

## INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL ISSUE (Introduction de l'édition spéciale)

---

### Creation and Mobilization of Counselling Resources for Youth: An Innovation in Collaborative Program Development

---

Bryan Hiebert  
*University of Calgary*

---

#### *Résumé*

En 1989 la Société canadienne d'orientation et de consultation (SCOC) lançait une initiative nationale de 15 millions de dollars dans le but d'améliorer substantiellement le counseling de carrière. Cette initiative permettrait aux jeunes d'entrer sur le marché du travail sans trop de difficulté et par la suite d'y participer plus efficacement. Cette initiative fut intitulée "Conception et globalisation des ressources en counseling pour les jeunes" ou CGRCJ. CGRCJ représente une association entre une fondation, des universités, des collègues, des gouvernements provinciaux, des entreprises privées et plusieurs associations professionnelles et Emploi et Immigration Canada (EIC). Ainsi, CGRCJ représente probablement un programme unique de recherche et de développement de cette envergure au Canada en termes du nombre des subventions, de la portée de son implication et du nombre de ses projets. Cette édition spéciale de la *Revue canadienne de counseling* présente un échantillon des rapports de divers projets. Cet article d'introduction documente le contexte événementiel qui a amené à la concrétisation de la CGRCJ, en soulignant les aspects originaux et collaboratifs de cette initiative, en espérant que d'autres puissent bénéficier de notre expérience en recherche et dans le développement de programmes.

Jusqu'à maintenant, il y a 41 projets sur le point d'être complétée ou déjà complétés. Les articles présentés dans cette édition spéciale de la *Revue canadienne de counseling* ont tous été développés sous l'initiative de la CGRCJ. Les résultats des champs d'étude et/ou le développement conceptuel des programmes sont le centre d'intérêt de ces articles. En fait, la réponse à la demande d'articles fut si bonne et la révision des articles, par nos critiques, si positive que nous avons dû répartir les articles touchant la CGRCJ sur deux publications de la *RCC*. Ainsi, cette édition présente plusieurs des projets de recherche de la CGRCJ et la prochaine édition sera composée des articles n'ayant pu être présentés dans cette édition spéciale. Ces articles représentent un éventail des nouveaux développements

en counseling de carrière pour les jeunes, une orientation considérée de plus en plus importante pour le futur.

In 1989 the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation (CGCF) launched a 15-million-dollar national initiative directed at effecting a substantial improvement in career counselling in order to enable more youth to enter the labour market without serious difficulty and then to participate in it more effectively. The initiative was entitled "The Creation And Mobilization of Counselling Resources for Youth" or CAMCRY. CAMCRY represents a partnership between a foundation, universities and colleges, provincial governments, private business, and several professional associations and Employment and Immigration Canada (EIC). Thus, CAMCRY is likely the largest single research and program development endeavour in the history of counselling in Canada in terms of amount of funding, scope of involvement, and number of projects. This special issue of the *Canadian Journal of Counselling* contains a cross-section of reports on various projects. This introductory paper documents the background events giving rise to CAMCRY, highlighting the novel and collaborative aspects of the initiative, in the hope that others might benefit from our experience in research and program development.

Currently, there are 41 CAMCRY projects nearing completion or already completed. The papers reported in this special issue of the *Canadian Journal of Counselling* have all been developed under the CAMCRY initiative. The field test results and/or the conceptual development of the programs are the focus of the papers. In fact, the response to the call for papers, and the number of papers receiving positive reviewer recommendations, was so great that it was necessary to spread the papers dealing with CAMCRY projects across two issues of *CJC*. Thus, this issue will highlight several CAMCRY projects and the next issue of *CJC* will contain the remaining papers. Collectively, these papers provide a glimpse of **new developments in career counselling for youth**, a focus which many believe will become increasingly important in the future.

#### HISTORY

The roots of CAMCRY date back to the fall of 1986 when several people were exploring the feasibility of operationalizing a dream for creating a dramatic improvement in career counselling for youth. A working paper was developed by four prominent Canadians with expertise in career counselling and/or counsellor training, Dr. Vance Peavy of the University of Victoria, Dr. Bill Borgen of the University of British Columbia, Dr. Conrad Lecompte of the University of Montreal, and Mr. Stuart Conger, formerly a director general with Employment and Immigration Canada (EIC). In January 1987, a 2-day "think-tank," hosted by EIC and chaired by Vance Peavy, was convened to get reactions to the working paper from

leading anglophone and francophone scholars, notable practitioners, and government representatives, from such diverse perspectives as economics, sociology, corrections, psychology, counselling, education, career development, and job training. There was a consensus on the need for improved career counselling for youth, that a truly innovative and creative approach would be necessary, and some convergence on the sorts of factors that needed to be addressed to accomplish such an improvement.

