

Author of Making It Work: Career Management for the New Workplace

From My Perspective...

A Guide to Career/Employment
Centre Management

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By

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INTRODUCTION

When I started consulting for the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling (CERIC), my first responsibility was to write a publication on career/employment centre management. My initial thought was that, having been the director of a career/employment centre for sixteen years, this was a topic with which I was very familiar. I then considered just who a potential audience would be and what they might want to gain from reading this publication. As there are currently so many talented career/employment centre directors and managers, all with their own approaches, I decided to simply reflect on my experience and share what I hope will be helpful tips on successful career/employment centre management. **From My Perspective...** is just that — a guide to career/employment centre management from my perspective.

Managing a career/employment centre is both challenging and extremely fulfilling — though not without its frustrating moments, for sure. This publication has been written so that both the beginner and the more experienced director/manager will be able to take away some ideas and approaches that will prove useful in their work. Although my background is in career centre management in a university setting, I think the principles apply to any career/employment centre or service.

Career/employment centre management relies on a myriad of **skills and competencies** including a solid understanding of career development, sound management, marketing, leadership skills and perhaps most importantly vision. Successful directors/managers are those who are never satisfied with the status quo. They are always looking to enhance programming, to learn all they can about the economy and the marketplace, to provide better services to their clients and employers, to find innovative ways to motivate staff and to most effectively market and promote their services.

They spend time seeking their colleagues' opinions and including them in visioning exercises. They develop strategic plans based on

staff and client input and establish formal and informal means by which employers have the opportunity to provide feedback. Effective directors/managers establish and maintain strong partnerships within the organization, the profession and with key stakeholders.

From My Perspective... will touch upon fundamental issues such as staffing, financing, programming, profile establishment and maintenance, as well as essential ingredients for success such as effective networking, relationship management, marketing, time management, visioning, strategic planning and evaluation. This publication clearly does not replace courses or seminars in any of these topics. All new directors/managers might want to assess their own skill bases and seek professional development opportunities in any areas that need strengthening. CERIC's Cannexus and Summer Skills Academy are excellent places to access quality professional development and to establish effective networks.

I am hopeful that whether you are an experienced manager or just thinking about a career in career/employment centre management, you can find something to take away from this publication that will be helpful.

LEADERSHIP

To me, strong leadership is the most important quality a successful career/employment centre director or manager can have. Someone who commands the respect of her or his colleagues, who is able to motivate staff and who has both vision and the ability to include everyone in formulating that vision embodies the essence of leadership. Leadership is not about being liked, but rather about being respected. It is about team building and fostering commitment and buy-in on the part of colleagues. It is also about providing strong leadership within the larger organization while providing direction to the department itself.

Sound leadership plays an important role in attracting and retaining good staff. A centre that can communicate its vision and mission clearly — as well as focus on the needs of its clients — is much more likely to attract like minded staff than one that just “keeps on trucking” without any clear vision or mission. Leadership in career/employment centre management will highlight the absolute priority of providing excellent services to clients and will focus on the importance of attracting and retaining quality employers.

*Leadership is not about being liked,
but rather about being respected.*

Strong leaders will address issues quickly in an open, honest manner. If there are inappropriate behaviours or attitudes being observed, they will be brought to the attention of the individual(s) responsible and talked out. A plan will be devised to turn the situation around. An experienced leader will not just let the situation continue hoping it will right itself.

Good leaders will ensure that colleagues are **never put in the position of having the responsibility without the authority** for a particular program or service — nothing is more de-motivating or discouraging. If an individual can be trusted with the responsibility, he or she can be trusted with the authority.

Be your kind of director—don't try to adopt the style of the director who came before you or someone else. Act on what you know to be your strengths and convictions so that at the end of the day, you know that you are being true to your authentic self.

— Canadian Career Centre Director

Leaders will also create collegial, friendly environments that offer challenging work which respects the talents and gifts everyone brings to the table. Any team needs a combination of the detail people, the big picture people, the front-line staff and the back-room number crunchers, the planners and the spontaneous folk, the presenters and the writers, the client staff, the employer service staff and so on. A collaborative team led by someone of **vision** and **strong management** skills is what every career/employment centre aspires to.

Career/employment centre directors/managers can create strong teams through a number of leadership strategies in addition to those already mentioned. I always believed that it was essential to involve all staff in defining the vision and mission of the centre and annual planning, as well as five year planning. Through their contribution in determining the direction the centre is to take, staff members are in fact signing on to be major contributors to the achievement of that vision and mission as long as they are part of the team.

Most staff want to be encouraged to grow in their positions and to know that you believe in their ability to do so. Strong leaders are always seeking ways in which staff can grow and develop their skills. In not-for-profit organizations, as in post secondary institutions, opportunities for promotion are often slim. To ensure that both experienced and new staff members want to stay, the leadership

has to create an atmosphere that fosters personal and professional growth and development and provides opportunities experiences such as mentoring and job shadowing. An atmosphere where satisfaction comes from working with the clients and employers in a collegial, fun, team environment and where you are encouraged to continuously develop skills and experience helps to compensate for one where there are more promotions and greater pay.

It is also important to demonstrate leadership outside the career/employment centre in the rest of the organization, in your profession, in the external community, and internationally. I will talk more about this later. Suffice it to say at this point that it enhances the credibility of your career/employment centre for you as the director/manager to be seen as a ‘mover and shaker’ — a leader.

Leadership is a skill that can take you a long way. It certainly helps you to build a strong team of colleagues whose focus is on the needs of clients and employers. It also helps to create a ‘happening career centre’ — one which is respected by all.

STRUCTURE

There really is no best way to organize a career/employment centre. In fact, all centres are structured somewhat differently. Size, history and available resources are usually responsible for the structure of a centre. There are basically two models of career/employment centres. One sees a focus on employment services with career counselling being offered in partnership with another area of the organization or externally; the other which is increasingly popular is an integrated model with both employment services and career counselling being offered in the centre.

Most centres are staffed by a combination of full and part-time employees, as well as sometimes by volunteers. The number of staff is usually, but not always, related to the number of clients served. It is always directly related to the resources available to the centre.

Mandates vary according to whether employment services are the focus or whether both career counselling and employment services are offered. Online employment listings are either available through external organizations or through a custom-built online job posting service designed for the individual career/employment centre. In the latter case, marketing and employer relations are key functions of the centre's work.

My experience is that in a busy career centre, marketing is often overlooked in favour of staffing for direct service to clients and employers. This is a mistake when offering custom-built online listings. Job listings are an essential service to clients — the more diverse and plentiful, the better. As the skills required for marketing are frequently not the skills called for in advisers and counsellors, it is often necessary to extend a hiring search to include external marketing specialists. Marketing will be discussed in further detail later in the publication.

