

Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

DIVISION OF SECONDARY, TECHNICAL AND  
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND  
TRAINING IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

- NEW ROLES AND CHALLENGES FOR GUIDANCE AND  
COUNSELLING

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# **Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the 21st Century:**

## **New Roles and Challenges for Guidance and Counselling**

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# Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the 21st Century: New Roles and Challenges for Guidance and Counselling

## Preface

**T**he rapid technological developments we are witnessing in the early years of the twenty-first century, together with the forces of globalization, are likely to lead to radical changes in the world of work. In fact, the changing nature of work is already perceptible in both urban centres and in rural communities. It follows therefore that human development, of which education is such a vital part, must keep in step with these societal changes if people are to lead productive, peaceful and satisfying lives.

During the past several decades a mismatch has been evident in many countries between the skills imparted by the national education system and those demanded by the workplace. This mismatch has been exacerbated in recent years with the integration of new technologies in almost every sphere of professional activity. Narrowing the gap between education and the world of work is thus a priority for most governments because of the potential economic and social benefits to be derived from increasing the proportion of the population that is engaged in productive livelihoods.

Vocational guidance and counselling is widely accepted as a powerful and effective method of helping to bridge the gap between education and the world of work, as well as between school and society. It is a means of assisting young people to make appropriate and judicious educational choices that will enable them to develop their potential and to have access to work opportunities that are compatible with their interests and abilities. It can also help to instil confidence and positive attitudes, to derive fulfilment from their chosen areas of learning and work and, most importantly, to inculcate an eagerness for lifelong learning.

While guidance and counselling is an easily accessible service in many developed countries, its benefits are yet to be adequately exploited in the developing world. In some countries it may even be considered a luxury that is set aside indefinitely in the face of more vital services that must be provided within diminishing budgets. Yet, we have observed from focus group discussions that UNESCO has held with technical and vocational education and training (TVET) policy-makers and practitioners from developing countries that many of our Member States are convinced of the importance of guidance and counselling. They have expressed their willingness to introduce or better integrate this service in their countries' TVET programmes in order to achieve more effective human resources development.

This publication is an attempt to meet the career and life guidance and counselling needs of some of these developing countries. It was compiled and edited for UNESCO by Dr Bryan Hiebert of the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) and Dr William Borgen of the International Association for Counselling (IAC), both valued non-governmental partners. We hope that this material will be used as a reference resource by all stakeholders of technical and vocational education and training, be they policy-makers, practitioners, employers, providers of guidance and counselling services, teachers, trainers, parents, or learners so that they may be informed and inspired by the variety of ways by which guidance and counselling can contribute to more effective TVET. We also hope that all stakeholders of TVET will be convinced that investment in guidance and counselling can help to optimise the use of their resources and thereby enhance the human resource development capacity of their education systems.

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# Introduction

## Counselling and Guidance: International Perspectives

Hans Hoxte

**I**t is generally agreed that in contemporary society children and young adults are in need of guidance and counselling on a very wide range of issues. Too often, young people find the period of transition from school to work to be a time of crisis. They may perhaps have looked forward to leaving school but frequently find themselves quite unprepared to face the realities of the transition, ignorant of the choice and nature of the occupations available to them and bewildered by the thought of the ordeal that lies ahead of them. In addition, they sometimes find that they have read subjects that are unrelated to the requirements of the occupation they wish to follow. Careful long-term preparation for this challenging phase of their lives could transform adolescence from a time of crisis into a period of planned transition that is fulfilling and exciting. Such a systematic preparation could greatly assist young adults in their task of adapting to a new environment and help to ensure that they find opportunities for personal fulfilment in their future occupations.

Surveys of educational and vocational guidance systems have led to broad agreement on the social and psychological factors that form the basis of this process. It is generally agreed that, to be of maximum value, vocational guidance should be accompanied by counselling which is made available to all pupils throughout their schooling and forms a carefully planned programme of career orientation. In some countries a programme of long-term preparation for career choice is an integral part of the framework of secondary education. Most

career orientation courses present work as an important part of an individual's life. These courses attempt to help pupils make a realistic assessment of their own potential and of future occupational choices both by theoretical study and practical experimentation. The main function of guidance and counselling in career orientation programmes may be considered as forming a bridge between the world of school and the world of work.

In some countries, the terms career guidance and career counselling are still not clearly comprehended. The relationship between advice, guidance and counselling is often fuzzy. Frequently, the system for providing career advice and information is not considered scientific. In many countries there is a need for a major extension and academic upgrading of the vocational guidance advisers' skills in parallel with research in this field.

Systematic guidance and counselling services may well lead to a drastic reduction of the wastage that occurs at many levels of the educational and vocational ladder and thus avert a major expense to the taxpayer. They may also reduce the causes of dissatisfaction and frustration to students and their families. Technological advances and economic conditions may bring about relatively rapid changes in the employment market which in turn will have an important bearing on decisions concerning educational and vocational choices. Thus, guidance and counselling of a scientific and professional character will be more necessary than ever before in schools and technical colleges. The international associations active in this field have a vital role to play in helping developing countries to discover the usefulness and full extent of the services that the counselling and guidance movement can offer to society at large. They must also help these countries to examine the nature of the service and the training of service-providers in order to maximize the benefits of guidance and counselling services.

H.Z. Hoxter



**Note**

Professor Hoxter founded the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) in 1951 and the International Round Table for the Advancement of Counselling (IRTAC) in 1966. IRTAC changed its name to the International Association for Counselling (IAC) in 1997. Professor Hoxter retired as President of IAC in 1998, and held the position of Honorary Life President till his death in November 2002, a few weeks prior to the publication of this monograph.

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# Chapter 1

## Understanding the Context of Technical and Vocational Education and Training

**William Borgen and Bryan Hiebert**

**T**oday's world is one of rapid change in virtually all dimensions of life. The globalization of trade means that decisions in one country may have an impact on employment opportunities in another country where values and priorities are very different. Globalization of the labour market means that workers have greater mobility across borders, yet opportunities are not uniform from one country to another or in different segments of society within a given country. There is a greater need for specialized education and training, but in some countries a tendency to cling to traditional priorities results in a shortage of workers in certain specialized fields. There is a widening gap between the rich and the poor, those who can seize opportunities and those who are marginalized, and those who have received an education and those who have not. The days of job stability (which some would argue never existed) are over for many, and are being replaced by a context where flexibility, adaptability, and transferability of skills are essential (Avis, 1997; King, 1993).

Yet within this context of change some familiar features remain. In most countries, women continue to earn less than men. Equal pay for work of equal value is a commonly expressed goal that is seldom put into practice, even in so-called developed countries (Jackson, 1989). In many countries, prestige and status continue to be attached to university education, and young people (and their parents) seek career paths in the so-called professional occupations, even though in many countries there are few employment opportunities in the profession for which they wish to train.

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is often regarded as inferior, or as a second choice after professional education, regardless of the student's interests (indeed passions) or abilities. Many people therefore dismiss promising and meaningful career paths in areas where employment demand is greater, simply because of the stigma attached to technical and vocational occupations. Education systems continue to be directed primarily towards preparation for university education, even though the majority of students move directly into the labour force (Heinz, Kelle, Witzel & Zinn, 1998; King, 1993; Morris, 1996).

In some countries, there is a clash between the new world priorities and the traditional cultures. People are seen washing in rivers in front of houses with satellite dishes. Countries import workers to fill blue-collar jobs while their own young people seek training in professions in which there are few or no openings. The investment in training often goes unrealized, as young people drop out of training, or having completed it do not enter the occupational field for which they have been trained. In some countries, lip-service is paid to the values of the so-called developed countries, but these values often find little favour with the bulk of the population.

## **Informed transitions**

There are numerous examples suggesting that countries that are developing or redeveloping their industrial and technological capacities need to think carefully before adopting the policies of well-intentioned neighbours. The following are some examples.

- An intergovernmental aid project in Latin America brought canned soft drinks into small towns where there was no clean drinking water. What an order of priorities!
- In another project in Latin America, local farmers ploughed up their fields of maize to grow flowers to sell

to the United States of America in order to meet their cash flow targets. This was successful financially, but maize is a staple food in the area (being used to make tortillas) and now an area once able to produce all the maize it needed grows flowers for export but imports its staple food.

- In a similar paradox, an example was recently cited of women working together in a local craft guild, watching wide-eyed as an ox cart loaded with computers drew up. The computers were to help them to be better entrepreneurs!

Programmes need to be developed that focus clearly on locally and regionally evolving economic, social and cultural needs. A rush to adopt alternative systems often means that local needs, values and ways of doing business are relegated to second place and that informal learning and informal economies that produce transferable skill sets are overlooked.

