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ABSTRACT

This chapter discusses the successful implementation of the Arizona Comprehensive Competency-Based Guidance program model, and how lessons learned from this project can be applied to business and industry settings. Also discussed is the Career Decidedness Study, developed to improve counseling skills and the services offered to employees seeking career counseling at the Motorola Mesa Career Management Center. The salient points of these projects and their implications for career guidance in 2021 are discussed. The importance of keeping business and industry as counseling partners is highlighted, as well as the importance of educators and counselors remaining the providers of career and educational competencies and the experts in educational direction. (Contains 11 references.) (GCP)

Taking Comprehensive Competency-Based Guidance to Business and Industry

By

Tina K. Ammon

Taking Comprehensive Competency-Based Guidance to Business and Industry

Tina K. Ammon

While state supervisor of guidance and counseling at the Arizona Department of Education (1985–1994), and in conjunction with a Guidance and Counseling State Task Force recommendation, I helped develop the Arizona Comprehensive Competency-Based Guidance (CCBG) program model, which was piloted in six Arizona schools in 1986 in order to create a set of CCBG videotapes modeling CCBG program prototypes in large urban high schools, midsize suburban high schools, and small rural high schools. The pilots were successful and there was consensus of the stakeholders to take the Arizona CCBG program model statewide through an annual counselors' academy.

The National Career Development Guidelines were piloted for the career domain of curriculum competencies in the Arizona CCBG program. From 1986 to 1994, various Arizona schools developed curricula to deliver the National Career Development Guidelines competencies.

The Arizona CCBG program model is being delivered in Arizona schools today and has proven to be a highly successful model. Whether the template used for CCBG program design is Johnson's Competency-Based Guidance Model or Gysbers' Missouri Comprehensive Program Model, the program structure and curriculum competencies of both models provide all students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to be successful in school and the world of work (Bloom, 1994).

As a career consultant for Motorola, Inc., in Phoenix, Arizona, I set out to deliver the adult National Career Development Guidelines competencies to Motorola employees. At the corporate career center in Phoenix, I initiated a project to pilot the National Occupational Information Coordinating

Committee (NOICC) Adult Career Portfolio to find out how viable the portfolio was in business and industry.

The NOICC Adult Career Portfolio Project

Business and industry employees ranging in age from 17 to 70 participated in the NOICC portfolio project. Ten employees interested in their career development were just handed the portfolio to use in order for us to see how viable the portfolio was as a self-directed tool. Other employees were scheduled for two different small-group guidance sessions. One group was to use the portfolio for career development planning and the other group for educational planning. Each group session was planned for four hours, using basically the same pages from the portfolio in each session. A sample agenda for career planning appears on the next page.

Participant evaluations of the group sessions were consistently positive. For the next four years, the NOICC Adult Career Portfolio was used in several career centers at Motorola as a career guidance and counseling tool.

The 10 employees given the portfolio as a self-directed tool thought the portfolio looked interesting but they "hadn't found the time" to actually use it. The group session was a superior method because employees were permitted time to work on portfolio sections and were offered counselor guidance and input. Completing sections of the portfolio requires extensive introspection, which employees found tedious. The pages that required the user to identify skills and then write information on how he or she demonstrated those skills on the job were excellent for developing a performance-style resume, a style template available through a software program used in the career centers.

NOICC Adult Career Portfolio: Paradigms for Future Guidance Programs

After years working with high school students in job placement (co-op) and career counseling, I wasn't surprised to find that youth lacked initiative related to their own career guidance. I *was* surprised to find that business and industry adults who were considered high-powered employees were unable to find the time and initiative to use the NOICC Adult Career Portfolio as a self-directed tool.

