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Promoting research and reflective practice in career development

NICEC

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CAREER EDUCATION AND COUNSELLING

NICEC STATEMENT

The Fellows of NICEC agreed the following statement in 2010.

'The National Institute for Career Education and Counselling (NICEC) was originally founded as a research institute in 1975. It now plays the role of a learned society for reflective practitioners in the broad field of career education, career guidance/counselling and career development. This includes individuals whose primary role relates to research, policy, consultancy, scholarship, service delivery or management. NICEC seeks to foster dialogue and innovation between these areas through events, networking, publications and projects.

NICEC is distinctive as a boundary-crossing network devoted to career education and counselling in education, in the workplace, and in the wider community. It seeks to integrate theory and practice in career development, stimulate intellectual diversity and encourage transdisciplinary dialogue. Through these activities, NICEC aims to develop research, inform policy and enhance service delivery.

Membership and fellowship are committed to serious thinking and innovation in career development work. Membership is open to all individuals and organisations connected with career education and counselling. Fellowship is an honour conferred by peer election and signals distinctive contribution to the field and commitment to the development of NICEC's work. Members and Fellows receive the NICEC journal and are invited to participate in all NICEC events.

NICEC does not operate as a professional association or commercial research institute, nor is it organisationally aligned with any specific institution. Although based in the UK, there is a strong international dimension to the work of NICEC and it seeks to support reflective practice in career education and counselling globally.'

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TITLE

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AIMS AND SCOPE

The NICEC journal publishes articles on the broad theme of career development in any context including:

- Career development in the workplace: private and public sector, small, medium and large organisations, private practitioners.
- Career development in education: schools, colleges, universities, adult education, public career services.
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It is designed to be read by individuals who are involved in career development-related work in a wide range of settings including information, advice, counselling, guidance, advocacy, coaching, mentoring, psychotherapy, education, teaching, training, scholarship, research, consultancy, human resources, management or policy. The journal has a national and international readership.

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Contents

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Overview of this issue

Welcome to the October 2018 issue of the NICEC journal. The articles below were contributed in response to an open call for papers. It is once again a pleasure to report that innovative, creative, and engaging scholarship is thriving in our field.

Peter Plant, Inger Marie Bakke and **Lyn Barham** get the ball rolling with a timely call for 'geronto guidance' for older people. They are particularly interested in the support that is available around retirement arguing it is currently something of a blind spot in terms of a genuinely lifelong guidance system.

The second article from **Lisa Law** continues the theme of age and change. It uses an action research strategy to evaluate the delivery of a workshop for older students at a UK university. The workshop demonstrates a creative and successful example of practice for this key client group.

Charles Jackson argues for the value of career surveys drawing from his work with trainee doctors and medical students. The surveys, it is suggested, highlight the importance of the human touch and talking directly with other people about career issues. The article finishes with a set of conclusions about the value of career surveys.

Steve Mowforth extends the use of survey to small-scale qualitative research with generation z students at a British university. He argues that contemporary scene has moved on from attitudes and beliefs associated with what he terms the industrial state.

Julia Yates reports on some contemporary techniques in career coaching. These include visual tools, role play tools, possible selves technique, passengers on the bus technique, pre-designed frameworks, and client-generated maps.

Debra Osborn and **V. Casey Dozier** argue for the value of cognitive information processing theory in relation to interventions. They provide two case studies to illustrate the approach.

Ingrid Bårdsdatter Bakke, Erik Haug and **Tristram Hooley** provide a timely update on guidance developments in Norway. They propose an innovative approach to combining face-to-face and online guidance based on career learning and instructional design.

Our final article by **Cathy Brown** and **Tracey Wond** is devoted to the topic of career capitals. Two contrasting conceptions of capital are critically assessed. Drawing from this, they propose some ideas for the development of career capital using a case study.

This issue concludes with a book review of *Graduate Employability in Context: Theory, Research and Debate* edited by Ciaran Burke and Fiona Christie.

Phil McCash, Editor

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Geronto guidance: Lifelong guidance

Peter Plant, Inger Marie Bakke & Lyn Barham

From Greek γέρων (géron): old man, elders (in plural)

We argue that older workers and retirees have a right to be esteemed as members of society. Few guidance activities currently focus on one of the final and important transitions in life, the process of retiring. This process raises challenges to personal identity and self-esteem which could be ameliorated by support in the later years of working life. But most guidance activities are aimed at youth or at people at job and/or education transition points earlier in their lives. With an ageing population, this will have to change. Geronto Guidance is a blind spot in lifelong career guidance.

Introduction: Ageing and guidance

The aim to include older people in the labour market has a social inclusion side: work in many people's lives provides the framework for social contacts, for social recognition, and, in some countries, for access to social services. There is also a macro-economic drive in engaging the older workforce and extending their working years (CEDEFOP 2010, 2012, 2015; European Foundation 2017). Lifelong guidance has a place in this, but most guidance activities are aimed at youth or at people at job and/or education transition points earlier in their lives. With an ageing population, this will have to change.

The UK Parliament's Women and Equality Committee spells out the issue:

> The country faces acute challenges recruiting and retaining an experienced, skilled workforce in many key public services as well as in the private sector. It is unacceptable that the nation is wasting the talents of more than one million people aged over 50 who are out of work but would be willing to work if the right opportunity arose. People in later life are often playing many different roles in society, but those who wish to work should not face the current barriers of discrimination, bias and outdated employment practices.
>
> (Women and Equalities Committee 2018)

We face a paradox that labour-market participation rates could stagnate over coming years, more so for older people than for the rest of the population, due to age-related discrimination (Loretto et al, 2007) at a time when the cohort of younger entrants to the workforce is significantly smaller than the age cohort likely to retire. Rhetoric salutes older workers, praising their stability and willingness to be flexible in terms of tasks and working hours, whilst at the same time ageism and downright age discrimination also take place. As noted by Plant (2007: 231-235), there is a gap between rhetoric and reality.

This leads to the consideration that life-long guidance (EU 2004) will be needed even more than previously, especially for older people, who could find themselves excluded from meaningful work, and from the links to society that work and other forms of active societal participation (e.g. voluntary work) provide, with the result that national economies lose the employee numbers and skills that they need. And for the older workers this could be an early end to their career rainbow (Super 1957) - with no bucket of gold at the end.

This situation is mirrored across Europe (Plant & Sanchez-Lopez 2011). On average European populations are getting older: an ageing population in European countries creates new challenges to policies and practice (Bergmo-Prvulovic 2017). Demographic change creates fundamental alterations to the

workforce across the EU, reflected in the European population 'pyramid', which, tellingly, no longer has the shape of a pyramid, due to low birth rates and increased longevity. The increased demand on a shrinking pool of workers to provide for the social needs of an ageing population is leading policy reforms intended to increase the employment rate of older workers and lengthen working life. Policy reforms have – in the UK and Nordic countries in particular – focused on raising the state pension age and providing financial incentives for older workers to remain in work beyond this age. In most countries and most work spheres there is no longer a default retirement age.

Defining 'age'

One complexity of the theme of 'older workers' is defining the group: how old is an 'older worker'? Use of terminology varies confusingly. Historically, statisticians tended to take the age of 45 as the demarcation between being a younger (24-44 years) or an older worker (45-64 years). In the Nordic countries an age limit of 45 years still tends to be used, but this fluctuates according to context. The UK's commission into the future for lifelong learning (Schuller & Watson 2009) argued that the traditional 3-stage model of the life course was outdated and proposed a new 4-stage model to reflect later young-adult transitions into full adult roles, an extended third period of active life, including employment and voluntary work, and a final fourth stage of full retirement.

But is chronological age the most significant factor? Over time, 'biological age', reflecting the physical and mental wellbeing of each individual and their life expectancy, comes to vary markedly from the raw measure of 'years since birth'. This has implications for the concept of lifelong guidance, which will need to take these issues into account, through providing varied guidance services in response to highly differentiated guidance needs.

A life-long guidance need

A range of factors influence workers' decisions to continue working into older age; these include health and well-being, work–life balance, career prospects and job security, and working conditions such as autonomy, hours of work and psychosocial aspects of the workplace.

The transition towards and into a stage of life beyond paid employment follows a number of earlier life-stage transitions. The nature and tasks of those transitions have been viewed through a number of theoretical lenses. If career practitioners are to support effectively those engaging in a late career transition, we need ways to conceptualise the processes, identifying what is common with earlier transitions, and what is distinctive to this particular transition.

Super's life stages and roles

Donald Super's Career Rainbow model builds on a concept of Life Stages (Super 1957). During an individual's life span, s/he goes through a series of career stages. Each stage allows for specific lines of development. Super referred to the entire cycle as a maxi-cycle, where the major stages are growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. Super introduced the concept of mini-cycles, i.e. revisiting earlier stages as part of re-evaluation or re-reflection. The concept of 'disengagement', incidentally, in early models by Super, was named 'decline', but as he himself got older, he obviously felt a need for a broader concept. While maintenance points at growth and development in the career, disengagement will include vocational development tasks such as decelerating, retirement planning, and retirement living. Retirement planning leads eventually to separation from occupation and commencement of retirement living with its challenges of organizing a new life structure and different life-style.

The transition between the maintenance stage and the disengagement stage may have consequences for self-

perception. The concept of self is, according to Super, formed through social, experiential, and interactive learning, plus reflective self-awareness. Occupational choice is viewed as an attempt to implement self-concept; 'career self-concept theory concentrates on the personal meaning of abilities, interests, values and choices as well as how they coalesce into life themes' (Super et al. 1996: 139). The self-concept system consists of all of the individual's roles (child, student, leisurite, citizen, worker, and homemaker). The importance of a role is determined by three components: commitment, participation and value expectations (ibid: 152). An aspect of transition is that the roles that pervade an individual life are likely to re-coalesce into new patterns of priority and decline: as the student role may have largely ceded place to the worker role in young adulthood, now the worker role cedes place – but to what? And how is the personal meaning of abilities, interests and values enacted in an adapted self-concept responding to adjusted life roles?

Erikson's psychosocial stages

Erikson (1950), in his concept of eight life stages, points to the psychological crisis - a driver in terms of self-development – which accompanies each transitional phase. As we encounter these crises of growing and ageing, we need to face them and find ways to resolve them; a failure to do so may impact on our future psychosocial wellbeing.

Erikson's seventh stage, mature adulthood, is characterised by Care (Generativity v. Stagnation). As this stage draws towards old age, 'fundamental questions about identity are raised as people switch the balance of their attention away from job roles and towards their own needs, with the prospect of full retirement visible on the horizon. While work identity may typically have had greatest salience for men, it is also important for women who gained much of their sense of identity through work', as noted by Barham & Hawthorn (2010: 264).

Key to Erikson's work on adulthood is the notion of 'generativity', the idea that with maturity and increasing age a growing aspect of people's self-concept is their concern for the wellbeing of future generations and for the legacy that they themselves leave. Work is an important arena for generative expression, but varies depending on the individual. It may evidence through leadership, productivity, creativity or care-giving, as examples, but all contributing in some way to the 'common good' (Clark & Arnold 2008).

Successful exercise of generativity is a precursor to successful entry to Erikson's eighth and final stage of life, balanced between ego integrity and a sense of integration in society, or a sense of despair. Stagnation, as might be experienced in later adulthood in unsatisfactory or unrewarding work, or in unemployment, offers a poor foundation for looking back on a life well spent, and a risk of despair that this is beyond remedy.

Honneth and recognition

With this in mind, the issue of recognition gains importance. Honneth (1995) has pointed to the connection between identity and recognition. He identifies three elements of *recognition*:

- **Love** (most fundamental dimension, recognition through emotional and physical closeness, in families, as friends, close relationships) engendering *self-confidence*
- **Legal rights** (agreements, moral, equality) engendering a sense of *self-respect*
- **Solidarity** (recognition of trait and abilities, me and/or the group to which I belong, contributions to society) engendering *self-esteem*

Moreover, as Axel Honneth has pointed out, recognition is crucial, and applies to all life-stages, including old age. Honneth's three 'patterns of recognition' necessary for an individual's development of a positive relation-to-self (love, rights, solidarity) refers to all levels and sectors in society, and are crucial to developing a positive attitude towards oneself, and it remains as important for older people as younger that these spheres or patterns of recognition are in place:

'For it is only due to the cumulative acquisition of basic self-confidence, of self-respect, and of self-esteem…that a person can come to see himself or herself, unconditionally, as both an autonomous and an individuated being and to identify with his or her goals and desires' (Honneth 1995:169)

Other scholars, such as Paul Ricoeur, have distinguished as many as 23 different usages of the notion 'to recognize' (Ricoeur 2005: 5–16) grouping them under three main categories, namely recognition as identification, recognizing oneself, and mutual recognition. All three aspects of recognition are inter-related. Recognition, or what you contribute within the work sphere applies strongly to self-esteem. Recognition is life-wide, but is in part earned and enjoyed in the work sphere. This applies most strongly to self-esteem. All three aspects of recognition are inter-related, with self-confidence being engendered through love from earliest experience, and self-respect from citizenship conveying access to legal rights, stature and power, in the most general sense of that word. Self-esteem (solidarity) can be seen to be negotiated in a more ongoing, contingent form including particularly in the workplace.

The condition for self-esteem is solidarity. The loss of employment-related status means that identity may be at risk of being defined by 'non-employment' and by age, both of which have negative connotations in modern Western societies.

This is exemplified in recent research with Norwegian female academics where research participants convey a sense that 'recognition' is at risk (Bakke, Barham & Plant 2018). Through their employers' lack of attention to their value and to the need to take steps to replace them, the institution exhibited a disrespect and lack of recognition even before severance from the work role. The women also said they would consider postponing the transition if the institution recognized their contribution to work, and if it prepared for using their specific competences. As they were not even being asked, they felt insulted and not recognised.

On the other hand, the researchers (op.cit.) report that 'several interviewees say they are afraid of loosing their identity when they are no longer employed', but they added that their strategies for coping with this were in fact limited: 'keep going as long as they can; no time to prepare; cross that bridge when they get there; wait and see what happens'. This points to the need, as career practitioners, to provide such competences and guidance offers.

A wider view

The developmental psychology underlying Super's (1957) life-span career rainbow and inter-related life roles, and Erikson's life stages and psychological crises are both based on a Western, largely linear and somewhat individualistic model of career development: a rise-and-decline model, basically. This lies as a tacit understanding behind much Western third age guidance: that third age means being in decline, physically and mentally. Classical illustrations of the life-cycle are based on this chain of thought, with Man (sic!) at the top at the age of 30. Erikson (1950) attends more to altered concerns than to decline as such, but interestingly, other cultures take this further. Arulmani & Nag-Arulmani (2004:148) point to the four Indian concepts of life-span development, in which life is seen as a journey:

- Brahmacharya Ashrama (learning, preparation)
- Grahastha Ashrama (family, personal career)
- Vanaprastha Ashrama (serving society, not for personal gain)
- Sanyasa Ashrama (spiritual service of mankind).

Whilst there is some apparent correspondence between Erikson's 'generativity' and the later stages of the Indian model, the latter clearly adds a much-needed value-based, spiritual, and societal dimension to the more individualistic and market oriented Western career development and guidance models. Honneth's depiction of the conditions for recognition perhaps sits more comfortably with other cultural viewpoints.

Questions for career development practice

Transitions through life stages also imply transitions in personal identity. Identity is formed through processing social and personal experiences, as an answer to the basic question: Who am I? But this is not a question to be posed just once in lifetime. Working with people in their fifties, Hawthorn (2007:1-11) identified 'unfinished business, either educational, emotional or in ambition' which led to them addressing the question 'Who do you want to be now?' Facing the disengagement stage, similar questions pop up.

Recognition develops through others, and has to do with the feedback you get, on who you are, what you say, and what you do. Recognition is sought and occurs in all spheres of life, including the workplace. And, being dynamic, the recognition sought changes over time: it may shift from a claim for recognition of ambition and potential to recognition for experience and wisdom in society as well as at work. In terms of geronto guidance this has implications in terms of the scope and focus of guidance interventions and activities for older people.

Voluntary work, for example, is seen as a vehicle for aligning retirement with professional values (Bakke, Barham and Plant 2018), and admittedly, voluntary work is important in terms of creating social cohesion in all societies. South Korea, has, pointedly, added geronto-dimensions to its Employment programme for Seniors (Choi 2016). This includes a number of elements of which voluntary work is a prominent one. This is also the case in Norway, where incidentally, *dugnad*, in 2004, was chosen as the most Norwegian word: it means working together, voluntary work.

A successful transition from paid work to retirement involves planning and the opportunity to prepare, i.e. late-career guidance. Many older people have both the will and the ability to contribute after the retirement age. Still, very little support is available in terms of facilitating the transition from employment to retirement, or indeed the reverse. Research on 'un-retiring' suggests that retirement for many is not a straightforward stepping away. About 25% of people who report themselves as retired then reverse that decision (Platts et al. 2017), which must raise the speculation that retirement had in some way not been a satisfactory state. Again, this points to the need for geronto guidance.

The need for action has been reiterated in the UK-based Mid-Life Career Review Project, in the pilot of which 3,000 people aged 45-64 took part (Learning and Work Institute 2017). Reviews were delivered by 17 partners including the National Careers Service, voluntary organisations, learning providers, Unionlearn, Workplace Learning Advocates, and Community Learning Champions. They covered employment, training, financial planning and health issues, particularly focused on people out of work, facing redundancy, or wanting to adapt to a new way of working. This example points to the need for an intensified focus on career guidance for older people.

Policies and research

The Centre for Ageing Better has called on UK employers to ensure they have more age-friendly employment policies and practices. The Centre's studies suggest that only one in five employers are engaged in strategic discussion on how to address issues arising from an ageing workforce, while almost a quarter (24%) admit they are unprepared for growing numbers of older workers.

These are troubling findings in the context of over 50s now making up nearly a third of the UK workforce, with numbers of older workers steadily rising.

They suggest five age-friendly practices in this context, though we note that there is no explicit mention of life-long guidance, let alone geronto guidance:

- Flexible flexibility – working arrangements that work for the employee as well as the employer
- Age-positive recruitment which doesn't discriminate against older candidates
- Appropriate support for health at work, including workplace adjustments
- Equal opportunities for progression and development at all ages
- Age-inclusive workplace culture and line management

From: https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/news/uk-employers-unprepared-ageing-workforce

The absence, in some cases, of the employer in the final phase of working life may cause additional difficulties. The worker is left alone, and potential resources can be lost. Thus, this situation has both individual and societal aspects. Public policy preoccupations have done little to ameliorate a potentially difficult situation for older workers and retirees. Policy preoccupation is with loss of skills to the economy and with pension saving in a dual sense: saving state funds by delaying pension entitlement, and individual saving in order to accrue personal pension funds. To re-iterate the words of the Women and

Equalities Parliamentary Committee: 'It is unacceptable that the nation is wasting the talents of more than one million people aged over 50…'

Career practitioners need to have ways of conceptualising what is happening in the lives of older people in term of the existential questions. The transition towards and into retirement is a time of identity re-formation, which could re-run the identity crisis of Erikson's adolescents if not done well. A focus on these issues has benefits into oldest age (social, health and financial benefits) (cf e.g. CEDEFOP 2010; 2012; 2015), but little research is available in terms of guidance and its role in strategies of active ageing. This brief list of examples of previous research reveals the state of affairs, as precious little is available, so far: Clayton, Greco & Persson 2007; Ford 1997, 2001; Ford & Clayton 2007; Kirk & Belovics 2005; Plant 2000a, 2000b, 2003; Plant & Sanchel-Lopez 2011.

Conclusions

Geronto guidance, i.e. guidance for older people, will be a growing field in the coming years, both in terms of service delivery, and as a field of research. The reason for this is, above all, of a demographic nature. So far, geronto guidance is, largely, a blind spot in terms of truly lifelong guidance. Career guidance, within its traditional boundaries and ties to employment as a means to live a full life, with an income and status, will be challenged to expand into this field and beyond its traditional focus of youth and earlier life transitions. The pivotal question is 'Who do you want to be now?' (Hawthorn 2007), i.e. now that working life is drawing to an end. This is a profoundly existential question which reaches far beyond working life. It implies a 3D approach to guidance: lifelong, lifewide, and life deep in nature (Plant 2006). There is so much more to life than work.

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Design and evaluation of a short course to address the career related preoccupations, concerns and issues of adults from mid-life onwards

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This study examines a range of development and narrative career theories that illuminate the career related preoccupations, concerns and issues of adults from mid-life onwards. Using themes identified in the literature, this article also details an innovative short course design, which contains a framework and set of exercises that enable individual adults to resolve their unique career conundrums. Using an action research approach, the evaluation explores participants' response to the course and provides recommendations for the future. It is anticipated that the outcomes of this project will be useful to career practitioners working with groups of adults and career services wishing to strengthen their offering to older clients.