In addition to avoiding training programmes that may not meet the needs of a region or country, areas that are in the process of creating a training infrastructure may want to consider alternative ways of conceptualizing it. One problem in many areas of the world where TVET has been established is the relatively low status ascribed to it within the context of the broader educational community (King, 1993; Morris, 1996; Wright, 2000). This can lead young people and their parents to question the legitimacy of the education and training offered. This has occurred in the contexts where education is considered as a hierarchical structure, often with universities at the top and TVET institutions nearer the bottom (King, 1993; Morris, 1996; Wright, 2000). Given the need for all types of education and training opportunities now and in the future, it may be more useful to replace the traditional hierarchical structures with one that might be seen as consisting, instead of circles of education and training. This new structure would value each type of education and training for its contribution to the educational and vocational fulfilment of individuals and

to the economic, social and cultural well-being of communities and regions. This paradigm would also need to allow movement across and within circles, and the process of movement would need to be clear and transparent. Given the orientation towards lifelong learning that will be needed by individuals in all educational and training settings, this paradigm may be much more useful in that it attaches value to all occupational roles and recognizes the contribution they make to society at large.

## **Definitions**

Before proceeding, it is important to outline the way in which some key terms are used in this monograph. In many cases, there are no universally accepted definitions. It is thus important for us to define key terms so that readers know the meanings we attach to them.

### ***Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)***

In 1999, at the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education in Seoul and at the 30th session of the General Conference of UNESCO in Paris, it was agreed to adopt the phrase “Technical and Vocational Education and Training” (TVET) to describe the combined process of education and training and recognize the common objective of employment as their immediate goal. The congress emphasized that TVET should be a multi-domain concern, requiring collaborative and integrated approaches. TVET programmes should be designed as comprehensive and inclusive systems, accommodating the needs of all learners and accessible to all. Special efforts were needed to reach marginalized groups and programmes should be designed to facilitate entry into the mainstream. TVET programmes needed to be gender-balanced, attracting men into previously female-dominated occupations and attracting women into previously male-dominated occupations. TVET is an integral component of lifelong learning and as such plays a crucial role

in helping individuals and countries to achieve a culture of peace, environmentally-sound sustainable development, social cohesion and international citizenship (UNESCO, 1999).

### ***Career development***

Career development is the lifelong process of managing learning, work and transitions in order to move towards a personally determined and evolving preferred future. Career development programmes and services support are designed to support and assist people in managing these transitions (CCDF, 2001).

### ***Career information, guidance and counselling services***

Career information, guidance and counselling services are services intended to help individuals, of any age and at any point in their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. It includes a wide range of activities, for example activities in schools to help students clarify career goals and understand the world of work; personal or group-based assistance with decisions concerning initial courses of study, courses of vocational training, further education and training, initial job choice, job change, or work force re-entry; computer-based or on-line services to provide information about jobs and careers or to help individuals make career choices; and services to produce and disseminate information about jobs, courses of study and vocational training. It includes services provided to those who have not yet entered the labour force, services to job-seekers, and services to those who are in employment.

Career information, guidance and counselling services are intended to assist individuals with their career management. They often overlap with other forms of personal services, such as job placement, personal counselling, community-based personal mentoring, welfare advice and educational psychology. Frequently, these other services are delivered by people who also deliver career information,

guidance and counselling, but there are often separate guidance services that do not provide career information, guidance or counselling (OECD, 2001). Perhaps it is time to examine the effectiveness and utility of separated services as compared to a more integrated approach.

### ***Career guidance***

Career guidance refers to assistance given to individuals, or groups of individuals, in addressing problems related to occupational and life choices, offering full opportunities for personal development and work satisfaction. Career guidance is a continuous process, the fundamental principles of which are the same irrespective of the age of the individuals involved, and with due regard for the characteristics of those individuals and their opportunities (IAEVG, 1992).

### ***Career counselling***

Career counselling helps individuals to achieve greater self-awareness, develop a life/work direction, increase their understanding of learning and work opportunities and become more self-directed in managing learning, work and transitions. Career counselling facilitates the acquisition of skills, interests, beliefs, values, work habits and personal qualities enabling each participant to create a satisfying life in constantly changing cultural, social and work environments.

### ***An explanatory note***

Although advice, guidance and counselling each have the ability to help an individual through interaction with a person possessing a specific body of knowledge, they differ in focus and scope. Advice is focused primarily on the problem at hand and is typically generated from a perspective external to the individual. Advice is the prescription of a particular course of action regarding the presenting problem (Cormier & Cormier, 1991). Guidance is much broader in scope, as the information provided focuses on relevant knowledge or options pertaining to the person's concerns or goals. It is, however, the individual who

decides on her/his own course of action (Cormier & Cormier, 1991). Finally, counselling creates a climate where individuals can explore, examine and clarify their own thoughts, feelings and actions to arrive at the answers that are best for them (Corey, 1996; Hoexter, 1999). Counselling promotes an exploration of self, to identify the course of action that best suits the person, and her/ his own values or goals, thereby helping the individual to live in a more personally fulfilling manner (Blocher 1987; Hoexter, 1999).

### **Key issues to address**

Technical and vocational education and training represents a comprehensive and inclusive approach, intended to help people achieve their full educational and vocational potential and in so doing make meaningful contributions to the communities in which they live. In considering the implementation, maintenance or expansion of technical and vocational education opportunities, it is important to consider some fundamental issues and challenges.

- Two prevailing orientations in TVET are a human resource-driven approach and a market-driven approach (Jakupec & McTaggart, 1997; King, 1993; Morris, 1996; Ziderman, 1997). Given the potential advantages and drawbacks of each, how can a balance be achieved between the two within a given country or region? For example, some TVET is geared towards training individuals in skills relevant for a specific job in a particular factory. These skills may not readily generalize to jobs in other factories or other occupations. Even if the skills are generalizable, the individuals involved may not realize it.
- What mechanisms are in place, in TVET and related educational and vocational programmes, for recognizing prior learning and transferable skills in order to optimize flexible and ongoing access to programmes as the needs of the labour market and



individuals evolve and change? How are TVET and related educational and vocational programmes working with employers in recognizing prior learning and transferable skills? In addressing these questions it is important to consider learning arising from the formal and informal economy, as well as from paid and unpaid work. TVET programmes need to be designed to be flexible enough to anticipate and accommodate the impact of ongoing global changes on community and regional labour market needs and demands.

- TVET programmes exist within the context of a range of other educational and training opportunities. In addressing the stigma often attached to TVET (Ecclestone, 1997; King, 1993; Morris, 1996; Wright, 2000), as has already been suggested, it may be useful to consider educational opportunities within a non-hierarchical system, for example using the paradigm of “circles” of training rather than “levels” of training. It would then be easier to consider how TVET programmes could be more effectively linked to community, regional, or country-based training opportunities in order to respond to evolving labour market needs.
- How can companies, corporations and businesses develop into thinking and learning organizations that anticipate the training and educational needs of workers in order to maintain sustainability in the marketplace, and to help individual workers to recognize the generalizability of their skills?
- Everyone is involved in lifelong learning, whether intentionally or unintentionally. How can a guidance and counselling infrastructure be created that can assist individuals in making informed decisions about entering TVET programmes and teach them skills enabling them to make decisions to access further

training as needed or desired? How can these services develop a focus of assisting individuals to consider educational and training opportunities within the context of a broader life-plan? How can these services help individuals to become more self-sustaining in adjusting to changing educational and labour market opportunities?

- What mechanisms are in place, or need to be developed, to help ensure equal opportunity of access to TVET? It is important to address ongoing issues related to increasing gender balance in the workforce (European Training Foundation, 2000c, 2000d, 2001c; Heinz et al., 1998; Jofre, 1998; Thurtle et al., 1998) and to broadening access independent of culture (Avis, 1997; Chinese Education & Society, 1999; European Training Foundation, 2000c, 2000d, 2001c; King, 1993; Torres & Arnott, 1999; Wright, 2000) or socio-economic status (Avis, 1997; European Training Foundation, 2000c, 2000d, 2001c; Heinz et al., 1998; King, 1993; Torres & Arnott, 1999; Wright, 2000)
- TVET contributes to social and cultural changes that need to be considered and anticipated. For example, young people working in foreign countries that are importing workers may contribute to the income of an extended family while at the same time their absence weakens its cohesiveness. What infrastructures and support systems can be created to accommodate these changes?
- Productive nations are those characterized by a flexible and well-qualified labour force, one with a rich and diverse mix of skills that are developed and updated throughout life (Power, 1999), a process for which individuals, organizations and government bodies share responsibility. Infrastructures are needed and

mechanisms are required to help to create a sense of commitment and purposefulness on the part of workers and organizations. This may be most effectively accomplished through the development of guidance and counselling services to facilitate a spirit of openness to change, a commitment to continual personal and occupational development, and a corresponding increase in the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to develop a sense of personal empowerment and be successful within a context of rapid change. For example, some countries are utilizing a process of individualization to help each student find his/her own, tailored way through the educational options. A whole new group of career development staff, known as tutors, are now helping each student to do this (Plant, 2000). The outcomes of processes such as these will help ensure that informed decisions are made regarding appropriate educational and training programmes for each individual, thereby meeting the needs of all learners and helping to reduce the chronic problem of high dropout rates (European Training Foundation, 2000c, 2000d, 2001c; Imel, 1993; Thiel, 1985).

