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ABSTRACT

There has been a renaissance in the thinking about career development. It is becoming accepted that information is not enough; in addition to academic and technical skills, youth and adults need to learn life/work designing and building skills to become healthy, productive, and self-reliant citizens. Despite the fact that Canadian students have reasonable access to career information and guidance, rates for post-secondary education are not high and secondary school graduates are not prepared for work. Also, adult workers are encountering involuntary career transitions. The goals of career information delivery and career employment counseling are changing. Clients must be prepared for the likelihood that they will occupy several different types of jobs. The counseling focus must shift from helping people decide what they want to be to helping people learn the skills they need to become healthy, self-reliant citizens, able effectively to cope with the many work and other transitions they will encounter in their lives, and to maintain balance between work and life roles in rapidly changing labor markets. The Blueprint for Life/Work Designs provides competencies organized into three areas: personal management, learning and work exploration, and life/work building. The Real Game Series of developmentally-sequenced programs helps students at all levels as well as adults master the Guidelines/Blueprint essential life/work skills. (Contains 15 references.) (Author/MKA)

Academic & Technical Skills
+ *Life/Work Skills*
+ Career Information & Guidance
= SUCCESS IN CAREER BUILDING

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What follows is a text prepared by Mr. Jarvis for presentation as part of a panel on International Collaboration (E82) at an International Conference for Vocational Guidance sponsored by the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance, the Bundesanstalt fur Arbeit and the European Community in Berlin, Germany from August 30th through September 1st, 2000. It is an extension of ideas shared by Mr. Jarvis in a keynote presentation to a Central and Eastern European conference on Career Information Systems hosted by the Hungarian Ministry of Education and sponsored by the European Training Foundation and the World Bank in Budapest, Hungary in March 2000.

Mr. Jarvis has spent most of his 30-year career (in military, government, corporate and not-for-profit national agencies) producing print, computer, video and Internet-based information to help youth and adults make informed career decisions. He authored the Choices[2] series of career exploration software, initiated Career Tabloids[3] in Canada, and is currently President of Canada WorkinfoNET[4], Canada's gateway network to career and labour market information on the Internet. He is Canadian Coordinator of the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs, and International Coordinator of The Real Game Series. Mr. Jarvis has played a significant role in national initiatives underway in the United States, United Kingdom, France, Romania, Turkey, Hungary, Australia and New Zealand.

There has been a renaissance in the thinking about career development. Prevailing wisdom during the latter half of the twentieth was that if citizens have reasonable access to comprehensive and accurate career, occupational, learning and labour market information they will make appropriate decisions about their career and employment options. The result will be improved human resource allocation, labour force mobility and productivity, and improved cost-effectiveness of employment, education and training programs (Krumboltz & Worthington, 1999). Many countries have invested heavily in developing and distributing print, video, computer and web-based resources on this premise. Watts (1999) made a good case for "The Economic and Social Benefits of Career Guidance"; however, recent analysis of school-to-work

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[1] http://www.lifework.ca
[2] http://www.can.ibm.com/ism/careerware/index.htm
[3] http://www.careerccc.org/prospects99-00/english/products/prospects/index.html
[4] http://workinfonet.ca

and work-to-work transitioning in some countries raises doubts about whether simply providing access to information and guidance is sufficient to reap the benefits Dr. Watts describes (Blustein, et.al., 1997; Krumboltz &Worthington, 1999; Lent, Hacekтt, & Brown, 1999; Savickas, 1999; and Worthington & Juntenen, 1997).