Many centres function in a traditionally hierarchical manner with a director/manager, and perhaps depending on size, an associate director, managers and/or co-ordinators of programs or services.

I had the opportunity at the University of Toronto, St. George campus, to shift from a hierarchical structure with managers and co-ordinators to that of a team model. There were four main teams — career counselling and promotion, marketing and employer relations, information and career resources and information systems. Additionally there was a Career Management Consultant who worked with all of the teams and co-ordinated faculty/academic department specific workshops. At that time as in addition to being Director of the Career Centre, I was also Director of Student Services, an Associate Director was responsible for the day to day operation of the Centre.

What were the advantages of the teams? The first advantage was that a layer or two of hierarchy was removed, thereby allowing more direct input from all staff. This change in structure was done in part because staff often complained that their ideas and suggestions were not reaching the management team for implementation. The development of teams allowed every staff member's voice to be heard. At the same time each individual felt a direct sense of responsibility for the effective functioning of her/his team.

For each team there were facilitators who were responsible for co-ordinating the work and ensuring effective communication with the other teams. That was always a challenge as people would get so busy with their own work that cross-team communication often took a back seat. The team approach stimulated innovative programming and there was some healthy competition between teams. It appeared that being a member of a team enhanced all members' sense of responsibility as well as, of belonging.

Whether one has a team centred structure or not, team building is essential to a smooth running effective service. Team building occurs through many different venues. Sharing the vision and mission into which all staff have had input is the first step to building a strong team. Excellent communications within the centre would rank a close second. Team building happens quite naturally through professional development activities, working together to produce large events, shared lunches and after work get togethers.

Teams may not work in a smaller service or make sense regardless of size. While the structure of a centre is important, it does not dictate the success of the centre. It is but one of the many considerations. What is important is to ensure that, in whatever structure exists, all staff members have a voice.

STAFFING

The effectiveness of any centre is dependant on the quality of its staff — plain and simple! Staff members must have a sound understanding of career development, a genuine interest in the client group, a positive attitude, an appreciation of teamwork and a commitment to making the centre the best it can be.

The public sector has recently seen a move towards greater accountability and an increased focus on outcomes, both individually and organizationally. On-going effective coaching is required to ensure staff members clearly understand what is expected of them from the perspective of individual accountability and work outcomes.

Something that took almost my entire career to truly appreciate was that **when one is hiring, it helps to look for just two fundamental qualities — intelligence and attitude.** These, along of course with the required education and skills, will serve any organization well. The specific content of most jobs can be learned if people have the requisite academic and experiential backgrounds — intelligence cannot. Helping someone shift his/her attitude takes valuable time and energy and is not always effective.

...when one is hiring, it helps to look for just two fundamental qualities—intelligence and attitude.

The qualities we all look for in career/employment centre staff include initiative, innovation, creativity, knowledge of the economy, jobs and employment trends and a can-do attitude. It may seem like a given, but a genuine liking and respect for the client group being served is essential as well as an appreciation for client centred service delivery.

I think most career/employment centre directors/managers would agree that staff development and management can be a very time consuming process. I found that the most time was spent with staff at the two extremes — the poor performers and the ‘stars’. The latter because they demand the attention and I wanted to keep motivating and challenging them and the former because I spent an inordinate amount of time coaching them and trying to help them meet the challenges they faced.

Hiring staff, whether continuing or part-time, is just step one in the process of developing an effective team. A thorough orientation period and training on the specifics of your centre and organization are also key to ensuring that staff feel secure in the new environment and equipped to meet the challenges to come. Depending on the position for which you are hiring there is sometimes a need for training in the actual content of the work. Time spent doing this will pay off in the future.

Professional Development often gets lost in the busy atmosphere of most career centres or relies on a few people each year attending a Cannexus Conference. While these conferences are invaluable in terms of content as well as networking, in house professional development is essential as well. Not only does it allow you to focus on particular topics you think would be of value to your colleagues, but it also provides a wonderful team building opportunity. Closing the centre twice per year for professional development is, in my opinion well worth doing. It is also possible to hold mini PD sessions at the start or end of the day, particularly if your centre is closed to clients at those times.

Performance reviews ought to happen on a regular basis throughout the year.

Performance Reviews are as you all know, an opportunity to focus on an individual’s contributions and goals for the upcoming year and not the punitive process they are sometimes seen as being. Although often not formally permitted in unionized environments, staff members usually welcome the opportunity to sit down and discuss their work and learning plans. I always felt that individuals

had the right to have the opportunity of doing this if they wished. Where there were no union rules around performance review, most staff welcomed the opportunity to give their opinion of the year, to hear a fair assessment of their work, and discuss their goals and learning plans for the coming year. In a team environment the performance process is determined by the team members through mutual agreement. **Performance reviews ought to happen on a regular basis throughout the year.** It is both helpful and important to staff members to check in to ensure that they are on target in terms of the outcomes of their work.

Job Shadowing is an interesting and, I believe, beneficial program to offer. Members of the staff are asked to volunteer to be shadowed and then those positions are advertised as available for either a half or full day of shadowing. Once it is sorted out who is shadowing whom, the individuals involved arrange between themselves when the shadowing will occur. Job Shadowing allows staff a new understanding of others' work and challenges. It also provides the opportunity for insight into the interconnectedness of each other's work. Making it work takes patience and flexibility, but the rewards outweigh the challenges.



Job Sharing is something that, when it works, is excellent for the staff involved as well as for the organization. The key in my experience is to ensure adequate time for the people sharing the job to communicate with each other. Ideally this means overlapping for a half or full day, but if that is not financially possible, the use of notes, e-mails and phone conversations becomes essential. Those on the staff doing the job sharing must be committed to making it work.

When writing about the structure I mentioned that teams allow for all staff voices to be heard. It is also obviously possible to facilitate staff participation in a more hierarchical structure when the desire to do so exists. Including all staff in visioning and the setting of future goals not only maximizes the range of ideas but also ensures buy-in and a greater commitment. At the University of Toronto Career Centre before we moved to a team structure, I used to meet with groups of staff several times a year just to get their read on how things were going and what they would like to see added to the centre's programming. These meetings were in addition to all staff being included in vision and mission work.

What else helps to motivate staff besides feeling that they have an integral role in determining the direction of the centre? Staff who feel valued tend to want to give the most back. That sense of being valued might come from Professional Development opportunities, Job Shadowing, positive feedback on jobs well done, being considered for promotions, social events, office lunches or other ideas that demonstrate appreciation. In a busy centre it is too easy to neglect these forms of recognition.