The purpose of this monograph is to outline and discuss issues relevant to TVET at the beginning of the twenty-first century. TVET is most directly concerned with the acquisition of the knowledge and skills required for the world of work, formal and informal, urban and rural (Power, 1999). Each chapter contains a discussion and examples of emerging trends and challenges, and the new perspectives and skills needed to provide quality services in differing cultural and social contexts. The structure of the monograph is as follows:

Chapter 1: “Understanding the Context of Technical and Vocational Education and Training”, provides the background necessary to understand the complexities of the issues addressed in the remainder of the monograph.

- Chapter 2: “Building Community Capacity”, discusses how we can help communities increase their capacity to support meaningful work-roles for people, regardless of the availability of paid employment.
- Chapter 3: “Career Guidance and Counselling for Lifelong Learning in a Global Economy”, discusses the role of guidance and counselling in making life-long learning a reality, dealing with the complexities of newly-emerging market economies, and making sure that both formal and informal economies are taken into account.
- Chapter 4: “Basic Education and TVET”, describes the role of guidance and counselling in promoting the integration of TVET and basic education, helping to make sure that TVET is a viable first option, not just a second or third alternative.
- Chapter 5: “Reaching Marginalized People: Linking Skills Training and the World of Work”, describes how we can more effectively meet the needs of particular groups, such as women, individuals with special needs, out-of-school youth, rural and remote populations, indigenous people and the homeless, and suggests ways of ensuring that policy-makers, government and the private sector recognize that TVET is an investment and not a drain on resources.
- Chapter 6: “Workplace Wellness and Worker Well-being”, discusses factors affecting the health and wellness of people and organizations, looking at factors in the physical environment and also the social and emotional environment in the workplace.

- Chapter 7: Building Positive Work Habits and Attitudes, examines the importance of developing a sense of industry in workers, creating a context that helps people develop a sense of contributing to the organization rather than just pursuing their own personal goals, of being focused, developing personal agency and a sense of personal empowerment, both for themselves and for the organization in which they are working.
- Chapter 8: Where To From Here? Guidance and Counselling Connecting with TVET, concludes with thoughts and points to challenges arising from some of the monograph's recurring themes.

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## Chapter 2

# Building Community Capacity

Diana Aisensen, Lynne Bezanson, Flo Frank  
and Phyllis Reardon\*

### Understanding community capacity

Over the past decade, community capacity-building has become important as both a concept and a field of practice. Everyone is talking about it, many people are doing it and even more are affected by it. In many ways it has become an industry in itself. Yet, surprisingly enough, community capacity-building is not well understood and as a result it has received limited attention within the career development field.

To understand community capacity-building, the terms need to be examined in their broadest context, acknowledging that there is no clear or universally accepted definition for either the context or the terms. "Community" generally refers to a group of people within either a specific geographic area or a particular sphere of interest. "Capacity" within the community context is what it takes to get things done. "Capacity" refers to more than just training and skill development. It includes things such as leadership, operating systems, finances, human resources and all kinds of other resources. The building of community capacity is therefore often complex, under-resourced, and connected to several different aspects of community. To build community capacity requires leadership, time and effort.

Community capacity-building is closely related to community development. Community development is generally agreed to mean the planned evolution of all aspects of community life including social, economic, environmental and cultural development. Community development and community



capacity-building are not the same thing, however, although some would point out that they are so closely intertwined as to be inseparable or that one is a result of, or leads to, the other. However, one important difference is that community development does not have to be - and in many instances is not - driven by community members, but when community development is not undertaken by community members, very little community capacity-building occurs (Rappaport & Seidmann, 1989).

One example occurs when government and industry control the economic and social development of a community. Jobs are created, programmes and services are provided, but there is little input from local residents. While the community's economic wealth may be improved, the same cannot be said of its ability to sustain long-term well-being or prepare for a future that might not include that particular industry. The result is that the community's overall capacity is not built up, although the community appears to be developing.

An example of the reverse, where capacity is built but community development may not occur (at least not immediately), can be found in marginalized communities dependent on outside expertise and assistance. Sometimes communities have been damaged and need to build personal and community wellness from within. The opportunities might be there, but the community is unable to identify or take advantage of them. Leadership is needed and strategic plans and skills must be developed and resources acquired. Capacity needs to be built before community development can take place. In many communities, however, there is a healthy relationship between community development and capacity-building and therefore it is useful and practical to consider them together as complementary processes.

Community economic development (CED) is another critical concept coming within the scope of community capacity-building. It too is participatory and community-based, but has as a focus the connection between economic and social

well-being within a community. CED is sometimes considered as an alternative to, or substitute for, mainstream economic development. One of the key defining differences is that often the businesses or enterprises directly involved are community-owned rather than private. The profits are ploughed back into the business to create additional jobs and/or to provide community benefit. There is always an emphasis on training and employment for local people, giving consideration to those most in need, those least able to find or maintain jobs and/or those who have been displaced from the labour market for one reason or another.

These three concepts and processes-community development, capacity-building and community economic development-are connected and have a great deal to do with sustainability and quality of life, which ultimately are what we are seeking both in communities and as individuals.

While results are not easy to measure, indicators of increased capacity include:

- stronger community relationships; caring families and safer, welcoming communities;
- identification of more community-based opportunities ;
- enhanced respect for limited resources;
- increased interest among young people in becoming future leaders;
- increased awareness of the importance of protecting and improving conditions for vulnerable people, floundering economies and environments.

There is strong compatibility between the processes, values and outcomes of career development and community development. Yet the connections in practice are not obvious. Career development is very much about helping individuals to be self-sustaining, to access learning and work opportunities, to create personally meaningful lives with respect to the work they

do, and to build healthy families and lifestyles that contribute to their communities in constructive ways. Both community development and career development have sustainability and increased quality of life as their primary focus. One of the overriding values of community development is to leave a positive legacy; one of the overriding values of career development practice is to enable individuals to leave a positive legacy.

This chapter provides a context for aligning the practice of career guidance and counselling more closely with community development, community capacity-building, and community economic development. Some examples of early positive responses will be given and suggested future directions will be explored.

### ***The capacity-building environment***

The industrial era is long gone. From the community development perspective, one might assess the industrial era as one which was successful in building cities and economies but much less successful in building sustainable communities. The driver of the industrial era was economic development. Guidance practitioners fuelled the supply side of the industrial era by focusing on matching individual knowledge, skills and abilities to economic opportunity. Single-industry towns with jobs for life were norms for economic growth.

The information and knowledge era is now well established and single-industry towns are a thing of the past. They are being replaced by multifaceted economic and environmental strategies, partnerships and joint ventures, community-based decision-making, locally-owned enterprises and community plans. New ways of working and new models of sustainability are now norms for economic growth. When communities are able to identify and take advantage of opportunities, these strategies often (but not always!) have the potential to build local capacity. But because they involve new ways of working, many individuals, communities and guidance

practitioners do not know how to harness their potential. Some communities do not have sufficient infrastructure or resources for longer-term economic viability and may not have attained the level of community wellness and readiness required to create opportunity. However, many more communities have this capacity than do not.

In many ways, we are all unprepared for what lies ahead. We think that the future is some time from now, but in reality it is already with us, and we are hurrying to adapt tools and techniques to keep up with changes that have already taken place, restructuring organizations and roles to make them reflect the current situation more accurately. Paid work, voluntary work and sustainable livelihoods are being considered in a different way. We are struggling to understand the changes taking place in an environment that is less structured and less familiar.

Some of the shifts occurring include increased appreciation of integrated and holistic approaches to capacity-building. There is a visible frustration with outdated, insular policies and programmes, as well as increasing dissatisfaction with the use of short-term projects as vehicles for long-term social and economic development. Poor attitudes and low expectations are being replaced with more positive approaches to both human resource planning and community development. Unimaginative responses are being challenged and more creative and interesting approaches are being used to increase community involvement and encourage personal life planning. Using knowledge, skills and abilities as the prerequisites for growth is important for economic development, but incomplete and inadequate as a community capacity-building model. The values, interests and beliefs dominantly held in a community are the essential drivers if any sustainable community capacity-building is to occur. What a community values determines what its members will become committed to; beliefs about their capacity will drive their motivation for change and their interests will sustain their motivation.

