keywords that define his or her own work preferences. For instance, an administrative professional who wants to supervise should be sure to include words such as "supervision," "management," and "leadership." Likewise, if an administrative professional does not want to supervise, he or she should avoid including those words on the e-resume.

Myth #5: Resume scanning is the same as a keyword search.

Resume scanning is not the same as a resume keyword search. A keyword search is the process of a search engine going through each electronic file in its database to find specified keywords. Resume scanning is the process of transforming a hardcopy resume into an electronic document.

Resume scanning involves placing a hardcopy resume into a piece of hardware called a scanner, which makes an electronic image of the file, sort of like taking a snapshot of the document. The scanner then uses Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software to convert the electronic image into an electronic file. Not until the resume is in the form of an electronic file is it ready to be entered into a database where it can undergo a keyword search.

Myth #6: A Keyword section is essential on an e-resume.

For years it was advised that a job seeker create a special Keyword section near the top of his or her resume where 20 to 60 keywords would be listed in paragraph form. As it turns out, a Keyword section isn't necessary at all. Because the database search engine scours the entire electronic resume in a few seconds, keywords will be found as long as they appear *somewhere* on the resume.

Myth #7: ASCII text is a highly technical type of document.

Quite the opposite: ASCII (which stands for American Standard Code for Information Interchange) text is a very simple form of text that can be reliably transferred from computer to computer over the Internet. According to Rebecca Smith, author of *Electronic Resumes & Online Networking*, there are three types of ASCII text: Text Only, Hypertext, and Rich Text Format. Text Only is the type of ASCII text to use for an electronic resume that is to be posted to a Web site or emailed.

Converting from an MS Word document to Text Only is done by opening the MS Word document, performing the Save As function, selecting Text Only from the pull-down menu, and clicking Save. It's that simple! The tricky part is making the necessary adjustments to the Text Only document before posting a resume online or emailing it to an employer.

Posting a Resume Online

Myth #8: A resume must be converted to Text Only before posting it online.

On most online resume banks, you don't *have* to convert a resume to Text Only before posting it. However, it's greatly to your advantage to convert it to Text Only because once in Text Only, you can adjust the formatting to optimize the very limited layout possibilities (such as no bold, italics, tables, varied font sizes, lines, borders, or other fancy effects) offered by most Web sites' database systems.

Myth #9: Selecting one or more jobs on a Web site limits a job seeker's possibilities.

To the contrary, if you select one or more jobs on a company or public Web site, you increase your visibility. Here's why: Each job an applicant chooses creates a requisition (req) number in his or her resume database file. In addition to conducting keyword searches, recruiters and hiring managers often search the entire database for particular req numbers. The more jobs an applicant chooses, the more req numbers appear in his or her file, which draws the attention of more recruiters and managers.

Knowing this, a job seeker may be tempted to select lots and lots of jobs. "However," advises Randall K. Gross, Sr. Consultant, HR Technology America Online, Inc., "you should choose no more than 10. More than 10 would make you look too scattered or desperate."

Myth #10: Only required questions should be answered on the Web site e-form.

Not necessarily good advice. It's well worth a job seeker's time to think through and answer each question as long as he or she doesn't reveal information that's too confidential.

Most resume Web sites have both required and optional questions, indicated by a note in small print or a special symbol such as an asterisk. Although it's acceptable to submit an e-form with only required answers, it's recommended that a job seeker answer all optional questions as well unless he or she has a specific objection to a particular question. Here's why: The answers to optional questions could generate codes in the applicant's database file that would grab the search engine's attention. For instance, the answer to the question "Where did you learn about this job?" could generate a source code in the applicant's fle for the career fair that he attended the previous week. Before conducting a keyword search of the entire database to fill a particular job, the recruiter who represented the company at that fair might give priority to career fair attendees by searching for all resume files that contain the "career fair" code.

If a job seeker doesn't want to answer an optional question (such as "What is your salary requirement?"), it's perfectly acceptable to leave it unanswered.

Myth #11: What you see is what they get.

After filling out the e-form and entering an electronic resume on a company or public resume Web site, an applicant may assume that the employer will see the information and resume exactly as it appears on the applicant's computer screen. Not necessarily so. A lot can happen to the characters and format of a resume as the document passes from the applicant's computer to the Web site, into the Web site database system, through the Internet to an employer's computer, into the employer's database system, and finally onto the screen of a hiring manager. Because some characters don't transfer accurately and formatting sometimes gets jumbled, it's entirely possible that the resume that appears on the manager's screen won't look like the resume the applicant submitted on the resume Web site.

To ensure that the employer receives an accurate transfer, the applicant should click the Web site's Preview button before submitting the resume. Doing so will bring up a screen that shows exactly how the resume will appear on the employer's computer. If the applicant isn't happy with how the characters and formatting come across, he can click Edit or the Previous Page button in order to edit the document. He should preview and edit as many times as necessary to make his document look as professional as possible. When all is right, it's time to push the Send or Submit button.

Myth #12: Cover letters don't count online.

Cover letters *do* count! A short, effective cover letter can positively influence an e-resume's success when submitted through a company or public resume Web site. Not all Web sites allow an applicant to submit a cover letter, however, and those that do, usually make it an optional entry.

It's highly recommended that an applicant jump at the chance to write a brief note of introduction that contains some keywords. After all, once in the applicant's database file, the letter will be searched for keywords. Cover letters are also an excellent opportunity to break the ice with the hiring manager who will eventually read the resume file word for word and hopefully request an interview with the applicant.

Emailing a Resume

Myth #13: Attached files are a good idea.

Sending a resume as an attached file to an email message is not a good idea unless the employer specifically asks the job seeker to do so. Here's why: An attached file may not be opened successfully if there's incompatibility between the sender's and receiver's computer platforms, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), word processing programs, or versions of those word processing programs. In some cases, the attached file may be opened but the contents are unreadable because the electronic transfer scrambled the layout or inserted programming codes into the document.

Additionally, some employers won't open an atached file, or even open an email that indicates it has an attached file, for fear of contracting a computer virus.

The alternative is to insert the resume into the body of the email, taking care to format it with regard to the limited graphic capabilities of email software.

Myth #14: Emailed resumes should be followed up with hardcopy resumes.

Not only is it unnecessary to follow-up an emailed resume with a hardcopy resume, doing so could be counter-productive (unless, of course, the employer specifically requests it). Once a resume is submitted through email, it goes immediately into the company's resume database. If a hardcopy version of the same resume is sent by fax or "snail mail," the resume already in the database is likely to be replaced by the second resume.

Why could this be a bad move? Because the second resume is hardcopy, the company will convert it to an electronic resume by running it through a resume scanner before it can deposit it into the resume database. The problem lies with the resume scanning process. Resume scanners have a very high rate of error in "reading" text (interpreting characters), no matter how carefully the resume preparer has followed guidelines for formatting a scannable resume. That means the second resume, which was the scanned resume, is bound to have several errors that the emailed resume didn't have. And Murphy's Law predicts that the errors on the scanned resume will make keywords unidentifiable, making the scanned resume less effective than the emailed resume it replaced in the database.

Myth #15: Spacing is a good way to create design in an email resume.

This concept is part myth, part truth. Spacing is one of the few ways to give a sense of design to a resume that is to be placed into the body of an email. Too much space, however, can make the email very long, sometimes causing the end of the resume to get cut off by the recipient's email software.

Remember the "less is more" resume principle that encourages limiting a hardcopy resume to one or two pages? The wisdom behind this limitation, of course, is that it cuts down the amount of work (or perception of work) it takes for the employer to grasp an applicant's qualifications. For the reader of email resumes, work (or turning pages) translates into scrolling. A document that needs extensive scrolling appears cumbersome. A resume that requires less scrolling appears easier to handle.

Here are four tricks for giving an email resume visual appeal, without making it either too spaced out or too dense and hard to get through:

1. Present qualifications in "bullet point" statements instead of in paragraphs, using a symbol such as an asterisk instead of the traditional bullet point at the beginning of each statement.
2. Put major headings such as Summary of Qualifications, Professional Experience, and Education in all caps.
3. Insert one line space between each resume section.

4. Start the first line of each section immediately after the major heading. In other words, don't insert a line space between the heading and the first statement of that section.

To summarize, formatting an electronic resume isn't difficult, but it does require attention to a few details. An e-resume can—and should—be longer than a hardcopy resume, and it should not contain traditional bullet points, but should use symbols such as asterisks instead. It does not need to have a special Keyword section, but must use keywords throughout the document that correspond to the employer's computer search, and it should be presented in Text Only format.

When posting a resume on a company or public Web site, one should answer both required and optional questions unless a question is particularly objectionable. Before submitting the resume, one should click the Preview button to be sure the resume appears the way it's intended to appear. It's also advisable to include a cover letter with the posted resume whenever possible.

An emailed resume should be placed in the body of an email message rather than sent as an attached file, unless an employer specifically asks for an attached file. Never follow up an emailed resume with a hardcopy resume, unless asked to do so. Use spacing judiciously on an emailed resume to reduce the amount of scrolling on the employer's part while giving the resume visual appeal.

To learn how to create an electronic resume step-by-step and to view samples of a resume as it progresses from a hardcopy to an electronic version, visit The Resume Guide at www.susanireland.com.

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Leveraging Change for Career Success: A South-East Asian Experience

Han Kok Kwang, CEO
Personal Mastery Resources, Singapore

Introduction

Life is what you make of it. Sounds clichéd, but it's true. The same principle applies to our careers. We can create and control our lives and our careers.

Yet, it seems that many people are not happy with their lives. For live evidence, look at the faces you see every morning when you go to work. How many happy faces do you see? Their faces reflect their state of mind.

As a career coach & behavioral consultant based in Singapore, I have worked with thousands of clients in South East Asia. Quite a number are unhappy with their lives, because they were unhappy with their jobs. On closer probing, however, they did not start out that way. Some were madly in love with their jobs when they started. But somehow, it didn't feel the same anymore.

Be Prepared for Change

The key word is CHANGE. They did not see the change coming, or they didn't know how to cope with the change. No matter how you see it, things are not the same anymore.
When they can't cope, they gave up, and that sparkle in their eyes diminishes with time. It does not have to be that way. It is challenging but not impossible to change, as demonstrated by many of my clients.

The thrust of this paper is to enable you to learn the same techniques that my clients used to regain control of their careers and lives, and go on to become more successful than before. But there is one condition: you have to put it to work yourself. Just reading will not make much impact. You have to be in the driver's seat.

Why is this technique important for you? Because change is the only constant in our lives. We face change all the time. If we learn how to leverage on change and make our lives better, why not? Secondly, very few people actually do it. Many talk, many know, few do. Thus, if you do it, you will be ahead of the rest of the pack. Most importantly, change is A MUST if we want to grow. Take a cue from mother nature: things that don't grow, die! It is the same with us humans!

This resource is intended for anyone who is keen to make a positive difference in his/her career, or even his/her organization. Once you have learned how to leverage change, you will welcome change. Imagine what that can do for your career and your life? This is especially useful for people and organizations which want to make a difference.

What is change? It means that things are not the same anymore.

For instance, the advent of the Internet and the World Wide Web has turned business hours to 24/7/365 (open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, everyday of the year), instead of office hours only. This is a Mega-change that altered the rules of play. It gave the smaller players a chance and it also made many businesses irrelevant.

Similarly, with globalization, mergers and acquisitions seem to be the order of the day: to be bigger, richer, stronger etc… The net effect? Loss of jobs for many people. Another Mega-change! How do people cope?

To cope with change, the first action step is to take it objectively and positively. Accept that it is not personal. It is just an event that happens. But you may ask: how can you not take it personally, when you have lost your job because of the change?!

That is precisely the point. Once you take it personally, you lose objectivity. Emotions take over and it clouds your judgement and decision. Objectivity does not happen overnight. You have to train your mind to be objective. To stay objective, no matter what the changes, you have to be "well leveraged." You need to have multiple interests in your life. These interests form the pillars of your life and it supports you in your pursuits in life. In short, a job should not be the be-all & end-all of your life. It is tough to be objective if you have only one pillar, and that only pillar collapses.

Next, train your mind to think critically and clearly. Stay focused on your goal. For example, a job is a means to an end. A job helps bring home the "bacon" (money). The goal is the bacon. If the job is gone, worry not. Find another way to bring home the bacon. Learn to use what you have (skills, experience etc..) to make a living. Look for another job. Free lance. Start a business. Play to your strengths. Do anything. Let the creativity of your mind take over.

If your focus is on the job instead of the bacon, then again, it is tough to manage the change because you took it personally. It is hard to break out of that paradigm because that is the way you have thought for as long as you have lived. As Henry Ford once said, whether you think you can or you think you cannot, you are right.

A Story of Leveraging Change for Career Success

To illustrate what I mean, let's look at Hank. Hank is presently a successful entrepreneur. He recently upgraded to a 2,000 square foot penthouse, a luxury by any standard in space-tight Singapore. And the best part is this: he did all this without a job! When Hank came to us, he was a senior manager in a Fortune 50 Company. But he wasn't happy. The politics and the routine at the workplace were killing him.

When we reviewed his career record, we saw a trend of leveraging change for career success. When he started out, he was non-college graduate in a recession year. He was competing with graduates for a job, who were all "priced reasonably" given the economic situation. But Hank spotted an opportunity – yes, there were many graduates but what companies were looking for in a recession was more than paper qualifications.

They wanted someone who could get the job done, and also "boost the morale" of employees. Hank was well placed to take advantage of the opportunity because he was formerly a canoeing instructor. He had also scored a distinction in extra curricular activities in school. More importantly, he packaged all these into a deal (a get-the-job done problem solver-cum-cheerleader) that companies could not ignore.

He got his 1st job as a HR Administrator in a local Multi-National Company (MNC) against 200 competitors, many of them graduates, even before he graduated officially.

Two years down the road, he got restless. He had outgrown the job. Then the economy was booming. Opportunities for consulting work were abundant. It was déjà vu as Hank competed for an opening in a leading Government linked Human Resource Management (HRM) consulting firm. The competition was fierce because they were experienced graduates. Hank was no graduate, though he had been attending night school in various business disciplines.