Job satisfaction often depends on the nature and variety of the work. It increasingly depends on the organization's respect for balance in an employee's life. Younger staff will demand it while their older colleagues certainly appreciate it. What does balance mean? It can mean flexible hours, work from home, additional holidays, personal days, on-site affordable child care facilities and time off for elder care, to name just a few examples. In my experience, it is the exception that these benefits are abused.

In summary, **staff members make the centre**. As a result, hiring, training, motivating, providing opportunities for team building, respecting work/life balance, and inclusion in determining vision and direction are all essential components for building a successful career/employment centre. As a director/manager you cannot invest enough in staff development, recognition or input. It sometimes

might feel that you are spending an inordinate amount of time on staff issues, but it is well worth it. A happy and satisfied staff will provide the counselling, advising and employment services your clients and employers have a right to expect. And it is the staff that will make your centre a great one.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

All centres have core funding whether it comes from the municipal, provincial or federal government, the organization, grants, client fees or a combination of these sources. Unfortunately, often core funding is not enough. It is common to see ninety percent of a career/employment centre budget being used for salaries and benefits, leaving little for career resources, events, promotion, marketing, new programming, much less operating costs such as telephone and printing. Today, the idea of offering new services with a price tag through core funding is the exception rather than the rule.

The first priority of any organization is to ensure that a sound financial management system is in place. In a large organization, the career/employment centre would be expected to follow established financial policies and procedures. In a smaller organization, it may be necessary to implement a financial management system that is appropriate for the specific needs of the organization. There are many varieties of financial software systems available. It would be valuable to talk to colleagues in other organizations of a like size to get their recommendations.

Attaining base budget funding is critical, as one time only (OTO) and soft dollar funding assist with projects but, by their nature, are not adequate sources of funding to build a stable unit which can respond effectively to needs.

— Canadian Career Centre Director

In addition to ensuring that your centre is within budget, financial planning is an integral part of a director/manager's role. Annually analyzing whether resource allocations are correct, whether full-time positions are required, or whether part-time or contract would be more effective is a key piece of financial management. Obviously, during the year it is essential to stay on top of spending and to try to anticipate unforeseen expenses.

For an innovative director/manager, there are always new programs, projects or services for clients or employers that could be provided. There are several possibilities for getting additional funding. Trying to get your core funding increased is the place to start.

If funding is not available through the core funding route, grants become the next place to look. A first step as most of you know, is to research where available money might be found. Possible sources include government, foundations and corporations. Once you know who a possible source of funding might be, the next step is to write a compelling proposal. Proposal writing takes time — often time you do not feel that you have. However, it is a necessary part of attaining additional monies.

A number of career/employment centres across the country are charging employers for job listings as a way to increase funding for their centres. Further, many charge user fees for assessment tools and registration fees for job or career fairs. Career/employment centres seem to have to always be on the look out for innovative and lucrative ways to enhance funding.

I am sure each of you has your own funding success story. Although it took some time to develop, my philosophy is that if you don't ask you don't receive. The effort it takes to explore funding sources is, to my mind, time well spent, even though it is often time and resources you just don't feel that you have at that moment. It is imperative that you make the time.

CASE STUDY

I would like to share the story of funding of the University of Toronto's Career Centre's Extern Program. In 1987 I applied for and received an Innovation Grant from the Federal Government to start the Extern Program, which provides students with the opportunity to job shadow in a career area of their choice during Reading Week or the first week after exams in May. At the time there were just two Extern programs in existence, both in universities in the United States. That initial grant was for three years and covered all the costs of the program.

In the third year, knowing that the Innovation Program was coming to an end and that there was no chance of renewal, I wrote a proposal to The Counselling Foundation of Canada for funding for the now firmly established Extern Program. We were very fortunate to receive funding for two years. As that grant was coming to an end I went to the students through the Council of Student Services (COSS) at the University of Toronto to ask for funding to continue the program. At this point more than 2,500 students had participated during the five years and had all provided extremely positive evaluations. The students on COSS were impressed enough to vote in favour of incorporating the costs of the Extern Program into the Career Centre budget. The program was offered for over 20 years thanks to a combination of government, foundation and student fees. I only wish that every initiative received such positive funding results.

PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES

To some extent, programming and the services offered are dependent on the clients you serve, the scope of your mandate and, of course, the resources available to you. It is also dependant on the services provided directly to employers. If the centre has its own employment listing service, there will be a greater emphasis on services to employers than if it doesn't.

As you certainly all know, some of the common services offered by a career/employment centre to clients include:

- a job listing service
- career resources
- individual career counselling
- workshops on resume and covering letter writing
- interviewing skills
- job search
- self marketing
- networking

Additionally, there is a wide range of employment programs offered to youth and adults, as well as newcomers to Canada.

Many centres additionally offer:

- job fairs
- career information events
- volunteer opportunity fairs
- employment etiquette sessions
- skills and personality assessments
- mock interviews
- mentoring programs
- internships
- web based workshops

Centres that have an integrated service of employment and career counselling usually also have fairly extensive collection of career resources, as well as online access where clients are encouraged to research career possibilities. Both individual career counselling and career development workshops are offered. These may cover topics such as discovering skills and options, exploring interests and values, personality tests such as the Myers Briggs or other interest/personality tests, as well as networking and self marketing workshops.

I have to admit to a bias when it comes to testing. I tend to think that tests may sometimes be a lazy approach to career counselling. I know that is heresy in some circles, but to me sitting and actually listening to a client can illicit deeper and more extensive information than any test can. The Myers Briggs may be an exception to this bias as I do think it can be invaluable to a client's self understanding and career decision making.

A number of centres across the country offer online career development modules and courses for clients. Some offer online career counselling. Online career development programs will no doubt continue to grow as technology advances. The immediacy of online services definitely appeals to younger clients.

The 21st century has brought with it an emphasis on learning outcomes for career development services. I have to admit that I found this 'epiphany' somewhat interesting because in my experience over the past thirty years in student services, all programming and services had always been based on learning outcomes — we had just never formalized or named the process.

Despite the tinge of cynicism expressed above, I really do believe that formalizing learning outcomes is an excellent exercise for staff and is of definite benefit to clients. It forces staff to focus on what they want clients to learn from each activity, workshop, counselling session, program or event and assess the learning outcome, while allowing clients to understand what they are able to do and know as a result of their participation in the career activity.

As those of you who have incorporated learning outcomes into your process already know an example of a learning outcome from a Skills and Options workshop might be — at the end of the workshop clients will be able to identify four skills and two possible career areas where those skills might be used. Long before the introduction of learning outcomes, counsellors would design workshops with those exact same outcomes in mind; now they have become an integrated piece of career/employment centre programming.