## **Motivation in community capacity-building**

Much like change in our own individual lives, change at the community level is usually driven by either passion or necessity-an opportunity to enhance quality of life in the community or a crisis which threatens the viability of the community. Examples of opportunity might include: the potential to diversify economic activity in a community; an interest in grassroots initiatives to respond to community talents or interests; opportunities to create needed programmes or facilities for citizens. Examples of crisis might include closure of a primary industry or too many young people leaving a community.

This dichotomy is also applicable to shifts which have recently occurred in career development practice and which appear to be emerging more and more as individuals express their need for more integrated, holistic and balanced approaches to life/work. A recent study (Lowe & Davidman, 2001) conducted by the Canadian Policy Research Network (CPRN) is a case in point. When Canadians were surveyed about what mattered most to them on the job, they identified the following as more important than remuneration or status: respect, interesting work, the chance to participate in decisions, the chance to develop and improve skills, opportunities to collaborate with others, and the ability to manage stress and have life/work balance. Canadians were focused on their need for quality work and the chance to achieve balance and quality in their lives. This was true of workers of all ages.

An issue not directly apparent from the study, but which can be inferred, is the desire to be able to build a quality life in or near one's own community. The demand side of the industrial era presumed that workers would move to areas with high growth opportunities (in other words the cities), often to the detriment of home communities and opportunities which might be developed or created within home communities. The need to move geographically to the growth sectors has been

dramatically changed by technological advances as well as by an increasing sense of communities' willingness to take charge and reinvent their opportunity structures. This is evident in many Canadian provinces and territories. Extraordinary efforts are being made to reinvent community, and some very interesting success stories are beginning to come through which suggest innovative ways to approach career and life planning.

Those who provide help to individuals in this context are obviously driven by values, interests and beliefs as much as by knowledge, skills and abilities. This has been very successfully integrated into individual career and guidance counselling practice. In the context of emerging trends, however, the overall role, relationship and usefulness of career and guidance services (which continue to operate mainly at the level of the individual, and not at the level of the community) need to be examined.

Change is occurring very quickly. New roles have emerged, both at the individual and community levels, many with no titles, and some with few clear ideas about the training required to undertake them (Frank & Smith, 1997). What the new roles have in common is the goal of building capacity both for individuals and within communities. Some of the most familiar occupations in this field are social planner, community development worker, career/employment counsellor, and career and work development practitioner. These roles are increasingly important and in demand. However, one thing is clear: people providing career guidance and counselling services need to address both individual and community needs, and they are almost all in transition.

### **Linking career planning to community capacity-building**

Capacity-building is an ongoing process for individuals and for communities. We call one career planning or personal management, and the other community development or capacity-building. Just as individuals have self-esteem,

confidence and skills, so too do communities.

It is suggested that career and guidance services (and other roles related to helping individuals access education, training and/or work) are now linked to community capacity-building in substantial ways. A community-based labour market is different from the traditional industry-based labour market. Jobs are not always predetermined and occupations are not always clearly defined. Making career connections for individuals is closely tied to community planning and priority setting. The two roles-career guidance and counselling and community planner/developer-need to be more closely connected. What connects them now is the desire for high quality in the world of work, the need for a healthy environment and the shared goal of sustainable economies for individuals and entire communities. As the future continues to unfold, a clear and critical role is emerging for much expanded career development and guidance training services and practices.

### **Early responses linking career development and community capacity-building**

Although there has not yet been an explicit shift in direction and practice, initiatives are under way which provide evidence of new attitudes to career development and guidance and counselling. However, the orientation described above is beginning to take on a much more collective and expanded role. It appears to be a gradual evolution resulting from the need to respond to immediate needs in individuals and communities and also to long-term sustainability issues. The following section highlights several examples of emerging trends in Canada and Argentina. These provide an overview of shifting directions and describe some of the issues which require attention if this emerging shift is to become more integrated into everyday practice.

***Canadian standards and guidelines for career development practitioners***

A Canadian initiative to develop voluntary guidelines and standards for the practice of career development has been under way since 1996 (Hiebert, 2000; Hiebert et al., 1999). A similar development is currently taking place through the IAEVG to develop international standards and guidelines for career development practitioners (Repetto, Malik & Hiebert, 2000). The practice of career development in Canada, as in many other countries, is highly diverse. Career services are delivered in community agencies and in education, mental health and rehabilitation settings, among many others. One of the purposes of the Canadian standards initiative was to recognize and validate the diverse skill sets of people in the field. The guidelines developed were based on what practitioners in the field actually do. Extensive consultations were organized across the country in which groups of practitioners identified the competencies they use and need in order to provide quality services directly to clients. This made it possible to establish a set of “core” competencies required by all who practise career development in any substantial way. Six distinct areas of “specialized” competencies also were identified. This recognized that while all career practitioners require certain basic competencies there is also a range of specializations which are peculiar to specific settings and unique client and community needs.

One of the specializations identified as a result of these consultations was community capacity-building. These competencies emerged strongly (but not uniquely) among practitioners in rural, remote and northern communities where a sense of community, and belonging to a community, are strongly-rooted. Many of these communities have limited wage economies, but a strong and buoyant informal economy which shares the goods and services that help sustain a community. To be relevant, career practitioners in communities such as these need to connect individuals with community resources, but they also need to be catalysts or collaborators in bringing the



community together to build long-term strategies for unemployment reduction and economic growth.

Another group for whom community capacity-building competencies were important were practitioners in government settings whose work was changing from delivering direct service to managing community services contracted to and delivered by third-party providers. Being competent in this community service role requires the ability to work with service-providers in order to maximize limited resources and coordinate client services.

New tools and competencies are needed to work at a collective level. Asset mapping, for example, is essential. This involves mapping the assets of a community (the infrastructure, resources, talents and driving values of the population) to provide a strengths-based approach to facilitating sustainable career development at the community level. Competencies which are becoming necessary for effectiveness include: the ability to conduct an analysis of sectors based on human resources and to work with a community to determine gaps between visions, goals and capacity.

The fact that community capacity-building is a specialization in the Canadian model draws attention to the emerging importance of the catalyst and influencer role. It has traditionally been extremely difficult for career and guidance services to be recognized as essential by policy-makers and community leaders and to be given support. As career and guidance practitioners assume a more visible and activist role at the community level, this lack of recognition may be better addressed. Communities may begin to take career/life planning for their members more seriously and see the connection between this type of personal planning and the sustainability and improved quality of life of a community.

## ***Regional economic development and schools: A Newfoundland initiative***

In 1992 the province of Newfoundland and Labrador was dealt a devastating blow when a moratorium was placed on cod-fishing. Cod-fishing defined life for the people of this province. It was the reason people first came from the old world: to fish on a seasonal basis before returning to Europe. Not only was their source of employment taken from them but a way of life that had taken form over nearly 500 years was lost.

Across the province the atmosphere in schools was dismal. It seemed that young people would need to leave the province to have a sustainable future. The provincial government developed a plan that would help rural and remote areas of the province to deal with this crisis. A Strategic Economic Plan was implemented which created 20 economic development zones, each one responsible for devising a strategic plan which would outline potential growth sectors in the economy. The Regional Economic Development and School Initiative (REDAS) was the result of collaboration between a career guidance specialist and an economist who were both determined to find a means of making young people aware of work opportunities in their own regions or communities.

The challenges of bringing more practical career education into the schools were numerous and are faced by many countries. The most significant among them were that:

- The only way to reach all students was through classroom teachers, and if career education was not mandated as part of the regular curriculum (which it was not), it would not be delivered by teachers.
- Teachers specialize in a particular subject and most have limited expertise in, or exposure to, economic development and labour market analysis.

The REDAS initiative has several imaginative and innovative components:

- Teachers who are accepted under the initiative work together with economic and community developers to create a learning module which will fit into their regular curriculum. The module must relate to awareness of work opportunities within the regional economy.
- Teacher substitutes are provided so that teachers in the programme are released from their normal duties for a period of time to develop the learning module.
- The learning modules are shared with other regions in the province so that over time students are exposed to opportunities in other parts of the province as well as in their own region.
- An emphasis on entrepreneurial activity and creating one's own work is fostered. This is allowing students to see their opportunities through a "new economic lens".

Growth sector learning modules have been developed to encourage the use of cutting-edge technology within what is left of the fishing industry: e-commerce in developing business web pages, manufacturing and robotics, aquaculture and cultural heritage. At the time of writing, the initiative has just entered its implementation phase following an 18-month pilot period. Evaluation results are very promising, with more motivated and energized teachers a side benefit. The creators of this initiative offer the following perspective:

"Career development, individual capacity-building, an understanding of community and community development, and an understanding of economic development are necessary pieces of information and knowledge if we are to

build and sustain communities, especially in rural and remote areas of our province and country and indeed anywhere in the world.”