Though this firm was renowned, Hank knew from his research that it was not a good paymaster. So Hank packaged himself into a great value proposition where price became irrelevant. Again, he got the job. Best of all, this was a government-linked company who values paper more than people. The success was made sweeter because he was promoted within a year of joining.

History repeats itself another 2 years down the road. Hank was restless again as he felt he was becoming too much of a specialist. He was a headhunter. He wanted to get back into broad HRM because his goal was to be a HR Manager. This time it was even tougher. He had 4 years experience, but only two were in HRM. His competitors were experienced HRM practitioners with more than five years' experience.

Hank saw the opportunity this time in job titles. Many companies were giving big titles, but with limited job scope. After all, titles were free. What Hank wanted was quality exposure to prepare him for his HR manager job. So he applied for a job in a Japanese MNC with a simple "Executive" title but with great scope for growth. He won again, and he went on to be promoted within 12 months of joining.

Two years on, Hank was finally a graduate. He still does not have a Bachelor's Degree, but he has an MBA with Distinction. He went straight into an MBA because he wanted to prove that it could be done. This was against conventional wisdom that it was "not recognized" by employers. It was déjà vu all over again. He became HR Manager. He beat at least 100 experienced competitors to the post, many of them with double degrees. He went on to earn two more promotions within four years.

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As a senior manager, Hank had all the perks of corporate success – private car park lots, club allowances, entertainment allowances etc - but Hank was not happy. He felt stifled and the office politics were killing him.

We reviewed his strengths. Hank loved to write. Hank loved to teach. Hank had many passions, one of which was to help others. He does this by sharing his experience with night school students two nights a week. He didn't forget where he came from. We felt that with his talents, it would be hard to find a company that could sustain him for the long term, as demonstrated by his track record.

The economy had recoverèd from a recession. We suggested an entrepreneurial path. Hank took it and flew. There were bills to pay, monthly mortgages to settle, the children's education, etc… but when Hank was sold on an idea, he made sure it happened. He planned for it to happen. It may sound cliché but it is simply "plan your work and work your plan." Plans are great but without results, it is just an academic exercise. Hank went on to write a bestseller. He was also appointed as partner in an international management consulting firm.

Key Learning Points

Sounds like a fairy tale but if you follow the key principles, you can also create your future by leveraging on change. What were the key learning points?

1. Keep in tune with the environment. That is where all the opportunities are.

2. Keep adding value to yourself. The best investment is in your self, your education.

Core competencies could become a key disadvantage, if you do not change and adapt with the times.

3. Keep expanding your mind. Be open to new ideas, concepts and skills. An open mind is always the first to spot opportunities. One good resource is the Ned Herrmann whole brain concept. It helps us understand why we think and behave the way we do.

Keep working on the basics of business. Understand that without satisfied customers, all the rest does not matter. Satisfied customers can take the form of real customers, bosses, peers, etc…When you meet their needs well, the money will take care of itself.

4. Change is the only constant. Every time there is a change in your life, ask how you can take advantage of it and you will be miles ahead. In short, ask "why not?" instead of "why me?"

5. In the new economy, job competency is a given. Without competency, you do not even qualify for entry. But competency alone does not get keep you there. You have to keep adapting and expanding your competency to stay relevant to the needs of the market.

The case study above helped to illustrate some of the ways change can be managed and leveraged for career success. For instance, when Hank started out, the odds were against him. He looked for a niche. He saw the change in bosses' attitude about preferred employees. He leveraged on that change in attitude and got his first job.

In the second move, he saw the change in attitude on expense-control in government-linked companies due to the economic recession. Though there were other considerations, like minimum qualifications and experience, this new cost-efficient attitude took precedence. Again circumstances proved him right.

In his 3rd move, the trend was towards inflated titles. But Hank was focused. He knew that substance, not labels, has to win at the end of the day. There were companies who were focused on doing what was right. So Hank picked the right change to leverage on. He went for substance and won again.

You could see Hank moving easily between macro and micro changes, mega and task environmental changes. That is what you should develop: the ability to be in tune with the environment. Once you are in tune, you are open to opportunities. When you spot an opportunity, work hard at it. Sometimes opportunities come disguised as problems, and you have to be able to discern between the two. In general, if you have the right people to guide you, problems will become opportunities. Of course, the reverse is also true.

Conclusion

Remember one thing: change is the only constant. It can be a constant advantage f our minds are open. In the new economy, the ability to leverage on change is our only security. In the famous words of Napoleon Hill, "in every adversity, there are seeds of opportunity." So start spotting those opportunities now by expanding your mind and acting on them. Leverage on change and be the next BIG story people talk about.

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When Assessments Fail: Using Alternative Approaches to Career Exploration

Cindy Lewis
Cynthia Sabedra
California Lutheran University Career Services

Career Assessments are useful as they help people to uncover interests, values, personality, and skills identification. Assessments help people to describe and understand themselves in a way that may be new, or more in depth than usual. Assessments often confirm what a person thinks s/he knows, and gives options as well as a place to start towards research on career and educational decision-making. When trying to make a career decision, the career research that is conducted will help students uncover positions that they may want to pursue. It is important for students to discover the things they enjoy doing. If a student is happy in a position, it will most likely lead to happiness in other areas of their lives since jobs and careers take much of our time. When counselors can help a client find out what their "calling" or "niche" is, they have done a great service.

Where assessments fail is really where the counselor fails to come up with other options to use when trying to assist a student in making a career decision. The following are some of the many reasons that a particular client or student may not be open to assessments: they have taken career assessments before and still do not know what they want; they do not believe that taking assessments can work for them and feel that they are unlikely candidates to fit into a category or personality type; assessments are not available or are too costly; and lastly, many assessments deal with job types or positions, where as many students may know more about the industry or region of the country they are interested in. Assessments of course aren't for every student. Certain people do not test well and others will look at results and say, "This does not sound like me."

This paper will go over 10 alternatives to administering Career Assessments, which counselors can implement immediately into their counseling sessions. Also, we will use the word "student" and "client" interchangeably. Remember, you do not want to overwhelm students with offering them all their choices for Career Exploration that are described in this paper, but instead to recommend a few options for each person, depending on what you learn about them during the counseling session and through your initial intake. A detailed intake can be created for all appointments and should ask contact information as well as questions on work experience, educational background, graduation dates, majors, geographic preference, career goals, etc.

An effective counselor will end a session with clear goals on what information you want the client to bring in the next time they visit, for example, "Choose 5 options you are considering and print out 1 job description for each. Call me in one to two weeks to share the information and discuss." This gives you as the counselor something to start brainstorming about to help students come up with new ideas. For example if someone is interested in Law, they could work at a Law School, Law Firm, Consulting Firm, Legal Counsel with a company, or in a Non-Profit Organization. Present these ideas to students to get them thinking. Show them some job descriptions and resources. Make copies for them if needed. Clients look to you for guidance, new ideas, confidence, and for someone to hold them accountable.

Below are ideas to implement when counseling students who are making career choices:

1. Volunteer or Do Internships Related To Areas That Spark Your Interests

A diploma alone may not guarantee students a job upon graduation. Hiring managers are seeking employees with relevant experience on their resumes. Students who do internships while they are in school will gain new skills, experience, and career maturity to make them more capable to make a decision. What better way to uncover skills, passions, and obtain an insider view of a company or organization's culture then to work part-time or volunteer a few hours per week. Not only will some experience build a student's resume and make them more marketable later, it is a sure way for the student to establish what they do and do not like.

Students receive the following benefits by doing an internship: the opportunity to apply the concepts they've learned in classes to an actual work setting; clear observation of how the industry operates and what skills are needed; confirmation as to whether or not the position and field matches their interests and career goals; hands on experience with the field they wish to pursue; opportunity of receiving more job offers, making more contacts and/or being hired at a higher salary than those who do not work part-time while in school.

Here at CLU in Thousand Oaks, CA, we begin reaching out to students a month prior to starting school! At CLU we have an online system that Freshman are automatically entered in. Once on campus students register an E-profile (which many faculty make mandatory), and we send them emails on part-time, full-time, and internship opportunities and leads related to their chosen major or interests. This also keeps them aware that Career Services is here to serve them. This E-profile is even built into our Freshman 101 classes, which is a mandatory class for all incoming Freshman. At CLU we take advantage of these captive audiences of Freshman. This alleviates "I did not know we had a Career Center," *which we have all heard.*

2. Mentor or Career Contact Programs

These programs link students up with community members who are working in fields students find interesting. They can conduct informational interviews to learn more about a field first hand. Sometimes these leads even end up becoming an internship or volunteer position although that is not the motive here. One warning on mentor programs: expectations of mentors and mentees often differ which can lead to a program's failure. With all the services career centers offer, mentor programs are the hardest to run effectively and they take more time, planning and staff than most realize.

Although students receive a number of career benefits through participating in career mentorship programs it is often very common to have one half of the participants come through a Mentor

Program saying it was worthwhile, while others feel their mentor did not help. These discrepancies can rest in the expectations of each student and that is why an organized program that has training for both mentors and mentees is crucial, but often lacking. Some of the benefits of these programs in relation to career decision making are: mentorship programs may provide students with the opportunity to learn about a specific job, be introduced to other contacts, become familiar with a particular industry or organization, and discuss social and personal issues that may arise.

3. Imagination or Dream Job Scenario

If you can imagine it, there is someone doing it! Advise clients to imagine 3 jobs that they would "Dream" to have or learn more about. Dream job scenario has the client go back into their past and write out, or share out loud, 3 jobs they previously were interested in but gave up pursuing due to financial barriers, practicality, educational limits or for other reasons. Try to pull interests and passions from this "Dream Job" and uncover why the student changed his/her mind. This is useful information for counselors. Then suggest other careers that revolve around the core components of what drew the student *originally* to this area. For example: if they say they wanted to run a flower shop, you can probe further into their love for flowers, creative expression, running a business and being their own boss. With aspects of each position confirmed, you can then brainstorm new options or areas to explore.

4. Field Research or Informational Interviews

Meeting with people helps you to learn more about careers, advancement, skills, and may even lead you to a job or internship. You can assess if these people really look happy and ask them first hand the things they do and do not like about their job. Students might also ask about types of projects they are working on and professional associations they are members of.

Examples:

- If a student talks to someone who writes copy for a PR department in a company, s/he realizes that you do not have to be in publishing to be a writer.
- If a student talks to someone who is a recruiter for a college, s/he realizes there is more than just corporate outreach there is also marketing and recruiting in a university.
- If the student talks to someone who is an Art Director at a Museum s/he may see that the position is really a management job and not as creative, even though it's in the art field.

Things to Remember:

- Impression is critical, including vocabulary when talking to decision makers.
- Enthusiasm, energy and curious nature draw people.
- Write out questions on position, industry, company, and career ladder.
- Have students set specific outcome goals from their Field Research such as, "In two weeks I want to meet 3 people."

Students can contact people for field research by: knowing the information for which they are seeking and finding the right people to talk to; calling individuals and knowing what to say and how to say it (Coaching can help); trying to make an appointment to meet with the person; Having well thought out questions to ask; knowing how to close the meeting; and finally, documenting outcomes and follow-up procedures.

Following up and thanking the people met is just as important as preparing for the actual meeting. Students can do that by leaving their resume with the person and sending a thank you letter after the meeting has taken place. In addition to a typed or hand-written thank you letter, recommend to clients that they can also email a message right after the interview.

5. Printing Jobs From The Web

With the web giving people so much more access to information on jobs, a client has to be careful not to use the online advertisement as positions to apply for, unless they want lower-level positions, but instead using jobs you see online as maps to the skills and experience needed for any given profession. There is no better way or more detailed information on skills, duties, qualifications, salary ranges and ideas about places to work than from advertisements. It is a sure way to find out about new areas by using keyword searches and then printing the job descriptions to compare with other areas clients are considering. This gives your clients something to work towards and knowledge on what they are lacking.

6. Hobbies Twisted Into Career Options

Some students will not embrace structure, conformity, and process. These students will not find "traditional" jobs interesting. These are also students who will take career assessments and not be interested in anything! One way to get creative is to discuss their hobbies and passions or what they are good at and offer creative ideas to show them other possibilities.

Examples:

- Those who like Music-Work for Music Company, music magazine, or concert promoter
- Those who like Horses-Work as Trainer, at Equestrian Centers, in Breeding, with a Magazine or a Professional Assoc.'s for Jockeys.
- Those who like Crime TV Shows-Careers in Criminal Justice or Non-Profit Organizations, Writer of short stories in crime, E-commerce company devoted to catching criminals, or Call Centers like 911 or call-in Help-lines.
- Those who like Sports-Recreation Centers, Schools, Coaching, Managing Sports related company, other sporting retail stores.

7. Join Associations, Use Membership Directories, Conferences, and Newsletters

Joining groups that link students with others in the field and update them on events and conferences is a great way for them to find out if the field seems suitable. Newsletters give "insider" information in the field and membership directories can be used for further field research or career contacts. Many students are not aware that there are many organizations or clubs to join for every field out there. Eureka, a career related software program lists associations in profiles in the Occupations Database. Once the student has determined which associations they are interested in they can visit the website or call for additional information. Students get a substantial discount to associations so they should take advantage of them.

To get the most out of an association, the student needs to do more than just join. It is important to be active in your local chapter by doing things such as attending meetings, conferences, and workshops as often as possible. These activities will help students to focus more on their career goals or establish some new contacts. Being involved in your association will allow you to network with professionals in your field and may even lead you to the position or internship you've been looking for. Students need to be informed about "The Hidden Job Market" which are existing openings that are not advertised for. Employers often hire people using referrals, networking contacts, or colleagues to help them find "the right fit." Studies have shown that many jobs are filled before they are ever advertised. In addition, advertising is very costly for employers.

8. Using Company Directory Indexes to Generate Ideas and Interest
Industry indexes are a great way to get a quick overview of places to work. If students are willing to take a more proactive approach to their job search they will decide "where" they want to work as opposed to applying for advertised openings. Company directories will provide students with addresses, phone numbers, website addresses, and sometimes even a description as to what the company is all about. If the company does have a website, encourage students to visit the website of the company they are researching which may spark a new interest. Getting a student excited about a company can help them to hone in on a job target.

