

# Careering

Skills → Jobs → Dreams

**BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT  
LES OBSTACLES À L'EMPLOI**

**BUSTING THE MYTHS ABOUT PEOPLE  
WITH DISABILITIES / DÉBOULONNER  
LES MYTHES SUR LES PERSONNES  
HANDICAPÉES**

**OVERCOMING BARRIERS FOR  
CRIMINALIZED CLIENTS / SURMONTER  
LES OBSTACLES POUR LES CLIENTS  
CRIMINALISÉS**

**UNDERSTANDING ASD IN SCHOOL AND  
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The official publication of



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CANADIAN EDUCATION AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR COUNSELLING  
INSTITUT CANADIEN D'ÉDUCATION ET DE RECHERCHE EN ORIENTATION

10  
years  
ans  
2004-2014

ceric.ca

PUBLISHER: Trevor Shirtliff

EDITOR: Catherine Ducharme

CREATIVE DIRECTION & DESIGN: Troy Hspahic

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR: Ann Krawchuk

ADVERTISING SALES: Shirley Goray, Bradley Pritchard

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Kayla Altman, Ritchy Dubé, Bryan Hiebert, Nicki Moore, Siobhan Neary, André Parent, Yvonne Rodney

## CAREERING

CER-T0214 • SPRING - SUMMER 2014

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FOR EDITORIAL INQUIRIES:  
catherine@ceric.ca

FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION:  
dbilley@marketzone.ca  
1-888-634-5556 x103

FOR SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES  
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catherine@ceric.ca

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177 McDermot Avenue, Suite 200  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada  
R3B 0S1  
Tel: 1-888-634-5556  
Fax: 204-515-1185  
Email: production@marketzone.ca  
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CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:

Circulation Department  
177 McDermot Avenue, Suite 200  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0S1



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LORRAINE BOLAND Your Employment Services - Thunder Bay

JOHANNE BOUTIN Société GRICS

JENNIFER BROWNE Memorial University of Newfoundland

ILIA ESSOPOS UQÀM

JULIE GAUVIN Société GRICS

CATHERINE KEATES Queen's University

DON MCCASKILL Frontier School Division

ROSIE PARNASS University of Toronto

IRIS UNGER YES Montréal

ROXANA ZULETA Jane/Finch Community and Family Services

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## When is a barrier not a barrier?

I don't like the words "barriers to employment." Maybe it's just me succumbing to the legendary Canadian political correctness, but the term "barrier" just sounds so negative for a concept that touches a majority of people. You live in a disadvantaged neighbourhood? It's a barrier to employment. Immigrant? That's a barrier too. Mental health issues? Criminal record? Too young? Too old? In the end, if you don't have a barrier to employment, you are a member of a minority.

Beyond the negative connotation of the term though, it's the implied meaning that annoys me. If having an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is considered to be a barrier to employment, does it mean it's a bad thing to have ASD? Is it something you must try to hide? Be ashamed of? André Parent, in his article on intervention with ASD clients, clearly establishes that this is not the case. Rather, it's a question of adjusting your approach to the needs of your clients.

Lacking a better term, we chose barriers to employment as a theme for this edition of *Careering*, and in its pages, you will find insightful articles, full of new perspectives and practical tips, on working with ex-offenders, persons with disabilities and homeless clients (online only). If you have a better term to suggest, write away at [catherine@ceric.ca](mailto:catherine@ceric.ca)!

## Quand les mots sont des obstacles

Je n'aime pas l'expression « obstacles à l'emploi. » Je ne sais pas si c'est la légendaire attitude politiquement correcte canadienne qui parle, mais c'est une expression qui, pour moi, sonne très négative pour une réalité qui touche la majorité du monde. Vous vivez en milieu défavorisé? C'est un obstacle à l'emploi. Immigrant? Un obstacle aussi. Problèmes de santé mentale? Casier judiciaire? Trop jeune? Trop vieux? Les gens qui n'ont pas d'obstacles à l'emploi font partie d'une minorité.

Au-delà de la négativité de l'expression, c'est le sous-entendu qui m'agace. Si avoir un trouble du spectre de l'autisme (TSA) est considéré comme un obstacle à l'emploi, est-ce que cela veut dire qu'être TSA est une mauvaise chose? S'agit-il de quelque chose qu'il faut cacher, dont il faut avoir honte? André Parent, dans son article sur l'intervention avec les clients TSA, établit clairement que ce n'est pas le cas. Il s'agit d'ajuster son approche aux besoins de ses clients.

Faute d'un meilleur terme, nous avons choisi les obstacles à l'emploi comme thème pour cette édition de *Careering*, et vous y trouverez également des articles de fond, avec de nouvelles perspectives et des conseils pratiques, sur l'orientation avec les ex-détenus, les personnes handicapées et les personnes sans-abri (en ligne seulement). Si vous avez un meilleur terme à nous suggérer, écrivez-moi à [catherine@ceric.ca](mailto:catherine@ceric.ca)!

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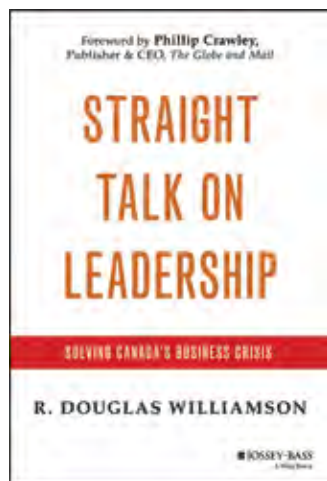


# Straight Talk on Leadership

*Solving Canada's Business Crisis*

Book by R. Douglas Williamson

Review by Yvonne Rodney



From page one of this book, it's clear that Douglas Williamson is *very mad*. Like a passionately caring parent who sees the things he worked hard to establish not being leveraged by the next generation, he feels the same about leadership or lack thereof in Canada. The long and short of his argument is this: Canada will be left behind on the world stage unless our leadership makes a radical shift in how they do business.

The 352-page hardcover tome seems daunting at first glance. However, Williamson has broken down his ideas into short, easily digested chapters, sections and summaries. Using bad and good case scenarios, practical wisdom and information culled from a plethora of thought leaders, Williamson makes a strong, sometimes strident case that Canada's complacency, "niceness" and risk-averseness will lead to our country being left behind. And he does not mince his words, ergo the title, *Straight Talk on Leadership*.

Williamson insists that **transformational leadership** – script-less, making it up as we go, flying by the seat of our pants, but informed by a rich experience repertoire is what is needed to turn things around for Canada and Canadian businesses. After setting the stage for his treatise in Part I of the book, he lays out in Part II, "Meeting the future today," the different kinds of intelligence a transformational leader must possess in order to lead effectively, and he illustrates how they work throughout the rest of the book. These are contextual intelligence, strategic intelligence, emotional intelligence, innovative intelligence, ambiguity intelligence, talent intelligence and collaborative intelligence.

The transformational leader must discard the map-book style of leadership – basing decisions on how things were done in the past – and instead grab hold of a compass, ignoring short-term thinking mentalities and knee-jerk reactions, to steer "a confident and steady course to the future..."



*Straight Talk on Leadership*, while making a solid case for transformational leadership, then goes a step further. No leadership can be effective without **inspired followership**. Williamson claims that most leaders are not giving their followers anything exciting or bold to follow. They claim that people are their most valuable assets, but need to see followers instead as “investors.”

The transformational leader must learn the human culture of his/her organization down to the DNA level, battle stagnation, and realistically face what’s happening in their organization in order to build the high-performing work culture needed to get Canada back on the map. To do this we could learn a lot, he says, from the long-standing work Canada has done in producing “high-performance hockey players capable of competing on the international stage.” He cites Magna International and WestJet Airlines as two examples of Canadian organizations that have approached the organizational culture dynamic from unique perspectives.

Williamson also put high stock in a leader’s **credibility** and sees it as a gift the followers give the leader that can be capitalized on when times get tough. Williamson states that Canadian business leaders must “declare outright war on the things that diminish credibility... setting high standards and not being afraid to hold everyone accountable.”