Portfolio for Career-Planning Group Session

Time	Agenda Item
1:00–1:15 p.m.	Introductions and overview
1:15–1:45 p.m.	True Colors (cards and vocabulary test) Closure: pages 1-3 of the portfolio
1:45–2:15 p.m.	Participants complete pages 11-16 of the portfolio
2:15–2:45 p.m.	Group debrief of portfolio pages 11-16
2:45–3:00 p.m.	Participants complete Transferable Skills Checklist in the Motorola University Catalog in order to identify training gaps
3:00–3:45 p.m.	Job-O A career assessment administered
3:45–4:00 p.m.	Closure: portfolio pages 18-20
4:00–4:45 p.m.	Tentative career plan
4:45–5:00 p.m.	Informational interviewing resources
5:00 p.m.	Evaluation of group session
Workshop follow-up	Follow-up: Participant completes portfolio sections Deciding and Planning, and Acting, in preparation for his or her one-hour follow-up visit (30 days later) with counselor to finalize career plan.

Later, as the manager of a highly computerized career center, I developed an eight-hour self-directed career-planning program using CD-ROM career guidance tools, such as Repacking Your Bags. This software program guides the user in developing a dialogue with his or her significant other using a series of topics and postcards for decision making regarding changing to employment in another geographic area. Few people (five) requested these highly advertised self-directed tools. Employees in business and industry preferred career development activities such as panels, counselor-led classes, and one-on-one counseling.

When it comes to the topic of "What will I be when I grow up?" human beings of all ages seem to want to be directed, even to the point of wanting the career counselor to help them figure out what personal information to include on their resumes. In contrast to client need, business and industry continues to offer online self-directed career development tools. It was evident from attending various business and industry conferences, such as the Summit on Linking Career Development with the New Corporate Agenda (Various Corporate Sessions, 1998) that only 50% of corporations are offering career services to employees. The corporate trend is to provide online career development information. At Motorola, employees would access the online information if they had Internet access, but they still came to the career center for one-on-one counselor interaction. My experiences with youth in education and adults in business and industry led me to the conclusion that the human need for counselor interaction related to career development will persist into 2021. Whether business and industry or education will meet that client need is another question.

Career Decidedness Study

The Career Decidedness Study, involving business and industry employees, was developed to improve counseling skills and the services offered to employees seeking career counseling at the Motorola Mesa Career Management Center (Mesa CMC). I prepared an extensive write-up of the Career Decidedness Study and presented it at the Second Motorola Worldwide Research Conference (Ammon, 1997). What follows are salient points related to the study and its implications for career guidance in 2021.

Selection and Definition of the Research Problem

Career counseling is interactive, and, optimally, client need determines the counseling intervention. The Mesa CMC counseling staff used multiple career guidance interventions: for example, one-on-one counseling intervention using the World of Work Inventory (one-on-one WOWI); the portfolio group session using the NOICC Adult Career Portfolio, coupled with the Job-O A career assessment instrument and other business- and industry-developed materials; an eight-hour career development class (module); as well as various self-directed CD-ROM career-planning programs. The business and industry

thrust for these career guidance interventions was the Individual Dignity Entitlement (IDE) corporate initiative, specifically question number four of the initiative: "Do you have a personal career plan, and is it exciting, achievable, and being acted upon?" Developing a personal career plan requires a certain level of career decidedness. "Employees are 'career decided' if they have established a career goal with which they experience relative certainty and comfort. Employees are 'career undecided' if they have either not established a career goal or established a goal with which they experience substantial uncertainty and discomfort" (Greenhaus, Callahan, & Kaplan, 1995). Career guidance interventions that help employees raise their level of career decidedness would facilitate their completion of a career plan.

One of the measures the Mesa CMC used to address customer satisfaction was a set of five questions on the CMC Participant Information form. Following their four-hour one-on-one counseling experience using the WOWI, employees answered yes or no to the following questions:

The CMC process provided

1. the opportunity to increase self-understanding and self-knowledge
2. information that will assist in locating, evaluating, and interpreting occupational information
3. information regarding relevant education and training programs
4. insight for making appropriate career decisions
5. action steps to begin career planning

During 1995, the Six Sigma result of clients' satisfaction as addressed by these five questions was 6.0 (high). The portfolio group sessions provided participants with evaluation forms to rate the quality and satisfaction of services based on similar questions used on the CMC Participant Information form as previously described. The composite of evaluations from both the portfolio group session and the eight-hour career development class evidenced a high degree of customer satisfaction; employees continued to request those interventions. This evaluation data are consistent with the research findings of Kileen & Kidd (1991), who stated that 90% of the studies regarding career guidance and counseling evidenced at least some positive effects.

