

Career Development

Key to Economic Development

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Career Cruising

PRE-READING QUESTION

1. What is the difference between the new career management paradigm and the traditional vocational guidance paradigm?

Introduction and Learning Objectives

Despite growing workforce skill gaps, current processes to connect talent with opportunities remain inefficient. Too many students fail to see the relevance of their studies to future work roles. They do not know how to identify local employers who need their unique talents. Thus, they lack motivation to optimize learning opportunities that public education and local training providers offer. The fastest growing youth cohorts tend to be the least adequately served. At the same time, many adults find themselves in jobs in which they are not fully engaged. Too many are unemployed, underemployed, or marginalized. Employers don't have an efficient mechanism to identify future talent in their own community. They insist schools are producing graduates that lack essential employability and applied skills, character, and attitude. So employers cast their talent nets across the country and around the globe. Using ads, the Internet, and recruiters, they seek to find and relocate the talent they need. Employers are importing talent even though students are dropping

out of school in the employer's community, and adults are yearning for meaningful opportunities at home. Of new employees who are enticed to come, many will move on to other employers in other communities. All in all, the process of matching talent to opportunity is hit-and-miss, and there are vast economic and human consequences.

After reading this chapter, you will:

1. Understand the economic consequences of inadequate career development.
2. Be knowledgeable as to how **demographic trends** contribute to Canada's economic challenges.
3. Be familiar with the differences between the industrial age career model and the new **career management paradigm**.
4. Appreciate how the *Blueprint for Life/Work Designs* can assist in matching talents with opportunity.
5. Be cognizant of alternatives that will increase the return on investment for governments and employers for individuals, families, communities, and the nation.

Leaks in the Talent Pipeline

The majority of secondary school students do not feel prepared for employment or for postsecondary studies (Talbot & Associates, 2006). According to the Lifelong Learning Strategy Report undertaken for the City of Vancouver by Talbot & Associates, only 30% of Grade 12 graduates attend colleges and universities in British Columbia and only 19% of them obtain a degree. As can be seen, the majority of students do not pursue postsecondary education. Given that 85% of new job openings will require education beyond a basic high school diploma (BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Human Resources Development Canada, 2003), students and their parents need to be better informed as to the educational requirements in the 21st century. Many students are bored and cynical about education, and one in five in Canada drop out before completing high school. Some groups fare worse than others. For example, the majority of Aboriginal students in Canada do not complete Grade 12 within six years of entering Grade 8 for the first time (Bowlby & McMullen, 2002).

The majority of high school graduates also do not have career goals to which they are emotionally committed. About a third of students enter university or college directly without clear workforce goals, hoping to discover their calling through further study. Too few students select apprenticeship, trades, or technology training to meet current and projected demand. Over one third of postsecondary students change programs or drop out by the end of their first year. Of those who graduate, 50% will not be in jobs directly related to their program of study two years after

graduation (Centre for Education Statistics, Canada, 1997). Considering how badly our workforce now needs the right talent in the right place at the right time, today's "talent pipeline" has far too many leaks.

The issue of managing careers is not only a problem for young people; career management is a concern for adults as well. Many adults go through their entire working lives without ever making fully intentional, fully informed career choices. Many "land" jobs through happenstance rather than informed choice, and then spend 50% of their waking hours in work settings they do not like. In a Gallup survey, seven in ten adults (69%) reported that if they were starting their careers over, they would try to get more information about job and career options before they started working (Gallup Organization, 1999). In the same survey, more than five times as many people indicated that they entered the workforce by chance rather than by a choice influenced by a career development professional. While many people eventually find their way to satisfying and fulfilling work roles, many never do. Those who feel trapped in inappropriate work roles are less productive than their satisfied counterparts. The Gallup Organization estimates that as many as 25 million workers (19% of the workforce) are "actively disengaged" from their jobs, and that this is costing the U.S. economy \$300 to 350 billion annually (Harter, 2001). The loss of productivity and the waste of human capital are palpable, whether they are measured in training costs or unrealized human potential.

