ARTICLES

★ Counsellor and teacher collaboration in classroom-based career guidance
   Charles P. Chen

★ A narrative sentence-completion process for systems career assessment
   Peter McIlveen, Tanya Ford and Kristine Dun

★ Australian artists, starving and well-nourished: What can we learn
   from the prototypical protean career?
   Ruth Bridgstock

★ Validation of the short form of the Career Development Inventory–
   Australian version with a sample of university students
   Wendy Patton, Peter Creed and Rebecca Spooner-Lane
The Australian Journal of Career Development is a refereed, professional journal focusing on current theory, practice and policy relating to the career and work education field. The journal provides a national forum for sharing, disseminating and debating current careers research, practice and policy.

The audience for the journal includes professionals in educational and academic settings, community and government agencies, business and industrial settings. Therefore, topics should be presented with implications for practice. Authors of research reports and theoretical discussions should relate their conclusions to the realm of practical applications.

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

General Principles

Material will be considered for submission if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- it expands the body of knowledge;
- it informs in a manner that will develop people’s professional understanding or help in their understanding;
- it provides concrete assistance in professional practice;
- it raises philosophical questions related to the field of careers practice; or
- it opens a new frontier of knowledge and ideas related to professional practice.

Sections of the Journal

1. Case Studies

Case studies concerning innovative programs and individual work may be submitted. They should be both descriptive and analytical, providing the merits and shortcomings of the situation. Concise presentations are preferred.

2. Articles

Research articles are invited dealing with career development, planning, guidance and education, labour market and training issues, vocational education and training, occupational information, career management policy, practice and programs. Normally they should be a maximum of 4500 words.

3. Research Reports

Recently completed research relevant to careers practitioners is invited. This provides scope for shorter research reports and dissemination of findings and outcomes.

4. Practice Application Brief

This section comprises a review and summary of practical applications and techniques in the area of career development, guidance, placement or counselling services. It offers a concise, coherent and easy-to-read summary of a relevant topic for practitioners.

5. Reviews

Books, reports, packages, computer programs or any other material relevant to career practitioners are reviewed in this section.

6. Careers Forum

This is the place in the journal for news, trends and comments on relevant issues to stimulate discussion and debate. Comments may relate to material in earlier editions of the Journal or to issues you are facing in your day-to-day work. Brief reports of relevant conferences, seminars and events may also be included.

Manuscript Standards

All submissions are required in MS Word format. Copy should be typed double-spaced. Submission as an email attachment is preferred and will expedite the review process.

Article and Case Study submissions should be preceded by an abstract of 100–150 words. Tables should be typed on separate pages with approximate location indicated in the text. References are given at the end of the text and only references cited in the text should appear in the reference list. Spelling should conform to the Macquarie Dictionary and language should be gender inclusive. Authors should keep a copy, as manuscripts will not be retained.

More detailed information on style can be found in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed.). From 2005, each article should be accompanied by: (a) a brief biographical note about the author(s) and (b) a black-and-white high-resolution passport-sized photograph, saved as a JPEG file. Upon acceptance, authors will be asked to submit a short Theory and Practice section at the conclusion of the article, which will be boxed. This will contain around 1–5 questions and answers from the paper for practitioners and will highlight the professional practice implications of the paper.

Effect Size, Confidence Intervals


Review of Articles

Manuscripts are evaluated by a blind reviewing system in which the author’s identity is anonymous to the referees and vice versa. Therefore, there should be a separate title page showing the title of the manuscript, author’s names, their academic position or employment title, the address of institution and the date the manuscript is submitted. The first page of the manuscript should include the title of the manuscript but omit the authors’ names and affiliations.

Artwork

Materials need to be of high quality with good resolution to allow for reproduction in print. JPG file format is preferred.

Manuscript Submission

Manuscripts in hard copy or preferably as an e-mail attachment should be submitted to the editor.

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CONTENTS

Editorial 2

Career Profile 5
Interview with Barrie Irving and Beatrix Malik

At My Desk 11
Peter Tatham

Case Study 13
Integrating career education in a primary school
Jenni Proctor

Articles
Counsellor and teacher collaboration in classroom-based career guidance 18
Charles P. Chen

A narrative sentence-completion process for systems career assessment 30
Peter McIlveen, Tanya Ford and Kristine Dun

Australian artists, starving and well-nourished: What can we learn from the prototypical protean career? 40
Ruth Bridgstock

Validation of the short form of the Career Development Inventory–Australian version with a sample of university students 49
Wendy Patton, Peter Creed and Rebecca Spooner-Lane

Book Review 61

Careers Forum
Information and Resources 63
Forthcoming Conferences 64
From the Journals 65
Reviewers for Volume 14 67
Those of you who have subscribed to the *Australian Journal of Career Development (AJCD)* over the years and retained their back issues would now find they have a substantial careers resource at their disposal. Of course, I would not say for one moment that every issue has been relevant to you or even to me. In my case, it should not be as my interests in careers are not catholic. Our field is diverse and there are many pockets of specialised practice.

I am proud to see our area mature in Australia and I have always viewed the *AJCD* as an indicator of this development. Accordingly, I have been keen to support the journal as a subscriber from the first issue, and this was well before I came on board as editor. Moreover, being a subscriber says something to me about who I am, just as memberships of my professional bodies say something to me about my occupational identity. I am not writing all this so that readers will part with their money and take up a subscription, because in all likelihood I am preaching to the converted. My main objective in this editorial is to canvass a range of issues about the journal. Let us look at the larger picture, namely, the scope of the journal.

Given the size and nature of the careers profession in Australia, it is no small feat for a journal to aim to speak to all the diverse interests, whether they are in schools, universities, rehabilitation, placement, employment, counselling, vocational education, training, government, organisational or personnel settings. Have I omitted anyone?

Originally the journal sought to offer a readable forum for both professionals and researchers. It continues steadfastly in this tradition which was first established by Rob Ware and Meredith Shears and later continued by Wendy Patton. It attracts articles from practitioners as well as academics, provides research papers as well as case studies; offers empirical research as well as conceptual articles. In short, it seeks to address the needs of a wide readership and to complement the publications of state and national career adviser associations and journals such as the *Australian Journal of Rehabilitation Counselling*. However, the *AJCD* also seeks to represent the over-arching interests of career development nationally. Moreover, it seeks to do this in a way that promotes Australian research and stimulates professional practice in career development at a nationally respected and internationally recognised level.

The *AJCD* aims for high standards, and in the rest of my editorial I would like to emphasise aspects of the publication process and answer your question regarding what it takes to get an article published. I want you to know some aspects of how your journal is produced and published.

My recollection is that journals began life as a means of recording results and were later used for communicating research findings—they were intended for a specialised audience such as Fellows of the Royal Society. They were a means of reporting observations and discoveries to peers and colleagues. This meant that journals provided an outlet for ideas and an opportunity for dialogue, comment and criticism. Journals were not intended as glossy magazines with articles of general interest. They were a means of specialised communication.
Journal articles are focused forms of writing. Often they are dense and difficult to read. They presume that you already know something about the topic. They are not human interest stories, written in Janet and John language. They have to be deciphered. I tell my students that quite often it takes at least five to six years from the time some research has been undertaken until it finally appears in print, and then many months or years of effort have to be summarised into only a few pages. In the AJCD we have continued some of this academic and professional journal tradition. We publish original research and, where possible, try to make it as readable as possible to a wide audience.

The other thing many people do not realise is that contributors to journals are not paid for their articles. It is entirely voluntary. Indeed, the whole journal is based on goodwill. On reflection this is quite remarkable; especially considering that the process has endured over so many years. Researchers and practitioners undertake their research, write it up and then submit it for consideration gratis. Why? Well, because there is some academic, intellectual, professional or other kudos associated with the capacity to produce and disseminate one’s research. You would also be familiar with the academic credo of publish or perish.

Researchers are now judged on the impact of the journal in which they publish (some journals have a higher standing and in our field I would say the Journal of Vocational Behavior from the US is the market leader). Academics are also judged by the number of times their work is cited by other authors. Journals therefore exist as sources for publication. Allow me to digress even further and say that they have proliferated and are now huge commercial ventures. I am informed that some publishers have set their fees for books and journals so high that they actively discourage individual purchasers or subscribers and now opt only for institutional or library subscriptions. Some journals are no longer paper-based and are available only in electronic format. Nowadays I rarely need to visit the university’s library, as I can obtain a PDF file of whatever article I want online, because our institution subscribes to nearly all the major journal databases and collections. There are some exceptions, but you can easily predict that one day soon the AJCD will be available in electronic format. However, I hope that it will always be readily available in hard copy for professionals who do not have ready access to libraries.

So what happens when I receive an article? The process is fairly standard. Almost always it arrives unannounced and at a time when I am really busy. I look at the content and decide whether it is appropriate for the journal. I reject people who are trying to spruik products or public relations people who only seem to know how to use adjectives, especially superlatives. I accept contributions that are modified from conference papers, but we normally do not allow work to be published that has appeared in print elsewhere. If we do so, then this forms part of the Career Forum section of the journal where it is acknowledged and permission obtained to reprint it.

So, to summarise, most of the articles that I receive are unsolicited original contributions from authors. This means that the content is determined largely by the contributors’ interests. The journal uses a peer review system. I acknowledge receipt of an article and send it out to two or three reviewers, who are asked to look at the article and consider whether it should be accepted as it is, accepted with minor modifications, revised and re-submitted or rejected. Where possible, the reviewers comprise one member of the editorial board, a professional and an academic. This task is also voluntary and time consuming for reviewers. I try to spread the load around, so do not be surprised if one day you get a call from me. It is actually good experience in learning how to set standards and how to write.

Some people are unable to review; other reviewers never respond (I know that they are not dead because I have seen them at the annual conference); others agree, have a mid-life crisis just as I send it to them and then take forever; and others, whom I think are likely to be the busiest in the profession, give me almost instant turnaround. Funny world isn’t it?

The reviewers provide me with a referee report that has specific comments, criticisms or recommendations. Reviewers do not know the names of the authors, and contributors do not know the names of the referees. The process is called ‘blind refereeing’, and it can take 16–20 weeks or longer.

The peer review system with blind refereeing is not perfect, but it means that published articles have to meet some criteria and often quite a stringent
critique. To me this is the benefit of having an article published—it means that our work meets some sort of standard. A word of advice—never take the comments of referees personally; they are just doing their job and I recommend that you sit down and address all their concerns.

The process is meant to be reasonably fair, but it is not unbiased. For instance, maybe a referee is too demanding, finicky or just plain wrong. Sometimes a referee can guess who the author is. Sometimes, unknown to me, a reviewer might have a longstanding grudge against a contributor or some ideological position that is uncompromising. Quite often they do not agree, and then your poor editor has to actually make a decision. We tend to reject around two to four submissions per issue and publish around five or six articles.

I hope this information gives you some idea of the way that research articles are treated in the AJCD, and also of the process of research publication. In order to broaden the impact of the journal I often invite contributions and these bypass the review process, because they are invited from established researchers who would probably be offended if an anonymous reviewer said that they could not write well and really had nothing to say. So for invited papers you can blame your editor. We complement the research articles with case studies, brief research reports, and papers on general themes in the Careers Forum.

Potential contributors are welcome to consider the journal as an outlet for their research or writing and to seek my assistance, especially when submitting for the first time. Remember to consult the Guidelines for Contributors—articles need to be coherent and structured. They need to be of an appropriate length and an acceptable standard of literacy. They should address a professional issue or theoretical question and include references (where applicable). The journal uses the format and style of the American Psychological Association and contributors can access an abbreviated guide at http://www.bell.uts.edu.au/referencing/apa2.html

As I mentioned earlier, this whole process from contribution to refereeing is based on goodwill. There is some prestige in being an editorial board member of a journal, but it is an unpaid contribution and involves time and effort. I call on your editorial board and the international advisers many times each year. You may recall that other referees participate freely, giving their valuable expertise, often under difficult constraints. Why? Because some believe that we need a national journal of career development in Australia. Accordingly, I am grateful to all these reviewers, referees and contributors. I am grateful to the publisher, ACER Press, for their editorial support. I am grateful for the cooperation of the professional associations, but more importantly I welcome your involvement as you scan each issue for something that is relevant to you.

The real purpose of this editorial was to explain some aspects of the AJCD because some readers may have a different impression of the publication and its process. Another objective was to emphasise the reasons for the wide theoretical and practical scope of the journal, to stress that it is peer reviewed and what that means, and also to say that increasingly the AJCD is an ambassador for Australian career development. Moreover, I welcome your involvement as a reader of our articles, reviews, case studies or professional information. The publisher and I are trying to incorporate something new in each issue—sometimes a small and hardly noticeable change, and at other times a new feature. We always add and I cannot recall that we have ever subtracted from the journal permanently. We think the next step will be to involve more professionals as contributors, with articles that focus on practice and complement the research emphasis.

The AJCD is unique in its approach. With the passage of time it will also address a niche market internationally and that is good for career development in Australia. Our aim is to ensure that it is owned by all the stakeholders in the career industry in Australia. In the final analysis, it is your journal and please remember that I am only a temporary steward.

Well, now you can get back to your cup of tea, stare out the window and bask in the springtime sun, as you think about true love, the meaning of life and possibly the AJCD.

James A. Athanasou
University of Technology, Sydney
Can you tell me a little about your own career development?

BM: When I first started thinking about a future profession I wanted to become a marine biologist, but then for a long time I considered becoming a medical doctor, as I wanted to work with people. My father, who supported me in this decision, helped me to apply to several US colleges. However, I finally decided not to go to the US, arguing I did not want to study medicine after all. I had met a boy—who is currently my husband—and I also wanted to stay in Spain with my mother. In my last year of high school my interests shifted towards the humanities field—I enjoyed science and maths but I also liked languages, literature and art history. I thought about becoming a writer. Career guidance that year was practically non-existent; all we had were some visits from graduates in different disciplines telling us about their majors or professions.

Right before graduating from high school I became interested in special education, and decided to study therapeutic pedagogy. I volunteered for one year in a special education school, catering for children and adults, and enjoyed the experience very much. At that time I was also working part-time, baby-sitting and teaching English, so I enrolled in the Spanish Open University...
Career Profile

(Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia—UNED) to study pedagogy. However, the specialisation I wanted was not available so I majored in educational guidance. After graduating, I was admitted to a doctoral program in this field and I obtained a research grant from the Spanish Ministry of Education to work on my doctoral thesis for four years. I then started to consider the possibility of an academic career.

When the grant ended there were no positions available at the university and I took a job as secretary to a researcher in the Spanish Research Council (CSIC) who was coordinating a European R&D project in biology. Although it had nothing to do with education or guidance, it was a great experience. I learned a lot concerning the coordination and management of European projects, expertise which has proved very useful later on in my career. It was a part-time job and I continued collaborating at the university. After one and a half years I got a position as Lecturer in Career Guidance at the Faculty of Education (UNED), and afterwards as Assistant Professor. In 2002 I was tenured in the area of guidance theory and models. And there I am … with my ups and downs, but practising resilience!

BI: My own career journey could be described as a classic ‘patchwork quilt’. After emigrating to Australia from the UK in the mid-1960s we frequently moved house, leading to an irregular pattern of schooling. After leaving school at 15 with no qualifications I had a range of jobs, from the railways through to retail management. Returning to Britain in the mid-1970s I found myself looking around for jobs, eventually ending up in a holiday camp! After this I made my way to Southampton where I was fortunate enough to get a job on board cruise ships as a salesperson in the duty-free shops. This once more took me around the world until, after a two-year stint, I decided it was time to ‘settle down’. After a short period as an assistant manager in a major department store I found out that it would be possible to enter higher education as a mature-age student, even though I had no formal qualifications. This was a real period of enlightenment and opportunity as my four-year sociology degree also included a professional studies option, where I was able to study for my diploma in careers guidance. Not only was I able to develop an understanding of education and insight into the place of career within it, but I also began to develop a much clearer social conscience and political view that I carry with me today, ‘that all men [sic] are not equal’ as power, wealth, biology and social location continues to shape and control opportunity for the majority.

The itinerant gene, and my growing understanding of issues of equity continued to pervade and I worked for a range of careers services before joining the College of Guidance Studies, and then Canterbury Christ Church University College as a lecturer and researcher in the areas of career education and social justice.

What led you into this field?

BM: It was completely random: as explained previously, when I made up my mind on what to study, I wanted to specialise in special education (therapeutic pedagogy), however, the university where I obtained my degree, UNED, did not offer this specialisation, so I chose school guidance, as the courses were more related to my interests (the other one was school management). When I was in my senior year at the university, I met Professor Elvira Repetto and started collaborating with her on a European project on the training of guidance workers, as well as in the translation of the IAEVG (International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance) glossary (published in English, French, German and Spanish), among other national and international projects. At that time, she was Head of the Careers Service at UNED, which had just been created, and I worked there for a few months. When I obtained the research grant from the Ministry of Education I worked under her supervision on my doctoral thesis, earning a PhD in Educational and Career Guidance, and thus my career in the field of educational guidance and career development started.

What does your current work involve?

BI: In 2003 my wife and I emigrated to New Zealand as we felt it was time for a change. I am currently taking a break from the academic world and we are in the process of developing an art and cookery school along with a café in a converted primary school in a rural area of South Canterbury. This we hope will become a haven of tranquillity that encompasses a
Have there been any special mentors in your career?

**BM:** There are many people who have been very helpful at different stages of my career, to whom I am very grateful, although it is not possible to mention them all. Among those who have been most influential in my career, I must mention especially two who I can consider as my mentors: one of them is Professor Elvira Repetto, in the field of guidance, whose clear influence I have already referred to. The other one is Professor Teresa Aguado, who I met while I was undertaking my doctoral studies, and started collaborating with in the field of intercultural education. We became close friends, and are currently working together on several projects dealing with cultural diversity and education, along with other colleagues from our research group (INTER Group).

**BI:** I was fortunate enough to teach alongside, and take classes for, Marie Parker-Jenkins while she was at the University of Nottingham. Marie has a deep interest in issues related to children’s rights, and Islam and Muslim schooling. From Marie I gained an insight into the wider academic world of the university, learned much about how inequality, discrimination, culture and power can impact on people’s lives, and was able to develop my teaching by working with master’s level students. Marie is now Professor of Research in Education at the University of Derby. In 2004 we co-authored a book (along with Dimitra Hartas from Warwick University) entitled *In good faith: Schools, religion and public funding*, published by Ashgate.

What current thinking has influenced your work?

**BM:** My work is influenced by, among others, Krumboltz’s Happenstance Theory; McMahon and Patton’s Systems Theory; and Schlossberg, Waters and Goodman’s Career Transition Model, on one side. On the other, it is influenced by multiculturalism, more specifically Sue and Sue’s work on Counsellors’ Multicultural Competencies, and career development theory which challenges current assessment and counselling practices based solely on one ‘standard’ pattern, as well as the developments in the field of intercultural education in Europe.

**BI:** There have been a number of influences on my thinking over the years. Interestingly, however, few of these are in the careers work area, except for Suzy Harris! A number of writers in the area of education and social justice—such as Michael Apple, Roger Gale and Dave Gillborn; Sally Tomlinson who writes in the social policy arena; and Iris Young in relation to the philosophical nature of social justice—have helped to shape my broader understanding and should be standard reading for all potential career education and guidance professionals.