In the final chapter of the book, Williamson lays out a **six-step transformational action plan for Canada’s future**:

- 1) Raise the awareness level
- 2) Build the guiding coalition
- 3) Look at the future through fresh eyes
- 4) Commit to bold leadership
- 5) Engage the Canadian people
- 6) Make brave choices

He sees Canada’s track record of honour, peace and good relations with many nations, our fairness and reasonableness as a people, as strengths we can build on. However, in true Williamson style, he inserts the caveat... “But they will not matter if we fail in rising to the challenge at hand and don’t have the courage, the resolve and the intelligence to carve a new path, in a new world, with new ideas and a new set of national priorities. Canada can, if we put our minds to it.”

*Straight Talk on Leadership* can be overwhelming when one considers all the intelligences Williamson insists a leader must possess. It was at a presentation at the Cannexus National Career Development Conference this past January that he offered a perspective that was easier for me to wrap my head around: Like a jazz musician, the transformational leader improvises, imagines and inspires. S/he is prepared to throw out the score, pick up the beat and go with the flow, making sense out of the craziness around – not trying to get a perfect solution but a “roughly right” one.

Transformative business leadership, transformative governmental leadership, inspired followership – these are the things that will turn Canada around.

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**Reviewer bio**

**Yvonne Rodney**, author, speaker and playwright, is President of Inner Change Consulting, providing career consultation for individuals and organizations. She also offers coaching on personal development and spiritual growth.

**Author bio**

**R. Douglas Williamson** is President & CEO of The Beacon Group, a company that provides leadership development, executive coaching, strategic planning and performance management services.







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# Canadian Business Divided on Best Way to Tackle Skills Gap

*Survey finds 71% of employers agree they have a responsibility to provide career management programs but only 29% offer them*

A shortage of skilled workers is the single biggest issue facing Canadian executives in 2014 but employers are split on how to address the skills gap, according to a survey released by the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling (CERIC). Environics Research Group conducted the survey of 500 Canadian business leaders about the skills shortage and skills gaps, employee training and recruiting workers, as well as career management practices.



## Finding skilled employees not easy

Employers from across the country face a number of challenges, but the most commonly noted (68%) is a shortage of skilled workers. The survey found that a majority of executives (72%) perceive a gap between the skills they are looking for, and what most jobseekers have. More than one in three businesses (36%) feel that gap has grown.

Among Canadian businesses, there is an even split between those who feel the best way to close the gap is for employers to provide more training (43%), and those who say it is prospective employees who should better prepare themselves for the labour market (43%).

Nearly two-thirds of executives say they would hire an employee with the right soft skills and provide training on the more technical aspects of the job. Yet two out of three businesses (66%) have difficulty finding candidates with the soft skills they're looking for – a positive attitude, good communication ability and a strong work ethic.

Although willingness to provide training is high, a majority of employers (64%) also express concern about losing employees after investing in training.

When it comes to recruiting, just half of Canadian executives (52%) say that a potential employee's online footprint is important to them, with only one in 10 (11%) saying it is very important. Small businesses are the least likely to consider a potential employee's online profile.

Seventy-six per cent of executives said resumes are still important, while an additional 10% see resumes as having become more important.

## How do regions of Canada differ?

What region of Canada is being hit hardest by skills shortages? Where are employee referrals the most common recruitment practice? In what part of the country are employers least likely to invest in staff training? Find out the answers to these questions and more in newly released regional breakdowns of CERIC's *National Business Survey*.

For instance, a much higher proportion of employers in Ontario (38%) believe it is "easy" or "somewhat easy" to find the right people with appropriate skill sets to fill vacant positions than is the case in the other regions of Canada (BC 22%, Prairies 26%, Quebec 21% and Atlantic Canada 25%).

Also notable is the fact that finding people with adequate soft skills seems to be most difficult in Ontario compared to the other regions. Almost three-quarters of employers (73%) stated it was "somewhat difficult" or "difficult" in the former while the average was nearly 10 percentage points lower across the other regions (64%).

## Who is left out of Canada's workplace?

To consider the issue of high youth unemployment in Canada, executives were provided a series of possible reasons, and asked to pick which they feel is the greatest. The most commonly selected reasons are that young people are too demanding in the jobs that they want (19%) and that they lack real-world experience (18%).

What do Canadian businesses do to attract young workers? Half of all Canadian executives said that they post their job openings to online job sites (55%) or recruit through social media (49%). Campus recruitment (34%), job fairs (31%) and paid internships (29%) are used by three in 10 businesses, while fewer recruit through youth service agencies. Of note, nearly a quarter of businesses (24%) reported offering unpaid internships.

Canadian executives were also asked about their organizations' efforts to recruit candidates from under-represented groups, such as visible minorities, Aboriginal people, people with disabilities and new Canadians; half (50%) say that this is not something in which they invest a great deal of time or effort.

## Career planning and coaching

Seven in 10 executives (71%) agree that employers have a responsibility to provide career management programs for their staff. However, only three in 10 (29%) say such programs are currently being offered by their organization with larger organizations being more likely to offer them. A lack of time is the greatest challenge, and for small organizations, the main reason is a lack of expertise. The most frequently offered programs include tailored coaching (29%) and career planning (25%).

A strong majority of executives (88%) agree that it is at least somewhat important that employees have the opportunity to reach their own career goals with 44% of businesses stating it is very important.

The survey was co-sponsored by TD Bank Group. The complete report, *Career Development in the Canadian Workplace: National Business Survey*, as well as the detailed regional breakdowns, are available online at [ceric.ca/perspectives](http://ceric.ca/perspectives).



# Overcoming Barriers

*Ex-offenders face an array of prejudices when trying to reintegrate into society – including from the people trying to help them*

## Surmonter les obstacles

*Les anciens délinquants qui tentent de réintégrer la société font face à une foule de préjugés, y compris de la part de ceux qui essaient de les aider*

By Ritchy Dubé

Par Ritchy Dubé

I am a nationally published author (whoop-de-do), registered addiction therapist, founder and executive director of a charitable organization for the prevention of drug abuse, and founder and president of a personnel agency that placed ex-convicts. In my peak, I had 75 men on payroll, 50 to 70% were ex-cons.

Laurentian, McMaster and Simon Fraser University were kind enough to award me a certificate, diploma and degree while Cambrian College provided me with a decent business education. Oh yes, I also served eight years in Canadian penitentiaries where I learned to mind my business, bluff my way through deadly confrontations and read many of the classics, but was never handed a certificate of accomplishment for any of that.

You can imagine how few people or organizations are willing to help stigmatized individuals like myself. I discovered, to my chagrin, that many employment counsellors are downright loath to help. They have their reasons and I will address these concerns here, but before I do, I need to let you know that I don't like receiving unsolicited advice, so I am not going to give any. My aim is to share my experience as a counsellor who has worked with criminalized populations and also as a consumer of services as a stigmatized and criminalized client. I thought this dual perspective would be helpful.

Je suis un auteur dont les écrits ont été publiés à l'échelle nationale (quelle affaire!), un thérapeute en toxicomanie agréé, le fondateur et directeur général d'un organisme pour la prévention de l'abus de drogues et le président-fondateur d'une agence de recrutement qui trouve des emplois aux anciens détenus. Au plus fort de mes activités, j'ai eu 75 employés. De ce nombre, de 50 à 70 % étaient eux-mêmes d'anciens détenus.

Les universités Laurentian, McMaster et Simon Fraser m'ont gentiment décerné des diplômes, tandis que le collège Cambrian m'a donné une formation adéquate en administration des affaires. Ah oui, j'ai aussi été incarcéré pendant huit ans dans des pénitenciers canadiens où j'ai appris à me mêler de mes affaires, à me sortir de situations dangereuses et où j'ai lu de nombreux classiques, mais je n'ai reçu aucun certificat pour ces exploits.

