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ABSTRACT
        This article outlines three different counseling
approaches which counselors typically use to promote clients' career
development. These include the trait-factor, client-centered, and the
developmental approaches to career counseling. The trait-factor
approach is described as having the overall goal to help clients
accurately assess their own skills and interests in order that they
might choose a compatible occupation or career. The client-centered
approach is described as emphasizing the importance of dealing with
clients' personal problems and concerns as they are viewed as the
major obstacles to making meaningful and satisfying career choices.
The developmental approach is described as one in which counselors
usually provide both career guidance and personal counseling services
in their work with clients depending on their developmental needs. It
is noted that each model places a different level of emphasis on the
amount of time and energy practitioners are encouraged to provide for
career guidance versus personal counseling services with clients. The
paper discusses Hawaii's Jobs Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS)
Program, which integrated aspects of all three of these model's in
such a way as to effectively promote the personal and career
development of poor women living in Hawaii. The components of the
program and the women it served are described. (ABL)

When and Why Do Counselors Use Personal and

Career Counseling: An Integrative Model

by

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2

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Abstract

This article provides an overview of three different approaches counselors frequently use in assisting clients to realize their career potential. A model that integrates aspects of all three approaches is also discussed

When and Why Do Counselors Use

Personal and Career Counseling: An Integrative Model

Counselors are frequently called upon to assist clients in making career choices. Fundamentally, this requires practitioners to act as a resource in order that individuals may experience a sense of support and guidance as they explore various issues related to their career interests. In this regard, career exploration involves seeking information about one's self and the environment in ways that facilitate occupational choice, job entry, and work adjustment (Savickas, 1989).

Counselors use different approaches in helping clients make informed decisions regarding their career choices. For instance, some practitioners prefer using a structured approach when providing career counseling services to their clients. In doing so, they primarily discuss issues related to occupational trends, job entry abilities, and clients' career competencies. These counselors may be described as being career counseling "purists" as they direct most of their attention to dealing with occupational issues and avoid complicating the process by minimizing the amount of time spent doing personal counseling with the persons with whom they work.

In contrast, other practitioners stress the importance of supporting in-depth exploration of clients' personal concerns in helping to promote their career development. This counseling orientation places a premium on providing

personal counseling services in assisting persons to
overcome various emotional barriers that impede their
ability to make effective and satisfying career choices.

Clearly, the degree to which counselors provide career
or personal counseling depends on numerous factors. This
includes the practitioner's theoretical orientation to
career counseling, the needs of the clients being served,
and the overall purpose of the intervention. With these
factors in mind, the following section of the article
describes three different counseling approaches that are
frequently used to promote individuals' career development.
Each approach stresses varying levels of personal and career
counseling when working with clients. The author also
includes a discussion of an intervention, which incorporates
both career and personal counseling techniques, that was
used to stimulate the career development of a group of low-
income women living in Hawaii.

The Trait-Factor Approach

The trait-factor approach to career counseling emerges
from the work of Parsons (1909) and Williamson (1972).
Counselors using this approach tend to focus on matching
clients with a career choice that best fits their abilities,
interests, and attitudes. This orientation to counseling is
fundamentally based on the notion that individuals and
occupations differ along measurable and relatively stable
dimensions (Lynch & Maki, 1981). Thus, the overall goal of
counseling from this perspective is to help clients

accurately assess their own skills and interests in order

that they might choose a compatible occupation or career.

Because assessment is the core of this approach,

counselors rely heavily on the results of vocational

interest inventories, aptitude tests, and ability tests

which they administer to clients in the course of their work

with them. Typically, counselors using this approach are

active and directive. They may also be noted to willingly

accept the role of a "teacher" as they use counseling

sessions to teach clients various problem-solving skills

that are useful in making career-related choices. In

summary, career counselors, who use a trait-factor approach

in their work, direct much attention towards increasing

clients' skill level and decision-making abilities by using

a variety of educational and assessment services. The main

objective of these efforts is to assist clients to make

career choices that complement their own work attitudes,

interests, and skills (Lynch & Maki, 1981).

Counselors, who use a trait-factor approach, are less

inclined to provide personal counseling services which focus

on clients' emotional concerns and difficulties. In this

context, "emotional difficulties are not emphasized but

viewed as the result of the lack of information and the

inability to make effective decisions" (Lynch & Maki, 1981;

p. 63). Thus, while it is agreeably a useful counseling

strategy with persons who are motivated and generally free

from emotional distress, the trait-factor approach is likely

to be less effective when interacting with clients who
demonstrate a lower level of motivation and/or manifest
personal difficulties which impede their career development.
In working with these clients, it may be more useful to
implement a client-centered counseling approach where the
personal concerns and emotional needs of the client become
the center of attention.