Are you involved in any special projects?

**BM:** I was directly involved in the CQS! Project, chaired by Professor E. Repetto and Professor B. Hiebert, within the IAEVG, which led to the approval of the International Competencies for Guidance Practitioners at the General Assembly. These standards are being evaluated in several countries and in some they are also used as a framework for the development of counsellor training programs.

Currently I am also involved in a European project on intercultural education, under the SOCRATES Program (Comenius 2.1), coordinated by UNED (T. Aguado). We are in the third and final stage. We have produced a guide to be used in teaching training (both initial and in-service). This *INTER Guide* is now being implemented and evaluated. We have also submitted a bid for a project within the ALFA Program (cooperation between Europe and Latin America) to create a master’s course in intercultural education, but have obtained no response as yet.

At a national level (Spain), I take part in two R&D projects. One has to do with cultural diversity and school achievement (funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology), and the other with work values and representations in relation to gender, and how these affect young people’s career development (funded by the Women’s Institute in Madrid, and coordinated by a colleague who is a professor in career guidance).

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1 Counselor Qualification Standards was the original name of the project, although it was later changed to International Competencies for Educational and Vocational Guidance Practitioners.
I am also initiating a research line on the inter-cultural competencies of school guidance counsellors in the Spanish context. There are two graduate students doing their initial thesis research work on this subject, and some members of the INTER group are also on the research team.

Can you say something about your roles as a researcher, academic, practitioner and/or author?

BI: As I am now no longer active in the academic world, I continue to have an interest in all matters concerning ‘career’ but no longer actively participate in the same debates. I guess my ‘swan song’ was the publication of the book mentioned earlier, and more specifically the publication of the book I co-edited with Beatriz Malik.

BM: Critical reflections on career education and guidance is to me a groundbreaking book due to the theoretical assumptions underpinning its chapters and their practical implications. From a critical standpoint, it examines important issues which are currently affecting the career development of people, such as globalisation and neo-liberalism. It questions the economic and individualistic aims that drive education and career guidance, and explores educational and social aspects which cannot be overlooked in careers work. It is meant, as Professor Peter Plant puts it in the foreword, as a ‘counterflow’ to the prevailing ideology in career education and guidance.

On what points are there agreement and maybe some disagreement between you?

BM: I think our points of view regarding career education and guidance are very similar. We are both concerned with the current discourse in this field, acknowledging the need to promote critical thinking and advocate for a socially just agenda.

BI: We have been very fortunate to find wide areas of agreement, particularly with reference to issues of ‘race’, social class and how this influences the educational and ‘career’ experiences and opportunities for many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Issues of social justice have featured strongly in all of our professional discussions and the need to bring this to the attention of academics, teachers, practitioners and policy-makers alike. To date we have found no points of disagreement.

What do you consider to be some of the important issues affecting the careers field today?

BM: Mainly those that are addressed in our book, dealing with social justice and globalisation, as mentioned earlier. In general, in the careers field we are driven by a neo-liberalist approach to guidance and forget some important aspects which affect our youths and adults. Decision-making is not a question of free individual choice, but is determined by the influence of several factors.

We cannot place the responsibility solely on the individual; we must acknowledge the structural factors (unequal distribution of resources, real access to education, labour market conditions) affecting their opportunities, and it is not enough with training people in the proper skills to enter the labour market—equity is not being achieved. Social inequalities around the globe are increasing, and this must not be overlooked in the field of guidance. The economic growth of some is being accomplished at the expense of others.
There are also other issues, such as the emphasis on competency-based training or the accreditation of qualifications. For instance, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) in Europe is affecting the way universities organise their courses, and this will have implications for guidance. Assessment of actual professional experience to obtain academic accreditation is also a major issue in some countries.

How do you see the field of career development evolving in the next few years? What are some of the challenges?

BI: Watch any television program and references to career still appear to highlight a ‘better paid employment with more responsibility’, a ‘professional occupation’, or an opportunity ‘to progress through a company hierarchy’.

Career counselling, career education, career development—this in itself requires some unpacking as the need for clarity about the different intentions and activities related to each aspect is required if it is to make sense to those who may be the recipients of one or more forms. Hence the lack of any clear definition as to what constitutes the concept of career, and the ongoing vagueness and pragmatic responses continue to cloud all aspects and areas of the work. This is possibly the biggest challenge facing academic and professional alike if the careers field is to have any real significance for individuals and impact on the development of social policy. Clearly there is a need for more research at both the macro and micro level that is interdisciplinary, is more academic in nature, yet demonstrates implications from practice, and establishes a global body of knowledge that broadens the insight and understanding of all.

There are a number of key issues that impact on the development of ‘careers work’, and not least of these is the lack of any definition of what a ‘career’ actually is. A number of contemporary writers argue that the concept of ‘career’ needs to be all-embracing to include financial self-management skills, and concerns individuals in learning and in work—including participation in lifelong learning. (Yet, where does that leave those who are not economically or educationally active?) Others argue that this represents a western view of the world that is caught up with economic success at any cost, and the primacy of the competitive individual. Moreover, the current focus of government policy in the West is too overtly governed by narrow economic rhetoric and material goals. This tends to obscure the notion that we (the people en masse) should determine the type of society we want, and therefore construct our economies accordingly. Such ‘dissenters’ (myself included) need to continue to posit a holistic view of ‘career’ which implies that ‘we’ (both individually, culturally, socially and politically) need to be able to be actively involved in the construction of pathways through life, thereby acknowledging that ‘value’ should not be seen simply in relation to economic and productive potential. This should include a wider understanding of ways in which culture impacts on notions of individual choice and opportunity, and the need to engage in discussion and debate.

Career education, in particular, is at risk of losing its way as preparation for life is increasingly translated to mean ensuring that young people leave schools, colleges and universities with the skills and behaviours that employers demand—this leaves little scope for the development of a critical imagination and active engagement in change!

BM: There is a growing emphasis on creating closer links between public policy and career development, as demonstrated by the International Symposia on Career Development and Public Policy held in Ottawa (1999), Vancouver (2001), and forthcoming in Australia (2006). Internationalisation is also increasing, by means of comparative studies across countries, and the recent establishment of the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy. Hopefully, these initiatives, which are at present driven by economic aims, namely workforce development and labour market efficiency (responding to the demands of the countries involved), will also take into account other aims in career guidance, and question current ideologies and practices. This poses a real challenge to all of us working in the field.

Social justice is not a common priority, and is seldom considered in careers work nowadays—unless mentioned only as a principle. There is nothing to suggest that this will change in the years ahead if the dominant ideology prevails. There is, however, an increasing awareness among some researchers and practitioners of the need to address social justice issues, and at least they are starting to be taken into account.
We should look more into the implications of casualised work in the lives of people. We also need to consider different lifestyles as being equally valid. We usually work from one perspective, bearing in mind a standard pattern of life, and it becomes the lens through which we filter our interventions, considering that everyone has to conform to that specific pattern to be ‘successful’. It is necessary to take into account personal and cultural factors in the process of decision-making, without labelling people and placing them in certain predefined categories.

I think we also need to pay more attention to Green Guidance, as proposed by Peter Plant, as another challenge for the future; and to happenstance, as John Krumboltz defines it. It is really important in career guidance to help clients make the most of unplanned events. Life is unpredictable, and no matter how well we plan our future there are many events that can change our original plans. James Athanasou illustrated this very well in an editorial in this journal (2004, 13[1]), when he recalled a Greek professor who wrote: ‘It is difficult to predict even what one might say in 30 seconds time’ (p. 2). This does not mean that we cannot set goals, but certainly they have to be constantly revisited, and we must be open to different possibilities. Open-mindedness is a key attitude, not only regarding career development, but also in our relation to others.

What about Barrie Irving when he is not involved in careers?

**BI:** Much of my time is now spent in developing my new venture. However, I recently attended a couple of art classes and have started to do some sketching. My ultimate goal is to eventually begin painting and create a masterpiece at some point (although this is only likely to hang in my own hallway!). I enjoy reading all types of books, and now have more time for novels, and continue to travel whenever the opportunity presents itself. As I now live in New Zealand my aim is to see all of the parts of Europe I missed when living in the UK. Surprisingly, I have found this easier to organise from a distance, or maybe it is just that the motivation is now higher!

What about Beatriz Malik when she is not involved in careers?

**BM:** I like spending as much time as I can with my family and friends. I’m fortunate because most of my best friends are also colleagues at work, and we are engaged in common projects, but we do try to see each other outside work. As to my family, they are a little more scattered, my sisters and all of my cousins live abroad (Colombia and the US), but fortunately both my parents live in Spain at present. My husband is currently working near Valencia (a city on the east coast of Spain), so we only spend the weekends and holidays together, although he will soon be transferred back to Madrid.

I enjoy reading very much—I like mainly historical and mystery novels, but also other genres—and swimming when I get a chance, especially in the ocean. I like music as well—I’m taking piano and clarinet lessons at a music school near my home, but my progress is very slow as I do not have too much time to practise. I played the clarinet in the school band for two years, in junior high school, but had to quit and a few years ago I took it up again.

I do a lot of travelling, although usually related to work, and, of course, I also travel often to Valencia. We have two dogs and several cats (one in Madrid) and it’s really fun to be around them.

**Barrie Irving and Beatriz Malik, on behalf of the Australian Journal of Career Development may I thank you for this interview and taking the time from your busy schedules to respond to these questions.**
Since my last column I have been elected President of the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA). CICA is the peak career policy body representing 12 national and state career associations. It is a privilege to contribute to the national career development agenda and serve the interest of colleagues and the community.

We all recognise that career development is a public and a private good. The focus of CICA is inherently concerned with improvements in public policy that contribute to career development on both levels. Currently, the government is implementing a veritable smorgasbord of programs that CICA is keen to contribute to. The trial of the Australian Blueprint for Career Development, a feasibility study into the establishment of an Institute for Leadership in Career Development (tender awarded to Allen Consulting), a review of Career Information Centres, and a review of myfuture are indicative of where career development is moving nationally.

In addition, CICA’s current projects include the National Standards and Accreditation of Career Practitioners Project. It is also organising the 2006 International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy.

What is very pleasing is the embedding of several career initiatives, including the Lighthouse Schools programs and the Scholarships program, into recurrent government funding. This is a significant advance, as it moves these career initiatives from the incidental to the mainstream.

To assist with its work, CICA has appointed Judith Leeson as Executive Officer (Projects) and Lyn Camp as Executive Officer (Administration). If you would like to comment to CICA on any national issue, please email CICAIInc@bigpond.net.au or call Lyn on (02) 9618 2900.

**STICKY NOTES—NEWS UPDATES**

**National Standards and Accreditation of Career Practitioners Project**

CICA has been funded to develop national standards and is dedicated to a process that is collaborative, respectful, consultative and inclusive. There are a number of consultation points as we finalise the standards. Miles Morgan has recently completed interviews to facilitate the development of a competency framework and to provide further clarification on entry-level qualifications for consideration by career associations.

Consultation will occur next in late September following agreement by member associations on a draft code of ethics, a draft set of core competencies and a model for continuing professional development. The draft will be widely distributed for
At My Desk

comment and feedback. Further consultation will occur to identify minimum levels of training required for various specialisations. The standards will include a sunset clause to include all existing career practitioners.

A comprehensive strategy has begun to keep practitioners and other stakeholders informed on CICA’s progress. By May 2006, CICA hopes to develop and recommend an accreditation model.

National standards will enable future government tenders to set minimum standards for delivery of career services in Australia. They will be a catalyst for careers work to be more closely aligned with criteria that are usually associated with professions. It will give the community greater confidence in accessing services and enable new career projects to take place. For more information see: www.cica.org.au

International Symposium for Career Development and Public Policy—Sydney, 2006

Australia will host the third International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy. The 2006 symposium will examine the progress and build on the dialogue of previous international symposia held in Canada in 1999 and 2001. The website www.crrcanada.org/crc/symposium2/nav.cfm?s=documentsp=index&l=e provides useful background on these events.

An international Steering Committee has been formed consisting of Tony Watts (UK), Raimo Vuorinen (Finland), Lyn Bezanson (Canada), John McCarthy (ICCDPP), and from Australia Richard Sweet, Mary McMahon, Christine Haines, Judith Leeson, Robyn Bergin (DEST) and myself. Col McCowan is Convenor and QUT is organising the symposium. The Steering Committee is working on the strategic vision for the symposium.

The title of the symposium—Shaping the Future: Connecting Career Development and Workforce Development—reflects the challenge of the next decade for policy makers and practitioners; how to strengthen the role of career development in workforce development in a manner that facilitates policy objectives, while maintaining the individual as the central focus.

Teams of up to four participants will be invited from each country and it is hoped to have strong representation from the Asia Pacific region. Australia will have a team of up to ten participants.

The international symposium directly follows the annual AACC conference in Sydney, from 18–21 April 2006.

RICAs and NICS

Reading tenders is not everybody’s idea of a good night in; however, there is no doubt that the various components of the Australian Network of Industry Careers Advisers will have great impact on career development in Australia.

From November, a network of Regional Industry Careers Advisers (RICAs) will work in partnership with local community partnerships to ensure that all young people (from 13–18) will have access to professional industry career advice. RICAs are expected to complement existing career services in schools and the community. National Industry Career Specialists will provide targeted industry career advice and specialist labour market information. These roles will provide useful information, particularly about needs within small to medium employers, which is sometimes difficult to access.

Post-graduate studies at QUT

QUT offers two post-graduate courses which have specialised study areas in career guidance. The Master of Learning Innovation (eight units, one year full-time; two years part-time) offers students flexibility in their choice of units to meet their own professional and personal learning needs. The course is useful for people who work in all aspects of education and training.

The Graduate Certificate in Education (four units; two semesters part-time or one semester full-time) provides a post-graduate course in an identified area of education.

From 2006, the units in the career guidance study area will all be available online. Students satisfactorily completing the Australian Career Development Studies unit receive a unit’s credit for the Graduate Certificate. For information, contact Wendy Patton: w.patton@qut.edu.au

CONTACT Peter Tatham with news entries for this section by 1 February for the Autumn Issue at Peter.Tatham@utas.edu.au. Entries should be no longer than 100 words, and may be edited for space reasons.
CASE STUDY

INTEGRATING CAREER EDUCATION IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL

Jenni Proctor, Mary MacKillop Catholic Primary School, Birkdale QLD

Career education concepts have been integrated into the curriculum at a primary school in Brisbane. Essential elements of relevant syllabus documents were identified and used as the basis of planned career education strategies. The existing curriculum was examined in the light of career competencies. All career-related learning that had already formed part of the education experience of the students was identified and grouped under the three main areas of competencies of the Australian Blueprint for Career Development. A three-year program of annual career days has been implemented, with a strong curriculum basis to enhance the children’s understanding as they learn about different careers. By integrating career development competencies into the school curriculum, teachers, parents and students have embraced career education.

Mary MacKillop School in Birkdale, Queensland, was awarded the runner-up prize in the 2003 National Innovation in Career Education Award organised by the Australian Career Service and the Department of Education, Science and Training. The school’s career education policy incorporates an integrated approach to career-related learning from preschool to Year 7, supported by an annual career education day.

The purpose of this article is to share the practices that have been found to be successful at this school. While student surveys have been undertaken to gauge the effectiveness of the career education days, these studies have not been independently evaluated and therefore will not be included or referenced.
Case Study

An Australian study drew the conclusion that ‘school is an influence on the career development of children and adolescents, with or without the intervention of school staff’ (McMahon & Patton, 1994, 1997, quoted in McMahon & Carroll, 1999). Career-related learning integrates naturally into the primary school curriculum enhancing the teaching and learning activities that already occur (McCowan & McKenzie, 1997). However, while career competencies are developed incidentally through many facets of the primary school curriculum it is not yet common for this to be recognised and named as career education in the primary school context (McMahon & Carroll, 1999).

INTEGRATION IS THE KEY

As an experienced teacher librarian at a Catholic school in Brisbane, and with a deep professional interest in career development, I was certain that the students would benefit in many ways from implementing career education into our school. However, the challenge was to introduce these concepts in such a way as to make them a valid and accepted dimension of the school curriculum rather than a separate entity. It was clear that if career education could be achieved as an enhancement of current programs or through placing a different perspective on activities that were already part of our school life, it may be embraced. Without curriculum integration, support would be unlikely in this school context.

The solution was to recognise career development concepts and career competencies within the curriculum framework on which all planning is based, and to identify all aspects of career-related learning that were already part of the teaching and learning activities occurring in the school. As a result of this integrated approach to implementing a career education program, it has been accepted by staff, students and parents as a valued learning experience that this school provides, and appreciated for the additional dimension it brings to the students’ learning.

STAFF INVOLVEMENT

The Australian Blueprint for Career Development (Haines et al., 2003) was introduced to the staff at a meeting, and its rationale and definitions were discussed. In grade-level groups the staff considered how the Level 1 competencies of the blueprint related to what was already being taught in the school. All school programs and significant learning experiences of the students were listed by the staff under the more familiar headings of Personal Development, Learning Skills and Strategies, and Building Awareness of the World of Work. These lists were then collated and placed on a wall, grouped under the three career competency areas of the blueprint. The large amount of data that was evident demonstrated clearly how much career-related learning was already part of the educational experience of our students.

The strength of conducting an exercise such as this was that it became clear, in a very concrete way, that career education was already occurring in our school and that all of the three main areas of competencies were already being taught to some degree from preschool to Year 7. Through the naming of these competencies, and the recognition of their components, they can now be more effectively taught for the purposes of career education rather than as incidental learning.

CREATING A MATRIX: CURRICULUM OUTCOMES/CAREER COMPETENCIES

In creating a matrix of career competencies with the Queensland Syllabus Outcomes Statements (Queensland Studies Authority, 2002), certain aspects became clear. Attributes of lifelong learners, underpinning all the documents, also underpin the career competencies. If teachers are planning towards the development of these outcomes they are already well on the way to developing their students’ career competencies. Similarly, the cross curricular priorities of life skills and futures perspective add a dimension to the children’s learning that supports and develops the stated career competencies. The cross curricular priorities of literacy and numeracy are obviously basic to all that the children do and, as such, are fundamental to all career development. The curriculum documents on which other states, school systems and countries base their education would undoubtedly have similar connections with career competencies.
Annual Career Education Day
The initial planned career education experience at this school was a whole-day event known as CLAN (Celebrating Literacy and Numeracy), which was held in National Literacy and Numeracy Week, giving it curriculum legitimacy in the minds of staff and parents. CLAN was originally planned as a stand-alone day, but there were immediate requests to make it an annual or biannual event. The students’ enthusiasm for the CLAN day demonstrated to the school community, far more effectively than any amount of teacher professional development or parent education, how interested children are in careers and how their learning relates to their future. It had the additional benefit of providing a unique opportunity for many parents to discuss the world of work with their children, and to use their skills and experience to contribute to a school activity.

The career day has a three-year cycle to ensure that it retains its freshness and impact and provides a different curriculum emphasis each year. The first year of the cycle will remain a celebration of literacy and numeracy (a cross curricular priority). The second year will be based on the Lifelong Learners curriculum framework of Brisbane Catholic Education (Brisbane Catholic Education, 2002). During the third year of the cycle the additional cross curricular priorities of life skills and futures perspective will be developed.