It is becoming accepted that a) information is not enough; and b) in addition to academic and technical skills, youth and adults need to learn life/work designing and building skills to become healthy, productive and self-reliant citizens. Gysbers (1997) refers to this concept as "life career development"; defined as "self-development over a person's life span through the integration of the roles, settings, and events in a person's life". An important part of "life career development" is giving individuals life/work skills that empower them to locate and process information, and to make good choices at the *many transition points* they will inevitably encounter on their life journey. These skills are as important as the communications, mathematics and science skills we now expect all students to acquire and master. Krumboltz and Worthington (1999) state that "The goals of career counseling and of the school-to-work movement should be to facilitate the learning of skills, interests, beliefs, values, work habits, and personal qualities that enable each participant to create a satisfying life in a constantly changing work environment" and Savickas (1999) suggests that students need to learn to "look ahead" and "look around" before they leave to school to develop competence and skill in the following 5 domains: (a) self-knowledge, (b) occupational information, (c) decision making, (d) planning, and (e) problem solving. According to Worthington and Juntunen (1997): "When employers are asked why they prefer not to hire youth, or why there are high turnover rates among youthful workers, they will tell you that today's youth frequently fail to demonstrate essential employability skills." Employers are imploring educators to ensure students "don't leave school without them," yet life/work skills have not found the prominence they deserve in "mainstream" curricula.

Canada has prided itself in the quality and quantity of career and labour market information it has made available, across all contemporary media, for youth and adults. Yet, despite the fact that all students have reasonable access to career information and guidance:

- 70% of secondary students expect to go on to post-secondary studies (university, college, technical or trade school) and 80% of their parents have the same expectation, but only 32% do actually go on directly to post-secondary, and only about 50% of them will graduate
- 26% of secondary students nationally drop out of secondary school before graduation
- 9% of secondary students expect to work after they leave secondary school, yet 64% of secondary students actually do go to work before any other career destination
- 47% of post-secondary students change programs or drop out by the end of their first year, and 50% of those who graduate are not in work closely related to their programs two years after they complete their programs
- These and other statistics suggest that fewer than 25% of Canadian youth actually arrive at their intended career destinations

Are the 64% of secondary students who go directly to work from secondary school ready? Perceptions vary. One recent Canadian survey yielded the following results to the question, "Are secondary students ready for work when they leave school?"

Response from:	Ready for the Workplace	Ready for Post-Secondary
High School Students	80%	87%
Parents (K-12 Students)	40%	65%
Post-Secondary Teachers	35%	53%
Employers	35%	70%

Secondary school is primarily intended to prepare students for post-secondary studies, yet most students in Canada, for example, will not be going there in the short-term. Students are expected to master complex academic material many will not have immediate use for, if ever. At the same, most are not taught basic life/work skills they need immediately. In short, the majority of Canadian youth are not prepared for life after secondary school. It is testimony to their resourcefulness and to their personal networks more than to the systemic support they receive that most find their way to acceptable, if not optimal, employment.

Although the above figures suggest the school-to-work transition process is less efficient then one might hope for youth, adults face a starker reality. Adults encountering involuntary career transitions due to privatization and "right-sizing," especially older workers, must cope with serious challenges in re-connecting with work and learning opportunities. Adults, who may have responsibility for dependents, must deal with issues of shock, anger, fear, uncertainty, diminishing self-esteem and dignity, ageism, loss of identity, and emotional and financial risks as they cope with transitions (Newman, 1995).

The goals of career information delivery and career and employment counselling are changing. The traditional goal was "*to help people make informed career decisions.*" It was assumed that at some point in their lives, usually in the 9th to 11th year of formal education, students could assess their assets, analyze their options, choose an ideal occupation, then develop and implement plans to achieve their goal. Current Canadian projections that young people now entering the labour market are likely to experience a succession of work role, with as many as twenty-five jobs, often involving aspects of several occupations in a single job, in five or more distinct occupational sectors during the life span of their careers (Alberta Learning, 1999). At times they will be doing multiple part-time jobs concurrently, and at times they will have no paid employment. Periods of work will be interspersed with periods of learning, sometimes full-time but more often during evenings and weekends while holding one or more jobs. Krumboltz and Worthington (1999) describe a future where " . . . there will be more of a need for worker flexibility as worker requirements change more frequently and new teams are formed to work on specific projects. Workers will increasingly be expected to move from project to project doing whatever work needs to be accomplished, and not merely to fulfill a written job description." In light of this, it is "unrealistic and self-defeating" to expect students to commit to one occupation for a lifetime. They need to prepare for the "likelihood that they will occupy several different types of jobs" and "learning how to adapt to changing

conditions in the workplace will be one of the essential skills for success" (Krumboltz & Worthington, 1999). It is difficult for teachers and counsellors, many of whom have worked in the same building for most of their careers, to imagine let alone prepare students and clients for this new work world. The oft-heard question from parents, teachers and, yes, counsellors, "What do you want to be when ...?" looses its relevance in labour markets characterized by this magnitude and frequency of change.