In planning programming in a career/employment centre, it is important to think about where the clients are and what they consider to be important. Despite the fact that we would all like clients to understand the importance of career development and to start using the career/employment centre before they actually need it, the reality is that many come in when they are desperate for a job. Our job is to meet them where they are while introducing them to the process of career development.

What most clients know is that they need a resume. Promoting a resume clinic or service to clients is often the hook needed to engage them in the career development process. We all know that resume critiquing provides an excellent opportunity to help clients identify their skills and interests. It also provides the opportunity for referrals for career counselling for clients struggling with what they might like to do.

I always found input from clients to be essential in determining future programming. Exploring the needs and wants of clients through advisory committees, focus groups and the opinions of individual clients often opened windows of opportunity not necessarily considered by me or my colleagues.

To me the establishment of a client advisory committee with diverse membership early in the year and the scheduling of four to five meetings throughout the year — always of course accompanied by food — was key to ensuring the voice of clients were heard.

Employers are another invaluable source of client programming ideas. Their feedback often gave rise to new and innovative programming. One example of this was the implementation of the first etiquette session at University of Toronto Career Centre after hearing feedback from an employer about the table manners of some of our students at a corporate lunch which was part of the hiring process. The students loved these sessions and said that they were very helpful to them. Feedback from employers also reflected the difference the sessions made.

Employers are invaluable in participating in career/employment centre programming whether it be by sitting on resume and covering letter or interview panels or by attending career nights. Clients think of an employer's word as being 'gospel' and so their participation is affirming of the work the centre does. The benefit to the employer is an enhanced profile for his/her organization.

Services to employers may include the listing of employment opportunities whether they be full-time, part-time, summer or volunteer, the collection of resumes, sign-ups for interviews and possibly the provision of interview rooms and facilitating the opportunity to meet specific groups of clients whether for information sessions, briefing sessions and/or social events, as well as consulting on branding on campus and recruitment strategies.

Designing career development programs is a much bigger topic than can be addressed in this publication. Many conferences such as Cannexus offer interesting program planning sessions which are both helpful in and of themselves but also trigger your own programming thoughts.

TIME MANAGEMENT

One of the skills that has served me well over my career has been effective time management. This skill has also allowed me to manage the balance of work and life effectively. Throughout my career I always worked hard. However, when I left for the day, the week-end or for vacation, I really left. I know that this can be a real challenge for some people.

When I reflect on what it was that I did that allowed me to manage my time effectively, the first thing that comes to mind is that I realized early on in my career that I got more desk work done between 7:30am and 9:00am than I did the rest of the day. There were no phone calls, meetings or drop-ins. I could concentrate on clearing up e-mails, writing memos or designing programs. I know that many folk with young children or those who simply are not morning people cannot do this. For them it might be the 5:00pm to 6:30pm time slot that would work better. **Finding time with the fewest possible interruptions is the first step to good time management.**

It is for that reason that the Career Centre at the University of Toronto opens at 9:45am to students and closes three days a week at 4:00pm, while staff members start work at various times from 8:00am on and leave work anytime from 4:00pm until 6:00pm. With these hours, staff members have administrative time without interruption. This is, of course, of most value to staff members who provide direct student or employer services.

Time management skills can be learned. Often it just takes examining your use of time to discover where you could make improvements to enhance efficiency. For some people the problem lies in procrastination. Others are disorganized or find it difficult to delegate.

Finding time with the fewest possible interruptions is the first step to good time management.

The antidote to procrastination is to deal with issues, e-mails, phone calls and mail as soon as they arrive on your desk. By staying on top of all of these things, you will feel that you are controlling your own time, that things are getting done and that there are no piles to depress you. Procrastinating breeds more procrastination as the tasks begin to feel too daunting to even begin to address. When you make a decision to try to deal with e-mail as soon as it comes in, to return phone calls immediately and get paper off your desk by dealing with it as soon as you can, you begin to feel on top of your work. **Just touching a piece of paper once is not an urban myth!**



A clean desk, organized files, a time of day where you can work uninterrupted and prioritising your work go a long way to improving time management. Prioritizing is extremely important. I remember

a colleague asking me for help because he was always behind in his work. When we looked at his style of work it was clear that he had absolutely no priorities. He treated everything with the same degree of importance or non-importance. Deadlines were impossible for him as he was always struggling to just keep up and therefore more often than not missed deadlines. Once he stopped to look at why he was having a tough time, it became clear to him that he had to establish priorities and work accordingly. After looking at how he was using time, he began to prioritize and was amazed at how much more control he had over his work. Meeting deadlines became much easier for him.

It is sometimes helpful to keep a log of how you spend your time. Keep track for three to five days and then look for patterns. What is the balance between home and work? Did you work according to priorities or were you more reactive? Did the piles just keep growing on your desk or were you able to deal with issues and file them? How long did it take you to respond to e-mails — voice mails? Did you feel rushed or overwhelmed? Did you feel that you and not the piles were in charge? How often were you late for meetings? How often were you double booked?

Delegation is an issue for some directors/managers. Effective time management is dependant on your ability to prioritize and delegate. However, people sometimes feel that they can do it better themselves, that they don't have time to explain it to someone else, or that there is no one to whom they can delegate. The reality is that you cannot do it all yourself and the career centre will suffer if you try. Furthermore, most staff members welcome new responsibilities and would be only too happy to help out.

Assuming that you have hired well and surrounded yourself with talented people, the act of delegating is, in fact, very easy. Remember though, that when delegating, delegate the authority as well as the responsibility. Otherwise you are tying the hands of the person to whom you have delegated.

Speaking of delegating, how do you plan for that all important vacation? Will someone represent you in your absence or do you feel that you have to stay in touch via e-mail and/or phone? Clearly the former is a much better solution. We all need vacations and the distance from our work that they provide. It is essential to put in place a position whose function includes acting as a 'second in command' in your department – someone who can represent you

when you are away. Not only is staying in touch via e-mail and/or phone counter-productive to your having a relaxing vacation, it is ultimately detrimental to the organization.

A helpful time management strategy is to plan your day/week/month. A **'To Do List'** is a useful tool in both planning your work and prioritizing it. It can be either on paper or on a PDA. Writing the list forces you to think about what is most important and to become aware of any deadlines. Being able to check off a 'To Do List' is very satisfying. Try not to book back to back meetings or appointments. Give yourself a chance during the day to return voice mails and e-mails. Always take a lunch break. Tremendous amounts of time can be wasted in setting up meetings. It is helpful to give attendees several different dates and times and a deadline to respond. Once the date is set, confirm by e-mail. If you are chairing, decide what it is you want the meeting to cover, in what order, length of time and location. Send the agenda out ahead of time if possible so that everyone attending can think about the issues before the meeting.

