CHAPTER 1

Understanding and Facilitating Career Development in the 21st Century

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W HY DO PEOPLE WORK? What role does it play in our lives? Why should counselors and psychologists focus on work behavior? What do they have to offer people who are in the process of preparing to enter the world of work, adjusting to the workplace, experiencing problems or major changes in their work lives, or preparing to leave the work role? How does work relate to other life roles? Should work be seen as an impediment or as a complement to involvement in family and other life domains? Is counseling for work issues any different than counseling for other issues?

These are all questions that captivate and challenge those who study work behavior from a psychological perspective or who seek to assist students, workers, and retirees in the process of preparing for, entering, surviving or thriving within, or exiting from the work world. Not surprisingly, such questions form the foundation of this book, which is aimed at introducing students (and reacquainting professionals) in the helping professions with the literature on career development and counseling. This literature includes foundational and evolving theories of work and career behavior, research on a host of work-related constructs, and efforts to translate theory and research into practical efforts to help people experience optimally satisfying and successful work lives.

This chapter is designed to set the stage for the rest of the book by briefly considering the role of work in people's lives, sketching the conceptual and professional boundaries of career development and counseling, discussing

some of the myths and realities that surround the field, and describing its historical context and contemporary challenges. Our primary goal is to convince the reader that work and career is one of the most important domains of life that counselors and psychologists can study—and that it is also one of the most meaningful targets of intervention in our roles as counselors, therapists, educators, and advocates. Freud was said to have equated mental health with the capacity to love and to work. Although these capacities may not truly be sufficient to define mental health, it is clear that work has a central location in many people's lives—one that frequently intersects with other life roles and that can have an immense impact on one's overall quality of life.

WHY DO PEOPLE WORK?

It seems fitting to begin by considering the reasons that people work and the various roles that work can play in their lives. At first glance, the question of why people work may seem silly or moot—the sort that only academics perched up in their ivory towers might ask. People work because they have to, don't they? They need the money that work provides to put food on the table and a roof over their heads. This may be true for most adults, but work as a means of survival does not tell the whole story, at least not for everyone. As the old saying goes, people do not live by bread alone.

Working to Live or Living to Work? The Differing Roles of Work in People's Lives

In this section, we briefly consider various sources of work motivation.

Work as need fulfillment. One way to view the question of why people work is through the lens of Abraham Maslow's (1943) famous hierarchy, where human needs range from those that focus on basic survival (e.g., the need for food) all the way to self-actualization (e.g., the need to realize one's inner potential). Maslow's hierarchy is often pictured as a pyramid, with more basic needs (e.g., food, safety, security) at the bottom. In this view, the satisfaction of basic needs provides a foundation for meeting higher-order social and psychological needs, such as friendship, intimacy, self-esteem, and personal growth.

One of the problems in applying such a needs hierarchy to work motivation is that it may be used to imply that some reasons to work are somehow nobler or loftier than others or that poor people work only because they *have to* (i.e., to survive) while those better-off work because they *want to* (i.e., to satisfy higher-order needs). To avoid such a bind, one can simply view Maslow's

needs as reflecting a range or list of reasons why people work, without the added assumption that they are necessarily hierarchical in nature. Thus, in addition to meeting basic survival needs, work can provide the context for fulfilling (at least a portion of) one's needs for security (e.g., enhancing the material comfort of one's family), social belonging and intimacy, personal esteem (e.g., providing a sense of personal worth and accomplishment), purpose, and self-actualization. People may be motivated to work for any combination of these reasons; they are not mutually exclusive or necessarily hierarchical, except to the extent that basic survival is obviously a prerequisite for fulfilling other needs. Rounds and Jin (Chapter 15, this volume) provide a more complete consideration of work needs and values, including their role in the selection of particular forms of work.

Work as an individual's public identity.   Beyond Maslow's hierarchy and the issue of need fulfillment per se, work may also serve other, perhaps less obvious roles in people's lives, particularly if we expand the question to "what do people get from working?" and if we highlight the role of culture in work. For example, tied to the esteem and self-actualization bases of work is the issue of identity, which can have both public and private significance. Perhaps particularly in individualistic or Western societies, work can be seen as an expression of one's public image. Note how often people in the United States ask each other, "What do you do?" (i.e., what form of work do you do?) when they meet someone new. One's occupation can be a shorthand way of announcing one's social address (e.g., education, social class, prestige). Fair or not, what one does for a living is often viewed as an essential part of who one is as a person.

Work as personal identity or self-construction.   Work-as-identity can also be an expression of self-image, a means through which people "implement a self-concept," in the words of Donald Super (Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996, p. 139). This may be most obvious in artistic forms of work. For example, we typically think of artists as expressing themselves through the things they create. But self-expression or, more expansively, using work to become the sort of person one imagines—to construct a self—can be a potent source of motivation in any form of work. Taking Super's thoughts about work motivation a step further, Edward Bordin, another influential career writer, emphasized people's capacity to seek work that they find intrinsically interesting or from which they can derive pleasure. To illustrate his point, Bordin (1994, p. 54) asked, "Is a professional athlete working or playing?"

   Such views of work motivation are sometimes criticized with the argument that many people are not free to choose work that expresses anything more

than the need for a paycheck or that not everyone is lucky enough to be able to do work that is pleasurable. One may ask whether those who work for a minimum wage, in unskilled jobs, in fast-food restaurants, on assembly lines, or in coal mines have the luxury of ''playing'' at, or implementing their self-concepts through, work. There is little question that lack of economic resources can limit one's choice of work or that jobs may differ in their obvious outlets for self-expression.

However, it is not hard to think of less affluent persons who find meaning, dignity, and enjoyment in their work. The notions of work as a calling (e.g., as a way to help others or to serve a higher power) or as an opportunity to construct and tell one's life story (Savickas, Chapter 6, this volume) capture the sense that work can play extremely valuable, self-defining roles in people's lives, regardless of social class and even when performed under difficult or harsh conditions. One can easily, from an external perspective, see someone else's life story as mundane, boring, or marked only by exploitation. However, that same story may be far more intriguing and meaningful to the person who is living it.