Introduction

Levinson (1978, p.*x*) stated that 'there is a growing desire in our society to see adulthood as something more than a long, featureless stretch of years with childhood at one end and senility at the other'. Given that the proportion of people aged 65 and over in the UK has increased in the last 40 years from 14% to 18%, and is predicted to rise another 6.6 percentage points by 2039 (Nomis, 2016), it is clear that the UK's population is ageing. This presents an opportunity to social institutions which need to find fresh ways to support an ageing population (Phillipson and Ogg, 2010).

As a university careers adviser, I recognise a need to work with mature students more effectively. Currently my institution's career services tend to be pitched at younger students who are in the process of establishing their first fledgling careers, focusing on topics such as CV and application form writing, job hunting, interview technique and career choice. Whilst these topics *may* have relevancy to mature students, older learners are likely to have additional career issues to work through. For instance, they might be considering how to translate a long working history into a new work role or deciding whether work has relevance in their life anymore.

The question over how older people can be supported in their career development is also of personal interest to me: my father is in his early 70s and is considering retirement, a transition that he has found difficult for many reasons but crucially because, in his words, work is part of his identity. The course that is the focus of this paper therefore very much has my father in mind as my initial inspiration. The project has also prompted me to evaluate my own career: as a person approaching middle-age I find myself questioning what development may look like given that my career is already established.

Project goals and strategy

I adopted an action research strategy to create, deliver and reflect upon an educational course that enables older adults to resolve career related concerns and issues. Action research is described as having four

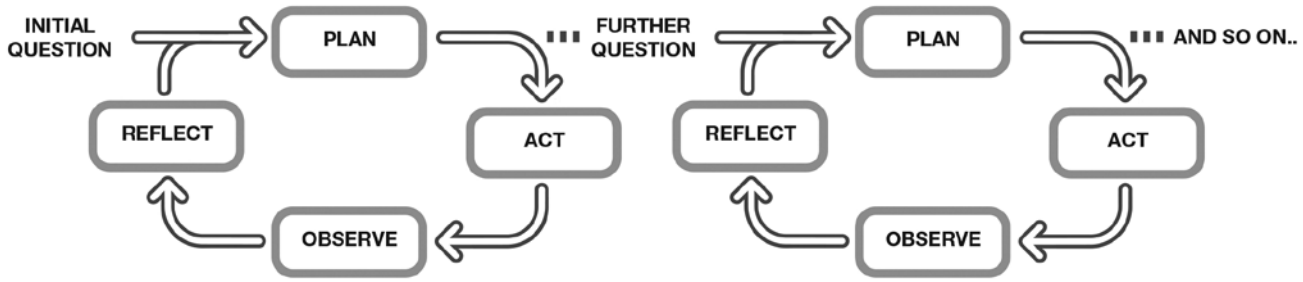

Figure 1: the action research process (Open University, 2013, p.5)

elements: plan, act, observe and reflect, leading to further questions that may precipitate a second cycle (Open University, 2013, p.5).

During the 'plan' element I constructed a short course using a concept mapping process (Amundsun et al., 2008) to show how older learners can be supported to resolve their career concerns.

I drew upon four areas:

1. Life-span development and narrative theory. I drew from theorists who have undertaken extensive primary research to gain a comprehensive understanding of adult development. For instance, Vaillant (2002) analyzed the life stories of over 800 people.

2. Media representations of age and career. There is considerable variation in how age is presented in the media (Vaillant, 2002, p.3). My intention was that facilitating the participants to examine samples of these would enable them to deconstruct culturally held ideologies and personal beliefs about age and career.

3. Personal experiences to lead by example and encourage the participants to engage.

4. Pedagogy to create a curriculum that facilitates participants to engage with content and explore personally held belief systems. I was inspired by Kolb (1984), Cochran (1990; 1997) and Savickas (1993).

During the 'act, observe and reflect' stages I delivered and evaluated the course. The evaluation used multiple data collection methods and frameworks for analysis, including a reflective journal where I recorded observations immediately after the course, participant questionnaires, and a reflective account which synthesized the data collected from these.

Participants

I advertised the course to all students at the University of Wolverhampton as, although the course was aimed at mature students, there is no ready-made group of mature students to target. This resulted in four mature students eventually attending. Although a low number, I was able to gain good quality feedback about the course.

Course overview

This short course draws upon life-span development and narrative theory, media artifacts and personal narratives. I used a concept mapping process (Amundsen et al., 2008) to synthesise these sources and create the course structure, which is depicted overleaf.

A critical discussion of the literature and explanation of how this guided the design can be found on the next page.

Career conundrum (concept map item 1)

Adult career patterns are hard to generalise: whilst people begin careers in the same way through exploration and establishment processes, they end them uniquely (Greller & Stroh, 1995, p.240). Older adults may therefore be starting, continuing, modifying

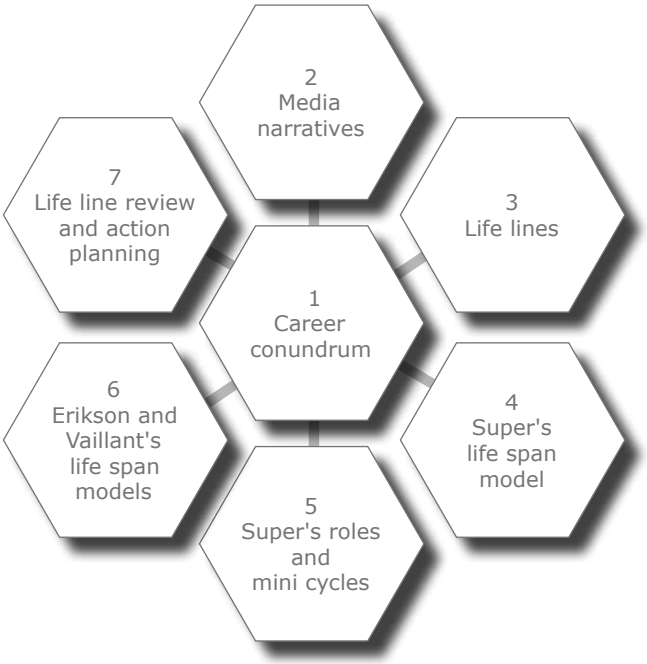

Figure 2: Concept map

or exiting a career (Sterns & Miklos, 1995, p.259). It thus seemed appropriate for participants to define their own career problem and goal from the outset. Drawing from Cochran (1990, p.6), participants did this by creating a metaphor for their problem and its solution. To build trust, I undertook this exercise prior to delivery and shared my career metaphor of an uphill climb, which signified my desire to end my current career phase and to start a new chapter.

As depicted in figure 2, each subsequent segment returned to the participants' conundrum. My intention here was for the content of each course segment to influence the participants' thinking about their conundrums and facilitate a resolution.

Media narratives (concept map item 2)

There are multiple stories that are told about what it means to age and what a person can or should do in relation to career as they get older (Vaillant, 2002, p.3). This segment therefore invited participants to look at news articles with differing perspectives on later life careers. These included: *Why shouldn't the over 50s start a new career?* (Hinsliff, 2015), *Suddenly hot jobs for over 50s* (Kadlec, 2015) and *Age discrimination 'still an issue'* (Jones, 2016). Each person analysed an article and described their view on it to the rest of the group. This precipitated discussion about career change in mid-life, the value of older workers in the labour market and the possibility of adult career development. Choosing articles which juxtaposed different views encouraged participants to examine the narratives critically, giving them freedom to embrace or reject them. This process inevitably encouraged the participants to become more aware of their own beliefs about these topics, important because individuals may internalize culturally formed ageist stereotypes (Greller & Simpson, 1999, p.336). This activity is therefore consistent with pedagogy which empower learners to examine their existing viewpoints and integrate modified ideas into their belief system (Kolb, 1984, p.28).

Life lines (concept map item 3)

Life span development theories propose that people progress through a series of stages with associated developmental tasks. These can affect their sense of self, intrinsic motivations and career aspirations. I wanted participants to draw out meaning from these and relate them to their own lives and career conundrum. Life lines sensitize people to past memories and provide a chronological account of his or her life (Cochran, 1997, p.74). With this in mind I adapted Sugarman's lifeline exercise (2001, pp.1-3 & p.55) which involves creating an account of one's life in graph form. I then supported participants to analyse their lifeline by prompting them to consider what the "Y" axis represented (to identify important values), and to identify critical events and priorities at different ages (to illuminate change and consistency in their life). I also asked them to ascribe meaning to the shape of the line in order to bring into awareness the overall narrative tone.

Super's life span model (concept map item 4) and Erikson and Vaillant's life span models (concept map item 6)

In these segments I introduced participants to models devised by Super, Erikson and Vaillant. Super's model explicitly focuses on lifelong career development. Erikson and Vaillant's theories provide an interesting contrast as their models of psychosocial development foreground how identity evolves, often in-hand with career.

During segment 4 I presented Super's maxi cycle of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and disengagement. (Super et al, 1996, p.124). Super asserted that a person's development can be assessed from a social and psychological perspective (Super et al., 1996, p.125). For instance, a person of 50 would be classed as being within Super's maintenance stage, however they may identify more with the development tasks of crystallization, specification and implementation: characteristics associated with Super's exploration stage. Bearing in mind that people can be judged "on time" or "not on time" against a social clock (McAdams, 1993, p.197), this person may feel a social pressure to conform to what is expected for their age. In this segment I therefore asked participants to identify the stage they were at according to chronological age and then according to developmental task, precipitating discussion about societal norms. I then asked participants to focus on the developmental tasks they were facing regardless of chronological age and how they may tackle these tasks. For instance, if they were considering how to revitalize their current job (and therefore in the maintenance stage), they may fulfill this stage's developmental tasks by updating their skills and knowledge, identifying new challenges or innovating new ways to undertake existing tasks.

I used the same method in segment 6 but this time used Erikson and Vaillant's stage models. The stages both theorists identified for mid-late adulthood were generativity and integrity (Erikson, 1980, pp.103–105), with Vaillant adding an additional stage: "keeper of the meaning" (Vaillant, 2002, pp.53 – 58). For each stage I explained the inherent identity shift and illustrated how this may alter personal values, in turn, impacting upon career choices. Thus, generativity may precipitate an interest in caring for the development of the next generation (Erikson, 1980, p.103; Vaillant, 2002, p.47), making mentoring or consultancy roles attractive. Valliant believed that during the "keeper of the meaning" stage, people extend their concern across a wider social radius (Vaillant, 2002, pp.141-158) and therefore they may enjoy a role that impacts a whole community, organization, occupational sector or geographical region. Finally, the last stage of integrity is defined as a time of life evaluation, where individuals face the challenge of accepting their life cycle (Erikson, 1980, 104; Vaillant, 2002, p.49), including how satisfied they are with how their career has played out.

Similar to the exercises based on Super's model, and using myself as an example, I asked participants to consider which stages they identified with and encouraged them to consider how this had a bearing on their career conundrum. This process turned these models into an autobiographical method, as participants related the stages and tasks to their own life in order to create future plans.

Super's roles and mini cycles (concept map item 5)

Super updated his 1950s model by introducing the concept of mini cycles. These account for the way in which people are likely to go through multiple career changes in life due to boundaryless careers that have become prevalent (Sullivan & Crocitto, 2007, p.284). His mini cycles follow a recycling process where individuals end participation with one role and start another. This process follows the same pattern of growth, exploration, maintenance and disengagement, however cycles are shorter and can be initiated at any age (Super et al, 1996, p.134).

Super asserted that the work role may be central, peripheral or non-existent, and other foci such as leisure activities and home making may be central instead (Super et al., 1996, p.126). This means that careers practitioners need to help clients holistically assess the full constellation of roles they inhabit before helping them reconfigure the pattern of the roles. I therefore devised a spidergram mapping exercise based on Super's Career Rainbow model (Super et al., 1996, p.127), which enabled participants to identify the main roles in their life (Super identified seven main roles: child, student, worker, leisurite, parent, homemaker and citizen (Super et al., 1996, p.127)) and the micro roles within these, thus giving them a picture of the content of their life.

Role conflict can arise from differences in the salience a person awards to a role and the amount of time they actually spend in it (Sugarman, 2001, pp.15-16). The exercise therefore also asked participants which roles had the highest salience for them and whether the way they spend their time was congruous with this. Participants then returned to their career conundrum and questioned whether role conflict could be causing their dilemma. This provided the first step in helping

clients accept or renegotiate the balance of roles, cease or enter new roles.

Finally, I asked participants to identify the stage they considered themselves to be at within the mini cycle for each role and the associated development tasks that they were therefore facing. This enabled participants to plan the action they wished to take in each of the roles they identified.

Life line review and action planning (concept map item 7)

It is acknowledged that a narrative approach to careers guidance can help individuals make sense and impose order on their past career experiences (Greller & Simpson, 1999, p.333; Sugarman, 2001, p.11). This is an important skill of careers practitioners, who can help clients create coherent and credible stories, identify themes and tensions and learn the skills needed for the next episode in the story (Savickas, 1993, p.213). This activity therefore used prompt questions to help participants consider how the content of the course had resulted in a changed perspective on their past, for instance by considering what the positive results of the troughs and the negative consequences of the peaks might be. The activity therefore enabled participants to reframe events in their life and to integrate them into their story.

Finally, to assist with future planning, I recapped the content of the course and asked participants to summarise the insights that they had found useful. I then encouraged the participants to plan practical steps to move towards a resolution.

Evaluation

Participants found it easy to think of metaphors to express their career conundrum (item 1 in the concept map). One commented "this was an interesting way to condense my own ideas" and another: "it was simple but illustrated how I felt". Later on, one participant said he hadn't articulated his conundrum, despite having earlier pictured this as "hitting a brick wall". I assumed that the metaphor would speak for itself, however further scaffolding was needed to help participants make sense of their metaphors.

Participants found the articles in the *media narratives* section (item 2 in the concept map) provocative and these spawned a variety of debates about the purpose of work, ageism and employability. The discussion led to the group collectively expressing desire for a job that they considered interesting, however they were doubtful that they would successfully secure employment. They saw this as being partly due to ageism in recruitment, expressing concern that employers do not want to manage people who are older than them, that they do not consider the skills of older job applicants to be transferable and that they believe younger workers to be more enthusiastic. One participant stated that entering a new work environment would require adjustment, and that it could not be assumed that having worked before meant that a person knew how to function across all work environments.

This demonstrated to me that the concerns of older adults are, at least partly, about the expectations of employers, the needs of new working environments and the extent to which they match these. Therefore, supporting participants to understand employers' requirements and to improve their fit with these would be beneficial. Having employers as guest speakers would also allow participants to pose questions to them directly about the way they perceive older people when recruiting.

In retrospect, the articles chosen foregrounded the issue of ageism in recruitment and steered this segment away from showing that there are multiple beliefs about the career development of older people. Due to it proving difficult to find media artifacts that illustrate beliefs about development, I propose that participants could be given statements drawn directly from life span development theory to reflect upon. For example, statements could include: "adult development is about a person increasing their social radius" (drawing from Vaillant) (Vaillant, 2002, p.42) or "adult career development is characterised by adapting to the changing needs of a work situation" (drawing from Super) (Super et al., 1996, p.133). This would provide a better introduction to the subsequent theories to be presented.

Speaking about the lifeline activities (items 3 and 7 in the concept map), one participant said "I quite liked

this exercise…it was particularly good to think about triggers for troughs and peaks in my life-line and to recognize commonality in some of the events." The exercise was successful in enabling participants to explore change and consistency of values, priorities and identity over the life course, for instance identifying the meaning of the Y axis on their lifeline helped participants see overarching principles through which they evaluate life experiences.

I asked participants to describe the shape of the line to raise awareness of the narrative tone they ascribe to their life. However, upon reflection, their lines did not show this, but instead showed ups and downs of *events* in their life. A better distinction between events and development is needed, as development can exist or cease, slow down or speed up as events occur.

The segments based on Super, Erikson and Vaillant's life span models (items 4 and 6 in the concept map) worked to an extent, although participants got too caught up in the stage the models placed them at according to chronological age and the notion that the models show an invariable, linear sequence. It is important to make explicit that adult development does not follow rigid rules: stages can be out of sequence or omitted (Vaillant, 2002, p.50).

Super's model generated lots of discussion about establishment and maintenance and whether this really constituted development with one participant remarking "is that all I've got to look forward to – updating my skills?" and all of them agreeing that these stages seemed dull. It would be useful to explore establishment and maintenance in greater detail and link this to participants' personal definitions of development. This would enable them to imagine how they could enact establishment and maintenance according to their values.

The participants had mixed feelings about the segment based on Erikson and Vaillant's models (item 6 on the concept map) with at least one participant strongly believing that these models were no longer culturally relevant and others doubting that the characteristics of the stages applied only to people past mid-life. However, one participant recognised that the stages might be used to explore motivation and possibly point to career choices. Instead of explaining the stages by giving examples of the *roles* a person may take on (eg mentoring roles for those at the generativity stage), emphasizing the mechanism *underpinning* these roles may have allowed participants to identify with the change in motivations that precipitate career change.

The participants gave positive feedback about the section on Super's roles and mini cycles (item 5 in the concept map): "the mini cycle was good, because I felt I could look at where I am now and where I want to be within the same bit of work". Participants also felt that exploring roles was useful, commenting that this was "interesting – made me think about my life in a structured way". To develop this exercise, it would be interesting to explore how mini cycles contribute to overall development by referring back to the lifeline.

Conclusion

Older adults who are job seeking may need support similar to young adults who are seeking work for the first time, including job identification and matching, and support through recruitment processes. However, this project demonstrates that older adults have additional needs. For instance, ageism in recruitment is perceived as a problem by some; therefore, involving employers in the delivery of courses aimed at older people is important. Moreover, this project demonstrates that older adults benefit from support to evaluate the meaning they have ascribed to their past and present career and its place in their overall life structure. Enabling clients to author new career possibilities which are congruent with changing priorities and life circumstances is also of value.

Careers practitioners can provide this support. To do this well, a course aimed at older clients must recognise the individuality of participants and their experiences. Supporting participants to set their own agenda by identifying a metaphor for their career conundrum is an effective method, however scaffolding to understand the significance of this metaphor is necessary.

Adopting a narrative process throughout encourages participants to explore their career conundrum, reflect upon their past and construct future plans. Development theories can assist in the construction

of this narrative, however predicting the stage or tasks that a person is likely to be engaging with according to age is far less useful than clients identifying their own developmental stages and tasks according to their individuality. To enable participants to critically engage with developmental theories, it could be beneficial to create activities that enable discussion of the ideas underpinning these theories, so that participants arrive at their own definition of what constitutes 'development' and 'career development'. This would enable them to identify the personal values which may steer future career decisions.

Exercises that utilise life-lining, the mapping of roles and exploration of mini cycles assist individuals to explore personal motivations and their developing sense of identity. These activities enable individuals to establish the significance of work in their life and renegotiate a new balance of life roles if necessary. Within these exercises, a distinction needs to be drawn between life events and life development, so that individuals can see how development occurs *through* events.

Overall a course which utilises narrative and life span development theories enable participants to think creatively about their career dilemmas. This approach can also enable careers practitioners working in universities and in contexts outside of Higher Education to also be creative and design innovative support mechanisms that enable clients to explore deep issues of identity in relation to career. I have found undertaking this project fascinating: professionally it has shown me a way of working with older clients more effectively and personally it has revitalised the way I think about my career.

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The role of career surveys: Identifying issues and evaluating practice

Charles Jackson

Drawing on the results of two surveys of early career doctors conducted 12 years apart, this paper discusses how such surveys can identify career concerns and provide evidence of the effectiveness of career interventions. The first survey identified the need for more and better career advice in medical training. Since then, there have been considerable changes to the structure of medical training and a number of initiatives to improve the career support given to these doctors. It is argued that career surveys are an important way of monitoring and evaluating change over time but also have the potential to make a valuable contribution to informing and evaluating career interventions in a range of settings.

What is a career survey?

Many organisations run employee attitude surveys every one or two years. Typically these surveys will include one or two questions or attitude statements that ask employees about their experience of career and development issues. However the main purpose of these surveys is to gather a broad overview of employees' views on a wide range of issues ranging from pay and reward to equal opportunities, from levels of stress to the behaviour of line managers. When run regularly, such surveys can be used to benchmark employees' attitudes on many aspects of their experience in the organisation and compare results over time or with other organisations. Such surveys can sometimes provide useful insights on career issues but their general focus means that they rarely explore these issues in any great depth.

By contrast, a career survey sets out to explore in much finer detail individuals' experiences of career and development issues. It may ask about experiences of, and attitudes towards, specific career and development interventions. It can be used to identify key sources of career information and support and how useful they are. It might also ask respondents to identify particular career issues that are important to them or the career challenges they face.

The main difference between a career survey and an employee attitude survey is one of focus. While an employee attitude survey usually has a broad focus on the employee experience in an organisation, a career survey focuses almost exclusively on aspects of the individual's career and the career support they have received. Unlike most employee attitude surveys which are usually run within a single organisation, a career survey may also be run across organisations and may focus on a particular professional or occupational group rather than the whole workforce. While an employee attitude survey may provide some feedback to those responsible for career and development issues in a particular setting, the main purposes of a career survey are likely to be to get an understanding of career issues and to provide feedback on the usefulness of existing career interventions.