For students who have a hard time with position types, you might uncover more by focusing on companies or organizations that interest them. Once they find a few places that they are interested in you can discuss the different departments, and then finally, the types of positions in each department. When looking at types of positions refer to great books like *1500+ Key Words for $100,000+ Jobs* by Wendy Enelow or *The Job Hunter's Word Finder* by John Bluemond. Both publications offer lists of skills and buzz words along with concepts to familiarize a student with a certain position, leading him/her closer to a job target and clarification of career goals.

9. Learning Lessons of Resourcefulness, Persistence, and Creativity
Remind students they need to be "Career Detectives;" any question they have can be answered. Encourage students to visit their school and public libraries and remind students the business librarians are trained to find specific information and they enjoy challenging requests. Librarians can connect students with resources such as basic company information and annual reports, and access to resources. Career questioning can be similar to writing a term paper when you realize there are a few obscure resources that you never knew existed.

Persistence is also crucial. When looking for information you need to be creative in finding what you need. Do not forget that a few phone calls can usually open many avenues of information. Phone books and online yellow pages are also overlooked when trying to find information. No matter what the barrier, persistence can often be a major component to career success.

10. For Those That Read, Read Books With Career Decision Making In Mind
Having students make a conscious effort to think about the world around them in terms of jobs and career ideas is important. Whether reading a book, watching a movie, or just being observant of their surroundings, new ideas can emerge and be followed up on. Remind students that most major bookstores have a career section located in the reference area where they can find many of the same titles that most career centers carry. Encourage students to spend an hour or two in the bookstore researching careers or reading for pleasure and thinking about careers. Hold them accountable for coming back one week later to share and discuss their findings. Make sure to suggest to clients to write information they come across down in a binder created

for their career research. If a client hopes to remember a job s/he read about in a book at the bookstore, s/he runs the risk of forgetting and missing a few ideas to share with a counselor.

One special addition to add to this paper, and for counselors to think about when working with 18-30 year olds, is the effect parents have on career decisions. Parents often directly or indirectly tell or show students what "they" think is an appropriate profession. When helping a student make a career decision a student may not know what *they* really want or like, for they have been "groomed" towards a parent's goal. Even the student may not be fully aware of the messages they received from parents and the immense influence a parent has. It is up to you to ask about this since a student may not see this as interfering. Students may realize with further thought that they are chasing a parent's dream and not their own. This may explain a lack of interest in school subjects and even low grades. A question to probe further into whether this is occurring would be: "What do your parents want you to do?" This can definitely help to see if parental expectations are an issue. In the recent book review issue (Winter 2001) of the *Career Planning and Adult Development Network Journal*, this issue is further discussed in "Hand Me Down Dreams," by Mary Jacobsen.

As you have read in this paper, there are many suggestions to offer to facilitate a career decision. Doing internships, making contacts, talking about a dream job or hobbies, conducting field research, joining associations, analyzing job descriptions, using company directories for ideas, and more. As counselors there is a need to provide more coaching on how all these options work. Script writing and role-playing can be a great way to introduce someone to what is to come leaving little surprise. Finally, make sure you do not overwhelm younger students by giving them too many ideas. Make sure they know the next 3 steps before the session ends even though you may have discussed an overview on the entire process. Encourage students to check back with you through a phone call, email or appointment. Leave your doors open!

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International Career Development Conference 2001

Improving Career Self-Efficacy in Emerging Adults with Limited Life Experiences

Lea Beth Lewis
Monica H. Schneider
Claire Sham-Choy

Introduction

At one time, the answer to the question of career choice was a life long answer, or one that spanned at least twenty or thirty years. While we no longer expect to have long-term answers for careers like our parents or grandparents did, we often ask the same questions to the emerging adult population in the 17 to 20 age bracket: "What will you do five years from now as a career? What exactly would you like to do with your education?" The misleading notion in this line of questioning is that it implies the answer will have long-term assurance when, in fact, career plans fluctuate due to the variables that students encounter during the choice experience. Age, maturity, value shifts, demographics, lifestyle and economic cycles can shape a decision and reshape it within months, if not weeks, of the last known declaration. Another dilemma in asking these questions of emerging adults is that, among this age group, limited life experiences can impose limited thinking and inhibit the career selection experience due in part to low self-efficacy.

For individuals with limited life experiences, such as little or no work experience, the task of making career decisions can be difficult. A critical factor in the decision making process is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is the belief that one can set goals and achieve them, overcome odds and setbacks, and execute the task of making a career decision despite the limitations of a future with many unknown variables. Bandura (1977) calls this ability to overcome perceived barriers "coping efficacy."

The authors of this article have submitted a request to the Institutional Review Board at California State University, Long Beach to conduct research on the self-efficacy beliefs of students in career planning classes in the Fall of 2001, and will report the status of their research at the International Career Development Conference in November, 2001 in Seattle, Washington.

Career and Personal Exploration Classes

Three lecturers teaching Personal and Career Exploration classes at California State University, Long Beach discussed how to develop better methods of presenting and processing career related information to students in a university course, and to evaluate whether these changes decreased student's indecision regarding careers and majors. Because the content of the course has been certified by the institution as meeting the requirements for a General Education Self-Integration course, the researchers wanted to introduce methods that would enhance the value of the course, without adding another assignment to the already comprehensive course outline. For example, students take a battery of assessments including Locus of Control, Learning Difficulties, Study Skills, Cognitive Styles and Work Values; develop an Education Plan, and 3 months of Study Management Schedules; attend workshops from the Learning Assistance Center to improve study skills, and write four integration papers. Students also take and process the information from the Myers Briggs Type Inventory, the Strong Vocational Interest Inventory, and the COPS Interest Inventory.

The Personal and Career Exploration classes have been taught for at least twenty years at California State University, Long Beach. As many as fourteen sections, with an enrollment cap of sixty students, are available each semester. Data has been gathered citing the effects of the course on graduation rates as well as retention, and has been cited elsewhere, such as "The Effects of College Career Courses on Learner Outputs and Outcomes: Technical Report No. 26" by Folsom and Reardon.

Limited Life Experiences and Career Planning

This study examines self-efficacy beliefs in a college classroom setting, attended by freshman and sophomore students anticipating a course in Personal and Career Exploration. Given that students enter a classroom setting with different levels of career relevant experience, it is likely that they will have varying levels of self-efficacy as well. It is hypothesized that self-efficacy would be positively affected by 1) normalizing limited life experiences through a prescribed feedback intervention that reinforced the past events as a "frame of reference," 2) identifying careers for exploration using basic, functional transferable skills used in part time and volunteer work, and 3) introduce a method for students to record their anticipated and actual grades on each of the class assignments. The rationale for this intervention is to encourage students to acknowledge their limited past performance as worthy of recognition and attributable to future goals.

Background Information on Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1986) describes perceived self-efficacy as the belief that one can execute behavior to produce outcomes. He believes that people with strong beliefs in their self –efficacy set challenging goals and sustain strong commitment to their goals, whereas people with weak beliefs in self-efficacy shy away from difficult tasks and have low aspirations and weak commitments to their goals. Luzzo and McWhirter (2001) believe that few researchers have examined the role that perceived barriers play in the career decision-making process, yet current research suggests that college students perceive a number of barriers to educational and goal attainment. Brown and Lent (1996) suggested that perceived career-related barriers inhibit translating interests into career goals and goals into actions. "Even persons with well-developed and differentiated interests in a particular career path will be unlikely to pursue that path if they perceive (accurately or inaccurately) substantial barriers to entering or advancing in that career"(Brown and Lent, 1996, pp. 355-356).

Bandura (1997) identified four major categories of experiences that determine efficacy beliefs, which are mediated by how a person cognitively evaluates information. When individuals are unfamiliar with the demands of a given task or activity, they are likely to call on the self-efficacy beliefs that have been developed as a result of previous experiences with similar tasks. Consequently, how a person behaves is influenced by self-perceptions of their capabilities, which help determine what a person will do with the knowledge and the skills they have. In this present study, the context of limited life experiences is suggested to be a perceived barrier to the recognition of *possible selves* in career planning. Possible selves represent individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming (Markus, 1986).

If self-efficacy and self-esteem are central to the sustained success of individuals, then career related accomplishments could be experiences that build confidence and boost the sense of positive outcome expectations. However, most 17 to 20 year olds have limited job experiences and generally those experiences are not in highly skilled occupations. Therefore, a critical piece of the goal setting process for this age group is that they frame their limited experience in such a way that they receive positive feedback that suggests the experiences they have had are worthy of future career related recognition. Through self-assessment, students may be better able to understand how their evaluation of interests, skills, personality and values will influence their selection of future career options. Students who lack career decision-making self-efficacy may avoid exploration activities, give up easily, and essentially fail to reach their full career related potential.

Research Assertion

Based on these suppositions, the researchers anticipated that the participants in the experimental groups that were exposed to a model of normalization of limited life experiences and reinforced with constructive feedback would intensify their goal setting and gain a higher degree of goal attainment than the control group. Goal attainment would be indicated by satisfaction with selection of a college major. The researchers also hypothesized that the experimental participants would increase their knowledge of the basic functional transferable skills that occupations require, and that would lead to an increase in satisfaction of selection of a career goal.

Procedure

Two classes would use the constructive feedback and skills analysis intervention and two other classes would not specifically use this approach. A pre and posttest of career choice self-efficacy would be given to all four classes. During the first week of class, the students would be briefed on the general nature of the study. The students will be informed that participation is voluntary and assured that their responses to the questionnaires would remain confidential and would not have any effect upon their grade in the class. Participants would provide measures of demographics (sex, age, prior work experience) and a measure of career choice self-efficacy as a control variable.

Triad Intervention Exercise

In the second week of class, students will participate in a group exercise that offers a structured experience in which feedback about their paid or unpaid work and volunteer experiences could be identified as viable experiences related to future career planning. The directions for this exercise will be scripted to insure uniformity. The students will be divided into groups of three, and each student reports on three to five events, accomplishments and/or experiences they recall with pride and satisfaction. One person acts as the listener and is asked to offer acknowledgement and help the speaker identify skills and attributes that contributed to their success. The other person records what skills and abilities were highlighted in the discussion about these past events, using a list of 72 basic, functional, transferable skills from the EUREKA MicroSkills Inventory.

EUREKA Micro Skills Assessment

Following the triad intervention report, the students are asked to transfer their achievements or accomplishment onto the EUREKA MicroSkills Worksheet Form R. [1] Following the directions on the worksheets, the students check off whether they used any of the 72 basic, functional, transferable skills on the worksheet, and in the final column, whether they wished to use these skills in their future work. Then the students prioritize these skills into the five Very Satisfying Skills, the 10 Moderately Satisfying Skills, and the 20 Somewhat Satisfying Skills. The students visit the university's Career Development Center and input their responses into the EUREKA MicroSkills program. Each student has a detailed set of instructions on how to complete this assignment, including the content of and the number of pages of printouts that they are required to bring back to class as well as a due date. The resulting list of occupations from MicroSkills are interpreted as a match between the skills selected by the student, and the skills that are necessary for that occupation. A further step in the interpretation is the comparison of the skills the students selected, and three occupations of initial interest to the students. A class discussion will ensue as to the educational and work experience goals that students will need to set in order to achieve the occupational goals.

The researchers will tabulate a list of the occupations that students were interested in before assessing their skills, and the number of matches between the initial three occupations and the results from the MicroSkills feedback. By participating in this exercise the students are exposed early in the course to potential occupations and potential college majors. Instead of thinking about a five-year plan, the emphasis is of goal setting using self-concept information and career choice.

Record Keeping for Feedback

To boost the appraisal of self-ratings for students, the instructor in the experimental group will ask the students to predict the grade they expected from each assignment and record the actual grade achieved. The feedback sheet procedure will be part of each class agenda. While this strategy may not necessarily boost perceived self-efficacy, it is noted that when people estimate their capabilities accurately, it can be of considerable value in successful functioning (Bandura,

[1] © EUREKA, the California Career Information System.

1997). The record keeping is a method to reduce the ambiguity expressed by students of the class assignments and help students focus on their goals by monitoring their own performance in relation to the assigned tasks. Because there are a large number of assignments in this course with varying degrees of assigned points, the researchers want to integrate the concepts of locus of control and locus of responsibility as a feedback component.

Conclusion

The purpose of this investigation is to explore the implications of self-efficacy beliefs on the career planning process among emerging adults in the 17-20 age bracket who have had limited life experiences. An objective for the coursework in personal and career exploration is to expose students, new to the college experience, to methods for identifying and achieving successful academic and career goals. Throughout such courses, numerous tasks and exercises expect identification with self and future self-schemas. By improving the methodology of validating life experiences, the researchers are attempting to show that self-efficacy can be positively influenced, leading to a boost in self-efficacy that can contribute to improved goal setting and goal attainment.

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International Career Development Conference 2001

Seniors Are Not Only Hirable, They're Sought After

Bradley Marston
Tracy Marston

The Challenge

Aging baby boomers remain highly active in an unforgiving job market. The age bias story has been so frequently and forcibly told that it has become universally accepted – regardless of situations and individual variables. Associated age-biased challenges impacting older adults may include:

- Needing more compensation than is offered.
- Being financially forced to either remain in or enter into the job market.
- Finding positions reflective of their skills in a highly competitive market.
- Rising unemployment rates.
- Obtaining employment that matches their professional level of competence.
- Possessing obsolete or otherwise unmarketable skills.

With today's growing age-related employment challenges, the *Salt Lake County, Utah Division of Aging Services* contracted *TAG Enterprises, LLC* to develop solution-focused programming based on qualitative and quantitative data obtained from *Salt Lake County* clients and area employers. This market research analysis determined program content to enable career counselors to better assist their 55+ job-seeking clients.

Tag Training's research consisted of a focus group meeting during which existing and former Salt Lake County Aging Services' clients described their experiences as job seekers age 55 and older. Additionally, a client survey was distributed to obtain quantitative data. Employers were likewise surveyed and interviewed to determine their perceptions of job candidates and employees age 55 and older.

Data Insights

Study results show that, while some employers have issues with certain stereotypical and age-related biases, the majority consider older adults to be strong job candidates [see appendixes A and B]. Following are key findings:

While job seekers age 55 and older feel they are age discriminated, most employers do not believe this to be the case.