Work as normative expectation, group identity, and social contribution. In more collectivist cultures, work may be seen as an expression of group as well as personal identity. For example, choice of work may be made less on a personal basis and more in collaboration with members of one's family, tribe, or community. Consideration may be given to the needs of the collective and to selecting work that serves (and reflects positively on) the group and preserves relational harmony. Such functions of work may be seen, perhaps, as extensions of Maslow's (1943) focus on security, social, esteem, and actualization needs—but with the focus on benefits for the group rather than for the self alone.

Of course, prevailing social norms in most societies maintain that one *must* work if one is able to do so. It is a strong expectation conveyed by social agents in the family, school, and other social institutions. This norm is well-captured by the early rock-and-roll hit ''Get a Job,'' in which the singer comically bemoans the social pressure to find work. Indeed, those who fail to find work are often derided with labels such as bum, shirker, lazy, good-for-nothing, or couch potato—especially if their failure to find work is attributed to their character or to a lack of effort. The power of this social norm can be seen in the internalized anger, frustration, and other adverse reactions unemployed persons often experience. This normative aspect of work may be seen as a special instance of Maslow's social belongingness need.

Work as existential response and aid to mental health. From an existential point of view, work may be seen as a way to structure one's time and construct personal meaning in an otherwise meaningless universe. Kierkegaard, the famous philosopher, spoke of work as a means by which people may find distraction from their self-consciousness, especially from thoughts of their own mortality. Although perhaps not the most upbeat idea, such a view of work may nevertheless help to explain why some people become so heavily invested in their work, sometimes to the point of work addiction, and why many become depressed when the loss of the work role, either through involuntary layoff or retirement, erodes their sense of life structure or meaning. Several social problems, like delinquency, may also stem partly from, or be exacerbated by, lack of access to suitable work. The old adage ''an idle mind is the devil's workshop'' captures the value of work as a way to structure time, maintain mental health, and promote prosocial behavior. The concept of psychological ''flow'' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) demonstrates how pleasurable it can be to become so absorbed in one's work activities that one becomes oblivious to the passage of time or to one's own sense of self-awareness.

In sum, people work for a variety of reasons, especially to earn a living, honor and contribute to their families and communities, achieve self-growth, establish a public identity, and structure their lives. Many of the ideas we have presented on why people work or what they derive from working can really be reduced to two venerable philosophical positions. In the *hedonic* view, people are motivated to survive and to experience as much personal pleasure (and to avoid as much pain) as possible. This position subsumes Maslow's survival, security, and esteem (and, perhaps, love and belongingness) needs. In the *eudaimonic* view, people are motivated to ''live the good life,'' not merely the ''happy life.'' Doing good is elevated above feeling good. A premium is placed on approaching work as an opportunity to achieve growth, purpose, meaning, and social contribution. The eudaimonic position subsumes Maslow's focus on aesthetic and cognitive needs (e.g., knowledge, goodness, justice) and self-actualization (or developing one's inner potential).

WORK VIS-À-VIS OTHER LIFE DOMAINS AND ROLES

Paid work is but one of life's domains, though it is the focal point of many people's waking lives—if not in terms of psychological investment, then at least in terms of hours spent. Assuming an 8-hour workday, many full-time workers spend at least a third of most weekdays at work—as much or more time as they spend sleeping or engaged in just about any

other activity. And this estimate does not include the many additional hours or days that some people put into their work, above and beyond the traditional workweek. If work accounts for a third of a typical workday and sleep accounts for another third, that means all other activities (e.g., leisure, parenting, volunteering) are compressed into the remaining third or are put off until the weekend—assuming that one is not doing paid work then, too. Many people also think about their work when they are not at work. It is no wonder, then, that work can be seen as having the potential to conflict with or overshadow other life roles, like family members. Yet psychological research increasingly acknowledges that work and other life roles also have the potential to enrich one another (see Heppner, Chapter 7, this volume.)

Super was perhaps the first vocational theorist to view career development in the context of other life domains or roles and note that, in addition to their roles as workers, people can be invested in student, family, romantic, leisure, volunteer, and other life roles. Because work can interface with these other roles, it makes sense to reframe career planning as life-career planning or ''life design'' (Savickas, Chapter 6, this volume). Such a broadened view suggests that people consider how central or peripheral a role paid work will play in their lives. It also opens the door to extending interventions, for example, to those who perform unpaid work or who wish to enrich their leisure or civic lives. (In a literal sense, *occupations* can be seen as any activities that occupy people's time and energy—or as roles that people occupy—regardless of whether such activities or roles involve paid compensation.)

Super also emphasized the notion of role salience, which implies that work, or any other life role, can vary in its centrality or importance for any given individual and at different stages of life. This insight reminds us that work is not *the* most valued role for everyone. (See Hartung, Chapter 4, for coverage of Super's ideas regarding life-career development.) Such a perspective is extremely liberating, allowing for a less work-centric view of people's lives, freeing career counselors to view their clients as whole people with interests and commitments outside of work, and providing a valuable link to the study of women's career development (Richardson, 1993). Historically, men have often been socialized to focus primarily on their work trajectories, giving less thought to other life domains, whereas women have been more likely to view their work lives in the context of other central life roles, such as romantic partner or parent. Life-career planning and the allowance for differential role salience simultaneously challenges the traditional, male career pattern as *the* way to define career development, normalizes alternative ways to pursue work, honors the feminist commitment to equality, and offers the possibility of more flexible choices for women and men alike.

THE WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW OF WORK

To this point, we have mainly focused on the *why* of work—the reasons why people work—and how work relates to other life domains or roles. In so doing, we have been discussing the general forces that impel, or motivate, people to work. And we have so far sidestepped the crucial what, when, where, and how questions: *what* specific form of work people either choose or feel compelled to do, the *how* of choice making (the process through which the individual and/or important others make work choices), the *when* of work decisions (points at which key work choices are made), and the *where* of work (the impact of the environment on choice and subsequent work outcomes).

   Much of this book is devoted to addressing these very questions. The major theories of career development, contained in the first section of the book, all grapple with these questions to varying degrees. For example, the theories of person–environment fit (see Swanson & Schneider, Chapter 2, and Nauta, Chapter 3) tend to emphasize the what and where questions (i.e., the content of work that people do and the role of the environment in attracting them to or repelling them from certain forms of work). The developmental theories (see Hartung, Chapter 4), meanwhile, highlight the how and when questions (e.g., the ages or stages at which work-related decisions are made and the processes by which these decisions are aided or stifled). The chapters in the second section of the book emphasize key person and social factors (e.g., gender, social class) that often play into work ''choices'' and affect how people lead their work lives. The chapters in the third section focus on psychological and social attributes that career counselors often assess when assisting people to select or adjust to work. And the chapters in the final section involve interventions that extend theory and research to practice—the how of facilitating life-career development.