In the remainder of this article, data from two career surveys are used to provide insight into how such surveys can inform the provision of career support. First of all some contextual information on the research and the development of medical career advice and guidance is outlined briefly to set the context.

Medical career advice and guidance

The lack of career support in the UK for trainee doctors and medical students had been well documented since the late 1980s (Allen, 1988a,

1988b, 1989, 1994). In 2000, a team from the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling (NICEC) was commissioned by the Department of Health to conduct research on the career advice and guidance needs of trainee doctors. The research set out to develop an understanding of the career support needs of doctors in training from their own perspective. This was achieved through conducting a national survey of final year medical students and doctors in training. Providers of career guidance and policy-makers in the field of medical education were also interviewed in order to generate contextual information that could be used to frame the survey findings and to understand the issues affecting the development of better career support (Jackson, Ball, Hirsh & Kidd, 2003). In 2014 a similar survey was conducted online and this allowed for the impact of changes in the level of career support available to trainee doctors to be assessed.

Over the last 15 years considerable changes have taken place in how doctors are trained. The introduction of the two year foundation programme in 2005 following the publication of Modernising Medical Careers (Department of Health, 2004) was part of a restructuring of the career paths for doctors, intended both to shorten the duration of training and to introduce the option of 'run-through' training where progression from one stage to the next is automatic provided that the required level of competence is achieved.

The provision of career support has also increased markedly in this time. All Local Education and Training Boards (LETBs) in England now have a designated contact for the provision of career support and at the same time much more information about medical careers is available from websites. While the 2001 survey asked about 19 possible sources of career support, 32 potential sources were identified in 2014. It is the length and complexity of medical training that makes the provision of effective career support so critical.

This paper uses data from both surveys to assess the impact of changes in the level of career support provided to medical students and doctors in training. In particular, it looks at satisfaction with the quality of career advice and guidance available, levels of career decidedness and satisfaction with the choice process, and use and helpfulness of different forms of career support.

The surveys

The 2001 survey was a national survey with questionnaires sent to final year medical students, House Officers (PRHOs), and three samples of doctors in training stratified by year of first registration. Both UK and doctors from overseas working in England were included in the sample which was taken from British Medical Association (BMA) membership records. The survey was conducted as an anonymous postal survey with two reminders. It achieved a 42% response rate with 1,740 completed questionnaires returned.

The 2014 survey was conducted as an anonymous online survey. Doctors were contacted to participate in the survey via a number of different routes. Most were contacted via their LETBs but weblinks to the survey were also circulated by BMJ Careers, the BMA Junior Doctors Committee and the Royal College of Physicians.

Only the 901 respondents replying to the 2014 survey who were studying or training in the UK were included in the analysis. 57% (511) were doctors in the foundation programme, 26% (234) were in the first two years of core/specialty training, 11% (102) were in year 3 or above of core/specialty training, and 6% (54) were medical students. Replies were received from Foundation Doctors working in 16 of the 22 English Foundation Schools as well as Wales and Scotland and from doctors working in 11 out of 13 LETBs in England along with doctors working in Wales and Scotland.

Both surveys were designed to measure satisfaction with existing arrangements for providing career support, respondents' personal experience of career advice and guidance, their use of formal and informal guidance sources, their information needs, and to assess their views about career guidance needs and priorities. Factors which affect how career decisions are made were also measured in both surveys. In 2001 three different versions of the questionnaire were prepared tailored to the situation of the three different

groups of respondent – final year medical students, PRHOs, and post-registration doctors in training. For example, the version for final year medical students did not include questions on current employment.

As far as possible questions in the 2014 questionnaire were identical to those used in 2001 but the 2014 one was shorter with a small number of less relevant questions omitted. For example, no information was collected about exams passed during training. Respondents were routed to appropriate sections of the online questionnaire depending on their career stage but all respondents were asked to complete the core questions about their experience of receiving career support.

Satisfaction with training and career support

Overall 74% of respondents to the 2014 survey were satisfied with the quality of the training they had received. This compares with 56% of respondents in 2001. While it is difficult to compare year groups because of the changes to the structure of training, 79% of those in Foundation Year 1 and 64% in their first year of core/specialty training were satisfied in the 2014 survey compared to 60% of PRHOs and 51% of SHOs at roughly equivalent stages in 2001.

In 2001 only 14% of respondents were satisfied with the quality of the career advice and guidance they had received, while over half (55%) were dissatisfied. In contrast, 40% of respondents in 2014 were satisfied and just under a quarter (24%) dissatisfied.

These findings suggest that overall the changes to training and the investment in career support have had a broadly positive impact.

Career issues in medical training

In deciding how best to provide career support to medical students and doctors in training, it is important to understand the issues with which these students and doctors currently want help. The 2014 survey asked respondents which of 20 career issues they would like help with currently and the top six are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Top 6 Career Issues where respondents want help currently

Top 6 Career Issues	Mentioned by
In-depth information on my preferred career options	46%
Increasing my chances of success in my chosen career	45%
A better understanding of medical opportunities overseas	44%
Greater awareness of flexible training options	44%
Anticipating the future financial and lifestyle implications of my career choice	44%
Evaluating my chances of success in my chosen career	41%

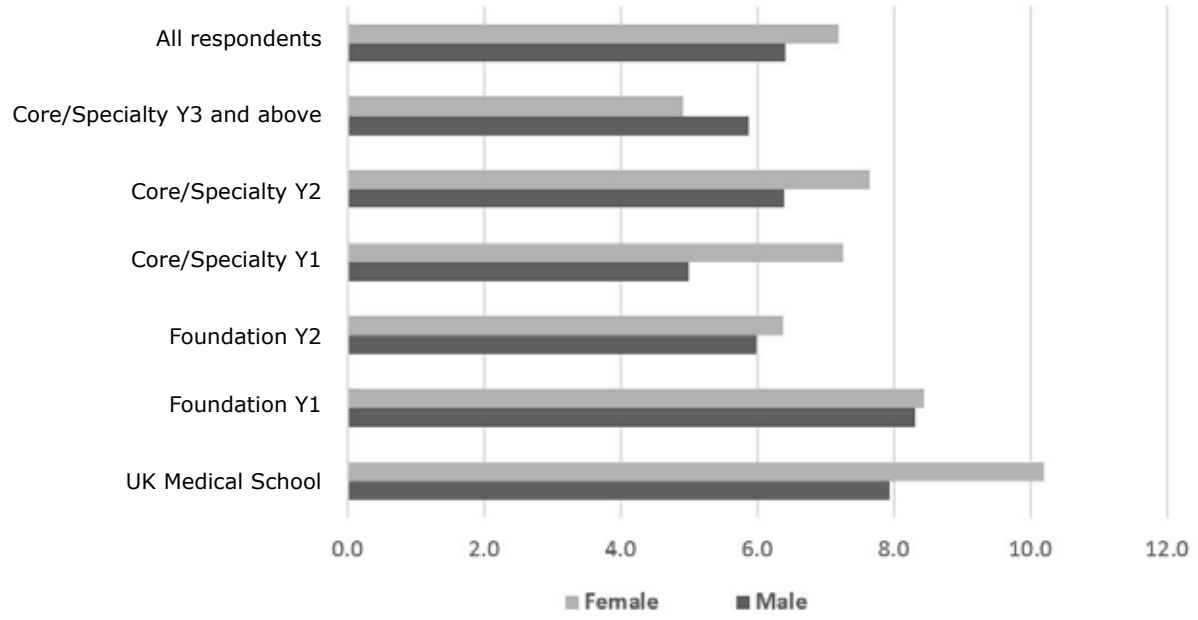
Source: Medical Career Advice and Guidance Survey 2014

Greater awareness of flexible training options (the option to train on a less than full-time basis) was mentioned by over half (53%) of female respondents with the proportion varying from 64% of the relatively small number of female medical students to 55% of foundation doctors and 48% of those in core/specialty training. This compared to just 29% of male respondents mentioning it. Women respondents were also more likely to mention returning to medicine after a break as an issue they would like help with currently (20% compared to 10% of men).

Overall, women mentioned more issues on average than men at nearly all career stages (Female = 7.2, Male = 6.4; $t = 2.15$ $p < .05$), although the differences between male and female doctors in both Foundation years were very slight. The other exception was among those in year 3 and above of core/specialty training where female doctors mentioned fewer issues on average than male ones (see Figure 1).

The number of career issues that respondents wanted help with currently tended to decrease as they progressed through training with students in medical school having the most needs and those in year 3 and above of core/specialty training the least. However, both male and female doctors in Year 2 of core/specialty training mentioned more issues than those in the first year and women doctors in the first year of core/specialty training seemed to have more issues currently than women in the second year of Foundation training.

Figure 1: Average number of current career issues by career stage



Source: Medical Career Advice and Guidance Survey 2014

The 2001 survey only asked about nine issues and the wording of the question and answer options were slightly different. However, it found broadly similar trends with the number of requirements decreasing across year groups but with female respondents tending to have more requirements than male ones.

Slightly more female respondents (60%) in 2001 wanted advice on flexible work/training opportunities. This may have been a reflection on the fact that 79% of female final year medical students mentioned it. Nevertheless, the results from both surveys showed the importance of flexible training to women in the profession.

The changing medical workforce and implications for training and careers

One of the biggest changes to the medical workforce over the last 20 to 30 years has been the increase in the number of women doctors. In 2015 women made up 55% of medical students and 57% of doctors in training (General Medical Council, 2016). However, women are more likely to become General Practitioners (GPs) than Hospital Consultants. 60% of GPs under 50 are women compared to 39% of Specialists. While the proportion of women entering medical training appears to have stabilised recently, women will almost certainly make up the majority of the UK medical workforce in a few years' time.

Fewer respondents to the 2014 survey had been put off training in certain specialties because of lack of flexible training opportunities. In 2001 42% of female respondents and 15% of male ones had been put off compared to 33% of female and 12% of male respondents in 2014. More female respondents in 2014 (41%) than in 2001 (33%) expected to undertake some of their training on a part-time basis. While these figures do suggest opportunities to train on a part-time/flexible basis may have become more widely available, they need to be interpreted with some caution because of possible sampling differences between the surveys. Nevertheless it still appears that, in a number of specialties, the career and specialty choices of substantial numbers of (mainly female) doctors are constrained during training by the perceived difficulty of undertaking some elements of training on a less than full-time basis.

Sources of career support

Both surveys collected information about respondents' use of different sources of career support as well as

whether they had attended specific types of career event. Respondents were also asked how useful they had found the sources they had used and the events they had attended.

The results from both surveys highlight the importance of conversations with other doctors as the most frequently used sources of career advice. In 2014 these were:

1. Senior Doctors (e.g. Consultants, GPs) mentioned by 91%
2. More experienced peers (e.g. in the next grade) mentioned by 85%
3. Peer group (e.g. others in the same grade) mentioned by 71%
4. Educational Supervisors mentioned by 70%

The three most used websites were: Specialty Training websites (54% visited), BMJ Careers website (47%) and NHS Medical Careers (43%), while just under half (47%) of respondents in 2014 had attended Medical School Careers Fairs, events, talks or lectures.

It is encouraging that the sources most widely used are also rated as among the most useful. In particular, 93% rated more experienced peers, 87% rated senior doctors and 76% rated their peer group as useful or very useful. These findings were almost identical with those from the earlier survey in 2001.

Some sources that were not so widely used were among those rated most useful (see Table 2). The reasons why some sources are not so widely used as others will vary. Not everyone will have family and friends who are doctors. Using Specialty Training and Recruitment websites is more common at certain stages in training (Foundation Year 2 and Year 1 of Core/Specialty training). However, there may be scope to encourage wider use of some less used sources that are found to be particularly useful.

In general, most sources were found to be useful to some respondents and only two were rated as useful by less than 40% of those who had used them. Even for the source fewest respondents rated useful, Sci 59 – the specialty choice inventory (19% rated useful but used by only 24%), the low score may be more about how and when it is used and the relatively small number of respondents that had used this source also means that this finding must be interpreted cautiously.

Career knowledge and preferences for how career support is delivered

Respondents to both surveys were asked to rate a series of attitude statements about how they find out about medical careers and how they thought career support should be delivered (see Figure 2)

Views on some statements had barely changed from 2001. It is concerning that 67% still felt that there were many areas of medicine that they knew too little about. However, there had been some positive changes with nearly half (47%) now agreeing that the information they had received about medical careers had been accurate and more that the advice they had received about medical careers had been timely and relevant (37% in 2014 compared to 19% in 2001).

These findings provide further evidence that the perceived quality and usefulness of the career support provided to doctors in training has improved since 2001 but also indicate that challenges still remain. In particular, more (47%) felt that they had been forced to make difficult decisions about the area to specialise in too early in their career and this may be partly a consequence of changes to the training system. Data from the latest Career Destination Report 2017 (UK Foundation Programme, 2018) shows that the percentage of Foundation Year 2 (FY2) Doctors going direct into specialty training has declined from 71.3%

Table 2: Use and usefulness of selected sources of career support

Source of career support	Useful	Used/ visited by
Websites		
Specialty Training websites	84%	54%
Specialty Recruitment websites	79%	40%
BMJ Careers website	73%	47%
Other sources		
Family and friends who are doctors	83%	42%
Professional bodies (e.g. BMA, Royal Colleges)	77%	23%
Careers fairs and events	75%	28%
Self-help careers materials (e.g. books, internet)	73%	46%

Source: Medical Career Advice and Guidance Survey 2014

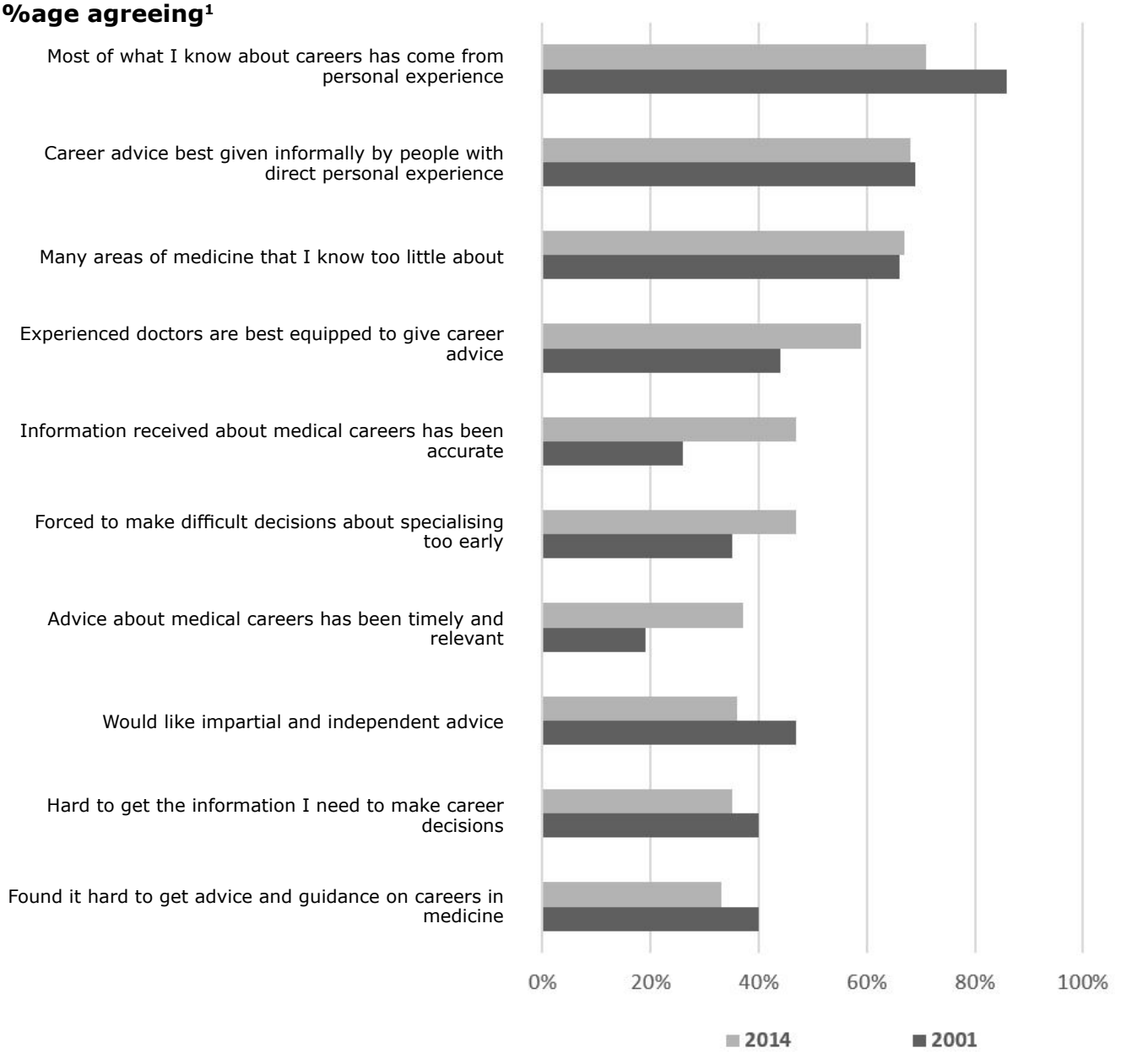
in 2011 to 42.6% in 2017 and gives some support to the view that many doctors may not be ready to commit to a specialty at this stage. Some may feel that this is a good time to take a break, travel or work overseas but evidence from the GMC (2017) suggests most do return to specialty training within 3 years.

The view that career advice is best given informally by people with direct and relevant personal experience also confirms the earlier finding about the career conversations that respondents found most useful.

Key survey findings

The results from these two surveys indicate that medical students and doctors in training were considerably more satisfied with their training and the career support they received in 2014 than they were in 2001. It is important to realise that training and career support are intimately linked as much of the career support is aimed at helping these doctors navigate their training and specialty choices. While it would be wrong to claim that better career support

Figure 2: Career knowledge and preferences for how career support is delivered: %age agreeing[1]



Source: Medical Career Advice and Guidance Surveys 2001 and 2014

1 Note that the wording of the attitude statements used in the surveys has been abbreviated in this figure.

alone has led to greater satisfaction with training, nevertheless it seems reasonable to conclude that it is very likely to have been one factor in this change.

Who respondents would like to talk to about career issues has not changed with a strong feeling that experienced doctors are the best equipped to give career advice through informal conversations. Other research (Kidd, Hirsh & Jackson, 2004) has also found that many of the most useful career conversations in other settings are often not with career specialists. Perhaps, most significantly, in the age of the internet and with so much information provided online, the surveys highlight the importance of the 'human touch' through talking directly with other people about career issues, especially those working in medicine.

The value of career surveys

While the findings from the second survey in 2014 provide evidence of how the quality of career support provided to doctors in training has improved since the first survey in 2001, there are also other more general lessons from this research.

1. Career surveys often need to be conducted in a particular occupational setting because the circumstances – length and complexity of training for example – vary so much between occupations. Medical training might be an extreme example both because of the number of specialties (65 different specialties in the UK and a further 32 sub-specialties) and the length of training (10 to 15 years minimum depending on career path chosen). There are choices to be made at numerous stages throughout the training process and career support needs to be tailored accordingly.

2. It is the quality of conversations with colleagues (senior doctors, more experienced peers and one's own peer group) that are not only the most common way that career support is provided but also are perceived to be the most useful. This importance of the 'human touch' should not be forgotten when there is a trend to provide career support online and via websites. The surveys suggest that websites and other online sources of career information are seen as useful but it may well be the conversations with colleagues that are important in helping people to evaluate and use this information.

3. The role of career professionals is as much about overseeing the delivery of career support as providing it on a one-to-one basis. Career professionals working in LETBs, Deaneries and Medical Schools have had a major role in developing many of the new and improved career resources, such as websites and self-help career materials. The importance of this role as developer of resources should not be underestimated. Another significant role for career professionals is as the trainers, co-ordinators and supporters of those non-specialists who give so much career support on an informal basis. Signposting different sources of career support is also an important activity so that people know where to get help at different points in their careers.

4. Career surveys have an important role in the evaluation of career interventions. Some surveys may focus on particular innovative interventions but others such as these ones focus on the whole delivery system. This can provide useful feedback by not only identifying the most commonly used sources of support but also on their usefulness.

5. Career surveys help in identifying the issues with which people want career support. This is important for the development of more appropriate interventions and identifying gaps in provision as well as shaping future policy and overall strategy for career support in a particular professional or occupational setting.

6. Career surveys, especially now that they can be conducted online, are a very cost-effective way of gathering feedback from a large number of respondents and therefore of providing persuasive quantitative evidence to policy makers. They can be used to track cohorts over time or, as here, to look at how experiences change over time for different groups.