Pilot Study

In an effort to be more precise about the effect of the various CMC career guidance interventions, I initiated a pilot study in November 1995. The pilot study served as a feasibility study to determine if client career decidedness was raised by any or all of the guidance interventions offered by CMC; that is, the one-on-one WOWI, portfolio group session, eight-hour career development class (module), and CD-ROM self-directed career-planning programs. I used Osipow's Career Decision Scale (CDS) as the instrument in the pilot study. I administered the CDS as a pretest and readministered it within a 30- to 45-day timeframe during the client follow-up as a post-test. The eight-hour career development class participants were mailed the CDS 30 days after completing the class and were asked to complete and return the CDS post-test via confidential mail. Statistical analysis of the pilot study data conducted by Robert Watkins, Motorola engineering manager, in his initial report of July 24, 1996, confirmed that with samples of at least 75 to 100 employees per guidance intervention, data collected would yield a statistical analysis that showed whether guidance intervention made a significant difference in successful career development.

One of the values of the pilot study was the validation of the Career Decision Scale as a usable instrument with employees accessing CMC services. They were able to read and answer the questions with no instructions other than those appearing on the instrument.

Another value of the pilot study was that it had already led to improvement of the Mesa CMC career management process. Of the 200 participants in the pilot study, 85 completed a usable pretest but only 28 participants returned for their follow-up and completed the CDS as the post-test. In career counseling, clients not returning for their follow-up session is a common problem, and the reasons vary. After the pilot study, the CMC process was refocused so that after employees completed the career guidance intervention of their choice (one-on-one WOWI, portfolio group session, or career development class), they also completed a tentative career plan. The follow-up session was redesigned to review the tentative career plan and make changes based on informational interviews or other information-gathering activities assigned to increase the likelihood of a more defined career plan. Because the IDE initiative called for employees to develop a career plan, this refocusing of the CMC career development process increased the number of employees

attaining that outcome.

Also, the training-hour credits were tied to the follow-up session; in other words, the employee did not receive four training hours of credit for the portfolio group session until the follow-up session was completed. Employees who did not show up for the follow-up session were logged into the No-Show Report that went back to their supervisor. This increased the number of employees returning for the follow-up session. During the first quarter of 1997, 40% of participants completed the follow-up session and the CDS as a post-test.

During 1995, there was an effort to develop an online career development program called the *Personal Career Navigator*, which received high visibility as the career tool of the future. During 1999, the *Personal Career Navigator* CD-ROM program was abandoned after an expenditure of millions of dollars. A few pieces of the *Personal Career Navigator* program were salvaged for online Internet users, but business and industry reorganizes so quickly, it was deemed impossible to keep the system up to date regarding company divisions, job titles, and job descriptions. The success of the project was in finding out what didn't work. The *Personal Career Navigator* participants would be an important sample in the 1997 Career Decidedness Study.

Career Decidedness Study Research Methods

The statement of the problem for this study was

> How can the Mesa CMC improve the career guidance interventions offered to employees within the framework of corporate initiatives and client expectations?

The purpose of the study was to identify the discriminating factors, including the score levels of Decidedness and Indecision of Osipow's Career Decision Scale (CDS), for selection of employees for the various career guidance interventions at the Mesa CMC.

Null Hypothesis

The null hypothesis of this study was

> There is no significant difference between employee mean gain scores on the CDS, one-on-one WOWI sample, portfolio group session sample, eight-hour career development class sample, or CD-ROM career-planning program sample.