This suggests the need for a much broader scope of practice as well as a much more diverse background of knowledge than is traditionally given in the preparation of career and guidance professionals. It also suggests that guidance professionals in the school system should play an enhanced leadership role in bringing relevant career education into the mandatory curriculum and having schools embrace career education and make it part of the educational mainstream.

### ***Career Circuit and the Circuit Coach training initiative***

Career Circuit is a national Canadian initiative geared to strengthening partnership and capacity within the youth career services sector. It integrates career and community development and offers an example of effective community-based guidance in action. Not-for-profit community-based agencies provide a large proportion of career development and employment services for out-of-school youth and young adults. Traditionally, however, the non-profit sector has been fragmented and under-resourced and has had limited access to structures, support and professional training. Career Circuit provides a strategic response to each identified need.

After four years of intensive development, pilot testing and refinement, the following resources are now available free of charge to youth-serving agencies across Canada:

- **Network.** A virtual community of approximately 5,000 community-based youth-serving member agencies, connected to each other and to a wealth of current, regionally tailored, and sector-specific information via [www.thecircuit.org](http://www.thecircuit.org).
- **Resources.** A searchable database of thousands of targeted resources ([www.vrcdatabase.com](http://www.vrcdatabase.com)) and the

Virtual Resource Centre CD-ROM offer access to hundreds of resources (PDF format) organized by theme, media type and youth questions answered.

- **Training.** Circuit Coach is a fully self-instructional training programme to provide front-line workers with a solid grounding in career development and prepare them to use a wide range of innovative interventions to address specific youth issues. Circuit Coach is supported by a network of trainers across Canada who provide coaching and learning support at the community (non-institutional) level. The training is beginning to be recognized by colleges and university-level institutions for credit purposes, which represents another innovation and a break from tradition.
- **Assistance.** A key to the ongoing success of Career Circuit has been the engagement of Field Liaison Officers (FLOs) in each province/territory. These officers were recruited mainly for their connections to the community, experience of organizational change and connections to business and employers, and secondarily for their career development expertise. Half of the FLOs have career development qualifications, but half do not. Their expertise includes some career development, but they also have strong backgrounds in fields such as: international development, human resource development, mediation and technology. All FLOs are strong in community-development experience. Their unique role has been to promote the initiative at the grass-root level, to work with community stakeholders to plan tailored implementation, and to act as a liaison between regional interests and national coordination. They also act as resource people for practitioners completing Circuit Coach training. In the process, they themselves are becoming more specialized in career development.

In order to mobilize a community of career service providers, it has been critical to have a person devoted to building community partnerships and increasing capacity. The diverse multidisciplinary backgrounds of the FLOs have been crucial to their capacity to have impact at the community level.

This initiative raises the issue of qualifications and professionalism in the career development field. Traditionally, career and guidance counselling is a post-graduate qualification rooted in counselling, education and psychology and not grounded in human resource development or community and business development. The success of the Circuit Coach initiative invites reflection on our assumptions as to what is needed to be truly effective with youth and young adult populations.

### ***Argentina***

The southern belt of Greater Buenos Aires is very densely populated. Originally, it had an industrial profile, but in the last decade there has been an abrupt decrease in permanent jobs caused by the sudden closure of many companies. Unemployment has resulted in social vulnerability and social exclusion for many, especially women and young people. The problem is how these conditions narrow expectations for the future and impact on personal identities.

In recent years, there has been an agreement between the Psychology Faculty of Buenos Aires University and a local county (partido de Avellaneda, provincia de Buenos Aires) for the development of a programme for the community. The general approach involves collaboration between the university and local town councils, on the basis of organizational agreements, to provide support for youth. The objectives of the initiative are: to work closely with educational centres, offering technical assistance for the development of psycho-social programmes for young people, children and families; and provide training for teacher and guidance assistants. Within the programme, intervention is focused on vocational and occupational guidance

in order to help young people develop personal projects for their life, studies and work. Activities are carried out in town councils, local social clubs, and schools (Aisenso, 1996; Aisenso & Monedero, 2000).

Efforts are being made to develop practical community-based interventions and assess their effects. For example, a Reflection Workshop on Vocational Guidance has been created which enables young people, under the guidance of a psychologist or teacher, to reflect and talk with their peers about their vocational and transitional situation, what they hope to do in the future, their expectations, and their personal interests. Possible jobs and activities, and roles to which they aspire are carefully reviewed. The purpose is to encourage self-confidence, promote trust in their capabilities, identify and develop personal strengths and resources, and widen their scope of possible alternatives. Innovative projects and strategies are encouraged. New tools are being introduced to help them face transitional conditions in restrictive, marginalizing contexts such as unemployment or unstable jobs. Strategies for finding a job, formal and informal ways of job-seeking, résumé and cover-letter writing, and the first job interview are covered.

Another example is the Educative and Work Opportunities Fair-Exhibition held every year for seven years and attended by approximately 15,000 youth, faculty and parents annually. Local public and private educational institutions as well as local public companies, unions and businesses are represented. This has been a forum enabling young people to discover different work and educational opportunities, gain information, widen their choices, and strengthen their sense of direction.

Programmes are delivered to elementary and high school counsellors, the staff of kindergartens in undeveloped neighbourhoods, and parents in the poorest neighbourhoods. Technical assistance is also given to directors and school counsellors. Discussion of social differences and cultural diversity is a focus of the teacher/counsellor programme as are tools to prevent dropping out of school, vulnerability, and social exclusion. Distinctions are made between factors of

identification developed at home and at school so that teachers and counsellors can better target their action. Theoretical models from vocational psychology, community psychology, cognitive social psychology, educational psychology, the sociology of education, the sociology of work, and economics are widely applied. Approaches cannot be clinical only. The real problems being faced by people in society make it necessary to review the theoretical models on which the practices and purposes of guidance are based (Guichard & Huteau, 2001). It is also necessary to adopt a code of ethics (IAEVG/AIOSP, 1996) for the training of guidance counsellors.

Problems dealt with in this initiative include:

- Personal attitudes. In countries that suffer from widespread poverty and marginalization, such conditions begin to be taken for granted, thus creating psychological barriers to transformations that might improve personal and social conditions.
- Analysing life, study, and job histories encourages reflection on the different processes and transitions that determine personal histories and particular paths.
- It is important to recognize that specific physical, psychosocial and socio-dynamic conditions are needed for proper development, particularly at transitional stages. Individuals need to recognize that social support is necessary, and local organizations must be ready to effect the internal changes that enable them to offer such support.
- While some social processes create vulnerability, others protect and facilitate resilience (Rutter,1993), which enhances ability to face adversity. This resilience exists in people, institutions and communities, and is the capacity that community-based programming is intended to develop.
- Empowerment development (Rappaport & Seidmann, 1989) is a process that enables individuals,



organizations and communities to acquire the capabilities to cope with their conditions, become resilient and move forward. It is closely linked to self-esteem and self-confidence. Personal attitudes that tend to transform personal and contextual conditions are to be encouraged in individual, family, group and community projects.

To date, results indicate that the model increases community capabilities to develop life projects and plan careers. It also enhances individuals' capacity to support personal projects that are deemed important, even though they might not provide a paid job. Activities in this field are proving to be very useful and suggest a possible model for guidance practice in other countries and communities.

### **Implications and suggested directions for the future**

The examples cited are demonstrations that the field of career development is expanding its scope of practice. It may be that there is a sense in which traditional career development thinking and training have become too narrow to be effective when faced with the challenges of shifting labour markets, struggling communities, and the sheer numbers of people of all ages who need some assistance in planning and managing their career futures and social and economic inequities. If so, what might be areas for further analysis and possible action pertaining to the practice of career guidance and counselling?

As the scope of practice expands, the need for innovative career development preparation and professional training which embraces community and economic development competencies becomes critical. Programmes which continue to be relatively divorced from these broader disciplines may not be providing the best training for career guidance and counselling practitioners. More importantly, traditional training programmes may result in fewer and fewer students and workers being able to access career and guidance services if these services continue to be provided primarily in an individual counselling context which

does not embrace collective delivery modes and other types of community expertise.

In most countries there is a strong trend towards outcome-based programmes and services. Proof of impact and return on investment are increasingly required when seeking public funds and public support. Traditionally, the career guidance and career development field has had a struggle to demonstrate its worth in terms which policy-makers can understand and endorse. Career development that is more connected with community development, as in the projects in Newfoundland and Argentina, may be a surer way of demonstrating impact and results. Working at a more collective level provides opportunities to gather concrete cost/benefit and outcome data that might better meet the needs of both policy and practice.

Community-based guidance and career services bring into the delivery system professionally-trained career specialists and a diverse range of community stakeholders from elders to parents to employers to community workers to youth advocates. This huge diversity contributes to individual career development and community development sustainability. The field will be challenged to examine how to protect the professional role appropriately and ethically while at the same time remaining open to debating important questions regarding the “right” mix for effectiveness.