In spite of predictions by some, the end of work is *not* is sight. Indeed, with all our labour-saving technologies, most people have never worked harder than they are today. The notion of jobs *is* shifting, and dramatically. Except in government and public educational settings, those who say "That is not my job!" may well find themselves without one! Ironically, these tend to be settings where those charged with helping youth and adults plan their futures are found. Career is increasingly being viewed as something *every* human has, and the word is not being used as often synonymously with profession, occupation or job (Gysbers, 1997). The concept that is losing ground most rapidly in the "real world" is *occupation*, despite the fact it remains the cornerstone of most career information systems and databases, guidance processes and vocational education and training enterprises. People must begin to see themselves as the host of a range of in-demand skills, willing to accept shorter term commitments from potential employers and more flexible employment arrangements, promising new opportunities immediately present themselves.

We pressure youth and adults to define themselves at the earliest possible stage in terms of one or more occupational goals. We still insist that our clients label themselves with one occupational title before they can enter vocational training, and we train them to think they are only qualified for a specific occupation. Then we train them in technical skills but not in employability and life skills. Technical qualifications are needed to get an employer's attention, but life/work skills will determine subsequent success and advancement.(Krumbotz & Worthington, 1999 and Worthington & Juntenen, 1997).

In Canada, about 90 percent of real job creation in the past 15 years has been generated by companies of 20 or fewer employees. This is where many secondary and post-secondary graduates will spend most of their careers. These organizations tend to have no HR Department, no job descriptions, no training and employee development plans, and they are in a constant reorganization and change. Employees aren't certain what their duties will be in the future because their employers are continuously reinventing the business. These employers need bright, energetic, positive, team-players who have good foundation knowledge and are able and motivated to learn new tasks and do whatever the organization needs them to do to. Potential employees who bill themselves as specialists in one area are doing themselves a disservice. Those who can clearly describe the skills and assets they bring to helping the organization meet it's immediate challenges and achieve longer term success and prosperity, in whatever combination of roles, are more appealing (Worthington & Juntenen, 1997).

The notion of helping people choose one occupation, then plan suitable education and training paths is largely anachronistic in large sectors of today's labour markets. They need to identifying broad work sector destinations and securing foundation skills that will equip them to take on multiple roles therein. The focus must shift from helping

people decide what they want to be to *helping people learn the skills they need to become healthy, self-reliant citizens, able effectively to cope with the many work and other transitions they will encounter in their lives, and to maintain balance between work and life roles in rapidly changing labour markets* (Fouad, 1997; Gysbers, 1997; Krumboltz &Worthington, 1999; Lent, Hackett & Brown, 1999; Savickas, 1999; and Worthington & Juntenen, 1997). This is more about education than counselling. Mastery of the skills essential to realization of this goal would ideally be learned through mainstream school curricula. According to the school-to-work transition literature, a good school intervention would: include simulated occupational experiences which would excite students by the opportunities presented and motivate them to explore their occupational possibilities with more enthusiasm (Krumboltz & Worthington, 1999); teach them about the consequences of making decisions in life (Varenhorst, 1968,1973); allow them to test the adequacy of various decision making models (Krumboltz, Scherba, Hamel & Mitchell, 1982); allow students to sample various occupations (Krumboltz, 1970); incorporate role-playing, which is deemed the most useful intervention technique (Krumboltz & Worthington, 1999); facilitate the learning of skills, interests, beliefs, values, work habits, and personal qualities that enable each participant to create a satisfying life in a constantly changing work environment (Krumboltz & Worthington, 1999); be developmentally appropriate and be distributed throughout the school years (Lent, Hackett, & Brown, 1999); and, allow students to develop employability skills (Worthington & Juntenen, 1997). Giving students the opportunity to master the skills they need to find and maintain fulfilling employment will also equip youth and adults to be better students, marriage partners, parents and community members. What are these skills?