   Parenthetically, we placed the word *choices* in quotation marks in the last paragraph to highlight the point that work decisions are not always—in fact, are *often* not—a matter of purely free choice. Some people in certain cultural and economic contexts may assert greater personal agency in selecting their work than do others. In some contexts, ''choice'' is severely limited by financial or other constraints. In other contexts, choices may be made primarily by important others (e.g., family members). And in all cases, the environment has something to say about what work people will be allowed to do and for how long. Vroom (1964) observed that ''people not only *select* occupations, they *are selected for* occupations'' (p. 56). Thus, employers, admissions committees, and others serve as gatekeepers that help to determine initial and continued access to particular work and educational paths.

WHAT IS A CAREER? WHAT IS CAREER DEVELOPMENT?

To this point, we have been using the term *work* as the most inclusive way to refer to the subject matter at the center of this book. *Work* may also be less laden with excess conceptual and cultural baggage than are other terms used to describe the same essential area of human functioning. Some writers have, in fact, suggested that the field of vocational psychology be recast as ''work psychology'' or the ''psychology of working'' (Blustein, 2006). We appreciate this argument, but we also find the older terms—*vocational psychology, career counseling*, and so forth—still serviceable, if occasionally problematic. We decided to retain ''career development and counseling'' in the title of this book to maintain continuity with a large body of literature that has accumulated on the study and promotion of work behavior. But it is appropriate at this stage to define our terms more carefully.

Work, Job, Occupation, Vocation, Career—What's the Difference?

Work refers to the domain of life in which people provide services or create goods, typically (though not always) on a paid basis. It can also refer to the specific activities that one performs for pay or on a volunteer basis (i.e., volunteer work). In most societies, work is associated with the period of life after formal schooling (although some students engage in work as well as academic roles) and before retirement, or disengagement from work. *Job* is a specific work position held over a defined period of time (e.g., being a quality inspector at one factory for 10 years). Although *job* and *career* are sometimes used synonymously in popular discourse, vocational psychologists often use the term *career* to refer to a sequence or collection of jobs one has held over the course of one's work life. In this sense, people may hold different types of jobs over the course of a single career. However, it is also common to use *career* in a more limited sense to refer to one's involvement in a particular job family (e.g., engineering), which may include multiple jobs (e.g., being an engineer at company A for 10 years and at company B for another 10 years). It is in this sense that one can speak of a *career change*, a shift from one job family to another (e.g., from engineer to teacher).

Other terms commonly used to refer to work behavior include *occupation* and *vocation*. Both of these terms are often used interchangeably with *career*. For example, many writers speak of occupational choice, vocational choice, or career choice as meaning the same thing. But each of these terms, particularly *vocation* and *career*, also come with some excess baggage, at least in the view of some writers. *Vocation* is sometimes viewed as an antiquated term. It originated from the Latin verb *vocare*, ''to call,'' and historically has been used in some religious circles to refer to a divine calling to pursue a religious path. *Vocation* was later used to refer to secular forms of work as well, and

leaders of the vocational guidance movement (e.g., Parsons, 1909) sought to assist people in locating jobs that would best match their personal qualities and be satisfying. In more recent times, the term *vocation* has been associated with vocational/technical (as opposed to ''academic track'') education and is sometimes used to refer to jobs that do not require higher education. As a result, clients may sometimes be a bit confused about how someone identified as a *vocational* counselor or psychologist can help them select or adjust to a *career* path. Still, *vocation* has had staying power as a generic term.

 Career may have a more contemporary feel than *vocation* and is more commonly used in popular discourse. Potential clients may be more likely to understand why they might see someone called a career counselor as opposed to a vocational counselor, and many professionals in our field prefer to refer to themselves as career counselors or psychologists. However, some writers find the term *career* objectionable on political or socioeconomic grounds and argue that it implies choice and privilege and that not everyone who works has a subjective sense of career. According to this line of reasoning, careers imply higher-status work. Thus, engineering is a career, but housepainter is not because the former requires more education and tends to command greater prestige and more favorable work conditions and pay.

 Although we are sensitive to this argument, we are not sure that the term *career* necessarily implies all these things (or that housepainters would agree that they do not have careers). Moreover, it is hard to dismiss the term without also dismissing the extensive literature with which it is associated. In short, *career* is a compromise that most professionals in the field have been willing to make in the absence of an alternative term that meets with universal acceptance. Yet it is well for readers to be aware of the controversy that sometimes surrounds it.

What Is Career Choice and Development?

Career development can be seen as a process that encompasses much of the life span—one that begins in childhood (and includes the formal and informal experiences that give rise to talents, interests, values, and knowledge of the world of work), continues into adulthood via the progression of one's career behavior (e.g., entry into and adjustment to work over time), and culminates with the transition into, and adjustment to, retirement. It is a concept designed to capture the dynamic, changing nature of career or work behavior and is sometimes used as incorporating *career choice* and at other times as distinct from it. Career choice may be seen as the process of selecting and entering a particular career path, whereas career development refers to one's experience before, during, and (especially) after career choice. The period before initial career choice may overlap with one's educational life.

Some writers conceive of this period of academic or educational preparation as a part of the larger career development process; others treat it as distinct from, but conceptually related to, career development. Of course, career choice is not necessarily a static or one-time process. Many people revise their career choices over time for various reasons (e.g., to pursue work that better fits their interests and talents, to shift paths after involuntary job loss, or to reenter the workforce after raising children). Career choice, in turn, often has at least two phases: setting a choice goal and then taking steps to implement this goal, for instance, through additional training or a job search process.

Career *development* is sometimes used synonymously with career *advancement* or *management*. We see these terms as somewhat distinctive, however. Career advancement implies a linear process or one in which the individual progressively improves his or her career standing over time, as in the metaphor of climbing a career ladder. Career management connotes a situation in which the individual is actively engaged in directing the course of his or her own career development; that is, it implies a view of the person as active agent, anticipating and adjusting to new opportunities and behaving proactively to cope with negative situations. Career development, by contrast, connotes a continuous stream of career-relevant events that are not necessarily linear or positive in impact and that may or may not be subject to personal agency (e.g., being born into poverty, losing a job due to the bankruptcy of one's company). Although development ordinarily implies forward movement, it also holds the potential for devolvement or regression as well as progress.