Definition of the relevance of career and guidance services in non-wage economies, as well as in developing countries which are struggling with poverty, literacy, social exclusion and inequity, is a major task. What models can the career guidance and counselling field provide that are truly relevant and useful? Delivered how and by whom and with what qualifications? What programmes, tools or successes might be relevant to and transferable between developed, middle and developing economies? The risk of career development and guidance being seen to be, or indeed having become, elitist, equipped to meet the needs of the more advantaged but out of its depth with anyone else, merits serious and rigorous consideration. This would involve developing a much deeper

understanding of and empirical evidence for the integration of knowledge, skills and abilities with values, interests and beliefs as models for individual and community change and growth.

The point was made earlier that individuals and communities change in response to either a crisis or an opportunity. The same is perhaps true for professions. The wider community capacity-building agenda may present the career development and guidance field with both a crisis in relevance and a true opportunity for growth.

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## Chapter 3

# Career Guidance and Counselling for Lifelong Learning in a Global Economy

Raoul Van Esbroeck

**E**conomic globalization has led to a process of creation and migration of new products and service organizations which knows no boundaries, often bringing in its wake new organizational cultures and managerial styles that differ markedly from local traditions. Frequently the indigenous culture moulds the new organization to bring it closer to local practices, creating in the process a business culture that differs from that of the parent organization. Sometimes the local organizational cultures can find themselves changing in order to accommodate the business practices of their new players.

Regardless of the direction these adaptations take, economic globalization often results in significant changes to local business practices, with ripple effects in society at large. For instance, the increased participation of women in the labour market can effect fundamental changes in gender interactions and traditional gender roles. In some cultures, the fact that women can earn money, have more economic independence than previously, and perhaps even hold more stable jobs than men will change the relationship between the sexes. This may lead to tensions and confrontations, especially in the initial stages of the adaptation process.

Economic globalization is often also accompanied by considerable emigration and immigration of workers at regional and international levels. This often leads to new minority cultures appearing alongside a majority culture. In some cases the minority cultures belong to the dominant economic power, in other cases the minority culture is itself dominant. In either case, there is a potential for further confrontations, tensions, and conflicts. Though openness to and recognition and respect

for different cultures are growing, many individuals find dealing with new cultures, with all their differences, quite a challenge. Interactions with new cultures often trigger a process of cultural identity development: some people will identify with the new culture and reject their own origins, while others will identify more strongly with their origins and respond negatively to the other culture.

These different types of cultural identity development will influence the career behaviour of individuals (Leong & Serafica, 2001). Indeed, the conflict of cultures triggered by economic development, changed work environments, and human and organizational immigration produces a need to re-examine interests, values and expectations, which although individually defined are strongly influenced by cultural environments. The values and expectations of individuals having been reviewed, new values, new interests and new expectations will develop. Although these developments may occur first in the work environment, they will quickly begin to influence non-work-related life-roles, such as family roles and gender interactions.

In order to prepare individuals for this more diverse society, many efforts are being made to expose adolescents and young adults to new cultures. Modern audio-visual technologies provide increased awareness of different cultures with different value systems. In some countries, programmes organizing study or work abroad provide first-hand experience of other cultures. At the moment such opportunities are available to a very small proportion of the world's population. But there is increasing awareness among policy-makers, and those population groups that will provide the leaders of the future, that economic globalization is a fast-growing process, which will result in large parts of the world population coming into contact with new cultures in the coming years and being strongly influenced by those encounters.

### **Lifelong learning**

Globalization is taking place in a new economic and social context (Grantham, 2000; Mayor, 1999). New technologies

are being introduced, changing traditional production processes and labour relations. New communication and transport systems offer the possibility of locating production processes in different environments and spreading new skills and knowledge all over the world. These changes frequently lead to the disappearance of traditional economic patterns and social relations. Stability and predictability are decreasing and to some extent even disappearing.

Many facing these changes as they build their lives may have acquired skills and knowledge that are no longer adequate to deal with the new situations in which they find themselves. Adults may also need to update their skills and knowledge. One persistent problem, however, is to make people aware of this situation and of the need for change. In traditional environments, there may not be many precedents for a need for change or incentives to engage in the process of acquiring new skills and knowledge. Young people may be more open to the idea of change, because they have more opportunity, through schooling and other communication systems, to become aware of the changes and of the need to adapt.

The problem for young people remains the unpredictability of the type of adjustment required to address the changes. Short-and medium-term changes may be somewhat predictable. Schools may even be helping prepare young people for such changes. But long-term changes are more unpredictable, except for the fact that they will occur. Schools, and even institutions of higher education, are unable to give adolescents skills and knowledge that they will need for the rest of their lives. The only solution is to help make young people aware that life will be full of changes and that all of them will require preparation. Preparing to take these changes in one's stride is only possible through lifelong learning.

The changing nature of society today will require a constant updating of skills and knowledge through a flexible process of lifelong learning. The learning system must mirror the flexibility of economic and societal developments. Flexible life-long learning will take place not only within the education system, but also elsewhere. Learning on the job and in other

forms of work (including non-remunerated work activities), should count towards qualifications and be recognized as part of the lifelong learning process.

Every individual will need not just to realize the necessity of lifelong learning, but also to have access to it. Local, national and international authorities must motivate all citizens to participate in the process of lifelong learning and make it available to all, without exception. Lifelong learning must become a fundamental right for all, in exactly the same way as basic education is a fundamental right for all.

Special attention needs to be given to those population groups that are most at risk. In particular, those whose experience of basic education was not successful should receive special attention in order to facilitate their engagement with the lifelong learning process. The increasing need for updating and improvement of skills and knowledge in a global economy means that no country or region can afford to ignore the special attention those most at risk required without jeopardizing its overall level of development. All will need a lifelong learning perspective in order to deal with the changes they will face successfully. Lifelong learning thus needs to be accessible to all, regardless of individual circumstances.

### **Lifelong career guidance for lifelong learning**

Making people aware of the necessity of lifelong learning and making a flexible lifelong learning system available are important. However, lifelong career guidance and counselling will be essential in order to make the system work. Without lifelong career counselling and guidance, there is a risk that many individuals will respond in a reactive rather than a proactive way to the changes they face. They will focus on survival and overcoming narrowly-targeted problems, rather than on development and planning for the future. The main focus of a lifelong learning process is not to overcome particular problems, but to help individuals develop in a manner that allows them to set developmental tracks that can respond to changes and new developments.



The concept of lifelong development is the key to a life-long learning system. The lifelong development of an individual is now generally recognized (Levinson, 1978, 1996; Super, Savickas & Super, 1996). In industrialized countries, this development is frequently divided into stages, which are each characterized by specific interests, values, activities and behaviours. In adulthood these stages are often related to work roles, and in the context of a growing global economy, work roles cannot be separated from learning roles.

Adult development can be characterized by periods of transition preceded by an unstable growth period and followed by a period of stability, the length of both of which will differ from one country to another. The content of, and issues to be addressed in, these periods of instability and stability will also differ from one culture to another. For example, in some cultures children move very quickly from childhood into early adulthood and their career entry stage starts earlier in their chronological development than in other cultures. Similarly, in some regions elderly people continue to live an active life and to hold leading positions in their work place and their communities. For these people, it makes little sense to talk about retirement in the usual sense of the word.

This more fluid view of the lifelong developmental process will have an important impact on career development. Career development cannot be predicted in general. It will become a more individual process, influenced by environmental developments, but forged to a large extent by individuals who have been empowered with the necessary skills and knowledge. This is exactly the role that career guidance and counselling must play. Their main role is not just to help people to acquire the skills and knowledge required to deal with change, but first to help them to discover what skills and knowledge are needed and then to help them determine how, where and when they can be acquired and also how to implement them in a proactive and well-planned manner.

At each stage of their development, individuals may need support. Some may need assistance to cope with the challenges of that particular stage. Others may need support to overcome

the barriers preventing them from bringing one developmental stage to a successful conclusion and entering the next. Some will need extensive individual career guidance or counselling, which in some situations will need to go beyond personal support to include intervention with the family, extended family, workplace or the broader community. Some periods, such as childhood and adolescence, are recognized world-wide as stages which are crucial to later career development and during which most people might benefit from career guidance (Isaacson & Brown, 2000). For children and adolescents in the education system, career development support systems are available in most countries, though considerable discrepancies exist in the type of services available. However, for those not in the formal education system, and for adults in a work force fraught with rapid and often unpredictable change, assistance is often sparse. Although more facilities to give support to these groups are being developed, they are in general less widely available than support systems for young people still in the education system.