Data reveals that 86 percent of the clients sampled feel they are age discriminated. Additionally, 57 percent strongly feel they have barriers to finding employment. As a result, only 22 percent agree they can get a job without assistance. Quantitative employer data shows 62 percent agree older adults are educated and possess the skills needed to perform the job. Qualitative employer data overwhelming suggests that older adults are often sought after for employment. Employers also strongly expressed their interest in individual competencies rather than group stereotypes when making their hiring decisions.

While employers believe older adults are worth what they are paid, a majority of job seekers over age 55 surveyed do not feel they can earn what they are worth.

In review of the study results obtained from the two sample groups, it appears that the dichotomous perspectives relative to salary are not attributed to older adults' actual worth, but rather to the level of positions secured. Every employer interviewed expressed their willingness to hire older adults, especially for positions requiring direct contact with customers, which are often the lower paying jobs. Employers' desire to hire older adults for these positions stems heavily from their belief in the 55+ employees' self-management skills. For instance, every employer surveyed agreed that older adults are reliable. Furthermore, 92 percent feel they possess a strong work ethic.

On the other hand, only 38 percent of the focus group members surveyed feel they can earn what they are worth. Both quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the 55+ focus group suggests this perception is attributed more to their belief that they are discriminated against than to a lack of skills.

While employers believe they do not discriminate against older adults, a consensus exists among employers interviewed that certain perceived weaknesses are linked to this population.

Certain stereotypes typically associated with older adult employees were expressed in the survey results. For instance, only 32 percent of employers surveyed feel older adults are technically competent, with a low 22 percent agreeing they are able to use computers to complete their job. Only 40 percent of employers surveyed feel older adults appear confident and make strong first impressions. Furthermore, 33 percent do not believe 55+ job seekers present well-prepared resumes. Ironically, every focus group member surveyed feels they are confident in their skills and abilities, with only 25 percent agreeing they need help with their resume presentation.

In summary, employers expressed little concern with hiring older adults, despite the few expressed concerns. In fact, they often seek after the older adult employees due in large part to their self-management skills. In sharp contrast, focus group members say they are age discriminated, which causes them to face the associated challenges. Survey results suggest that getting a job may not be the issue. Getting the right job at the desired salary is the older adults' real challenge.

The Solution

It is universally understood that, in today's evolving marketplace, age bias is a reality. The question remains, "Which age group is most often discriminated against?" The soda shop owner may prefer a mature employee who doesn't have a lot of distractions keeping them from the job and who interacts well with clients of all age groups. On the other hand, an alternative music shop owner may prefer the younger employee who is familiar with the latest sounds and can identify with their clientele. Is it better to be over or under qualified, over or under educated, over or under aged?

The answer to these questions is as unique as the hiring situations. The solution – career counselors must focus on what the client can offer instead of relenting to uncontrollable factors and then position their clients accordingly. Survey results show employers' willingness to define candidates by their individual qualifications rather than group stereotypes. Additionally, older adults are reportedly seeking assistance to better market themselves. Conducting a successful job-search campaign requires coaching based on a four-tier marketing solution as follows:

1. *Laying the Foundation*
   Career counselors help job seekers lay the foundation by thoroughly assessing their interests, qualifications, preferences, and achievements. Because today's employment opportunities may be fewer, it is especially important to define the job seeker as a multi-dimensional individual rather than labeling their product by a single job title. Doing so will help clients to discover employment options beyond the obvious.

2. *Identify Options*
   Research indicates acquiring job leads is one area in which older adults want assistance. This process requires creative and extreme research as the more opportunities discovered, the more choices will be available to the job seeker. Depending on a client's personal profile ascertained during the assessment process, options such as volunteerism, contract work, and virtual business employment should be considered.

3. *Position Job Seekers Accordingly*
   Having reviewed the options generated, it is essential to determine the viability of pursuing each option. Job seekers may set themselves up for failure if they apply for a "job" without considering the overall fit.

4. *Customize Application Approach*
   To maximize their candidacy, job seekers must customize their approach to specific employment opportunities, focusing with confidence on the skills and qualifications they have to offer employers. The impersonal method of forwarding a generic resume, crossing fingers, and hoping employers call is less effective in today's highly competitive market. Because the job market is highly competitive for everyone, getting the job requires candidates to differentiate themselves by giving added value to their application. It is, therefore, important to learn points of differentiation by first

talking with the potential employer (unless otherwise requested to not call) and next highly customizing the cover letter and resume contents accordingly. Customized computer- and web-based programming is available to assist clients in developing their own documentation, thereby freeing career counselors' time for the more important function of coaching job seekers with their marketing approach.

In conclusion, job seekers 55 and older should ignore the concept of age bias, whether real or perceived, and focus on their qualifications, experience, education, and positive attributes. Otherwise, age bias becomes a crutch and job seekers easily fall victim to their own self-fulfilling prophecy. Developing their product, positioning their product offerings within the job market, and promoting themselves accordingly will ensure older adults' success, not only with their hirability, but in their effort to be sought after for desirable positions.

Tag Training, a division of TAG Enterprises LLC, is a Salt Lake City, Utah-based training and consulting company specializing in computer- and web-based employment training. Please visit www.tagtraining.com for additional information.

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Determining Return on Investment for Career Development: The Bombardier Aerospace Inc. Experience

Catherine Mossop, President
Mossop Cornelissen & Associates

Introduction

This paper presents two established methodologies for calculating the Return On Investment for training, and is applied here to a career development program – Building Our Future - with Bombardier Aerospace Inc. The ROI process was incorporated into the program design, and calculated at the conclusion of the development process one-year later. The impact of this program was calculated to demonstrate a 3,000% contribution-based ROI in one year.

This paper is intended to assist Human Resources Consultants, Career Development Consultants, and Performance Improvement Consultants to demonstrate how Building our Future, a Career Development Program, is a strategic initiative which adds to the bottom-line value of the organization. The methods outlined include an application of the Philips formula of contribution-based ROI, which provides a means to communicate value to their senior and financial management.

Background

Building Our Future program was implemented at the deHavilland Plant of Bombardier Aerospace Inc. This location has approximately 6,000 employees and manufactures regional aircraft – commercial turbo prop aircraft. At the dawn of 2000, they were faced with business issues and challenges similar to other major employers in Toronto, Ontario Canada:

- Attracting talented engineers and professionals
- Retention – where industry standards in turn-over of high potential engineers and technical people was +30% per annum
- Failures due to promoting talent before ready
- Competition for scarce talent in a declining population market (gen.-X, gen.-Y)
- Investing in the "right" people (succession development) at the right time

Program Overview

This program was designed to accelerate the development of early career employees in preparing them to successfully take on leadership responsibilities sooner than would have been possible historically. Typically where it took 5-years to develop an individual for leadership, the organization now needs people to be "ready" in 2 years or less. People, who are chosen for this experience, are choosing this time of their life to invest in an intensive learning experience. They have shown they have potential and the organization has seen enough energy and activity to agree and support this development.

Participants are expected to take responsibility for their own learning so as to identify their own development needs and access resources made available to support the program. In this way, they draw on the resources when needed and on a regular basis through the year. By doing so, participants enhance their qualifications, acquire new learning habits, and use real on-the-job issues and challenges for learning and development. They also make significant contributions to the organization during the development process.

Building Our Future Guiding Objectives are:

- Individuals who become effective leaders – independent, self-directed and accountable - through their personal career development experience
- A leadership mindset that accepts new ideas and develops the individuals who are more open and resilient to change
- Individual contributors who are ready for the challenge when promoted
- A better motivated, versatile leader who is more competent and equipped with a broad range of competencies to meet current and future organizational needs.

Program Components:

1. This one-year development program has the following major components:
   - Program launch including pre-work self-assessment materials such as completing the MBTI, and other exercises
   - 2-day Career Assessment Workshop & preparation of Learning Contract
   - Learning Teams with external Mentors
   - Learning Project with internal Sponsor
   - Program Evaluation Process: Follow-up Impact Questionnaire.

Building Our Future is linked to the strategic plan through the succession planning process, and the operational plan as an "add-on" to the performance management process. Participants continue with their current work assignments and are expected to maintain normal performance throughout.

The goals are accomplished through participation in an intensive career assessment process that acts to set the foundation for creating individual learning goals – a Learning Contract. Personal learning goals are accomplished through participation on a learning team. Each team has an external Mentor who acts in a coaching/advisory role. Each team chooses and is charged with a project with both learning and organizational goals to be achieved within 1-year. Each team member is expected to achieve and integrate learning through: on the job activity; participation in their learning team; participation in achieving the project goals and other development activities.

Participants in the program are identified through the succession planning process and are typically in the early stages of their careers. This is a departure from the tradition of waiting until people have reached mid-management before investing in extensive leadership development programs. Demographic pressures as well as historical reductions in "soft skills training" that occurred in the late 1980's and through the 1990's created a dearth of leadership talent. Many Canadian corporations are faced with proportionally large retirements in the next 5 years as baby boomers reach retirement age. This has contributed to a significant shift in how succession planning and development is being viewed and conducted today.

Core principles of adult learning and development were also incorporated into the design:

> When people understand the foundation for learning (assessment) + build their learning plan (goal setting linked to personal and organizational needs) + create the implementation plan (with measurable targets) + practice in the workplace (on-the-job implementation) + receive ongoing support and feedback (from mentors, learning teams, sponsors and supervisors) = accelerated learning and development.

Overview of Key Results

Attrition based Return on Investment

Seventeen participants began the 1st program – 3 did not complete the program: 1 left the company; 2 made internal transfers and were unable to continue due to travel schedules. Given the 2 internal moves are not departures from the company, attrition was <1% after 1 year. Where attrition of high potential employees was 15%, the retention gain was calculated at 3X $60,000 (industry standard cost of replacement of a high potential engineer/IT professional) or $180,000. In this instance the ROI based on reduced attrition was 190%.

This is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Cost of Attrition}}{\text{Program costs}} \times 100 = \text{ROI}$$

Promotions

Of the 14 participants who completed the program, 12 or 86% had a substantive positive change in the level of responsibility. As all participants were interviewed, including the two who had moved to another division, we were aware that the 2 internal transfers were also taking on greater levels of responsibility. This demonstrated the program met with the 4 Program Objectives outlined earlier.

Calculating Contribution-Based Return On Investment (ROI) – the Philips formula

As participants were required to prepare a learning contract with measurable outcomes, a level of complexity was introduced to this development program that is atypical for employing a "level 4" evaluation. Participant-developed learning goals gave us a total of 50 learning results to measure. To simplify, we "clustered" learning objectives into 6 major categories that were also linked back to the program goals. Participants were then asked to provide one example of a measurable accomplishment from one of their learning objectives.

Completing the actual calculation is not complicated. The most challenging aspect was the time it took for participants to identify specific accomplishments or improvements directly attributable to involvement with the program. Having the participants go back to their original learning objectives, was the key to helping them identify various projects that were completed on time, reductions in response time, reductions in overtime or improved productivity. They also needed to research actual costs (for standard hourly wage calculations, cost of goods etc.) through the finance department. This information was not typically available for individuals at this level, nor was it typical for participants to look at their contributions to the organization in this form.

Once participants identified specific accomplishments or improvements attributed to the development program, the next task was to have participants establish a dollar value for their accomplishment. For purposes of this paper we'll call this amount "x". For example, if participants had identified "Reduced Inventory Levels" as one of their accomplishments, they then identified the percentage reduced, the specific inventory impacted, and the dollar value of that inventory. If a company did not need to carry extra inventory, then there would be definite savings due to less materials ordered and less warehouse storage facilities/space required.

The amount identified then needed refinement. Two questions were asked to help participants evaluate the dollar value of their contribution, and relate it directly to their program. The first question asked what level of confidence the participant had in their own estimated valuation. For purposes of this paper we'll call this amount "a". They rated it on a 0% to 100% personal confidence scale - 0% meaning the participant has no confidence in the estimate that they provided, they don't believe the number at all, and 100% meaning they were absolutely certain of the dollar value that they attributed to their accomplishment.

The second question asked what percentage, from 0-100%, of the estimated accomplishment can be attributed directly to the development program. For purposes of this paper we'll call this amount "b". This question takes into account the fact that participant learning does not take place in a vacuum. While involved in the development program, they also learn from other sources. The question causes the participants to think about the influence of factors that are unrelated to the program, but may have contributed to the success of their accomplishments.

Once the above information is gathered, the ROI is calculated for the program, with the added confidence that the amounts were not inflated. The initial dollar values provided by each participant are recorded as "x". Multiply "x" by the confidence percentage provided, then multiply that number by the external influences percentage provided. The formula is as follows: *(x X a)X b = individual attributed amount*. This calculation is done with the results provided by each participant. Once complete, all of the refined numbers are added to get the aggregate total of company savings brought about by the program. For purposes of this paper we'll call this amount "acs".

Having calculated the overall savings, the next step is to calculate the total expense that the program has cost the client organization. To do this, all costs associated with the program, both hard and soft, are added together. These costs include, but are not necessarily limited to, the program costs, venue costs, transportation fees, meals, supplies and participant salaries for 'down-time' to attend the program. All expenses are added together for the total expense amount. For purposes of this paper we'll call this amount "te".

To determine program ROI, divide the aggregate company savings "acs" by the total expenses "te", then multiply that number by 100. The final result is the Return on Investment, ROI.

$$\frac{\text{Aggregate Company Savings}}{\text{Total Expenses}} \times 100 = \text{ROI }\%$$

Examples of individual accomplishments, from which the ROI process begins:

- Realized revenues from obsolete inventory reduction, $2+million
- Improved leadership coaching of poor performing employees in my unit, which resulted in reduced overtime – saving $1,200. pr. week.
- Improved effectiveness of team set up – saving $10,000. pr. year.
- Reduced cycle time for customer deliveries by 1-day pr. month.

Participant Questionnaire Sample:

I. Please identify any specific accomplishments/improvements that you have made and can attribute to your involvement in this program (project completed on time, reduced response time, reduced overtime, improved productivity, etc.