Economic Consequences of Inadequate Career Development

Canada invests heavily to support individuals, groups, and regions in need, accepting higher taxes than many countries to "level the playing field" and to ensure a higher quality of life for more citizens. Even minimal losses on these huge investments cost governments, corporations, and communities dearly. Fallout from gaps between people's skills and the needs of the workplace reduces the return we rightly expect from our investment in education, health care, and social services. A workforce that is unmotivated, unskilled, or inadequately skilled, results in lost revenues for the government and affects the ability of some businesses to remain competitive in a global market.

Productivity

We are sitting on a huge potential boom in **productivity** — if we could just get the square pegs out of the round holes (Bronson, 2002, para. 5). According to a 2009 study by the Conference Board Research Group, only 45% of workers are satisfied with their work, down from 49% in 2008 (Stanglin, 2010). This is the lowest level ever recorded in the 22 years of studying this issue. The study suggests that the drop

in worker happiness can be partly blamed on the worst **recession** since the 1930s, but in fact, worker dissatisfaction has been on the rise for two decades. Fewer workers find their jobs satisfying, creating a working environment that stifles innovation and negatively impacts competitiveness and productivity. A 1% increase in Canada's productivity would result in an increase of \$13 billion in goods and services each year. Improving the mechanisms for job placement so that people were connected with work that truly suited their skills and personalities would have profound ramifications for businesses across Canada, and yield standard-of-living gains in communities from coast-to-coast.

Education

In the 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment study from the OECD (2010), Canadian students ranked in the top 5 of 32 countries for reading, mathematics, and science. Nonetheless, our education system is failing too many students. Many students are unclear as to why they must learn what they are being taught. Too many students change programs, underachieve, or drop out. Some extend their education because they are reluctant to enter the world of work. Few students fully understand the diversity of work roles that align with their academic skills. Many graduate with heavy student loan debt and unclear career prospects. Too few master the skills in career and life management they will need after graduation to become adept, confident, self-reliant, and resilient navigators in the constantly changing waters of the workplace and society. If more students saw the relevance of their classes to their adult lives, more would be motivated to perform at high levels, thus increasing the return on our massive investment in education.

The One-Percent Difference: Health, Social Services, Protection, and Corrections

Unemployed people or people in jobs they dislike are subject to increased stress, have increased likelihood of unhealthy lifestyles, and are more prone to substance and physical abuse. Good jobs foster good mental health, whereas poor jobs cause distress (Loscocco & Roschelle, 1991; Savickas, 2002). In a September 2002 Ipsos-Reid survey, one in six adults surveyed (17%) said there have been times they were under so much stress they considered suicide. The main causes of stress cited were work (43%) and finances (39%). It is estimated that workers with depression cost U.S. employers \$44 billion yearly in lost productive time (Stewart, Ricci, Chee, Morganstein, & Lipton, 2003). About \$122 billion was invested by all levels of government in Canada in 2009 on health care (Statistics Canada, 2009). If health expenditures were reduced by only 1% by helping more people find satisfying work, the potential savings would be over \$1.2 billion each year. This

would cover the salaries of an additional 15,000 teachers or counsellors or average annual tuition for over 120,000 undergraduate students.

Just over \$190 billion was invested by all levels of government in Canada in 2009 on social services, including social assistance and welfare (Statistics Canada, 2009). Fewer recipients would need assistance if more had the skills to find and keep suitable work. A 1% improvement would save nearly \$2 billion annually. Just under \$51 billion was invested by all levels of government in Canada in 2009 on “protection of persons and property,” including policing, prisons, and correctional services (Statistics Canada, 2009). A 1% improvement in the number of detainees who acquire career management/planning skills could save \$510 million annually.

Over \$585 billion was collected by all levels of government in Canada in 2009 in income taxes (individual and corporate), property taxes, consumption taxes, health premiums, social insurance contributions, and so on (Statistics Canada, 2009). If more Canadians were able to find suitable work, revenues would increase for all levels of government. A 1% increase in the number of Canadians paying taxes rather than drawing on entitlement programs would generate over \$5.8 billion per year in government revenues each year. A 5% increase in employment would yield a \$29 billion annual windfall for all levels of government.