The Client-Centered Approach

Nevo (1990) accurately noted that individuals, who seek
the services of a career counselor, often do so because they
are "anxious and confused, suffer from low self-esteem, and
are insecure about their identity" (p.321). It is agreed
that persons experiencing personal distress in their lives
may benefit from discussing various occupations with
counselors and learning more about their own skills and
interests as a result of undergoing a career assessment.
However, the client-centered approach to career counseling
emphasizes the importance of dealing with clients' personal
problems and concerns as they are viewed as the major
obstacles to making meaningful and satisfying career
choices.

Patterson (1982) makes an interesting distinction
between counseling services that emphasize information
sharing about career issues versus those that stress the
importance of exploring clients' personal concerns, problems
and anxieties. In this regard, he refers to the process of
gathering and sharing specific information about occupation

trends and vocational issues with persons who are not
experiencing personal problems "career gui.. ~e." However,
Patterson (1982) uses the term "career counseling" to more
specifically describe efforts aimed at helping clients, who
are experiencing various personal difficulties, come to
grips with their problems in order that they might make
effective career choices.

Like Patterson (1982), Wrenn (1988) argues that
counselors cannot (and should not) separate clients'
personal problems from their career problems. From this
perspective, career counselors are urged to focus on
clients' inner-lives by helping them explore their emotional
concerns and fears in a non-threatening, supportive
environment.

In doing so, counselors are encouraged to use a
"client-centered approach" as they assist in the exploration
of both personal and career issues by following clients'
leads and responding to their emotional needs. Thus, by
providing personal counseling services, client-centered
advocates note that individuals often manifest a more
accurate self-understanding and an increased level of self-
respect. These advancements, in turn, allow clients to make
more effective and satisfying career decisions (Freeman,
1990).

In contrast to the trait-factor approach, client-
centered career counselors are less directive and more
interested in using personal counseling as a means to help

clients' realize their career potential. Although client-centered counselors are likely to use career tests and inventories as a means to enhance the process of personal counseling, they usually do not use them to the extent that counselors who aspire to the trait factor approach would.

The Developmental Approach

The developmental approach to career counseling is reflected in the work of Donald Super (1957) who has written extensively in the area of career development. Super's (1957) approach to career counseling represents an integration of self-concept theory and developmental psychology. Similar to other developmental theorists, he describes career development as an on-going process that can be described in a set of stages. They are referred to as the Growth, Exploration, Establishment, Maintenance, and Stages.

Each developmental stage is marked by a unique set of career tasks and characteristics which persons normally experience at different points across the life span. Bradley (1988) points out that the manner in which individuals deal with these career development tasks greatly influences the way they think and feel about themselves.

Counselors using this approach usually provide both career guidance and personal counseling services in their work with clients depending upon their developmental needs. For example, counselors are likely to use a variety of career tests and design various learning activities when

operating proactively with their clients. In doing so, individuals are encouraged to think about and discuss potential career options that match their particular skills and interests.

However, when working with persons experiencing noticeable emotional difficulties which clearly impede their occupational decision-making abilities, developmental counselors are noted to make an intentional shift in their counseling style. Instead of using career counseling techniques associated with the trait-factor approach, they redirect their efforts towards providing clients with a supportive and non-threatening atmosphere in which they are encouraged to explore and overcome their intrapsychic concerns. Using various personal counseling techniques to facilitate this process, the developmentally-minded counselor works to help individuals overcome the types of negative and self-defeating thoughts and feelings these clients typically express about themselves and their career options.

The counselor's job is certainly made easier when the needs of the persons with whom one works are best served by providing career guidance or personal counseling services. In contrast, it is usually more difficult and challenging to work with persons whose diverse interests and needs requires that counselors be able to effectively shift from providing career counseling services to offering personal counseling when the occasion arises. With this in mind, the author

describes a community-based intervention which integrates
both career guidance and personal counseling services within
the context of an adult career motivational training
project.

The Jobs Opportunities and Basic Skills Program

The State of Hawaii's Jobs Opportunities and Basic
Skills (JOBS) Program is a federal- and state-funded project
designed to assist persons receiving public assistance to
achieve financial independence by promoting their career
development. This program consists of a wide range of
educational, training, counseling, and support services
which participants may use over an extended period of time
in order to enter a satisfying and financially rewarding
career. The initial component of the JOBS Program consists
of a motivational training group which all participants are
required to attend.

The career motivational training groups were held once
a week from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. in which individuals who
received governmental subsidies (i.e., Aid to Families with
Dependent Children - AFDC) either volunteered or were
required to attend. These group meetings were designed to
help the participants become familiar with the JOBS Program
as well as provide clients an opportunity to express any
personal concerns they might have about participating in the
project.

The majority of the persons taking part in this project
were female heads-of-households who received governmental

subsidies in the form of Aid to Families with Dependent

Children (AFDC). The personal and career histories of these

women reflected that they experienced numerous problems

associated with being poor, undereducated and lacking basic

occupational skills and knowledge. In general, these women

either not been employed in the past several years or had

never secured a full-time employment position in their

lives. Thus, from a developmental perspective, they were

noted to exhibit many of the needs and characteristics

associated with Super's (1957) Exploration and Establishment

Stages of career development.