Population

The population for the study was Mesa SPS employees at the Dobson and Broadway plant who requested career guidance services from the Mesa CMC. This population consisted of males and females, ranging from 17 to 70 years of age, involved in various types of work, such as manufacturing associates, management, administrative assistants, security guards, engineers, and so forth. They came to the Mesa CMC to complete career or educational plans. They ranged at all levels of career decidedness from totally undecided and exploring options to the more decided, such as an engineer choosing an engineering rotational assignment. Each employee accessing CMC services completed the CMC Participant Information form. Responses to this form provided demographic information and 12 reasons why employees accessed CMC services.

Sample

Only Mesa SPS employees who completed the pretest, a CMC career guidance intervention, and the post-test were used in the sample for statistical analysis. In line with the recommendations related to the pilot study sample and data analysis, a sample of 75 to 100 was required for each career guidance intervention for validity and reliability purposes. This data and sample requirement were collected from September 1996 to October 1998.

Validity Controls

In this study sample, employees completed the CDS as a pretest and post-test. All employees completed the CDS prior to the intervention (that is, the one-on-one WOWI, portfolio group session, career development class, or CD-ROM career-planning programs). All employees completed the post-test after a 30- to 45-day follow-up period to control for the threat of history to internal validity. I or a trained certified career counselor administered all CDS pre- and post-tests to control for the external validity factor of the interaction of testing and intervention. I or the career counselors delivered all four guidance interventions involved in the study.

Study Design

In this study, the career guidance interventions were the independent variables. The dependent variable was the gain scores of the post-test samples on the CDS. The research design

used in this study was a pretest/post-test design.

$O X_1 O$
$O X_2 O$
$O X_3 O$
$O X_4 O$

O denoted the collection of data (dependent variable) from employees.

X represented the career guidance interventions: X_1 represented CMC employees completing the one-on-one WOWI counseling session. X_2 represented employees completing the portfolio group session. X_3 represented employees completing the eight-hour career development class. X_4 represented employees completing the CD-ROM self-directed career planning programs.

Data-Collection Procedure

1. Mesa plant employees requested services from the Mesa CMC. Employees completed the CMC Participant Information form and CDS as a pretest.

2. Employees completed the career guidance intervention of their choice: one-on-one WOWI, portfolio group session, eight-hour career development class, or the CD-ROM self-directed career-planning programs.

3. Employees returning for their follow-up session (30 to 45 days later) completed the CDS as a post-test. Employees using the CD-ROM self-directed career-planning programs completed a software evaluation form that assessed the effectiveness of the software in meeting their needs.

4. I or a trained certified career counselor collected all CDS pretests and post-tests. I hand scored all tests.

Data Analysis: Pilot Study

I hand-scored the 28 CDS pre- and post-test samples and used "Appendix C: Adults Seeking Continuing Education" of the *CDS Interpretation Manual* (Osipow, 1987) to grossly evaluate pilot study data. Robert Watkins, engineering manager, analyzed the pilot study data using a paired t-test and Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test. With regard to the certainty scale, pilot study data analyzed for the eight-hour career development class sample did support the rejection of the null hypothesis. However, data were too sparse to make any other comparisons.

Data Analysis: Career Decidedness Study

As I continued to gather and hand-score CDS data, reaching a sample of at least 200, it became clear that the one-on-one WOWI counseling session was the intervention that consistently raised career decidedness on the CDS. The portfolio group session data analysis revealed that it did not raise career decidedness on the CDS but was excellent for adults wanting a career exploration activity. The eight-hour career development class was discontinued in 1997, so the sample and data, other than pilot study data, were inconclusive. (With the downturn in the semiconductor industry in 1997 and 1998, factory managers did not support any eight-hour career guidance intervention. Production needed to be increased and factory employees to be on-task.) The CD-ROM self-directed career-planning programs, even though well advertised, were not requested enough over the two years to provided a sample.