Together, a 1% increase in government revenues and productivity, and a 1% decrease in social costs, represents over a \$20 billion annual windfall for Canadian individuals, organizations, and communities. Again, to put this staggering number in perspective, this would cover the salaries of over 250,000 additional teachers or counsellors, or provide more learning resources and facilities, or cover the full tuition for over a million undergraduate and graduate students.

The economic consequences of having too many citizens unemployed, underemployed, or in jobs they dislike, are staggering. The human consequences are even higher. Too many Canadians are simply not enjoying satisfying, purposeful, and fulfilling lives because they have not found the right work. What’s more, this is not just the individual’s problem. Families, communities, and society in general all lose when individuals are unable, confidently and effectively, to manage their careers.

❖ *Stop and Reflect*

1. What are some of the economic consequences of having a large number of Canadians in “jobs they dislike”?
2. What is the role of the career practitioner in addressing the inadequate career development of Canadians?

Impact of Demographic Trends

Generational cohorts are groups of people who share birth years, history, and a collective personality as a result of their defining experiences. Generational profiles,

while not infallible, help us to understand how the life experiences of a generation capture the attention and emotions of millions of individuals at a formative stage in their lives and ultimately affect personal core values. The historical, political, and social events experienced by generational cohorts that typically span 15 to 20 years help to define and shape their values, work ethics, attitudes towards authority, and professional aspirations (Cowin & Duchscher, 2004).

Members of the *Baby Boom Generation* (*boomers*) are between the ages of 51 and 68. Research highlights that employees in this generation want to be recognized for their deep experience and dedication to their careers, in the form of compensation and unique development opportunities (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, & Brown, 2007). Boomers seek personal growth opportunities through varied and interesting work at this point in their careers.

Members of *Generation X* (*Gen-Xers*) are currently between the ages of 31 and 50 (born between 1961 and 1980) and are in the middle of their careers. Data suggests this generation greatly values stability and seeks balance between job and family demands (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Sessa et al., 2007). While Gen-Xers want to advance into senior leadership positions, the expected speed for advancement is less aggressive than among members of Generation Y.

Members of *Generation Y* (*Gen-Yers*), who were born between the years of 1981 and 2000, are today between the ages of 11 and 30. Research (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Sessa et al., 2007) shows that this generation perceives work as an opportunity for personal development and growth. Generation Y greatly values a sense of work/life balance that enables opportunities to enjoy other life interests. Since this generation was born and influenced by the wired “24/7” world, data suggests Gen-Yers have low patience levels. This translates into the need for instant feedback and fast-paced career advancement.

Canada, like many industrialized countries, is approaching a demographic transition that will affect many aspects of its economy. The baby boom generation has had a substantial impact on the demographics of the nation’s population over the past 60 years (Sauvé, 2012). Concerns have been raised in Canada that as the boomers leave the workplace there will be shortages in labour, skills, and knowledge.

This shortage will be compounded by fewer young people entering the workforce. Family size and fertility rate have been dropping. Family size has dropped to 2.5 in 2006 and overall fertility in Canada has declined to 1.61 children per family (Statistics Canada, 2012) as couples have children later. This is not sufficient to maintain the population.

It is worrying that the number of unskilled workers is growing. It is projected that by 2016, Canada will have 1,350,000 unskilled workers (about 8% of total workforce) in a country that can no longer absorb unskilled workers. In 2010, there were more than a million unfilled positions begging for skilled workers (Miner,

2010). Even factoring for immigration, the projected worker shortfall of close to 500,000 in 2011 will grow to close to three million in 2031.

It is getting more difficult for employers to find people with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes considered essential in the 21st-century workplace. These skills include commitment to lifelong learning, comfort with ever-changing technology, problem finding and solving, communication and collaboration, and appreciation for diverse cultures and people. “Canada is already facing a labour crunch as baby boomers retire, but that could turn into a labour crisis if the education system is not fixed” (Cappon, 2011).