CLAN Conference
CLAN was a whole-day conference for Years 3–7, complete with conference features such as many speakers, bags of free gifts, and participants moving independently between selected presentations. The CLAN conference commenced with a whole school gathering, setting the tone of celebration and with a ‘keynote address’ by our local federal member. Twenty-eight members of the community had agreed to speak with groups of children about their careers and the ways in which they use their literacy and numeracy skills in their career. Each child attended four different presentations during the day and, as much as possible, they were given their first or second choice of presentations they had elected to attend. During each of the four sessions there were 14 speakers presenting in different rooms throughout the school. Due to the number of speakers, all groups were small, making presenters very accessible and the tone intimate.

Visitors were encouraged to make their presentations as concrete as possible in accordance with the children’s ages. Presenters came from many occupations, with representations from the media, trades, community services, professions, sport and small business. Most presenters responded in very creative ways. A female builder organised the children to create house plans, look at quotations and then plan their colour scheme on computers. In another room a midwife performed a successful caesarean delivery of a teddy bear, complete with surgical implements and gowns. The children reported finding this day very enjoyable and interesting, and found the exposure to a variety of presenters exciting and stimulating.

LLLife Expo
The second annual career day, held in August 2004, brought a different dimension to the children’s career education. It was called LLLife Expo (‘Life Long Learning is for ever’ Expo) and, once again, commenced with an entertaining opening ceremony followed by the official opening by the local federal member, who spoke of the importance of being a lifelong learner throughout his varied career. It was interesting to note that in planning the second annual event, parents volunteered more willingly, as the rationale for career education had become better understood and they wanted to support the initiative.

Case Study

FIGURE 1: ROLES OF LIFELONG LEARNERS

- Active Investigator
- Designer and Creator
- Community Contributor
- Leader and Collaborator
- Effective Communicator
- Quality Producer
- Reflective, Self-directed Learner

(Brisbane Catholic Education, 2002)
Presenters were asked to choose a particular lifelong learning role (Figure 1) that they demonstrate in their own career and reflect on that in their presentation. Children chose the speakers they wanted to attend by considering their lifelong learning roles, rather than their occupations. Each role was demonstrated in such varied ways through people’s diverse careers, for example, the role of Leader and Collaborator was represented by an international airline pilot (who came to the LLLife Expo directly off a flight from Hong Kong), as well as a stevedore, an environmentalist and a lawyer who now chooses to be a stay-at-home mother to her five children. With equal diversity, the role of Active Investigator was represented by a chiropractor, a general practitioner, a geologist and a university student.

Students each carried a LLLife Expo Passport (a workbook encouraging reflection), with a page for each lifelong learning role. As they attended each presentation they were given specially made stickers for the lifelong learning role that was being demonstrated. For the last hour of the school day students returned to their classroom and were asked to assume the role of reflective self-directed learners by considering the presentations they had attended and completing their passport. Students have been encouraged to keep their passports as a souvenir of LLLife Expo.

Year 1 and 2 children also participated in the day at an age-appropriate level with two visitors to each classroom, each running very concrete activities such as gardening, dressing in firefighters’ clothes and teaching the children to do the jive. These classes then participated in interesting classroom activities related to the day and brought their work to the closing ceremony to share with the school.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The organisation of a whole-day career education event demands a large amount of work and commitment. Outlining the organisation that was involved is beyond the scope of this article, but for an initiative like this to be successful three factors must exist. At least one staff member must be passionate enough about the importance of career education to be prepared to lead the initiative. The support of the school executive is fundamental, along with support within the school community—people willing to discuss ideas and assist with some tasks. Finally, although there is not a lot of expense involved, in order to make the day pleasant and observe social customs it is advisable to have a small budget to pay for token gifts and refreshments for presenters and other incidental expenses.

MAKE IT REAL GAME

Career education is now being taken to another level at Mary MacKillop School with the Year 6 and 7 classes basing their integrated unit for term 4 on the Make it Real Game (Barry, 2001). Several members of staff have been trained in the program, and it is hoped that this will enrich and complete the primary school career education of our students.

CONCLUSION

The career development of our students will have an impact on the choices they make in life, the successes they enjoy and their resilience to cope with the inevitable changes that will occur in their lives and work roles. In primary schools we are in the privileged position of being able to integrate the concepts of career development into the curriculum, enhancing our students’ understanding of the world and giving further depth and richness to the teaching and learning that is already occurring. In accepting the challenge of integrating career-related learning into our curriculum we will lead our students towards gaining ‘the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life’ (MYCEETYA, 1999).

REFERENCES


Case Study

“The role of Active Investigator was represented by a chiropractor, a general practitioner, a geologist and a university student.”


**CASE STUDY**

JENNI PROCTOR is a teacher librarian working at a Catholic primary school in Brisbane, Queensland. In 2002 she followed a life long interest in career development and studied through the Worklife College for Career Practitioners. As she studied career development concepts at night, while heavily involved with curriculum and learning strategies in the school during work hours, the relationships between career development, the curriculum and its role in the life of primary school children motivated her to initiate a career education program. She hopes to influence other educators to give career education the importance it deserves in the life of primary school children. Jenni is now completing a Master of Career Development and has her own private practice, Career Clarity, www.careerclarity.com.au
COUNSELLOR AND TEACHER COLLABORATION IN CLASSROOM-BASED CAREER GUIDANCE

Charles P. Chen, University of Toronto

High school students in North America, namely, the United States and Canada, encounter the challenge of the school-to-school and school-to-work transition, and they need considerable help for career guidance and counselling. Yet, the guidance and counselling resources of the school system are often stretched to their limits. This article proposes an alternative for the career guidance initiative to reach out to a massive student population by establishing effective counsellor–teacher collaboration in the classroom setting. The background and rationale for this collaboration will be examined and the critical communication dynamics and process in forming this collaboration will be elaborated on. Finally, several collaboration strategies are offered that can work to enhance classroom-based career education and guidance initiative.

Career guidance is of particular importance to high school students because this group of students is at the significant crossroads of their lives—encountering the challenge of school-to-school or school-to-work transition (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002; Sharf, 2002; Zunker, 2002). The former situation points to the transition from high school to post-secondary education, while the latter refers to the transition from high school to the labour market. Although not every student in this group is necessarily in an acute need of career counselling, the majority of students in the group do need guidance to increase their career awareness and gain basic skills in some preliminary career planning and decision-making. By doing so, they will be better prepared for the transition (Niles & Akos, 2003; Saginak, 2003). Research evidence has suggested that effective school guidance and counselling programs facilitate students’ development in educational, personal/social, and career domains (Whiston, 2003). The key point, therefore, is to design and initiate effective programs that are accessible, appealing and helpful to all students.

The school counsellor has an important role to play in this helping context. Nevertheless, the reality depicts a challenging picture because of the scarcity of helping resources in today’s school system in North America, namely, the United States and Canada. Notwithstanding the necessity for career guidance and counselling, professional school counsellors often
find themselves struggling with the excessive overload of duties they have to carry out on a daily basis. As the resources in the school system are stretched to their limits, fewer counsellors have to serve more students. For example, across Canada, one counsellor may have to work with a minimum of 300 to 400 students in some school districts, while another counsellor may need to serve as many as 600 to 700 students in other school districts. With this kind of counsellor-to-students ratio it is not very feasible for the counsellor alone to implement a comprehensive career education initiative or vocational guidance program in addition to the numerous other tasks they must perform.

An alternative for a career guidance initiative to reach out to a massive student population is to form an effective counsellor–teacher work alliance, through which the counsellor collaborates with teachers in promoting and implementing career education and vocational guidance in a high school classroom setting. In this article, I describe several key considerations for developing such a comprehensive counsellor–teacher collaboration model. While in many ways these considerations are relevant to the enhancement of other aspects of counselling and guidance in the high school environment, such as personal/social counselling and educational counselling, my proposals focus on career education and vocational guidance. Also, it is beyond the scope of this article to elaborate on ways that promote career education and vocational guidance outside the classroom setting.

With these parameters in mind, the article first examines the background and rationale for this collaboration. Second, it discusses the critical communication dynamics and process in forming this collaboration. Finally, the article offers several collaboration strategies that can work to enhance the classroom-based career education and guidance initiative. Suggestions for building and improving the counsellor–teacher collaboration will be provided. For clarity and brevity, the terms ‘professional school counsellor’, ‘school counsellor’, and ‘counsellor’ are used interchangeably in this article. They all refer to professional school counsellors who work as guidance counsellors in a high school context in North America. Similarly, the term ‘collaboration’ means the counsellor–teacher collaboration in career education and guidance in a high school context.

Collaboration: Background and Rationale

The need for effective counsellor–teacher collaboration is based on the increasing attention given to the importance of career guidance for high school students. There has been serious attention paid to developing and strengthening career education initiatives in the school system, especially among high school students across the United States. Since the national initiative of school-to-work transition was launched in 1994, much effort has been devoted to designing and implementing useful career education approaches (NOICC, 1992; US Department of Education and US Department of Labor, 1996; Zunker, 2002). Parallel effort, such as the Work/Life Blueprint initiative, can also be found in Canada at the national level (Hache, Redekopp, & Jarvis, 2000). Of note, there have also been recent policy and program initiatives relating to career education by the Ministry of Education at the provincial level in Canada. Such initiatives have drawn particular attention to the critical aspect of career guidance and counselling in general, and to the urgency of school-to-work transition in particular. For example, the province of British Columbia implemented a very comprehensive career guidance program entitled Career and Personal Planning (CAPP) in the mid-1990s, and the program is now entering its mature stage (BC Ministry of Education, Skills, and Training, 1997). Similarly, in 1999, the province of Ontario launched its guidance and career education program policy called Choices into Action, presenting an extensive program outline with implementation planning on career education and guidance (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999).

In light of such career education and guidance initiatives and undertaking, counsellors and teachers are called upon to work more closely than ever before for program implementation. For example, teachers are asked to integrate the CAPP program (high school section) materials into their weekly curriculum plans. With little or even no training in career
Articles

education and guidance, teachers face the challenge of how to utilise this full box of career education materials in a relevant and effective matter while teaching the CAPP curriculum. In this context, counsellors may act as the consultants who would provide the CAPP teachers with relevant resources and background information. Teachers and counsellors may find that such program implementation can be more effective if they work closely, coordinating their joint effort to utilise and maximise the optimal impact of the program. As a result, the program can be offered to students in a meaningful manner.

To form an effective collaboration, a professional bond needs to be built between the teacher and the counsellor (Basham, Appleton, & Dykeman, 2000). The greatest advantage for establishing such a work alliance lies with the counsellor's awareness and knowledge of the high school environment, as well as his or her expertise in working with different parties, especially teachers and students, in program planning and implementation (Basham, Appleton, & Lambarth, 1998). Professional school counsellors do possess unique background knowledge and experience in this context because guidance and counselling work is part of the integral educational effort to promote students' wellbeing (Cobia & Henderson, 2003). Many counsellors may have obtained teacher education training prior to their entry to the school setting, and have actually worked as teachers before becoming counsellors (Goodnough, Perusse, & Erford, 2003; Randolph & Masker, 1997). These circumstances often provide the counsellor with a solid understanding of teachers’ perspectives, intentions, and needs in promoting the wellbeing of their students, including vocational guidance and career education.

However, this close affiliation with, and understanding of the teaching profession, does not mean an automatic guarantee of a smooth and effective cooperation between counsellors and teachers. Both counsellors and teachers need to be aware of the importance of collaboration. They must understand that a partnership between them is not about a personal preference or an administrative mandate, but rather, it is required by the nature of guidance and counselling tasks in a high school context. That is, guidance and counselling work in secondary schools must function as a vital component that is supplementary and complementary to the general educational experience of each student. Although this function promotes and precipitates the students’ welfare in educational, personal and social domains, it carries special pertinence to the students’ growth in the domain of vocational and career maturity (Super, 1990). This is because career and vocational exploration is a meaningful and time-presssed challenge encountered by all high school students, especially grade 11 and grade 12 students who are embracing the daunting experiences of school-to-school and school-to-work transitions. Thus, it is the pivotal nature of the career guidance task that calls upon both counsellors and teachers to take a more proactive approach in strengthening and developing this collaboration.

The ultimate goal for a productive and constructive collaboration between counsellors and teachers in career guidance is to generate a win-win-win outcome for teachers, counsellors, and students. With the counsellor’s assistance, teachers can substantially improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the career education initiative, and this in turn, will enhance the students’ vocational wellbeing. The increased career competency among students will certainly help with the counsellor’s work in guiding students in their prospective academic and career planning and decision-making. More importantly, it enhances the overall quality of guidance and counselling in the school environment. As vocational guidance and counselling become more effective and receptive to students, both teachers and students may find more interest, incentives, rationale and meaningfulness in their active engagement in career education activities. These gains from all parties represent a very healthy and optimal cycle that makes career education and guidance a sustainable effort, and yields more positive results. Consequently, this ‘triple-win’ situation will contribute to the formation and enhancement of a comprehensive guidance and counselling program (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001).

**DEVELOP COLLABORATION: COMMUNICATION DYNAMICS AND PROCESS COLLABORATION AS A TRUE MUTUAL EFFORT**

Literature in the realm of school guidance and counselling often draws more attention to what the school counsellor can do to build and improve the collaboration process with others such as the administrators, teachers, parents, and the community at large.
(Bemak, 2000; Cobia & Henderson, 2003; Dougherty, 2000). The counsellor does have a vital role to play in initiating and maintaining an effective collaboration. However, it should also be noted that there must be a consensus between both counsellors and teachers for the need for collaboration. In other words, both parties must see the necessity for the collaboration to occur, and have the willingness to cooperate in a mutually respectful and collaborative manner. Therefore, the collaboration emphasises a two-way interaction. For example, counsellors may provide teachers with updated resources on career guidance intervention tools, while teachers can give suggestions on revising these very same tools, and how to incorporate them into a career education curriculum. There is no need to maintain an absolute balance between the contribution each party makes to the collaboration process. Rather, a sense of sharing reflects a collaborative spirit, as well as an active engagement from both parties in the actual collaboration effort (Friend & Cook, 1996, 2000).

According to Friend and Cook (2000), and Keys, Green, Lockhart and Luongo (2003), school professionals working in a collaborative relationship follow a set of distinguishing communication norms in their interaction. Such norms defined by these authors seem particularly helpful when considering counsellor–teacher collaboration in career education and guidance.

First, collaboration is voluntary. As stated, teachers and counsellors who come together in this regard must want to collaborate for a collaborative style of interaction to occur. Collaboration cannot occur merely because an administrator has mandated it.

Second, collaboration requires parity between counsellors and teachers. Parity means that each party has an equal voice in decision-making and that they equally value each other’s input in a collaboration effort.

Third, collaboration depends upon shared responsibility for decision-making. This suggests that it is neither the teacher nor the counsellor alone who is responsible for solving the problem. They both contribute to the decision-making and task implementation process. Yet, not each party necessarily contributes equally in terms of time, ideas and actual work to a collaboration initiative. The degree to which each party contributes can be situational, depending on the expertise, skills and other aspects related to each party in the collaboration.

Fourth, collaboration is based on mutual goals and a shared accountability for outcomes. Both parties must agree on goals and objectives to be accomplished. With firm commitment from both, each may contribute a different expertise to achieve the desired outcomes. They share the outcomes, whether these lead to successes or disappointments.

Fifth, the partners in the collaboration share their resources without dictating how they are to be used. They work collaboratively to decide on more effective and efficient ways of utilising their resources so that they will better serve mutual goals.

Together, these five communication norms should serve as the principal guidelines to ensure a healthy and operational work alliance between counsellors and teachers. The essence reflected in these norms is a mutual effort based on a very strong commitment to this professional working relationship. It is this mutual commitment and a sense of shared responsibility that forms the common ground upon which a collaboration process is built and strengthened.

**BUILDING A COMMUNICATION PROCESS THAT WORKS**

The basic foundation for initiating a career guidance curriculum that works is that the counsellor and the teacher both share the common vision of the importance for such an initiative to occur. In seeing the need to work together for promoting the vocational wellbeing of the students, both the counsellor and the teacher are interested in a collaborative effort. This is not to say that such initiatives should be proposed simultaneously by both parties. The teacher can approach the counsellor to share ideas of interest, and vice versa, the counsellor can communicate with the teacher on possible program development in the classroom setting. While a range of options exist to increase and improve the communication between the counsellor and the teacher, a deliberate effort is needed to not only maintain a communication channel between the two partners, but also to enhance the quality of such communication.

Several points are worth noting in establishing such a healthy communication process.
Set Up Communication Time
Mechanisms need to be established to keep communication flowing between the two partners. In other words, procedures should be in place to maintain regular communication. While informal communication is encouraged when needed, the counsellor and the teacher must ensure that they have planned and fixed meeting schedules throughout the entire academic year to discuss guidance and counselling issues of high priority. Guaranteed professional meeting time is of critical importance as it ensures both parties are given a forum in which to bring up issues deemed as important to guidance and counselling. It is important to point out here that this kind of professional communication differentiates itself substantially from either a regular business meeting or a contingent meeting that deals with time-pressed and urgent issues requiring immediate resolution among students.

The formally arranged counsellor–teacher communication is a strategic forum that draws attention to guidance and counselling issues that demand long-term planning. Similar to a professional in-service forum, the purpose of such a counsellor–teacher dialogue is developmental in nature (Paisley & Hubbard, 1999). It provides both partners with time and space to share and reflect on issues relevant to the design and delivery of a comprehensive guidance and counselling program to all students.

Set Up Communication Agenda
The ultimate purpose for having a professional forum for communication between the partners is about identifying issues of concern and getting things done. To achieve these goals, partners need to be well prepared for the professional dialogue. There must be a clear agenda set up well before each meeting schedule. In the circumstance where both counsellors and teachers find themselves struggling with time constraints in virtually all aspects of their school work, they still need to conduct professional meetings that produce concrete results with a practical impact on promoting the wellbeing of students. The agenda has to be defined in a clear, concise, simple and straightforward manner so that it can easily catch the attention of the readers, and remind them to be prepared to discuss key points.

A viable alternative for setting up an effective agenda is to avoid being too ambitious and focus on a couple of key themes that may be of higher interest to both parties (Kahn, 2000). A simple rule of thumb to follow here is ‘one thing at a time’. The feasibility of an agenda lies with its focus on a main issue or program to which both partners feel able to contribute in a meaningful way, making a positive difference. In prioritising goals, needs and action plans, the partners are better able to retain their key attention and utilise their combined resources, such as time and energy, in a much more effective and efficient manner. The bottom line is that quality rather than quantity is more important in this professional exchange. One annual meeting where something can be achieved is preferable to having two or three such meetings that produce fewer action plans and outcomes. Communication effort that produces concrete outcomes tends to retain motivation and stimulate new interest in the collaboration.

Coordinate Communication Implementation
Although either the counsellor or the teacher can initiate and organise such planned communications in the first place, the counsellor may take the lead to coordinate such activity. Once the activity becomes a professional routine both partners may take turns in the coordinating effort. This role can be negotiated in a collegial manner between the two partners. Of vital importance here is that the partner taking on the coordinating role has to give a bit more time and energy to put things together. In the meantime, the other partner should also be proactive and responsive to the making of the agenda. Thus, the professional dialogue itself demonstrates a collaborative process for initiating ideas, sharing responsibility and implementing plans.