Super, the dean of the developmental career theorists, described a number of life stages through which careers were assumed to evolve (growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, disengagement; see Hartung, Chapter 4), and other developmental theorists also point to distinct stages or life periods that are crucial to career choice and development (e.g., Gottfredson, 2005). The current book is organized with three larger developmental periods in mind, namely, the periods prior to work entry (e.g., see Turner & Lapan, Chapter 19, and Whiston & James, Chapter 20), during work entry (e.g., Jome & Phillips, Chapter 21), and after work entry (e.g., Lent & Brown, Chapter 22; Bobek, Hanson, & Robbins, Chapter 23), which may well involve a recycling through periods of retraining/preparation and entry into new career paths.

WHAT IS CAREER COUNSELING AND HOW IS IT DISTINCTIVE?

We use the term *career counseling* in this book, as will most of the chapter authors, to refer to services offered to ameliorate or prevent problems with work behavior, regardless of the prestige or level of education associated

with a given work option. In this section, we describe the purview of career counseling, other services that may augment or overlap with it, and the relation of career and personal counseling.

Formats and Foci of Career Counseling

Career counseling typically takes place between an individual client and counselor, though many career counselors also employ group counseling or workshops, particularly in educational settings in which a number of clients are dealing with common developmental challenges (e.g., academic or career-related choices). Career counseling can be directed at a fairly wide range of client presenting problems, but these may largely be captured within three larger categories:

Help in making and implementing career-related decisions. Helping clients make career choices is probably the most popular image of career counseling. It entails assisting clients in deciding among various career paths as well as educational or training options (e.g., academic majors) that may have career relevance. Some clients enter counseling needing assistance to identify viable career options, with few if any firm ideas about which direction they might like to pursue. In some cases, clients have prematurely eliminated options that may, in fact, suit them well. Other clients enter with a dizzying array of options in mind and hope for help in narrowing their list. Yet other clients may have already made at least a preliminary decision about their educational or career direction and would like the counselor's assistance either in confirming the wisdom of this choice or in putting their choice into action, for example, by helping them locate and obtain employment in their chosen field. Whiston and James, Chapter 20, and Jome and Phillips, Chapter 21, focus, respectively, on counseling for making and implementing career choices.

   Although career choice counseling is often pursued by students anticipating the period of work entry, it is also often sought by adult workers wishing to change directions (or sometimes forced to do so by circumstances) and by persons planning to reenter the paid workforce after a period of primary engagement in other life roles (e.g., parenting). For these reasons, it may overlap with the career transition focus of career counseling, discussed later in this section. In addition, counselors in school settings often focus on orienting children and adolescents to the world of work, helping them gain self-understanding, and aiding their academic performance. Such activities, which are intended to prepare students to ultimately make and implement satisfying choices (Turner & Lapan, Chapter 19), may be part of the developmental aims of vocational guidance and career education services.

Help in adjusting to work and managing one's career. Another common focus of career counseling involves work adjustment concerns, such as coping with dissatisfaction with one's job or difficulties with work socialization or performance. These problems may be manifest at any point after work entry. Sometimes they occur during the early period of transitioning from school to work as people discover that their new job is not exactly what they expected to find or that they are having a difficult time meeting the expectations of their employer. At other times, work dissatisfaction or performance issues may occur at later periods, for example, when people gradually come to feel stifled by a lack of variety or advancement opportunities or when a promotion places them in a novel situation where their current skills are challenged by new job requirements. Counseling to promote work satisfaction and performance must contend with the many reasons an individual may be unhappy at work as well as the many reasons supervisors or coworkers may be unhappy with the individual (see Lent & Brown, Chapter 22).

Help in negotiating career transitions and work–life balance. Some people seek or are referred for career counseling specifically for help in making the transition from school to work, from one form of work or career path to another, or from work to retirement or other life roles. The issue of career transitions is complex and multifaceted because such transitions may be either voluntary (e.g., based on a desire to do something ''more meaningful'' or to engage in ''career renewal'') or involuntary (e.g., due to job layoff), experienced as either developmentally on time and expected or unplanned and premature, and be anticipated with great worry or, in other cases, great excitement. Of course, whereas some clients may seek counseling preemptively to improve their work lives before things go wrong, many seek counseling with a sense of urgency or crisis after a negative life event has occurred or seems imminent. Career transition issues are addressed by Bobek and colleagues in Chapter 23.

Some clients also seek assistance in coping with the challenges of managing multiple roles or maintaining work–life balance. Although their reasons for counseling may not be stated exactly in those terms, these concerns may be implicit in such presenting problems as stress at keeping up with work responsibilities while caring for an ailing parent or dissatisfaction with one's relationship partner because he or she is perceived as not fulfilling a fair share of child care or homemaking responsibilities. Some counselors may view this class of presenting problems as not essentially a part of career counseling and rather as being within the realm of relationship counseling or even psychotherapy. We believe it clearly falls within the province of career counseling, particularly if one takes a broadened view of career–life

counseling, seeing the work role as intersecting with other life roles (e.g., romantic partner, parent, family member). Several chapters in this book include consideration of work–life balance issues (e.g., Heppner, Chapter 7; Kenny & Medvide, Chapter 12; Lent & Brown, Chapter 22).

Our clustering of career presenting problems into three broad categories is, admittedly, somewhat arbitrary. Some problems do not fit neatly into only one category. For example, as we noted, some clients anticipating a career transition or dissatisfied with their current jobs may need to revisit career choice issues to consider whether a career change may better fit their current interests or life circumstances. Still, it is helpful to think of career counseling as encompassing multiple presenting issues that occur over the life span, from the preentry period of education and work preparation through entry into, adjustment to, and exit from the world of work. To be helpful to clients, counselors must ordinarily arrive at a mutual agreement with them on the goals and tasks of counseling. Taking a one-size-fits-all approach—by assuming, for example, that all career counseling involves career choice issues—may severely limit the ways in which a counselor can be helpful to his or her clients.