Impact of Labour Market Trends

Massive weather systems occasionally converge in extraordinary ways and create a “perfect storm.” Three labour force megatrends are now converging to create a perfect storm in the Canadian job market that will impact career prospects for decades to come: (a) the great recession, (b) up-skilling of jobs, and (c) unprepared workforce.

The global economy and communities across the country are weathering the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression nearly a century ago. Despite a combination of service cutbacks and massive economic stimulus, recovery from the great recession is slow and faltering, and the economy is vulnerable.

Accelerating technological advances have rendered many jobs obsolete, and there is an up-skilling of jobs in all sectors that has produced new types of jobs at an unimagined rate. More formal education, technical training, and “soft skills” are now demanded of workers in all job sectors, but especially in new and emerging career fields. It is estimated that 80% or more of all jobs available now and in the future require some form of formal postsecondary education or training, often with a focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

In raw numbers, Canada’s biggest workforce challenge is upgrading the skills of current workers and adult job seekers. Few employers are investing adequately in employee career management and training. Workers themselves are also not investing adequately in upgrading their skills. If their employer provides inadequate opportunities for upgrading skills, few can quit work for an extended period to upgrade their skills.

There is inadequate support to help students. Without a vision of their future, many students fail to see personal relevance in their academic studies. Today’s students will need higher levels of academic, technical and “soft” skills than any cohort before them. Much of our current and future workforce is at risk of becoming casualties of the looming perfect storm in the job market. A new paradigm of career navigation and workforce preparation is required.

Basic building blocks of this new paradigm of exemplary career navigation and workforce development resources already exist, but they tend to be used in a fragmented fashion, and are largely underutilized. Consensus on “best practices”

suggests a core of five “foundational resources” that should be in place at all levels of education:

1. Experiential career learning programs at all school levels.
2. Comprehensive Internet-based career exploration and planning systems.
3. Electronic portfolio systems that follow students through education levels out into adulthood.
4. Online-course-planner systems linked to student information systems that enable students, teachers, and parents to collaborate in maintaining individual learning plans for all students.
5. Online-networking systems that connect students to adult job seekers and employers seeking immediate and future talent. These connections can result in immediate hires, as well as work experience, job shadowing, co-op, volunteerism, and part-time job opportunities that allow employers and students to “test the fit.”

In the end, entire communities need to be mobilized to support these foundational career and workforce development resources.

In summary, technology has transformed work in all sectors into essentially two kinds of “knowledge-era” jobs: (a) new jobs generated to fill various labour needs recently created by technological advances; and (b) changing jobs — that is, traditional jobs that have evolved in response to new technology. Truck drivers, farmers, and fishermen, for instance, now need to be comfortable with laptops, the Internet, spreadsheets, GPS systems, and smart phones.

New jobs are emerging daily. No one can predict the full range and diversity of new jobs that will appear, even those in the next five years. We can speculate on some, like nano-mechanic, old-age wellness manager, memory augmentation surgeon, weather modification police, waste data handler, social networking worker, personal brander/communications advisor, and manager of a stem-cell bank (Gordon, 2009). What is certain is that the new job market will require higher and higher levels of knowledge and skills.

Immigration is not the solution. Competition among developed and developing countries for highly qualified immigrants, who come from countries that need their best talent more than we do, grows more intense each year. There is no scenario in which immigration alone can resolve our projected labour force talent gap. Clearly, we must seriously re-think our approaches to preparing all young people for success in work and life, and assist a great many more adults to “**up-skill.**”

The good news is that there are, and will be for years to come, more than enough 21st-century jobs available for every Canadian who wants to work. However, most will have to up-skill to qualify for them. Moreover, we must dramatically increase labour force participation rates among traditionally under-represented,

socially excluded groups such as Aboriginal peoples, lower socioeconomic groups, new immigrants, and the disabled.

A New Paradigm for Career Development

The traditional career-choice paradigm is not working for many Canadians. This paradigm expects youth, possibly with help from a counsellor, to make an informed, long-term career choice in middle or high school. Yet, few adults are doing the work they expected to be doing when they were in school. The evidence suggests that only a small minority of young people can identify a “calling” in secondary school, despite strong pressures to do so. Young people now entering the workforce are likely to have at least 10 to 15 jobs, in several occupations, and in multiple industry sectors during their working lives. How can they (and why would they) confidently answer the question, “What will you be when you grow up?”