Enhance Collaboration in Classroom-Based Career Guidance
The counsellor–teacher collaboration can be built in several different ways for the purpose of enhancing career education and guidance among students. Although these aspects are very often closely connected, they can be divided into two general categories, that is, a classroom-based learning approach and after-class guidance activities. In the former category, the collaboration happens in the context where the counsellor would join the teacher to infuse the career education content into the curriculum while using
the classroom setting as a venue for promoting career education and guidance. In the latter situation, the counsellor solicits the input or invites the direct involvement of the teacher in career guidance activities that take place after the class. While this latter scenario certainly warrants significant attention and elaboration, it is beyond the scope of the present discussion to include this extracurricular context. Therefore, the following section focuses solely on the considerations of counsellor–teacher collaboration in enhancing classroom-based career guidance program and curriculum.

**Rationale for Classroom Infusion**

According to the National Standards for School Counseling Programs in the United States, promoting career development among students is part of the responsibility of professional school counsellors (American School Counselor Association, 1999; Campbell & Dahir, 1997; Dahir, Sheldon, & Valiga, 1998). To achieve this critical aspect of the guidance and counselling endeavour, classroom infusion is one of the most highly cost-effective methodologies that aim to reach all the students (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997; Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1997). Classroom infusion is about delivering the career guidance program directly to the classroom setting, and making career education an integral part of the required curriculum (Fall, 1994).

The main goal of strengthening and developing this guidance approach, therefore, is for the counsellor and the teacher to work closely in designing and implementing a career education program that is more relevant to the general needs of all the students in the class. This career education intervention aims to have positive effects on the students’ growth in their learning experience (Evans & Burck, 1992). With his or her knowledge and expertise in vocation guidance and career counselling, the counsellor can be more proactive in playing the role of a consultant and resource person who provides the teacher with much needed assistance in this educational and guidance process.

**Class Visit**

The counsellor’s visit to the classroom setting can be advantageous to career education. As mentioned earlier, because high school students—especially those at grade 11 and grade 12 level—are at the crossroads of their school-to-school or school-to-work transition, they need career guidance and education. Either type of transition manifests a significant life career transition for these students (Saginak, 2003). Unfortunately, only a very small number of these students will actually have an opportunity to talk to the counsellor for career related guidance, such as choosing either a vocational option (finding a job, occupational training) or an academic option (continuing college and university) after high school. Bringing career guidance and education into the classroom setting, in this sense, is a proactive outreach approach to all the students. Thus, counsellors have become increasingly engaged in the guidance curriculum activities in the classroom setting (Whiston, 2003).

Three points may be important for the success of this approach. First, the counsellor and the teacher both feel the need for the counsellor to come and visit. They exchange this need and mutually agree on the format and time for such a visit. There must be a clear goal that guides such a visit. As part of this goal, there should be specific objectives to be achieved through the visit. For example, the counsellor can come to the classroom as just an observer and listener, whose main purpose is to collect information. They may also come to be directly involved in helping the teacher implement a career education curriculum such as the CAPP program mentioned earlier. Furthermore, the counsellor may come to the class to play the role of an...
Articles

Educator. In this circumstance, the counsellor teaches the students a career guidance program, while the teacher plays the assistant role in the guidance activities. Second, there is always a need for a debriefing between the counsellor and the teacher after the counsellor’s visit (Lusky & Hayes, 2001). The purpose of the debriefing is to talk about the positive outcomes and discuss areas of the visit that need further improvement. Third, based on the positives and negatives such a visit may engender, the frequency of the visit can be negotiated between the teacher and the counsellor, making it a flexible and more effective helping method for career guidance. The centrality for making the counsellor’s visit beneficial to a career education program lies with the collaboration spirit and its related communication norms discussed in the previous section. Following these principles, the class visit should always be a well-planned and coordinated effort, but not a superficial gesture. Substance rather than format is much more important. This is to say that with collegial, professional and effective communication channels maintained between the counsellor and the teacher, the class visit is always intended to generate concrete results. Such results can be small gains such as stimulating students to start talking and thinking about their career interests, or gathering some information about student needs. More substantial positive change will occur as small gains accumulate.

Needs Assessment

As an essential component in all types of guidance programs, needs assessment is also a must when forming a career guidance program that will really work for students in the classroom setting (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Schmidt, 1999). It is important to know the needs of the students so that the career guidance program and curriculum can address specific issues and concerns of the students. To conduct relevant needs assessment, the counsellor can often benefit from close cooperation with the teacher. As frontline educators who have the most frequent contact with the majority of the student population, teachers often have the most up-to-date information that reflects the current situation of the students. A frequent sharing of student information between the teacher and the counsellor provides the counsellor with a useful database that may be used in the needs assessment process. In this regard, the teacher can often function as the channel of information flow between many students and the counsellor. It should be recognised that such communication is reciprocal. The counsellor can certainly provide the teacher with student information that the counsellor has collected in his or her work. Such information may assist the teacher to improve classroom learning, and make the career education curriculum more pertinent to the needs of the students.

In the meantime, a well-coordinated counsellor–teacher joint effort in reaching out to students in a classroom setting is no doubt a very relevant and cost-effective way for needs assessment. Conducting a needs assessment in a classroom setting can result in a range of benefits. First, it guarantees that all students have the opportunity to participate. Therefore, the design of a career guidance program or curriculum will take into account various demands and concerns from a large student population. For example, students with different levels of career maturity and preparation can have the opportunity to voice concerns from their particular perspectives and experiences. Second, it provides the counsellor with more exposure to many students who have not had the opportunity to connect with the counselling services in the school, or who have had little knowledge about the existence of the various career guidance programs and activities provided by the counselling service.

Needs assessment can be achieved in a variety of ways. The teacher can help the counsellor get students directly involved in an assessment task, such as completing a questionnaire-type survey, or in class discussions that specifically focus on letting students express their concerns and needs in the domain of career exploration. Meanwhile, some more informal and indirect methods may also be utilised for the same purpose. With the teacher’s invitation, the counsellor can be the on-site observer in the classroom, while they take part in class activities that contain elements of career guidance and education. For example, observing what students are thinking and
how they are reacting in a class that focuses on social communication skills or a course on economics can provide useful information for needs assessment. Such information often reflects students’ knowledge and competence levels relating to career awareness and planning, or career maturity as defined by Super (1990). This is an invaluable opportunity for the counsellor to collect first-hand data for assessment and program design. Based on the identified key issues from the observation, the counsellor can design career guidance and curriculum activities that reflect the students’ central concerns. Of course, the teacher is always invited to provide his or her feedback on such initiatives and plans, contributing to the development and fine-tuning of the program design.

Program Design and Refinement
The successful outcome of a classroom-based career guidance program or curriculum depends on a series of factors. These factors may include the relevance of the program to the needs of the majority of the students, the teacher’s preference and priority to implement the curriculum, and the counsellor’s direct involvement in coordinating and/or providing technical support in implementing the program. Along with these factors, a key determinant that affects the program outcome is the overall quality of the program itself. That is, a career education curriculum and its associated learning activities in the classroom setting has its own unique needs and characteristics. These special features of the curriculum differ from those of a career guidance program designed for an extracurricular context, even though both types of programs share the same goal of promoting career awareness and competency among students.

The centrality to bear in mind is that a classroom-based program or curriculum must possess aspects pertinent to the learning dynamics and needs within a classroom environment. Without taking into serious consideration these contextual variables, a program or curriculum may not be geared to a learner’s needs. Consequently, all good intentions will lose their momentum. Therefore, the essential point here is that well-defined goals and objectives must be translated into well-articulated, simple and, most of all, relevant content that is permissible and friendly to the audience—learners in the classroom. Does the content sound straightforward and interesting to all the students? How can it be made more relevant to the students’ immediate needs? How can the students be helped to connect their immediate needs to a more concrete future career plan? A series of questions such as these need to be asked and considered during the design of a classroom-based career guidance curriculum.

To ensure that the program content sounds appealing and relevant to the students, there is definitely a need to bring together the knowledge and expertise of both the teacher and the counsellor. The counsellor can certainly contribute more to the overall framework of such a program design, including aspects such as program philosophy, goals, objectives, and the main contents. In the meantime, the counsellor can learn a great deal from the teacher in refining these program elements, especially in sections that deal with procedural matters, such as the organisation of the content, time arrangement, and delivery strategies in a classroom setting.

Because they have more frequent daily contact, the teacher is often more familiar with the concerns and needs of the students, and is also more knowledgeable about the teaching and learning dynamics in a classroom environment. Such classroom-based expert knowledge from the teacher will provide the program with more ‘bolts and nuts’, strengthening the relevance of the career guidance curriculum in the eyes of the students (Ripley, Erford, Dahir, & Eschbach, 2003). Similar to other types of collaboration between the two partners, the counsellor and the teacher should always follow up their cooperation endeavour (Lusky & Hayes, 2001). They can share their reflections on what has been done, identify together the pros and cons of the program content, examine ways in which things can be improved, and explore options for new initiatives in similar future contexts. This collaboration effort enhances the design of the program content, which in turn, increases the overall quality and effectiveness of the program, making the program more relevant and helpful to all students in the class.

Program Delivery
A career guidance curriculum with relevant content materials is a necessary condition for the success of the program. Yet, this condition is not sufficient to
guarantee a positive outcome. Even a well-designed program with very rich and meaningful content cannot achieve its goals and objectives without an effective delivery methodology (Niles & Akos, 2003; Saginak, 2003). To use a metaphor here, the classroom context is similar to a marketplace. The students are the consumers and the career guidance curriculum is a product. Although the good quality of the product is important, it is equally, if not more important that a very thoughtful and effective marketing strategy is in place to promote the product to the consumers. In other words, effective implementation methods need to be formed and utilised to make the program appealing and pertinent to all the students in the classroom.

To achieve this goal, the program should adopt the normal characteristics that are both familiar and appealing to the majority of the students in this learning context. The program becomes influential when the students feel that not only the program content appears relevant to their personal needs in vocational exploration and career planning, but also that their participation in the related guidance activities results in a very interesting learning experience. In this sense it is reasonable to claim that a determining factor for a successful program is to generate a series of implementation strategies that are coherent to the classroom learning environment and receptive to the students.

The frontline teacher has rich experiences of delivering teaching services to his or her students. Being knowledgeable in classroom dynamics, the teacher knows better how to get messages across to the audience. This expertise is certainly a valuable asset in program delivery. However, it should be recognised that although classroom communication norms are important variables to consider in the delivery of a guidance program, a career guidance curriculum does have a unique feature that requires additional communication strategies. That is, such a curriculum is better delivered with an approach that combines the characteristics of teaching and guidance. The counsellor can contribute to the integration of guidance and counselling components into the career curriculum delivery.

First, the counsellor can play the role of a resource person who provides the teacher with assistance in integrating useful group guidance and counselling techniques in the teaching process. They can provide teachers with short training sessions that focus on the very basic skills needed to lead a career guidance group (Newsome & Gladding, 2003). The counsellor can also be directly involved in leading career guidance groups in the classroom, which can have demonstrative reference for his or her teacher colleagues.

Second, having done the necessary preparation and coordination beforehand, it may be very helpful for the teacher and the counsellor to co-lead the career guidance program or co-teach the career education curriculum. The counsellor can learn from the teacher ways to reach out to the majority of students in a classroom setting. Such teaching experiences can also benefit the counsellor while he or she works with students in an extracurricular context, especially in the group guidance context. Likewise, the teacher may find it very beneficial to learn a range of guidance and counselling related skills in a group communication context from the counsellor. A constructive combination of the strengths from both communication modes can lead to ways of communication that are more effective in this particular learning context.

Finally, depending on the particular dynamics and atmosphere of a certain class, the teacher and the counsellor can share their views on ways of improving delivery methodology, coming up with more pertinent and contextual guidance techniques to facilitate the students’ participation in this learning environment. For example, size of the group, types of activities, and length of activities can all be subject to a mutual and constructive consultation. Both partners may find this professional exchange helpful to generate insight for program and curriculum improvement (Basham et al., 1998).

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

A good collaboration between the teacher and the counsellor provides promise for the enhancement of career guidance and career education. Although this discussion has looked at such collaboration in a classroom context, similar cooperation between the two educator partners can promote and strengthen career guidance and education outside the classroom. For example, the counsellor and the teacher can cooperate in a variety of career guidance initiatives and activities. These activities include conducting focused
career exploration and career interest development groups among students, organising career days and career awareness field trips, coordinating job-shadowing and apprenticeship programs, engaging parents in their children’s career and vocational planning, and networking with local community and business in support of the school-to-school and school-to-work transition.

It may also be assumed that similar counsellor–teacher collaborations can and ought to be developed and implemented in other educational and extracurricular activities, especially guidance and counselling interventions in the school environment. Not only will such helping contexts include the career planning and vocational exploration domain, but also the other core domains, such as personal–social guidance and counselling, and educational guidance and counselling. The benefit for both partners in this collaboration is mutual; they both gain invaluable leaning experiences from their partner’s professional knowledge and expertise. Likewise, they both make proactive and positive contributions to the same learning process. With a supportive attitude and facilitative leadership from the school administration, the counsellor–teacher collaboration has the potential to contribute to a positive school climate in general, and to the formation and growth of a comprehensive school guidance and counselling initiative in particular. Consequently, this collaboration effort is to enhance the wellbeing of all students.

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Articles


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Why is it important to promote and enhance career guidance for high school students?
Answer: Career guidance is of particular importance to high school students because this group of students is at a significant crossroads of their lives—encountering the challenge of school-to-school or school-to-work transition. Although not every student in this group is necessarily in acute need of career counselling, the majority of the students in the group do need guidance so that they will increase their career awareness, and gain basic skills in some preliminary career planning and decision-making. In doing so, they will be better prepared to make the transition.

Why is there a need for counsellor–teacher collaboration in high school career guidance?
Answer: Notwithstanding the necessity for career guidance and counselling, professional school counsellors in North America often find themselves struggling with the excessive overload of duties they have to carry out on a daily basis. As the resources in the school system are stretched to their limits, there are fewer counsellors to serve more students. In order to reach out to a massive student population in need of career guidance, counsellors and teachers need to work together more closely to promote and implement such guidance initiatives.

What are some of the essential requirements to build an effective counsellor–teacher collaboration that will work?
Answer: The counsellor–teacher work alliance must be built on a mutual effort and interest. Based on that, an effective collaboration process should draw attention to the time and agenda needed to facilitate a constructive communication process. Also, coordination is needed to make the communication process run smoothly.

What is the central idea of counsellor–teacher collaboration in the classroom-based career guidance?
Answer: Counsellors and teachers can collaborate in several ways in the school environment. Classroom-based career guidance, however, mainly occurs in the context where the counsellor would join the teacher to infuse the career education content into the curriculum, using the classroom setting as the venue for promoting career education and guidance. In doing so, career guidance can be delivered to a large number of students who otherwise may not have the opportunity to utilise such a guidance service that can be very helpful to their career planning.

How can classroom-based career guidance be implemented?
Answer: Classroom-based career guidance can be implemented through a range of closely collaborated efforts between counsellors and teachers. Within the classroom setting, counsellors and teachers can collaborate on conducting needs assessment, organising career guidance courses and activities, designing and refining new initiatives that are pertinent to the classroom education context, and finding ways in which they can deliver the career guidance initiatives with more effectiveness and efficiency.
The theoretical assumptions and practices of vocational psychology and career counselling have been variously brought into question through postmodernist challenges to objectivist methodology and logical-positivism (e.g. Patton & McMahon, 1999; Pryor & Bright, 2003; Richardson, 1993; Savickas, 1994). Despite the evidence indicating the effectiveness of career development interventions in general (Oliver & Spokane, 1988; Sexton, Whiston, Bleuer, & Walz, 1997; Swanson, 1995; Whiston, Sexton, & Lasoff, 1998), the robust criticism of logical-positivism and objectivity, as it has been applied to the practice of career counselling, has opened the way for the accession of a new paradigm for career counselling that has been established upon constructivist and social constructionist notions (McMahon & Patton, 2000; Savickas, 1994; Young & Collin, 2004). This article contributes to the professional discourse of these new approaches by introducing a counselling technique based upon the notions of constructivist career counselling.

Constructivist and narrative approaches to career counselling have emerged as viable practical alternatives to traditional models. This article describes the development of a career counselling assessment process that is based upon notions derived from constructivism, narrative, and systems theory. The technique utilises a sentence-completion method to facilitate clients’ exploration of personal career systems. Evaluation of the technique indicates that clients experienced a positive reaction and no negative reaction to the process. Furthermore, there was tentative evidence that it may impact upon the positive expectations for their career counselling.

**A NARRATIVE SENTENCE-COMPLETION PROCESS FOR SYSTEMS CAREER ASSESSMENT**

PETER McILVEEN, TANYA FORD and KRISTINE DUN, University of Southern Queensland

Constructivist and narrative approaches to career counselling have emerged as viable practical alternatives to traditional models. This article describes the development of a career counselling assessment process that is based upon notions derived from constructivism, narrative, and systems theory. The technique utilises a sentence-completion method to facilitate clients’ exploration of personal career systems. Evaluation of the technique indicates that clients experienced a positive reaction and no negative reaction to the process. Furthermore, there was tentative evidence that it may impact upon the positive expectations for their career counselling.

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**CONSTRUCTIVISMS AND CAREER COUNSELLING**

In their introduction to the special edition of the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, devoted to constructivism and social constructionism, Young and Collin (2004) set out a useful synthesis of the literature...
under the plural rubric of constructivisms (hereafter constructivism for convenience). Young and Collin also described constructivism as focusing on ‘meaning making and the construction of the social and psychological worlds through individual, cognitive processes while [social constructionism] emphasises that the social and psychological worlds are made real (constructed) through social processes and interaction’ (p. 375). Hence, social constructionism actively aims to include distal factors within the framework of an individual’s experience of the world, and attends less to internal psychological processes, whereas constructivism attends to the proximal, phenomenal, mental experiences of the world. Despite the differences, both forms of knowing have generated a stimulating array of implications for the practice of career counselling.

A career counselling process, enacted under the aegis of constructivism, requires the counsellor to enter into the psychosocial sphere of a person’s career system. This incorporates the notion of a therapeutic system in which counsellor and client exist within one another’s systems, and thus coalesce to create a new system. The counsellor cannot understand the person by taking an independent vantage and objectively observe this system; they must enter, and, if only briefly, immerse into the living discourse of a person’s career-life. Immersion into the narrative pays tribute to the subjectivity of the counselling experience and phenomenological locations revealed by Richardson (1993). In the counselling process, the career counsellor is not an expert but a facilitator of a career-life learning experience and a co-constructor of meaning inherently embedded in the process.

Walsh (1996) identified that in the nexus of theory of career development and counselling practice the real work of applying a career theory through the practice of career counselling falls to the skill of the counsellor. The subjectivity of this position highlights the difficulty of actually translating theory into practice. Constructivism must address this pragmatic problem if it is to acquire the widespread professional acceptance enjoyed by traditional models of career development practice. Constructivism can generate myriad forms in theory and practice. Inasmuch as it is intellectually liberating, the breadth of constructivism also has the potential of being paralysing for practitioners who seek ways to pragmatically operationalise such a complex paradigm in the counselling dyad.