Career Counseling vis-à-vis Other Career Services and Interventions

As Savickas (1994) has noted, career counseling is related to a variety of other services intended to promote people's career development, in particular, guidance, advising, education, placement, coaching, and mentoring. The first three of these are mainly identified with educational settings; the remaining three tend to be associated with work settings or with the transition from education to work. *Guidance* refers to the career-orienting activities typically provided by school counselors and teachers as they help students to become aware of the work world, of the value of planning, and of self-attributes that may relate to various career options. Career counseling as a formal specialty grew partly out of this guidance function. In recent years, computerized career guidance and information systems have been developed to automate or aid the guidance function (see Gore, Leuwerke, & Kelly, Chapter 18, this volume). *Advising*, typically associated with teachers and professors, is usually limited to selection of coursework and fulfillment of academic requirements but may involve less formal aspects, including advice regarding career options.

Career education usually refers to formal school-based programs, often at the middle and high school levels, aimed at introducing students to the world of work, assessment of career-relevant personal attributes, and exploration of career options that may fit one's personal attributes. It may

also include a work component (e.g., placement in a relevant part-time job as a part of a school's career academy). Career education may be seen as an extension of the guidance function in that it is aimed at many of the same career-orienting and planning objectives, though often in a more structured and lengthier format. It differs from advising in that the focus is on career exploration rather than simply provision of advice or instructions on meeting academic requirements. A typical format for career education involves coursework facilitated by school counselors or teachers. Career planning courses are often offered at the college level as well to assist students in making academic and career decisions.

Placement, as the term implies, is focused on "placing" students or workers in particular jobs. It is concerned with helping people locate relevant job openings, mount effective job searches, and present themselves effectively to prospective employers (e.g., via resumes, job applications, and interview preparation). (On the work organization side of things, human resources professionals are involved in recruitment, screening, and selection of prospective employees.) Career counselors often provide services that overlap with those of placement personnel because both may assist people in implementing their career choices. Placement offices on college campuses are sometimes part of a larger career services center that offers both career counseling and placement. The advantage of such an arrangement is that it provides students with one-stop career assistance. In other cases, however, placement services may be located in a unit separate from counseling services.

Finally, coaching and mentoring are increasingly popular career services. *Coaching* has come to take on a number of different meanings in the career world. Often it is focused on assisting workers, particularly managers or executives, to improve their work performance or to promote their career progress within a given work organization (e.g., prepare for a new role or job). It may be practiced by service providers from a variety of professional backgrounds (e.g., counselors, vocational psychologists, organizational psychologists) and overlap substantially with career counseling. Alternatively, it may be offered by persons with relevant work content experience but no formal counseling or psychological training. *Mentoring* typically refers to the practice of pairing a newer worker with one or more experienced workers for the purposes of helping the newcomer adjust to the work environment, learn the ropes of his or her job, receive support and advice when work problems surface, have a model for negotiating work–life balance, and generally facilitate his or her career progress. Mentors and mentees may come together informally or be formally paired by the work organization.

It is apparent that career counseling can overlap with other career services. It is, therefore, important for career counselors to be familiar with these services so that they can facilitate clients' use of them as needed, for example,

by making appropriate referrals to an academic advisor, a career class, or a placement office, or by helping clients identify mentors.

Career Counseling vis-à-vis Personal Counseling and Psychotherapy

There are differing views about how career counseling relates to personal counseling and psychotherapy. Career counseling is clearly distinctive in some respects. Its most obvious distinction is the focus on one or two life domains, that is, preparation for work and functioning in work and school contexts. Thus, it involves specialized training elements and courses of study, for example, in career counseling and vocational psychology. However, the prevailing view within the counseling professions appears to be that there is often a false dichotomy between career and personal counseling (Hackett, 1993). This view is based on the observations that clients often present with multiple concerns (e.g., depression *and* difficulty making a career choice), that career issues are often intertwined with other life domains and roles (e.g., the difficulty of a romantic couple in making dual career decisions), that career problems can have emotional sides or consequences (e.g., stress, dissatisfaction), and that counseling can frequently rotate back and forth between career and other (e.g., personal, relational) life concerns.

Given the frequent overlap of career and personal counseling, it may be argued that the ideal scenario is for counselors and psychologists to be prepared, via training and experience, to deal with both career and personal concerns. Training, for example, only in personal counseling and psychotherapy can lead counselors and therapists to overlook or downplay the importance of work-related issues or to feel incompetent at dealing with them. It is, of course, imperative that one be able to recognize the limits of one's competence and, where those limits have been reached, to make responsible referrals. However, there are also advantages to receiving training of sufficient breadth in counseling and therapy so that one is truly competent to identify and deal with the more common career *and* personal problems with which clients are likely to present.

It is probably most helpful to view the career versus personal counseling controversy in terms of a continuum rather than a dichotomy, with more purely career-type concerns (e.g., career choice) at one end and more purely personal concerns (e.g., depression) at the other. In the middle of this continuum is where the two overlap or are interwoven (e.g., where choice is made more difficult by depression). A good example of how career issues can be relatively distinct from and, at other times, overlap with personal issues can be found within the types of clients who seek help with making career choices. Researchers have found that there are several types of career indecision (Brown & Ryan Krane, 2000) and that these can best be

approached with different counseling strategies. For instance, some clients enter counseling with relatively focused, developmental problems in making a career decision. They do not generally experience decision-making problems but are having trouble with this one area. Not surprisingly, perhaps, such clients often do well in just five or fewer counseling sessions that are aimed exclusively at self-exploration, career information, and decision-making activities. Another type of career client enters counseling with a characteristic tendency to experience negative affect and to be indecisive in most life areas. To be maximally helpful, counseling with such clients may well involve more extensive efforts to deal with both their career and personal (e.g., cognitive and emotional) concerns.

SOME MYTHS AND REALITIES ABOUT CAREER COUNSELING

We have found that career counseling is viewed in stereotypic fashion by some of our colleagues in the helping professions. Common stereotypes include perceptions that career counseling is relatively simple, easy, formulaic, and brief; that it involves a ''test 'em and tell 'em'' approach in which assessments are mechanically assigned and interpreted and clients are quickly sent on their merry way; that computer programs can be used to substitute for career counselors; and that the effects of career counseling are not as impressive or meaningful as are those of personal counseling. In this section, we briefly address such perceptions and examine ways in which we believe they can mistake or distort the reality of career counseling.