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'The world is your oyster': Exploring the career conceptions of Gen-Z students

Steve Mowforth

If generation-Y were considered digital pioneers, generation-Z (born after 1995) are true digital natives. The oldest of this cohort are now completing their undergraduate studies. This article reports on a HECSU funded, non-experimental, exploratory study intended to provide insight into how generation-z view the concept of career. In addition, it considers what - if any - are their career concerns related to the effects of technological and social acceleration. It will also reflect on the topic from the perspective of some career theories.

Introduction

As CEAIG professionals, our practice is grounded in a set of theoretical approaches established, in large part, during the so-called *Industrial State* era (Arthur, Inkson & Pringle, 1999) - a period equating loosely to the latter half of the twentieth century and characterised by comparative stasis and linear career trajectories. By contrast, we are now in what Arthur, Inkson & Pringle (1999) refer to as the *New Economy* – a global, technologically accelerating and significantly knowledge-based economy that is said to be increasingly VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous).

Given this contemporary career landscape, I wanted to gain some insight into what might be the common career conceptions of generation-z (hereafter gen-z) undergraduate students at Coventry University. Whilst the results of this small-scale qualitative enquiry are not necessarily generalizable, its conclusions will be of interest to fellow practitioners in different contexts. As a secondary objective, it is intended that the present study may inform a possible large-scale quantitative project.

Much has been written about the apparent agency of individuals pursuing their career in the contemporary employment landscape, e.g. Arthur & Rousseau (1996), Hall (2004), Lo Presti (2009), Savickas (2011). A common view is that the organisational career and *job for life* is in decline, that geographical, psychological and organisational boundaries are becoming more permeable, and that individuals today have greater agency in managing their own careers. Some research, however, questions this received wisdom, e.g Baruch & Vardi (2016), Lyons, Schweitzer & Ng (2014), Clarke (2013). For the purposes of this project, however, my interest is more aligned with popular perceptions than empirical research, since the former are more likely to be the influences that gen-z will be subject to.

Background

An overview of the literature suggests that a considerable number of gen-z studies consider a US context (of 37 Google Scholar results US=18, UK=2). Given the parity with the UK in terms of educational systems, internet/social media access and generational cohorts, it is assumed here that the literature will maintain a significant degree of relevance across the two nations and - perhaps to a lesser extent - with other technologically advanced countries. The birth years of gen-z are commonly considered to span from around 1996 to the present. Steele Flippin (2017) delineates preceding generations roughly as follows: Traditionalist (1922-1945), Baby Boomer (1946-1964), Generation-X (1965-1980), Generation-Y or 'Millennials' (1981-1995). According to Steele Flippin, gen-z is distinct from its preceding generation due to having lived through a particular set of world events; having never experienced a world without social

media; having instantaneously accessible information; and having been parented by generation-X and millennials, with their 'go figure it out for yourself' (p.5) approach to parenting; in contrast to the Baby Boomers' *helicopter* style. Stillman & Stillman (2017) point to the collaborative working style of millennials in contrast with a more independent inclination of gen-z, whom they observe are: '… focussed on preparing for careers at a young age' (p7). Seemiller and Grace (2016) identified a set of shared personality characteristics through their *Generation Z Goes to College* study. They found their US gen-z participants to be: loyal, compassionate, thoughtful, open-minded, responsible and determined. In her large qualitative study of UK gen–z, Combi (2015) observes in her foreword that they are: 'growing up in a world shadowed with economic uncertainty, shrinking job prospects, widening social inequality and political apathy'. Combi's social research encompasses the gamut of gen-z in terms of age, socioeconomic background and educational level, whereas Steele Flippin (2017) focuses on the workplace and Seemiller & Grace (2016) examine university students.

Methodology

Second year Coventry University undergraduate students were invited to join the study and were selected to form a representative sample (n=23) in terms of gender, nationality and faculty. Each participant was assigned to one of three one-hour focus groups (of which analysable content was around 40 minutes each). The sessions were video recoded and later transcribed by me using the listen and repeat (speech-to-text software) method (Park & Zeanah, 2005; Matheson, 2007).

Thematic analysis was informed by Braun and Clarke (2006) and began with a set of deductively identified themes originating from the focus group stimulus questions. As the analysis progressed certain additional themes were inductively generated. Codes were revised and modified throughout the process and attention was given to consistency of coding. Themes were reviewed and refined recursively. In some instances analysis was semantic - whereby what was spoken could be taken at face value; in other cases latent meaning required interpretation - which inevitably was subjective. Whilst occurrences of the various coded categories were counted to provide some sense of scale, a higher frequency does not necessarily imply significance.

Analysis and discussion

The principal aim of the study was to gain some insight into how the participants view the concept of career. More specifically, whether their notions about career reflect the modern employment landscape or, conversely, to what extent might their thinking about career remain anchored in an industrial state paradigm. In analysing the data, this overarching aim generated an associated question: are gen-z driven primarily by a desire for fulfilment and self-actualisation, or rather one of achieving stability and security (the former commonly being associated with the *New Economy* and the latter with the *Industrial State*)? Related to this question is another concerning motivational drivers to adopt a flexible career mind-set: are participants' concerns primarily associated with circumstantial disruption (e.g. structural/technological, frictional and cyclical unemployment) or rather, a more *protean* (Hall 1976, 2004) outlook favouring personal values as a motivator of career transitions? In the focus groups there was only one clear-cut acknowledgement of this duality: 'Sometimes I think they find themselves in the situations and sometimes they just want to change'. Participants' career conceptions were further explored from the viewpoint of career theory.

Influences

Twenty-one specific sources of influence were identified, of which the one with the highest frequency (family) is considered here. In addition to these relatively well-defined influencers, a separate category covering *social knowledge, cognitive process or passive perception*, which had 59 occurrences, became apparent. It could be argued that some codes (such as *desire to meet celebrities*) cannot be considered influences *per se*.

There were 27 instances of family members as an influencer and within this category were mentioned, *uncle* (1), *father* (7), *mother* (7), *both parents* (12), *grandfather* (1), *brother-in-law* (1), older sibling (1), cousins (1). Out of the 26 occurrences of parental influence, seven indicated explicit encouragement to

effectively *follow your heart*: 'they always told me to do whatever I like, no matter what everybody else says', and: 'You go for it. I missed my opportunity but you go for it.' There were an additional three instances of parental support for participants' volition. There was one occasion where a participant indicated that they had asserted their own volition over that of their parents and there was one expression of parents deterring from particular jobs.

There were 59 instances indicating influence derived from s*ocial knowledge, cognitive process or passive perception*. An example within this category is: 'I feel like now everyone is trying to just keep doing better and better and better. Whereas, back then [*Industrial State* era] it was kind of like, "we're stable, we're fine" kind of thing'. Across all three groups there was a general sense of positivity in relation to the job market: in group three, for instance, three participants responded positively to a suggestion that the job market was currently buoyant. In the media and fashion industries there was an awareness of the importance of building a portfolio, accumulating a track record and networking, and of job hunting being more involved than in other sectors. There was no mention of formal LMI (although some may have picked up sector knowledge from course tutors, for example) or formal engagement with CEIAG.

Comparison with the Industrial State career landscape

I identified four occasions when a participant expressed career conceptions explicitly reminiscent of the *Industrial State* career paradigm, for example: 'it's like if there's a business, you start at a level and then you see yourself working up to becoming a manager and then maybe you go further to CEO' and: 'I've always thought [originating from parent's experience] you stick in your current job'. In group one, participants were asked what they understand by the term *a job for life*. Some participants associated it with older generations. For others, the interpretation was more aligned with contemporary options and choices. Across all three groups participants were invited to compare their perceptions of the career landscape fifty years ago with that of the *New Economy*. There was some recognition of career stasis having been aspirational (and perhaps of life commitments having been a driver of that). There was a perception from one or two participants that people from older generations were inclined to apply their own experiential framework in communicating their expectations of gen-z: 'personally I feel like a lot of people from the older generation feel like *well I did it and so can you* and it's not that easy'. Some felt that job opportunities were greater in the past due to relative absence of credentialism. For most, there was a perception that widening access to HE has opened a broader range of opportunities. There was recognition that in the modern career landscape more frequent job transitions are likely:

> I feel like the concept of a career though is sort of going out the window nowadays because there's that statistic [participant expresses some uncertainty later] where like people our age on average will have like ten to fifteen different jobs in their life whereas people from the generation before had like five to ten sort of jobs in their life.

Technological and social acceleration

The term *technological acceleration* is commonly aligned to an observation that technology is evolving exponentially (e.g. Ford, 2015). Frequently, discussion concerning techno-acceleration revolves around the effects of automation on those work processes traditionally carried out by humans (see Mowforth, 2017a). A related and overlapping concept is Rosa's (2010, 2013) social acceleration whereby certain social processes, driven by various factors, are increasingly speeding up, giving rise to a sense - in varying degrees - of alienation, exhilaration and stress.

Discussion concerning technological acceleration was limited to group one. A mechanical engineering student (P1.1) introduced the topic of exponentially accelerating automation, raising the issue of self-driving trucks in the US and truck driver protests. He processed this line of thought, effectively evoking the phenomenon of creative destruction (here, redundant processes spawning new ones) which, in dialogue with another participant, led him to consider that: 'You're going to need to be able to transition from one thing to the next. In analysing the transcript,

these contributions were evocative of Holland's RIASEC *differentiation* indicator (Spokeman, 1996). The conversation between these participants considered a perceived need to be able to transition from one occupational area to another due to technological disruption (see Mowforth, 2017b). P1.1 highlighted the problem of high differentiation in those circumstances: 'once you've done a fashion degree you're not going to go and start practising law' and later stated: 'If you're a taxi driver or lorry driver you'd have to transition from driving to maybe into a service industry'. P1.4 (also a mechanical engineering student) responded: 'Sorry but you can't just transition to being creative when you're not creative'. P1.1 summarised by saying: 'more diverse skills in the workforce is going be needed in the future. You're going to need to be able to transition from one thing to the next'. P1.4 appeared to suggest that automation will benefit employers to the detriment of workers but concluded that ultimately it will serve to increase education and be a 'good step for humanity'. The conversation was effectively considering individuals' degree of natural differentiation. That is to say, how in those circumstances low differentiation (interest and ability distributed across the RIASEC types) could be beneficial, whereas high differentiation in a declining occupational sector may be disadvantageous). Further exploration of this theme may benefit from consideration from a specialist/generalist perspective.

There was a sense, primarily in group three, of an awareness of social acceleration within their own experience. The broad themes identified from those conversations were: critical importance of subject choice decisions (during secondary education), GCSEs (increasing workload and pressure), competition, concurrent necessity and desire to be ambitious, credentialism, academic inflation, and increasing stress/pressure.

- …there is some sort of pleasure from being ambitious because there kind of has to be because […] being ambitious comes with a lot of stress.
- Like you have to decide what you want to be when you're 30 when you're 14. And if you don't that's it, you're screwed.

Participants' definitions of career

At various points, participants were invited, explicitly or implicitly, to provide their own definition of what a career is today. Broadly along a scale from *Industrial State* to contemporary conceptions the following codes were applied: an eventual means to support retired parents; (promotional) ladder (x3); long-term sector (x2); specific goal (x2); defining theme; mixture of work and education; (themed) doors to knowledge acquisition; stepping stone; job choice; many jobs - possibly in diverse fields; flexible goals (x3); degree not essential (enjoyment important); for some money, for others want/love/enjoy; enjoyment 1st, money 2nd, promotion 3rd; the notion of career is evolving; is related to one's brand/lifestyle; self-actualisation once stability is achieved (previous generations satisfied with stability); aspiration (rather than stability); doing what you want/love/enjoy (x4).

To summarise, there were a few definitions that were evocative of an *Industrial State* conception of career, although most of these, it could be argued, are also characteristics of typical modern careers. Midway, there were suggestions of choice, flexibility and personal development. At the opposite end of the spectrum were those definitions that were suggestive of career being conceived as a facilitator of personal fulfilment. I got a sense of strength of feeling in certain of these instances. One participant was effectively describing Maslow's hierarchy of needs (prompted by me) in expressing that self-actualisation was the ultimate goal, and that in order for this to happen a degree of career stability is required.

- …once you've got a degree you've got that much debt you may as well go forth with that particular career
- …doing something that you really love and it gives you total satisfaction

Following your heart/doing what you want

This theme arose in the *parental influence* and the *definitions* sections above. Excluding occurrences in those categories, there were a further seven explicit instances of the theme elsewhere, e.g. 'And then it comes to us and we are like, *no, I want to be happy. I don't want to just be stuck in a job for life, I want a career*,

I want options and choices.' In addition, there were several implicit references.

Protean career orientations

Hall (2004), with reference to Hall (1976), summarises his concept of the protean career as 'one in which the person, not the organization, is in charge, the core values are freedom and growth, and the main success criteria are subjective (psychological success) vs. objective (position, salary)'. He suggests that protean orientation is both trait and state and can be enhanced through the development of two metacompetencies: adaptability and self-awareness. In the present study, those contributions suggesting an element of protean orientation were evaluated under two dimensions as described in Briscoe & Hall (2006): values-driven and self-directed. I equated the values-*driven* element to seeking self-fulfilment, as analysed above. In addition to coding instances suggestive of a self-directed outlook, I counted examples of *who is/should be in charge of an individual's professional development* as an indication of *self-direction*. A few occurrences indicated it was the employer's responsibility. For most, it was either a combination of employer and employee, or the individual taking ownership of their development. From this evidence of *values* and *self-direction*, I concluded an indication of protean-orientation within the groups.

Boundary crossing

Two conversations were indicative of the boundaryless career concept. In their introductory chapter to *The Boundaryless Career*, Arthur & Rousseau (1996) describe boundaryless careers as '…the opposite of "organisational careers" - careers conceived to unfold in a single organisation' (p.5). The extent to which the modern career landscape can actually be referred to as boundary-less is a moot point (e.g. Baruch, 2012; Baruch & Vardi, 2016).

The first sequence of interactions on this theme was in group one. The conversation was considering an observation that CAD and similar software are common to both mechanical engineering and fashion, and - effectively - that automation is a driver for boundary crossing, for instance: 'You wouldn't think that maybe fashion and engineering are particular linked. But […] like you say, the barriers are sort of softening' and: '…a lot more people transition into more creative stuff because you can't get a computer to like design or draw some clothes because it doesn't quite work'. The second occasion was in group two and focussed on geographical boundary crossing. A participant suggested that once graduates are established in their career they can say to themselves: 'Well, you know what, I'm doing business here. I can go to Japan or another country, or America and decide to start a life there…' and further commented: '…there are less boundaries now.' There was an indication that a facilitator of this boundary crossing was considered to be communications technology.

Acquisition of career knowledge

Bloch (1989) asserts that 'The individual, who is always seeking (at some times more actively than others) to solve the problem called career, is receptive to information which appears useful' (p.122). Individuals map new information onto their own mental career framework. Bloch states that these sources of information can be *systematic* (provided formally) or *unsystematic* (acquired from a host of sources in the environment). The latter is the case with the information derived from social and environmental sources as analysed, above. Given that none of the participants made reference to systematically delivered career information, I suggest that, in this context, authenticity of information being accessed by students is a matter of concern for Higher Education CEIAG.

Conclusion

In summary, the most prominent themes arising from the above analysis are: *an (effective) protean orientation*, *(some) insight into the effects of technological and social acceleration*, and *supportive parental influence*. From these factors I summarise that the participants' career conceptions are, generally, more aligned with contemporary (and popular) notions of career in the *New Economy*, than with the *Industrial State* era (during which some of their grandparents and older parents will have forged their own careers). There was some awareness of permeable occupational and geographical boundaries. Participants' conceptions appear to have been shaped by everyday social interaction rather than the formal delivery of career information, via CEIAG services for instance. It is noteworthy, given the growth

of the internet, that we, as careers professionals, are no longer the gatekeepers to the body of *official* information. Indeed, Thambar (2018) highlights the decline of this asymmetry.

In comparing their values with those more typical of the *Industrial State* era, it appears that fulfilment trumps job stability. On the whole, I got a sense of positivity and did not pick up any major concerns about their future career development. It is interesting, for example, that there was no mention of Brexit, nor of the more techno-pessimistic predictions around structural unemployment that currently figure in the media (automation being perceived by participants as *disruptive but good*). Social acceleration was seen as both exhilarating and stressful. It was unclear (with the exception of the concern around GCSEs) whether career values were related to self-actualisation as an end in itself or rather with superordinate goals aligned to personal values.

These are not, of course, concrete conclusions grounded in hard evidence. This small scale, qualitative enquiry can only be a snapshot and its themes may not be representative of the sample itself. Indeed some themes may have arisen from relatively few individuals or from relatively few occurrences. The study's secondary objective is to inform a possible large-scale qualitative project which would provide more substantiated results.

As a first attempt at a formal research project I have found the project both challenging and rewarding. It has been a steep learning curve but I'm looking forward to the next one with the benefit of this experience!

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Career coaching tools: Evidence-based techniques for practice

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Recent theoretical and empirical developments have led to a deeper understanding of the complexity of career decisions and the cognitive processes that underpin them, and numerous techniques have been developed aimed at supporting clients struggling with this complexity. This article introduces a number of evidence-based techniques available to career practitioners, examining the theories which underpin them and the evidence for their effectiveness within career practice. The paper offers a framework of techniques and describes a number of tools which have been shown to add value to career conversations.

Introduction

Building on the insights from 20th century scholars, our understanding of how people choose their careers and navigate their career paths has advanced yet further over recent decades. The process of career development is now understood to be even more complex and multi layered than was previously imagined.

Contemporary career theory conceptualises career decisions as holistic, and inevitably influenced by the different roles we play (Blustein, 1997; Super, 1980), the other people we are connected to (Amundson, Borgen, Iaquinta, Butterfield, & Koert, 2010), and a range of other aspects of our lives (Savickas et al., 2009). Career choices are understood to be decisions about identity (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Meijers & Lengelle, 2012) and are therefore bound up with gender, class, race, sexuality, religion and community alongside psychological factors such as meaning, interests, values and skills. Compounding this complexity is the growing tranche of evidence that our decisions are heavily and inevitably influenced by non-conscious cognitive processes (Krieshok, Black & McKay, 2009; Redekopp, 2017). Alongside these personal issues, the fast pace of change in the labour market renders career development yet more convoluted, as individuals face the ongoing, lifelong challenge of negotiating their way through an ever changing landscape (Savickas et al., 2009).

Our understanding of career development has thus progressed in the last twenty years, yet at the heart of one to one career guidance practice lie models which were developed in the 20th century. The approaches to guidance which have dominated practice are grounded in Rogers' person centred philosophy. Bedford (1982), Egan (1975) and Ali and Graham (1996) for example, whose models of guidance are all widely used today, advocate a style of career guidance interview based on Rogers' core conditions for therapeutic change which include a focus on empathy, congruence and listening (Rogers, 1957).

There is evidence which supports this sustained commitment to the person-centred philosophy. Research from the fields of counselling and coaching indicates that the specific approach taken by a practitioner is often less important to the therapeutic outcomes than the quality of the working alliance between the client and practitioner (de Haan, Grant, Burger, & Eriksson, 2016; McKenna & Davis, 2009). From this it could be inferred that the exact nature of the intervention does not much matter as long as the practitioner and client have a good relationship and a shared understanding of the aims of the session. Yet evidence of the outcomes of career guidance indicates that specific techniques and approaches do confer additional and differential benefits on clients (Brown et al., 2003; Whiston, Li, Mitts & Wright, 2017). It seems timely, in the light of the new developments in our understanding of career development, to reflect on the

range of contemporary techniques and tools which career practitioners can draw on to complement and supplement the person-centred bedrock of career practice.

Tools for Career Practice

Techniques have been developed both within the career development field and beyond it, and tools devised and honed within areas such as coaching (Yates, 2013) and counselling (Reid, 2015) hold promise for effective career practice. Many of these techniques have a strong evidence base that supports their inclusion in career conversations, and in the section below, I introduce a number of tools which have been shown to add value in a career context. The techniques can be grouped within three categories. First there are the tools that help clients to uncover their *unknown knowns* and allow them to capitalise on the information stored below the level of consciousness. Then there are techniques which help clients to think *beyond the barriers* and can help people who are struggling to navigate their way past the challenges they face. Finally, there are *structured frameworks* which can help people to make sense of the complexities of their situations.

Uncovering the unknown knowns

In 2002, Donald Rumsfeld, then the Secretary of Defense for the US described three kinds of knowledge: *known knowns, known unknowns* and *unknown unknowns*. This has been quoted widely, but alongside these three categories, there is an obvious fourth, which has had considerably less traction. Unknown knowns are elements of knowledge that we have, but are unaware of: the information is stored within our minds, but is so difficult to recall that we are not aware it exists (Žižek, 2006).