Study Conclusions

The review of literature regarding increasing employee career decidedness concurs with the intent of the study. "Research indicates that vigilant career decision making produces positive work attitudes and the least stress" (Greenhaus et al., 1995). Positive work attitudes would result in lower absenteeism, greater job satisfaction, and a more "on-task" employee. Having knowledge of career guidance interventions that raise career decidedness is significant for the career counselor, especially within a corporate environment with a corporate initiative requiring a career plan. In a rapidly changing workplace, perhaps the only security an employee has is a viable career plan with at least two good options for future employment toward which he or she can train and network.

Hornak and Gillingham (1980), in their journal article "Career Indecision: A Self-Defeating Behavior," list the prices of career indecision as follows: increased anxieties and possible depression; psychosomatic illness; unnecessary expenditure of money, energy, and time in school; disapproval of significant others; feelings of discouragement and inadequacy compared to peers who make firm decisions; inability to capitalize on collegiate opportunities; erosion of self-confidence; and poor grades because of lack of purpose.

To summarize, when one compares the benefits of raising career decidedness against the costs of indecision, the quest for career guidance interventions that raise career decidedness

are worthy of research efforts.

Career Decidedness Study: Paradigms for Future Guidance Programs

Problems that plague counselors in an educational setting are similar to those in business and industry: for example, the importance of professional credentials. Our profession believes that a master's degree in educational counseling and coursework in career guidance are necessary in order to work with students in developing educational and career plans; this emphasis on credentials is further supported by State Department certification requirements for counseling. However, vocational teachers and uncredentialed part-time employees work in career centers involved in career counseling. In business and industry, career counseling is found in the human resources (HR) department. Because the number of HR specialists is greater than the number of career counselors (200 to 1, respectively), the human resources degree is preferred, and the leadership for employee career development rests with human resources specialists and managers. Furthermore, business and industry uses professional outplacement firms for downsizing; these firms offer career planning, and their staff members generally have a bachelor's in business management or psychology. There are some exceptions: There is usually one "token" certified career counselor on staff. Our profession of counseling works for professional credential recognition and the right to exercise career development leadership in both arenas: education and business and industry.

One vehicle that lends credibility to a profession is professional research.

The purpose of the Career Decidedness Study was to improve the delivery of career development interventions for employees and to improve the counselor's performance. Research in business and industry is just as difficult to conduct as it is in education. The research deals with human beings, so getting clients to return for a follow-up session and complete a usable post-test is difficult. During my four and a half years of employment at Motorola, there were two major reorganizations, resulting in my moving from a corporate career center to managing a plant career center and finally to orchestrating regional career services. Just as in education, where an election can mean a new state superintendent of public instruction and a

"new regime" with a "new thrust," every business and industry reorganization leads to a new CEO and a new regime with a new thrust. A research project started one year might or might not survive the next, so long-term research (two to five years) is difficult to accomplish. This trend of constant business and industry reorganization and elections of new state superintendents will persist to the year 2021. Research will continue to be difficult to accomplish, but it is worth our efforts to continue to establish the counseling profession and recognition of professional counseling credentials.

Implementing the National Career Development Guidelines

The services of the Mesa CMC were provided in response to the corporate Individual Dignity Entitlement (IDE) initiative; question number four of that initiative (as previously stated) served as the cornerstone of the IDE mission statement. All CMC career services revolved around the nine adult National Career Development Guidelines competencies.

There is no career guidance program model in business and industry similar to the CCBG program model. Career services offered to employees are developed in response to the corporate career development initiative and the knowledge and talent of individuals delivering those career services. One of the business and industry trends for organizing career development interventions is the concept of "career resilience; i.e., the ability to adapt to changing work circumstances, even when the circumstances are discouraging or disruptive" (Collard, 1994). According to Collard, the four elements of career resilience are self-confidence, the need for achievement, the willingness to take risks, and the ability to act independently and cooperatively, depending on the situation. One of the documents developed to work with organizational clients was the Career Resilience Self-Assessment packet using the concept of career resilience and the employee's report of the proficiency of the adult National Career Development Guidelines competencies to determine needed career development training. The immediate response of employees completing the self-assessment packet was, "Were the National Career Development Guidelines customized to our business?" and the response was yes. A presentation and document I developed, entitled "The Answer," is an in-depth customization of the adult National Career Development

Guidelines in response to the corporate IDE initiative. The adult National Career Development Guidelines are usable in business and industry but need to be updated to reflect business and industry trends, such as project work.