Constructivism has directed career practitioners towards the holistic experience of a person’s career within their environmental context. An exemplar of this inclusive and dynamic approach has been the Systems Theory Framework (STF) (Patton & McMahon, 1999). The STF emphasises social constructionist notions of embedding career within a blend of human experiences ranging from the intra-psyche (e.g. values) through to vast and apparently intangible environment context variables (e.g. political decisions). The STF dynamically tethers myriad elements of career by invoking the notions of recursiveness, time (past, present and future), and change. Moreover, STF emphasises that the valence of particular factors can change, that the connectedness of variables can change and that the relationships between variables may not necessarily be reciprocal. In this way, the constellations of factors within a person’s career-life system throb and writhe as if they were part of a living system. This description metaphorically portrays the chaotic dynamism that is career, as propounded by Pryor and Bright (2003).

**Narrative Approach**

Personal meaning making and narrative identity have emerged as valued topics of the psychology of personality and life transitions (e.g. Bauer & McAdams, 2004; McAdams, 1993; Singer, 2004). Narratives play a crucial role in a person’s understanding of their self and world.

Narrative and self are inseparable in that narrative is simultaneously born out of experience and gives shape to experience. Narrative activity provides tellers with an opportunity to impose order on otherwise disconnected events, and to create continuity between past, present, and the imagined worlds (Ochs & Capps, 1996, p. 19).
Articles

Ochs and Capps (1996) suggested that narratives integrate various modalities of human expression (e.g. speech, music, movement) in order to manifest personal or communal meaning. They suggested that narratives contain elements of temporality (i.e. time-reference to past, present and future), and point of view, a notion similar to Richardson’s (1993) location, but includes the binding power of plot.

In his seminal text on narrative career counselling, Cochran (1997) described three features of narrative as life story:

First, a narrative provides a temporal organisation, integrating beginning, middle, and end into a whole … Second, a story is a synthetic structure that configures an indefinite expansion of elements and spheres of elements into a whole … Third, the plot of a narrative carries a point (pp. 5–7).

Narrative is usually the content that a client brings to counselling as an initially inchoate concern and then through to a broader, evolving personal story which seeks to explain and predict a life. It is through the telling and the hearing of a life story, through the predominant psychosocial currency of counselling—talk, text and image—that both angst and insight emerge. Therein lies the collaborative work of career counselling.

Narrative protagonists such as Chen (1997, 1998, 2002), Cochran (1997), Gibson (2004), and Peavy (2000, 2001) assert that a narrative approach to career counselling is a meaning-making process that must relate to the entire complexity of an individual’s life and identity. A narrative approach is not simply a matter of recounting events but an intentional and interpretive interpersonal communication which endeavours to generate coherent and connected meanings. Narrative career counselling requires the counsellor to take part in the narration (i.e. co-construct) through his or her own contributions or insights to explore the client’s position. This places onus upon the counsellor to know his or her own location and power within the dyad. The career counsellor assists the client to draw links among unexplored or unclear elements of their narrative. A crucial feature of the perspective is that the client is an active agent in the process, as opposed to a passive recipient of expert knowledge. Moreover, future orientation is a source of primary concern in the formation of narrative in counselling.

**Narrative Technique**

Don Super’s (1957) thematic extrapolation method laid an important foundation for the concept of deriving understanding of a person’s career from his or her own personal history. This technique proceeds through analysis of events and development in order to synthesise recurrent themes and underlying trends, and ultimately predict their career future. This stood in contrast to the psychometric, actuarial methods available at that time. Although originally conceived from the position of a logical-positive approach to career, like many other traditional techniques, this one is readily subsumed under the banner of constructivism by its emphasis on the personal experience of the individual. Although ignored because of an inadequate scientific support base at that time, Super adumbrated the future emergence of thematic exploration.

As practitioners, we assert that the interview is the mainstay of career counselling and certainly the primary vehicle of personal exploration under the rubric of constructivism, with its attendant shared dialogue, interpretation, and ultimately, meaning making for the client’s development. Cochran (1997) and Brott (2004) described a range of techniques or topics for enriching the interview process or empowering narration (e.g. life-line, life chapters, success experiences, family constellations, role models, early recollections, life-role circles). These techniques have been primarily written or spoken in modality. Recent work has highlighted visuo-spatial avenues of narrative career counselling, and these include: career system diagrams (Miller, 2004); text-boxes connected to pictures, personal coat of arms, (Gibson, 2000, 2003); collage of meaningful pictures (Adams, 2003); mind-maps (Pollitt, 2003); career-o-gram (Thorngren & Feit, 2001); and life-role circles (Brown & Brooks, 1991).

There is convincing evidence that the act of writing about oneself and issues has positive benefits upon wellbeing (e.g. Cameron & Nicholls, 1998). Life-lines (Goldman, 1992), life chapters (Cochran, 1997) and the storied approach to career counselling (Brott, 2001), essentially epitomise the notion of an individual talking and writing about his or her self and their career life in order to generate some meaning...
related to career. Brott centred the process on story co-construction, deconstruction and construction. Through these processes the client explores the meanings and interconnectedness of life roles (e.g. family, leisure).

McIlveen, McGregor-Bayne, Alcock and Hjertum (2003) adapted the storied approach (Brott, 2001) by developing a semi-structured interview based around the STF (Patton & McMahon, 1999). Their method structured the interview conversation around the myriad variables of career-life identified in the STF. Furthermore, McIlveen et al. (2003) found that the method was efficacious in stimulating career attributions and intentions towards self-exploration, when compared against a standard psychological assessment interview.

We aimed to further that work by developing a written means of exploring an individual’s career system through his or her own narrative elaboration. Our intention was to facilitate, through the use of writing, a client’s thinking about his or her career issues through a matrix of variables identified in the STF. Our reasoning was that providing a guide to a writing process would encourage the client to comprehensively consider their career as an entire system, as distinct from writing about a narrower topic (e.g. recollections of success). We assert that this guided elaboration firmly embedded the technique within the domain of constructivism. In addition, we sought to evaluate the technique by assessing clients’ reactions to completing it.

CONSTRUCTING A NARRATIVE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The recommendations for developing qualitative career assessment processes published by McMahon, Patton and Watson (2003) were used as a guide for the development of a technique. These recommendations included the following:

- Ground the assessment process in theory.
- Test the career assessment process.
- Ensure that the process can be completed in a reasonable time frame.
- Design a process that fosters holism.
- Write instructions for the client.
- Write readable and easily understood instructions.
- Sequence logical, simple, small, achievable steps.
- Provide a focused and flexible process.
- Encourage cooperative involvement of counsellor and client.
- Include a debriefing process.

Item Construction

The sentence-completion paradigm was chosen as a useful means of facilitating a client’s writing. Sentence-completion has been used to develop a measure of ego-identity in other discipline areas, most notably in the work of Loevinger (1985). In the work presented here, we borrowed the concept of completing sentences as a form of projective technique. We believed that an individual would psychologically project onto a part-sentence those career issues most meaningful for them.

Each variable of the STF and others not included in the framework, but ones we believed to be important for personal understanding (e.g. emotional impact), were represented by a part sentence. There were 31 system variables and three generic variables—‘Impact’, ‘Summary’ and ‘The Future’. Each variable had three partial sentences, summing to a total of 102 items. For each variable, one sentence-part was present or past focused, one sentence was future-focused, and the final sentence addressed the value of the variable through a rating (low, medium, high) of how the variable impacted upon career-life. In the case of the variable ‘Health’, for example, the sentences were:

- At the moment my health is …
- My health will …
- How healthy I am has a low/medium/high impact upon my career-life because …

The part-sentences were derived from the first author’s recollections of common issues discussed in counselling sessions using the semi-structured interview developed by McIlveen et al. (2003). Potential for bias was attenuated by making the parts as generic as possible. It should nevertheless be noted that a
postmodernist approach assumes that objectivity is unattainable and it consequently does not necessarily eschew bias. A postmodernist perspective requires an awareness, acceptance, and if necessary, deconstruction of one’s influence in any discursive process, and constructivist career counselling is no exception.

The Form
The nine-page form was entitled ‘My Career Future’ and included a comprehensive set of instructions on the first page. The instructions were written to encourage the writer to be open and avoid pre-judging his or her responses. The concept of the interconnectedness of variables of the career system was emphasised, along with the importance of open exploration. This was reinforced by a modified graphical representation of an STF diagram (Patton & McMahon, 1999, p. 163). The modified version did not include the original diagrammatical elements for recursiveness, change over time, chance, but did include additional variables (e.g. dreams, self-confidence). Each item had sufficient space for the writer to fit in a long sentence or to accommodate large handwriting. The form was printed in landscape format.

Initial Trial
The items were initially tested with respect to how it felt to actually write responses to them. The lists of items were completed by the three authors and by three individuals who volunteered to test-run the items. Feedback from this process resulted in modifications to the items (e.g. shortening some sentence-parts because they were too prescriptive) and the process (e.g. including a diagram of a career system).

Evaluation Method
Upon completing the final version of ‘My Career Chapter’, we proceeded to its evaluation in a counselling setting. The evaluation was exploratory and with a focus upon clients’ emotive reactions, rather than a definitive account of the potential efficacy of the techniques.

Participants
Twenty-two clients of the university’s Careers Service voluntarily participated in the evaluation process. The counselling services of the university are free of charge. The mean age was 22.8 years; 14 were female and eight were male. All but three were undergraduate students. All of the participants spoke English as their first language.

Measures
The Client Reactions System (CRS) (Hill, Helms, Spiegel, & Tichenor, 1988) was used in this study. This scale was developed to measure clients’ reactions to therapist interventions. The scale contains 14 positive reactions (e.g. I felt understood, or hopeful) and seven negative reactions (e.g. worse, confused). Clients were instructed to rate their level of agreement using a seven-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. Unfortunately, Hill et al. (1988) did not present reliability indices for this scale.

The Clients’ Constructions of Change Scale (CCCS) (Dumka, Sprenkle, & Martin, 1995) was modified for use in this study. The CCCS was developed to measure clients’ perception of their counselling experience. The scale measures four constructs—outcome optimism, perceived progress, self-agency, and effort and persistence. The scale consists of 16 items with four items per construct subscale. Clients were instructed to rate their level of agreement using a seven-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. Dumka et al. (1995) reported Chronbach’s alpha indices as .81 for outcome optimism, .88 for perceived progress, .81 for self-agency, and .84 for effort and persistence. The CCCS items were modified slightly to suit the context of career counselling, as opposed to the original scale’s context of clinical counselling. For example, the term ‘career counselling’ was inserted in place of ‘counselling’ where appropriate. There were no obvious contextual or meaning related anomalies in making these changes.

Procedure and Design
A one-shot case study design was implemented. The Careers Service operates a drop-in session in which clients’ concerns are screened in terms of the presenting issues and needs. This triage process results in some clients being given information only, whereas others may be referred to alternative agencies, and some could be referred into the career counselling service. Due to the constraints of offering, and, more-
over not withholding counselling services to potential clients, the participants were not randomly selected. Those clients appropriate for career counselling were invited to take part in the trial, and hence they represented a convenience sample rather than a true random sample. Allocation to a counsellor (three in total) was based upon their availability.

At the end of the drop-in screening interview, the participants were invited to complete the ‘My Career Chapter’ exercise and return it when they attended their scheduled full career counselling appointment. They were presented with a brief, standardised rationale that their career concerns related to a system of influences—at this point a systems diagram was shown—and that it may be helpful to write about their system of influences. They were instructed to read the guidelines and complete the Chapter. They were instructed to complete the evaluation schedules, CRS and CCCS, immediately following their completion of the written exercise. Immediately completing the evaluation schedules was required to mitigate the potential effects of intervening influences. Instructions specifically guided the individuals to rate their experience in relation to completing the written work (and to exclude their experience of the drop-in screening interview). The schedules were to be given to the receptionist upon return for their counselling appointment.

Results
There were no missing data. Skewness and kurtosis coefficients of the variables were converted to a z-statistic (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). This analysis indicated that there was no significant skewness or kurtosis. Outlier screening indicated that there were two cases whose scores on the CCCS subscales were markedly lower than those of other cases. Though their scores depressed the average scores somewhat, these cases’ data were nevertheless retained in the dataset for the overall statistical analysis.

Clients’ scores on the CRS for positive reactions and negative reactions are presented in Tables 1 and 2 respectively. All mean scores of the positive variables were more than four (i.e., neither agree nor disagree). The mean scores for the variables understood, supported, hopeful, relief, clear, and educated were rated between ‘slightly agree’ to ‘agree’. These results indicated a mild positive reaction to completing the ‘My Career Chapter’.

### Table 1: Mean Scores for Positive Reactions on the Client Reactions System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>95% Confidence Limits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understood</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>5.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>5.73</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>5.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopeful</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>5.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware of negative thoughts/behaviours</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>5.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better self-understanding</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of feelings</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>4.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstuck</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>4.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New perspective</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>4.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educated</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>4.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New ways to behave</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenged</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>4.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Means for the negative reactions were all between ratings of two and four with a trend towards a rating of ‘slightly disagree’ to ‘disagree’. These results indicated that there was no evidence of an overall negative reaction to completing the ‘My Career Chapter’ exercise.

The mean scores for the CCCS subscales are presented in Table 3. The alpha coefficients were .63 for outcome optimism, .66 for self-agency, .69 for perceived progress, and .76 for effort and persistence. These coefficients were less than those reported by Dumka et al. (1995); however, they were taken to indicate that the scales had acceptable reliability for the purposes of an exploratory study in accordance with Streiner’s (2003) suggestions. The subscales outcome optimism, self-agency, and effort and persistence, all showed a rating between ‘slightly agree’ to ‘agree’. The subscale perceived progress was rated between ‘neither agree nor disagree’ to ‘slightly agree’. Taken together, these results indicated a mild positive account across three subscales, and an equivocal or neutral positive outcome for progress.

### DISCUSSION

Constructivist approaches to career development offer a fresh paradigm for the practice of career counselling. Under this aegis we sought to further develop narrative and systems models by constructing a career counselling technique that facilitated a client’s self-exploration of their career system. Moreover, we sought to establish the reactions clients felt immediately after, and in response to, completing the assessment process.

The CRS (Hill et al., 1988) furnishes a measure of clients’ positive and negative emotional reactions. The positive emotional variables understood, supported, hopeful, relief, clear, and educated were most frequently endorsed. All of the remaining positive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>95% Confidence Limits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scared</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>2.62 4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worse</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.95 3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuck</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>2.56 3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of direction</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.89 3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confused</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>3.10 4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misunderstood</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>2.30 3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reaction</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>2.38 3.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>95% Confidence Limits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome optimism</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>5.30 5.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-agency</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>4.96 5.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived progress</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>4.19 5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effort and persistence</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>5.47 6.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
variables fell within the mid-range and certainly none were within the range of being absent (which would have been indicated by ratings of disagreement). We interpret this result as meaning that clients experienced a mild positive emotional state in reaction to the completion of the tool. Although a positive state is encouraging, we were more interested in the results of the negative emotions, which indicated that the process did no harm. The ratings on negative emotional variables were in the range of disagreement, that is, clients were not experiencing a negative emotion in reaction to the completion process. In summary, the outcomes on the CRS indicate that the completion process is not emotionally offensive to clients.

The CCCS (Dumka et al., 1995) was modified for the purposes of this study by changing the content of items to reflect career counselling, as distinct from the original schedule, which related to clinical counselling. The alpha coefficients reported here indicate that the modified CCCS had acceptable reliability. It is not unlikely that the relatively small sample size had an impact upon the coefficients. Nevertheless, we cautiously view the results as interpretable. We were not surprised to find that perceived progress was the lowest of the three subscales. Given that clients had only just commenced the career counselling experience, it would be unlikely that they would indicate a sudden change in their movement towards an improved career status. The results on the subscales outcome optimism, self-agency, and effort and persistence were encouraging, in that we interpreted the three together as indicating that the experience may have positively generated a sense of hope and enthusiasm for the career exploration process upon which they had embarked.

Although the natural contingencies of the setting in which this evaluation was completed did not allow for the operation of a clear experimental design, we assert that our explicit instructions to clients—that they should immediately rate their reactions specifically towards the tool and completion process—secured the validity of the results. Notwithstanding the caveat on the design, the results indicate that the process of completing ‘My Career Chapter’ was not offensive or negative and therefore did not place clients at risk of psychological harm. Moreover, the results offer initial evidence that the experience of writing ‘My Career Chapter’ was on average a positive one that enhanced their positive expectations of career exploration. We conclude therefore that ‘My Career Chapter’ stands as another narrative career counselling tool that could be adapted by practitioners to suit their needs. ‘My Career Chapter’ would benefit from further development and refinement. Future evaluations of this technique should investigate its relationship to the subsequent counselling experience into which the client returns with completed form in-hand and to assess its efficacy in comparison with other narrative techniques.

**References**


Articles


What is one purported difference between constructivism and social constructionism?
Answer: Constructivism has its focus upon the (internal) phenomenological construal processes utilised by an individual to make sense of their world, whereas social constructionism has its focus upon how the individual makes sense of their world through the multiple (external) discourses in which they live.

What are some guidelines for developing a qualitative assessment process?
Answer: Ground the assessment process in theory; test the career assessment process; ensure that the process can be completed in a reasonable time frame; design a process that fosters holism; write instructions for the client; write readable and easily understood instructions; sequence logical, simple, small, achievable steps; provide a focused and flexible process; encourage cooperative involvement of counsellor and client; and include a debriefing process.
AUSTRALIAN ARTISTS, STARVING AND WELL-NOURISHED: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE PROTOTYPICAL PROTEAN CAREER?

RUTH BRIDGSTOCK, Queensland University of Technology

Recent literature documents the demise of traditional linear careers and the rise of protean, boundaryless, or portfolio careers, typified by do-it-yourself career management and finding security in ongoing employability rather than ongoing employment. This article identifies key attributes of the ‘new career’, arguing that individuals with careers in the well-established fields of fine and performing arts often fit into the ‘new careerist’ model. Employment/career data for professional fine artists, performing artists and musicians in Australia is presented to support this claim. A discussion of the meta-competencies and career-life management skills essential to navigate the boundaryless work world is presented, with specific reference to Australian artists, and recommendations for future research.

In a post-industrial economy where organisations have slimmed down and sped up in response to globalisation, technology and competition, the notion of ‘career’ has also transformed. Heralded in the 1970s (Hall, 1976), by the mid-1990s the demise of the traditional linear career, ‘bounded’ by orderly employment arrangements and progression through a single firm and occupation, was increasingly documented (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; deFillippi & Arthur, 1994; Hall, 1996). Terms such as protean career (Hall, 2004), boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) and portfolio career (Cawsey, Deszca & Mazerolle, 1995) all refer to aspects of this apparently new phenomenon—the need for individuals to enhance their human capital through active career navigation; to seek employment security no longer, but opt instead for security in employability.

This ‘new phenomenon’ has a familiar ring to representatives of several occupations who present themselves as having faced this challenge for
centuries. Small business owners in many fields, professional athletes and fine/performing artists (Greffe, 2002) all arguably have long histories of boundarylessness and other hallmarks of the protean career.