II. What specific value in Canadian Dollars can be attributed to the above accomplishments/improvements (use first year value only)? While this is a difficult question, try to think of specific ways in which the above improvements can be converted to monetary units. Use first year values along with the monetary value; and please indicate the basis of your calculation.

III. What level of confidence do you place on the above estimation? (0%=No Confidence, 100%=Certainty)

IV. Other factors often influence improvements in performance. Please indicate the percent of the above improvement that is related directly to this program. (In most learning situations it is recognised that there are a number of factors that will influence improved performance. Here we are asking you to estimate the direct influence of this program on your development, over the past year).

V. Please explain.

Qualitative Results

Participants were asked to respond to a questionnaire to determine the qualitative outcomes after one year of participation in the program to determine the level of movement or development in the areas where the participants had their learning contracts. A scale allowed participants to mark their starting point and current position, and allowed for the variety of "starting points" of the participants' development – as not all participants start at "0" or at the same place in their learning. This information would also be used to assist the participant with on-going development once the 1st year of the program was complete.

Example Question:
Please describe your learning objectives and the outcomes using the following format:
At the beginning of the development period (date) how capable were you in using the skills/competence you wished to develop. At the present time (date) how far have you moved in your comfort in using the skills/competency you chose to develop.

Using a 10-point continuum (from –5 to +5) scale, the average change for this group was 3.6 points of movement; highest was 7 points and lowest 2 points – for all 50 individual learning goals.

Participants were asked to rate the various elements of the program including a 2nd evaluation of the career assessment workshop (1-year after attending the workshop). The Career Assessment Workshop result was 4.8 on a 5 point scale immediately following its delivery; 1 year following, the rating was 4.5 on the 5 point scale. We consider this positive feedback as traditional level 1 evaluations show significant and dramatic declines as short as 6 months following the training session.

Example Question:
Please rate, on a scale of 1-5, the relevance of each of the program elements to your creating and supporting your learning objectives, and implementing your learning strategy. (1) Indicates no relevance, (5) indicates highly relevant.

Overall program elements were rated as follows – (on a 5-point scale, with 5 high)

Introductory session	4
Assigned pre-work	3
Off site (career assessment workshop)	4.5
Being a member of learning team	5
External mentors	5
Group project	3
Learning team monthly meeting	4

To see how this program influenced other elements of organizational effectiveness beyond the scope of the program objectives, participants were asked to rate their development on key organization-wide leadership competencies as follows (1-low / 5-high):

Q: Indicate the extent to which you think this "Developing Our Future" program has influenced your personal development in each of the following leadership qualities for you personally:

Strategic thinking	4
Interpersonal skills	4
Ability to manage dynamic relationships	4
Clarity in communicating	4

Complex problem solving	4
Establishing clear goals and objectives	3.5
Building networks and coalitions	5
Conflict resolution strategies	4

Participants were asked to rate their performance against standard productivity indicators as follows:

Q: Indicate the extent to which you think this "Building Our Future" program has influenced each of the following measures in your work unit, department or business unit (using a 5 point scale – 1 – no influence, 5 - very high influence):

Productivity	3.8
Customer service response time	3.5
Cost control	2.5
Employee satisfaction – morale	4
Customer satisfaction	3.8
Quality	3
Teamwork across functions	4.5

Summary and Conclusions

Traditionally, it has been a challenge for Human Resources Consultants, Career Consultants and Performance Improvement Consultants to demonstrate the tangible and measurable value of career assessment and development programs within a corporate environment. This paper demonstrated established methods of calculating ROI – showing the return on investment on dollars spent on this intervention. In this form, the consultant may present to senior executives and financial executives the bottom line value of the program to the organization. The example of Bombardier Aerospace Inc., Toronto Canada, Building Our Future, an accelerated career development and learning program, is a strategic initiative that is linked to the succession plan and operational plan for the organization.

This program demonstrated an ROI value to the organization of 3000% in one-year, and untold benefits to the individuals in the enhancement of their qualifications, developing new learning habits, and building effective networks. The method of determining ROI can be integrated into new programs and may be added to existing program evaluation processes. By demonstrating value in outcomes, consultants will make significant contributions to the success of their client organizations.

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Career Optimism: Strategies for Reenergizing Workers in Times of Change

Roberta Neault, Ph.D.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century organizations find themselves facing a predicted shortage of skilled workers across occupations and industries as the baby boomer generation exits the workforce in unprecedented numbers. Recruiting and retention have become hot boardroom topics.

Ironically, however, even as we look ahead to a time when workers will be in great demand, we find ourselves in the midst of major corporate restructuring that is resulting in layoffs, budget cuts, belt-tightening, and a general uncertainty about what the immediate future holds. The "global economy" has suddenly taken on new meaning as nations around the world join the United States in a war against terrorism. We can only imagine what impact the events of this autumn will have on the future world of work.

Effective Career Management

Many individuals are looking for help and guidance as they try to "manage" their careers in these turbulent times. The career sections of major bookstores are bulging with new titles. The Internet provides immediate access to career advice. Professional journals, popular magazines and daily newspapers all have career sections brimming with tips for success. Professional associations bring in guest speakers to talk with their members about career management strategies. Coaches and counselors work with individuals and small groups to help them set and achieve career goals. Corporate managers are being asked to develop career and professional development plans with each of their employees. With all of the career information available today, however, how do we know what really works?

A detailed review of the current career literature revealed nine career management themes—attitudes and strategies that are believed to contribute to career success and job satisfaction (Neault, 2001). Individuals are encouraged to be (1) flexible, (2) persistent, (3) willing to take risks, (4) planful and goal-oriented, (5) optimistic and (6) engaged in continuous learning and professional development activities. They are also told to (7) network with others, both inside and outside of their organizations, (8) manage their money to handle downtimes between projects and (9) find balance between their work and personal lives.

For career coaches and managers to provide meaningful direction to their employees and clients, it is essential to discover which of these attitudes and strategies have the most impact on career success and job satisfaction. In a recent survey, a group of Canadian managers from a large utility company were surveyed to determine which career management activities and beliefs most contributed to their career success and job satisfaction (Neault, 2001). The results were somewhat surprising.

Flexibility

We know from surveys of employers (e.g., Conference Board of Canada 2000+) that flexibility is a highly valued attribute for most employees. It was not surprising, therefore, that flexibility was a strong predictor of career success in the Canadian study. It is worth noting, however, that flexibility was not a good predictor of job satisfaction. Perhaps some employees, by being flexible enough to accommodate the needs of the organization, are sacrificing their personal satisfaction in order to achieve career success.

Planfulness

Career counselors, coaches and managers encourage individuals to set career and learning goals and then to implement plans to achieve those goals. In this study, however, planfulness did not turn out to be a significant predictor of career success. Even more surprising, it was a negative predictor of job satisfaction. This should not be interpreted to mean that career planning causes one to become dissatisfied. Rather, a more likely explanation is that workers who are satisfied with their jobs are not engaging in career planning activities. This, too, has implications for career coaches and managers who are trying to help workers more effectively manage their careers during turbulent times.

It was also interesting that planfulness did not correlate with flexibility in this survey of managers. Although several theories that inform career development suggest that both of these characteristics facilitate effective career management (e.g., Planned Happenstance theory, Krumboltz, 2000; Positive Uncertainty, Gelatt, 1991), perhaps it is unreasonable to expect workers to be planful and goal-oriented while at the same time remaining flexible enough to meet the changing demands of their organizations.

Continuous Learning

Long believed to be important to ongoing professional development and career success, in the Canadian study continuous learning was the best predictor of job satisfaction. This has implications for "selling" continuous learning as a career management strategy—it seems to enhance an individual's experience of work even more than it contributes to career success by benefiting the employer.

Flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997) might offer some insight into this phenomenon. Research suggests that the flow experience (i.e., becoming immersed in an enjoyable and engaging activity) is largely a function of matching skills to challenge. Many employees find a particular job exciting until they have fully mastered the required skills. After that point, unless challenging new tasks are added to their workload, they may begin to find the job boring. Continuous learning, therefore, becomes a tool to keep an individual in flow. Learning helps enhance skills to meet new work challenges and also offers intrinsic challenges that help to keep work interesting.

Optimism

The most interesting finding of the Canadian study, however, was that optimism was the only significant predictor of both career success and job satisfaction. The remaining career management attitudes and strategies in the study (i.e., persistence, risk-taking, work-life balance, networking, and financial management) made relatively little difference to either success or satisfaction.

In uncertain times, then, how can managers and coaches help workers stay optimistic about their careers? The rest of this paper will present a framework for managers, coaches and corporate leaders that highlights essential elements for effective career management programs. Stories of people who kept their hope alive and reenergized their careers despite major challenges and unexpected events will illustrate tips and strategies for fostering optimism at work.

Keeping Hope Alive: Building an Optimistic Workforce

Optimism is an attitude—according to Seligman (1990), an attitude that can be learned. Optimism is also one of the competencies in emotional intelligence (EQ) and EQ is considered by some to be a better predictor of career success than technical skills or general intelligence (Goleman, 1998).

Optimistic individuals tend to share some common traits: faith and a sense of purpose, a belief in their organization or industry, and a belief in themselves. If optimism is learnable, then, it follows that coaches and managers can help to enhance the optimism of their employees.

Hopeful people tend to believe that the future will work out and that life has purpose and meaning. One recent participant in a transition program shared that her faith in God has helped her to make sense of her unexpected job loss and to stay optimistic about future work possibilities. Another client, who had to fly immediately after the recent terrorist activity, reported that she wasn't at all afraid because she had a strong faith that there was a plan for her life and she was prepared to accept whatever might happen. Several participants in a cancer support group that I facilitate have shared similar stories—having a sense of purpose and a spiritual faith has kept them going during very difficult times. Their attitudes remain upbeat and optimistic, even in the face of death.

Managers and coaches, then, might want to help employees make sense of changes in the organization, find purpose and focus for their work, and understand how their contributions to the organization make a meaningful difference. Some workplaces are going beyond that, recognizing the importance of spirituality and offering workshops to help employees explore and develop that aspect of their lives.

Optimistic, hopeful people also tend to believe in the future potential of their occupational field, organization or industry. They are able to weather storms because they believe that the future looks bright. A recent conference participant, for example, told me that he is excited about the technological changes in his field and delighted to be part of a dynamic industry. His energy and enthusiasm infected the room full of other participants who were focused solely on recent cutbacks and layoffs.

Managers and coaches can enhance this belief in a positive future by clearly communicating corporate plans, sharing information that puts the organization's place within the industry in perspective, and supporting individuals to join relevant professional associations where they will stay up-to-date within their fields by getting cutting-edge information.

Finally, optimistic, hopeful people tend to believe in themselves. In the career development field there has been a focus in recent years on career resilience (Collard, Epperheimer & Saign, 1996). One dictionary definition of resiliency is "cheerful buoyancy"—a resilient individual, then, could be expected to have an optimistic attitude.

Other recent literature highlights the importance of an "entrepreneurial spirit" to career success (Neault, 1997). Most entrepreneurs that I know would certainly fit the profile of "eternal optimists." They are able to let go of the old to make room for the new and are talented at finding a niche for their products and services. They have a "can-do" attitude—focusing on new possibilities and how to overcome obstacles rather than grieving or complaining about things that are outside of their control.

Managers and coaches can also help enhance self-esteem in their employees and clients. An essential element of meaningful coaching is providing clear feedback on observed performance. To foster optimism, then, it would be essential to "catch employees doing good" and offer specific insights into their strengths and marketable skills. Most individuals assume that if they are able to do something well, so is everyone else. They are unable to see themselves objectively against a backdrop of their peers. External support people such as managers and coaches can help individuals benchmark their skills against best practices in the field and gain a clearer understanding of how much they really have to offer. Comprehensive self-assessments and other career resources can also help individuals develop an accurate self-portrait.

Individuals who know that they have skills currently in high demand in their organization or industry also have every reason to be optimistic. A year or so ago, during the peak growth period for high-tech industries, my clients who lost their jobs with one organization had very little trouble finding work with another one. They remained optimistic because they knew that their skills were "hot" and highly marketable at the time.

Managers and coaches, then, with organizational support, can foster optimism by helping their clients and employees access the educational and professional development opportunities that will ensure employment readiness for future changes in their fields.

Career Management Programs: Essential Elements

As managers and coaches are given greater responsibility for helping individuals to manage their careers in these turbulent times, a framework for programs and services that promote career success and job satisfaction might be helpful. Many managers and coaches tasked with career management responsibilities have never been specifically trained in career development. Therefore, one essential element for effective career management is to provide such training.

When I helped set up a career transition centre for one large corporation, one of my responsibilities was training a group of internal human resource (HR) managers and external consultants—none with a previous background in career development. To begin, I had to provide an overview of career development models and theories as a foundation for specific career management tips and strategies.

Next, I introduced a variety of self-assessment tools using "The Wheel" (Amundson & Poehnell, 1996) as a comprehensive framework. The Wheel highlights eight components to assess in individuals making career decisions: skills, interests, values, personal style, significant others, education, work and leisure experience, and labour market trends.

I also introduced specific tools and resources for accessing labour market and career information. The managers and coaches, as would be expected, had no prior knowledge of resources that career practitioners use on a daily basis. As a result of this segment of the training, together we built a career resource library for transition centre participants; bookmarked a number of important career-related internet sites; ordered daily newspapers, relevant trade publications, and college and continuing education calendars; and developed bulletin boards (physical and on-line) for posting relevant career and labour market information.

Additional training focused on techniques to help individuals deal with career transitions, make career decisions, set specific goals, and develop career action plans. Some of these skills are not specific to career development so the managers and coaches had a strong existing base of knowledge on which to build. In a few cases, though, managers did not have experience giving clear and direct feedback. The importance of this to career management, therefore, had to be emphasized if participants were to be able to move on successfully to their next careers.

Training the managers and coaches about effective job search techniques and alternatives to full-time work was also important. To equip them to take on career coaching responsibilities, I presented the basics of great resumes, the full gamut of interview practices, and tips for negotiating job offers—all skills outside the realm of their regular work as managers and coaches.

This training program, of course, was specific to a career transition centre. While most of the components would also apply to any career management program in an organization (or community), within organizations there needs to be an additional focus on supporting employee training and development. Managers and coaches, then, require skills to help individuals develop learning plans, identify training resources, effectively manage time to accommodate learning, acquire study skills, and access the funding that they need.