A serious problem that confounds career guidance in education and business and industry is the constantly changing nature of work and job titles; this problem will continue into 2021. Bill Bridges's (1995) predictions in *Job Shift* regarding project work are a reality in business and industry now. The big thrust in training in business and industry is certification in project management. Job titles constantly change. The State of Arizona Occupational Information System (OIS) lists occupational information for computer scientist and computer operator, but there are myriad computer-work job titles and descriptions in business and industry that are not found in the OIS, such as network administrator. An example of a job title change in human resources is a change from human resource specialist to human resources performance consultant. In-house training to become the human resources performance consultant is short term and leads to a certificate. There is no committee or training organization determining job title changes; rather, it is the work of "high potentials," employees (30 to 40 years of age) who are bright and Internet savvy, creating job titles as they move through the world of work. Their resumes and chat room conversations are the source of knowledge about new job titles.

Paradigms for Future Guidance Programs

It is true that what drives business and industry and the work done there is global competition. Business and industry constantly changes its focus in career development for employees. In 1994, the focus at Motorola was the family concept: "The company will take care of you and provide you the training needed to have a job with the company." Later that year, the IDE was rolled out as the new corporate career development strategy: "It is your responsibility to develop a career plan and remain viable in the company; we will provide the training for you to do that." In 1998, the corporate career development thrust changed again: "You need to work with your manager to see if you still fit with the company's new direction and have the skills needed for that next job. Take time to talk with your manager about a future career direction." In other words, career development and skills attainment are the responsibility of the

employee, and the employee's manager is the key to that employee's future. Bill Bridges predicted that the future of employees in the world of work was to find a successful manager and move with that manager and organization to the next project. That is a good scenario for 2021 students to understand. Certainly the concept of career resilience as described in Betsy Collard's "Career Self-Reliance" would be valuable to students entering the world of work in future years. A good activity for high school students might be to explore various job titles in their top three occupational clusters and plan sample paths of possibilities, listing a series of acceptable job titles or project work that would interest them.

Schools and school counselors will find a CCBG program still viable in future years if they work with business and industry advisory council members to understand project work and new job titles, and to build into their models the concept of career resilience as related to the career and educational domains. A new set of competencies related to marketing oneself needs to be added to the high school and adult career development competencies, most likely under the National Career Development Guidelines. Counselors need to understand the urgency of career development guidance and to continue to strive to make sure that every student has attained the National Career Development Competencies by grade 12. Business and industry does not want to spend its money or training time doing that job. The youth who has mastered the National Career Development Competencies and who knows how to develop a tentative career plan for the next three years has the basics needed to begin in the world of work.

Online and CD-ROM career development programs will be valuable for information, reinforcement, and additional practice of competencies, but it is evident from having operated a state-of-the-art computerized career center that people want the personal guidance of a counselor, and time will not change that human need.

Counselors and education in general need to come to a demystified understanding of business and industry. A representative of a particular business or industry has expertise in that industry just as the teachers and counselors of the educational community have expertise in education. Million dollar mistakes are made each year in business and industry, such as the *Personal Career Navigator* CD-ROM program, and there is little consequence. Industries think nothing of requiring

employees to work 12-hour shifts that interfere with family life and increase stress. Educators and counselors cannot afford to make mistakes with youth because youth are not expendable. Education and, particularly, counselors are held to a higher standard than business and industry when it comes to performance in relationship to human beings and their nurturing and growth. We need to keep business and industry as our partners to keep up with the changing world of work, but educators and counselors need to remain the providers of career and educational competencies and the experts in educational direction.

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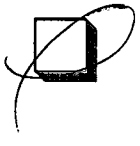

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