Career Counseling as Simple, Brief, and Highly Structured

Is it true that career counseling is simple, easy, formulaic, and brief? The kernel of truth in this stereotype is that some clients do, indeed, profit from relatively brief, structured forms of career counseling. But it really depends to a great extent on the nature of clients' goals and presenting problems, on other qualities they bring to counseling, and on the methods counselors employ. As we noted before, research has found that many clients profit from five or fewer sessions of counseling aimed at career choice. Such rapid gains are most likely to occur when (a) clients' presenting problems are limited to making a career-related decision, (b) clients do not exhibit high levels of general indecisiveness or negative affect (i.e., global tendencies to experience feelings like depression and anxiety), and (c) counseling includes at least three of five critical ingredients (see Whiston & James, Chapter 20).

Many clients also profit from receiving more than five sessions of career counseling (Brown & Ryan Krane, 2000). In such cases, it is likely that their presenting issues extend beyond making a career decision (e.g., coping

with work dissatisfaction or stress), that they present with other issues that affect their career development (e.g., chronic indecisiveness), or that their career concerns are complexly intertwined with personal (e.g., emotional) or relationship (e.g., work–family balance) issues. Such situations, which are quite common, stimulate the creativity of career counselors and underscore the need for them to be facile with both career and other forms of counseling. For example, counseling for work dissatisfaction often draws on many of the same strategies as would be employed with clients who seek help because of dissatisfaction in other areas of their lives (Lent, 2004). Career counseling need not be any less artful or spontaneous than other types of counseling—and clients frequently present with problems that cannot be neatly categorized as needing only one form of assistance.

The Role of Formal Testing

Is it true that career counseling is synonymous with testing? The kernel of truth here is that career counselors often do employ formal assessments, particularly with clients who seek assistance in making a career-related decision. In fact, many clients have been told by advisors or others to go see a career counselor to ''take that test that will tell you what you should do.'' Of course, no test can read a client's mind or future, much less make a decision for her or him, and some clients are displeased, if not entirely surprised, when they discover this reality. However, there *are* a number of assessment devices that can provide very useful information about clients' self-attributes (e.g., interests, values, abilities) in relation to educational and career options they are considering or can help them expand or narrow their range of options (see the chapters in the third section of this book). Although not as dramatic, perhaps, as gazing into a crystal ball, it can be very helpful to discover, for example, that one's interests resemble those of people who are satisfied working in health care settings. In fact, individualized assessment is one of the components that accounts for the effectiveness of career choice counseling (Brown & Ryan Krane, 2000). Career counseling for work adjustment and transition issues may also profitably employ formal assessment methods (Lent & Brown, Chapter 22; Bobek et al., Chapter 23).

Despite its documented utility, career counseling need not involve formal psychometric measures exclusively or even at all. Many career counselors use less formal ways of gathering information about clients, often in addition to psychometric measures, to aid the counseling process. For example, depending on the presenting issue, some counselors use card-sorting activities, fantasy workday exercises, career genograms, role plays, and a variety of other methods (Pope & Minor, 2000). Such options can stimulate their clients' thinking about career issues and make the process of career

counseling more interactive, engaging, and creative—anything but the sterile, rigid, ''test 'em and tell 'em'' stereotype.

Counselors Versus Computers

Is it true that whatever career counselors have to offer could be done more efficiently and just as effectively by a computer program? It is important to acknowledge that most people do not seek the services of a career counselor. Most make choices and solve other career-related problems on their own or with the support and guidance of parents, teachers, friends, work colleagues, or others. Computerized guidance and information systems and high-quality Internet resources are useful tools for many persons who do not seek career counseling and who have relatively uncomplicated, developmental needs. Such options can aid people in gathering career-relevant information about themselves and the world of work and, perhaps, in reconciling these two sources of information (see Gore et al., Chapter 18). Computerized and Internet-based options can also be useful adjuncts for people who do seek career counseling. Research indicates, however, that for such persons, access to computerized services alone, on average, yields less substantial effects than when they also meet with a counselor (Brown & Ryan Krane, 2000; Whiston, Brecheisen, & Stephens, 2003). In essence, counselors can still do things that computers do not, such as helping clients set and work toward career goals, assisting them in processing complicated computer-generated information, and aiding them in marshaling supports and overcoming barriers to implementing their preferred choices (Brown et al., 2003).

The Effects of Career Counseling

Finally, how useful is career counseling compared to personal counseling (i.e., where the two forms of intervention are treated as relatively distinct)? Is it true that career counseling is somehow less impactful or meaningful? For several reasons, we believe it would be a mistake to trivialize the importance of career counseling. First, one's work can have a great impact on the kind of life one leads, both hedonically (e.g., materially) and eudaimonically (e.g., in terms of life meaning and purpose). As we noted earlier, work plays a central role in many people's lives. Its significance often goes well beyond the sheer amount of time and effort they put into their jobs or the size of the paycheck they receive. For many, work (or its absence) can have great psychological significance, with the potential to spill over into the nonwork parts of people's lives. For example, work-related stresses or conflicts can affect people's sense of well-being when they are not at work. Likewise, work colleagues become an important source of friendships and

general social support for many people. Although some compartmentalize their lives more than others, when people feel stifled or unhappy in their work lives, they are often likely to be unhappy with their lives as a whole (see Lent & Brown, Chapter 22). And this can have implications for one's friends and loved ones as well. Thus, it would be difficult to overstate the value of counseling that can either prevent or remediate career-related problems.

Second, meta-analyses, which statistically combine the findings of many studies together, have found that the effects of career choice counseling actually rival and, in some cases, exceed the effects of personal counseling. For instance, the average person receiving career counseling tends to show as much gain as the average person receiving psychotherapy, especially if career counseling involves at least three of five critical ingredients (Brown & Ryan Krane, 2000; see Whiston & James, Chapter 20). We should not press this comparison too far because the gains assessed in career counseling and psychotherapy outcome studies tend to involve different sorts of outcomes (e.g., changes in career decidedness versus depression). However, career choice clients do show statistically and practically significant benefits from counseling—benefits that may well promote other aspects of personal well-being.

WHO DOES CAREER COUNSELING AND STUDIES WORK BEHAVIOR?