Unknown known information is stored below the level of consciousness. Freud described a space in between the conscious and the unconscious which he described as the *pre-conscious* (Freud, 1915; Zepf, 2011). He suggested that we could access this knowledge through focusing attention and using language to help clarify thoughts. The use of language is important because it is thought that pre-conscious information is stored in the form of images, and it is through describing the images that thoughts are brought into the conscious stores and clarified.

Stored in the pre-conscious are ideas which may be relevant to career choice, and uncovering this information can help clients to make more informed decisions. The information might relate to the clients themselves - their own aspirations or hopes and dreams for the future, or might concern jobs or other opportunities. The information can be difficult to access, in part because our clients do not realise that they already have the information and in part because it is stored in the form of images, so needs to be translated into words before it can be fully analysed. The pictorial nature of this store of information gives us some suggestions for techniques that can help clients to access the information.

Visual tools

The field of art therapy has given us an understanding of the visual exercises that have a positive influence, and an insight into the nature of their impact. Two of the most straightforward art exercises are based on drawing and collage. There are three stages to these kinds of interventions. Clients are first asked to create an image, which they can work on within the career session or at home. The client could be asked to produce something which reflects their current situation or could create a picture which reflects an appealing future. This stage in itself can be rewarding for clients as they become absorbed in their task and feel the satisfaction of creating a tangible product. The client is then invited to reflect on their creation, question their artistic choices, and consider what meaning the image holds for them. Finally, the client and practitioner discuss, together, what light their image might shed on their current situation or future aspirations. Exercises such as this have been shown to increase clients' general psychological well-being and to enhance their self-awareness (Coiner & Kim, 2011)

Role play tools

Another set of tools makes use of empathy and imagination, and offers clients alternative routes to uncovering their unknown knowns. One such technique makes use of imaginary conversations. Clients who are struggling to make a career decision are asked to imagine the advice that a particular role

model would give them. In using an imagined role model as a conduit for this advice, the clients are able to free up their own thought processes and see things more clearly. The idea of 'imagined interactions' has been studied in depth in the literature (Honeycutt, 2002, 2008). These imagined conversations provide a different view of people's reality, and make use of symbols and visual images to provide an alternative perspective.

These two kinds of techniques, both firmly established within art therapy and drama therapy, can offer alternative cognitive pathways to the information stored in the pre-conscious. Once this information has been identified and articulated, the client is able to scrutinise and judge it, and then make a conscious decision about its value and relevance to their career choices.

The second set of tools can help clients to think beyond their barriers.

Thinking beyond barriers

The questions that our clients face are often both complex and challenging. Sometimes, clients can get stuck because the barriers seem insurmountable. These barriers can cloud their thinking and stifle their optimism and creativity. The barriers can be internal or external, real or imaginary, and they can have a detrimental impact on people's ability to set goals for themselves, or to find the motivation to put their plans into action. In order to free themselves from the constraints of these barriers clients can either take a cognitive leap forward in order to look past the problem, or can address the barriers head on.

Looking past the problem

Some techniques enable clients to fast forward to a point in time in the future. This allows them to mentally leapfrog over the barriers which they have identified and imagine a time in the future when their problems have been solved. Rather than working forwards chronologically from the present to the future, they are invited to work backwards, starting with a positive future and retracing their steps back to the present. This retrospective approach invokes their creative imagination to identify effective solutions. Two examples of this are possible selves, and the miracle question.

The idea of possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986) offers a well-evidenced technique which has been shown to help clients with goal-setting and motivation (Strauss, Griffin & Parker, 2012). It involves inviting clients to imagine different versions of themselves in the future and then render their imagined future identities as elaborate and vivid as possible. This mental image and the associated emotion which they are encouraged to 'pre-experience' have a long-lasting motivating effect on their behaviour. The miracle question, taken from solution focused coaching (de Jong & Berg, 2002) asks clients to imagine that one night, whilst they are sleeping, a miracle happens, and their problem is solved. Clients are invited to describe the morning after the miracle, and to identify the feelings, thoughts and behaviour which might first alert them to the fact that the miracle has taken place. They imagine the day unfolding and are asked to describe the way that their new life is revealed to them step by step, with a focus on the observable behavioural changes they can identify. The miracle question has been shown to help with goal setting, and increasing hope and optimism, and has been described as an approach which could offer a positive contribution to career practice (Burwell & Chen, 2006; Miller, 2017).

Dealing with the barriers

An alternative to the idea of by-passing the barriers, is to try to minimise their impact. One approach, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT – pronounced as a single word) (Hayes, Strosahl & Wilson 2009) offers techniques to help clients to accept their negative thoughts, and ensure that the thoughts do not prevent them from pursuing their goals. The *passengers on the bus* metaphor is one such technique (Flaxman, Bond & Livheim, 2013). In this a client is asked to imagine that they are driving a bus which symbolises their life journey. The bus is filled with passengers who represent the client's thoughts and feelings. Some of the passengers (thoughts and feelings) are negative and unruly and are trying to distract the driver (the client) and re-route the bus towards a different destination. Clients are invited to think about how they might want to deal with the passengers, and how they could ignore them and carry on with their journeys. Clients are then encouraged to apply this thinking to their real lives, identifying strategies for accepting the presence of their negative

thoughts and feelings, but finding a way to maintain a focus on their goals despite the negativity. ACT interventions have been shown to reduce anxiety, increase well-being and innovative thinking (Bond & Bunce, 2003; Öst, 2014).

The final set of tools introduced here offer clients a mechanism to help them structure their thoughts.

A structure for chaos

The complexities of the labour market, our lives and the career choices that we make can sometimes overwhelm our cognitive resources (Sweller, 1994). Numerous techniques exist to offer frameworks or systems which allow clients to structure their knowledge, and thus make it more manageable. Many of these tools are pre-designed, and clients can use frameworks that others have devised to help them to organise their own thoughts. Other approaches can offer clients the chance to devise their own frameworks. Perhaps inevitably, using these client-generated frameworks is more challenging both for practitioners, and for clients, but perhaps equally inevitably, they also offer more value as they stretch clients' thinking and lead to a framework that is tailor made.

Pre-designed frameworks

One pre-designed framework which has gained some devoted followers is known as the values-in-action inventory of strengths (Park, Peters & Seligman, 2004). It consists of 24 separate strengths which have been identified using data from thousands of participants the world over and which are grouped into six virtues: wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance and transcendence. The strengths cover a wide range of qualities including those which go beyond the usual list of work-related skills, and include humour, love of learning and zest. Clients can access an online questionnaire, or can use strengths cards to help them to identify their signature strengths. Finding a job in which key strengths are used every day has been shown to have a significant impact on job satisfaction (Peterson & Park, 2006; Mongrain & Anselmo-Matthews, 2012), so the use of strengths to help clients to examine their career choices could add considerable value to career conversations.

Client-generated maps

The Depth Orientate Values Extraction is an approach which facilitates clients to identify their own values through working with their interests (Colozzi, 2003). Examining interests can be revealing as leisure activities are (usually) pursued voluntarily and so can be a transparent window to authentic values. Colozzi offers a structure for a conversation which can lead clients to identify what they enjoy about their leisure activities, and this can reveal their implicit values. He suggests that clients should first identify ten or so recent occasions when they have really enjoyed themselves. They then need to identify what it was that gave them pleasure. This stage is challenging as clients need to be quite analytical and go beyond 'it was fun' and 'it was interesting' to identify exactly what made it fun and interesting. Clients are then asked to pick out some common themes from their analysis, and finally reflect on whether these themes could help them think about their future choices. Values have been shown to play an important part in both career conversations (Whiston et al., 2017) and job satisfaction (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005) and this technique facilitates clients to work out what really matters to them.

Conclusion

The techniques in this paper come from a wide range of theoretical traditions, including social psychology (possible selves), behavioural science (ACT), psychotherapy (art-based approaches) and positive psychology (strengths). This multi-disciplinary approach to career practice responds to an important call in the literature (Dany, 2014; Khapova & Arthur, 2011). Research into career development and into therapeutic interventions has moved on apace over the last decades, building on the understanding from the more traditional body of career theories. We are well aware that 'career' as our clients experience it is multi-faceted, incorporating psychological, sociological, economic and political influences so career practice which is restricted to a narrow selection of 20th century approaches may not be fit for purpose. We will serve our clients well if we can capitalise on the up to date ideas which have been generated both within our discipline and beyond to offer our clients the best support we can.

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Further details of these and a range of other techniques can be found in: Yates, J. (2018). *The Career Coaching Toolkit*, London: Routledge.

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Cognitive information processing theory: Applications in research and practice

V. Casey Dozier & Debra Osborn

Cognitive information processing (CIP) theory, in existence for over four decades, boasts over 150 evidence-based articles and close to 300 manuscripts in total that demonstrate its strength as a theory, fertile opportunity for research, and utility in practice across various settings and populations. In this manuscript, the authors will present the key components of CIP, summarize empirical evidence for the validity of the theory, and describe its applications in different settings. To demonstrate the differentiated model of career service delivery, two brief case scenarios will be provided.

Introduction

"How do you make a career decision? If you could do anything, what would you do? What is your dream job?" These are often questions posed during career interventions. However, these are big questions that can be difficult or overwhelming for many clients to answer. The reality is most people make dozens of decisions every day including what to eat, wear, and how to spend time, but not everyone is aware of their decision-making process or style because it is done with such automation. Are you an impulsive, methodical, or calculated decision maker? This question can give insight into one's decision making process, and ultimately tell a lot about the kind of information someone might need to learn more about themselves and their options. A primary goal of the Cognitive information processing (CIP) theory (Sampson, Reardon, Peterson, & Lenz, 2004; Osborn et al., in press) is to enhance one's awareness of their decision-making process and help practitioners, clients, researchers, and others learn how to make informed and careful choices. Four assumptions undergird CIP theory. First, while a major emphasis of the theory is on cognitions, the theory acknowledges the inextricable role that emotions and behavior play on career decision-making. Second, career decision-making is a complex task that requires not only knowledge about self and the world of work, but also a process for managing and applying that knowledge to the decision. Third, CIP states that this self and options knowledge fluctuates as a person interacts with and receives feedback from their surroundings. Fourth, career decision-making and career problem solving are teachable skills, subject to continued enhancement.

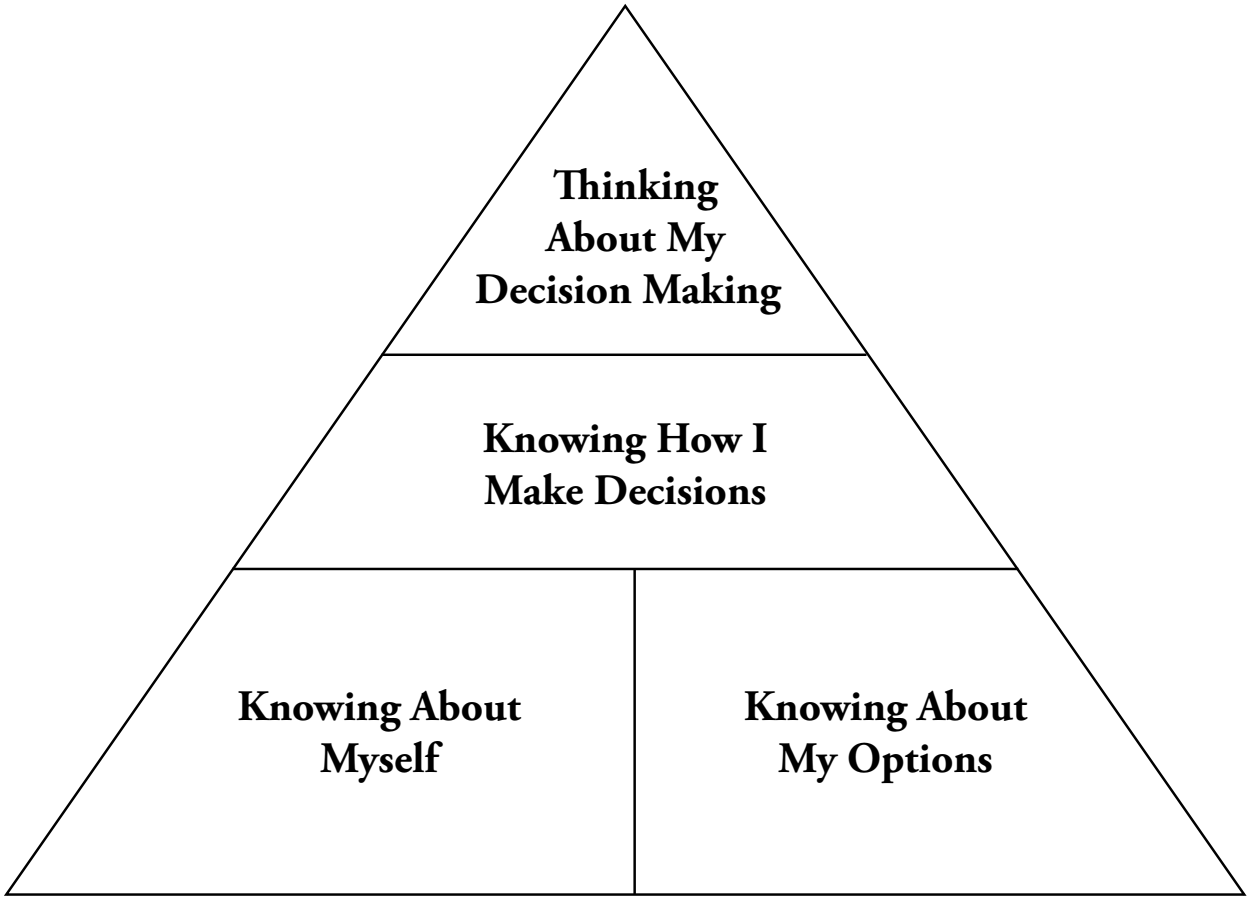
Key Components of CIP

As a learning theory, cognitive information processing (CIP) theory (Peterson, Sampson, Lenz, & Reardon, 2002; Sampson, Reardon, Peterson, & Lenz, 2004) provides a framework that teaches individuals how to make informed and careful choices which is a process that can be applied to decisions throughout one's life. CIP constructs include the Pyramid of Information Processing (Figure 1), the CASVE cycle (Figure 2), and the career readiness model (Figure 3). The pyramid includes three domains: knowledge, decision-making skills, and executive processing. The foundation of the pyramid includes self-knowledge (understanding values, interests, skills, and employment preferences) and options knowledge, which includes both knowledge of options as well as a schema for organizing information such as the world-of-work map or Holland's Hexagon.

The CASVE cycle is the middle of the pyramid and helps guide individuals during the decision-making process (Sampson et al., 2004). The sequential phases of the CASVE cycle include ***Communication***: the awareness of both internal (e.g., willingness to engage

Figure 1: What's involved in a career choice

A pyramid can be used to show what's involved in making a career choice

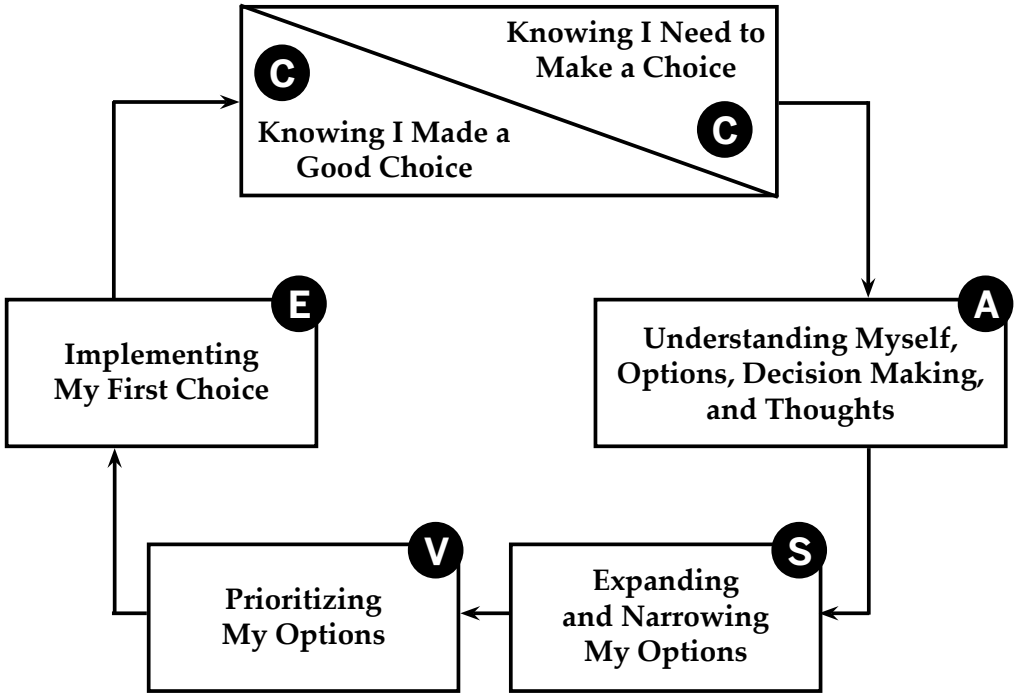


Adapted from: Sampson, J. P., Jr., Peterson, G. W., Lenz, J. G., & Reardon, R. C. (1992). A cognitive approach to career services: Translating concepts into practice. *Career Development Quarterly*, 41, 67-74.

in self-exploration, motivation, critical thinking about career problems, follow through with a plan of action, acceptance of personal responsibility, awareness of how negative thoughts impact one's process) and external (e.g., family, social, economic, and organizational) cues that signal a gap between one's current state and desired state of decidedness. Typically, a goal or a "gap" is formed at this stage. ***Analysis*** involves not only recognizing the connections between self and options knowledge, but also developing a model for decision making. It also involves understanding how important decisions are made and clarifying metacognitions or thinking about thinking. ***Synthesis*** includes the elaboration of potential options and then the crystallization (or narrowing) of options (typically to 3-5 choices) based upon information learned. ***Valuing*** means ranking options with tentative primary and secondary choices emerging at this stage. ***Execution*** involves putting a plan into action based upon the preferred choice. There is a return to the communication phase to reflect on whether or not the "gap" was closed. The CASVE cycle is cyclical in nature and as one career gap is resolved, the cycle often begins again.

The top of the pyramid includes self-talk (e.g., "I will *never* find a job" vs. "I am a qualified candidate," "job searching takes time, so I will keep on searching") self-awareness, and control and monitoring. These skills help one know when to gather more information to

Figure 2: A Guide to Good Decision Making



The CASVE Cycle

Communication, **A**nalysis, **S**ynthesis, **V**aluing, **E**xecution

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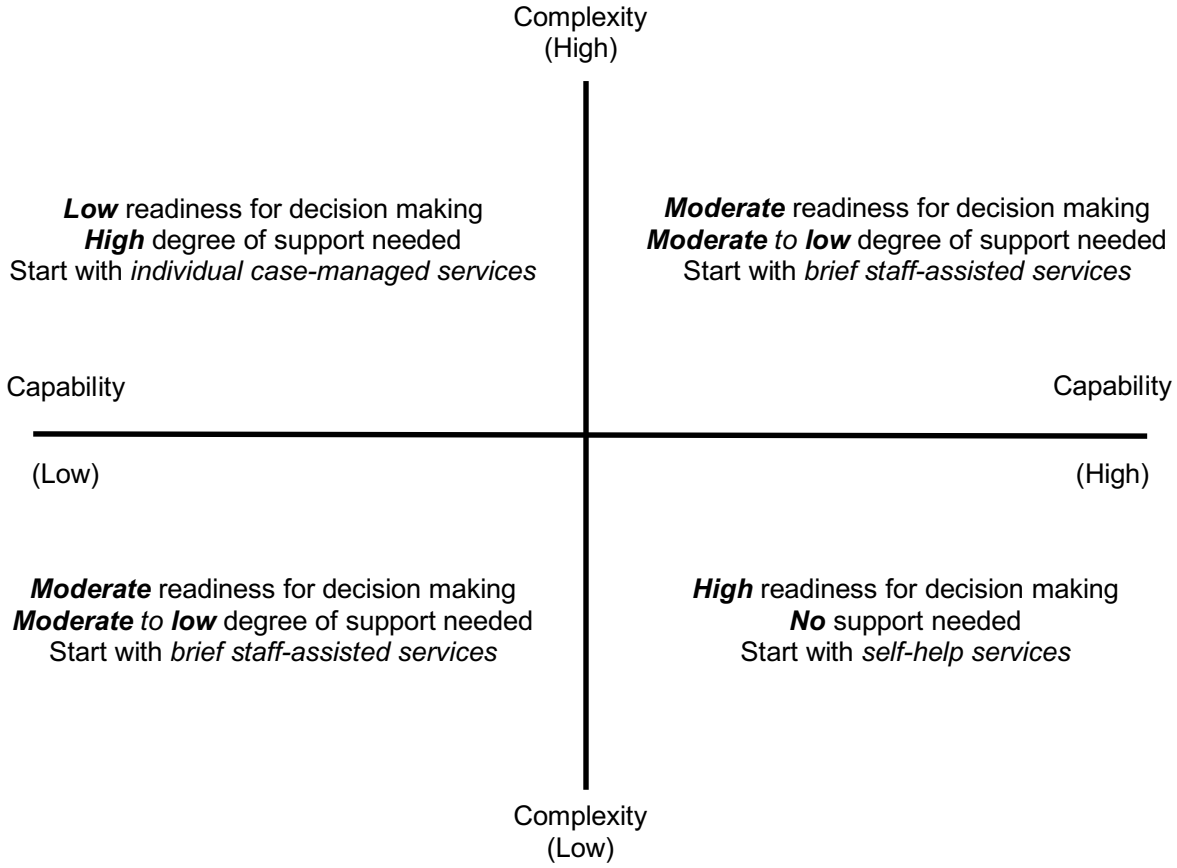
successfully navigate the CASVE cycle. CIP proposes that this self-talk, and in particular, negative career thinking, impacts the other three elements, which in turn, impacts decision making and one's career decision status (i.e., decided, undecided, indecisive). For example, if a person thinks that they are not interested nor skilled in any activities, this will impact how they rate themselves on interest and skills assessments. Similarly, if an individual believes that all occupational information is biased, or that it's impossible to learn about all the jobs "out there," that will impact the options they are considering and how they evaluate and apply occupational information to themselves. If a person believes that they never make good decisions or are constantly afraid that they are overlooking an option, they might become "stuck" in the career decision making process. CIP theory posits that by identifying, evaluating and correcting negative career beliefs, a person's view of themselves, their options, and decision making ability will improve. Given the impact of negative thinking on the other key elements of career decision making, CIP encourages career practitioners to address negative career thoughts prior to using a career assessment or other interventions to build self and options knowledge, to avoid undue negative bias.

