CHAPTER 1
TEACHING CAREER DEVELOPMENT

> "All counselors need to be prepared to help clients with career issues, understanding that those issues often are inextricably linked with other parts of their lives."
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> —ACES/NCDA, 2000, p. 2

Question: What can be greater than helping people uncover hidden potential, invest in themselves, and take steps towards realizing their dreams? Answer: career counseling. What is even better than career counseling? Answer: teaching and training others to do the same. Helping individuals clarify and then achieve their career plans is a main role of career counselors (Roles of the career counselor, 2006). This is why I love being a career counselor and enjoy being a career counseling educator even more. As a career counselor, my fondest memories of career counseling share the common theme of seeing "the lights come on" and smiles burst out on clients' faces as they realize that they have so many more options than they ever thought possible, and that there are specific steps they can take to turn their career dreams into realities. Whether it's interpreting a career inventory, critiquing a resumé, or conducting a mock interview, each of the roles and functions of career counseling professionals help to enhance knowledge about self, knowledge about options, and make the impossible possible. As a career counseling educator, seeing those same lights come on as counseling students begin to realize the powerful rewards of career counseling is just as rewarding.

Unfortunately, the career development course at the graduate level is often relegated to the newest faculty member – one who often has limited interest or background in teaching the course. Similarly, graduate students generally anticipate the career course to be the least useful in their planned program.

Take a moment and check off which statements best describes you:

Reflect….

_____ I am teaching career development for the first time.
_____ I am the regular instructor for career development.
_____ The career development course was not my first choice, but I have to teach it.
_____ I am excited about teaching the career development course.
_____ I am dreading teaching the career development course.
_____ I am looking for new ideas on how to make the career course fresh and exciting.
_____ I am not sure what topics to cover in the course, or where to find relevant information and resources.
_____ I want to improve my presentations – in the classroom, for conferences, or for other groups.
_____ Other:

By identifying your purpose(s) for reading this book, you can better choose the chapter(s) that are most pertinent to your needs. As an instructor of undergraduate and graduate career development courses and presenting on career counseling topics for over 15 years, I have several purposes for writing this book.

PURPOSES OF THE BOOK:

- To reassert the importance of the career development course;
- To identify key components that should be taught in K-12, undergraduate, and graduate career courses;
- To identify general and specific, simple and complex, active learning strategies to enhance the teaching and learning within career counseling courses and professional presentations;
- To provide an in-depth look at providing online career counseling courses; and
- To generate an excitement for teaching career development.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Various accrediting and professional organizations such as the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), National Career Development Association (NCDA) and the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) specify what students should be learning in the career development course. So, in one sense, I am bound to deliver information and training on those topics. The requirements are not unreasonable, but what career professionals deem to be vital for any counselor to know about career development. Aside from these external demands for what is included in the course, you probably have some additional or simpler objectives. My objectives for teaching career development have changed over the years, but can be summed up in 4 key desires:

- Students will leave the course with a knowledge of career theories, career assessments, and an awareness of various career issues that people face.
- Students' "toolbags" will be overflowing with career resources, tools, and techniques.
- Students will have a better understanding of their own career development – past, present, and future.
- Students will be excited about the field of career counseling.

WHAT A CAREER COURSE SHOULD COVER

Before getting into what a career course should cover, let us be idealistic for a moment. If you were able to completely design your course to cover whatever topics you would like to cover, what would they be?

Topics I Would Like To Cover In My Course:

There appears to be a general consensus of what should be contained in general career development courses. Differences exist between undergraduate and graduate courses. At the undergraduate level, the purpose of the course is generally to help students through the career-exploration, decision-making, and job-search processes, while graduate courses focus on training students to help individuals through that process. At the high school level, states often have an impact on what needs to be taught. Career courses in middle or high school may share common themes, such as development of self-knowledge, career exploration, and career decision making.

