Chapter 1

Introduction to Career Development Interventions

The first chapter introduces students to the importance of career development interventions in the 21st century to help individuals adapt to complex career concerns of today’s workers. Competent career practitioners must possess knowledge and skills required for providing effective career assistance that encompasses and transcends those required for general counseling. Preparing students to address career counseling needs with their clients, means helping them see the connection between mental health, wellness, and career. Career counseling is not delegated to administering and interpreting occupational assessments, but is inextricably tied to counseling whereby clients can more clearly articulate their identity and what matters to them. Career counselors and practitioners seek to empower people to derive meaning from their life experiences and to translate that meaning into rewarding occupational choices. Specifically, this chapter (1) traces the meaning of work across time (2) highlights the link between work and worth (3) provides an overview of systematic career development intervention while defining specific career related terms (4) highlights important events in the history of career development interventions, as well as the significant impact of Frank Parsons, (6) identifies specific career counseling competencies and performance indicators, and (7) discusses future trends in career development interventions

## The Meaning of Work Across Time

* The way in which individuals viewed work has greatly differed throughout history
* One’s occupation or career often used a primary means for self-identification and social status
* There is substantial evidence that the meaning of work is changing throughout the world in the 21st century
* Initially work was viewed as a means to serve God and evolved in the 19th century as a means of determining one’s status. Work has the same root as the Greek word: “sorrow”.
* Reformation and influence of Martin Luther and John Calvin tied hard work (“Protestant work ethic”) to an emerging value that all persons need to work
* Shift occurred at the beginning of the 20th century as individuals as individuals embraced a new work ethic called, “Career” ethic by which individuals “find their fit and don’t quit” (Maccoby and Terzi, 1981).
* Now in the 21st century (due to downsizing and a global economy) many organizations are flattening and leaving workers feeling betrayed, anxious and insecure about the future (Savickas, 1993).
* The elimination of vertical hierarchies challenges the definition of a “successful” career
* As a result, the meaning of work has expanded to encompass the totality of work/life roles throughout the course of one’s life.

## Linking Work with Worth

* Research supports the importance and centrality of work within individuals’ lives
* If a person has a “successful career”, we tend to attribution positive qualities to the person regardless of whether we know him or her
* Work provides social interactions, fulfillment of social and personal needs and a sense of personal identity and meaning (Doherty, 2009).
* Self-worth is substantially dependent upon how individuals feel about their work contributions
* Problems in self-esteem (or self-worth) occur when individuals develop unrealistic expectations for work, have not explored a variety of career options, feel that their skills are underutilized, or feel unable to manage numerous career transitions and tasks.
* High levels of career uncertainty and occupational dissatisfaction correlate with high levels of psychological and physiological distress such as increased rates in chemical dependency, interpersonal violence, suicide criminal activity, and admission into psychiatric facilities

## Providing Systematic Career Development Interventions

* Career development interventions need to be provided in a developmental and multicultural systematic fashion.
* This process includes helping children, adolescents and adults: (1) learn how to use both rational and intuitive approaches in career decision making, (2) become clear about the importance and values they seek to express through participating in various life roles, (3) cope with ambiguity and change, (4) develop and maintain self-awareness, (5) develop and maintain occupational and career awareness, (6) maintain relevant skills and knowledge, (7) engage in lifelong learning, (8) search for jobs effectively, (9) provide and receive career mentoring, and (10) develop and maintain skills in multicultural awareness and communication.
* Key terms include *career, career development, career development interventions, career counseling, career education, career development programs, and career development practitioners.*

## Important Events in the History of Career Development Interventions

* Frank Parsons is a central figure in the history of career development interventions.
* He delineated a systematic approach to career decision making that became known as the *Parsonian* approach which consisted of three steps: 1) gain self-knowledge, 2) gain occupational knowledge and 3) use “true reasoning” to decide which occupation to pursue .
* Parsons three requirements formed the basis of what evolved into the *matching model* and *trait and factor* approach to career development interventions.
* E. G. Williamson helped the advancement of trait-and-factor interventions by outlining a six-step process to guide trait-and-factor career counseling: analysis, synthesis, diagnosis, prognosis, counseling and follow-up.
* In classic trait-and-factor approaches, the counselor is active and directive while the client is relatively passive
* The Theory of Work Adjustment proposed by Dawis and Lofquist stresses how the person and environment must continually attempt to maintain correspondence with one another so that the needs and requirements of each are satisfied
* Dawis (2002) describes a more generalized TWA in his Person-Environment Correspondence (PEC) theory
* Personnel testing and placement activities as a result of World War II significantly contributed to the advancement of utilizing assessments to help place individuals into specific occupations.
* Donald Super significantly influenced the field of career development by placing career behavior in the context of human development.
* 1940’s and 1950’s saw emergence of professional organizations focused on career development interventions
* Primary organization for professional counselors has been the National Career Development Association (NCDA)
* Computer assisted career guidance programs and information-delivery systems in the 1970’s led to an emphasis on career education.
* Within recent years, career development interventions have been developed to addressed the needs of diverse clients (gender, race, class, sexual orientation)
* Currently advocacy for clients’ career concerns are necessary due to external factors such as large-scale downsizing, wage, stagnation, and salary inequities
* Today the use of social media and social networks are significantly affecting careers