This article explores the concept of the protean, boundaryless, portfolio career, specifically arguing that individuals working within the well-established fields of fine and performing arts often fit into a protean career model; space constraints preclude more thorough discussion of the other fields mentioned. In addition, this article explores the self-knowledge and industry competencies (ACCI, 2002; deFillippi & Arthur, 1994; Hall, 2004) and meta-competencies now proposed as essential to protean workers, with specific reference to professional artists in Australia.

WHAT ARE THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE PROTEAN CAREER?

Within this changing work world, competencies acquired for one job may not serve for a long period; work is no longer characterised by a set of tasks that are mastered once; careers are no longer characterised by vertical advancement within one organisation (McMahon, Patton & Tatham, 2003). Increasingly, work may be characterised as a series of periods within and outside paid employment, linked by learning and retraining. These career-related experiences are self-initiated, according to personal criteria, and self-managed.

The protean career is a process which the person, not the organization, is managing ... the protean person’s own personal career choices and search for self-fulfilment are the unifying or integrative elements in his or her life. The criterion of success is internal (psychological success) not external (Hall, 1976, p. 201).

Personal identification with meaningful work, personal responsibility for career management, and subjective, psychological measures of success are the first three generally recognised elements of the protean career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 2004). Individuals with a protean orientation are less concerned with maximising chances for promotions, salary and greater power within one working context, and are more motivated by autonomy, personal values and psychological success (Mirvis & Hall, 1996).

The decline of traditional employment relationships has borne the notion of the psychological contract; the protean career is typified by short-term transactional relationships with employers (more appropriately termed ‘clients’ in many cases), based on the exchange of work for upskilling and networking/increased marketability (Altman & Post, 1996). As the new careerist takes responsibility for their career development outside the bounded traditional employment relationship, the concept of a social network becomes more important (Raider & Burt, 1996). Individuals in protean careers recurrently seek jobs and information regarding new opportunities (Jones & deFillippi, 1996; Raider & Burt, 1996), and so often depend upon personal/professional contact networks for the next lead in their career journeys.

It is in the protean careerist’s interests to acquire skills that are transferable between employment opportunities (Hall, 1996). We are in an era of do-it-yourself career management which challenges individuals to play a greater role in constructing their own career development; workers are encouraged to act as free agents, developing personal enterprises and marketing personal skills. Individuals must increasingly focus on employability rather than job security, and must learn skills that assist them in taking responsibility for the direction and evolution of their own careers. Savickas (1999) suggested that in preparing for such dynamic working lives, individuals need to constantly ‘look ahead’ and ‘look around’, with the focus not on unfolding careers but actively constructing careers.

Regarding this changed focus from linear career planning, Amundson, Parker and Arthur (2002) discussed ‘a continuing tension between leveraging past experience and positioning for future opportunity’ (p. 27). These authors emphasised that the individual is an active, self-organising system; there is therefore an imperative for individuals to learn to intentionally act on environments of change.
People make sense of the world of work through subjective interpretation of their own career experience. In living through the complexity of economic life, they draw new insights and formulate new strategies that make sense of this complexity (Amundson et al., 2002, p. 27).

In the quest for career self-fulfilment and maximising employability, the protean worker may have a portfolio of multiple simultaneous or overlapping employment arrangements, requiring them to draw on various generic and transferable skills and perform numerous different roles (Mallon, 1999). The key attributes of the protean worker discussed above are summarised in Table 1.

**A Snapshot of the Arts Sector in Australia**
Currently, 300,000 people are principally employed in Australia’s cultural and arts sector (including artists, arts management and administration), with a total of 900,000 (9 per cent of the total working population) having obtained some paid work in this sector in 2002–03 (Australia Council, 2003). An estimated 40,000–50,000 are professional artists: writers, actors, musicians, visual artists, craft practitioners, directors, choreographers, composers, or cultural development workers who have undertaken professional work within the past three to five years. This definition will be used throughout this article except where otherwise specified.

Clearly the arts sector, while not large, is an established one experiencing moderate growth. The 2004–05 federal budget saw the Australia Council for the Arts’ triennial funding renewed, with additional funding of $10 million over five years. In 2003, total Australian government spending on arts and related activities at all levels was $1823 million (Australia Council, 2003).

**Arts Workers as Protean Careerists: The Evidence**

**Mobility, Occupational Roles and Income Sources**
Throsby and Hollister (2003) reported that the average professional Australian artist had four different serious arts-related occupations. About

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1: Key Attributes of Traditional vs Protean Careers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Traditional Career</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mobility/Security</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm-specific skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupational Roles</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source of Income</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary/wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single source of income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Career Motivation and Measures of Success</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility for Career Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and professional networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not as important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
two-thirds of these were undertaken in their own general art form (e.g. a writer might work as a novelist, a screenwriter and a non-fiction writer), and one-third in other art forms (e.g. craft, music, or dancing).

The majority of artists (63 per cent) hold multiple jobs simultaneously, with 56 per cent holding two jobs and 7 per cent holding three. By comparison, only 5.2 per cent of the general working population hold multiple jobs (ABS, 2002). Forty-three per cent of artists who undertake additional work do so in arts-related fields, while 32 per cent undertake work in unrelated areas. Perhaps Throsby and Hollister (2003) had a point when they entitled a recent wave of their longitudinal study of the working lives of Australian artists ‘Don’t Give Up Your Day Job’.

The literature distinguishes between ‘creative’ and ‘performing’ artists (Rengers, 2000) in terms of typical work arrangements, with performing artists more frequently contracting work for hourly wages, and creative artists more often self-employed with piecemeal reimbursement (refer to Table 2). Both groups, however, experience far higher levels of freelance/self-employed work than the general population, and far lower levels of permanent wage-earning (ABS, 2002). Eighty per cent of all artists have an ABN and work for clients through their own businesses (Throsby & Hollister, 2003).

### Career Motivations and Measures of Success

Economists are often intrigued by the fact that arts labour markets experience continuing growth, despite persistently low and often declining rates of monetary compensation (Menger, 2001; Rengers, 2000). Worldwide, this sector is characterised by high rates of unemployment and underemployment (e.g. intermittent, voluntary and part-time work). According to the Australian Graduate Destinations Survey (Graduate Careers Council, 2002), four months after graduation visual and performing arts graduates earned far less than graduates in other sectors with comparable human capital characteristics, and a far higher percentage were looking for employment (43.1 per cent; average of all graduates 18.7 per cent). Please note, however, that in contrast to the definition taken elsewhere in this article, the Graduate Careers Council (2002) defined ‘visual/performing arts graduates’ to also include fashion design and graphic design, categories where artists may have opportunities to follow more traditional career paths.

Further evidence suggests that professional artists are underemployed. About one-third of professional arts workers experienced unemployment between 1996 and 2001 (Throsby and Hollister, 2003), and the 2001 median annual income of an arts worker was $30,000, with a median arts-related income of $15,700. By comparison, the 2001 median annual income across all occupations was $36,600; across categories with professional training time comparable to that of artists (four to six years, e.g. teachers, lawyers, scientists), it was $43,700. The typical Australian artist spent just over 80 per cent of their time in arts-related work, yet earned only two-thirds of their income from these sources.

Despite this sobering portrait, the Australia Council for the Arts reported a 13 per cent increase

### Table 2: Employment Status of Australian Artists Working within their Principal Artistic Occupation versus the General Working Population, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Creative Artists</th>
<th>Performing Artists</th>
<th>General Working Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working for salary or wages – permanent</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working for salary or wages – casual</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working freelance or self-employed</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

in the number of people employed in the sector between 1998 and 2003 (Australia Council, 2003). It seems obvious from these statistics that artists derive other measures of occupational satisfaction and success than monetary remuneration. Although few studies examine the reasons behind artists’ work preferences, suggestions include ‘psychic income’ (Thurrow, 1978), ‘flow’ (Czikszentmihalyi, 1997), and the therapeutic benefits of art as an occupation (Burleigh & Beutler, 1996).

Artists themselves, however, do not seem confused on this point. Though often deeply dissatisfied with their financial positions (Greffe, 2002), they persevere. ‘The driving force that attracts so many people to this industry is passion—a simple, yet complete, desire for the job’ (Davidson, 2004). New developments in career theory emphasising personally meaningful life-work (Miller-Tiedeman, 1999) and having a ‘career path with heart’ (Potter, 1995) might be relevant to many artists.

### Personal Responsibility for Career Development and Networking

Three-quarters of professional Australian artists indicated that they were the most active promoter of their work and themselves; only 5 per cent identified their employer as their primary promoter, and 8 per cent identified their agent or dealer (Throsby & Hollister, 2003). Given the large proportion of self-employed artists discussed above, this finding is largely unsurprising.

Numerous books exist on networking and self-promotion for artists (e.g. crafts—Forster, 1993; visual arts—Hadden, 1998; performing arts—Davidson, 2004). Studies of how artists use social and professional networks to develop their careers are few, but some empirical evidence suggests that artists’ personal and professional networks have a significant impact on their continued employment in the arts, and their success in the fields of film music composition (Faulkner, 2003), writing (Anheier, Gerhards & Romo, 1995), and visual art (Greffe, 2002).

Though professional artists apparently agreed in principle that ‘knowing whom’ (deFillippi & Arthur, 1994; Jones & deFillippi, 1996) is important to a successful protean artistic career, a comprehensive review of the literature revealed no studies on the source of this notion in the psyche of artists, whether or to what extent they implement it and other career skills in personal career management, and which sources of information/training they access to hone their skills.

### Predictors of Career Success: Employability Skills and Competencies

We have seen that the major challenge for the protean worker is to actively navigate their career towards maximum employability, with the wider goal of self-fulfilment. Arts workers are a well-established occupational grouping of protean careerists; how effectively artists navigate their protean careers is another question, and one not yet systematically examined.

The literature presents multiple lists of enterprise skills, employability skills and generic capabilities that knowledge age workers need to possess. These include what several writers have called core survival skills or life/career management skills such as resilience, the capacity for continuous learning and improvement, the ability to network and team, skill in using technology effectively, and willingness to take calculated risks and learn from setbacks. For instance, Jarvis (2002, 2003) discusses skills which give people legitimate confidence in their ability to
Articles

construct fulfilling lives, asserting that knowledge age workers need:
- focus, on who they are and what they have to offer;
- direction, knowing options and preparing to maximise opportunity;
- adaptability, the skill of making the best of change; and
- healthy self-esteem and self-knowledge to counter uncertainty and doubt.

Taking charge of one’s own career requires creative tools such as flexibility, optimism and imagination, and flexible, creative decision-making approaches.

As individuals’ career patterns increasingly produce patchwork CVs characterised by serial work and learning experiences, of key importance are meta-competencies that cut across occupational skills and offer universal applicability. It is readily agreed that the most important meta-competence is the ability and will to keep learning. Flexibility and the ability/willingness to continue learning are much more important than specific occupational knowledge and skills, and the importance of learning is championed by expanding literatures in career development learning and lifelong learning. Mirvis and Hall (1996) asserted that workers need to learn a living rather than earn a living; Krumboltz and Worthington (1999) emphasised that ‘learning how to adapt to changing conditions in the workplace will be one of the essential skills for success’ (p. 313).

DeFillippi and Arthur (1994) and Jones and deFillippi (1996) identified six classes of interacting competencies that predict success in the protean career: knowing what, knowing why, knowing how, knowing when, and knowing whom. Only three of these (why, whom, and how) have presently been examined to any extent in the careers literature, and it is unclear how these competencies relate to the ‘meta-competencies’, core survival skills, or career-life management skills proposed by other writers.

Knowing whom, introduced in the previous section, involves developing strategic personal/professional relationships with those who might provide opportunities and important resources. Much of one’s professional network will develop from collaborating with individuals on projects (a key aspect of ‘knowing what’, discussed below).

Knowing why refers to self-knowledge—understanding personal motives, interests and meanings for pursuing a particular career, career goals and expectations. This competency relates closely to the concept of career identity. Some writers argued that this entails pursuing one’s career with ‘a passion’ (Arthur, Inkson & Pringle, 1999; Jones & deFillippi, 1996). At the very least, the protean careerist needs a comfortable relationship between their work and self-identity (e.g. balancing career and family).

Knowing what and knowing where refer to knowing one’s industry—what opportunities and threats exist, what factors are critical to success. ‘Knowing what’ involves knowledge of ‘the rules of the game’ (Jones & deFillippi, 1996), i.e. industry structure, beliefs, norms, values and culture. ‘Knowing where’ involves effectively identifying and choosing the best opportunities for advancement in terms of geography, projects and role.

Knowing when refers to timing the development of one’s career within an industry context. Knowing how long to stay in a role, when to exploit a new employment or training opportunity, the ability to move quickly once an opportunity is identified; all these fall within the bounds of ‘knowing when’. ‘Knowing when’ is critical to the development of ‘knowing how’, i.e. the skills required to take advantage of opportunities as they arise.

Knowing how refers to skills also emphasised in the traditional career, those needed for performance in one’s work roles. The protean career places a much greater emphasis on skills transferable from one working context to another, as opposed to firm-specific skills.

In 2002 the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry sought to ascertain which skills might make an individual employable in the emerging protean career context from employers’ perspectives, with the overall aim of ensuring long-term economic growth (ACCI, 2002). Interestingly, of the eight skills the ACCI identified, six fell into the ‘knowing how’ category—communication skills, teamwork, problem-solving, planning/organising, and technology skills. The other skills identified (learning, self management, and initiative/enterprise) return to the concept of career-life management...
skills—essential precursors of the ability to synthesise and manage all six career management competencies into one coherent career journey, a concept that Jones and deFillippi (1996) allude to but do not expressly identify in their discussions.

A continuous, progressive synthesis of these six career competencies is also required for the protean careerist to succeed. In order to make the next strategic career step, they must realistically appraise their current skills and knowledge in the current industry context while maintaining a strong idea of their personal career goals. They must then use their professional networks to identify and exploit emerging strategic opportunities to showcase their transferable work skills and gain new ones.

**Artists’ Career Competencies**

When Throsby and Hollister (2003) asked Australian artists to identify the primary factor in advancing their professional development, the most common responses were ‘talent’ (31 per cent), ‘social support’ (26 per cent), and ‘training’ (24 per cent). Twelve per cent indicated that a lucky break or critical timing was most important.

These findings suggest that artists are not fully consciously aware of the effect they personally have on their career development and employability through the development of the career competencies outlined above. Although various professional bodies and tertiary institutions provide some career management education and support for arts workers (Hunter, 2002; Victorian College of the Arts, 2004), these resources are largely piecemeal, designed to address specific career/business management requirements. Furthermore, it is unclear to what extent artists make use of them, and what effect they have on their career success.

The challenge of coupling creative input with career management and continuous employability (Caves, 2000; Greffe, 2002)—the ongoing endeavour of competency synthesis—provides further ground for investigation. How do artists balance the demands of knowing what, whom, where, when and why; how can they do so more effectively while remaining creatively productive?

**Conclusions**

This article has argued that the concept of the ‘new protean career’ is not actually new. There may be several well-established industries in which the idea is ubiquitous, and has been for a long time. Professional artists in Australia are certainly one such group of well-established protean careerists.

While exploration into the competencies required for navigating a protean career has commenced, further investigation is definitely required, including explorations of life/career management skills, meta-competencies and personal attributes and how they are synthesised.

This article has flagged specific areas relating to the life-career management issues of Australian artists requiring further research, including:

- the reasons behind artists’ continuing work preferences, despite evidence that many are dissatisfied with their financial positions;
- how comfortably artists navigate their protean careers: how conscious are they of the importance of career-life management skills? How do they develop these skills, and what gaps are there in career education provision?

Systematic studies of the careers of professional artists, referencing career management and career education, may not only assist the development of the arts industry, but other fields where the protean career is still emerging.

**References**


In what ways is an understanding of the protean or boundaryless career meaningful to a career professional?
Answer: Recently the literature has noted a decline in the traditional type of linear career with orderly employment patterns and upward progress through a single firm. Increasingly, individuals need to actively navigate their careers, and self-manage shorter-term overlapping employment arrangements interspersed with periods of retraining to ensure that their careers remain personally meaningful. This active navigation requires the development and use of a set of employability skills and competencies which are just starting to be emphasised by professional bodies and tertiary education institutions.

What are the main attributes of this new type of career?
Answer: The hallmarks of a protean career are: high mobility and low job security; several occupational roles; multiple sources of income; subjective motivations and measures of success; and personal responsibility for career development (including social networks and transferable skills).

What are the main ways in which Australian artists can be seen to be protean careerists?
Answer: Employment data for Australian fine and performing artists (including musicians) shows that the majority have had multiple occupations within the arts sector; that more than half work at more than one job simultaneously and in most cases these jobs are freelance or conducted on behalf of the artist’s own business; and that three-quarters agree that they are the most active promoter of their work and themselves.

Artists’ career motivations have been described in terms of ‘psychic income’ or ‘following your bliss’. Certainly, hierarchical position and salary (as per the traditional linear career) do not appear to be important motivators to artists, who generally earn far less than other workers with comparable education characteristics.

What are the competencies and skills needed by the protean, boundaryless careerist?
Answer: While there are some differences in the composition of the various lists of employability skills and competencies suggested by the literature, recurring themes include: focus, direction, adaptability (including the ability and will to keep learning), and healthy self-esteem and self-knowledge.

The six ‘knowing’ competencies are also useful to consider: knowing whom (creating strategic relationships), knowing why (being self-aware), knowing what, when and where (industry-based knowledge of opportunities), as well as the traditional knowing how (skills needed to perform work roles).
VALIDATION OF THE SHORT FORM OF THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY – AUSTRALIAN VERSION WITH A SAMPLE OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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PETER CREED, Griffith University, Gold Coast
REBECCA SPOONER-LANE, Queensland University of Technology

This article reports on a further exploration into the reliability and validity of the shortened form of the Career Development Inventory–Australia (Creed & Patton, 2004), a career maturity measure being developed to meet the need for a shorter and more up-to-date measure to provide data on this career development construct. Data gathered from 170 final-year education students (34 males, 132 females) provided partial support for the measure’s internal consistency, factor structure and construct validity.

Central to the understanding of career behaviour, the concept of career maturity has emerged as a major variable of interest in career development research in recent years. Career maturity is broadly defined as the individual’s readiness to make informed, age-appropriate career decisions and manage his/her career development tasks (Savickas, 1984). Career maturity is seen as an important construct to assess and develop in career programs for adolescents and adults as it involves awareness of an individual’s level of career progress in relation to his/her career-related development tasks (Crites, 1976).
Several assessment instruments have been developed to measure the construct of career maturity, with Levinson, Ohler, Caswell, and Kiewra (1998) and Bingham and Krantz (2001) identifying six: the Career Maturity Inventory (Crites, 1978a, 1978b), the Career Development Inventory (Super, Thompson, Lindeman, Jordaan, & Myers, 1981), the Adult Career Concerns Inventory (Super, Thompson, & Lindeman, 1988), the Assessment of Career Decision Making (Buck & Daniels, 1985; Harren, 1979), the Career Beliefs Inventory (Krumboltz, 1994) and the Career Decision Scale (Osipow, Carney, Winer, Yanico, & Koschier, 1976). The construct of career maturity has received renewed research interest, with a special issue of The Career Development Quarterly being devoted to it in 1998. Accordingly, assessment of the construct is also a subject of vigorous research, with most recent efforts responding to calls for shortened versions of the measure. For example, Crites and Savickas (1995, 1996) developed a shortened and revised version of one instrument, the Career Maturity Inventory—Revised, based on criticisms of the length of time required to complete the original measure (Powell & Luzzo, 1998). However, analyses of psychometric properties of the revised version have either been non-existent (McDivitt, 2001; Powell & Luzzo, 1998), or have shown limited support for its internal reliability and construct and criterion validity (Busacca & Taber, 2002).