In addition, professional organizations (www.ncda.org), state certification or licensing boards, and accrediting bodies such as CACREP (www.cacrep.org) have more to say about specific information that needs to be covered at the graduate level. As an instructor of a graduate career course, you should regularly check the standards to make sure the topics contained in your course meet current standards and expectations outlined by these bodies. Due to these guidelines, many graduate career courses look similar in terms of content. At the undergraduate level, Folsom and Reardon (2003) reviewed undergraduate career courses and identified common outputs of these. Courses at the K-12 level and the undergraduate level may look similar in terms of topic, but should be adjusted to make age appropriate. What a kindergartener is able to understand is very different from a 12th grader.

Common Course Topics

K-12 Courses	Undergraduate Courses	Graduate Courses
• self-knowledge – interests, skills, values • career exploration • how the world of work is organized • decision making • traditional and nontraditional jobs • how school and work are related	• self-exploration • occupational knowledge • career planning • career maturity • self-esteem and/or role of self talk on decision making • career decision making • sex-role stereotyping	• career development theories • career counseling processees and techniques • career assessments • career information and resources • career program planning and evaluation • interrelationships among work and other life roles • diversity • career and educational planning • technology-based career development applications • research and evaluation • supervision • career coaching • consultation • ethical and legal considerations

Other possible topics exist in addition to those listed in the table. In reviewing career development books of different types such as self-help, high school, undergraduate, and graduate, you might see such chapters or topics as the following in the tables of content:

- job search (resume writing, interviewing, job search techniques)
- negotiating job offers
- job discrimination
- glbt? (gay/lesbian/bi-sexual/transgendered/questioning) issues
- working in a global economy
- various developmental levels (prekindergarten through the lifespan)
- career development with offenders
- career development for people with disabilities
- career development in organizations
- career counseling in various settings (private practice, higher education institutions, prisons)
- career transitions
- labor market trends
- dual career issues

While a plethora of potential topics exist, time is limited and you must decide how much time you will spend on the required elements of the course, and if/how you will cover other special topics. You might consider having students present on a topic that will not be covered in depth. Another option (that would not take up class time) would be to have students contribute a course wiki (i.e., a shared web page that many students can edit; for an example, see www.wikipedia.com or www.pbwiki.com) on a special topic.

WHAT A CAREER COURSE SHOULD BE LIKE

What should a career development course be like? Before diving into that question, first consider your favorite (and least favorite) classes and presentations. Write down some of the characteristics of each.

Characteristics of my favorite courses:	**Characteristics of my least favorite courses:**

I remember two undergraduate courses in particular that were outstanding experiences. What did they have in common? First, neither were my favorite subject matter – one was world history and the other was chemistry. What made the courses fantastic were the teachers. One was a brand new faculty member, and the other was nearing retirement. Their age did not make the difference, but their passion in communicating their subject with somewhat unwilling and unmotivated students did. The history teacher intertwined facts of history with personal stories of people in that time period; the chemistry teacher went beyond dry equations on the board made a point that there was a practical, everyday application of the principle being taught in each class.

When thinking about the worst classes I have attended, memories of sitting for three hours of straight lecture come to my mind, as well as a class in which the instructor never lectured, but left it up to the students to prepare and present a lecture each week. In both of those courses, I left unmotivated and bored. I did the bare minimum to pass. By reviewing my best and worst class experiences, I began to develop a vision for how I wanted my classes to be, and definitely had a clear idea of what I did not want them to be.

Now that you have composed a table of characteristics of the best and worst classes/presentations you have experienced, you have a beginning list to guide you as you develop or try to improve your career course. A main purpose of this book is to help you transform your career development course or presentations into an all-time favorite for you to teach and for your students to take.

BIASES AND ASSUMPTIONS

Whether presenting information in a lecture or presentation, or sitting in a career counseling session, we have to recognize that we operate from biases and assumptions that we make about ourselves, others, and the world around us. Some of these biases and assumptions might be questionable or even in error. That is why it is so important to recognize and then evaluate these beliefs. As a first-time instructor of a graduate career course, two of my closest and dearest held assumptions were that (a) I had to teach them everything that was ever a part of, was currently a part of, and might possibly be a part of career counseling; and (b) that the students would be genuinely excited and motivated to learn all of this incredibly valuable information. It did not take long for those assumptions to be proven impossible and even, to my genuine

surprise, undesirable.