Career Management in the Midst of Change

Planned happenstance theory (Krumboltz, 2000) provides a model for career management that offers individuals a sense of control in the midst of turbulent, chaotic times. Built on the foundation of serendipity, or unexpected chance occurrences, an underlying theme of the theory is that individuals can (and do, to a certain extent) create their own luck. Managers and coaches might find that introducing planned happenstance theory to individuals with whom they work will help foster an optimistic, hopeful attitude as those individuals regain a sense of control over their careers.

Krumboltz (2000) offers four steps for preparing to "seize the moment." First, it is essential to acknowledge that uncertainty is natural and unavoidable. However, it may be useful to examine what actions an individual has taken that actually contributed in some way to a lucky or unexpected event. Second, it helps to transform natural curiosity into opportunities for growth and development. Actively pursuing interests and passions can open up unexpected new doors. Next, Krumboltz suggests that consciously visualizing a hoped-for future and then formulating an action plan to bring that vision to life may contribute to the likelihood of "lucky accidents" occurring. He quotes Tom Peters as saying, "There are strategies that you can pursue to lure luck out of hiding." Finally, to capitalize on happenstance or serendipity, it is essential to identify and overcome our many blocks to action. Sometimes these blocks are disguised as deeply held beliefs about careers.

Keeping Hope Alive

Technology, meant to simplify our work, has made it possible to work anytime, anywhere. For some workers, this means that work is difficult to escape—they find themselves on call 24 hours per day, every day of the week. The result, in many organizations around the world, is a workforce of people who are struggling to remain productive—people who have lost hope in their careers. Some folks are biding their time until retirement, hoping that their organizations will pay them to leave early. Others, overwhelmed by the stress of change and increasing work responsibilities, are taking sick leave or quitting their jobs because they no longer believe that their work situations will improve.

Managers and coaches are in a unique position to ignite a new spirit of hope and optimism in the workplace. We know from the research reported in this paper that optimism is linked to both career success and job satisfaction. We also know that many managers and coaches are presently tasked with helping people to manage their careers—usually with no specific training as career specialists. It is hoped that the information presented in this paper will serve as a benchmark for managers and coaches, both to help them identify their own knowledge gaps and to encourage them to access the training and support they need. An optimistic workforce is both satisfied and successful. Managers and coaches can help to keep hope alive during these turbulent times.

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The Cutting Edge for Counselors: Licensure

Dean Porter, MS, NCC, NCCC, RPCC

Counselor licensing is an important issue in California. The following presents the current licensure situation in California, how other states handle licensure, the background of counselor licensure in California, possible solutions for California's licensure dilemma, the current effort toward licensure, and recommendations for the next steps to take.

The Problem

General Practice Counselors are not licensed in California. The only legislation that regulates counselors in California was enacted in 1964 to license one specialty of counseling, that of marriage, family and child counseling. These Marriage, Family and Child Counselors (MFCCs) are now called Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs). The license is administered by the Board of Behavioral Science Examiners, which also licenses Social Workers and Educational Psychologists. (CA Business & Professions Code, Marriage, Family Child Counselors, Chapter 13) There are approximately 29,000 MFTs in California.

California has never licensed general practice counselors or other counseling specialties at the master's level. Examples of these specialties are career, rehabilitation, community, mental health, geriatric, community college, etc.

Why The Lack Of A General Practice Counselor License In California Is A Problem

The public is not protected. Without the title protection and legal definition provided by licensure, anybody could claim the title "counselor". This leaves the public with no way to differentiate qualified practitioners from untrained and unscrupulous practitioners offering counseling services. Absent licensure there is no mechanism for enforcing professional standards or for holding practitioners accountable for their actions. Without licensure consumers must go through the civil courts. Even if the court finds in favor of the client, the practitioner does not have a license to be taken away and can continue to provide services to the public.

Persons, not products, are at stake in counseling situations. When barbers and manicurists are required to be licensed in our state, how do we explain there being no legal requirements for counselors, whose task it is to work with people and their futures?

California is clearly out of sync with the rest of the country when it comes to licensure of counselors. Currently there is no portability of California credentials to and from other states. Licensed counselors coming from other states are restricted from practicing in California unless they can comply with the marriage and family therapy specialty. In turn, this unique California license is not recognized by other states. Professional Counselors, fully licensed in other states as general practice or mental health counselors, must specialize in marriage and family therapy to continue their practice in California. In addition to needing 12 units of marriage, family and child counseling and marital and family systems approaches to treatment in their graduate training, they must add at least two semesters in California law and ethics, 250 hours supervised experience in California, and take the California MFT exam.

State funds are being used to educate counselors who cannot get licensed to practice in California. Although students pay tuition at taxpayer-supported California state universities (or receive state/federal aid) and receive a Master's Degree in Counseling, they can only be licensed if they have specialized in marriage and family therapy as part of their graduate program. For example, school, career, rehabilitation and community college counselors who have a Master's Degree in Counseling are not eligible for licensure. School counselors, although credentialed by the State Board of Education, are restricted from practicing outside the school setting.

State-funded agencies required to hire licensed counselors are restricted to hiring marriage and family therapists or social workers, when masters prepared career or rehabilitation counselors might better fill the need and increase flexibility for these agencies.

What Other States Do About Counselor Licensure

Forty-five states, plus Washington D.C., have passed some form of counselor credentialing legislation. This general practice license is most often called the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). A few states use Certified Professional Counselor (CPC) and a few states specifically regulate mental health counseling with a credential such as Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC). California, Hawaii, Nevada, Minnesota, New York have no counselor licensure, although New York is close. There are about 60,000 Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) in the U.S. licensed by their states.

Thirty-seven states regulate Marriage Family Therapists (MFTs). Some states have a separate board for MFTs; other states regulate general practice counselors (LPCs) and MFTs under a composite board.

Sixteen states regulate rehabilitation counseling either as part of the LPC or separately. Thirty states regulate career counseling with the LPC. All fifty states regulate school counselors through their state departments of education.

Forty-three of the forty-five states with counselor licensure use a national examination in their licensure process. They use the National Counselor Examination (NCE) and /or the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling examination (NCMHCE) administered by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC). Visit the NBCC website at www.nbcc.org. Six states accept the NCE or the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Examination (CRCE). Two states use their own exam.

The Difference Between Counselors and Therapists

The scope of practice for Marriage and Family Therapists in California reads, "...the practice of marriage, family and child counseling shall mean that service performed with individuals, couples, or groups wherein interpersonal relationships are examined for the purpose of achieving more adequate, satisfying and productive marriage and family adjustments. This practice includes relationship and premarital counseling ... methods include, but are not limited to, the use of applied psychotherapeutic techniques to enable individuals to mature and grow within marriage and the family, and the provision of explanations and interpretations of the psychosexual and psychosocial aspects or relations." (California Business and Professions Code, Chapter 13, Section 4980.02)

"The term professional counselor is used to represent those persons who have earned a minimum of a master's degree and possess professional knowledge and demonstrable skills in the application of mental health, psychological, and human development principles in order to facilitate human development and adjustment throughout the life span. Professional counselors prevent, diagnose, and treat mental, emotional or behavioral disorders and associated distresses that interfere with mental health. They help people of all functioning levels grow mentally, educationally, spiritually, and in terms of careers.

Professional counselors are found in a variety of work settings including mental health centers, rehabilitation agencies, private practice, hospitals, elementary through senior high schools, universities, nursing homes, career centers, government, and business and industry. What makes professional counselors unique from their peers in other mental health disciplines is their 'wellness' orientation. While trained to understand pathology and mental illness, professional counselors take a preventive approach to helping people and are trained to use counseling treatment interventions which include principles of development, wellness, and pathology that reflect a pluralistic society." (American Counseling Association, Counselor Licensure Legislation: Protecting the Public)
www.counseling.org/resources/licensure-legislation.htm.

Neither the American Counseling Association (ACA) nor the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) recognizes California's MFT license as a counselor credential.

The Difference Between Credentialing, Licensure and Certification

Licensure is a legislatively established process of credentialing which grants a practitioner the legal right to practice through law. It restricts this right to only those persons who hold a license. State laws vary. Some will protect both the title and practice of the profession (practice acts or laws). Others will protect only the title granted to practitioners (title acts or laws).

Certification grants the use of a title by verifying certain qualifications; it does not involve the authorization to practice a profession nor does it regulate the profession. Credentialing encompasses a broad spectrum of efforts to establish professional training standards and regulations for practice.

A General Practice License Rather Than A Specialty License

The American Counseling Association (ACA), representing 52,000 professional counselors, supports a single, inclusive, scope of practice model of licensure which is representative of the full range of practices engaged in by professional counselors. ACA further believes that it is essential to ensure that all professional counselors, regardless of their chosen specialty area(s), are legally entitled to practice within their scope of expertise.

Specialties should be addressed through national standards promulgated by the profession and regulated through national certifying organizations. This means that ACA does not endorse specialty licensure (e.g. separate licenses for rehabilitation counselors, mental health counselors, career counselors, and so on). This is the model that most states have adopted, but state regulatory boards can choose to develop standards for specialty endorsements and rules for how professional counselors can advertise themselves in relation to specialties. (Counselor Credentialing Laws: Scopes of Practice, Language and Tiers, ACA, 1995)

A Possible Solution for California's Licensure Dilemma

The following is a draft proposal presented as a starting point for a movement toward general practice counselor licensure in California:

- Because it is the intent of the Legislature to "protect the public from incompetent, unethical and unprofessional practitioners" (CA Business and Professions Code Division 2, Chapter 13, Article 1, 4980.34);
- Because it was the intent of the legislature in amending the Marriage, Family and Child Counseling law in 1986 that it would serve as a "model professional licensing standard" and "the Legislature would continue to upgrade all other mental health professions" and "apply these standards as may be appropriate to those professions" (AB 3657, Section 1, (c);
- Because in the state of California there is a vital public need for competent counselors with a range of skills and knowledge beyond those recognized in the current law governing Marriage and Family Therapists, Social Workers and Educational Psychologists;
- Because 45 states license "Professional Counselors" or "Mental Health Counselors", who address a variety of counseling issues, and 38 of these states use the National Counselor Examination (NCE), administered by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), for licensure and certification, and because counselors who meet the licensing requirements of 45 states cannot move to California and practice unless they become Marriage and Family Therapists;

Therefore, it is proposed that the Legislature bring its licensing requirements in line with 45 other states by adding "Licensed Professional Counselor"(LPC) to the existing law.

"Licensed Professional Counselors" would be defined as all Master's level counselors not covered by current California licensure who meet the following requirements:

1. Education: Completion of a regionally accredited Master of Science in Counseling program (or a related field) with a minimum of 48-semester (or 72 quarter) units with specified counseling coursework;

2. Examination: Successful passage of the National Counselor Exam (NCE);
3. Ethics: Compliance with the Code of Ethics of the ACA and NBCC;
4. Experience: Document two years of post-masters counseling experience with 3,000 hours of work as a counselor and 100 hours of face-to-face supervision over the two year period.

All counselors with a current designation as National Certified Counselor (NCC) by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification, Registered Professional Counselor (RPC), Registered Professional Career Counselor (RPCC) or Registered Professional Rehabilitation Counselor (RPRC) of the California Registry of Professional Counselors and Paraprofessionals, or licensed counselors from other states would be automatically accorded the designation of Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) at the time of the passage of this legislation.

After becoming licensed as a Licensed Professional Counselor, practitioners could earn a specialty designation, such as Licensed Professional Career Counselor, Licensed Professional Rehabilitation Counselor, etc., by meeting the standards determined by the professional organization of that specialty, or hold a certificate from the state or national credentialing body of the specialty.

The Background of Counselor Licensure Efforts in California

In 1984 the CA Business and Professionals Code was amended to require career counselors to be licensed as employment agencies. Requirements for licensure included a high school diploma, a $10,000 bond, a $300 exam on running an employment agency, and an annual fee of $300. In 1988 California Career Development Association (CCDA) member, Norma Zuber, led an effort to enact an appropriate career counselor law (A.B. 4638), which would incorporate the standards set by the National Career Development Association (NCDA) and the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), including the National Career Counselor Examination (NCCE). This bill died in committee. Some of the resistance was due to the legislature's reluctance toward regulation of any industry, lack of documented numbers of potential licensees, and lack of complaints from the public about career counselors. Although a professional career counselor license was not achieved, the legislature did become aware of the inappropriate inclusion of career counselors with employment agencies and in the early 1990's career counselors were deregulated from this unfair situation.

The California Registry for Professional Counselors and Paraprofessionals

Because of the need to identify professional career counselors for the public and for legislators, a group led by Robert Swan, a counselor educator at CSU Long Beach, established the California Registry. The Registry would provide a voluntary certification opportunity for career and rehabilitation counselors. It was established under the California Association for Counseling and Development (CACD) Education Foundation in 1990. The California Rehabilitation Counselors Association (CRCA) joined the California Career Development Association (CCDA) in setting the standard of practice for their members who would apply to The Registry. CCDA set requirements closely aligned with those of NBCC. CRCA used the standards of the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC).

The Registry, which is administered by a volunteer staff and Board of Directors, evaluates applicants, administers examinations and maintains a web site with a directory of those who meet the standard. It currently has 111 Registered Professional Career Counselors (RPCCs), 18 Registered Professional Rehabilitation Counselors (RPRCs) and 121 Registered Career Paraprofessionals (RCPs). In Fall 2000 a third professional category was added. The Registered Professional Counselor (RPC), with requirements similar to the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) as it is defined by other states, allows for general practice counselors to join The Registry. There are currently 44 RPCs in The Registry.