To me, time management is essential to maintaining one's sanity. By learning how to better manage time, one will also be learning how to better manage stress. **You, not the work, will be in charge.**

NETWORKING

Networking is an integral component of a director/manager's life. No one knows the importance of excellent networking skills better than a career development professional. Few conversations with clients take place without including the importance of networking.

Despite thoroughly understanding the essential role of networking, we often fall into the trap of thinking that we really don't have the time to do it. What do we lose by this belief? We lose the opportunity to meet people who may be helpful to our career/employment centre, as well as to us professionally and personally. I think most of us take advantage of conferences such as Cannexus to network, but are we conscious of networking on a daily basis? Do we go out of our way to attend 'Networking Breakfasts'? Do we consciously network in our own organizations? Do we take advantage of employers being on site and take time to network with them?

Networking in today's world cannot be discussed without including social media. **Social media** is playing a larger and larger role in society in terms of how people communicate with each other and the field of career development is no exception. Young people have their smart phones with them 24/7 and are either talking, texting, checking e-mails, Facebook, Twitter or watching YouTube. Social media allows for interaction and collaboration between people. Forms of social media include but are not limited to: online forums, blogs, social networking sites, pin board sites, video sharing sites and many more. Popular sites include: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Google+, WordPress, Tumblr, Pinterest, Skype and Flickr.

Many organizations now have Facebook and Twitter accounts and offer workshops on how to use social media to find a job and advance one's career. LinkedIn has become in recent years an important part of job searching and career advancement.

Employers for the most part are active users of social media, including LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and blogs. Internet searches

are often used by employers when researching potential candidates. Clients have to be advised that employers are able to look up potential candidates Facebook pages thus necessitating a modicum of decorum both on their pages and in their twitters. Issues that turn employers off include: references to drug abuse, intolerant views, evidence of excessive alcohol consumption, inappropriate photos and foul language to name but a few.

Along with the advantages of social media in advancing networking opportunities, it can also be a challenge to boundary setting. Most centres have a policy which prevents staff from using their personal Facebook or Twitter with clients and employers.

In large organizations, networking internally is both possible and important, while in smaller organizations the priority is networking in the community. Establishing contacts with the Board of Trade, the local business association, Chamber of Commerce, educational institutions, and other not for profit organizations is not only worthwhile but imperative.

For those of us who are Myers Briggs introverts, the very thought of networking is often enough to cause whim-whams in the tummy. However, like most of our experience of living in an extroverted world, we have to dig deep, develop a strategy and **just do it**. The more experienced we are, the easier it becomes. I remember prior to going to my first networking event early on in my career, a colleague suggested to me that I think of a couple of current topics to raise if the conversation lagged. I keep that in mind to this day.

Networking, whether it is to increase the number of employers listing at your centre, to enhance the profile of the career/employment centre in the organization or community, or to further your own career aspirations, is an activity well worth the time spent. The larger your network, the more opportunity you have for spreading the word about the career/employment centre, its programs and services.

MENTORING

Mentoring has throughout history been a powerful personal and career development tool. It has a proven track record in helping people advance in their careers. Many of us have had the privilege of being both a mentor and a 'mentee' and have experienced the richness both roles have to offer. **Everyone wins in mentoring programs.**

Whether you are officially a mentor or someone people have unofficially looked to as a mentor, I am sure that you have been helpful in providing career guidance over the years to younger or less experienced colleagues. Often a professional relationship forms without either of you identifying it as mentoring. Yet, that is exactly what it is. You may find yourself taking a particular interest in the career of one of your colleagues and going out of your way to be supportive to that person. Perhaps a colleague will seek you out for career advice or suggestions. A true mentoring relationship can be one of the most pleasant professional relationships one can have. It is one of mutual trust, respect and honesty.

While being a mentor to someone else is extremely rewarding, having a mentor yourself can be one of the highlights of your career. Your mentor's wisdom, guidance, support and ability to simply listen to you can be invaluable. Often it is the mentor's insight and understanding of the politics of the organization that is most helpful and prevents you from making career-altering miscues. The interest in you and support that you receive are frequently the confidence boosts you need at a given point of time.

One of my mentors stands out for being most helpful in the questions he would ask. His questions really made me think about what was important, why I was doing what I was doing and how I might do it differently. He was never judgemental and was always supportive. I treasure the advice and encouragement he and other mentors gave me over the years. Those relationships guided me in my own mentoring experiences.

While the next chapter will deal with establishing your profile in your own organization and community, networking and mentoring are the foundational pieces necessary for profile enhancement. Both your mentors and mentees will help you spread the word about the centre and the excellent work it does.

ESTABLISHING YOUR PROFILE

Profile development may be one of the more important things a centre can do. It is certainly a huge factor in funding and maximizing the use of the centre. To my mind it has to be one of the director/manager's top priorities.

How does a career/employment centre ensure a high profile? My experience has been that the better known the director was the higher profile the career/employment centre enjoyed.

I was fortunate to have had an example set by my predecessor who sat on a multitude of university committees, had a major role in organizing U of T Day and chaired the university's United Way campaign. She was also a past president of a national professional association. I could clearly see that the very high profile she established on campus and off was of direct benefit to our career centre.

In following her wise example when I became Director I worked my way onto many university-wide committees and college councils. I was Acting Status of Women officer on a part-time basis for the university for a period and chaired several campus committees. Additionally, I was also president of a national professional association. These were just a few of the ways in which I tried to do my part to raise the Career Centre's profile both in the university and professionally. Certainly, by participating in the university in this way I did get the attention of the senior administration and by association they gained awareness of the Career Centre and its function. While my experience was in a university, it would be equally true in any organization.

Establishing and maintaining a high profile for the centre with clients is probably most effectively done via word of mouth. If clients are having good experiences at the career/employment centre, they will tell their friends and encourage them to also go to the centre.

Survey after survey shows that next to the web, friends are the most common referral.

It is essential to put adequate resources into the design and maintenance of the career/employment centre website. Certainly the web is young people's prime resource for all things important and has to be kept up-to-date to maintain credibility. This is equally true for the employer website.

Large, well-attended events such as career days, job fairs, and special events draw clients' attention as well. For many these may be their first exposure to the career/employment centre. Clients will wander over to see why the crowd is there and what they may be missing.

Being known in your organization is paramount to offering effective services. You could have the most extensive array of services and programs but if clients don't know about them, they aren't much use. And, if you do not enjoy the support of senior administrators, on-going funding could be in jeopardy. As I said earlier, raising the profile of the career/employment centre has to be one of the director/manager's top priorities and is built on the foundation of skillful networking and often, mentoring.