The **industrial-age career-choice model** was about helping people make an informed, point-in-time, occupational choice, in the following manner:

1. Explore one’s interests, aptitudes, personality, and values.
2. Determine a “best fit” occupation by matching personal traits to occupational factors.
3. Develop a plan to attain the prerequisite education and training.
4. Graduate, choose a secure job in a solid organization, climb the ladder.
5. Retire as young as possible on pension as a reward for decades of service.

Steps 1 through 3 apply in contemporary workplaces, although the terms work role, cluster or **industry sector** may be substituted for occupation. In knowledge societies, however, these steps are now recurrent, dramatically increasing the need for information and support services at all ages. Step 4, to obtain a secure job after graduating from university, is no longer assured. Even senior executives are not secure in their positions. Step 5, to retire, will only occur for those who learn and successfully apply personal financial planning skills. Increasingly, people either cannot or do not wish to stop working at a fixed age.

The career-choice paradigm emphasizes provision of career, learning, and labour market information to enable citizens to make appropriate career choices. Consequently, Canadians have access to world-class information resources from government and community agencies, industry sector councils, and private sector providers in print, video, and digital formats. Indeed, an OECD report on a survey of 36 countries noted that Canada is a global leader in the provision of labour market information (Sultana & Watts, 2004). Good information is essential, but is insufficient.

The new **career management paradigm** is not about making the right occupational choice. It is about equipping people with the competencies (skills, knowledge, attitudes, character, and emotional intelligence known as “soft skills”) to make sound decisions about the myriad choices that adults face in every aspect of their lives, for the rest of their lives.

While technical and job-specific skills sufficed in the past, it is increasingly being accepted that the worker of the future will need a more comprehensive set of meta-competencies that are not occupation-specific and are transferable across all facets of life and work. The economic value, to the individual and the nation as a whole, of a workforce equipped with these meta-competencies cannot be underestimated and their development cannot be left to chance. (McMahon, Patton, & Tatham, 2003, p. 3)

The key to success in the workplace, and in life, is not finding the perfect job, friend, or life partner: it is becoming the best possible worker, friend, or life partner.

- In the career management paradigm the question, “What do you want to be when you ... (grow up / graduate / lose your job, etc.)?” is replaced by the following: Who are you now, and what do you love to do?
- What are your unique assets, talents, skills, and predispositions?
- What evidence do you have that what you offer is special?
- What types of situations, people, environments, and roles appeal to you?
- What types of organizations or consumers need what you can offer?
- What innovative work arrangements will suit you and potential employers?
- What do you want to do first when you graduate? Then what?
- What competencies do you need to focus on to increase your options?
- What will success look and feel like?

The objective is to find satisfying work and construct a fulfilling career with purpose, meaning, and authenticity. Workers, more than ever, are seeking meaning, purpose, and opportunities for growth through their work. Dychtwald, Erickson, & Morison (2006) in their book, *How to Beat the Coming Shortage of Skills and Talent*, reported that work was most highly valued for reasons of personal development. Their survey results showed that: “‘Work that enables me to learn, grow, and try new things’ ranked third among ten basic elements of the employment deal ... It ranked higher than more pay, more vacation, flexible schedule, flexible workplace, work that is personally stimulating, and even (by a small margin) a workplace that is enjoyable” (p. 161).

Competency Frameworks

Tests and computer systems will never fully answer people's life questions, and career professionals are not exclusively qualified to ask the questions. The **career management paradigm** puts control and responsibility in the hands of the individual — not in tests, computer systems, or specialists. To be fully in control of their own lives, people need to learn career management competencies just as they learn mathematics, science, language, or technical skills. Career management must be a lifelong learning process for everyone, rather than an occasional counselling process for the few who need help. Career practitioners and human resource specialists who understand the new paradigm become pivotal players in the paradigm shift in their organizations. They play vital coaching, mentoring, and co-ordinating roles, whereas those not attuned to the new paradigm are relegated to the periphery.