The Current Licensure Effort Was Sparked By Three Emerging Factors

- Factor #1: Since its inception in 1990, The Registry has received inquiries from counselors licensed to practice in their state, planning to move to California and expecting reciprocity. Dean Porter, Executive Director, found herself advising several incredulous callers a week that, in order to be licensed in CA, they must now specialize in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT), necessitating coursework, extra supervision, a unique CA exam, etc. These calls compelled her to study licensure in other states. From this look at licensure across the country, Dean concluded that California is clearly out of sync with the rest of the country when it comes to licensure of counselors. Forty-five states have a general practice counselor license, most often called the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). Our state's only licenses are for Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs), Educational Psychologists and Social Workers. See CA Business and Professions Code, Chapter 13, sections 4980 - 4989. www.leginfo.ca.gov.
- Factor #2: In 1992 the federal government decreed that, in order to receive federal funding, agencies (including the State Department of Rehabilitation) must have licensed or certified rehabilitation counselors.
- Factor #3: In 1998 the legislature approved a bill submitted by the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT) to change the title from MFCC to MFT. Now that California's law names only therapists, the timing may be right to introduce a counseling law, because counseling is different than therapy.

In 1998 the California Career Development Association (CCDA) Board endorsed a draft proposal (page 6 of this document) for a general practice counseling bill. It suggests an educational requirement of a master's degree in counseling (or a related field) with 48 semester-units (72 quarter-units) and use of the NCE for the examination requirement. Since the proposed license would be a general practice counseling license and since the California Association of Counseling and Development (CACD) would represent a larger constituency than the California Career Development Association (CCDA), it was determined that the licensure effort be launched by CACD. In 1999 CACD appointed a Licensure Task Force, to be chaired by Martin Rosenberg, with $500 to cover its expenses.

In 2000 the CACD Executive Council endorsed the concept of counselor licensure legislation, authorized CACD joining a coalition seeking licensure, and allocated $2,000 to cover licensure retreat expenses. Task Force members contacted ACA and NBCC regarding model legislation and available technical support, consulted with the chairs of the recent licensure efforts in Pennsylvania and New York, met with the consultants for the California State Senate Business and Professions Committee and the Assembly Consumer Protection Committee, where the comprehensive Sunrise Questionnaire was received, presented licensure workshops at conferences, distributed a survey, resulting in over 200 members signing up to help, and contacted the Board of Psychology regarding Psych Interns' potential for licensure.

In 2001 a licensure retreat, hosted by Susan Zgliczynski at University of San Diego, was held with over 50 counselors of many specialties attending. Representatives of NBCC and ACA spoke about licensure from a national perspective. The following teams of counselors were formed: A six-month leadership team to plan a Northern California retreat for September 2001, a team to produce a licensure brochure, a database team (200+ counselors are now in a database), a communication person (an e-group is in place), a funding team, and a team to address the Sunrise Questionnaire. The CACD Ed Foundation allocated $1300 to produce and distribute a counselor licensure brochure.

Recommendations For Next Steps

Before proceeding with legislation the following questions need to be answered by California counselors:

1. Are there enough counselors who want LPC licensure badly enough to give the time and money, over a period of years, that this is going to take?
2. Are there sufficient numbers of potential LPCs to get the attention of legislators?
3. Can the case be made that the public is being harmed under the current circumstances?
4. Can counselors agree on what they want?

If the answers are "yes", a coalition of representatives of California counseling organizations needs to be formed to accomplish the following with the help of the existing teams:

- Assign elements of required documentation (Sunrise Questionnaire, a 35-page request for a license) to those with relevant expertise
- Develop the necessary funding
- Agree upon working definitions of counseling tasks, functions, requirements, and competency measurement
- Write and circulate a draft of the required documentation to coalition members for review and consensus.
- Collect documentation of cases where consumers have been harmed
- Develop a timeline for introduction of legislation
- Develop "talking points" to be used to educate counselors and legislators
- Develop language to be included in a bill
- Build grassroots support of a bill
- Select a lobbyist and an author for a bill

Conclusion

Counselors who would like to help get legislation for the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) designation in California should complete and submit the California Licensure sign-up form to indicate ways in which they are willing and able to become involved. The experience of other states tells us that we need to build a large grassroots organization with a well organized database, raise sufficient funds to hire a lobbyist, collect documentation of consumers who have been harmed by untrained or unethical practitioners, build consensus among counselors so that we speak with one voice, and submit clearly written legislation.

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Dean Porter can be reached at <deanporter@aol.com>

International Career Development Conference 2001

No Frames, No Boundaries: From Job Box to Niche

Shirley Porter, MS
Keith Porter

As humans, we have an insatiable urge to create frameworks and boundaries to guide, separate and categorize ourselves and our endeavors. While we are discovering that human performance and productivity are enhanced when boundaries are transcended, we also know that border-free environments are rare in today's workplace.

As a result, most workers experience significant restrictions and controls on the work they do, with negative impacts on initiative, creativity and productivity. Primary research with hundreds of participants in workshops has produced a method for helping workers successfully mitigate these negative impacts while significantly increasing performance effectiveness and job satisfaction. The method introduces a process called creating a personal workplace Niche.

The Job Box

Despite demonstrably negative impacts on productivity and the human spirit, employers continue to assign and (attempt to) control the work people perform in an old-school manner, applying rigid structures and expectations which can be called the "Job Box." The reigning symbol of the Job Box is the infamous job description, replete with classifications, separations, requirements, skills and qualifications.

Why do employers persist in managing the employment relationship with structures which are outmoded, perhaps even counter-productive? It isn't just employer recalcitrance, since workers often find a level of comfort in rigid structures as well. In large part, our attachment to the Job Box model stems from an entrenched belief that workers' interests are fundamentally at odds with those of employers. The model arose with the Industrial Revolution: employers gathered workers from their pastoral pursuits, paid them and thereby gained the right to exploit them for the employer's benefit. Even though it violates what we know today about the psychology of worker productivity, this model lives on in many people's subconscious attitudes.

The Employer's Role

Another reason for the persistence of the Job Box is the growing propensity for resolving differences—notably in workplace relationships—through litigation. Workers, once a voiceless, fungible resource, have found power through the legal system to establish and maintain their right to be treated fairly.

To reduce abuse and defend against criticism, employers find themselves forced to define the employment relationship with frames and boundaries which standardize, equalize and normalize. Even employers who clearly understand the benefits of a more open, individualized relationship often find themselves powerless to change the structure in the face of hierarchy, tradition and teams of defense attorneys. Therefore, significant movement away from the Job Box is not likely to be generated by employers.

The Worker's Opportunity

With respect to the Job Box, workers today have three choices:

(1) Accept the Job Box model as the "price of admission" and continue to work while keeping one's heart and soul disengaged. Work is tolerated as a necessary evil, but not a source of fulfillment.

(2) Find a position where the Job Box model is replaced with a more modern employment relationship. This will probably lead to a job change and, given the scarcity of such employers and positions, may require self-employment.

(3) Take responsibility for redefining and modernizing one's current employment relationship, replacing the Job Box with something more productive and satisfying.

For many, the third option will seem impractical, if not impossible. But that's a fatalistic view, rooted in the obsolete model of work discussed above, which holds that an individual is powerless to initiate workplace change. In our experience, it is not only possible for change to be initiated and implemented by the worker, it is a necessary condition for significant change to occur. Successful worker-driven change management can be seen as the process of creating a workplace "Niche."

Creating A Niche—A Give-and-Take Process

A successful Niche can be simply defined:

- Improves the fit between you and your work
- You initiate it
- Includes both "give" and "take"
- Both you and your employer benefit

Responsibility for initiating change to create a Niche falls squarely on the worker. While this may seem unfair in light of the employer's broader access to resources and expertise, the worker stands to benefit at least as much as the employer. And, for reasons outlined above, the party to the relationship with the creativity and flexibility to adapt is the worker.

The Niche concept has been introduced to and utilized by hundreds of participants in workshops called "Breathe New Life Into Your Work." A six-step process is introduced for modifying one's employment relationship in ways that are personally and professionally beneficial. The right to make changes is earned by increasing the level of contribution to the employer.

At first blush, workers, having often been told to "do more, with less," feel that the idea of increasing their contribution is onerous. A frequent response is, "Why should I?" The Niche model provides two answers to this question. First, it points to the personal benefits that accrue as "rewards" for increased contributions. Second, as the following example demonstrates, the increased contributions may be relatively insignificant when compared to the potential benefits.

Niche Example

Geena and her colleagues formed a team of seven administrative assistants in an engineering division, each supporting a small group of engineers. The work was semi-technical and pretty routine. She asked if she could use her writing talents and desktop publishing skills to create a monthly newsletter to help the groups overcome petty communications and procedural barriers that had developed. Her newsletter was a great success, and she received special recognition for starting it. More importantly for her, she now had a way to express her creativity, plus an occasional change of pace from her engineering support duties.

Step 1: Your Product

Creating a Niche can begin once two hurdles are cleared. The first hurdle is stepping away from collective conditioning about work to look at the relationship from a different perspective. Instead of employer as "boss" and worker as "pawn," a modern perspective views the relationship as an exchange of value between equals in an open marketplace. Deals are made, sometimes long-term deals, but in the process neither party abdicates rights nor responsibilities. This means that the worker must be clear that she/he is bringing something of value to sell in the marketplace, which can be called a product.

The second hurdle is becoming comfortable with the idea of oneself as a product. This way of thinking may initially seem mechanical and depersonalizing. However, it's a necessary prerequisite for reconceptualizing the employment relationship. Employers always view the worker as a product: a resource with a collection of features (skills, knowledge, abilities) that will help accomplish organizational goals. A worker who understands this perspective will have more highly developed self-knowledge about what she/he is offering to employers, what it's worth, and what personal price she/he is willing to incur to make the deal.

Once these two hurdles are cleared, it's relatively easy—and usually fun—for workers to define their personal product. A product definition considers characteristics relevant to the workplace, including one's personal vision, values, skills, personality type, past achievements and ideal working situation.

As in other career development interventions, these characteristics are assessed through a variety of instruments and techniques. However, an exercise not normally included in career interventions is added: writing a "Product Definition Statement." This activity helps reach objective conclusions about one's preferred role in the work marketplace, and suggests ways to market one's product to current or prospective employers. Details of this approach are provided in steps entitled Create Your Vision and Define Your Product in the book "Me, Myself and I, Inc: 10 Steps to Career Independence" (Impact Publications, 1998).

Step 2: The Fit Between You and Your Job

Creating a Product Definition Statement provides an opportunity to assess how well one's product "fits" one's job. A simple but revealing technique uses a single piece of paper. A large circle and a large square are drawn so that the circle and square overlap but each also has non-overlapping space. The circle represents one's Product Definition, and the square (complete with rigid boundaries) represents the job description.

The important points from one's Product Definition Statement are written within the circle; those utilized on the job are written in the circle/square overlap area, while those not utilized are written in the non-overlapping space. Finally, those activities and responsibilities that are required by the job description but do not match the Product Definition are written into the non-overlapping portion of the square.

The visual effect of seeing what "fits" in the overlap area and what doesn't can be eye-opening. In the previous example, Geena saw a clear fit problem. The structure of her job provided little opportunity to use some important characteristics of her Product Definition Statement: writing skills and influencing team relationships. Graphic evidence of a poor fit has prompted many, like Geena, into action.

Step 3: What's In It For You? The "Take"

Motivation to initiate change is always rooted in a perceived personal benefit. This is the "take" part of the give-and-take Niche equation, which is necessarily personal. In selecting what one chooses to "take" in creating a Niche, one should not reach too far while learning to apply the process. One's long-term goal may be to make sweeping changes, such as job-sharing or assuming more interesting responsibilities. However, the probability of success will be increased if one starts by focusing on smaller, simpler changes while management comes to trust that the organization will also benefit.

Noting the elements of one's Product Definition Statement which do not fit with the current job will suggest "take" opportunities. Examples of other successful Niches can be helpful in generating ideas as well. Four additional Niche examples are included in the final section. It can also be helpful to talk with others who may see things more objectively, generate ideas and overcome pessimism about the probability of success.

In the previous example, Geena realized she would like to modify her routine to increase her job satisfaction by allowing her to express additional creative skills.

Step 4: The "Give"

The other side of the equation, of course, is the "give:" identifying how one's Niche will increase one's contribution and benefit the employer. Note that increasing one's contribution does not necessarily imply that performance has been lacking. However, an objective look at one's relationship with work will always identify areas where increased contributions are possible. A worker who thinks objectively about better meeting an employer's needs (increasing one's contribution) immediately becomes a more important strategic asset.

As with the "take" side, the possibilities for increasing one's contribution are highly individualized. For some, increased contribution opportunities may be immediately apparent. Others may need ideas to prime the pump. Following are five areas where workers can universally increase contributions to employers, with tips for discovering how each might apply:

1. Self Knowledge—Clarifying your product definition, as above, will help bring your skills, knowledge and abilities to bear on solving problems and improving workplace relationships.
2. Continuous Learning—Do you feel bored or unchallenged in your work? Find a way to learn a new skill or take on a new task.
3. Working in Teams—Are you frustrated working with others? Are others frustrated working with you? Study what makes teams work, apply the skills and teach them to others.
4. Customer Service—Do you find it hard to satisfy other people's needs or requests? There's always room for improving customer service, including serving internal customers.
5. Attitude—All of us have times and situations when our attitude could improve. Learn what causes you to develop a bad attitude, and how to keep your attitude from impacting relationships with others.

In the previous example Geena was willing to increase her contribution by initiating something new and putting in personal time to make it happen.

Step 5: Identify Niche Opportunities

The final challenge is to synthesize the "give" and "take" ideas into a Niche which can be implemented. This is a classic brainstorming exercise, where discussing options with other people can be very helpful. Again, it's often best to start with a small change which won't require high-level approval or significant structural modifications. As the examples demonstrate, the benefits of what one takes usually far exceed the price of what's given. However, it's important to remember that a successful Niche must be a win-win situation, with clear benefits for the employer as well.

In the previous example, Geena suggested a Niche as editor of an inter-group newsletter, which would allow her to use creative writing skills and improved team relationships.

Step 6: Selling the Benefits

Finally, the best Niche idea in the world—even a clear win-win opportunity—is pie-in-the-sky until implemented. Generally (but not always) implementing a Niche requires agreement or approval of management. As in any selling situation, success requires understanding the difference between *what* is being sold (features) and *why* the buyer should buy (benefits). A classic mistake occurs when the seller, who has detailed product information, focuses on features instead of benefits. Buyer's don't buy features, they buy benefits which impact them at a personal, emotional level.