MARKETING TO EMPLOYERS

Marketing to potential employers is a challenge faced by all organizations with their own job listing services. To ensure credibility and to maximize opportunities for clients, marketing has to be given serious consideration. As I mentioned earlier all too often in our environments, usually due to financial constraints, we add marketing to a staff member's already busy job. This creates two problems — one, the staff member does not have the skills or experience required to be effective in marketing and two, as a result, that individual concentrates on the more comfortable parts of the job. Thus, marketing takes a back seat.

What I have learned the hard way over the years was to 'find' the money to hire an experienced marketing specialist who understood the public sector and, ideally, the employment market for the clients being served. If you are fortunate enough to be able to hire an experienced marketing expert, he or she will come with an established network, strategies for developing and maintaining relationships with current employers and for reaching out to potential employers. If the marketers have had experience in the public sector they will have a myriad of methods of marketing without incurring large costs. They will know how to effectively use an employer website to draw employers to your centre as well as the strategic use of targeted internet, e-mail, social media and brochure campaigns.

Your employer website is extremely important and warrants both the time and money necessary to build and maintain a professional looking and easily accessed site. Getting input from employers about the look and feel of the website is always useful.

Where do the career centre practitioners fit into a marketing strategy? You and your career/employment centre colleagues know the client body better than anyone else. You are able to articulate to a marketer what makes your clients unique, how their training/education allows them to be the best prepared for the world of work and what their value is to an employer. From hearing clients talk

about their career interests, you also know which sectors should be recommended for the marketer's attention. However, perhaps most importantly, all staff members have their own networks which no doubt include potential new employers. Promoting the organization to potential employers ought to be part of every staff member's job description and something to which everyone is committed.

In the clients you have the product. If yours is like many career/employment centres you will have varied your approach of how to define the 'product' and how to pitch it. In my time at the University of Toronto we varied between marketing the students — their brightness, diversity, talent, breadth of disciplines....., to marketing the University — largest in Canada, downtown Toronto, diverse student body, range of faculties and programs, illustrious alumni, Nobel prize winning professors and so on. We finally concluded that the reality was that the 'products' really were the students and alumni — not the university.

In employers of clients, you have the market. It is essential to build strong networks with current employers while at the same time attracting new ones. Although clients are the top priority, employers rank a very close second. Establishing and maintaining strong relationships with employers is essential to their continuing to recruit through your centre. Providing an easy to use web site for listing their positions, possibly the availability of efficient interview facilities, processes in place that ensure the appropriate client is present and well prepared to be interviewed, the provision of lunch or suggestions of nearby restaurants, a comfortable employer lounge and friendly, helpful staff members all contribute to encouraging employers to keep coming back to your centre.

In part, the marketing strategy defines what sets the 'product' apart from the competition. It focuses on what makes them unique and of value to an employer. It is sometimes helpful to do the S.W.O.T. analysis to help define what the strengths of your campaign are, what the weaknesses are, where the opportunities lie and to identify any threats to the campaign.

Equally important is determining the targets of your marketing plan — for example, specific areas such as clerical, advertising, publishing, laboratories, or trades. Decisions will also be made on whether to target multinationals, large, medium, small organizations and private or public sector employers. Research and input from career/employment centre staff and clients will help establish target areas.

Decisions have to be made in terms of approach — networking events, company visits, direct mail campaigns, e-mail, billboards, radio, TV, internet. In my experience, although often the popular choice of staff, I found that company visits were the least effective use of time in marketing. A half or even a full day may be spent with one company during a visit, while hundreds of e-mails could be sent in the same amount of time with enhanced results. That is not to say that it is never appropriate to do company visits but, as a rule of thumb, I believe there are more effective uses of time. I do think attendance at trade shows is often very fruitful from a marketing perspective.

As entire books are written on developing marketing strategies, I have obviously just scratched the surface of planning a marketing strategy for a career centre aimed at potential employers. That professional marketer you have hired will take it from here.

PROMOTION TO CLIENTS

Promoting the career/employment centre to clients is as important as marketing to employers — in fact, more so. The old saying — ‘build it and they will come’ — is not always true for career/employment centres. Clients have to understand **what’s in it for them** before they will take time out of their hectic days to visit the career/employment centre or its website.

In addition to the techniques for building the profile of the centre, there are endless strategies for promoting it. These include, but are not limited to, using online resources such as your own website, social media, hosting career related programs on radio stations, placing ads and career supplements in local newspapers and promoting the career/employment centre on billboards, banners and those old traditional and, I would say, tired flyers and brochures. I should clarify, I believe that brochures are useful once the client has come into the centre to help them understand the extent of services and programs available to them, but not as a vehicle to attract them in the first place.

Today’s young people, as we all know, rely solely on the internet for their information, and that is where we have to be to grab their attention. The bulk of youth career/employment centre promotion these days happens online. Having an attractive, yet informative, website that is constantly updated is essential. The use of Facebook, Twitter and texting in promoting career/employment centres are important ways in which to reach clients. Clients would be the best source for tips on how to make these resources work at your centre.

In addition to the internet, as I have noted elsewhere, having friends share their positive experiences with the career/employment centre is a very effective promotional tool. Holding a “Tell a Friend” event can be productive. Taking advantage of high profile events such as career days or job fairs is an effective way to introduce new clients to the career/employment centre. Often clients would

simply stumble upon an event and wonder what it was. Having staff available to fill them in and encourage them to check out the centre out for themselves is useful.

Promoting career/employment centre services to clients is an extremely important component of the work of the career/employment centre. The more clients are aware of the services of the centre and the more they take advantage of them, the more successful the centre will be.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Increasingly, the results of an organizational capacity evaluation are seen as integral to running a successful career/employment centre and feed directly into strategic planning. The assessment measures the organization's ability to meet its goals and achieve its mission. The results of effective assessments can be used to help position the career/employment centre.

Every five years at the University of Toronto, I initiated a thorough review of the centre — its vision, mission and approach. The result of each review was a five year plan. All staff members were involved in the process, as were students on the Career Centre Advisory Committee. We would also hold focus groups of student users and employers. The staff divided into groups to study various aspects of the centre — where we were, where we would like to be and how to get there.

Sometimes the vision statement was changed. In one notable review, we designed the Self Managed Career Development Model which continues to guide programming and services at the University of Toronto Career Centre to this day. The Self Managed Career Development Model was one way of looking at the career development process. It divided the process into four fundamental parts:

- Discover Your Skills and Options
- Identify Work Opportunities
- Market Yourself for Today's Workplace
- Manage Worklife

There was no definitive starting place, but rather the model provided the opportunity for an individual to plug in wherever they thought they were on the continuum. We believed that it was as relevant for a teenager as it was for a seasoned professional

considering a career change. Essential to the Self Managed Career Development Model, in addition to it being self directed, was that it stressed the importance of continuously assessing the marketplace and the impact of changes taking place.