Vous pouvez imaginer combien peu nombreux sont les gens ou les organismes prêts à aider les personnes stigmatisées comme moi. J'ai découvert avec tristesse que beaucoup de conseillers en emploi sont réticents à nous venir en aide. Ils ont leurs raisons et je vais les aborder ici, mais avant tout, je tiens à vous dire que, comme je n'aime pas recevoir de conseils non sollicités, je n'en donnerai pas non plus. Je veux partager mon expérience de conseiller en emploi ayant travaillé avec des personnes




As a consumer, stigmatized people, like little ol' me, slip through the door every day looking for a break, support, guidance, understanding, validation and a job, but often leave crushed, humiliated, utterly hopeless and rudderless. Some of these men and women have been good members of society for many years but still can't catch a break. We, the former bad boys and girls, are not looking for accolades for doing the right thing, but we certainly do not need or appreciate the added barriers. We just want to work, feed our kids, put some savings away for a rainy day and maybe even travel.

So, assuming we, as employment counsellors, want to reduce and remove some of these barriers, what can we do to make our workplace more inclusive to both help former offenders find work and even hire them as employment counsellors? I figure something can be done but it will require the right attitude. This shift in our thinking will certainly be a two-way street, where the ex-offender demonstrates a record of pro-social behaviour and where the counsellor demonstrates an honest desire to help. This proposition is based on a simple belief that the professional counsellor possesses goodwill, intelligence and a drive to improve. It will require integrity, experience and professionalism.

criminalisées, et de consommateur de services d'emploi en tant que client criminalisé et stigmatisé. J'ai pensé que cette double perspective pourrait être utile.

En tant que consommateurs, les personnes stigmatisées cherchent sans cesse un répit, du soutien, des conseils, de la compréhension, de l'acceptation et un emploi. Mais souvent, elles se retrouvent écrasées, humiliées, désespérées et à la dérive. Certains de ces hommes et femmes ont été des membres productifs de la société pendant plusieurs années, mais la chance ne leur sourit pas. Nous, les anciens détenus, ne voulons pas être félicités pour être entrés dans le droit chemin, mais nous n'avons certainement pas besoin d'obstacles supplémentaires. Nous voulons simplement travailler, nourrir notre famille, économiser et peut-être même voyager.

Donc, si nous présumons que nous, les conseillers en emploi, voulons réduire et supprimer certains de ces obstacles, que pouvons-nous faire pour rendre notre milieu de travail plus inclusif afin d'aider les anciens délinquants à trouver un emploi et même de les engager comme conseillers en emploi? Je crois qu'il est possible de faire quelque chose, mais qu'il



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We, the alleged enlightened and educated class are sometimes quite jaded and close-minded, yours truly included. That's right, I have trust issues, too. I also need to work on my attitude. We are quite often fearful and intolerant. Sometimes we just don't like ex-cons, period. Most of us are unwilling to put ourselves out there for the ex-con for some of the following reasons:

- We, the straight-laced and blameless (if there are any of us around – not me, I already confessed), have not faced adversity and have no direct experience with the transformative process, so we don't trust it or don't believe in it
- We hold negative views of the once anti-social and criminally involved
- We are afraid
- We may have been victimized
- We don't want to burn our bridges with employers
- We do not want to associate our organization with former felons
- We don't want to waste our time on a less desirable candidate when we can help one of the blameless

No worries, we the former hard cases totally understand because we feel the same about each other until we take time to get to know one another better. However, I have sent many men to construction jobs without any substantial screening and I and the employer have never ever been ripped off or hurt. The men either showed up and worked hard or they did not, no different than all other folks I placed.

For more sensitive placements, however, more diligence is required, and this is where getting to know one another pays off, so one of my strategies is to work with the individual for a time until we become familiar with each other. It does not take long to see when someone is serious in their aims. They will have made efforts to change, have been out of jail for a time, meet appointments, show up clean and sober, wear appropriate attire, honour obligations, complete assignments and communicate honestly, respectfully and calmly. They will have no qualms providing me with written references and will have no hesitation discussing their former ways. These folks, like me, have no issue with disclosure once we respect and understand one another.

All I need to do as a professional practitioner is respect their privacy and preserve their dignity. This requires a self-check where I ask myself some very pointed questions such as:

- 1) How important is it for me to know?
- 2) Am I violating any laws by asking?
- 3) Is it relevant to the job sought?
- 4) What are my motives for asking?

faut la bonne attitude. Ce changement dans la façon de penser devra se faire des deux côtés : l'ancien délinquant devra prouver qu'il participe à des activités sociales positives et le conseiller devra témoigner d'un désir sincère de lui venir en aide. Cette proposition est fondée sur la conviction toute simple que le conseiller professionnel a la volonté, l'intelligence et le désir de s'améliorer. Cela exige de l'intégrité, de l'expérience et du professionnalisme.

Nous, les gens prétendument informés et éduqués, faisons parfois preuve de cynisme et d'étroitesse d'esprit. Je m'inclus dans cette description. Moi aussi, j'ai de la difficulté à faire confiance. Moi aussi, je dois améliorer mon attitude. Très souvent, nous sommes craintifs et intolérants. Parfois, nous n'aimons tout simplement pas les anciens détenus. La plupart d'entre nous sommes réticents à aider les anciens délinquants pour une ou plusieurs des raisons suivantes :

- Nous, les gens irréprochables (si de telles personnes existent; pas moi en tout cas, j'ai déjà avoué) n'avons jamais eu à faire face à l'adversité et n'avons aucune expérience du processus de transformation. Par conséquent, nous ne faisons pas confiance;
- Nous avons une opinion négative des personnes qui ont déjà été antisociales et participé à des activités criminelles;
- Nous avons peur;
- Nous avons peut-être été des victimes;
- Nous ne voulons pas couper les ponts avec nos employeurs;
- Nous ne voulons pas associer notre organisme à d'anciens criminels;
- Nous ne voulons pas perdre de temps avec un candidat moins intéressant alors que nous pourrions aider un candidat irréprochable.

Pas de souci : nous, les anciens durs, comprenons parfaitement, car nous avons les mêmes sentiments les uns à l'égard des autres, jusqu'à ce que nous apprenions à nous connaître. Cependant, j'ai pourvu beaucoup de postes dans le domaine de la construction, et ni moi ni l'employeur n'avons jamais été volés ou blessés. Soit les hommes se présentaient au boulot et travaillaient dur, soit ils ne se présentaient pas. Ce n'est pas différent des autres gens que j'ai placé en emploi.

Dans le cas de placements plus « délicats », cependant, la diligence est de mise, et c'est alors qu'apprendre à se connaître devient profitable, alors l'une de mes stratégies consiste à travailler quelque temps avec la personne pour apprendre à se connaître mutuellement. Il ne faut pas beaucoup de temps pour comprendre qu'une personne a des intentions sérieuses. Elle a fait des efforts pour changer, est sortie de prison depuis quelque temps, se présente à ses rendez-vous bien mise et sobre, porte des vêtements convenables, remplit ses obligations, exécute ses tâches et communique honnêtement, respectueusement et calmement. Elle n'hésite pas à me fournir des recommandations écrites et à discuter de son ancienne vie. Tout comme moi, ces personnes ne voient aucun inconvénient à divulguer certains renseignements une fois que le respect et la compréhension sont installés.



These and other questions help me navigate the relationship and animate the dialogue. It is equally important for me to act as a good role model, never losing sight of the power differentials. More importantly, I must keep in mind my critical role as gatekeeper to the workplace. These folks depend on me to transform their lives by helping them find meaning, acceptance and security in the world through employment. This is a huge responsibility and one I should not easily shirk because of fixed ideas.

Ultimately, working with criminalized populations is more about what kind of person and professional we want to be than it is about protecting others. If we do our due diligence, be honest with ourselves, pay attention and develop the relationship, our job will be made very easy and, consequently, deciding to invest time to help or not can be done with confidence and conviction. No need for charades, shadows and excuses.