Guidelines/Blueprint

Pioneering work on a new life/work skills framework was done by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee in the United States, under the direction of Juliette Noone-Lester, NOICC Executive Director. With NOICC's permission and support, the American National Career Development Guidelines have been adapted and implemented across Canada as the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs. The Blueprint initiative is coordinated by the National Life/Work Centre. Other key partners are the Government of Canada (Department of Human Resources Development), all Provincial Governments (Departments of Education and Labour) and national professional associations. Between the United States and Canada, literally thousands of educators, curriculum specialists, guidance practitioners and advisors, career educators and researchers across North America have spent over ten years in an ongoing cycle of developing, piloting, evaluating, revising and implementing this new life/work skills framework,

Below are the eleven Blueprint core skills, or *competencies*, sorted into three areas (A. Personal Management; B. Learning and Work Exploration; and C. Life/Work Building). These competencies are further defined in age and developmentally appropriate terminology for four levels:

Level One	Early Years (Primary/Elementary)
Level Two	Middle Years (Junior High)
Level Three	Senior Years (High School)
Level Four	Adult (including Post-secondary)

There are 10-15 Performance Indicators on average for each competency, at each level, and the indicators are organized by "learning stages." Local, measurable standards are developed by implementing agencies for each indicator. To see the full framework of 44 competencies and over 500 indicators, please refer to the website: http://www.lifework.ca (See Blueprint Project).

BLUEPRINT COMPETENCIES
AREA A: PERSONAL MANAGEMENT
1. Build and maintain a positive self-image
2. Interact positively and effectively with others [SEE BELOW]
3. Change and grow throughout ones' life
AREA B. LEARNING AND WORK EXPLORATION
4. Participate in life-long learning supportive of life/work goals
5. Locate and effectively use life/work information
6. Understand the relationship between work and society/economy
AREA C. LIFE/WORK BUILDING
7. Secure or create and maintain work
8. Make life/work enhancing decisions
9. Maintain balanced life and work roles
10. Understand the changing nature of life and work roles
11. Understand, engage in and manage one's own life/work building process

As an example of what performance indicators look like in the Blueprint framework, below are the indicators for Competency 2 at the High School (Senior Secondary) Level. The indicators for Competency 2 at any of the other levels (Primary, Middle School or Adult) are age-appropriate, thus different.

COMPETENCY 2: Interact positively and effectively with others
Level Three (High School):   ***Develop abilities for building positive relationships in one's life and work***
Learning Stage I – Acquisition: acquiring knowledge • Discover the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to work effectively with and for others. • Explore helping skills such as facilitating problem solving, tutoring and guiding. • Examine appropriate employee-employer interactions and client-contractor interactions in specific situations. • Explore personal management skills such as time management, problem solving, personal financial management, stress management, life-work balance, etc.
Learning Stage II – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge • Demonstrate behaviours and attitudes required for working with and for others. • Demonstrate personal management skills such as time management problem solving, personal finances, stress management, life/work balance, etc.

• Express feelings, reactions and ideas in an appropriate manner. • Demonstrate helping skills such as facilitating problem solving, tutoring and guiding.
Learning Stage III – Personalization: integrating acquired and applied knowledge • Determine the helping skills one feels comfortable with and wishes to contribute in relationships with others. • Acknowledge the positive effects of expressing one's feelings, reactions and ideas. • Integrate personal management skills such as time management, problem solving, stress management and life/work balance to one's life and work.
Learning Stage IV – Actualization: striving towards full potential • Engage in further learning experiences that help build positive relationships in one's life and work.

In addition to the matrix of competencies, both the US Guidelines and the Canadian Blueprint are comprehensive publications that:

- Map out the life/work competencies all citizens need to proactively manage their life/work building process, from kindergarten to adulthood;
- Provide administrators and practitioners with a systematic process of developing, implementing, evaluating and marketing career development programs or redesigning and enhancing existing programs;
- Enable career resource developers to design products, programs and services to address specific competencies, and to explain to those who make purchase decisions the competencies targeted by such resources;
- Enable career resource purchasers and users to identify resources that align with high priority competencies identified through their own needs assessments;
- Enable researchers to determine the extent to which clients/students have acquired competencies addressed by program, product and information interventions;
- Provide a common language throughout the United States and Canada for the outcomes of career development initiatives, at all developmental stages, enabling people moving from one school or agency to another to have their needs addressed seamlessly, with high service quality;