Some of the areas traditionally included as a part of an organizational performance review include strengths and weaknesses, vision and mission, organizational structure, staffing, teamwork, values, training, programming and communication.

Organizational capacity evaluations are often conducted by external consultants. Their process may include interviews with individual staff, focus groups with students and employers and feedback from internal partners such as registrars and academic advisers. They often start the process by having the career centre staff gather a significant amount of information including annual reports, assessment tools, program information, budget information and organizational charts. While time consuming and expensive, some academic cultures give external reviews more credence than internal ones.

Theories and practices around client feedback to career/employment centres have changed significantly over the years. When I first started working at the University of Toronto Career Centre, the only assessments that were done were student evaluations at the end of all workshops. From that point, satisfaction surveys were added following career/job/volunteer fairs, career information days, individual counselling sessions, Extern Program participation and the on-campus recruitment program. Students and employers completed the latter. In other words — every event/encounter was evaluated in terms of student/employer satisfaction. In addition, needs assessments were carried out annually.

When I left as Director of the Career Centre at the University of Toronto students completed an on-line satisfaction survey of all services and programs as part of their annual registration process. Responses from over 25,000 students were attained each year. In analyzing this data we were able to ascertain the degree/program/gender/college/major/ year in school and so on, thereby knowing to whom to promote various services and programmes. That information was invaluable to program planning.

Satisfaction surveys, although important, do not address all assessment needs. It is often too tempting to use the same satisfaction surveys for all workshops rather than design individual ones which will provide a greater depth of information. Employment surveys are

another measure of the success of the career/employment centre's programs and services. With the advent of writing learning outcomes, all programming will be assessed according to the successful attainment of the learning outcomes.

Employer surveys help to ascertain the level of satisfaction employers enjoy when recruiting at your centre. Their feedback can also be used to lobby for things like additional staff, web enhancements, new or enhanced interview rooms and improvements to the service they receive while at your centre.

Just as self assessment is integral to the career planning process, career/employment centre evaluations are essential to ensuring that a relevant and high quality service is offered to clients and employers.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Organizations that do not take the time to define their purpose, assess where they are, where they want to be and how to best get there, may find themselves spinning their wheels and being out of touch with their clients. **Strategic Planning provides a structure for defining and meeting organizational goals.**

Fundamental questions to be asked include: What do we do? For whom do we do it? Why do we do it? What do we do best? What could we improve on? What could we be doing that we aren't doing? What do we want to be doing in a year, 2 years, 5 years? What is the ideal, what is the current reality and what will it take to achieve that ideal?

It is important to involve staff, clients, community agencies, funders, as well as employers in strategic planning. Not only does it provide everyone with an opportunity to stop and really look at what you are doing, how well you are doing it and what else you might be doing, it also forces the group to set priorities, goals and objectives. It allows for creative visioning without constraints and develops a sense of ownership. Most importantly, strategic planning allows the centre to develop a plan, a strategy for achieving that plan and a method of communicating the plan to the centre's users.

If the centre currently does not have a vision and mission statement writing one will be part of the Strategic Planning process. If it does have them, the planning will provide an opportunity to revisit those statements and ensure that they are still valid. As you all know, a vision declares where an organization would like to be in the future, while a mission defines the current purpose of the organization — why they exist. Both should be short and to the point.

Developing a five year plan gives structure to the direction of the centre and helps everyone understand what the goals are and how they will be achieved. It helps clients, employers and senior administrators appreciate the direction of the centre. Most certainly it is essential for financial planning. An annual planning exercise is necessary to stay on top of the five year plan.

Strategic planning can be done in-house or with the help of a consultant. Hiring a well respected consultant is frequently money well spent as she/he will ensure a positive process. Often the process itself is as important as the plan that evolves from it. I would suggest that, if your centre has never done any strategic planning, a consultant to guide you through the process is well worth it.

Many of you may feel that neither you nor the centre has time to do strategic planning. You are too busy providing direct service to clients and employers. While this is no doubt true, it is important to step back and look at the big picture and integrate strategic planning into your centre's priorities.

Some people believe that after doing all the work involved in strategic planning, the plan will just gather dust on some shelf. Clearly, it is the role of the director/manager to ensure that is not the case. Breaking the plan down into action plans helps to maximize the chances of implementation. It is also helpful to name one or more member of the strategic planning team to take on the responsibility of ensuring that the plan gets carried out.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

As we all know, the only constant in our world is change. This is particularly true in the world of career/employment centre management. Stewarding change in any organization is an integral part of management.

To manage change effectively, there needs to be a clear understanding of the reasons for change, a buy-in on the part of all staff and the necessary resources, whether staff or financial. Problems managing change occur when staff members' needs are not considered, when the fact that people react differently to change is ignored, when open communication isn't present and when the abilities of staff members are underestimated. Clearly, staff members are key to effectively managing change in any environment.

Change is synonymous with the employment market. Those of us who have been around career/employment centres for awhile have been through many economic up and down turns. We've witnessed 'client markets' and 'employer markets'. We've seen our interview rooms crammed month after month, and we have also seen them quite empty. We've seen an abundance of listings and a dearth.

As the director/manager, you are responsible for managing this change by putting resources where they are most needed according to the market. In tight markets, you need to supplement your direct services to clients in order to maximize their chances of finding work in a difficult employment market, while also boosting marketing resources. In good times, additional resources are often needed in employment services to handle the increase in employment listings.

If the change is going to affect staffing resources, the sooner you address the situation and talk openly about it with staff, the less misinformation will exist. Be honest, yet try to help them see the opportunities change brings. Be available to answer questions individuals may have and to hear staff feedback.

Change can be viewed as an opportunity or a threat. You aren't much help to anyone if you choose to see change as a threat. Leaders see the changes and welcome the opportunity those changes bring. Despite perhaps sounding 'polyanna-ish', it is the truth.

CONCLUSION

Writing this publication has been an extremely interesting exercise for me. It has allowed me to reflect on the time I spent in career/employment centre management and to recall how tremendously rewarding it was. I had the privilege of working with a very fine group of Career Centre colleagues, a high quality of students, alumni, staff and faculty at the University of Toronto, as well as wonderful employers and colleagues from other universities and colleges in Canada and around the world.

...I could never go wrong if I made decisions based on what was in the best interest of the students.