Through the years, I have started to realize the value in keeping things simple and, instead of giving every student every bit of information on every career topic, to have instead the goal of whetting their interest in areas specific to their counseling site and career goals. Based on this value, through the years I have recognized that I have four main assumptions that drive how and why I teach not only my career development courses, but all of my courses and presentations.

Assumption 1

- Career development course and workshop content (information, resources, research, issues) should be current.
  - Prior to teaching the course or workshop, spend an hour scanning the National Career Development Association's (NCDA) web site (www.ncda.org) or looking through the most recent *Career Development Quarterly* issues or *Career Convergence* topics and updating your presentations or lectures with new information.

Assumption 2

- Career course and workshop content should focus on practical tools the student or attendees can use.
  - Even the topic of career development theories should have a practical application. For example, in addition to teaching theory basics, have students determine what questions a counselor should ask if counseling from Parsons' perspective versus Krumboltz' or Holland's. If the workshop includes information on a theory, consider role-playing or using a video vignette to demonstrate how the theory might be used in practice.

Assumption 3

- The career development course or workshop should be personal.
  - Instead of teaching how different groups experience career development, first ask students or participants to reflect how their gender, disability, or cultural group has impacted their own career development. Instead of lecturing how to administer and interpret a career assessment, have students complete several assessments to learn by doing. Have students write a resume/vita, participate in mock interviews, research employers, and create a career management plan.

Assumption 4

- The career course or workshop should be fun.
  - The career course or workshop should be enjoyable for both the instructor and the students. Look for ways to keep the course fresh – whether it's trying a new assignment or technology each time you teach the course, or simply including career icebreakers or career-related cartoons throughout the class.

Assumptions I Have About Teaching Career Development

Take a moment to write down some assumptions that you hold about what a career counseling course or workshop should be like.

MAKING PROFESSIONAL CAREER WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

One can conceptualize a career course as a series of career workshop presentations. If you use the active learning strategies and the format of preparing a lecture as described in chapter two, you could break down one lecture into several mini-presentations. This format also works well when designing a professional career workshop presentation. Chapter Eight describes in detail how you might structure such a presentation from beginning to end.

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

The purpose of this book is to help enhance instructors' pedagogical delivery, based on my 15 years of teaching approximately 600 undergraduate and graduate students and delivering over 40 professional career development workshops at the state and national level. The chapters are designed in a way to share information and to encourage personal reflection on the topics. A key area that completely revitalized my teaching and dramatically improved my course evaluations was the deliberate inclusion of active learning strategies (ALS) into my teaching. Chapter Two provides some research behind the use of ALS, and detailed examples of how I have used ALS in my courses. Chapter Three

provides an overview of how to organize and manage a course. Chapters Four, Five, and Six address teaching career development for the K-12 population, at the undergraduate level and at graduate level, respectively. The integration of technology and teaching has become more prevalent in the past decade. Chapter Seven addresses e-teaching, including checklists, positives and negatives of e-teaching, and challenges with potential solutions to these challenges. Chapter Eight is devoted to making effective professional career development workshops, and Chapter Nine focuses on keeping the course fresh and exciting.

SUMMARY

Career counselors help individuals clarify and achieve their life/career plans. Becoming a career counselor and impacting people's lives in such a powerful, positive way is exciting. The excitement of becoming an instructor and training others to do this is even more so. The purpose of this book is to instruct, excite, and motivate you as you develop or enhance your first or existing career development course or workshop presentation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Reflect on a course that you have taken. What do you remember about the course, with respect to content? How were the key concepts taught? What activities really made the difference in helping you learn the material? Can you think of some activities that might have enhanced your learning?
2. What goals do you have for your students? How does this compare to the guidelines set out by your office, department, college, or university?
3. When thinking about your career course, what assumptions do you have about how the course should be? Describe what you envision happening during a typical class. How are the desks arranged? What are you wearing? How formal is the arrangement? What is going on in the classroom?

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