The Career Development Inventory—Australian Version
Since its introduction in 1984, the Career Development Inventory—Australian version (CDI–A; Lokan, 1984) has become a widely used measure of career maturity (e.g. Clayton & Fletcher, 1994; Creed & Patton, 2003; Levy, 1987; Lokan & Biggs, 1982; Patton & Creed, 2001) in Australia and other countries (e.g. South Africa; Patton, Watson, & Creed, 2004). The 72-item CDI–A is a shortened version of the 120-item Career Development Inventory (CDI; Super, Thompson, Lindeman, Jordaan, & Myers, 1981; Super, Thompson, Lindeman, Jordaan, & Myers, 1984). The CDI–A incorporates spelling, terminology, and references to institutions, information sources and occupational conditions that are appropriate to an Australian setting.

In relation to the CDI, researchers (Bingham & Krantz, 2001; Levinson et al., 1998; Lokan, 1984) have also raised concerns about its length, the repetitive nature of some of the items, the amount of reading required in the vignette item-formats, the complexity of the language required for younger age groups, and the difficulty of completing the two cognitive subscales. These issues act as a barrier to collecting information on career maturity.

Researchers have therefore also identified a need for a shortened, less repetitive and less complex version of the CDI–A. The CDI–A incorporates two attitudinal subscales, namely Career Planning (CP) and Career Exploration (CE), and two general cognitive subscales, World of Work Information (WW) and Career Decision Making (DM). Creed and Patton (2004) observed that young people have difficulty completing the CDI–A in a 40-minute school period, and students respond negatively to the demands of completing the WW and DM subscales.

The demand for a shortened version of the CDI–A has been met by Creed and Patton (2004) with the development of the CDI–A (SF). Using a sample of 2173 high school students (years 8–12), Creed and Patton developed a 33-item shortened form of the original CDI–A. The CDI–A (SF) was devised with reference to content coverage and statistical criteria. In particular, consideration was given to a) construct coverage, b) the corrected item-own and item-other domain total correlations for the attitudinal scales, and the item-difficulty scores for the cognitive scales, and c) selecting items that only loaded onto the appropriate factor.

As with the original CDI–A, the CDI–A (SF) comprises two attitudinal subscales (CP and CE) and two cognitive subscales (WW and DM). The CP subscale comprises two domains of Planning Orientation (items 1–6) and Specificity of Information (items 7–10). With regards to the Planning Orientation (PO) domain, the six items cover the content areas of discussing plans with an adult, choosing subjects relevant to future job, choosing a career, and...
life after current study course. With regards to the Specificity of Information (SI) domain, the four items cover the content area of self-knowledge of job duties, ability, job advancement, and working conditions.

The CE subscale comprises two domains: Resource Awareness (items 11–14) and Resource Use (items 15–18). For Resource Awareness (RA), the four items cover possible sources of advice (e.g. career counsellors, teachers, adults in authority, job incumbents). For the Resource Use (RU) domain, the four items cover actual sources of advice (adults in authority, written material, audio or visual aids, and job incumbents). The WW subscale (items 19–26) comprises eight items and covers content areas of information on exploratory methods, life stages, developmental tasks, job satisfaction, job seeking, occupational fields and job training. For the DM subscale (items 27–33), the seven items cover the domain areas of understanding the relative importance of different types of occupation, personal and situational characteristics.

Evidence of the construct validity was obtained through principal axis factor analysis with an oblique (direct oblimin) rotation for years 8–12 and the total sample using the four attitudinal domain totals (PO, SI, RA, and RU) and the two cognitive subscale totals (WW and DM). Two factors were rotated to reflect the attitudinal and cognitive dimensions. The pattern matrix indicated that the attitudinal and cognitive domains and subscales loaded onto their respective factors. All factors had eigenvalues greater than one, and accounted for greater than 62 per cent of the variance in each case, providing evidence that the factor structure of the CDI–A (SF) was consistent with the original factor structure of the CDI–A.

Creed and Patton (2004) provided further evidence of the construct validity of the shortened version in the form of statistically significant correlations between the CDI–A (SF) and other career-related variables such as the career indecision and career certainty subscales of the Career Decision Scale (CDS; Osipow et al., 1976), Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE-SF; Betz, Klein, & Taylor, 1996) and Self-Esteem (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965). Evidence of construct validity was indicated by appropriate age differences in scores, with older students reporting higher levels of career maturity than younger students. The authors concluded that the CDI–A (SF) shows promise as a career maturity measure for adolescents and may be useful in situations where it is not possible or inappropriate to use the CDI–A. Similar to the CDI–A, the CDI–A (SF) can be interpreted at the subscale (CP, CE, WW, DM), the composite scale (Career Development Attitude, Career Development Knowledge), and total scale (Career Orientation Total) levels. However, there is less support for the CDI–A (SF) at the domain level, because of the lower internal reliability for the RU domain. While there is advice in the CDI–A manual to interpret the CDI–A at the total score level (COT), Creed and Patton suggest that this is inadvisable for both the CDI–A and the CDI–A (SF) as this involves collapsing the two independent attitudinal and cognitive domains, which is likely to lead to spurious interpretations.

The Present Study

The main purpose of the present study is to continue to test the psychometric properties of the CDI–A (SF). To date, the measure has only been examined in a sample of high school students (Creed & Patton, 2004). The present study extends the use of the CDI–A (SF) by using a sample of 170 university students ranging in age from 19 to 48 years. To examine the psychometric soundness of the CDI–A (SF), internal reliability coefficients are generated and compared with data provided by Creed and Patton. To confirm the content validity of the composite scales—Career Development Attitude (CDA) and Career Development Knowledge (CDK), principal axis factor analysis is performed for the total scores of the attitudinal domains and cognitive subscales. The attitudinal domain items are also subjected to principal axis factor analysis. Factor analysis, however, is not performed for the items comprising the cognitive subscales as they are scored on a dichotomous scale (Gorusch, 1983). Factor analysing dichotomous items is likely to result in as many factors as there are items with different item difficulties because the Pearson correlation reduces the $\phi$-coefficient (Ferguson, 1941;
Participants’ scores on the CP are determined by adding the rating values for the responses given (A = 1, B = 2, C = 3, D = 4, and E = 5). The number of A responses is then multiplied by 1, B responses are multiplied by 2, C responses are multiplied by 3, D responses are multiplied by 4, and E responses are multiplied by 5.

Career Exploration (CE) comprises eight items. The first four items ask participants to rate people as sources of career information (e.g. ‘Would you go to careers teachers, career advisers, or school counsellors for information or help in making your plans for work or further education?’). The remaining four items ask for ratings of the usefulness of the information received from various sources. For example, one item asks ‘Which of the following sources (e.g. other adults who know things and can help people) have already given you, or directed you to, helpful information for making your future plans?’ Participants’ responses are given on a nominal scale (A to D) reflecting low to high levels of CE. Participants’ scores on the CE are determined by adding the rating values for the responses given (A = 1, B = 2, C = 3, D = 4, and N = 1). The number of A responses is then multiplied by 1, B responses are multiplied by 2, C responses are multiplied by 3, D responses are multiplied by 4 and N responses are multiplied by 1.

Scores on the Career Planning (CP) and Career Exploration (CE) scales may be combined to measure Career Development Attitude (CDA). Creed and Patton (2004) reported satisfactory internal reliability coefficients for the subscales CP (α = .87) and CE (α = .73) and the composite scale CDA (α = .87).

World of Work Information (WW) comprises eight items which assess knowledge of the career development tasks in the Exploratory and the Early Establishment Stages as described by Super et al. (1957). Career Decision-Making (DM) consists of seven items and involves participants solving career related problems based on verbal sketches of people making career decisions. Scores on the WW and DM scales consist of the number of items answered correctly. Scores on the WW and DM scales may be summed to measure Career Development Knowledge (CDK). Creed and Patton (2004) reported satisfactory internal reliability coefficients for the...
subscales WW (α = .73) and DM (α = .70) and the composite scale CDK (α = .82).

Self-esteem

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965) was used to provide a measure of global self-worth. The RSE comprises ten items (e.g. ‘I feel that I have a number of good qualities’), and participants were asked to rate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each statement. Answers were scored on a four-point response format using descriptors of ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’, resulting in a total scale range of 10–40, with higher scores indicating greater self-worth. The internal reliability coefficient was .86 in the current study.

Career decision making self-efficacy

The 25-item short version of the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale (CDMSE-SF; Betz et al., 1996) measures confidence regarding ability to make career-oriented decisions. A sample item is, ‘How confident are you that you could determine what your ideal job would be?’ Participants rated their level of confidence on a 5-point scale, with end-points of ‘no confidence at all’ to ‘complete confidence’. Higher scores indicate more career-related confidence. Betz et al. (1996) reported adequate validity for the scale, and indicated satisfactory internal reliabilities. The internal reliability coefficient for the total score was .94 for the present study.

Procedure

The data collected here constitutes one aspect of a longitudinal study examining career development and burnout among preservice teachers (Keeffe, Patton, & Spoonser-Lane, 2005). Surveys containing the scales used in the study, as well as demographic questions (e.g. age, gender, teaching area, and study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Internal Reliability Coefficients for the Present Study and Creed and Patton’s (2004) Study of High School Students</th>
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<td>Subscale</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
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<tr>
<td>PO</td>
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<td>SI</td>
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<td>CE</td>
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<td>RA</td>
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<td>WW</td>
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<td>DM</td>
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<td>CDA</td>
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<td>CDK</td>
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</table>

Note: CP = Career Planning; CE = Career Exploration; WW = World of Work; DM = Career Decision Making; CDA = Career Development Attitude; CDK = Career Development Knowledge; PO = Planning Orientation; SI = Specificity of Information; RA = Resource Awareness; and RU = Resource Use.  
1 = Internal reliability calculated with the Kuder-Richardson 20 formula, all other variables were calculated using Cronbach’s alpha.
pathways), were distributed by the researchers to all final-year education students in a classroom setting.

RESULTS

Summary Data
In the present study, means, standard deviations, and internal reliability coefficients were generated for the two composite scales, four subscales, and four domain scales. Using one-sample t-tests, mean subscale scores for the total sample of university students on the CDI–A (SF) were compared with a sample of high school students mean subscale scores as reported in Creed and Patton’s (2004) study (see Table 1). The sample comprised 2173 year 8 to year 12 students aged 12–18.

The internal reliability coefficients for the four subscales (CP, CE, WW, DM) and the two composite scales (CDA, CDK) of the CDI–A (SF) exceeded .80, except for CE which was less than adequate at .63. Creed and Patton (2004) reported internal reliability coefficients ranging from .70 to .87 for the four subscales and the two composite scales. The internal reliability coefficients for the four domain scales ranged from .51 to .79. The coefficient alphas were low for the CE domains (α = .53 for RA and .51 for RU). Creed and Patton (2004) also reported a low internal reliability coefficient for RU (α = .64).

Overall, the sample reported high levels of CDA and CDK. In particular, preservice teachers reported high levels of CP and WW and moderate levels of CE and DM. A series of one-sample t-tests with a 99 per cent confidence interval level revealed that in comparison with Creed and Patton’s (2004) sample of high school students, the present sample of university students reported significantly higher levels of CP, t(169) = 11.77, p < .001; CE, t(169) = 6.83, p < .001; WW, t(169) = 9.07, p < .001; and DM, t(169) = 11.53, p < .001.

Construct Validity
Construct validity of the CDI–A (SF) is investigated in three ways. First, the factor structure of the CDI–A (SF) is investigated using factor analysis. Second, the relationship between the CDI–A (SF) and CDMSE-SF and RSE is examined using a correlation matrix. Third, group differences for gender, age, study course and area of teaching using the CDI–A (SF) are explored.

Factor Analysis of the CDA and CDK Composite Scales
To confirm that the factor structure of the CDI–A (SF) appropriately reflects Career Development Attitude (CDA) and Career Development Knowledge (CDK), the total scores for the attitudinal domains (PO, SI, RA, RU) and the cognitive subscales (WW, DM) were subjected to principal axis factor analysis with oblique rotation (see Table 2). Two factors were extracted with a loading cut-off of .30. The KMO measure of sampling was .69 and the Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was significant (< .001). Examination of the pattern matrix revealed that the attitudinal domains and the cognitive subscales loaded onto their respective factors. The two factors had eigenvalues greater than 1.00 and accounted for 70.46 per cent of the variance.

Factor Analysis of the Attitudinal Domain Items
The items comprising the attitudinal domains (PO, SI, RA, RU) of the CDI–A (SF), were subjected to a principal axis factor analysis with oblique rotation.

TABLE 2: PRINCIPAL AXIS FACTOR ANALYSIS WITH OBLIQUE ROTATION OF THE ATTITUDBAL DOMAINS AND THE COGNITIVE SUBSCALES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composite Factors</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>CDA</th>
<th>CDK</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDI–A Subscale</td>
<td>PO</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SI</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>-.03</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.08</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RU</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>-.12</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WW</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.92</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DM</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.98</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2.57</td>
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<td>42.88</td>
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</table>

Note: CP = Career Planning; CE = Career Exploration; WW = World of Work; DM = Career Decision Making; PO = Planning Orientation; SI = Specificity of Information; RA = Resource Awareness; and RU = Resource Use.
(see Table 3). Four factors were extracted with a loading cut-off of .30. The KMO measure of sampling was .81 and the Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was significant (< .001). The forced four factor oblique rotation solution explained 44.7 per cent variance. Examination of the pattern matrix revealed that Career Planning was primarily defined by items reflecting Planning Orientation (PO) and Specificity of Information (SI) and Career Exploration was defined by items reflecting Resource Awareness (RA) and Resource Use (RU). Contrary to predictions, PO item 4 crossloaded onto RA, PO item 5 loaded more highly onto RA and item 6 loaded onto SI rather than PO. The loading for PO item 1 was slightly less than .30. Factor 4 had an eigenvalue less than 1.00.

**Correlation Matrix**

The inter-correlations between the four subscales of the CDI–A (SF) and the two composite scales of the CDI–A (SF), as well as the inter-scale correlations between the CDI–A (SF), CDMSE-SF and the RSE are presented in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Principal Axis Factor Analysis with Oblique Rotation of the CDI–A (SF)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CDI–A Subscale</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Career Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career Exploration</td>
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| Eigenvalue | 4.84 | 1.33 | 1.11 | .76 |
| % Variance | 26.93 | 7.37 | 6.15 | 4.22 |

**Note:** PO = Planning Orientation; SI = Specificity of Information; RA = Resource Awareness; and RU = Resource Use.

The item number for the original survey is reported in the parentheses.
### Table 4: Pearson’s Product-Moment Correlations between the CDI–A (SF), the CDMSE and the RSE Scales

<table>
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<td>1. CP</td>
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<td>2. CE</td>
<td>.60**</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. WW</td>
<td></td>
<td>.49**</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. DM</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.80**</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. CDA</td>
<td>.90**</td>
<td>.89**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. CDK</td>
<td></td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.95**</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. CDMSE</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. RSE</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: CP = Career Planning; CE = Career Exploration; WW = World of Work; DM = Career Decision Making; CDA = Career Development Attitude; CDK = Career Development Knowledge; CDMSE = Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy; RSE = Rosenberg Self-Esteem.

** p < .01.

### Table 5: Summary Data for the Four CDI–A (SF) Subscales Based on Gender, Age, Study Course and Teaching Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CDI–A (SF) Factors</th>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>CE</td>
<td>WW</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38.47</td>
<td>5.67</td>
<td>22.03</td>
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<td>5.47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>38.66</td>
<td>5.81</td>
<td>22.46</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>6.92</td>
<td>2.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
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<tr>
<td>19–25</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>38.02</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>22.37</td>
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<td>6.91</td>
<td>1.86</td>
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<td>26–35</td>
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<td>4.59</td>
<td>22.13</td>
<td>5.01</td>
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<td>36+</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>5.93</td>
<td>23.00</td>
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<td>7.21</td>
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<td>Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Ed.</td>
<td>85</td>
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<td>5.43</td>
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<td>4.39</td>
<td>6.99</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>5.83</td>
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<td>Double Degree</td>
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<td>39.38</td>
<td>6.97</td>
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<td>Graduate Ed.</td>
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<td>Teaching Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>37.82</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>21.08</td>
<td>6.33</td>
<td>6.77</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>5.63</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td>22.39</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>5.70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
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<td>39.56</td>
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<td>24.36</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>7.38</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>5.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: B. Ed. = Bachelor of Education; Graduate Ed. = Graduate Education.
Examination of the subscale correlations on the CDI–A (SF) indicates that the attitudinal subscales CP and CE are moderately correlated ($r = .60$) and the cognitive subscales WW and DM are highly correlated ($r = .80$). Furthermore, the subscale CP is significantly associated with CDMSE and RSE in the expected direction (i.e. planning is high when career confidence and self-esteem are high). CE is also significantly positively associated with CDMSE (i.e. exploration is high when career confidence is high). The cognitive subscales (WW and DM) were not significantly associated with CDMSE or RSE.

**Group Differences**

A between-subjects MANOVA was performed to test for differences in gender (male, female), age (19–25 years, 26–35 years, ≥ 36 years), course of study (Bachelor of Education, double degree, graduate education), and preferred area of teaching (primary, secondary and early childhood) on the four subscales of the CDI–A (SF). Box’s M-test for homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices revealed that homogeneity of variance was contravened at the recommended significance level of 0.001 and therefore a more robust criterion, Pillai’s Trace, was used to evaluate multivariate tests of significance. A Bonferroni-type adjustment was performed to reduce the possibility of inflated Type 1 error (0.5 divided by 4 = .125). With a 95 per cent confidence interval level, no significant differences were found for gender, age, course of study or preferred teaching area (see Table 5).

**DISCUSSION**

The present study partially confirmed the soundness of the psychometric properties of the 33-item short form of the CDI–A when used with a sample of multi-age university students ranging from 19 to 48 years. While satisfactory to good internal reliability coefficients were reported for subscales CP, WW, and DM, a low internal reliability coefficient was obtained for CE. The internal consistency coefficients for the two scales CDA and CDK were high and concurred with the data reported by Creed and Patton (2004) with a sample of years 8 to 12 high school students.

Construct validity of the CDI–A (SF) was explored using principal axis factor analysis. It was demonstrated that the attitudinal domains and the cognitive subscales loaded strongly onto their respective factors. Interscale correlations revealed moderate correlations between CP and CE ($r = .60$) and high correlations WW and DM ($r = .80$), which may suggest that the interpretation of career maturity is more reliable and valid when examined at a composite scale level. When the items comprising the attitudinal domains were further explored, the factor structure was less stable. The items loading onto the Career Planning domains PO and SI were not clearly defined. Although PO item 4 cross-loaded onto the Career Exploration domain RA, it loaded more highly onto the PO domain. While it was expected that item 5 would load onto the PO domain, it in fact loaded most highly onto the RA domain. In addition, PO item 6 loaded onto the SI domain. Furthermore, due to the current study’s sample size (see Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998), PO item 1 with a loading of .29 did not meet statistical significance. Finally, an eigenvalue of less than 1.00 was produced for the Career Exploration domain RU. Based on these findings, there is less support for interpreting the CDI–A (SF) at a domain level.