Two competency frameworks are needed to harmonize efforts to help citizens connect with opportunities, and employers connect with the talent they need. The first is a framework of the competencies that people need to find and keep good jobs, and to self-manage their careers. The second is a framework of the competencies that educators, career practitioners, and human resources specialists need in order to: (a) help youth and adults acquire those competencies; (b) help them connect with suitable learning and work opportunities; and (c) help employers connect with the talent they require.

The first was met through the *Blueprint for Life/Work Designs*, which was modeled on the National Career Development Guidelines (2004) developed by the U.S. National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee. Career and workforce development experts across Canada collaborated for several years in creating, testing, and implementing the Blueprint.

The Blueprint is a national effort to outline the outcomes of quality career development programs and services. The Blueprint specifies what individuals can expect to learn from services at different developmental levels, ranging from elementary school, to secondary and adult populations. The Blueprint also has a strong focus on implementing career development programs and helping providers be clear about the outcomes actually achieved by specific programs. (ATEC, 2001, p. 7)

During the same timeframe, a National Steering Committee undertook to develop the *Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners (S&Gs)*. This pan-Canadian initiative engaged professional associations of career and workforce development and human resource specialists at the national, provincial, territorial, and local levels, and from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. These dedicated volunteers detailed a framework of competencies that career development

professionals need to have to help their clients succeed in career development. Several provinces have developed certification of career practitioners based on this national framework.

The Blueprint and the S&Gs have been adopted by other countries seeking to harmonize their talent-opportunity matching processes. Both were cited as model national infrastructure elements in an OECD report (as cited in Sultana & Watts, 2004) that examined promising practices in 36 countries.

Career practitioners, counsellors, educators, workforce developers, and human resource specialists all need programs and resources that are based on career management learning objectives and performance indicators in order to best help their clients. They need to assess the client's **prior learning and acquired knowledge** and their career management learning in order to select programs, resources, and services that will meet the client's actual needs or gaps. Using the Blueprint and the S&Gs, organizations in the career and workforce development "business" are able to develop new and more effective service delivery and accountability mechanisms.

Blueprint for Life/Work Designs

The Blueprint identifies core career management competencies with associated performance indicators at four levels across the lifespan. The core competencies are the basis upon which career management programs are designed. The performance indicators, which are organized by learning stages, are used to measure learning gains and demonstrate program effectiveness. The Blueprint competencies are arranged in three domains as seen in Table 1.

Included in these competencies are employability, emotional skills, and character traits employer groups find lacking in many prospective employees, particularly youth. In fact, work habits and attitudes so strongly influence early adult earnings that educational and training programs need to emphasize work behaviours as much as job skills (Savickas, 2002). Self-reliance grows out of the acquisition of these skills.

Traditional career development practices have focused largely on information acquisition (Competency 5) and job search (Competency 7). The assumption has been that with access to appropriate information along with the necessary guidance, people can choose the right occupation: They acquire the education and training and, with job search skills, find the right job.

The reality is that a person may fail even with good information and job search skills. This can happen if the person:

- expects to fail again (Competency 1),
- has poor communication and teamwork skills (Competency 2),
- complains about change rather than embracing it (Competency 3),

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- is not open to learning and innovating (Competency 4),
- cannot balance life and work effectively (Competency 9).

(A) PERSONAL MANAGEMENT	(B) LEARNING AND WORK EXPLORATION	(C) LIFE/WORK BUILDING
1. Build and maintain a positive self-image.	4. Participate in lifelong learning that is supportive of life/work goals.	7. Secure, create, and/or maintain work.
2. Interact positively and effectively with others.	5. Locate and effectively use life/work information.	8. Make life/work-enhancing decisions.
3. Change and grow throughout one's life.	6. Understand the relationship between work and society/economy.	9. Maintain balanced life and work roles.
		10. Understand the changing nature of life and work roles.

Table 1: Blueprint Competencies.

If the person does land a job, chances are it will be short term. Moreover, a person lacking these competences will likely not find satisfaction and fulfillment in the job, and most likely not be highly productive.