Following this, CGCF undertook to determine if there was sufficient support, interest, and commitment to proceed with the development of a proposal. From the initial surveys, several factors became clear. First, if an impact was to be made on the practice of career counselling, professional associations representing the various groups working with youth in career development areas would need to be key players. Second, colleges and universities would need to be involved because of their role in training career counsellors. Third, provincial governments would have to be involved, especially if the thrust would include youth in school, because provincial departments were in a position to adopt or endorse new programs. Fourth, and most important, a co-ordinated effort involving all of the above-mentioned groups would have the best chance of affecting the career counselling practices of those working with youth, and that it would be an extremely large undertaking just to conceptualize and plan such a project, let alone to co-ordinate and administer it once established.

In the fall of 1988, CGCF received a grant of \$198,000 from EIC to explore the possibility of establishing a network of "Advanced Centres for the Study of Vocational Counselling," housed at Canadian colleges and universities, to design new and creative career counselling interventions for youth. The result of the grant would be an integrated proposal.

The task of preparing a proposal was approached via a series of three planning workshops. Based on the response to the initial survey, letters were sent to 20 universities and colleges, 44 companies, 33 foundations, 22 associations of counsellors, and 34 government departments describing the general scope, direction, and terms of reference of the project and inviting them to attend a planning meeting in December, 1988. The initial planning meeting was attended by 75 people representing 18 universities and colleges, 1 company, 13 associations of counsellors, 5 agencies, and 8 provincial and 5 federal government departments.

The initial planning meeting explored the requirements for innovative projects in career counselling in Canada. To aid that exploration, a series of four concept papers were developed dealing with: requirements for creation and innovation in training, new methods for delivery of services, accountable evaluation, and project management. Participants left the meeting with two tasks. First, to arrange discussions with their respective organizations to determine if there were sufficient resources and expertise

available, and commitment to continue. Second, to develop a draft project proposal before the next meeting.

A second workshop was held January 1989 for the purpose of reviewing draft proposals from the post-secondary institutions which elected to continue. The review was made by a panel that included a world-renowned authority on career counselling, Dr. Donald Super. Several of the projects were deemed to have considerable promise, while others had to be discouraged. Most proposals required revision to make more explicit the research focus, innovativeness, and labour-market impact of the project. In addition, the networking concept of a Centre with several satellite stations was emphasized. It became evident that this concept could apply in some cases, but others would have difficulty arranging the centre concept.

About this same time a National Advisory Committee was established comprising the heads of the Centres, representatives of associations of counsellors, some federal government departments, and one company. To achieve diversity, a mix of both federal and provincial professional associations were involved. At the initial meeting of the National Advisory Committee, two main topics were addressed: dissemination of information and accreditation/certification of training. The associations' representatives agreed to provide the Foundation with a list of their publications which could be used for dissemination of CAMCRY information and with the criteria they would find acceptable for accreditation and certification of the training of career counselling practitioners. Several associations also expressed interest in developing training courses for their members and agreed to integrate CAMCRY training programs into their continuing education and preconference programs.

The third and final planning workshop was held in March 1989 to prepare a final proposal. In the month preceding the meeting the penultimate draft of project proposals were prepared. Because of the condition that all projects obtain matching funds, the project budgets involved extensive negotiations with senior university and college staff, provincial government officials, professional associations' representatives, and personnel from counselling service delivery agencies. In addition, papers were prepared on the ownership of the intellectual property deriving from the projects and on the recognition of the proposed training programs by various professional associations. Finally, the overarching proposal from the Foundation was also drafted.

Subsequently, the draft proposal was completed and several rounds of consultation took place. The proposal was discussed with Innovations and other branches of EIC. Additional information was provided to EIC and where necessary, the proposal was revised. The formal proposal was submitted to the Associate Deputy Minister in March 1989. This was followed, in April 1989, by a meeting between the president and executive director

of CGCF, and the associate Deputy Minister of EIC and several of his key staff. That meeting addressed the nature of the projects, the steps the Foundation would take to maintain quality control of the projects, and some administrative matters such as start-up time, administration procedures, and project monitoring. In the fall of 1989 the Foundation received word that CAMCRY had been approved. The Foundation would receive 7.4 million dollars from EIC to fund the various projects and manage the entire CAMCRY initiative. Together with funding from other partners, the total value of CAMCRY would amount to 15 million dollars.

#### DESCRIPTION

A few facts will provide a picture of the scope of CAMCRY. Currently, there are 41 CAMCRY projects under development at 15 colleges or universities. The National CAMCRY Advisory Committee has representatives from 14 associations representing professionals who are involved in career counselling as part of their jobs. There also are representatives from municipal, provincial, and federal government departments who are involved in education and/or career development and employment at policy and/or service delivery levels.