Career counselors and vocational psychologists are not alone in their interest in career development issues. There are many facets to work behavior, and these are, accordingly, studied by a variety of professions. Thus, it is useful to appreciate the larger lay of the land. *Career counselors* often have master's degrees in counseling, with a focus on career issues. They may have studied in programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. *Vocational psychologists* typically have doctoral degrees in counseling psychology. Their academic programs may have been accredited by the American Psychological Association. Vocational psychology has, historically, been a central part of the larger specialty of counseling psychology rather than an entirely separate specialty area. Practicing vocational psychologists often consider themselves as career counselors, as well as more general therapists. Some vocational psychologists prefer the title ''career psychologist.'' Some of the key professional journals read by career counselors and vocational psychologists are the *Journal of Vocational Behavior, Journal of Counseling Psychology, Career Development Quarterly, Journal of Career Assessment*, and *Journal of Career Development*.

In addition to those trained specifically as career counselors and vocational psychologists, a variety of other master's-level counselors, especially *school counselors, mental health counselors*, and *college counselors*, may provide career counseling or related career services. For example, school counselors may lead comprehensive career guidance programs or teach career education classes, in addition to doing individual or group counseling aimed at facilitating educational behavior or career planning. Some *social workers* also focus on occupational issues, for example, as personnel in employee assistance programs. Historically, social work emphasized vocational services in an effort to combat poverty, particularly in urban settings.

Within the realm of psychology, *industrial/organizational (I/O) psychologists* also study and, in some cases, intervene in work-related issues. In some ways, vocational and I/O psychologists are interested in opposite sides of the same coin. They each focus on factors that promote effective work functioning, but vocational psychologists are primarily concerned with person-focused outcomes (e.g., how to facilitate an individual's decisions), whereas I/O psychologists mainly emphasize outcomes of concern to work organizations (e.g., how to promote organizational productivity). Although they tend to approach work behavior from these differing person versus organization perspectives, their interests frequently overlap. For example, both specialties are concerned with issues of work satisfaction, performance, stress, the work–family interface, and workplace equity. The I/O psychologists are less likely to receive training in career counseling but are somewhat more likely to engage in organizational development and consulting activities. *Occupational health psychology*, a relatively new specialty, is concerned with factors that affect the psychological and physical health of workers (workplace safety, psychological burnout). Various other psychological specialties, such as *educational psychology* and *developmental psychology*, also study topics that overlap with vocational psychology.

Finally, several fields outside of psychology and the helping professions also share an interest in work behavior. In particular, *occupational sociology* (also referred to as industrial sociology or the sociology of work) focuses on work-related trends, such as technological change and employee–employer relations, that affect workers and families at a large group or societal level. *Labor economics* focuses on issues affecting employment levels, participation rates, income levels, and economic productivity (e.g., gross domestic product). Like occupational sociologists, labor economists tend to examine work-related outcomes and processes at a more collective level, rather than at the level of individual workers or work organizations. These fields emphasize different aspects of work behavior than do counselors and psychologists, but they share a concern with shaping public policies that promote the well-being of workers, though they may define well-being in social or economic, rather than in psychological, terms.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND COUNSELING:
PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

The field of career development and the practice of career counseling have evolved rapidly over the past century. However, an interest in work behavior is hardly new. People no doubt began thinking about their work, what they liked and disliked about it, how to do it better or with greater rewards, how to handle conflicts with others at work, and so forth well before recorded history. Zytowski (1972) discovered books about occupations dating back to the late 1400s, and, of course, philosophers have long been preoccupied with the role and meaning of work in people's lives. A full-scale history of career development and counseling is beyond the scope of this chapter. Several writers have already traced the evolution of career development as a formal discipline from its early roots in vocational guidance, circa 1850, up through its current-day contributions and challenges. Some of these histories focus primarily on vocational psychology (Crites, 1969; Savickas & Baker, 2005), and some on career counseling (Crites, 1981; Miller & McWhirter, 2006), though the two areas are greatly intertwined with one another. There have also been intriguing histories of the pioneers of the vocational guidance movement, which formed the foundation for present-day career counseling and vocational psychology (Savickas, 2009).

One of the things that historians of career development agree upon is that Frank Parsons (1909) deserves credit as one of the field's key early figures. Parsons, a social reformer who was committed to raising the living standards of the urban poor, ran an early vocational service in Boston. He developed a deceptively simple three-step approach to vocational guidance that has been widely incorporated into subsequent formal theories of career development and counseling. In essence, he recommended that, in choosing a form of work, people be encouraged to (1) achieve a ''clear understanding'' of their personal attributes (e.g., interests, abilities) and (2) develop a knowledge of the requirements and conditions of different occupations and then (3) use ''true reasoning'' to consider how to reconcile these two sources of information. Modern-day career counselors may identify with a variety of theoretical positions and employ somewhat different terms and methods, but Parsons's simple formula still serves as a fundamental blueprint for the practice of career choice counseling,

Historians of the field also tend to agree that the two world wars of the 20th century—and the Great Depression in between them—were major influences on the field's evolution within the United States. In particular, the military needed assistance in assigning its recruits to different jobs in both wars, and the Veterans Administration was concerned with assisting returning veterans to adjust personally, educationally, and vocationally to civilian life after World War II. The Great Depression created an unparalleled challenge

of returning people to work in some organized way. In addition, increasing industrialization and associated changes in the economy (e.g., shifts from agriculture to manufacturing) in many countries during the 20th century also created a need for proven methods of matching people with work options, attending to their productivity, and nurturing their satisfaction and loyalty. These challenges were a huge boon both to the development of psychological instruments that could systematically assess self and occupational attributes and to the creation of guidance and counseling methods. Assessment devices, like the present-day Strong Interest Inventory and the General Aptitude Test Battery, emerged from this early cauldron of activity. So did the development of career counseling methods based on directive and, eventually, person-centered approaches.

Once veterans returned from the world wars and the economy recovered from the Great Depression, there was a continuing need for career counseling and placement personnel. Subsequent societal and economic changes in the latter half of the 20th century (e.g., the increasing popularity of higher education, shifts in employment demand from manufacturing to service sectors) formed the historical context for the further evolution of the career development field. In more recent decades, there have been considerable changes in technology (e.g., the introduction of personal computers and the Internet), in the nature of work (e.g., increasing need for knowledge workers), in global economic competition, and in the structure of work organizations.