Further data on validity was obtained through examination of associations within the subscales of the CDI–A (SF) and with the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Correlations were significant for the subscales of the overall Career Development Attitude and Career Development Knowledge combined scales. In addition, as expected, higher scores on the Career Development Attitude subscales of Career Planning and Career Exploration were associated with higher scores on career decision-making self-efficacy and self-esteem.

Contrary to a large range of studies conducted primarily with college students (see Patton & Lokan, 2001 for a review), no age or gender differences were found in the current study.

Contrary to a large range of studies conducted primarily with college students (see Patton & Lokan, 2001 for a review), no age or gender differences were found in the current study. As discussed previously, this may relate to adults having sound knowledge and skills. However, in support of developmental explanations for career maturity (Crites, 1976; Savickas, 1984), the present study illustrated that the
older sample had higher mean scores on each of the four subscales than the Creed and Patton (2004) high school age sample. It might be predicted that an older, better educated sample would demonstrate greater career maturity than a younger, less educated sample. There were no significant differences on each of the four subscales for course of study, although examination of the mean scores indicated that double degree students engaged in more Career Exploration than graduate education students. This may be explained by the broader opportunities available to students who graduate with a degree in education as well as another discipline area (e.g., Science, Arts, Business). While there were no significant differences on each of the four subscales for preferred area of teaching, mean scores suggested that participants preparing for teaching in the area of early childhood scored higher on Career Exploration than participants preparing for primary school teaching. As the former group of participants have a less clearly defined path to employment following their course, it would be expected at this stage of their program that their attention to Career Exploration items would be greater.

Taken together, these findings offer partial support for the construct validity of the CDI–A (SF) using an adult sample. Due to the moderate to high correlations between the CDA and CDK subscales, the lower internal reliability coefficients for the subscale CE and its domains RA and RU, and the instability of items at the attitudinal domain level, it is recommended that interpretation of the CDI–A (SF) should occur at the composite scale level.

The recent focus on lifelong career development and multiple career changes has highlighted the relevance of career maturity as a way of understanding the progress of individuals of all ages through the minicycles (Super, 1990) of career transitions. The 33-item CDI–A (SF) appears to be a promising shortened version of the CDI–A for adults in career change when interpreted at the two factor level—Career Development Attitude and Career Development Knowledge. Due to the limited sample size in the current study and the difficulty in identifying a well-defined factor structure, further testing is required with an adult sample. The current study however, has provided encouragement for the utility of this work. Given the dearth of appropriate and psychometrically sound short measures of career maturity in the career development literature, it is important to continue to explore the soundness of this measure.

REFERENCES


AUTHORS

Professor WENDY PATTON is Head of the School of Learning and Professional Studies at Queensland University of Technology. She has worked in career development for many years and has particular interests in career change and career development over the lifespan.

Dr PETER CREED is Associate Professor in Organisational Psychology at the School of Psychology, Griffith University, Gold Coast campus, and a member of the university’s Service Industry Research Centre. His research interests include effects of unemployment on wellbeing and efficacy; school-to-work transition; career psychology and psychometrics.

Dr REBECCA SPOONER-LANE is a lecturer in the School of Learning and Professional Studies in the Faculty of Education at Queensland University of Technology. Dr Spooner-Lane has worked on a range of projects investigating career development in adolescents.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

This section is designed as a brief professional review of the article. It provides relevant study questions and answers for readers to test their knowledge of the article.

Why is career maturity an important construct to measure?
Answer: Career maturity involves awareness of an individual’s level of career progress in relation to his or her career related development tasks. It is broadly defined as the individual’s readiness to make informed, age-appropriate career decisions and manage his or her career development tasks.

What does the CDI-A (SF) offer practitioners and researchers?
Answer: Several assessment instruments have been developed to measure the construct of career maturity. Recent efforts have responded to calls for shortened versions of such measures. The CDI-A (SF) is being developed to offer researchers and practitioners a short measure with which to assess career maturity.
BOOK REVIEW

THE LOWEST RUNG: VOICES OF AUSTRALIAN POVERTY
Mark Peel, Cambridge University Press, Port Melbourne, 2003

This book is a poignant, confronting and multi-layered work, a combination of detailed research, in-depth interviews and well-constructed, compelling argument. It is important reading for a wide audience that includes policymakers, sociologists, cultural historians and people who aspire to work in the welfare or employment services industries. I was initially compelled to question why it was so long in the making (the interviews were conducted in the mid-1990s), but the answer to this becomes clearer on viewing The lowest rung as just one part of a work in progress, as one chapter of an opus majora which is integrally linked to the author’s vocation.

Mark Peel teaches history at Monash University and has written two other books about Australian life: Good times, hard times: The past and the future in Elizabeth (1995) and A little history of Australia (1997). He is currently completing a history of social work practices in Melbourne and three American cities, focusing on stories, truth and lies, and is also involved in a collaborative project with John Murphy (RMIT) on public understandings of poverty in Australia since 1960.

‘Stories, truth and lies’ is a major theme in The lowest rung. As a storybook, it is hard going; the plot is strangely repetitive, the characters are shades of grey rather than black or white, and there is no fairy-tale ending. There are a few knights in shining armour who, after working long hours trying to do the best they can for the people they serve, and juggling an insufficient and ever-diminishing cache of government funds, suffer burnout while helping their communities to ward off many dragons (including isolation, endemic unemployment, critical health issues, inferior living standards and stereotyping). Peel’s contents page and chapter headings reinforce the sense of story: he has a ‘Cast of Characters’ and headings that include ‘Heroes’, ‘Suffering’, ‘Anger’, ‘Loss’ and ‘Hope’.

There is no likelihood that the reader will see this as a mythical or representational story. This is a story of real-world truth: of poverty and hardship, and of communities finding strength from within. Peel’s interviews were conducted in three areas identified as disadvantaged: Inala in Queensland, Mt Druitt in NSW and Broadmeadows in Victoria, and he succeeds in enlivening the struggles of genuine people who were the early victims of restructuring, reorganisation, tariff cuts and the recession of the early 1990s.

This is also a story about difference, but the theme is diversity rather than racial tension—just one of the myths Peel explodes. Examples abound to highlight that members of these communities see themselves as sharing a great deal in common with each other, overriding any differences in cultural background.

Despite the nine years that elapsed between the beginning of his research and the book’s publication date, the story has endured and been magnified. If he were to conduct these same interviews today, Peel would have no trouble finding similar stories in more
affluent areas, like Melbourne’s bayside suburbs and the Hills District in Sydney.

The story of lies runs concurrently with the everyday stories, ensuring that the reader is not lulled into believing that people living in disadvantaged areas are in any way responsible for their situations. There is no compromise in Peel’s presentation; his elucidation of the social injustices that are perpetrated under the guise of statistical ‘facts’ and government policy (both Labor and Liberal) is shocking. Readers may not be shocked with the information, because this is by now not news but established fact. They may not even be shocked at realising that this has gone on for so long without any identifiable change for the better. What is shocking is Peel’s juxtaposition of people and situations that are so real, so palpable, with the wasteful and ill-considered spending and ineffectual programs that are administered from on high, turning the recipients into ‘the resourceful opponents of uncaring institutions’.

There are several paradigms in this story that work to make it more complex, but at the same time these help us to more fully understand the situation for people in disadvantaged areas. One paradigm relates to the institutions that have been set up as helping agencies and strategies that are clearly bureaucratic, and represented by words and phrases like assistance, accountability, efficiency, competition (between agencies), provable outcomes, and mutual obligation. This paradigm places welfare recipients in a no-win situation. It fails to acknowledge that they are not responsible for their position, while at the same time making them passive recipients of funding and programs, which only serves to exacerbate their helplessness.

The lies were perpetuated and somehow transformed into universal truths when members of these disempowered communities learned how to tell officials what they needed to hear in order to get whatever assistance they could. Thus another paradigm came into play, to identify these groups — imagine the impact on one’s self-image when associated with words like suffering, hardship, restriction, underclass, limitations, neediness, dependency, inadequacy, injustice, dehumanised, humiliation, loss, pain, despair, trauma, fear and powerlessness.

While many were co-opted into the learned helplessness strategy, others responded by developing strong fighting skills, attempting no doubt to develop a different story with a more positive outcome. Words identifying this movement include resourcefulness, negotiation, resilience, bargaining and persistence. These were the people who recognised the strength of their community, and who have helped to give the story a hopeful, if not entirely happy, ending.

For career practitioners, the messages of this book are sobering. Chapter five offers insights into the impact of government policy and a deregulated labour market on unskilled workers and on those whose skills are no longer required. If those of us in the career and employment industry needed further reinforcement of what we have known for some time, Peel’s work highlights beyond a doubt that the skills shortage and problems faced by mature-age workers that is now endemic was already being experienced by these communities over ten years ago.

Further, there are serious implications for the future employability of people who hold onto unhelpful and often irrelevant ideas about how society works. Members of the three areas researched were found to have very strong views, such as those that relate to the roles of men and women. Further to this, many (especially men) were unable to accept that regular ongoing full-time work with the one employer was a thing of the past. These conceptions about the way society operates (or should operate) will take a great deal of time to extinguish.

There are further implications: Who will provide members of these disadvantaged communities with the skills to meet the demands of the modern workforce? Who will pay for the services they need to assist them to obtain relevant work experience, to compete for jobs, and to show resilience when they are once again downsized, right-sized or just plain not needed any more? Government programs, including Work for the Dole and the Job Network, have done little to turn the tide of events that are making the labour market a much scarier place for all but the most intrepid jobseekers. Peel is a historian and does not therefore ask these questions, but he provides us with an excellent base from which we can frame our own inquiries.

Julie Farthing,
Career and Employment Consultant
Career Dimensions, Victoria
CENTRELINK LAUNCHES DIPLOMA OF GOVERNMENT

Centrelink is the first in Australia to implement the revised Diploma of Government through its Virtual College. The new qualification meets the specific needs of staff in the Australian Public Sector, and more closely aligns with Centrelink job roles and service delivery needs. Around 1000 Centrelink employees are expected to be the first to graduate from the program next year in specialist job roles such as Centrelink Disability Officers, Complex Assessment Officers, and Financial Information Service Officers. The new training package is implemented by the Centrelink Virtual College, established in 2001 as the largest distance-learning network of its kind in Australia, to ensure staff have the skills they need to do their jobs proficiently. Contact: Monique Mahoney, Centrelink, on (02) 6284 6442.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS FOR OFFICE WORKERS AND TELECOMMUTERS

The second edition of Getting a grip on IT, the joint study from the State Chamber of Commerce (New South Wales) and Unisys, demonstrates that the uptake of telecommuting will not only change the way we work in the future, but will also have a significant impact on the economy.

The predicted ageing of the population will eventually lead to a shortage of skilled workers and the retention of workers in the workforce is a stated concern of the federal government. The increasing flexibility in the workplace that telecommuting promotes will aid in the retention or the return of skilled workers, which will, in turn, reduce overheads, hiring and training costs for businesses.

The development of new technologies allows workers to telecommute with ease; report findings revealed almost one-quarter of New South Wales businesses surveyed allow staff to regularly work offsite from their homes or abroad.

Only half of the businesses surveyed with a telecommuting workforce actively enforced formal OH&S standards, and under two-thirds of respondents were aware that this was a statutory requirement. Employers have full occupational health and safety (OH&S) responsibilities when staff work from home, just as they do for employees who are stationed in the usual workplace. Contacts: alan.smith@au.unisys.com or David Van, The De Wintern Group, david@dewintern.com

PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING: A STATISTICAL COMPLIANCE

This statistical compendium examines, firstly, vocational education and training (VET) students with a disability as a whole group, focusing on their participation levels, achievements and outcomes from VET, and identifies gaps and/or issues with the existing data. This is followed by a section dealing with people with different types of disabilities and a conclusion. The appendix contains detailed profiles, which can stand alone as fact sheets, for each disability type—physical disability, medical condition, vision disability, learning disability, hearing disability, intellectual disability, mental illness, acquired brain impairment, and other/unspecified disabilities. Also included is a profile on Indigenous people with a disability.

Careers Forum

THE PLACE OF RECOGNISED QUALIFICATIONS IN THE OUTCOMES OF TRAINING
The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between requirements of particular jobs and, in the opinion of employers, formal qualifications. A large number of competencies were identified by employers as required for jobs to be performed well. Generally, this was significantly in excess of those needed to obtain a qualification at an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level appropriate to the job.


FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

SYDNEY, NOVEMBER 2005
27 November–1 December
Australian Association for Research in Education
Creative Dissent: Constructive Solutions
The University of Western Sydney, Parramatta Campus

GOLD COAST, DECEMBER 2005
4–7 December
The 13th Annual International Conference on Post-compulsory Education and Training, Vocational Learning, Transitions, Interrelationships, Partnerships and Sustainable Futures
Crown Plaza Surfers Paradise, Queensland

SYDNEY, DECEMBER 2005
11–14 December
The 4th International Conference on Researching Work and Learning
www.oval.uts.edu.au/rwl4

SYDNEY, APRIL 2006
18–21 April
Australian Association of Career Counsellors
15th AACC National Conference
Reimagining work: Living Dreams, Constructing Futures
www.aacc06.com
Call for presentation proposals—Research strand of the AACC06 Conference
The organising committee invites proposals for the research strand of the conference in the form of individual papers or symposia where the research and/or issues relate to the conference focus. Full paper refereeing is optional, but all proposed presentations require an abstract and full paper to be submitted for refereeing by 31 October 2005.
FROM THE JOURNALS

JOURNAL OF VOCATIONAL BEHAVIOR, 2005

Volume 66, Issue 1
Stability and change in interests: A longitudinal study of adolescents from grades 8 through 12
Terence J. G. Tracey, Steven B. Robbins and Christy D. Hofsess
Flow among music teachers and their students: The crossover of peak experiences
Arnold B. Bakker
The structure of workplace adaptive skill in a career inexperienced group
Steven F. Cronshaw and Shefali Jethmalani
Generalizability of interest structure to China: Application of the Personal Globe Inventory
Lirong Long, Ryan S. Adams and Terence J. G. Tracey
Gender differences in the determinants of the willingness to accept an international assignment
Mandy E. G. van der Velde, Carin J. H. Bossink and Paul G. W. Jansen
Cultural influences on responses to items on the strong interest inventory
Nadya A. Fouad and Cindy M. Walker
Lillian T. Eby, Wendy J. Casper, Angie Lockwood, Chris Bordeaux and Andi Brinley

Volume 66, Issue 2
A qualitative study of Latino lesbian and gay youths’ experiences with discrimination and the career development process
Eve M. Adams, Betsy J. Cahill and Stacy J. Ackerlind
A daily diary study of coping in the context of the job demands–control–support model
Kevin Daniels and Claire Harris
Bridging the gap between intentions and behavior: Implementation intentions, action control, and procrastination
Edwin A. J. van Hooft, Marise Ph. Born, Toon W. Taris, Henk van der Flier and Roland W.B. Blank
Contributions of the relational context to career adaptability among urban adolescents
Maureen E. Kenny and Meredith Blethoe
Vocational choice: A decision-making perspective
Henry Sauerum

Volume 66, Issue 3
The role of personality and learning experiences in social cognitive career theory
Michael Schaub and David M. Tokar
The interactive effects of conscientiousness, work effort, and psychological climate on job performance
Zinta S. Byrne, Jason Stoner, Kenneth R. Thompson and Wayne Hochwarter
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James M. Dieffenbach, Meredith H. Croyle and Robin H. Gosserand
Organizational identification: A meta-analysis
Michael Riketta

Child vocational development: A review and reconsideration
Paul J. Hartung, Erik J. Porfeli and Fred W. Vondracek
Socialization and development of the work ethic among adolescents and young adults
Tom ter Bogt, Quinten Raaijmakers and Frits van Wel
Racial/ethnic bullying: Exploring links between bullying and racism in the US workplace
Suzy Fox and Lamont E. Stallworth
Text of a mediation model of perceived organizational support
Zhen Xiong Chen, Samuel Aryee and Cynthia Lee
Social predictors of unsuccessful entrance into the labour market—A socialization process perspective
Ellen Ek, Ulla Sovio, Jouko Remes and Marjo-Riitta Järvelin
The relative contribution of formal and informal organizational work–family support
Scott J. Behson
African-American students’ early trust beliefs in work-based mentors
Frank Linnehan, Christyi Weer and Josh Uhl
Evaluation of an intervention to increase non-traditional career interests and career-related self-efficacy among middle-school adolescents
Sherri L. Turner and Richard T. Lapan
Antecedents and consequences of reactions to developmental 360° feedback
Leanne E. Atwater and Joan F. Bret
Negative effect and job search: Further examination of the reverse causation hypothesis
Craig D. Crossley and Jeffrey M. Stanton
Careers Forum

The role of chance events in career decision making
Jim E. H. Bright, Robert G. L. Pryor and Lucy Harpham

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Volume 31, Number 3
The role of interpersonal comfort in mentoring relationships
Tammy D. Allen, Rachel Day and Elizabeth Lenz
Predictive relationships between web and human resource use and middle school students’ interest in science careers: An exploratory analysis
Tiffany A. Koszalka, Barbara L. Grabowski and Nancy Darling
Elementary career intervention programs: Social action initiatives
Donna E. Palladino Schultheiss
A longitudinal study of the talent search program
Ernest W. Brewer and Jama McMahan Landers
Career development and the needs of young college-educated females in Taiwan
Bella Ya-Hui Lien

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Reliability and validity of five-level response continua for the career decision self-efficacy scale
Nancy E. Betz, Marie S. Hammond and Karen D. Multon
Convergent validity of O*NET Holland code classifications
Donald E. Eggerth, Shannon M. Bowles, Roy H. Tunick and Michael E. Andrew
Career counseling process: A qualitative analysis of experts’ cases
Susan C. Whiston, Dawn Lindeman, Daryn Rahardja and Jordan H. Reed
Occupational possible selves: Fears and aspirations of college women
Linda M. Chalk, Naomi M. Meara, Jeanne D. Day and Kathleen L. Davis
Predictors of the career commitment process in Mexican American college students
Veronica Leal-Muniz and Madonna G. Constantine
Updated meta-analysis on the relationship between congruence and satisfaction
Orit Tsabari, Aharon Tziner and Elchanan I. Meir
Family influences on college students’ occupational identity
Ana C. Berrios-Allison

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Richard Sweet
Career guidance policies in 37 countries: Contrasts and common themes
A. G. Watts and Ronald G. Sultana
An occupation in harmony: The roles of markets and government in career information and guidance
W. Norton Grubb
Quality in career guidance: Issues and methods
Peter Plant
The skills, training and qualifications of guidance workers
John McCarthy
Measuring the outcomes of career guidance
Malcolm Maguire
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CAREER DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY, 2004
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