The CIP readiness model (See Figure 3) is comprised of two factors, and involves the capability (internal factors) of an individual to make a career decision while taking into account the complexity of their situation(external factors). Individuals might fall in one of four quadrants, that suggests the level of career support they need. A person with high capability and low complexity would most likely not need a great deal of career decision-making support, and could benefit from a self-directed approach, with minimal support from a career service provider, while someone

Figure 3: A two-dimensional model of decision-making readiness for selecting initial career interventions



Adapted from: Sampson, J. P., Peterson, G. W., Reardon, R. C. & Lenz, J. G. (2000). Using readiness assessment to improve career services: A cognitive information processing approach. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 49, 146-174. Used with permission.

with low capability and low complexity or someone with high complexity and high capability would most likely benefit from a brief-assisted career service, such as drop in career advising. Someone with high complexity and low capability would most likely need the greatest amount of support (as compared to the others), and thus would benefit from the traditional individual, case-managed approach. *The Career Thoughts Inventory* (CTI, Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996) is a 48 item readiness measure that assists in the career problem and decision making process as a means to pinpoint the nature of career problems/negative self-talk, and move towards desired goals in a timely and efficient manner. The CTI includes three specific areas of negative career thoughts, i.e., decision-making confusion, commitment anxiety, and external conflict. The CTI will be highlighted with two case scenarios at the end of this article.

Empirical Evidence for and Applications of CIP Theory

One of the criteria for determining what constitutes a theory is that it continues to generate research (Kramer, 2012). Since the 1970's, CIP theory has continued to generate research, currently boasting 181 articles focused on empirical evidence-based practice, with 23 (12%) of those being published since 2017 (Sampson et al., 2018). Brown (2015) stated that "probably the most widely studied career interventions have been those developed" from CIP theory (p. 62). The majority of the research has focused on CIP's unique contribution to career theories, i.e., the role of negative or dysfunctional career thinking (DCT) and its impact on career decision making. DCT has been found to be a major

predictor of career indecision in several studies (e.g., Bullock-Yowell et al., 2011; Kleiman et al., 2004). In addition, relationships between DCT and mental health have also been repeatedly demonstrated. Examples include depression (Saunders et al., 2000; Dieringer et al., 2017; Walker & Peterson, 2012), neuroticism (Edralin, 2018; Kelly & Shin, 2009); life stress (Bullock-Yowell et al., 2011); and somatic complaints (Finklea, 2016).

In addition to examining the components of CIP theory, other research (Kronholz, 2015; Osborn et al., 2016; Osborn & Reardon, 2006) has examined the theory's utility in service delivery. Osborn and Reardon (2006) used CIP to organize a six week group for middle school students, while Kronholz (2015) described a single case study of a drop in client using CIP's self-directed (not counselor-free) modality. Osborn et al. (2016) found the brief-assisted career service delivery model significantly improved knowledge and confidence of next steps and decreased anxiety associated with the career concern of 138 drop in clients. Supporting the theory's philosophy that the majority of clients could be served via the brief-assisted model, they found that following the brief interaction, 67% desired the brief-assisted model for their next interaction with a career advisor, 26% stated self-directed would be the modality needed, and only 6% desired individual, extended, one-on-one career counseling.

While the majority of CIP applications have been with college students (e.g., Edralin, 2018; Osborn et al., 2016; Osborn, Howard, & Leierer, 2007), CIP has been used with a variety of other populations, including middle school youth (Osborn & Reardon, 2006), veterans (Buzzetta, Hayden, & Ledwith, 2017), people with disabilities (Dipeulo & Keating, 2010; Lustig & Strauser, 2002), and female inmates (Railey & Peterson, 2002). CIP has also been used to design career courses, which have repeatedly shown their effectiveness in increasing positive career gains (Bertoch et al., 2014; Miller et al., in press; Osborn, Howard & Leierer, 2007). In addition, CIP theory has been applied internationally. Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland Department for Employment, 2008) recommended using CIP differentiated service delivery model on their career services website. Scotland (Fairwether, Govan, & McGlynn, 2006; The Scottish Government, 2011) similarly proposed the differentiated service delivery model for redesigning how they provide career information and career advising. Teuscher (2003) found that decision making tools that were applied to the CASVE Cycle were useful for 64 adolescent Swiss seeking to make career decisions. In each of these examples, CIP has been shown to yield positive outcomes across diverse populations.

Despite these positive outcomes, additional work is still needed to extend our understanding of the applicability of CIP theory to those from various cultures, socio-economic situations, job situations, educational levels, and so forth. Not all negative beliefs are dysfunctional. Discrimination does occur, poverty does exist, policies sometimes impede advancements in the career development field, and personal volition in career choices is not always achievable. One potential intervention to help address such complex issues from CIP theory is the *CTI Workbook* (Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996). For example, there are specific steps to identify, challenge, alter, and act upon negative thoughts that might be impacting career decisions, which allows one to recognize the reality that discrimination exists, but make a plan for how to move forward despite past experiences. Additionally, other cognitive or career theories can be integrated to more fully explore presenting concerns depending on the client, the practitioner's theoretical framework, and the presenting issue.

Additionally, the readiness model identifies unique complexities individuals face in their career dilemma, which could include experiences with discrimination, poverty, and policies that impact their ability to make a career decision. Beyond affirming that these are issues, a next step in the readiness model would be to identify strategies to address these complexity factors. This should not be limited to the individual and their specific situation, but should extend to the system level as well. For example, given that options knowledge is one of the foundational legs of CIP theory, work-related learning opportunities such as shadowing, interning and part-time work should be championed to individuals, employers, career centers as ways to build that options knowledge. Funding could be sought to encourage and reward employers for

creating these types of opportunities.

Providing access to quality career information and career guidance is a guiding principle of CIP theory and an important value of our profession (Sampson, 2009), one that has guided career service delivery to change from the primary service delivery of traditional one hour appointment to a primary service delivery model of drop in clients, enabling the access of career advisors to expand to where 19,000 clients received career services in one year (Osborn et al., 2016). While this is impressive, what about the masses who are not in a university, who lack access? CIP theory provides many resources for free online, but a next step would be to promote CIP use in schools and employment centers where a larger impact could be made. Career education courses at the secondary and post-secondary levels, as well as national career guides, could incorporate these activities and interventions aimed to increase readiness, address real and perceived barriers, and improve career decision making. Outcome research could demonstrate the effectiveness of CIP at these macro levels. In the next section, we turn the discussion back to the micro level with the presentation of two brief case scenarios using CIP theory for conceptualization and intervention.

Case Scenarios

Two case scenarios will be described to illustrate the importance of readiness assessment and how capability and complexity can help assess a client's needs using the CIP theoretical readiness model (Sampson et al., 2004). Imagine working with two clients who are both approaching completion of their four-year undergraduate degree, concerned about transitioning into the workforce or obtaining a job, and who appear quite similar in demographics (e.g., both Hispanic, Cisgender, men). After learning more about each client, you learn that 'Jonathan' grew up in the United States, has tens of thousands of dollars in student loans, was the first in his family to attend college, and he works part-time to help support his six siblings and elderly parents. On the other hand, 'Luis' moved to the United States with his family ten years ago, he has built his savings account, graduating with no student loans, he has a supportive network among family and colleagues, and currently has multiple job interviews lined up.

Factors such as student debt or stressors related to supporting his family for Jonathan may increase his complexity, making individual career counseling or ongoing brief-staff interventions an appropriate intervention. Whereas social and/or financial support in Luis' case can be indicators of lower complexity, which may allow him to benefit from a few brief twenty to thirty-minute sessions (Osborn et al., 2016). The readiness model can help differentiate the level of service needed to help serve more individuals in a brief-staff assisted model. These clients will now be conceptualized in more detail from a CIP theoretical framework. (Note: Special acknowledgment is given to Joshua Morgan for his presentation helped inspire some of the ideas for the case study presented).

Knowledge domains: Jonathan is a Mechanical Engineer major, but he is not really sure why he chose that major other than "everyone said it would be a stable job." He excelled in his courses, but now seems unsure if he truly has the passion to remain in the field. He is uncertain what to do. It appears as if Jonathan chose that major with little self-reflection of his own values, interests, and skills, but rather made the decision based upon the views of important people around him. On the other hand, Luis visited multiple advisors around campus, took self-assessment inventories, expanded his options and then narrowed his choices before selecting Business with a concentration in Marketing. He is pleased with his decision and excited about his upcoming interviews.

Decision-making skills: Jonathan is concerned that he quickly chose a major and jumped to the execution phase of the CASVE cycle without fully exploring his options during the analysis and synthesis phases. By engaging in some self-exploration, Jonathan learned that he values money, but not as much as his family. He is still interested in working in Mechanical Engineering, but he wants to work with a company that focuses on protecting the public health and the environment because he values helping others while also making money to help provide for his family. Luis is pleased with his decision-making progress regarding his Marketing major and upcoming interviews, however, he realized that all the interviews he has lined up are due to personal connections, so he has not yet evaluated how the companies fit with his own personal values of helping others, autonomy, and

a flexible schedule. Luis plans to rank order his values to help him better evaluate his options, should he have multiple job offers.

Metacognitions: Jonathan's *Career Thoughts Inventory* scores were above the mean in all areas (Decision Making Confusion, Commitment Anxiety, and External Conflict), and his highest scores were Decision Making Confusion and External Conflict, which indicates that he is uncertain how to get started in his decision-making process with evaluating himself and his options and he has some external influences (likely his family) impacting his decisions. Luis' Career Thoughts Inventory scores were within the average range except for his scores on the Commitment Anxiety scale, which were elevated above the mean, which is consistent with his concerns about prioritizing his values and choosing one option.

Career Interventions

The comparison of Jonathan and Luis' similar but distinct circumstances highlight how the CIP readiness model, conceptualization, and *Career Thoughts Inventory* can help assess a client's needs to provide tailored interventions to deliver cost-effective services (Osborn et al., 2016). More specifically, a practitioner would likely talk with both Jonathan and Luis about the *Career Thoughts Inventory Workbook*, which has many useful metaphors to help clients visualize how negative thoughts such as "I don't know what to do, I will *never* make a decision," can act as a stone wall or barrier to making a choice. Such negative thoughts can act like mud, and lead to clients feeling stuck.

The *Career Thoughts Inventory Workbook* has numerous interventions to facilitate discussions about reframing negative self-talk, remaining positive during career decisions, and includes activities that can be completed during session or assigned as interventions to be completed between sessions. The activities are theory-based and can help identify where a client has gaps in knowledge (e.g., self-knowledge, options knowledge, decision making skills, or metacognitive skills).

Once negative self-talk is identified and reframed, the practitioner may utilize self-assessment inventories or a computer assisted career guidance system to help Jonathan learn more about himself, prioritize his values, and begin connecting his self-knowledge with his options to identify whether or not he would like to remain in his current field of study. Luis was able to list his values, but he is not currently able to rank order his values or describe them in detail, so a practitioner might further discuss what helping others, autonomy, and a flexible schedule means to Luis to better understand each value and the impact they have on Luis' career decision. One potential intervention is to have Luis list the factors impacting his decision on a Decision Space Worksheet, which is a projective intervention that allows clients to rank how important each factor is to the decision in question. The larger the circle, the larger the influence of that particular thought, feeling, or factor.

More information about the Decision Space Worksheet is available at https://career.fsu.edu/tech-center/resources/service-delivery-handouts.

Summary

Cognitive information processing theory has continued to evolve since its inception in the 1970s. Research has shown the relationship of dysfunctional career thinking to career indecision as well as mental health concerns, and CIP has supported the use of brief-assisted and self-directed service delivery models. In addition, CIP has been applied to multiple populations and settings. CIP continues to be relevant for career service providers and career decision makers due to the ongoing relationship among CIP theorists, researchers, and practitioners.

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Moving from information provision to co-careering: Integrated guidance as a new approach to e-guidance in Norway

Ingrid Bårdsdatter Bakke, Erik Hagaseth Haug & Tristram Hooley

Norway has invested heavily in its career guidance system. This has allowed it to move rapidly from a relatively weak guidance system to an innovative and emergent one. One of the advantages of the historic lack of development of career guidance in the country has been the opportunity to learn from the mistakes of others and to try out new and innovative approaches. A key opportunity that the country is keen to make the most of is the potential to use digital technologies to support guidance. Following a process of exploration of this issue the government has resolved to establish an e-guidance service located in Tromsø. However, at present the nature of this service is unclear. In this article we argue that that the concepts of (1) integrated guidance, (2) instructional design and (3) co-careering should be at the heart of the new service and indeed at the heart of the delivery of guidance across Norway.

Introduction

This article explores the development of the concept of 'integrated guidance' in Norway. Integrated guidance seeks to combine career guidance that is delivered through different modalities (face-to-face, by telephone, online etc.) in such a way that the whole is more than the sum of the parts. Whilst the conception of career guidance as a multi-modal, diverse, but connected, set of interventions is not new (see for example OECD, 2004), current policy support for career guidance in Norway, as well as the country's high level of digital engagement and adoption, means that it offers fertile ground for the development of new ideas such as integrated guidance.

There is a long tradition of the use of online and digital tools in career guidance (Watts, 2002). Such tools offer a number of clear benefits including providing individuals with new opportunities to access career guidance any time from where ever they are and opening up the possibility of new kinds of guidance service (Hooley, Shepherd & Dodd, 2015). They also allow careers providers to manage demand more strategically and potentially to offer more diverse services than would be possible in a single location. Furthermore, there is a growth in client expectations that at least some services will be available digitally, reinforced by the way in which digital technologies have been used to deliver other kinds of services.

Online career guidance can take a variety of different forms. Hooley, Hutchinson & Watts (2010) summarise these forms as:

- the provision of career information and resources;
- the use of artificial intelligence and automation to replace aspects of what was previously done face-to-face by human professionals; and
- the development of new forms of communication and interaction through which careers services can be delivered.

Hooley, Hutchinson & Watts then go on to argue that communication and interaction can be one-to-one, one-to-many/many-to-one and many-to-many. Such an observation adopts a broad definition of guidance such as that advanced by the OECD (2004) as an activity that can take many forms including self-study, counselling approaches, classroom learning and experiential learning. In addition, by moving guidance online new modes of delivery are opened up such

as MOOCs (Brammar & Winter, 2015) and new pedagogies and approaches to guidance enabled such as connectivism (Staunton, 2016).

Despite the potential benefits offered by online technologies for the delivery of careers services, the evidence is mixed. Vigurs, Everitt & Staunton (2017) argue that there is little evidence to suggest that putting career and labour market information or other kinds of static resources online results in any positive and measurable outcomes for individuals. The evidence is more positive for the use of automation and artificial intelligence in the form of computer assisted guidance systems (CAGS) and for internet-mediated forms of communication. However, Vigurs et al. (2017, p.18) still conclude that online careers provision 'is not a replacement for professional information, advice and guidance' and that to be effective it 'must be embedded within a wider range of careers support services'.

The key insight that can be gathered from the research is that online career support is most effective when it attends to the context within which it is used and where its usage is supported with appropriate face-to-face and professional interventions. This finding moves the field away from a sterile debate where online careers provision is pitted against face-to-face provision and reframes the discussion as being about how to achieve the appropriate integration of different modes of provision. However, at present theory and research have largely ignored these questions and have not really developed thinking around the concept of integrated guidance. In this article we want to begin the process of theorising integrated guidance as a contribution to contemporary debates about the development of the Norwegian online career guidance service.

The emergence of blended guidance in Norway

Norway has been investing in the development of career guidance for over a decade. Notably establishing a national co-ordinating group within Skills Norway and investing in postgraduate level training for careers professionals. However, up until recently this development has been strongly rooted in face-to-face practice rooted in educational organisations and careers centres and has made little formal use of digital or other remote forms of provision. A small-scale pilot of online guidance was conducted and evaluated in some regional career centres, which garnered positive feedback from users (Ipsos MMI, 2012, 2013). This pilot adopted an approach to online guidance which was based around synchronous audio chat and strongly influenced by the Danish eVejledning (eGuidance) service (Jocumsen, 2017; Nygaard & Nielson, 2014). However, such experiments at best provide limited insights on what a national system might look like.

Following critical feedback from the OECD (2014a, 2014b) on Norway's skills system, including its limited career guidance system, the government established an expert committee to identify key components in a holistic lifelong system for career guidance in Norway. In their first report, which had a specific emphasis on the digital part of the system, the committee concluded that digital career information and services in Norway were scattered across several portals and that digital and face-to-face services were poorly integrated (Ministry of Education and Research, 2015). The committee also noted that the quality of information and resources available through these services is variable and is mainly focused on adolescents. Consequently, a number of areas of concern were noted, including the fact that there is very limited online careers provision for adults, people with special needs and those with a different first language than Norwegian.

The final report from the expert committee concludes that 'to improve the population's access to neutral, quality-assured information and to increase access to professional career guidance, the committee recommends establishing an online career guidance service consisting of a website with information and self-help resources and online counselling (e-guidance). The services as a whole will represent a significant increase in the availability of career guidance for the population at large' (Ministry of Education and Research, 2016, p.211). [1]

1 All Norwegian texts cited in this article have been translated by the authors of this article.

The focus on online career services in Norway can be seen as part of a broader movement towards e-government. The Norwegian e-Government Programme is pursuing a widespread programme of digitisation of public service which it argues 'will generate noticeable improvements across the public sub-sectors' and 'result in both more positive and faster interaction with the public sector for citizens and businesses alike as well as more efficient use of public sector resources' (Norwegian Ministries, 2012, p.4).

The Norwegian government broadly accepted the recommendations of the expert committee and funded the national unit for career guidance in Skills Norway to lead the development of a national online career guidance service (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). Skills Norway were tasked to prepare a plan by the 1st March 2018 for the development of a digital career guidance system. Following the publication of the plan (Skills Norway, 2018b) it is now clear that the development of the digital careers service has four main workstreams. These are to:

1. further develop the existing web portal (utdanning.no[2]) into a national platform, accessible to all who are in need of information and guidance regarding educational and vocational choices;
2. establish a technical solution for a national e-guidance service;
3. establish an organisational structure for the provision of the e-guidance service; and
4. develop e-guidance skills for e-guidance practitioners and develop a quality assurance system for the service.

The term *e-guidance* is not fully defined in current documentation and so there is still considerable opportunity to shape the concept and the nature of the emerging service. Encouragingly the plan argues that e-guidance services need to be integrated into a national, holistic and lifelong system for career guidance in Norway. This means that the new e-guidance service will need to be brought together with traditional face-to-face guidance services to create an 'integrated' service. The question is therefore what kind of integration Norway should seek as it develops its career guidance services.

Theorising integrated guidance in Norway

Career guidance in Norway has been strongly influenced by a focus on *career learning*, drawing on the work of Law (1996) and other international theorists. This perspective has been further developed in Norwegian literature which has placed career learning at the centre of Norway's approach to career guidance (Haug, 2018; Svendsrud, 2015). At present, Skills Norway is running a major project where career practitioners, academics and policymakers are gathered together to develop a framework for quality in career guidance (Skills Norway, 2018a). This group has defined a quality outcome as ensuring that career learning takes place. Given this, it is important that the emerging integrated guidance approach connects with this career learning tradition rather than running contrary to it. This means that the introduction of new technologies should be understood as offering new opportunities for providing career education and enhancing career learning. While the provision of information is critical for such career learning, it is important to focus on what is received and understood by the learner rather than what is transmitted by the professional or the website. Integrated guidance in Norway therefore needs to recognise that new technologies afford new approaches to interacting and learning as well as channelling greater amounts of information to individuals.