As the National Advisory Committee began to define its terms of reference, it agreed to take major responsibility for three main tasks, each served by an active subcommittee. The Policy and Standards Subcommittee would compile a self-instructing manual to assist agencies in formulating policy pertaining to the delivery of career counselling. The Training Subcommittee would prepare a set of career counselling competencies and assist in the design and mounting of the counsellor training experiences associated with CAMCRY. The Communications Subcommittee would plan strategies for disseminating information about CAMCRY and its various programs.

The CAMCRY projects are directed to various segments of the youth population, including: school students, young offenders, teenage moms, street kids, at-risk students, drifters, multicultural youth, learning disabled youth, native youth, young social assistance recipients, at-risk college students, and high school girls. The projects utilize a wide variety of delivery methods, including: video disk career information, computerized information bases, computer-guided career exploration, teleconferencing, video tape, print-based instructional materials, and print-based counsellor guides. They also represent a wide variety of interventions, including: locus of control, motivation enhancement, cognitive training, cognitive-behavioural training, distance counselling, assessment methods, job simulations, peer counselling, and mentoring. Most projects are developing a program for youth and also appropriate counsellor manuals. Training will be available to teach counsellors and teachers how to use the materials. The counsellor training aspects of many of the projects are

currently being integrated into a master counsellor training program dealing with career counselling for special youth populations.

#### COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The emphasis on collaboration and consultation in CAMCRY makes it unique in research and program development endeavours in Canada. Typically, in research and program development projects, a competitive model predominates. The usual procedure is for researchers to spend many hours developing a proposal, and then to apply for a grant to fund the project. The granting agency normally has sufficient funds for only a small fraction of the proposals submitted. For example, in the last funding year the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (personal communication, August 1992) was able to support only 10% of the proposals in some areas and even in its most favourable designations was able to fund only 40% of the submissions.

The typical procedure in funding agencies is to send proposals to acknowledged experts for external review and to base the funding decision largely on the reviewers' comments. Most often, reviewers' comments focus on problems with the research or the proposal itself, and in the final analysis, the proposals with the most positives, or least negatives, "win" and all others "lose."

By contrast, CAMCRY was a collaborative venture from its inception. All potentially interested parties were invited to attend the initial planning meeting. Proposal developers were invited to consult project organizers in preparing their proposals. The draft proposals were reviewed by at least three experts, areas for improvement were pointed out, and developers were invited to revise their proposal for the next round of meetings. The master proposal was designed to keep all interested players in the initiative and the requested amount was determined by totalling the individual projects. As often happens, the size of the award was somewhat less than requested. To address this problem, Foundation staff worked with each project to downsize budget and/or find new partners. Several key meetings were arranged between Foundation staff and the potential funders to assist with confirming the funding arrangements.

As projects worked through the various phases of program development, the collaboration continued. After projects had completed an extensive literature review of their proposed client population and validated the results of that review against the feedback from local focus groups of youth, a comprehensive concept paper summarizing the literature review and outlining the intended intervention was prepared. This concept paper was given to an acknowledged expert in the field, chosen by the project developer, and a "Specifications Conference" was held. The Specifications Conference focused on the strengths of the concept paper and the proposed program, and provided specific suggestions for how the

project could be improved. This is in stark contrast to the negative focus often associated with external review and was universally acknowledged by all projects as a positive experience that spawned improvements in the program.

As CAMCRY entered the start-up phase, some projects found that they had to withdraw because of changing institutional priorities, staff relocation, and/or promised partner funding not materializing. This made some money available for new projects and a request for proposals was issued. Again a collaborative approach was used. Interested people were invited to submit a preliminary prospectus. Foundation staff then worked with promising prospectuses to develop a proposal that was in line with the CAMCRY mission. This produced several excellent projects which contributed to the diversity of populations that CAMCRY was able to serve.

#### SUMMARY AND IMPACT

The above description emphasizes the commitment to collaboration that permeates CAMCRY. Collaboration began with the initial stimulus paper and subsequent think-tank meeting. It continued with planning meetings and the submission of the formal proposal. The development plan for all projects called for the development of a prototype program, based on the initial concept paper and aided by the input from the content expert in the Specifications Conference. This prototype program then underwent several rounds of field testing and revision until the developers were satisfied with the field test results. Currently, programs are in their final stage of revision and suitable publishers are being sought to bring the programs to market.

The impact of CAMCRY already has been substantial. It has sparked creative new ideas for approaching career counselling with youth. It has succeeded in getting universities and governments to commit resources to the development of career counselling programs that otherwise would not have been used for that purpose. It also has prompted universities to work in partnership with governments, professional associations, service agencies, and private businesses to develop career counselling resources for youth. This in itself has been a truly innovative accomplishment and one that many people did not think was possible. Currently there are about 150 professionals actively doing research and program development in career counselling, which represents perhaps a ten-fold increase compared with three years ago.

Bryan Hiebert, Chair of Counselling Psychology, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Calgary, and President, Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation.

This project was supported in part by the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation, who thanks Employment and Immigration Canada for funding the Foundation's contribution.