In a nutshell, change is a two-way street. I had to change, grow up, mature and own up to become a professional counsellor, and I needed to change to become an effective, empathetic and professional counsellor who acts ethically and with integrity. I am so very happy I was able to overcome these barriers because experiencing the transformative process myself and seeing it take root in others is the most fulfilling part of my life.

*Ritchy Dubé is an average guy who seeks a normal existence. He was born and raised in Sudbury, ON and has a desire to make life more equitable for all. Ritchy invites your comments at [sendakite@gmail.com](mailto:sendakite@gmail.com).*



En tant que conseiller professionnel, il me suffit de respecter leur vie privée et de préserver leur dignité. Pour ce faire, je dois faire un exercice d'introspection et me poser des questions très pointues comme :

- 1) À quel point est-il important que je sache?
- 2) Est-ce que j'enfreins des lois en posant ces questions?
- 3) Est-ce pertinent pour l'emploi postulé?
- 4) Quelles sont les raisons pour lesquelles je pose ces questions?

Ces questions et d'autres m'aident à me repérer dans la relation et à engager le dialogue. Il est également important que je sois un bon modèle en ne perdant jamais de vue la différence de pouvoir entre moi et l'autre. Surtout, je dois me rappeler mon rôle essentiel de gardien du lieu de travail. Ces personnes comptent sur moi pour transformer leur vie en leur trouvant un emploi qui les aidera à redonner un sens à leur existence, à être acceptées et à avoir un sentiment de sécurité. C'est une énorme responsabilité.

En fin de compte, travailler avec des populations criminalisées consiste davantage à définir le genre de personne et de professionnel qu'on veut être qu'à protéger les autres. Si nous agissons avec diligence, sommes honnêtes avec nous-mêmes, faisons attention à la relation et nous efforçons de la faire fructifier, notre travail sera grandement facilité et, par conséquent, la décision de venir en aide ou non à la personne peut être prise avec confiance et certitude. Nul besoin de jouer à des charades, de suivre la personne à la trace ni de trouver des excuses.

Pour résumer, le changement va dans les deux sens. J'ai dû changer, grandir en sagesse, mûrir et me responsabiliser pour devenir conseiller professionnel, et j'ai dû changer pour devenir un conseiller professionnel efficace et empathique qui agit de manière éthique et avec intégrité. Je suis très heureux d'avoir réussi à surmonter ces obstacles, parce que vivre moi-même le processus de transformation et le voir s'enraciner chez les autres est l'aspect le plus enrichissant de ma vie.

*Ritchy Dubé est un gars ordinaire qui veut vivre une existence normale. Il est né et a grandi à Sudbury, ON et souhaite rendre la vie plus équitable pour tous. Ritchy vous invite à lui transmettre vos commentaires à [sendakite@gmail.com](mailto:sendakite@gmail.com).*

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# Career Briefs

## The Great Canadian Skills Mismatch

A number of important demographic shifts happened since Rick Miner published the first report in the *People Without Jobs, Jobs Without People* series in 2010. *The Great Canadian Skills Mismatch* is intended to add new perspective to the ongoing debate about the existence of skills shortages and/or mismatches in Canada.

Miner concludes that by 2031 projected skills shortages will drop from 4.2 million unfilled positions to 2.3 million due to increased educational attainment levels, but a major problem will still exist. He argues that to address these shortages we need more workers and we need them to have the right skill sets. His recommendations include:

- Drastically improving our labour market information (LMI) systems.
- Developing a national education and training strategy.
- Establishing "mandatory" career counselling opportunities for students, their parents, teachers and administrators.
- Investing in basic literacy and employability skills training.
- Implementing a variety of changes to our post-secondary system to make it more accessible, flexible, responsive, relevant and affordable.

You can download these reports as well as other publications from Miner at [minerandminer.ca](http://minerandminer.ca).

## The world is coming to Quebec City

The International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) will be holding its annual conference in Quebec City this year, on June 4-6, in partnership with the Ordre des conseillers et conseillères d'orientation du Québec (OCCOQ) and the Regroupement québécois des organismes pour le développement de l'employabilité (RQODE). Keynote speakers include Norm Amundson, Spencer Niles and Gideon Arulmani, and 1,200 delegates from all over the world are expected. It's a one-of-a-kind occasion for career development professionals in Canada, since this conference rarely takes place in our country. Find out more at [aiosp-congres2014-quebec.ca](http://aiosp-congres2014-quebec.ca).

## What's new on ContactPoint: Wikis! Podcasts!

The wikis have become one of the most popular resources on ContactPoint, CERIC's online community for professionals in the career development field. In addition to the already existing wikis on career development theory and mental health, a new wiki on career development terms will be published online soon. Get in touch with [contactpoint@ceric.ca](mailto:contactpoint@ceric.ca) to become a contributor.

To celebrate CERIC's 10th anniversary, ContactPoint is holding a series of 10 conversations in its forum and on Twitter (#CERIC10) about topics that matter in your work as a career development professional. Discussions so far have addressed online resources and assessment tools. Also as part of anniversary celebrations, CERIC is hosting the *Texttalks* podcast series with authors of its newly published textbook *Career Development Practice in Canada*. The first podcast features an interview with Phil Jarvis on "Career Development: Key to Economic Development."

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CERIC also produces literature searches that include comprehensive listings of notable research and articles in various areas of career development. All 21 literatures searches covering themes such as Older Workers, Aboriginal Issues and Parental Involvement are available in ContactPoint's Resource directory.

Visit [contactpoint.ca](http://contactpoint.ca).

### But really, how important are skills?

The OECD recently published the results from its Survey of Adult Skills, conducted as part of its Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). Essential Skills Ontario published a series of bulletins distilling the PIAAC results, and the most recent one asks a rather blunt question: do skills actually matter when it comes to employment and earnings?

They do. In Ontario, educational attainment is one of the best predictors of employment status and income. The PIAAC data show that those who are employed have higher average scores in literacy and numeracy than those who are unemployed or out of the labour force. These results suggest that skills training could help to integrate more people in the labour force and would be beneficial to those who are looking for work. You can learn more by visiting Essential Skills Ontario's website at [essentialskillsontario.ca](http://essentialskillsontario.ca).

### Two new CERIC-funded projects in the works

#### Setting the Compass: A Career Services Training Manual for Supporting Mental Health Clients

In partnership with the Nova Scotia Career Development Association, CERIC is funding the development of a web-based training manual for career service workers that will improve employment and educational outcomes for people living with mental health issues. People living with mental illness face the highest unemployment rate of any disability group, and career service workers are a critical resource in supporting clients in meeting their full employment potential. CERIC previously funded another project to better understand the training needs of career practitioners around mental health.

#### Making It Work! Managing Successful Maternity Leave Career Transitions

Another CERIC-funded project seeks to understand the gap in women's career development and create resources for employers and women experiencing maternity leave career transition. Currently existing resources related to maternity leave pertain to singular groups or singular topics, such as employment law or work/life

balance. This project is developed in partnership with Canada Career Counselling and the Vanier Institute of the Family.

CERIC provides funding for research and learning projects in career development and encourages individuals and organizations alike to submit proposals for career counselling-related research or learning and development. Learn more at [ceric.ca/projects](http://ceric.ca/projects).

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# Busting the Myths

*Major obstacles to employment still persist for persons with disabilities – here's some practical advice for removing them*

By Kayla Altman

Cet article est disponible en français sur [orientaction.ca/careering](http://orientaction.ca/careering).

The idea of discussing barriers to employment for persons with disabilities is a daunting one, involving obstacles that are embedded throughout our cultural, financial, social, physical and institutional structures. I am going to address those obstacles that I witness most often, and hope to offer a few suggestions for removing these barriers.

## Recruiters, job developers and counsellors

I have been a client at a number of organizations that support employment for people with disabilities, and I have been asked at each of these organizations – always before looking at my resume – if I would be willing to work for minimum wage, and if I was capable of lifting boxes and other light labour.