When career guidance and counselling services are available for adults, they are often geared to particular groups. For example, services for people with disabilities, socio-economically deprived groups, minority groups, and particular age groups are far more readily available than services for middle class groups belonging to a majority culture. This reflects beyond any doubt a rightful priority, because the former have problems that are more serious and more obvious, and they often do not possess the necessary resources and skills to surmount barriers on their own. Also, members of the kind of group cited above often have less access to information on changes and are less able to understand and predict future developments. In a context of global economic development, these groups may need even more support than is available at the moment.

This situation becomes problematic when one considers that resources for career guidance and counselling are often limited and sometimes even declining. Pressure on resources may tempt decision-makers to restrict support for some special populations and discontinue the already meagre services provided for the rest of the population. In a predictable and

stable society this could be more or less accepted. Indeed, in modern society there often were people with enough insight into societal trends to develop an informal support system that was adequate to help people cope with career concerns. However, in post-modern society this is no longer the case. New global developments are leading to rapid and unexpected changes which are unpredictable even for those who formerly had the experience, knowledge and insight to cope adequately. Informal systems that worked in the past may no longer be adequate, in fact, they may even be counterproductive, as informal career support and guidance is often based on experience acquired in an outdated environment. The new situation may not be understood, still less accepted, by those who have traditionally held influential positions in communities.

In order to facilitate the development of all citizens, lifelong learning must be available to all, and in particular to those most at risk. Lifelong career guidance and counselling must also be available to all, to those in the mainstream culture as well as to those who belong to special groups. To limit access to, and the availability of, career counselling and guidance would be disastrous for large segments of society. More than ever before, large groups of citizens, and not just limited target populations, will need support throughout their career development. Countries that make high-quality career guidance and counselling services available to all, and have clear structures for receiving feedback from those services, are the only ones likely to be able to deal successfully with a rapidly changing future.

### **Lifelong career guidance and counselling: A segmented support system**

In many countries, career guidance and counselling support is frequently organized for specific groups (the socio-economically deprived, the unemployed, minorities), related to specific life roles (worker, learner, leisured), or for specific purposes (e.g., personal problems, career choice, studies). The usefulness of this approach is debatable because people tend not to divide their problems into categories that match this way of

organizing services. For example, membership of a group is often temporary. People who are unemployed may find work and, when they do, discover that the agency providing guidance and counselling while they were unemployed can no longer offer support to help them integrate into their new work environment, even though they are still experiencing many of the same problems. Similarly, a person may present a career choice problem, but upon examination it becomes clear that the problem is connected to personality issues. The agency that helps with career choice problems may not have the expertise or the mandate to help this person with their personality problem. In both examples, a more integrated type of service would be useful.

Currently, career guidance and counselling is more readily available at specific times of transition (for example the end of the schooling period) or in crisis situations (for example during a long period of unemployment). But a host of other situations also require services. In many countries a homemaker wishing to re-enter the labour market would have difficulty accessing services to assist with that transition. Similarly, people with a normal career path who have no serious problem but who wish to rethink their career/life project may have difficulty accessing services to assist them in that situation. The French system of the bilan de compétences (skills review) remains an exception, although even in its country of origin fewer people have recourse to it than one would expect.

The segregation of guidance and counselling services can be traced back to several historical factors. Typically, services were developed in response to needs that arose at a given moment for specific groups and related to specific economic or general social situations. These services were created and financed by government departments, trade unions, private enterprise or voluntary welfare organizations. Their mission was narrowly defined, often in relation to the presenting problem and the organization that created it. For example, departments of employment saw it as their role to help the unemployed to find an appropriate job. Education ministries considered it their responsibility to give educational and vocational guidance and counselling to those in the school system, and sometimes even

helping them with the transition to the labour market. Public health departments considered personal guidance and counselling to be their responsibility. This led to a situation where all these services typically existed independently from each other, each dealing with just one part of the larger problem the individual was facing.

One major problem with segregated approaches to service delivery is thus that agencies do not deal with the client's problem as a whole. Client problems tend to be complex these days, and to receive assistance clients may need to commute between services, with little assurance that they will receive appropriate support. Some might argue that lifelong career guidance and counselling can be obtained through a wide range of specialized services, each of them targeting specific population groups. If they are taken together, they can cover any problem that any individual can face at any stage. However, even in such a system, the problems people face during their development will not always match the services available in every situation and development stage. This often makes it impossible for people to receive the services they need.

Lifelong learning is one of the areas that may require a single support system that can deal with a complex mix of influences rather than a highly segregated system. This is precisely why it is an essential focus for those providing career development services. An adult worker realizing that it may be necessary to re-enter a learning situation will be facing a complex process before a decision can be made. This person may need support with self-assessment or with the exploration of educational options and labour market requirements. He or she may need help in understanding how to cope with the different life roles that will be created by the transition or how to deal with the financial aspects of the various options being considered. The kind of support needed may require the intervention of a whole series of specialists, which, in a fragmented career guidance and counselling system, is not likely to be found in one service. There is a need for a new approach to provide clients with the services they require.

## **A holistic guidance and counselling system for lifelong learning**

A holistic career guidance and counselling model (Van Esbroeck, 1997) is needed to satisfy the need for lifelong guidance. This model would put the person, rather than the presenting problem, at the centre of the support provided. The problem would be seen as one aspect of the person, in conjunction with other aspects and the environments in which the person is operating. Rather than limiting career guidance and counselling to narrow interventions such as career choice or job placement, a holistic career guidance and counselling approach is open to other fields, such as personal guidance and counselling (for personal, health, and social issues) and educational guidance and counselling (for learner support and educational choice). All service providers in the support system should be aware of the possible connections between career issues and other aspects of the person or the environment that may require input from other fields of guidance and counselling.

Within this holistic service model, three levels of services might be offered. The first level would be offered by people who have close, regular contact with the person seeking assistance, for example teachers in a school system or supervisors in a work environment. These persons are easily accessible and often hold positions of confidence. They should have the insight to detect possible problems and their role would consist of clarifying the nature of the problem and referring to appropriate services. Their intervention should be limited to information-giving, advising, teaching, and referral, although in some cases advocacy and follow-up could be included. People working at this level should be able to deal with problems requiring personal, career, and educational guidance, and must approach the person seeking assistance in a holistic manner, taking into account the totality of the person and his or her situation.

The second level of service would be a structured guidance and counselling system, operating within, or closely related to, the organization or environment to which the person seeking assistance belongs. The service providers at this level

would be considered as internal specialists who may be, to some extent, involved in other activities within the organization. This level of support would still be easily accessible by those seeking assistance. The service providers at this level may specialize in a specific field of counselling or guidance, but they should have an open mind to, and understanding of, other fields of guidance and counselling pertinent to presenting problems that frequently occur. The key concerns at this level of service would be: prevention and developmental programmes, diagnosis, and individual or group guidance or counselling to address the concerns of those seeking assistance.

The third level of service would involve highly specialized service providers who would most often have no direct contact with the person seeking assistance but work in specialized services independent of the environment of the person seeking assistance, for example a person specializing in working with schoolchildren who is totally independent of the schooling system. Referrals to this level would be made by those operating at the first or second level of service. The key components of service at this level would involve a differentiated diagnosis followed by counselling and/or therapeutic interventions. Support to other guidance service providers would also be included in this level of service. Service providers at this level could limit their activity to a narrow field, addressing only those aspects of the total situation that were connected to, or affected, the problem they are trying to address.

A holistic approach to guidance and counselling services has the potential to resolve many of the problems associated with the fragmented approach. However, it only addresses part of the structural problems. For example, a service working according to the holistic model could still labour under restrictions imposed by a funding authority.

### **A one-stop-shop for lifelong career guidance and counselling**

One question remaining is how to avoid fragmenting lifelong guidance and counselling services. One possibility could be

to create “one-stop-shops” for career guidance and counselling services. Watts, Guichard, Plant and Rodriguez (1994) refer in their survey report to what they call “joint bases” as a system of cross-fertilization and integration “where different guidance professionals can work together” (p. 77). One-stop services could be defined, on this basis, as services offering career guidance and counselling support with a holistic approach throughout the entire life span.

To ensure maximum usefulness, a general framework for the development of such services would need to take several guiding principles into account.

- 1 The creation of career guidance and counselling centres could be a community service, adopting a holistic approach and open to all. These services could be set up in two ways. New services could be developed if no other services already exist. Alternatively, existing services could be encouraged to amalgamate into a one-stop system or, as an intermediate step, to develop networks of related personal and educational guidance services. The goal of this operation would be the pooling of expertise and resources.
- 2 These community services could be non-profit agencies, subsidized by public authorities at the national, regional and/or local level.
- 3 The development of “one-stop-shop” services would require cooperation between several public authorities, such as ministries/departments of education, employment, welfare and health, as well as cooperation between national and other levels of government. The services would work for all public departments, including educational institutions, at all levels.