Everything changes when career development becomes widely viewed as a quest to acquire and hone the competencies needed to construct a purposeful and fulfilling life, rather than a point-in-time choice of “the perfect career.” Now we are helping young people connect with their passions and purpose and learn how to make the most of every day for the rest of their lives. Character traits such as respect, responsibility, honesty, integrity, empathy, fairness, initiative, perseverance, courage, optimism, and resilience become the foundational pieces, rather than career and labour market information, or tests. One cannot maintain a positive self-image (Competency 1) and earn genuine self-respect if one is dishonest, lacks integrity, and so on. One cannot interact positively and effectively with others for long without being empathetic and fair. One cannot change and grow (Competency 3) without courage and resilience. Helping students master these career and life building competencies will help them find and maintain jobs they find satisfying and fulfilling. It will also help them to be better friends, parents, and citizens. Economic success buys comfort, not genuine happiness. If the next generation of youth masters these competencies, the nation will enjoy not only increased

economic prosperity, but a resurgence of the core human values and character upon which it was built.

The Blueprint recognizes that people at different ages and stages learn differently, and that even young children can learn and appreciate these competencies. In fact, attitudes towards work are formed early in life, so workforce and career management policy must take a developmental perspective. Vocational psychologists such as Donald Super, John Crites, Robert Gibbons, and Paul R. Lohnes have each concluded from their longitudinal studies that planful competence in early adolescence relates to more realistic educational and vocational choices, occupational success, and career progress (Savickas, 2002). For this reason, the core competencies are defined at four developmental levels:

1. Primary/elementary school.
2. Junior high/middle school.
3. High school.
4. Adult/Postsecondary.

To view the entire framework, with nearly 500 performance indicators sorted by developmental levels and learning stages, visit <http://blueprint4life.ca/competencies.cfm>.

Conclusion

Canada's education system is more successful than most in helping young people acquire academic and technical skills. It is less successful in equipping students with the competencies they need to navigate and manage their careers. Too few students see the relevance of school experience to their future and, thus, lack motivation to excel in school. In fact, school is their first job beyond home. It can be the perfect "starter job" in which they can acquire academic knowledge that will serve them well in the future, and hone the habits, skills, attitudes, and character needed for success in school and all future life roles.

With an increasing shortage of skills in the workforce, and too many adults working in positions that undervalue their talents, Canada is slipping in productivity and competitiveness. Employers urgently need to find employees with the right skills and, equally important, the right attitudes. While employers need more talent, too many young people and adults are languishing in unemployment, underemployment, and marginalization. New, more effective and efficient mechanisms are needed to connect talent with opportunities across Canada. The Blueprint can assist citizens to purposefully acquire career and life management competencies. The Standards and Guidelines ensure that professionals in education, training, and

workforce development settings have the competencies they need to help individuals manage their career and life planning.

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Glossary

Career management paradigm recognizes that career development is a lifelong process of knowledge and skills acquisition that reflect a continuum of learning and mastery.

Demographic trends describe the historical changes in demographics in a population over time.

Generational cohorts are groups of people who share birth years, history, and a collective personality as a result of their defining experiences.

Industrial-age career-choice model was based on helping people make an informed occupational choice, by engaging in the following steps:

1. Exploring one's interests, aptitudes, values, et cetera (e.g., using tests and professional assistance).
2. Exploring the world of work and occupations.
3. Determining a "best fit" occupation by matching personal traits to occupational factors.
4. Developing a plan to obtain the prerequisite education and training.
5. Graduating and obtaining secure employment, climbing the ladder, et cetera.
6. Retiring as young as possible on pension as a reward for decades of work.

Industry sector refers to the goods-producing segment of an economy, including agriculture, construction, fisheries, forestry, and manufacturing.

Prior learning and acquired knowledge is assessed through prior learning assessment recognition (PLAR). PLAR is the process of identifying, assessing, and recognizing skills, knowledge, or competencies that have been acquired through work experience, unrecognized training, independent study, volunteer activities, and hobbies. PLAR may be applied towards academic credit, requirement of a training program, or for occupational certification.