It's unfortunate then that the same organizations that seek to eliminate barriers to employment are often a fundamental part of reinforcing the idea that a person with a disability cannot be a skilled employee, someone suitable for a career or a salary. I've sat at these organizations with an incredible range of people – people with PhDs and astounding technological expertise, others who speak several languages and hold degrees in finance. And yet, as people with disabilities, our skills are automatically downgraded when we are asked how little we are willing to work for and what menial tasks will suffice.

## Underpaid and undervalued

Recruiters and employment counsellors should actively seek out employer partners with a clearly defined commitment to access and inclusion. Candidates should be matched with roles providing a gamut of opportunities that represent the diverse skillsets and needs that people bring to the table. This means seeking out positions in technology and the arts, in hospitality and retail, and in every other market, no matter how specific or broad. According to a 2009 study released by the Canadian Human Rights Commission, only 44.9% of Canadians with disabilities aged 15 and up have full-time employment, meaning that more than 55% are

underemployed, partially employed, not in the labour force or unemployed – there are plenty of candidates to fill positions in the Canadian labour market.

It is also important that the positions sought out offer stable employment with appropriate compensation. People with disabilities are often underpaid and undervalued in the workforce – it is important that, as organizations of support, you ensure that employers recognize the value of your candidates.

## Institutional barriers

Often without realizing it, employers create barriers to potential candidates the moment they post a new position. Sometimes this means using overly complex application systems, or posting job descriptions and instructions that are incompatible with screen reading technology. Then, there is the job description itself – many do not indicate any commitment to inclusion, or any mention that applicants with disabilities will be accommodated during the recruitment (and retention) process, upon request. This means that an applicant with a disability may look at a job posting and determine that the organization does not support applicants and employees with disabilities.

Employers without any reference to workplace accommodations in a job description also represent themselves as not being supportive of employees once onboarded. People with disabilities should not be responsible for change-making at every step, and while an organization may be willing to adapt its policies once an applicant with a disability is hired, this leaves the employee to lead what should be an organizational commitment.

## How to open the doors to your workplace

Create and communicate job descriptions that are clear and concise, written in plain language and distributed in accessible formats. Do you only accept applications online? If so, consider that candidates may not have the assistive technology to submit their application this way.





When working with recruitment organizations, partner with groups in your community that specifically offer employment supports for underrepresented groups. Be flexible in your interviewing format – consider that people communicate best in a diversity of ways, and be willing to adapt and be creative when meeting with applicants. When possible, provide applicants with a brief overview of the interview content and format – will they be meeting with one person, or will there be three? Interviews are a stressful experience, and unexpectedly throwing a candidate in with

three interviewers can be overwhelming. Providing context before the interview allows candidates to prepare themselves. Also inform candidates if you intend to have them tested on certain technologies or programs, and provide a timeframe for the interview to allow for appropriate transportation arrangements.

### Retention

Employers often falsely assume that hiring people with disabilities will mean a higher rate of employee turnover. Marc Wafer is the owner of several Tim Horton's franchises in Canada, and has become known as a leader in inclusive hiring practices. At the 2013 Abilities in Mind (AIM) national conference on inclusive hiring, Wafer spoke of the benefits of hiring people with disabilities, including... **higher employee retention!** Retention is also at its best in environments with competitive salaries, employee benefits and support programs, and a feeling of stable employment. Roles with low pay, inconsistent hours and little flexibility do not promote high retention and often leave employees feeling undervalued and uncertain about their positions, meaning that people actively working in these roles often continue to look for something better.

### Work culture

Stigma and stereotypes are some of the most widely discussed issues that negatively impact the experiences of people with disabilities. There is an assumption that having a disability is synonymous with "lacking" something – that a person with a disability will be less skilled, have less knowledge or fewer social skills. These assumptions have a tendency to spread through the culture of a workplace, popping up in the sighs of human resources staff who are asked to consider accessibility in their recruitment efforts, or in the offhanded use of a derogatory word by a colleague.

For job developers and employment counsellors, it is important to communicate to employers what makes an inclusive work environment, and what practices create barriers to recruiting and retaining people with disabilities. For employers, it is moving beyond statements of inclusion to practices of inclusion, and ensuring that potential candidates and employees are supported from the moment a position is first written.

In reality, the majority of the barriers and solutions represented here apply to all persons, regardless of disability status. The impact of confronting these obstacles and ensuring inclusion reaches far beyond persons with disabilities, and has benefits that reach across organizations.

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**Kayla Altman** (BFA, 2011) is an Accessibility Specialist and a volunteer writer and editor with the Canadian Institute of Diversity and Inclusion, with a background in policy development, project management and communications. She has also worked with OCAD University's Diversity & Equity Initiatives where she developed her passion for balancing accessibility with arts and culture. Kayla is also a writer and has been published in various literary journals across North America.



# On the Wrong Planet? Understanding Clients with ASD in School and Career Counselling

*More and more people have autism spectrum disorder (ASD).  
Do you know how to help this growing group?*

# Sur la mauvaise planète? Comprendre les personnes TSA en orientation scolaire et professionnelle

*De plus en plus de gens présentent un trouble du spectre de l'autisme (TSA). Savez-vous comment vous y  
prendre avec cette clientèle émergente?*

By André Parent, c.o.

Par André Parent, c.o.

Many studies have suggested that the number of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is increasing rapidly. According to an article published Jan. 6 in the Quebec City daily *Le Soleil*, Quebec minister Véronique Hivon stated that the number of diagnosed cases had doubled in 10 years. As career or guidance counsellors, it is important that we have a solid grasp of what makes these clients unique. This article will outline some of the points to consider when treating members of this growing client group.

An individual with ASD has a range of characteristics that are important to put into perspective in terms of their degree and intensity. It has been shown that this neuro-genetic disorder is caused by the dysfunction of certain brain structures. The structures are there, but the connections are different than in other individuals. This difference affects several aspects of these individuals' behaviour in regard to communication, social interaction, their limited range of interests and their atypical behaviour.

Plusieurs études ont démontré que la prévalence des personnes présentant un trouble du spectre de l'autisme (TSA) augmente d'une manière importante. Selon un article du quotidien *Le Soleil* de Québec, paru le 6 janvier dernier, la ministre québécoise Véronique Hivon mentionnait que le nombre de diagnostics avait doublé depuis 10 ans. En tant que professionnel de l'orientation ou de l'information scolaire, il devient alors important de bien saisir les particularités des TSA. Cet article vous présentera les grandes lignes à considérer afin d'ajuster votre intervention auprès de cette clientèle émergente.

Les personnes TSA présentent différentes particularités qu'il est important de relativiser en termes de niveau et d'intensité. Il a été démontré que ce trouble neuro-génétique est dû à un dysfonctionnement de certaines structures du cerveau. Les structures sont là, mais les connexions sont faites différemment des autres personnes. Cela affecte plusieurs aspects de leur mode de fonctionnement au niveau de la communication, des interactions sociales et de la présence d'intérêts restreints ou de comportements atypiques.



## Non-verbal cues

For them, understanding non-verbal cues and social conventions properly can be very difficult. Behaviours like looking someone in the eye when talking to them, shaking hands when meeting someone or using common civilities have an implicit importance that people learn spontaneously in childhood. For individuals with ASD, there may be a significant gap between their age and their expected level of interpersonal maturity. They will often reach a major turning point in their 30s, when they begin to assimilate and use their communication skills more easily. Nevertheless, they can find being in group situations or exposed to new social situations exhausting. In response, they may prefer to be alone and go about their personal business free from stress and pressure. It is critical that we remember this when working with these clients.

Individuals with ASD may have difficulty understanding how things fit together; it's easier for them to consider the details separately than to see the big picture. They may see trees rather than a forest. They don't know that they don't know something. What might be obvious for you is definitely not for them. Being clear and concise and breaking your explanations down into smaller parcels of information is critical for optimal communication with your ASD client.

## A different logic

Logic is usually extremely important to individuals with ASD, and it is not the same logic as our own. Several things that we can do spontaneously don't necessarily have any rational purpose. If individuals with ASD don't understand the how and why of things, they will not take action.