The development of integrated guidance requires careers professionals and service designers to explore questions of what technologies to use and how to use them. This includes considering how digital learning environments should be designed, considerations of what the role of educators and careers professionals are and critically, questions about how online provision can be symbiotic with the activities that take place face-to-face. Such considerations are often addressed through 'instructional design', a term that describes the practice of developing learning experiences and environments that promote the acquisition of skills

2 Utdanning.no is the official Norwegian national education and career portal, and includes an overview of education in Norway and about 600 career descriptions.

and knowledge (Merrill, Drake, Lacy & Pratt, 1996). Instructional design is associated with online learning, but its key tenet is that it starts from what the learner needs and what is being learnt and then shapes the environment, technology, tools and content that are required to meet these needs. Learners' needs can be understood both in terms of what knowledge they need to acquire as well as in what way they need to acquire this knowledge. Instructional design, like the OECD's definition of guidance, therefore recognises that a growing variety of modes of delivery, often enabled by new technologies, can be usefully deployed and combined in order to facilitate learning to take place.

Staker & Horn (2012) offer four instructional designs that could be reworked as approaches to integrated guidance to provide an example of the way in which instructional design operates. Their first design is the ***rotation model*** in which guidance professionals and learners rotate between modalities during a programme of learning to combine the advantages of face-to-face provision with those of online provision. Their second design is the ***flex model*** in which most guidance is provided online, but learners can access a careers professional in a flexible way to meet their individual learning and support needs. The third design is the ***self-blend model*** where learners access core materials face-to-face but supplement them with additional learning opportunities online. Finally, in their ***enriched-virtual model*** career learning primarily takes place online but with strategically positioned face-to-face touch points. These different types of instructional design are not offered as alternatives from which Norway must choose, but rather as strategies that can variously be adopted based on resources and learner need within the right integrated guidance system.

The recognition of these different approaches to integrated guidance highlights that the extent to which the learner needs to interact with a careers professional to support their career learning and the nature of those interactions is likely to vary. For example, research in Canadian employment services found that where individuals were assessed as suitable for a self-study career development programme and incentivised to complete this programme the programme doubled participants self-assessment of their skills and their likelihood of being in work (Redekopp, Hopkins & Hiebert, 2013). It also found that once the initial assessment had been done and participants introduced to the programme there was little additional advantage in practitioners providing ongoing support. This project provides an example of an integrated instructional design which makes use of careers professionals to triage clients and guide them toward well designed learning resources.

Although a digital 'career compass' tool is now available at the utdanning.no portal which allows for interactive exploration of different areas of work and occupations, this interactive approach is not typical. Most existing forms of online career information and guidance in Norway have typically taken the form of work and career related databases, like the public employment service portal[3]. These databases offer articles and other types of information with little attention given to how learners encounter, engage with and learn from such information. A more pedagogic approach to instructional design needs to be developed if the promise of integrated guidance is to be realised in Norway. Given this it is important that the development of the e-guidance service is not viewed as a 'digital problem' but rather as a 'career guidance' or 'career learning' problem. The answer that is found to this problem will need to extend both the access to, and quality of, Norway's existing career guidance system. It should offer tools to extend the reach of professionals and increase efficiencies as well as allowing citizens to self-serve where appropriate. Given this, a key question is who is involved in the design of this new system, and how can the process of development be organised in such a way as to effectively capture the insights of existing professionals, digital specialists, instructional designers and perhaps most importantly the voices of the users themselves.

Research from Finland (Kettunen, Vuorinen & Sampson, 2013) provides some useful insights into some of the challenges of creating an integrated guidance system which builds on and extends the capacity of existing careers professionals. This research found that the level of integration of technology, specifically social media, into guidance practice, varied with the capacity and technological orientation of the counsellor.

3 https://www.nav.no/en/Home

Where careers professionals were negative about the integration of social media they sought to disengage from it and emphasise face-to-face communication. This had the effect of placing them in the position of experts who were able to control the career learning of the clients that they were working with. On the other hand, counsellors that considered technology as indispensable and viewed the digital world as the place where people live, regarded the careers professionals role as more of a facilitative one focused on supporting learners to engage with a broader career learning environment.

Technology shapes pedagogic possibilities, but it does not necessarily determine them. There are a a range of ways in which any technology can be used as part of a career learning programme. On one hand it is possible to use technology to deliver highly instrumental and hierarchical forms of learning, but Kettunen et al. found that where careers professionals adopted a positive orientation towards social technologies this was more usually associated with a non-hierarchical approach to pedagogy and information exchange. Staunton (2016) describes this non-hierarchical, technologically informed, pedagogic tradition as 'connectivism' but Kettunen et al. use the term 'co-careering'. We have adopted the term 'co-careering' because it allows us to focus on the way in which technology can transform the relationship between career professionals and learners and highlights the fact that it is a pedagogic decision by the professional to foregrounding career learning and place themselves in a facilitative rather than didactic role.

The concept of *co-careering* defines a professional role which is highly compatible with an instructional design approach. Careers professionals who seek to co-career with the learners that they work with are essentially viewing themselves as a resource, that is available for the community, but one which co-exists alongside other resources that may exist online or elsewhere. This approach offers the advantage of allowing diverse learners to access the blend of support that meets their needs rather than having to make choices between accessing the services that are offered through different modes.

The possibilities for integrated guidance in Norway

The discussion of the possible approaches to integrated guidance suggests a number of key things to keep in mind whilst developing the guidance system in Norway. Firstly, our discussion suggests that integrated guidance needs to connect meaningfully to the existing approach to guidance in Norway. Career guidance in the country is viewed as a learning activity and new digital services must work with the grain of this approach. For example, in upper secondary schools, Norwegian students study a compulsory career learning program designed to offer them insights into the world of education and work and increase their self- awareness. The main learning approach used in this program is visits to careers fairs and workplaces, combined with group discussions in the class. A more systematic integration of exploratory web-based tools and active use of the labour market information available online, could increase the learning in this program. Additionally, it is important that online services recognise that this programme is one of the main contexts in which young people will consume the resources that they provide and take account of the pedagogy of such programmes.

Secondly, the concept of instructional design provides a useful approach when thinking about how the appropriate integration between different pieces of the system can be structured. Again, this focuses on the concept of learning as being the principle issue rather than the provision of information. It also raises the question of who the instructional designers should be in Norway's new e-guidance service and how far they should have expertise in career learning as well as in instructional design.

Thirdly, the development of integrated guidance needs to take account of the existing infrastructure of career support that exists in face-to-face services and provide them with opportunities to extend their reach and increase their efficiency.

Finally, existing careers professionals will need to engage with the affordances offered by new technologies and consider how they can adapt their practice to make effective use of these new technologies. Perhaps most challengingly such ideas may require professionals to relinquish some of their

traditional power and influence and engage in co-careering, a change that may require an attitudinal change in addition to new skills. Our hope is that knowledge of the affordances and potential offered by technology will support such a change, and that the ongoing discussion about professionalisation of career guidance practice in the project on quality in career guidance will include such competence.

The shifts described above will require investment in research, service design and technological development. But, the success of all of this is likely to hinge on the effective engagement of careers professionals and the need to provide continuing professional development programmes to support them to develop their skills and knowledge. Until now the main resource that exists for professionalisation in this area have been webinars developed by Skills Norway, and local initiatives from practitioners with a special interest in integrated guidance. Some Norwegian practitioners have also attended the *ICT in guidance and counselling summer school*[4] developed by the Nordic network VALA, but we argue that educational programs need to be connected to Norwegian context, and include competence standards, systems and platforms already in use.

To address these concerns we are developing a new training programme which will run at the Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences from 2019. The programme is entitled *Integrated guidance – integrating technology into career guidance* and will build on the insights summarised in this article. The module is organised round the following themes:

- digital skills and digital career management;
- the use of technology in career guidance;
- the changing role of the careers practitioner;
- models and theories of blended guidance;
- online and integrated practice;
- evaluating the effectiveness of integrated guidance;

and

- the role of technology in education and the labour market.

The program will be carefully organised to exemplify the integrated pedogogic approaches that it is teaching. It is designed as a practical 'learning by doing' module, underpinned by relevant theories. As such, it will include a number of micro-teaching and simulated integrated guidance exercises designed to build students familiarity with integrated career guidance.

Conclusions and recommendations

The ongoing discussion about the future of career guidance in Norway offers a rare opportunity to develop an integrated and holistic approach to career guidance. At present, the entire make up and quality standards of both school-based and community-based provision of career guidance for both young people and adults is in a period of rapid development. This offers an ideal time to consider how to integrate digital provision to enhance the career guidance system. By introducing the principles of (1) integrated guidance, (2) instructional design and (3) co-careering into this discussion, we hope to shape the development of the Norwegian guidance system so that digital services add value and extend what is on offer face-to-face rather than competing with existing services. Such an approach places careers professionals at the heart of the integrated guidance system, but also ask careers professionals to develop their practice. The development of our new training programme is designed to help them to do this.

In this article we have focused on the uniquely Norwegian context for the development of integrated guidance. However, we believe that the concept has wider applicability and that developments in Norway will offer further insights that can influence the development of integrated guidance internationally.

4 https://www.jyu.fi/en/current/archive/2018/06/summer-school-ict-in-guidance-and-counselling-summer-school-13201317-august-2018

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Building career mobility: A critical exploration of career capital

Cathy Brown & Tracey Wond

Work transitions can be stressful to those who experience them, and yet are happening more frequently, as the notion of a job for life fades. Ensuring smooth and successful work transitions is therefore in the direct interests of individuals and, indirectly, employers. Using the career capital construct, this article explores how work transitions can be better negotiated by individuals. After introducing career capital, the article progresses to critically review two theoretical frameworks of career capital. To illustrate the discussion, one individual, a business leader in a wider study we are undertaking, is introduced to exemplify and illuminate our discussion of career capital. The article concludes by offering strategies to support career capital development.

Introduction

Career mobility is increasingly important. With growing commercial pressures on organisations, a job for life is perhaps less realistic for individuals than it once was (Tulgan, 2001), let alone lifetime employment with a single employer (Arthur, Khapova & Richardson, 2017). Instead, individuals are likely to have to transition between roles more frequently (Kambourov and Manovski, 2008), whilst seeking out opportunities within the careers landscape. Indeed, there have been several calls for more 'intelligent careers' in response to the changing work environment (Arthur Clamon, DeFillippi & Adams, 1995; Tempest & Coupland, 2016; Arthur, et al., 2017).

Inherent in several definitions and concepts of the career is an acknowledgement that careers comprise sequences of work activities or employment (see Ashforth & Saks, 1995; Arnold, 1997), these sequences are punctuated with work transitions. Work transitions can include a range of moves including upwards and sideward (lateral) moves, either inside an individual's current organisation or across organisations. Here, career mobility is defined as the individual's ability to undertake such role transitions. Having such mobility and undertaking work transitions can be stressful for individuals (Baruch, 2006). Experiencing such transitions requires both physical and mental adjustments to routines, networks, training needs, identity and attitude (Ashforth & Saks, 1995; Clarke, 2009; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). For some, transitions may expose fragility, prompting the need for introspection, re-evaluation and the creation of new career narratives (Clarke, 2009).

The likelihood and potential impact of these work transitions on individuals gives rise to further exploration of both the nature of transitions and relevant aspects of personal resources that aid an individual's role transition. Here, such personal resources are defined as career capital. Awareness of career capital, and relevant development, cultivation and leveraging of career capital could support individuals to make successful work transitions.

This article draws upon learning from a wider, ongoing doctoral study which explores the career capital that business leaders need to facilitate role transitions within an organisation. The wider study uses a case study approach comprising face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with 36 business leaders who had recently made internal role transitions in a UK-based construction company. The interviews explored aspects that had supported and hindered internal role transitions, and the participants' identification of additional support they perceived might have helped them. By adopting a case study design, it lends itself to bringing in-depth understanding to a complex, particular real-life phenomenon (Gaya & Smith, 2016), such as business leaders' role transition experiences.

Such understanding can lead to the creation of context-dependent knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2011) and a source of expertise and insight (Yin, 2009, 2012), that can both stimulate learning and be transferrable to new situations (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Hyett, Kenny & Dickson-Swift, 2014). In particular, one business leader is used to illustrate the importance of career capital during work transitions. To preserve his anonymity we refer to him as Colin throughout this article. Colin emerged as a role model in the way in which he leveraged elements of his career capital to make an effective work transition. We will next explore career capital through critiquing two theoretical frameworks before moving on to exemplify this through exploring Colin's transition experience.

Career capital

Career capital is not a new concept and has been explored previously in professional development and career management contexts (Dickmann & Harris, 2005; Felker & Gianecchini, 2015; Zikic, 2015; Tempest & Coupland, 2016). Yet, the concept still remains relatively under-used and few have explored what this means in particular contexts and work situations (such as during work transitions). The term, 'career capital' was first introduced by Arthur, Inkson and Pringle (1999), following earlier identification of career competencies (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994). Put simply, career capital refers to competencies that support individuals to build their careers and can be defined as 'the overall set of non-financial resources a person is able to bring to his or her work' (Arthur, DeFillippi & Jones, 2001: 101). The concept of career capital helps us to define and understand how individuals use their resources and competencies in the context of their career.

DeFillippi and Arthur (1994) identified three career competencies/capabilities at an individual level: 'Knowing-Why', 'Knowing-How', and 'Knowing-Whom'. These three competencies and capabilities contribute to our overall career capital.

'Knowing-Why' includes knowing beliefs, values, purpose and interests and shapes motivation; 'Knowing-How' comprises occupational knowledge, expertise and skills; 'Knowing-Whom' denotes networks and interpersonal relationships that support contacts, learning and reputation via social capital (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994). These three 'forms of knowing' are regarded as the currency of an individual's career capital (Arthur et al, 1995: 9; Inkson & Arthur, 2001) (see Figure 1).

DeFillippi and Arthur's (1994) model has some limitations as the categories can be ambiguous; full definitions of the 'Knowing-Why', 'Knowing-How' and 'Knowing-Whom' were omitted. In addition, by purely emphasising the network structure, 'Knowing-Whom' has a narrow scope; it misses out references to the resources or potential resources available through this structure, as often acknowledged within social capital theory (Bourdieu, 1986). Also, it only makes reference to the cultural context within 'Knowing-Whom' through emphasising the family network as a resource. What is omitted is the wider, cultural consideration of the role of family within upbringing and its impact

Figure 1: Representation of DeFillippi and Arthur (1994) (Source: Authors' own)

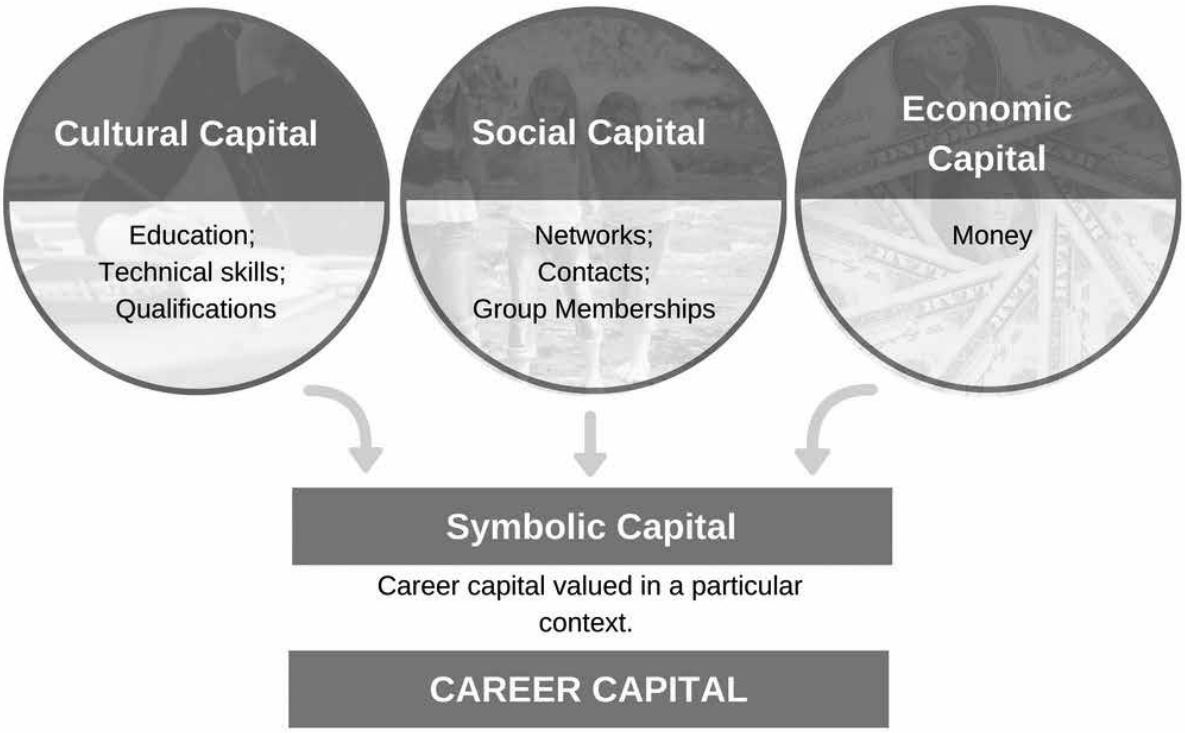

Figure 2: Representation of Iellatchitch et al. (2003) (Source: Authors' own)

on our cultural capital development as an individual. Finally, it is a static theory and fails to recognise the dynamism and movement that is emphasised with Bourdieu's capital work, e.g. how can 'Knowing-Why' generate 'Knowing-How'?

Iellatchitch, Mayrhofer and Meyer (2003) offer an alternative career capital framework. They acknowledge how our cultural background and economic resources, as well as our social networks impact our investment into our career capital. Iellatchitch, et al.'s (2003) framework is underpinned by Pierre Bourdieu's capital theory which identifies social capital such as social networks, resources and reputation (see Figure 2).

Showing parallels with DeFillippi and Arthur, cultural capital includes our educational background, technical skills and qualifications (Knowing-How); whilst social capital comprises our networks, contacts and group memberships (Knowing-Whom). Economic capital denotes our money (Mayrhofer, Iellatchitch, Meyer, Steyrer, Schiffinger & Strunk, 2004: 875). Moreover, Iellatchitch et al. (2003) acknowledge how career capital holds different value depending on the context, whether this be within a particular organisation or within another area of the careers market. Consequently, symbolic capital is defined as the career capital that is recognised as valuable within a career field (Iellatchitch et al., 2003). In addition, the circularity of career capital is recognised, where career capital aspects can be applied to generate additional career capital. Despite these additions, Iellatchitch et al's model does have weaknesses. The terms can be difficult to define and use, in particular symbolic capital (Haslberger & Brewster, 2009). Also, it assumes that individual development of career capital is hampered by: upbringing or socialisation (Mayrhofer Meyer, Steyrer & Langer, 2007), genetics and class (Iellatchitch, et al., 2003), as emphasised in Bourdieu's notion of symbolic violence where certain cultural values or ideology (such as gender) can be normalised (Connolly & Healy, 2004). Such hindrances reduce an individual's ability to develop in these areas.

From these two career capital frameworks, there are several points to note about career capital.

- Career capital can be applied to individuals or organisations: Career capital can be applied to individual growth, including personal development (Felker & Gianecchini, 2015) and

career management (Tempest & Coupland, 2016), as well as organisation contexts, such as organisational change (Arthur et al.,1999) and talent management (Zikic, 2015);

- Career capital is context-dependent: Career capital is dependent on the work environment and varies in different contexts. For instance, an individual's career capital may be better valued in one situation than others;
- Career capital may be transported and transferrable: Whilst more 'bounded' aspects of career capital are valued solely within specific situations, 'boundaryless' forms of career capital (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996: 124) can be transferred to new situations thereby supporting personal mobility;
- Career capital can be reinvested and scaled up: Career capital is extendable; it could be invested to generate additional career capital (Iellatchitch, et al., 2003). For instance, an individual may share their know-how with a contact in their network so as to strengthen the relationship.

Colin

Working within the case organisation, Colin described in his interview how he had instigated a cross-functional role move from one department to another. Colin had recognised and identified his own career aspirations, interests, and future needs and initiated this cross-team transfer ('Knowing-Why'). Such an inter-functional team transition was rare, with only three of the 36 business leaders undertaking such a move. With a challenging previous line manager seeking to retain him, Colin showed tenacity and influence ('Knowing-How') to overcome this force and overcome this silo-mentality.