Productivity is a measure of how efficiently goods and services are produced. It is usually expressed as output per unit of labour.

Recession is a decline in activity across the economy lasting longer than a few months. It is visible in industrial production, employment, real income, and wholesale-retail trade. The technical indicator of a recession is two consecutive quarters of negative economic growth as measured by a country's gross domestic product (GDP).

Up-skill refers to learning new skills.

Discussion and Activities

Discussion

Class Discussion Questions

1. How do career practitioners enhance and help their clients maintain employability in a turbulent and unpredictable economy? How can they help clients contend with a “boundaryless” and non-linear exploration?
2. Why must career practitioners continually redefine their own identity?

Personal Reflection Questions

1. In Canada, the labour force spans four generations to include the World War II Generation (born before 1946), the baby boomers (1946–1965), Generation X (1966–1980), and Generation Y or Millennials (1981–2000). Please read the descriptions of each generation as summarized at <http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/generations-workplace-united-states-canada>.
 - i. What generation do you belong to? How well do the descriptions of that generation fit for you?
 - ii. Do you think your generation’s situation and concerns are similar to the ones experienced by your parents at your age? What are some of the similarities and differences?
 - iii. What are some topics that people of different generations agree and disagree on?
2. We are all a product of the generation before us; that is, our behaviours and attitudes are strongly influenced by our parents. Consider the events and trends that occurred during the lives of your parents. How did their experience affect your ideas about the world of work and career planning?

Career Practitioner Role Questions

1. Career practitioners must learn new skills, stay aware of new trends in work and the economy, and provide expanded services geared towards those with patch-work careers, persons who work at several companies at the same time, retirees who need or want to continue employment, and workers who have not been able to accommodate themselves to these changing conditions. What other challenges do you see for career practitioners in this ever-changing world?
2. What skills will you need to work with the following groups: portfolio workers, youth, older adults, displaced workers?

Activities

Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)

SWOT analysis is a method to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of an organization, person, or project in meeting an objective; and to identify the threats and opportunities that might affect success. In this exercise, you will apply SWOT analysis to the career counselling profession. The matrix can be constructed quickly and will help you consider multiple viewpoints.

PERSONAL	Strengths •	Weaknesses •
EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT	Opportunities •	Threats •

Strengths are characteristics that provide an advantage over others, and weaknesses are a disadvantage. From the external environment, there may be opportunities for new markets or jobs (as one example), and also threats due to competition, economy, legislation and other factors.

Use SWOT analysis to examine some of the global, national, and local issues that face us as a profession and as professionals. The following headings can be used as a guide:

- internal weaknesses of current career practice,
- internal strengths of current career practice,
- external threats to the profession,
- external opportunities to the profession.

Resources and Readings

Resources

Websites and Video Resources

- Baran, D., & Baran, P. (2008). *Smart options plus*. National Life Work <<http://www.lifework.ca/lifework/Media/SO+Brochure.pdf>>.
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SPOTLIGHT: CAREER CRUISING

by Phil Jarvis

Career Cruising is a 100% Canadian-owned, Toronto-based organization, that provides career exploration software for helping people of all ages reach their goals. Its career resources are licensed by roughly 80% of all English-speaking secondary and postsecondary schools in Canada, and it is the first web resource to which most Canadian counsellors refer their students for exploring career options.

Career Cruising ccEngage Suite: description of products <<http://public.careercruising.com/ca/en/products/>>.

Career Cruising Blog <<http://public.careercruising.com/us/en/blog/>>.

The following are recommended:

- The Perfect Storm: 4 workforce megatrends you need to know about <<http://public.careercruising.com/us/en/blog/bl/2012/02/the-perfect-storm-4-workforce-megatrends-you-need-to-know-about/>>.
- Creating Pathways to Prosperity (category in weblog) <<http://public.careercruising.com/us/en/blog/?category=Career%20Summits>>.

People Right Careers (2010) *College-bound students face the perfect storm*. [Video]. Available from <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qZUZa7mRII0>>.

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Supplementary Readings

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