Many individuals with ASD feel that other people talk too much and are not sufficiently precise in what they say. Faced with this overload of irrelevant information that they have to filter out, it might take them a great deal of effort to follow conversations, so talk more slowly, get straight to the point and be precise. Understand that when you ask a question, you may get a moment of silence or a delay in response. This delay enables your ASD client to ascribe a logical, consistent meaning to your words.

## Choice of words

The choice of words is another important factor. It's common for individuals with ASD to understand only the literal meaning of words. Consequently, understanding jokes, irony and metaphors is difficult for some. As they grow older, they become more adept at drawing on their past experience to understand these subtleties. This difficulty in grasping non-verbal content can cause people with ASD to experience rejection by their peers at school or on the job.

These complications can be exacerbated by ASD clients' tendency to have a very limited number of highly developed interests. Their peers may become fed up with always hearing about the same subject. Nevertheless, as a result of their limited interests, they tend to develop a very specialized vocabulary and can be very excited and animated when talking about it. As professionals, our challenge is to help them apply that passion to a future job, because people with ASD can be very rigid and believe that only their interests are important. For example, can a young man who is passionate about Lego blocks or another who is excited about sketching plans find their way into a career in building design or architecture? This rigidity of thought patterns presents another interesting or difficult challenge

## Messages non-verbaux

Bien saisir les messages non-verbaux et les conventions sociales peut être très difficile pour eux. Des gestes tels que regarder quelqu'un dans les yeux lorsqu'on lui parle, serrer la main lors d'une rencontre ou encore prononcer des formules de politesse d'usage ont une importance implicite que nous apprenons d'une manière spontanée durant l'enfance. Pour la personne TSA, il peut y avoir un écart important entre l'âge et le niveau attendu de maturité interpersonnelle. On voit souvent un tournant majeur dans la trentaine, âge où le TSA intègre et exploite plus facilement ses aptitudes communicationnelles. Néanmoins, être en groupe ou être confrontés à de nouvelles situations sociales peut être épuisant pour eux. Ils peuvent alors préférer la solitude et faire leurs petites affaires sans stress ni pression. Donc, dans notre travail professionnel, c'est un aspect très important à considérer dans le cheminement avec eux.

La personne TSA peut avoir de la difficulté à comprendre la globalité des choses. C'est plus facile pour lui de considérer les détails individuellement que de voir un tout. Il peut voir des arbres plutôt qu'une forêt. Le TSA ne sait pas qu'il ne sait pas. Ce qui est évident pour vous ne l'est surtout pas pour lui. Faire preuve de précision et bien décortiquer vos explications est très important afin de favoriser une bonne communication avec votre client TSA.

## Une logique différente

La logique occupe habituellement une grande importance pour le TSA et elle est différente de la nôtre : plusieurs choses que nous pouvons faire spontanément n'ont pas nécessairement d'utilité rationnelle. S'il ne comprend pas le pourquoi du comment, il n'agira pas.

Beaucoup de TSA considèrent que les autres gens parlent trop et manquent de précision dans leurs propos. C'est pour cela que certains perdent le fil des conversations, étant donné la surcharge d'informations impertinentes qu'ils doivent filtrer. Réduisez votre débit verbal, allez à l'essentiel et soyez précis. Acceptez qu'il puisse y avoir un silence ou un délai après leur avoir posé une question. Ce délai peut permettre à la personne TSA de trouver un sens logique et cohérent à ce que vous lui dites.

## Choisir ses mots

Le choix des mots est important à considérer. Comprendre le seul sens littéral des mots est courant chez eux. C'est pour cela que la compréhension des blagues, de l'ironie ou des métaphores est difficile pour beaucoup. Plus ils vieillissent, plus ils sont en mesure de se référer à leur bagage passé pour mieux saisir ces subtilités. Cette difficulté à bien saisir le non-verbal peut amener les TSA à être rejetés par leurs pairs en milieu scolaire ou professionnel.

Ces complications peuvent être alimentées par leur tendance à avoir des intérêts restreints très développés. Leurs pairs peuvent en avoir assez de n'entendre parler que d'un seul sujet. Néanmoins, leurs intérêts restreints les amènent à développer un vocabulaire très spécialisé et ils peuvent se montrer très passionnés et animés lorsqu'ils en parlent. Comme professionnel, notre défi est de faciliter la transposition d'une passion dans un futur travail, car les TSA peuvent se montrer très rigides et considérer que seul leur intérêt prime. Par exemple, un jeune qui se passionne pour les Lego ou un autre pour le dessin de plan peuvent-ils aboutir à une carrière en dessin de bâtiment ou en architecture? Considérer la rigidité de leurs





for professionals, who will undoubtedly run into a degree of resistance. Getting your client to explore various avenues and pursue new experiences while you provide effective support and coaching can pay big dividends for your client.

### Helping your clients with ASD

For those of you who work with ASD clients, it is important to understand that you can help them come up with realistic, doable plans for their academic and professional lives, according to their own needs, interests, abilities and differences. Take the time to explain your role and how you work, and join forces with family members and other partners. Take the time to get to know your client well. I often say that when we work with a different sort of client, we have to remember that success in an educational program does not always equate with success in joining the workforce. There are three different realities that we have to deal with: those of the client, those of the educational community and those of the labour market. Our responsibility is to strike a balance between these three realities so that our ASD clients can find their own way and build a career path that contributes to their sense of self-worth while making them feel like they are part of a society that too often leaves certain individuals on the outside looking in.

We can look at autism as another form of intelligence, another way of thinking. People with this condition are able to fit in our schools and businesses. They are often loyal, honest, straightforward, reliable, meticulous, rule-abiding and decidedly logical. They are often free from spite, maliciousness and prejudice. Some people say they're on the wrong planet but unable to leave. So let's welcome them and help them carve out a place among us, because they have a lot to contribute. With their different way of seeing life and the world, many of them have helped improve our society.

We often read that people like Jobs, Einstein, Darwin, Mendel and Mozart may have suffered from autism spectrum disorder, and they all left their marks in a big way. Temple Grandin, a well-known ASD activist, once said that if autistic people hadn't existed to move things forward, we would still be socializing in front of a wood fire at the entrance to a cave. So let's adjust our practices to make them a bigger part of our professional lives, for the betterment of society. Let's train, discuss and experiment. No matter what you do, do it with good intentions. To err is human, and readjusting your approach is smart. Have faith in yourselves.

*Over the last 10 years, **André Parent** has specialized in counselling clients with ASD and mental health problems. Based in Quebec City, he works with ASD clients from across Quebec. He also provides training on working with ASD clients to career counsellors who want to expand their knowledge of this client group.*

pensées présente un autre défi intéressant ou difficile pour le professionnel; il sera indubitablement confronté à une résistance. L'amener à explorer concrètement différentes avenues et à vivre de nouvelles expériences en lui prodiguant un bon accompagnement devient alors une clé très intéressante pour votre client.

### Aider votre client TSA

Vous qui intervenez auprès des TSA, sachez qu'il est possible de les aider dans la découverte d'un projet de vie scolaire et professionnelle réaliste et réalisable, selon leur réalité propre, selon leurs capacités et leurs différences. Prenez le temps de préciser votre rôle, votre façon de travailler, établissez des collaborations avec leurs parents ou d'autres intervenants. Prenez le temps de bien connaître le TSA que vous aidez. Je dis souvent que lorsqu'on travaille avec une clientèle différente, il est essentiel de se souvenir que la réussite d'un programme scolaire ne garantit pas toujours l'intégration réussie sur le marché du travail. Il y a trois réalités avec laquelle il faut composer : celle du client, celle du milieu scolaire et celle du marché du travail. Nous avons la responsabilité de trouver un juste milieu entre ces trois réalités pour que notre TSA puisse trouver sa voie et construire un projet de vie professionnelle valorisant, empreint d'un sentiment d'intégration dans une société trop souvent marginalisante.