In selling one's Niche, features include the changes one seeks and personal benefits that may accrue (the "take" part.) Features may be discussed, but should not become the focus. The Niche idea will be sold by presenting the benefits which positively impact the decision-maker at a subjective, emotional level. Effective benefits ultimately translate into one of these gut-level categories: (1) saves time, (2) saves money, (3) improves the buyer's image or reputation, (4) makes the buyer's job easier or (5) makes the buyer feel better.

In the previous example, Geena sold her Niche not by focusing on how she could use her writing skills to publish a newsletter, but on how her department would save time and perform better with improved communications.

Summary: It's A Skill!

3 The process of creating a workplace Niche is a transferable skill
4 It's not a one-time thing; begin now, keep building your Niche
5 Repeat the process whenever you need to improve the person/job fit
6 Increase your job satisfaction
7 Increase your value to your employer

A successful Niche will prepare one to comfortably answer two tough workplace questions: (1) The boss asks, "What have you done for me lately?" (2) You ask: "What has my job done for me lately?"

Four Additional Niche Examples

(1) Frank, a city recreation supervisor, had experienced several cycles of "do more with less" changes. His work was good and his department was seen as important within city government. Frank was happy he'd been able to keep his job, which he liked, but he saw how the shake-ups had made him feel negative and lowered the morale of those around him. Some people dusted off their resumes and left for greener pastures, but most developed a sort of bunker mentality, keeping out of sight and complaining at every opportunity. Frank, concerned about the low morale, asked his director if there could be a team meeting to involve the employees in helping to reorganize and revitalize their department. The boss agreed, and asked Frank to facilitate the meeting. After the meeting, which brought an immediate improvement in the morale of the department, Frank realized that he enjoyed helping people deal with change. The department's success attracted attention, and Frank was recognized and appointed to a permanent committee to design ways to involve employees in planning for change.

(2) Meg and Florence were both in their thirties, and each had young children. They worked as professional colleagues in the employee development division of a large organization. They were responsible for developing programs to help employees address conflicts between their work and their lives. As the two women worked together they shared their personal circumstances, and found a similar theme: they both wanted more time at home and were willing to have less income, but also wanted to remain professionally active in their field. They developed a plan to share one position, and proposed it to their employer. Their plan was accepted because both had

solid reputations and did good work, and the proposal was in line with the company's goals of improving work/life balance. Now they each work two and a half days per week, and fill in for each other for vacations. The arrangement has worked so well over the past five years that many other job-sharing teams have been created in their company.

(3) Nick, a building engineer, had once been pretty ambitious. He had tried a few times for promotion to supervisor but hadn't been selected, and then the opportunities began to dry up. He resigned himself to working out his career right where he was. Nick was jolted by a performance review when his boss said he met expectations, but wasn't the top guy anymore. His pride was hurt, and he decided he was too young to just go along for the ride. He started taking on special projects, and speaking up in the meetings he disliked. He documented the times he used his experience to help newer engineers. A few months later, Nick's boss told him how pleased he was with his new attitude and that he hoped he'd put in for an upcoming supervisor's opening.

(4) Eva and five other customer service representatives worked with a large number of clients and maintained a single filing system to document their contacts. It had been several years since the filing system had been created, and it had become inconsistent and incomplete as the case load increased and changed. Problems with the filing system had created some low level conflicts within the group. Eva asked her co-workers to join her for a team meeting over lunch, and they agreed on a number of changes in the way they used the system. The changes were relatively simple and didn't need their supervisor's involvement or approval. The group implemented what they agreed on, which solved most of the problems and greatly reduced conflicts within the work group.

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Coaching Clients on Career Opportunities in Entertainment and New Media

Vivian VanLier

"The difference between growing up in Los Angeles and anywhere else in the United States is that everybody knows somebody on TV." Or so a close family friend once told my children when they were young. That was because, in addition to being something of a "big sister" to them, she was a character on a popular television series. It was just a normal part of life to be able to see someone you know quite well on TV. The kids they played soccer and baseball with were kids of people working in front of or behind the cameras. A close teen friend became "an overnight success" and teen idol. They saw TV and movie personalities come to life in local restaurants and bookstores. Overhearing discussions regarding projects in development was (and remains) common. Everyone has a script! Our neighbors were and still are screenwriters, film editors, set decorators, working actors, celebrity assistants, etc. And we don't live in Beverly Hills or another affluent section of L.A. It's just that here, in Los Angeles, entertainment is one of our major industries and it helps drive our economy. In fact, we refer to the Entertainment Industry simply as "The Industry."

In my practice as a Career Coach and Resume Writer, I work with people in all areas of the entertainment industry and I see many clients who aspire toward careers in "the industry." Some have come from other cities, states and countries and are attracted to the glamour and celebrity that they identify with the entertainment industry. I see young people who aspire to be performers, members of production teams, agents, tour managers, celebrity assistants or "anything," just to be around "the industry." I always ask why they want to work in the industry and "how familiar are they with the industry and the way it works?" If they aren't familiar with the way the industry works, I provide them with a brief reality check so they can honestly assess their level of motivation.

Even for those people who have earned degrees in film or television studies or have developed talents in the performing arts, I have found that one thing that was seriously missing from their formal education was an honest perspective of what it means to work in the entertainment industry — especially at the entry level. My objective in this presentation is to provide career professionals with a very brief overview of the industry and how to get that first job, so that they can assist their clients aspiring toward entertainment careers.

The Entertainment Industry Matrix

The entertainment industry can be thought of as a complex matrix. I am defining the industry as composed of four broad areas: Music, Television, Film and Theatre. Each of these areas can be further defined into a multitude of subcategories. Within each of these broad categories are the creative or performing aspect, the production process and the business side. To complete the matrix, the final dimension consists of the pre-production or development phase, the production/performance phase and the post-production process. When you add to this matrix the support and ancillary industries involved, it is easy to see that there are thousands of ways that people can work directly or indirectly in the entertainment industry.

The industry is changing—both in terms of globalization and the impact of technology. These converging trends bring both welcome new opportunities and radical change to existing jobs. Entertainment industries are cropping up in cities throughout the U.S. as well as internationally. Cities large and small have established film commissions to attract and work with production companies, offering opportunities for local professionals, craftspeople and laborers. The market for product throughout the world continues to expand.

As technology and artistry continue to merge into a "new media," whole new areas of opportunity are opening up. Examples include network and film company websites, streaming video and music, and real-time communication between live shows and online in audiences. Websites have to be created and maintained. Product must be developed and produced. We have only begun to see the tip of the iceberg in terms of what is emerging in new media.

The other side of the coin is that technology is also eliminating traditional jobs. An animation artist may develop characters, create color themes, and do turns or poses. But what used to be painstakingly created cel by cel is now generated on a computer screen. Artists are not only generating creative talent but are having to acquire and update computer skills. Whereas Ben Hur may have had a cast of thousands, Gladiator created a coliseum filled with spectators that were mostly computer generated. A fine performance in the recording studio is no longer necessary. Click tracks are created to establish a beat. An orchestra comes into the studio to record the tracks, listening to the beat through a set of headphones. Later the recording artist will perform, wearing headphones that now contain the background music. And then the sound engineer mixes, samples, fixes, adjusts pitches and creates the "music" that eventually becomes a recording. You can draw your own conclusions about the fact that many successful performers have limited talent while many talented individuals have limited success.

Some Random Facts About Working in the Entertainment Industry

While there are some jobs hat are unique to the industry, practically any job you can think of exists within the broad area of entertainment. Hairdressers, designers, chefs, attorneys, financial analysts, maintenance workers, teachers and nannies are all employed in the industry.

Among the realities of the entertainment industry are low pay, long hours and hard work. During production, 19-hour days are not uncommon. There exists a core infrastructure of professionals, executives, and support staff. The typical work hours are 9:00 to 6:00. Much of the day-to-day administration is handled by temps hired by staffing agencies for as long as their services are required.

In the case of production and performance positions, people are hired for specific projects or productions. In television it can be for the duration of a series. Each production is an entity that is formed for a specific project. An infrastructure is created; staffs and crews are hired. When the production is wrapped, the entity ceases to exist.

There is little security in the industry and you are kept as busy as the contacts that hire you. Some experienced production people command handsome hourly or daily rates. However it can be weeks, months and even years between jobs. Most performers and production people work at other day or survival jobs such as bartending and waiting tables. The various unions and guilds set strict guidelines regarding pay and working conditions. Without these protections, people would work for next to nothing just to be part of the action.

Advice From Industry Insiders

In order to better serve my clients, I have interviewed numerous people in all areas of the entertainment industry, both to find out how they got their foot in the door, and to ask what advice they would give to someone aspiring toward an entertainment career. I have talked to music and film producers, directors, performers, film and sound editors, animators, set designers and decorators, hairdressers and makeup artists, writers, business and personal managers, attorneys, production accountants, gaffers, grips, tour managers, baby wranglers and on and on. Their advice is consistently the same. "Be willing to do anything." They also stress the importance of being able to demonstrate that you can handle a busy schedule, meet tight deadlines, remain organized, have a good attitude and be willing to do more than just the requirements of the job. No one denies that it also helps to have the right parents or acquaintances!!

Getting Your Foot in the Door — The First Job

Everyone has to begin at the bottom and, as they say in the industry, "pay their dues." That includes college graduates and post graduates. The industry works like no other industry and in order to move up in it you have to learn its protocols. The most common basic training consists of becoming an assistant, and to illustrate a typical entry-level position, I will focus on the Production Assistant in the film industry.

Securing a position or internship as a Production Assistant is how virtually everyone begins in film. In this position, you are expected to do all the menial jobs that no one else wants to do. You must demonstrate the ability to work in a fast paced environment with constant pressure and to be willing to put your life and plans on hold at a moments notice. Hours can extend well beyond the normal 40-hour week; pay can work out to being under minimum wage. Fetching coffee, delivering scripts, handling busy phones, keeping complex schedules, having cars washed, arranging for baby sitters, and running errands can all be normal parts of the job.

Hollywood lives on meetings and phones. Keeping a well organized Rolodex or database is imperative. Knowing who waits on hold and who does not is part of the power game that needs to be learned in order to position players at the level they need to be perceived. Knowing all the right restaurants, where they are and how long it takes to get to them is a necessity in scheduling "meetings."

In order to be successful at this position, you cannot take other peoples temperaments to heart. If something goes wrong or the "boss" is in a bad mood, it is the assistant who gets the brunt of it. Many production assistants are actually unpaid interns working for college credit. While this "system" seems quite exploitive, from the perspective of industry insiders the production assistant is being provided with a valuable hands on education about the world of entertainment.

If the production assistant perseveres and demonstrates that s/he can handle this busy schedule, meet critical deadlines under extreme pressure, willingly offer take on additional responsibilities, learn the jargon and protocols of the industry, and is in the "right place" someone is likely to take note and offer a position of increased responsibility and pay. It is even possible that s/he will find a mentor who will guide his or her upward progression. Most successful people in the industry have had a mentor and most are happy to assist an aspiring professional who shows promise.

It is important for your client to have some sense of where he or she wants to be in five years, i.e. a creative, business or production path, in order to start out on the right track. It's not easy to move from development to production once you've begun to progress up the ladder. If he/she is interested in a production path, they should try to get some work on a non-union, independent film, even if it's for no pay. Since these are generally very low budget productions, it is an opportunity to gain exposure and hands on experience in a wider range of tasks. This is worth doing even as a volunteer, just for the experience.

Nepotism is Alive And Well in Hollywood

Anyone in the industry will tell you, "It's not what you know but who you know." While that's true of other industries, it is amplified in the entertainment industry. So, advise your clients to get to know who the players are. Working as a production assistant, you will start getting to know people. Keep in touch. Work those contacts. Nowhere is it truer that people like to hire people they know.

So what if you don't know anyone? How do you get that first job? Use guerilla tactics! The advice here is the same as in any other industry. Whether you call it field research or informational interviews, you must identify people in the industry and get to talk to them. Don't ask for a job but let them know that you are trying to learn more about the industry and the particular area they are associated with. Let them know that you respect their time and would appreciate a few minutes to obtain their advice and learn about their careers.

Contact information can be found by researching websites (entertainment companies, guilds, unions, etc.) and through industry publications. The Hollywood Reporter and Daily Variety are the two main entertainment industry daily journals. There are others daily and weekly publications for other areas of the entertainment industry such as Dramalogue for theatre and Billboard for the recording industry. Each year the Hollywood Reporter publishes the "Blu-Book" which is a directory of production companies, production support services, unions, studios and network executive rosters, celebrity contacts and other valuable information. Likewise, L.A. 411 is a comprehensive directory of companies associated with the film industry. Here you will find everything from film studios to production and postproduction companies, caterers, florists, and other ancillary companies that cater to the entertainment industry. L.A. 411 is also published yearly.

As with any job search, identify a potential decision maker; make an initial contact, strive to set up an appointment and if you are successful, come well equipped with focused questions you want to ask. Always ask for referrals to other people you might be able to contact. Respect the person's time, and always send a thank you immediately following your meeting.

A Few Thoughts About Performers

Being passionate about something you love and actually earning a living at it is having the best of both worlds. Working at your talent can provide enormous satisfaction and provide a professional life that is filled with individuals of like minds and the energy that comes from being involved in a creative endeavor. Continue to develop your skills. Practice, perform, and study continuously.

If you are an actor, you will need headshots and representation. Agents, managers and lawyers receive a percentage of your income. If you come across "agencies" that require up front fees, run, don't walk, the other way. Legitimate agencies never charge fees, nor may they under SAG rules. You will have to pay for headshots and composites.

Join a local playhouse or theatre company. This can provide not only experience to put on your resume, but you'll also start making connections.

Conclusion

Hopefully this article has provided some useful information to use in coaching clients who aspire toward careers in entertainment. For those with the passion and the drive to be part of the industry, the rewards can be significant. While only a precious few individuals in the industry actually generate high earnings, being able to be part of this exciting industry is a reward in itself for many. However, it is vitally important to have a realistic view of the working conditions, power structure, and politics or disillusionment and discouragement will be the final result and hopes, dreams and talent will wind up on the proverbial cutting room floor. A good caveat is what one of my entertainment industry friends provided: "Trust no one completely and always be looking for the next break."

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