Also, he could be seen to use social forms of capital in order to support his work transition. His relationship with his new line manager ('Knowing-Whom'), a key contact within his internal work network, was core to his transition and the success of his transition experience. In particular, his line manager approved the financial investment – or economic capital - to pay for Colin to complete a diploma which helped to build further his know-how and cultural capital in the form of a formal qualification:

> One of the things that I negotiated was that they had offered to pay for a [diploma]. They said 'Yes, we will support you.' I just thought 'wow!'
>
> I had just finished the diploma, the [technical specialism] diploma, and I was armed with all of this information which I could now go and apply […] it is kind of turning up to lay a carpet with a full tool box rather than an empty tool box […] I knew the kind of best practice approach because I had seen case studies and read the conceptual frameworks and the different books and studies and so that helped me to form the foundation.
>
> *(Colin, Interviewee)*

Colin's metaphorical use of 'toolkit' was also interesting to observe. Colin appeared to be able to recognise the variety of competencies and capabilities (tools) available to him (in his 'toolkit'/ portfolio), to support his transition. Without realising it, Colin had acknowledged the importance of developing and using his career capital.

Furthermore, Colin's new line manager represented him well within the Executive discussions, which built further his reputation across the business ('Knowing-Whom'):

> She […] acted as an advocate when we went to the [executive meeting] […] so some of the things was building credibility, and I suppose that may be where building quick wins came from. 'So how can you build credibility?' 'Well let's have some quick wins' […] it helped me build credibility in the role and recognition of me in the role.
>
> *(Colin, Interviewee)*

The support from his new line manager developed Colin's self-confidence further and enabled him to advise key stakeholders:

> So that helped me to build confidence and people because they knew me, they asked me for advice and every time they asked me for advice, and I gave advice and someone benefited from it, I was building confidence and it happened more and more.
>
> *(Colin, Interviewee)*

This led to a positive developmental spiral of confidence, reputation and know-how building. Experiencing no transition barriers and requiring no additional support, Colin 'took a few weeks' to settle; 'I don't think the team, or [line manager] could have done any more', Colin later remarked in his interview. Moreover, the new line manager aided the previous line manager to secure a new team member to backfill Colin, thereby easing the opposing forces of silo-mentality. Within six months of undertaking the interview, Colin left the organisation and secured a more senior role.

Colin's role transition story illustrates how central his relationship with his new line manager was to his success. Colin leveraged this supportive relationship to develop his career capital directly through financial investment in his diploma as well as actively building his reputation within the Executive team. Moreover, this support indirectly helped Colin to build his self-confidence which enabled him to perform well and enhance his reputation even further. Collectively, these educational, relational and reputational elements supported Colin to make his work transitions (and in the case of the first internal move, to settle quickly). On leaving the business and securing a more senior role, he demonstrated how his symbolic capital was transferrable and valued within both the previous and new employment contexts.

Developing career capital

Our learning from career capital theory through the wider study, and exemplified by Colin, provides us with an understanding of how career capital could be leveraged to support work transitions. We also saw Colin, and others in the study, develop their career capital. Acknowledging the nature and characteristics of career capital explored earlier, and the findings of our wider study, five strategies emerge to support the development of career capital in the contexts of work transitions:

- **Trading strategies** – it may be possible to exchange aspects of our own career capital with others (Lin & Huang, 2005). For example, we may be able to share some technical expertise with a colleague and in return receive coaching to build our levels of personal motivation;
- **Investing economic capital** – we may choose to cultivate further our know-how through investing economic capital in additional development, as illustrated by Colin who, on moving into a new role, negotiated a company-sponsored diploma;
- **Leveraging key relationships to build reputation** – it may be plausible to work with our existing key contacts to develop ways of building further our personal reputation, similar to Colin who leveraged his line manager relationship to build his reputation with the executive team;
- **Drawing upon others to gain additional capital** – people within our networks may be willing to support our development whether this is through building further our capabilities, skills or contacts (Lin & Huang, 2005). For example, our connections may be happy to share their know-how, as well as introducing us to members of their networks that may help us (i.e. Knowing-Whom);
- **Reflection and self-learning** – introducing self-development habits within our life can support the development of our own capabilities and strengths (Hooley & Barham, 2015). For example, journaling and meditation may increase our own levels of self-awareness and self-management, which may lead us to understand our development path.

Building career mobility

The acknowledgement and manipulation of career capital can support individuals to make work transitions. Our wider study observed conscious attempts by business leaders, such as Colin, to build resources within his career capital portfolio or toolkit. Pro-activity, self-awareness and the possession of transferable aspects of capital were evident amongst those who transitioned successfully. Learning from this, we therefore propose three sequential development prompts (that we assign the acronym of RI-F-TT), that can aid development of career capital when approaching work transitions (see Figure 3).

- **Recognise (R) and Identify (I):** It is critical that individuals take stock of their future career. Individuals need to identify their interests,

values, future needs, and ultimately, their career aspirations. They must also recognise that career capital is context-dependent. Without understanding this, career capital cannot be consciously planned and developed. Colin, for instance, was able to recognise rather objectively the tools from his metaphorical toolkit he needed to make the move he wanted and instigated;

- **Future-focused (F):** Individuals should give consideration to the future career field they wish to operate in, and have a strong appreciation of the emerging trends in this field. Such an assessment may identify high value career capital items (Tempest & Coupland, 2016) that will be critical for such forthcoming career transitions, as well as low value, obsolete career capital aspects (Arthur et al., 1999) that can be let go of. Emerging career capital needs can therefore be addressed;

- **Targeted (T) and Transferable (T):** Individuals should build targeted and transferrable career capital. Having predicted the emerging career capital that will be valued, a focused approach to building career capital can be taken. It will be important to ensure that this will be transferable into different situations and employers within this career field, rather than it being anchored to one particular setting. Colin's diploma built valuable knowledge and cultural capital that could be transferred into his new role, and later to his new employer.

By taking a considered and planned approach, individuals can build greater levels of personal work mobility into targeted areas.

Figure 3: RI-F-TT - Development prompts for career capital development (Source: Authors' own)

Conclusion

The frequency of transitions between roles and employers is increasing for role holders and often these can be experienced as stressful. Consequently, transition management is becoming an increasingly important skill for individuals to cultivate.

Career capital can act as a resource that individuals can develop to facilitate their transitions between roles and employers, where the opportunities exist within the careers landscape. Moreover, focused and conscious attempts to develop critical and emerging career capital may help individuals to realise their aspirations and to support their development of physical and psychological mobility within a particular career field. We observed Colin do this.

Career capital theory has explored how we draw from key competencies and resources in order to support our career management and development into particular career fields. In addition, it emphasises how career capital can be developed through considered investment and application. As part of a wider study, the use of career capital to support voluntary organisational work transitions within a UK-business is being explored. Future avenues of research could include currently unexplored work transition experiences, for example involuntary role transitions within an organisation.

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Book review

Graduate Careers in Context: Research, Policy and Practice, edited by C. Burke and F. Christie, London, Routledge, 2019, pp. 201, £115 (hardback), from £20 (e-book), ISBN 978-1-138-30176-4.

Reviewed by Dr Phil McCash, NICEC Fellow

Graduate Careers in Context is an edited collection featuring 15 chapters structured into four sections: the graduate labour market, graduate careers and transitions, professional and organisational issues relating to employability, and careers professional evolving into researchers. The intended audiences include career development professionals working in the higher education sector and sociologically oriented academic researchers. It is designed to enhance conversation and dialogue between these groups. As such, this timely and valuable book occupies a distinctive niche and has no direct competitors.

In part 1, Ciaran Burke and Sarah Hannaford-Simpson deftly employ Pierre Bourdieu's notion of capitals to interrogate some claims about graduate attributes in wide circulation. Andrew Morrison perceptively critiques supply-side notions of employability; and uses Nancy Fraser's theory of two-dimensional participatory justice to analyse inequalities in the graduate labour market. Teresa Crew uses the notion of regional capitals, again from a Bourdieusian angle, to discuss graduate employment in Wales. I particularly admired her reflexive stance and skilful ability to situate herself in her work.

In part 2, Charlie Ball critically evaluates some stereotypes and/or popular stories about the graduate labour market such as 'everyone has a degree nowadays' and 'all the graduate jobs are in London'. His use of contemporary labour market data gives timeliness and relevance to this chapter. Katie Vigurs et al. explore the early career experiences of graduates using the evolving concept of a graduate gap year. Their work features detailed and careful fieldwork with a range of graduates. In one of the most fully realised chapters, Rosie Alexander questions assumptions about graduate mobility based on her role as a career service manager based in Orkney and Shetland. She flags up 'mobiliser' versus 'integrator' positions (p. 91) in relation to geography and drives this credibly into recommendations for practice. Jane Artess analyses anew data from the large-scale Futuretrack survey to discuss how students learn to be employable. She argues persuasively for a more learner-centred conception of employability and career development to shape the evolution of curricula. Tracy Scurry and John Blenkinsopp explore the lived experience of graduates working in call centres in the Midlands of England. I found this a very moving and thoughtful exploration of the 'underemployment' phenomenon.

In part 4, Bob Gilworth provides an extensive typology of career and employability services in higher education. This is highly valuable as it considerably updates previous typologies and will be of great benefit in the training of career development professionals. Siobhan Neary and Jill Hanson discuss their research with HE career development professionals. They skilfully explore issues such as prior experience, gender, and the growing range of roles in HE services. Nalayini Thambar also discusses the professional identity of HE careers advisers and managers; and provides an insightful discussion of professional, sectoral, and institutional influences on identity.

In the final section, David Winter argues for an enhanced research mindset for career development professionals drawing from his experience with a large-scale career registration data project. He proposes good ideas for career development professionals who engage in research and/or need to critically understand research findings of others. Gill Frigerio brings the main chapters to a close by reflecting carefully on her own experience as a careers service manager, researcher, and teacher. She makes a strong case for the value of the systems theory framework developed by Wendy Patton and Mary McMahon.

Looked at in more critical terms, whilst the Bourdieusian inspired chapters are certainly interesting, there could perhaps have been more recognition that Bourdieu's ideas are already very much alive in the higher education careers and

employability community through the work of Paul Redmond, Rachael Collins, and several others, including the seminal publications of Phil Hodkinson (Hodkinson, 2008; Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997). It's fair to say that the average qualified higher education career development professional could give most academics, including Bourdieusian sociologists, a run for their money in terms of a rich, integrated transdisciplinary theoretical understanding of career development that includes concepts from Bourdieu but goes considerably beyond these.

Burke and Hannaford-Simpson are surely right to argue for a more nuanced handling of capital; however, the discussion of Fergal (one of their interviewees) slips uneasily into using terms such as 'low levels of aspirations and expectations' (p. 24), 'negative attitude' (p. 24), and 'negative outlook' (p. 25). Morrison argues for 'a more level playing field in the competition for graduate jobs' (p. 38) without fully unpicking notions of meritocracy and competition. The reader is left needing to hear more about how university staff and students may influence the demand-side of employability. This is a topic that Crew neatly picks up in her discussion of the Welsh context where she advocates working with employers and policymakers to transform the infrastructure of the labour market.

The promise of the Bourdieusian approach outlined is only partly realised as the extent and depth of the link between the early and later chapters is quite mixed. Ball's chapter could perhaps be linked more easily to the social learning ideas of Krumboltz. Gilworth's chapter to the developmental ideas of Super and Gati. Thumbar's ideas on organisational contexts linked, to my mind, more easily with the Systems Theory Framework. The varieties of capital add nuance to critique, for sure, but the proliferation of terminology lacks some rigour (capital is always *already* human, social, cultural, etc.) and occasionally drifts into mere intellectualisation. Symbolic violence, one of Bourdieu's key concepts, is referred to obliquely (p. 21) but could have been unpacked much further and linked critically to practices in higher education. So, more work would be needed to craft a fully Bourdieusian career theory and link this to the long and rich tradition of career studies and drive it credibly into practice. Nonetheless, this book provides some intriguing hints.

It is of course impossible to cover all angles, but I felt the focus on career development professionals was a little narrow; indeed, one chapter focused purely on the specific role of careers adviser. More chapters were needed on the roles played by other staff in HEIs including academics, managers, and other professionals. I wanted to hear more about how sociologically oriented academic researchers could engage in praxis within their own departments. Indeed, more content would have been helpful on the CPD received by academic and non-academic staff across the board in HE. The role of graduate recruiters was there, to an extent, but could have been more fully explored. We needed a meaty chapter on the contemporary experience of graduate employment in large graduate firms. I also struggled to square Thambar's description of undefined, locally focused, unrecognised, and unconfident careers staff with the outstanding, qualified, networked, creative, and highly able HE career development professionals I meet with every day of my working life. Nonetheless, she does recognise their dedication and makes a very good point about the need to understand the changing academic role in HEIs.

The criticisms above need to be set in context however. This is a unique book and fills a gap in the literature. The range of writers is impressive and it represents a considerable feat of scholarship. Ciaran Burke and Fiona Christie have done a great job in not just talking the talk but *walking the walk* in relation to improving dialogue between theory and practice. Judged on its own terms it certainly delivers on its objectives.

Speaking personally, this book will definitely be a welcome addition to the reading lists on our courses for career development professionals at Warwick. I can see some chapters quickly becoming core reading on our modules. It should be similarly adopted at other training centres. It will also be useful more widely for educational developers, university learning and development centres, teacher training centres, HR departments, and, of course, students too.

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Call for papers | Forthcoming events

Open call for papers for the April 2019 issue:

Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling

In order to enable a wide and varied spectrum of contributions, there is no specific theme identified for the next issue of the journal. Accordingly, papers are invited on any subject related to career development. Topics of current interest would be particularly welcome and these might include:

- Career development issues for LGBTQI people (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex)
- Social justice, critical pedagogical and emancipatory practices
- Neglected or under-researched service user groups.

For enquiries and expressions of interest, please contact the editors:

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Potential authors should note the following deadlines:

Initial expressions of interest:
19th November 2018 - *supported by an article title and brief abstract (100 words)*

Full draft article: 11th January 2019

Final corrected manuscript: 16th February 2019

NICEC Events Calendar 2018-19

Date and Time	Event	Place
Thursday 22 November 2018 5pm-6.30pm	*Seminar:* Girls' career decision-making (Professor Charlotte Chadderton, Bath Spa University and NICEC Fellow)	Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, Euston, London (Room 9)
Wednesday 23 January 2019 5pm-6.30pm	*Seminar*	Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, Euston, London (Room 9)
TBA	*Free CPD Event for Members:* CDI/NICEC At the Cutting Edge: Research into Practice	TBA
Wednesday 20 March 2019 5pm-6.30pm	*Seminar*	Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, Euston, London (Room 8)
16-17 April 2019	Changing boundaries: career, Identity, and self *An international conference on research, practice and policy in career development* (Speakers include Professor Michael Arthur, Suffolk University Boston and Dr Mary McMahon, University of Queensland.)	Manchester, England.
Monday 13 May 2018 2pm-5pm	*Network meeting*	Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, Euston, London (Rooms 5 & 6)
Event Costs:		

Seminars and Network Meetings:
- included in membership fees for NICEC Fellows and members.
- £20 for seminars and £40 for network meetings for non-members.

Forthcoming events

NICEC Conference:
Changing boundaries: career, identity, and self

A two-day international conference on research, practice and policy in career development to be held on 16th-17th April 2019 in Manchester, England.

The conference will provide a mixture of keynotes, debates, seminars and open discussion and will seek to address a number of big issues relating to the career development field. Confirmed international speakers include Professor Michael Arthur, Suffolk University Boston, Dr Mary McMahon, University of Queensland and Professor Rie Thomsen, Aarhus University.

The background

Anticipation of the changing post-Brexit landscape in April 2019 brings into sharp focus the way that previously unplanned events can alter our view of ourselves, our identity, and our career development.

As the UK and Europe enter a period of transition we are reminded how many types of transition are navigated: education and work; spatial and geographical; youth and ageing; gender fluidity; socio-cultural shifts; etc.

This conference will explore the ways in which boundaries are changing and what the implications might be for theory, practice and policy-making in career development in a world where once taken-for-granted assumptions are changing.

Conference themes

The conference is organised around three broad themes reflecting NICEC's focus on the relationship between policy, research and practice:

- Changing context for work and career
- Shifting themes and concepts
- Innovating practice

Book your place: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/changing-boundaries-career-identity-and-self-an-international-conference-on-research-practice-and-tickets-48343197806

Or email: info@nicec.org for further details.

Forthcoming events

CDI Training, Conference and Events Calendar 2018/2019

Date	Time	Event	Place
Thursday 22 November 2018 Tuesday 12 February 2019	9am-5pm	How to Start a Careers Advice Business of One	London Swindon
Thursday 29 November 2018	9.30am-4pm	Developing and Sustaining Effective University Information, Advice and Guidance: The Key Facts For Teachers and Careers Advisers	London
Thursday 13 December 2018 Thursday 24 January 2019	9am-4pm	Advanced Career Guidance and Coaching Skills	Swindon Birmingham
Wednesday 5 December 2018	9.30am-5.30pm	An Introduction to Careers Leadership in Schools	London
Thursday 6 December 2018	9.30am-4pm	Group Work - Adopting a Coaching Approach to Practice	Paisley
Thursday 6 December 2018 Wednesday 30 January 2019	9.30am-4pm	Motivational Interviewing and Solution Focused Approaches to Career Guidance Practice	London Exeter
Tuesday 15 January 2019	10am-1pm	Master Class: Transforming the Careers Guidance Interview – An Effective Integrated Counselling Approach	Cambridge
Tuesday 15 January 2019	1.30-4.30pm	Master Class: Achieving a Breakthrough with the "Stuck Client" - The Art of Effective Challenging	Cambridge
Wednesday 23 January 2019 Thursday 7 February 2019 Tuesday 26 March 2019	9.30am-3.30pm	Understanding Autism for Careers Professionals	London Birmingham Newcastle
Wednesday 6 February 2019	9.30am-4.30pm	Insight into Labour Market Information	London
Thursday 7 February 2019	10am-1pm	Master Class: How Do I Improve My Career Guidance Interviews?	Southampton
Thursday 7 February 2019	2-4.30pm	Master Class: Exploring New Theories in Careers Guidance	Southampton
Thursday 14 March 2019	9.30am-5pm	NLP and Careers: Using Neuro Linguistic Programming in CEAIG To Accelerate Learning and Inform Decision Making	London
Ongoing: various dates throughout 2018 and 2019		**CDI Certificate in Careers Leadership:** Essential training for those new to the career leadership role or those with many years of experience who would like to have accreditation for their work.	Venues in Birmingham, Newcastle and London
Wednesday 16 January 2019 Tuesday 26 February 2019 Thursday 4 April 2019	9.30am-5pm	**CDI Certificate in Career Guidance Theory**: Only full CDI Members may undertake this qualification. Both CDI members and non-members can opt to attend the training day only. See website for further options.	Manchester
Webinars (free to CDI members): see the CDI website for dates and topics			
Booking a place:			
For details, costs and individual or group bookings, visit the CDI website: www.thecdi.net/Skills-Training-Events For enquiries and to discuss your training needs, contact Claire.Johnson@thecdi.net			

ABOUT THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

The Career Development Institute (CDI) is the UK-wide professional body for the career development sector. We have a growing membership of 4500 individual members and affiliate organisations and speak with one voice for a lively and diverse sector.

We have a key role to play in influencing UK skills policy as it affects those with whom career development practitioners work and a clear purpose to improve and assure the quality and availability of career development services for all throughout the UK.

All CDI members subscribe to a Code of Ethics, which is supported by a strong disciplinary process, and subscribe to the principles of CPD.

Importantly the CDI is responsible for the UK Register of Career Development Professionals; the National Occupational Standards (NOS: CD); the first Career Progression Pathway for the sector; UK Career Development Awards; QCD and QCG/D qualifications; the CDI Academy; the Careers Framework and a UK-wide CPD programme.

Below are a few of our major achievements:

- A powerful brand supported by an evolving website **www.thecdi.net**; social media (Twitter and LinkedIn) presence; and quarterly magazine *Career Matters*;
- A schedule of CPD, skills training, webinars and conferences based on market analysis and members' training needs;
- A growing media and lobbying presence with the CDI recognised as the *expert voice* in the field; advising politicians, speaking at conferences and commenting on policy;
- The establishment of the UK Career Development Awards – ten sponsored awards including *Careers Adviser/Coach of the Year* and *Careers Leader of the Year and Lifetime Achievement Award*;
- Clear focus on professional identity and increasing the professionalism of the sector through our influence, ownership and development of the QCD and QCG/D and the CDI Academy including the new *CDI Certificate in Careers Leadership*.

ASSURING QUALITY

The CDI has a critical role to play in setting standards and articulating what quality looks like for the sector. Importantly we are an awarding body, managing the Qualification in Career Development (previously the QCG/D) and the UK Register for Career Development Professionals, which is pivotal to our ongoing quality agenda and is fast becoming recognised as the sector's equivalent to chartered status.

We are delighted to be working in partnership with NICEC on the Journal and the NICEC/CDI research-focused events which take place twice a year across the UK.

The Journal is made available to all CDI members via our website.

Contents

EDITORIAL

ARTICLES