## Future Trends in Career Development Interventions

* New or revised career development interventions are needed to help individuals adapt to the rapid changes occurring in the world of work due to technological developments, the emergence of a global economy, and a diversified workforce.
* Rising trend towards part-time work and rising unemployment
* Highlight the importance of helping clients articulate and become aware of their values and how they impact their career choices.
* Seek to go beyond objective assessments to try to capture stories behind the scores in a way that individuals’ life experiences are taken into consideration
* Embrace counseling based career assistance in order to help clients articulate their experiences and construct their lives.
* Continue to emphasize the importance of multicultural career development theories and interventions such as economic hardship, ethnic minorities, immigrants, personals with disabilities and persons who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered.
* Focus on helping individual develop and continue to express themselves in multiple life roles
* Seek to incorporate social justice and advocacy into career development interventions

Classroom Activities

1. Divide the class into small groups. If you have multiple counseling specialties present, divide the groups by the population with which they intend to work (e.g. elementary school, higher education, community). Ask each group to identify a list of career development concerns clients might bring up in their counseling sessions.
2. Ask students to draw their lifeline and identify the important factors in their lives that have influenced their career development. As a larger group, create an aggregate lifeline including important factors volunteered from the class participants. Discuss themes that arise.
3. Show a movie or television show that depicts a variety of career problems. Break students up into group and have them note what types of mental health concerns emerge as a result of the presenting career problem.
4. Show Mark Savickas 2013 NCDA Closing Address (on YouTube) that provides an

extensive history of career counseling throughout the last century

Class Discussion Questions

1. What myths about career counseling have you heard? Where do you think they come from? Are they (myths identified) justified?
2. What career development concerns might you encounter in session during your future work as a counselor?
3. How is a career important to an individual? What value might it add to their life? How might it affect their self-concept?

**Test Bank – Chapter 1**

Essay Questions

1. Describe the Parsonian approach to career decision making and its contribution to the career counseling profession.
2. How has a global economy and corporate downsizing impacted today’s worker?
3. How can a client’s well-being be negatively impacted by linking work with self-worth?
4. Identify and describe at least one future trend in career development interventions.
5. What career interventions can career counselors use to help individuals manage their career development effectively in the 21st century?

Multiple Choice

1. Today’s, career development practitioners help individuals manage their career development by helping them do all of the following EXCEPT:
2. cope with ambiguity and change
3. use rational and intuitive approaches in career decision making
4. help them maintain relevant and up to date skills
5. land the right job and keep it.
6. By definition, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ refers to the lifelong psychological and behavioral processes as well as contextual influences shaping a person’s career over the lifespan.
7. career education
8. the Parsonian approach
9. career development
10. career counseling
11. The idea that feelings in one area of life affect feelings in another area of living is know as
12. true reasoning.
13. trait-and-factor approach.
14. values-based decisions.
15. spillover hypothesis.
16. Those adhering to a self-fulfilling work ethic are seeking a career that allows them to be
17. free-spirited, allowing things to unfold over time, laissez-faire.
18. involved in family, community, leisure, and/or other life roles.
19. caring for others while maintaining one’s own needs and interests as well.
20. conservative, managing risk, and making sure one’s own opinion is heard.
21. Entrepreneurial and career work ethics have been replaced by the
22. wish-fulfillment ethic.
23. altruistic ethic.
24. self-fulfillment ethic.
25. self-containment ethic.
26. Career uncertainty and occupational dissatisfaction may cause
27. both psychological and physical stress.
28. psychological stress.
29. physical stress.
30. none of the above.
31. A systematic process for occupational decision-making, labeled *true reasoning*, was developed by
32. Parsons.
33. Super.
34. Herr.
35. Strong.
36. Forty years ago the prevailing term for one’s career was
37. avocation.
38. vocation.
39. guidance.
40. career path.
41. The work of James Cattell, Alfred Binet, and Walter Bingham contributed extensively to the emphasis of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in career counseling.
42. decision-making
43. group work
44. psychoanalysis
45. testing
46. Parsons’ tripartite model for vocational direction developed into the approach to career development interventions known as
47. trait-and-factor.
48. developmental stage model.
49. cognitive behavioral.
50. values-based career decision making.