I hope to synthesize in this conclusion some of the more important lessons I learned during my tenure as a director of a career/employment centre. One thing that clearly stands out for me was that I could never go wrong, if I made decisions based on what was in the best interest of the clients. Asking this question whenever I was in doubt about a decision usually helped me zero in on the correct direction to take.

I believe that we are so fortunate to work in the field of career development. It is a field that touches a myriad of disciplines including economics, sociology, psychology, history, political science, marketing, international relations and education, to name just a few. It is a field in which change is constant. As a result, there is always something to learn. I am grateful to the career development profession for the understanding I garnered about the economy, its effect on the labour market and career availability.

Perhaps one of the more interesting things I learned was that career development is more often as dependant on **being in the right place, at the right time, with the right skills**, as it is on traditional methods of career planning. I know that is heresy to think, much less say in some places. However, John Krumboltz and those who believe in his theory of ‘Happenstance’ would certainly agree. Consider your own career path — ask your friends. How many of you or them ended up where you are because of traditional career planning techniques and how many were just in the right place, at the right time, with the right skills. I know that my personal experience has been right place, right time and right skills.

... loyalty, along with being fair and equitable in promoting people, is not always in everyone's best interest.

And, if I am correct that this is increasingly the case, the ability to identify skills and relate them to the world of work becomes that much more important. It never failed to amaze me how difficult university students found it to be able to articulate what their skills were, much less where they might want to use them. Even mature graduate students struggled to identify their skills. It seems to me that it would be helpful if children were taught in elementary and high school how to identify their skills as they were developing. It would certainly make skills identification for career development purposes and thinking about work options that much easier in college/university.

A management lesson I learned early on was that loyalty, along with being fair and equitable in promoting people, is not always in everyone's best interest. Not everyone is cut out for management, and it certainly is not doing someone a favour to put her or him in a position she or he cannot handle. That was tough lesson for me because my intention in promoting a colleague was to be fair, yet it turned out to be a very unfair decision for all concerned. I did learn from it, albeit the hard way.

Another tough management lesson — I remember my boss telling me as I was accepting my first management position that **it was not wise to be friends with the people you supervise**. I thought at the

time — what ridiculous advice. Oh, how I have learned to respect that wise piece of advice and share it with colleagues over the years. It is fine if the staff member who is also a friend always performs well and you are never in the position to have to eliminate her or his position due to financial cutbacks. If this is not the case, you are in trouble. I have seen too many situations of managers finding themselves in of the unenviable position of having to either discipline or lay off a friend.

One of my management principles was — **no surprises**. I would let colleagues who reported to me know right from the start that my least favourite thing was to be caught by surprise. What did I mean? I meant that I didn't want, for instance, to hear about something relevant to the Career Centre from someone outside the centre before being told directly. It sounds simple enough, but when one is caught flat footed it is not only personally embarrassing but reflects poorly on the Career Centre.

I have previously mentioned my epiphany regarding hiring — **hire intelligence and attitude**; the rest can be learned. I'm not sure why it took so long for me to come to that conclusion, but it did. However, once I had it, I did some of my very best hires.

What else did I learn during my years in career/employment centre management that might be worth passing on? Certainly, one thing would be that a key relationship a director/manager **has to establish and nurture is a dynamic and positive relationship with one's boss**. It is essential to being able to develop and run an effective career/employment centre. This relationship may have to begin with your teaching her/him a crash course on career development and where career education fits in the bigger organization's picture. Your boss has to understand well enough to be able to articulate the role the career/employment centre plays in contributing to the organization's achievement of its mission. A well versed boss will then be ideally able to act as a cheerleader for the centre. Further, her or his clear understanding will serve you well at budget time.

The higher the profile of the director/ manager, the higher the profile of the career/ employment centre.

I previously talked about the importance of profile and the role the director/manager plays in establishing and maintaining a high profile in the organization. I cannot stress this enough. The higher the profile of the director/manager, the higher the profile of the career/employment centre. A bi-product of establishing a positive profile will be that you will be noticed by senior administrators and more likely to be approached to get involved in high level committees or projects. The experience you gain and contacts you meet while on committees are invaluable to both you personally and to the career/employment centre.

I believe that it is also important for directors/managers to **get involved in professional associations by accepting leadership positions**. In Canada, there are many professional associations at both a national and provincial level. I will always treasure my experiences on the CACEE Board, both as a member and then as President. My fellow Board members were impressive representatives from employer members and colleges/universities. We did some excellent work and the association grew during our tenure, but we also really had fun. I value many of the friendships I made then to this day.

...it is equally important to stay on top of all career related sites and services.

It is important to take leadership roles in professional associations, but it is equally important to stay on top of all career related sites and services. For example CERIC is an institute dedicated to career counselling whose committees on learning and professional development and research provide support for innovative ideas and projects. Additionally, CERIC organizes Cannexus, an excellent annual national career development conference. Other CERIC programs include Contact Point which is an internationally recognized on-line resource for career development practitioners and last, but far from least, the Canadian Journal of Career Development.

In summary, in writing this publication, I have had the privilege of looking back on the part of my career that was in career centre management. I have many fine memories of that time and all I learned at the University of Toronto, and through my involvement in CACEE

and NATCON. I am so fortunate to now be able to create new career memories through my current work as National Co-ordinator, Outreach and Innovation with CERIC.



MARILYN VAN NORMAN, M.A.

Currently National Co-ordinator of Innovation and Outreach for the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling (CERIC), Marilyn Van Norman has over 30 years proven experience in career centre and student services management. She has held the positions of Director of the Career Centre and Director of Student Services at the University of Toronto. She is a collaborator, visionary and expeditor.

Author of numerous articles and publications on career development, her book *Making It Work: Career Management for the New Workplace* was a Canadian bestseller. Marilyn has been the recipient of a number of awards including the Award of Merit, Outstanding Contribution, Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers; Contribution to Career Counselling, Ontario College Counsellors; the Etta St. John Wileman Award for Contribution to Career Development in Canada; The Joan Foley Award for Significant Contributions Enhancing Student Life, the University of Toronto; Life Membership, the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers.

Marilyn has been active on numerous Canadian committees and Boards relating to career development including: a past President of the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers (CACEE); member of Contact Point Board; member of the founding board of the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling (CERIC); chairing the National Consultation on Career Development (NATCON) for fifteen years.



A very no-nonsense approach to the management of a Career/Employment Centre. As all experienced or inexperienced managers will know, the task of managing a Career/Employment Centre is ever changing and evolving. The topics covered are the day-to-day realities of a Career/Employment Centre Manager. Relevant topics, sound advice and practical solutions will make this a definite read for all managers, senior staff and Boards of Directors.”

— *Nancy Dube, General Manager, YMCA of Sudbury*



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