Nous pouvons voir l'autisme comme une autre forme d'intelligence, une autre façon de penser. Les gens qui présentent cette condition peuvent trouver leur place dans nos écoles et dans nos entreprises. On reconnaît aisément chez eux la loyauté, l'honnêteté, la franchise, la fiabilité, la rigueur, le respect des règles et du cadre, leur simplicité toute logique. Ils sont souvent dénués de malveillance, de médisance et de préjugés. Certains considèrent qu'ils se sont trompés de planète et qu'ils ne peuvent pas repartir. Donc, accueillons-les et aidons-les à se faire une place parmi nous, car ils peuvent nous apporter beaucoup. De par leur façon différente de voir la vie et le monde, beaucoup d'entre eux ont contribué à faire avancer notre société.

On lit souvent que les Jobs, Einstein, Darwin, Mendel et Mozart pouvaient présenter un trouble du spectre de l'autisme, et ils ont notablement laissé leur marque. Temple Grandin, une militante TSA reconnue, a déjà mentionné que si les autistes n'avaient pas existé pour faire avancer les choses, nous serions encore dans des cavernes en train de nous parler de la pluie et du beau temps. Ajustons donc nos pratiques pour les inclure davantage à nos vies professionnelles et au profit de la société. Formons-nous, échangeons entre nous, expérimentons. Peu importe ce que vous faites, faites-le avec une bonne intention. Se tromper est humain et se réajuster est sage. Faites-vous confiance.

*Au cours des 10 dernières années, **André Parent** a développé une spécialisation en orientation avec une clientèle qui présente un TSA ou une problématique de santé mentale. Basé à Québec, il reçoit des clients TSA venant de plusieurs régions du Québec. Il donne également une formation sur l'orientation avec les personnes TSA aux conseillers d'orientation qui veulent parfaire leurs connaissances avec cette clientèle.*



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A group of service rig workers in hard hats and safety gear standing in front of an oilfield structure.

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- **Crews travel together to the worksite and travel home together each night**. Employers provide transportation and crewmembers are paid an hourly travel wage.

[ServiceRigDrive.ca](http://ServiceRigDrive.ca)

A large drilling rig structure with workers in safety gear at the base.

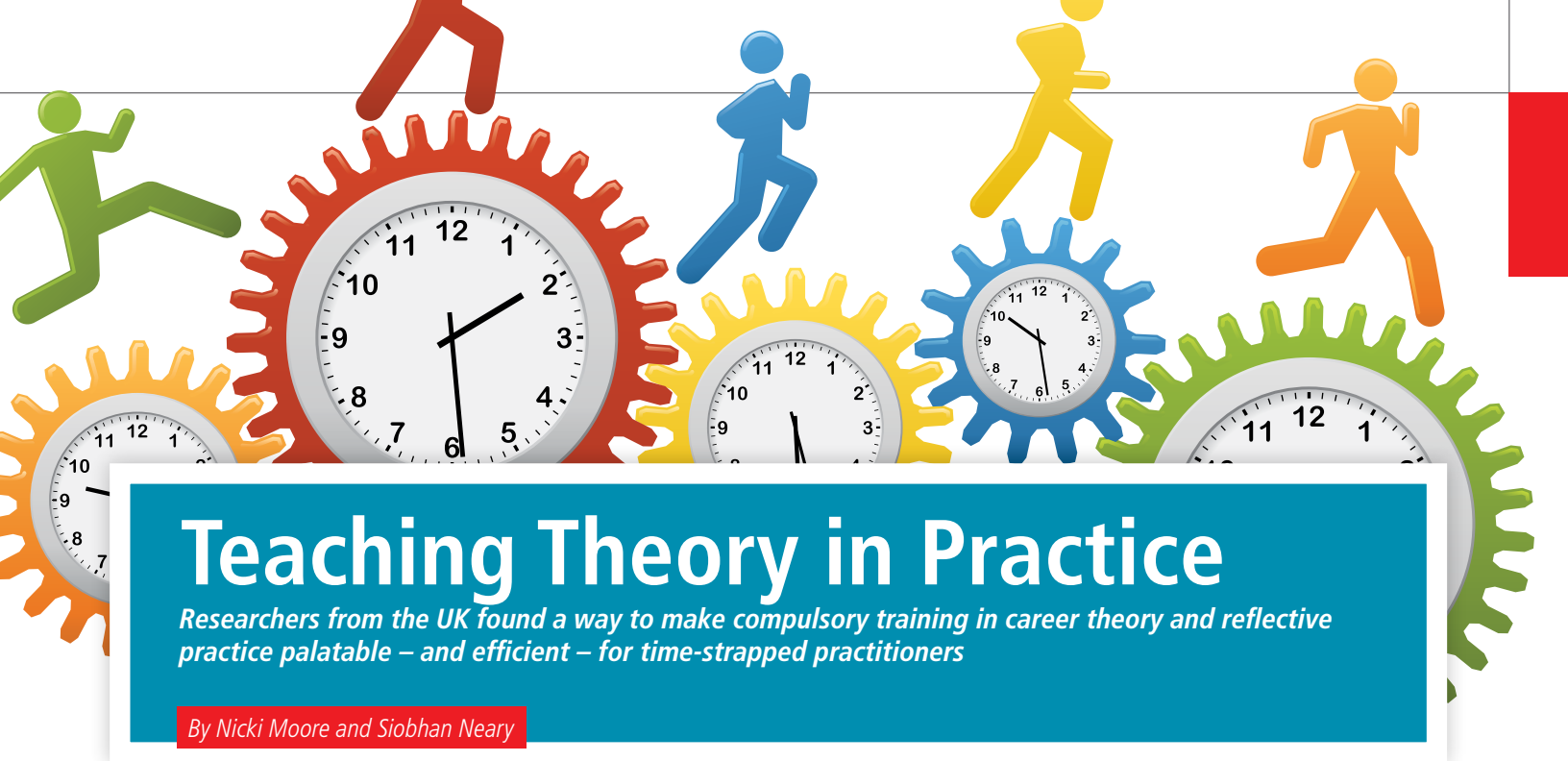
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[RigTech.ca](http://RigTech.ca)



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# Teaching Theory in Practice

*Researchers from the UK found a way to make compulsory training in career theory and reflective practice palatable – and efficient – for time-strapped practitioners*

*By Nicki Moore and Siobhan Neary*

Recent work by career development professionals across the UK has resulted in a new agenda for professionalization. This includes a new professional body, a national register for practitioners and higher-level qualifications, including the requirement to study three additional areas of professional practice: labour market information, reflective practice and career theory. This has created a need for new approaches to training and professional development for career practitioners.

Staff at the International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS) at the University of Derby have developed two pedagogical approaches to deliver the topics of reflective practice and career theory: one in which both topics were delivered as stand-alone themes, and one which integrated elements of both career theory and reflective practice in a single program. We will explore the different outcomes for those undertaking the programs, and for ourselves as teachers and practitioners.

## **Approach one: Delivering programs independently**

Teaching reflective practice can be a challenge as it is very difficult to switch reluctant learners on to the idea of being reflective. This is particularly the case when their practice offers them little time or resources to think, write or share feelings, ideas or evidence-based practice. Teaching reflective practice as an isolated topic can be a two-dimensional route through theory

and discussion of its application in the abstract. Including reflective activities in these sessions has some success in that it encourages practitioners to reflect on a selected activity or issue using a variety of models, but it can create a very pressurized and false environment for reflection. Although the program was well received and learners left with the knowledge and understanding to meet the assessment requirements, we are not persuaded that we have won the hearts and minds of the practitioners and transformed them into more focused and thoughtful individuals able to reflect on their own continuing professional development needs. This is especially the case since we have had no opportunity to follow up with this group of learners to determine the longer term impact of their learning.

Teaching career theory can also be difficult as many learners consider the idea of studying theory a dull prospect. To meet the new learning requirements, practitioners need to demonstrate that they are able to understand and apply theories and concepts in their own practice. While it is possible to teach these in isolation, applying difficult ideas to abstract situations can result in switched-off learners who understand but don't apply their learning.