The motivational training groups typically accommodated

between 6-15 persons. Houser, D'Andrea, and Daniels (1992)

designed the format of these motivational training groups in

such as way as to intentionally provide clients with both

career guidance and personal counseling services. This dual

service delivery approach was established because the

program planners recognized that, while information related

to the clients' career needs certainly warranted attention,

they respected the importance of dealing with the personal

side of the participants by taking time to counsel them

about their anxieties, fears, and frustrations. What

follows is a brief discussion of the specific types of

activities used by the group leaders in working with these

women.

First, a number of group activities were designed to

expand clients' awareness of the JOBS Program. This

included discussing the various types of services the clients' were eligible for as participants' in the JOBS Program, clarifying ways in which these services might be useful in terms of making effective and satisfying career choices, and increasing their understanding of ways in which their own "work attitudes" might be matched with specific types of occupations and careers.

In order to accomplish these objectives, the group leaders opened the morning session with an "ice breaker" activity in which the participants were encouraged to write their names in the center of a 5" X 10" card and list four adjectives around their names that described positive characteristics about themselves. As a result of taking turns stating their names and explaining the adjectives, the group members gained a sense of familiarity with one another in a positive and respectful atmosphere.

Next, the counselors had the group members view an educational audio-visual presentation of the JOBS Program. Besides providing much information about the types of career development services the clients were entitled as participants in the program, the film was entertaining in that it included a number of popular local personalities who explained the structure of the program and the clients' rights and responsibilities in detail.

After reviewing the film, clients were asked to complete the Work Attitudes Inventory (Houser, Smith, & Konstam, 1990) and the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (Folkman

& Lazarus, 1988). These pencil and paper, self-scoring
instruments were used to assist clients gain greater insight
into their own attitudes towards work as well as providing
the chance to talk about the types of occupations which
might best match their attitude scores. Also, the results
of the Ways of Coping Questionnaire provided the opportunity
to have the participants' examine the various coping
strategies that they were likely to use when confronted with
various life stresses.

Given the high levels of stress that characterized the
lives of these women, the group leaders acknowledged that it
would be irresponsible (and perhaps even unethical) not to
provide opportunities for them to explore their personal
concerns, fears, uncertainties, and frustrations during the
career motivational training group. Thus, in building upon
the discussion of the clients' coping strategies, the
facilitators presented a "Guided Imagery" exercise in which
the participants were encouraged to think about various
achievements and strengths they have experienced in their
lives. They were also encouraged to begin to consider new
goals that would enhance their own sense of personal and
career well-being.

In order to facilitate this self-evaluative and goal-
setting process, the participants were instructed to close
their eyes while they listened to calming music and asked to
follow a series of relaxing exercises (Houser, D'Andrea, &
Daniels, 1991). As they moved into a more relaxed mindset,

the women were encouraged to think about a couple of their own personal achievements, strengths, and to consider what sort of new goals they might set for themselves. After "guiding" them through this exercise, the group facilitators instructed the participants to note two achievements, strengths, and goals they thought about during the "Guided Imagery" exercise on a separate piece of paper.

Having done this, the clients were instructed to list possible barriers to attaining these goals in their own lives. It was at this point in the motivational training group that the counselors consistently noted a shift in the tone and content of the group discussions. In this regard, the clients were observed to bring up numerous personal problems they were experiencing that impeded their career development. These personal barriers included being "stuck" in a physically abusive relationship in which many of the women reported feeling that they could not do things which were not approved of by their husbands or boyfriends, feeling very anxious about leaving their young children alone while they participated in job training activities, describing their own dependence on alcohol and/or drugs, and expressing feeling generally ashamed of their status a "welfare recipient" to name a few.

Presented with these sort of problems, the counselors intentionally shifted from a career guidance orientation to a more personal counseling modality. A primary objective in making this sort of shift was to help the group members feel

comfortable in talking about these sort of personal issues. In doing so, the facilitators noted how willing the other participants were to attend to the personal concerns of the other members in the group. By using numerous client-centered counseling techniques, such as communicating empathic understanding, extending a genuine sense of concern and support, and avoiding making judgmental statements in response to the personal concerns expressed by these women, the participants frequently reported feeling better about themselves, appreciating the supportive comments made by other persons, and more interested in continuing in the JOBS Program.

Without making the shift from a career guidance emphasis to a more personal counseling orientation, all of the group leaders indicated that they would have lessened the participants' interest to continue in the JOBS Program and lower their overall motivation to pursue new career goals in the future. In fact, recent research of the effectiveness of these intervention model revealed that the group participants reported a significant increase in their level of career self-efficacy as a result of taking part in the motivational training group (Houser, D'Andrea, & Daniels, 1992).

In conclusion, this article outlines three different counseling approaches which counselors typically use to promote clients' career development. These include the trait-factor, client-centered, and the developmental

approaches to career counseling. Each model places a
different level of emphasis on the amount of time and energy
practitioners are encouraged to provide career guidance
versus personal counseling services with clients. Finally,
the author discusses a project which integrated aspects of
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