Having a national framework of life/work competencies and indicators helps service providers achieve a number of aims:

- Clarity of outcomes: The Guidelines/Blueprint frameworks enable practitioners (and their funders) clearly to articulate, and measure, the outcomes they are seeking and achieving.
- Service consistency: A common language within and between services and products helps citizens know what they need, and get what they need, as they move from one service or product, agency or organization, or geographic region, to another.
- Efficiency: A common language for life/work competencies helps clients and practitioners more efficiently review, compare and select programs and products.

- Reduced ambiguity: Assumptions abound regarding the meanings of terms such as *career planning* or *self-awareness*. Spelling out these assumptions for all to review enhances clarity and effectiveness of communication significantly.
- Career development culture: Having a common structure by which to discuss career development issues and aims helps all citizens become more conscious of career development and life/work issues.

The Real Game Series

Life/work skills, like literacy and numeric skills, should be mastered by students at all stages of their education (Lent, Hackett & Brown, 1999; Fouad, 1997; and Savickas, 1999) and by adults in life and work transitions. In fact, increased attention to these competencies helps students understand the relevance of their school studies, and may have a positive impact on attendance, achievement and completion rates. In an unprecedented international development, several countries including Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Australia, New Zealand and Hungary are collaborating in developing and implementing The Real Game Series (TRG Series) of developmentally-sequenced programs to help students at all levels, and adults, master the Guidelines/Blueprint essential life/work skills. The Real Game incorporates all aspects taken from the career transitions literature of what a good intervention program should be (as mentioned above).

The TRG Series includes six programs, as follows:

• The Play Real Game	Ages 6-8
• The Make It Real Game	Ages 8-10
• The Real Game	Ages 11-13
• The Be Real Game	Ages 14-15
• The Get Real Game	Ages 16-18
• Real Times, Real Life	Adults

All programs in the series are experiential, involving role-playing, and are set in participants' futures. They include detailed lesson plans created and tested by over 3,000 students and teachers (each program), and masters of all teacher and student materials and consumables, which may be locally reproduced. Realistic scenarios, based on contemporary labour market realities, are created which engage participants in activities they enjoy without actually realizing they are learning essential life/work building competencies. They establish lifestyles, budget time and money, transition through job-loss and acquisition scenarios, plan business trips and vacations, balance family and work, engage in community activities, etc., all in safe roles that allow them to experiment in a risk-free environment. They also clearly see the relevance of the subjects they are learning in school within the context of the future scenarios they are experiencing and " . . . students who believe that high school education has relevance for their future success are strongly and significantly more likely to work hard in school, even after parent, peer, school, and psychological variables are controlled" (Rosembaum & Nelson, 1994). A real bonus is that teachers learn almost as much as students in this context, and both teachers and students have fun together!

Each program in the series offers rich opportunities for team-teaching, involvement of senior student mentors, participation by community members and organizations, and parental involvement. Moreover, when people are engaged within the context of any of these programs they are more motivated to seek out, process and absorb traditional career and labour market information resources (print, computer, video, Internet). The key is that *participants become excited about their future opportunities, and are motivated to take action!*

All programs in The Real Game Series are Guidelines/Blueprint compliant. The contexts and activities of each program have been conceived to maximize students' opportunities to master the full range of essential life/work building skills. By experiencing one or more of these programs, students and clients will increase their mastery of skills that will serve them well throughout their life journey. For complete information on The Real Game Series visit "www.realgame.com".

My title suggests the formula for success in career building is:

1. Good foundation academic and technical skills;
2. Mastery of essential life/work skills
3. Ready access to good career and labour market information, and guidance as required

Conclusion

The "missing link" link in Canada has been a comprehensive, national framework of life/work skills, accepted by leading public and private sector stakeholders. Adopting such a framework, and implementing curricula and resources to help people master essential life/work skills, are important steps to helping youth and adults become healthy, self-reliant citizens, able effectively to cope with the many work-related transitions they will encounter in our rapidly changing labour markets, and maintain balance between work and other life roles.

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