Observing such changes, many career writers have concluded that a new era in career development has dawned (e.g., Hesketh, 2000). The old psychological contract between worker and employer has been cast aside. Where many could once expect to work for a single employer for many years and feel confident that their loyalty and productivity would be rewarded appropriately, the new contract promises far less security and stability. Terms like *boundaryless careers*, *protean careers*, and *Me Incorporated* abound in the recent career literature, particularly among I/O psychology writers. These terms are based on the assumption that employers will continue to be motivated, for reasons of global economic competition, to retain smaller permanent workforces. They will, instead, draw on temporary, part-time, or contract workers to a much greater degree to create a flexible, just-in-time workforce that requires neither benefits nor long-term commitments—a cadre of workers who can complete particular projects and then move on.

The implication is that current workers, and especially those in the future, will need to be increasingly adaptable and resilient in their approach to work. The ''Me Incorporated'' notion refers to the need to treat oneself essentially as a private vendor who is responsible for finding new work, investing in one's own career development, developing new interests, and updating one's skills to remain employable under uncertain and constantly changing

conditions. Some believe that the new contract will render obsolete current theories of career development and current approaches to career counseling. Although the context of work may be changing, we are convinced that current career theories still have relevance. People may have less stability in terms of where and when they work, but they still profit from identifying and accessing work options that are compatible with their work personalities (e.g., interests, talents, personal and cultural values) and in which they can perform successfully. We think this is a point that career futurists sometimes miss. If a career is based on the assumption that one will work for a particular employer over one's entire work life, then *that* restrictive notion of career may be dead (and was never truly viable for many workers). However, if *career* is defined, consistent with Super, as the sequence or collection of jobs held over one's work life, then the concept of career remains as alive as ever, but it is a concept owned by the worker rather than by the employer and requires no assumptions about the long-term stability of a particular job.

We are not sure that career choice and development theories really need to predict the exact job that a single individual will enter and stay in for life. What such theories have always done best is to help people to identify and adjust to an array of compatible work options. Beyond these traditional contributions, however, we do see a need for new theories and preventive-developmental interventions to help people negotiate a changing macroenvironment. Although the range of jobs people perform is still generally captured well within existing occupational classification schemes (see Gore et al., Chapter 18), how and where many jobs are performed (e.g., using computers, at home) is changing—and so is the need to prepare for periods of work instability and change. The time-tested Parsonian formula, though still viable, needs to be supplemented with new methods aimed at assisting students and workers in anticipating and coping with periods of flux and transition (Lent, in press). We are not sure it is a reasonable goal to transform all workers into entrepreneurial chameleons. Not everyone has entrepreneurial interests or talents, and poets do not easily turn themselves into engineers just to find the next job. But it may make sense to approach adaptability, resilience, and planning as qualities that, potentially, can be learned or strengthened through counseling and other forms of career intervention (e.g., career courses, workshops).

A FINAL WORD: CAREER DEVELOPMENT AS PRACTICE, SCHOLARSHIP, *AND* SOCIAL JUSTICE FORUM

We believe this is an exciting time to enter the field of career development. In fact, there have probably been few more momentous times in the field's history. In addition to meeting the external challenges of a

changing work world, the field seems poised to transform itself from within. In particular, career counselors and vocational psychologists are, increasingly, meeting and working together with their counterparts across cultural and national boundaries as the larger profession—like the work domain that serves as their common focus—becomes more and more internationalized. The U.S.-based professional associations, like the National Career Development Association and the Society of Vocational Psychology, are not alone. International associations, like the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance and the International Association of Applied Psychology, are prospering. The field has clearly been infused with a great deal of vitality and energy, as career counselors and vocational psychologists around the world find new ways to study and promote career behavior.

It is important to emphasize that career development and counseling is both a scholarly *and* a practice field. That is, it is devoted to understanding work behavior *and* to applying this understanding to practices that directly enrich clients' lives. Although the ideal for many years in psychology has been to develop scientist-practitioners—that is, persons who attend to both of these spheres—the reality is that many professionals are drawn to one of them more than to the other. Indeed, this very awareness is a reflection of what has been learned about career behavior, for instance, that interests tend to favor choice of some work activities over others. Thus, those with primarily social interests may gravitate toward the counseling role, and those with stronger science interests may favor the research and scholarship roles. The field needs talented people to perform both roles, and it needs them to communicate well with one another so that scholarship remains responsive to practice and that practice is based on science as well as art. More and more, the field is also becoming aware of the need to invest a greater portion of its collective energy in advocacy and public policy efforts, including involvement with decision makers and leaders who formulate wide-ranging education and work policies. Such upstream advocacy may aid people's career opportunities and functioning at a systemic level, regardless of whether they ever seek formal career services.

As part of its science, practice, and advocacy missions, the career development field is also marked by a commitment to social justice and multiculturalism and to serving the needs of an increasingly diverse society and world. Indeed, concerns about social justice pervade the history of the career development field. They were prominent in the earliest days of the field, as social reformers sought to improve the lives of recent immigrants and others lacking economic privilege (Parsons, 1909), and they were a primary stimulus for the field's efforts during the middle and latter parts of the 20th century to better meet the needs of women, persons with disabilities, veterans, work-bound students, and other traditionally underserved clients

from diverse social and economic backgrounds. Social justice remains a hallmark of the field, as evidenced by a continuing sensitivity to the ways in which diversity shapes people's career experiences (e.g., see the chapters in the second section of this book). In short, assisting people to obtain and succeed at work has long been seen as an essential way to improve the human condition and to promote equity.

CONCLUSION

We covered a fair bit of ground in this chapter. In particular, we noted a variety of roles that work may play in people's lives, from meeting basic survival needs through helping them to address meaning-of-life questions. We also defined several key terms, such as *career* and *career development;* identified the counseling and psychological professionals who are specifically trained to provide career counseling and related services; and noted a variety of other professions that share an interest in career development or work behavior. We considered some common myths and stereotypes surrounding career counseling, pointing out ways in which they may sometimes be accurate but more often are not. Finally, we described the field's historical context and some of its contemporary challenges and argued that a concern with social justice and a respect for human diversity have been key forces directing the field's evolution from its inception up through its present state. We welcome you to the field of career development and counseling and hope you will find it a great place to develop your own career.

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