## **Approach two: An integrated pedagogy**

An alternative to delivering topics in isolation was to combine and integrate both areas of learning into one program and use the concept of reflective practice as a vehicle to learn about,

apply and reflect on career theory. By reflecting on life and professional experiences, learners enrich their understanding of these situations and develop new insights and knowledge as a result. This, of course, is one of the principles of reflective practice and it seemed logical to us, when developing the program on career theory, to use this principle to help learners create new knowledge and understanding for themselves. Our approach encouraged learners to apply and reflect on theory and its application in a range of situations and to share this with their colleagues, very much in the spirit of a "career theory community of practice." There have been implications for us as teachers in this respect, as we became part of the community of practice and learned a great deal about ourselves as teachers and practitioners in the process.

Our program was structured to include an introduction to reflective practice followed by three days of theory, each separated by a number of weeks. Each session was structured to include small bursts of teaching followed by a series of projects designed to stimulate creative and critical thinking. Learners were encouraged to reflect on their insights and to apply these in their practice during the time between each session, reflecting on their findings and feeding back to the group at the next session. Learners were also invited to join an online community of practice to reflect on their learning. The program ended with a further session of reflective practice during which learners were asked to reflect on their learning journey.



“ Many of our learners expressed a **renewed commitment and enjoyment in their work**, and sought opportunities to shape and influence their professional context.



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Learners became increasingly engaged as we progressed through the program. The final presentations demonstrated that many reluctant learners had engaged in theory in unexpected ways. They had moved from situations of profound frustration and mediocre practice, constrained by perceived employer expectations and dogmatic systems, to a new position of empowerment and understanding. Our approach to teaching theory has caused many to examine the application of career theory to their own personal context, and many had gained new insights into their own lives, relationships, influences and motivations for personal career development. Some of the outcomes of this approach included:

- A drive to share practice with colleagues, including the implementation of a number of new local communities of practice; and
  - A greater awareness of issues of quality, including a refocusing on client entitlement and client centredness.
- We perceived a change in the way our learners were approaching their practice. They all achieved a level of enlightenment far exceeding our expectations in terms of their professional identity and intellectual engagement. Our integrated approach created a new understanding of what it means to be an autonomous professional. Our learners had transformed from simply seeing themselves as employees to regarding themselves as true professionals with a grasp of theory and its application, which transformed not only their professional practice but also contributed to their own personal development. Many of our learners expressed a renewed commitment and enjoyment in their work, and sought opportunities to shape and influence their professional context.

Our reflection on the differences in these pedagogies suggests that, while there is considerable merit in teaching career theory and reflective practice as separate disciplines, teaching them together as a self-supporting theoretical and conceptual framework reaps dividends in terms of both formal learning outcomes and in individual personal development.

**Nicki Moore and Siobhan Neary** both work for the International Centre for Guidance Studies and have many years' experience working as practitioners, teachers, trainers and researchers in the field of career development. Their work includes consultancy for organizations across the world including, most recently, Sri Lanka, China, Malaysia and Croatia.

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## Calendrier

Pour que votre événement soit mentionné ici, vous devez d'abord l'ajouter à la liste des événements sur [orientation.ca](http://orientation.ca).

**International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) Conference / Congrès de l'Association internationale d'orientation scolaire et professionnelle (AIOSP)**  
 JUNE 4-6 JUIN 2014  
 Québec, QC  
[aiosp-congres2014-quebec.ca](http://aiosp-congres2014-quebec.ca)

**2014 Skills Canada National Competition / Olympiades canadiennes des métiers et des technologies**  
 JUNE 4-7 JUIN 2014  
 Mississauga, ON  
[skillscompetencescanada.com](http://skillscompetencescanada.com)

**Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE) Conference**  
 JUNE 17-19 JUIN 2014  
 Regina, SK  
[supportedemployment.ca](http://supportedemployment.ca)

**Congrès 2014 de l'AQISEP**  
 JUNE 18-20 JUIN 2014  
 Rimouski, QC  
[aqisep.qc.ca](http://aqisep.qc.ca)

**National Career Development Association (NCDA) Conference**  
 JUNE 19-21 JUIN 2014  
 Long Beach, CA  
[ncda.org](http://ncda.org)

**Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE) Conference / Congrès de l'Association canadienne de l'enseignement coopératif (ACDEC)**  
 JUNE 22-25 JUIN 2014  
 Niagara Falls, ON  
[cafce2014.com](http://cafce2014.com)

**Canadian Conference on Positive Psychology / Congrès canadien de psychologie positive**  
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# 10 Questions for Bryan Hiebert

**In recognition of his lifetime of achievement in career development, Bryan Hiebert accepted the Etta St John Wileman Award at the Connexus14 National Career Development Conference in Ottawa. Hiebert holds positions as Professor Emeritus of Education, University of Calgary; Adjunct Professor, Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, University of Victoria; and Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Lethbridge.**

## In one sentence, describe why career development matters.

Career development is a matter of having a vision for your life and making sure that your paid employment is helping to move you towards the sort of person you want to become in five years, or 10 or 20, etc. People who don't have a fairly clear vision for their life often end up floundering, exploring blind alleys, and not becoming the person they were looking forward to becoming.

## Which book are you reading right now?

I usually am reading more than one book, typically two, one related to my professional work and a second one of personal interest. Right now I'm reading *Embedded Formative Assessment* by Dylan William, and am finding new sources that I had not encountered before as well as affirmation of many of my own ideas. It's an easy read and I recommend it. The other book I am reading is *The Incomplete Folksinger* by Pete Seeger. It's an autobiography tracing the development of folk song in North America and the connection with folk songs in other countries. It is helping me get back in touch with my musical past and motivating me to take my banjo off the wall and play again.

## What did you want to be when you grew up?

I was a floundering young person. I was always good at math, and pretty much squandered everything else. After a year of bible school, I thought I might become a minister, but my father would not hear of it. He had seen too many poor ministers and pressured me to find a job that was better paying and more reliable. So, I explored teaching. The counsellor at the University of Calgary I talked to indicated that people who believed their job was to impart subject matter usually did a BSc or BA and then did the additional year to obtain their teaching credential. On the other hand, people who believed that their job as a teacher was to work with children entered the BEd program. It was a question of priorities: Is the more important thing the subject matter content or the students? As a result of the thinking that comment spawned, I enrolled in a BEd program.

## Name one thing you wouldn't be able to work without?

My library. I have a good selection of professional books and lots of access through the universities and via Google. The library is one thing that I would really miss if it was not available to me.

## What activity do you usually turn to when procrastinating?

Hands-on projects dealing with house repairs, or general tidying my workplace. Ultimately, I need to take myself by the ear and force myself to sit down and get started. Then ideas start to flow and I begin to be productive.

## What song do you listen to for inspiration?

I have many playlists and select one that is appropriate for the job at hand. Likely the song that has the most influence right now is "Against the Wind" by Bob Seger. I especially revisit the line "wish I didn't know now what I didn't know then." Many things are best forgotten.

## Which word do you overuse?

I spot this tendency in others and have in the past fallen into the trap myself usually accompanied by severe consequences. Right now, I think that I don't overuse any word, I just try to be descriptive of the things I see and do.

## Who would you like to work with most?

People who are like-minded in the things they are trying to pursue. I've passed the stage in my career path where I want to convert others to my way of thinking, but I'm pretty open to people who are trying to do similar things and we can work together to inform each other.

## Which talent or superpower would you like to have?

Some sort of telekinesis would be nice, so I could travel to destinations, participate in projects, and not have the five or 12-hour plane trip to contend with.

## What do you consider your greatest achievement?

I have been able to foster the career advancement of many of my graduate students and colleagues. Standing in the background and seeing others move ahead, and trying to prepare the opportunities that they could step into, has been more important to me than any of the many projects I have undertaken.

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The CJCD is a peer-reviewed publication of career-related academic research and best practices. [cjcdonline.ca](http://cjcdonline.ca)

La RCDC est une publication qui porte sur la recherche universitaire et les meilleures pratiques évaluées par des spécialistes du secteur. [rcdcenligne.ca](http://rcdcenligne.ca).

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