- 4 These services would be able to contract specific support activities out to the private sector, at competitive rates. This could include the development of guidance programmes for employees of private sector organizations, or support for employees in their individual career management.
  
- 5 All stakeholders (employers, employees, the unemployed, public authorities, and the community in general) should be involved in the creation and management of these services.
  
- 6 Recognizing that a good deal of support is sought and found through informal channels, the one-stop centres should connect with local associations, volunteer groups and traditional extended family structures, and help them to become key agents in developing and implementing comprehensive career guidance services. Guidance and counselling services should be linked to these familiar settings, which could make it easier to seek assistance and improve access for disadvantaged groups.

One difficulty in developing comprehensive one-stop services would be the effectiveness of communication between existing services and the measures required to motivate them to work together in a new framework. Funding authorities could also be a major obstacle if they saw themselves as having exclusive control over the mission and the day-to-day process of service delivery. For the system to work well, agencies and funding authorities would need to be able to see themselves as partners in a larger consortium that represents the entire community, working together to address the needs of the people they serve more successfully.

## Conclusions

Economic globalization is having a major impact, changing work environments, undermining certainties, and

creating a more culturally diverse work world that makes flexibility and openness a condition of success. To respond appropriately to this transition, large groups of the population will need to receive preparation different from that currently on offer. A process of developing awareness and motivating people to prepare for these changes may be needed. A system of re-schooling and continuing education, as part of a process of lifelong learning, is the only possible answer to this new situation. To support and steer the lifelong learning process, lifelong career guidance and counselling will be needed. Present support systems do not meet these needs because they are too fragmented, too narrowly focused on certain specific problems, and in general too problem-oriented. A new career guidance approach, based on a holistic model and a “one-stop-shop” delivery system, could be an effective way of dealing with the needs of the community.

This approach, however, will require a fundamental revision of the present system. The authorities in charge of organizing and financing career guidance and counselling services will need to revise their strategic thinking. The existence of a traditional approach, and of the system that supports it, will be a major barrier to the introduction of a new system. National, regional and local authorities may need incentives and support from international organizations in order to revise their traditional approaches. The role of international organizations such as UNESCO, ILO and the World Bank could be decisive in stimulating these new developments. They should, however, always bear in mind that their role should remain complementary and supportive, and that they should work with local infrastructures and respect existing national educational and guidance and counselling systems in order to produce an implementation plan that makes sense and is workable.

How important their role could be, but also how difficult it is for it to reach a successful conclusion, is illustrated by what has already been achieved by the European Commission (see Hodgson, 2000). In 1992 the European Commission began to create transnational programmes to stimulate and finance the development of a number of training activities. The resources

allotted to these programmes were considerable. For example, the first Leonardo da Vinci programme, which ran from 1995 to 1999, was allocated 620 million euro of available funding, and is funding some 750 transnational projects relating to lifelong learning. The European Year of Lifelong Learning in 1996 was one of the more visible actions taken to encourage understanding and recognition of the importance of lifelong learning. Though it is difficult to assess the precise impact of these programmes—and in fact little effort has been made to do so—it seems that the idea of lifelong learning has been accepted by European public opinion and its importance recognized. In almost all Member States of the European Union, national models and policies for lifelong learning have been developed. Obviously there is still a substantial degree of national diversity. Some of the models were strongly market-driven (as in the United Kingdom) while others continued to adopt a social partnership approach (as in Germany). All these efforts, however, were concentrated on three main areas: initial vocational training, continuing vocational training, and lifelong learning.

Career guidance and counselling was only a peripheral concern in most of these European Union programmes. However, some projects relating to the provision of information were carried out under the Leonardo programme. One such project concerned the European network of National Resource Centres for Vocational Guidance (NRCVG). This network aims to create a channel for information and advice on education within each of the participating countries (which include European Union Member States and also States which have applied for membership) and on possibilities for study abroad. These centres play a leading role in the development of educational guidance, particularly in the countries of Eastern Europe. Other national initiatives, such as the Liaison Offices (Grafia Diasindesis) in Greece, which were intended to strengthen national guidance provision, also received European Union support.

There was little mention of guidance and counselling in the EU's Council Decision of 26 April 1999 (1999/382/EC) concerning the second phase of the Leonardo programme. However, this is changing. The importance of guidance and counselling was recognized in October 2000 in the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning

(European Commission, 2000). One of the five key messages of the Memorandum was entitled Rethinking guidance and counselling. The fundamental ideas behind the key message in this section of the memorandum are inspired by:

- a holistic guidance and counselling model, suggesting that guidance services should abandon the distinction between educational, vocational and personal guidance and counselling, and move to a “holistic” style of service provision; and
- a lifelong guidance and counselling model, reflected in the idea that guidance and counselling must be continuously accessible to accompany individuals on their journey through life.

The concept of a “one-stop-shop” approach is supported in the recommended model, which involves locally accessible and firmly linked networks of services and the pooling of expertise. The message on guidance and counselling contained in the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning is being followed up by making resources available in 2001 to set up experimental local guidance and counselling networks that would adopt a holistic, one-stop approach. This project should be implemented from 2002 onwards.

Similar examples of good practice in relation to lifelong learning and lifelong guidance and counselling are certainly to be found in other regions. Reference could be made, for example, to the National Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction and Credit (PONSI), a project in the United States on the crediting of non-traditional learning and SkillNet.ca in Canada, which serves as a one-stop-shopping site for jobs and career information. The main characteristic of all these projects is that they involve many actors at local, national and international level who come from a variety of economic and social backgrounds

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## Chapter 4

# Basic Education and TVET

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### Taking one step back

**T**his chapter examines the relationship between basic education and TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) and suggests strategies to help increase the synergy between the two, especially at global level. Indeed, it is our view that both modalities must ultimately fuse to create an entirely new and more satisfying educational construct. The ensuing synergy would lead to a more broadly defined form of education more able to fulfil its new and elevated global mandate, namely to train future generations to be as self-determining and self-actualizing as it is possible for human beings to be. However, before outlining measures to be adopted it would be in order to describe the context to which they would apply, taking one step back to try to see the whole and not just the parts.

We shall begin with a brief review of what the world appears to be demanding from its school-leavers and how this relates to the essential problem with basic education as it currently stands. We shall then present a framework for a type of basic education whose core goal would be to prepare students for an ongoing process of lifelong learning and the application of that learning with the assistance of TVET and guidance counselling.

### To begin at the beginning

Basic education which teaches literacy and numeracy and encourages cognitive, affective and social development and

maturation at primary and secondary school levels is a pedagogic experience shared in one form or another by the majority of human beings. No matter what other educational experiences may follow, the experience of basic education is generally formative and lasting. It is thus at this point, regardless of whether the student undergoing basic education is 5 or 50, that educators have the greatest power to effect powerful and positive, indeed life-altering change. Yet even a cursory examination reveals that all is not well in basic education, given the demands and exigencies of the new economic world order. This holds equally true for the communities of the first, second, third and fourth worlds.

Life now beats time with an irrepressible cadence. Instantaneous communication is available to almost anyone, anywhere, and at any hour. Electronic capital flows have created borderless economies. The corporate multi-national is slowly eclipsing the nation state. Thus, to say that we live in an era of unprecedented change is wholly inadequate. It is as if almost every cultural, societal and technological node within the concourse of human experience has been ignited, and each blaze is simultaneously illuminating and electrifying the entire world. What is truly overwhelming is that this spiralling trajectory of change keeps escalating at an ever accelerating pace. Humanity as a whole is thus enveloped, mesmerized and galvanized. We gaze in wonder and awe at the sheer magnitude of this audacious expression of human ingenuity and endeavour (Wacker & Taylor, 1993).

There are those today who believe that these profound and pervasive changes are related and can ultimately be understood in context. Castells (1996), for example, characterizes this complex whole as the singular manifestation of "informational capitalism" (p. 18). This emergent paradigm derives its *raison d'être* from "a specific form of social organization in which information generation, processing, and transmission (have) become the fundamental sources of productivity and power" (Castells, 1996, p. 21). In turn, the structure and logic of informational capitalism is being defined and driven by the ubiquitous nature and diffusional capacity of the network. This is all made possible by an extraordinary

confluence and interfacing of several major technological innovations best represented by the omnipresent and ubiquitous World Wide Web.

An information-based society, as opposed to one based on material physicality, calls for a radically new and divergent world view. The mechanistic, causal model of life and the universe that derives from Newtonian science and Cartesian philosophy, and that has informed our epistemologies and the very structures of our social and economic institutions, is no longer relevant. This new world perspective derives from research in several fields, including game theory, chaos theory and the work of Arno Penzias, the 1978 Nobel laureate in physics, "who first theorized that computing had met communicating to form connectivity" (Wacker & Taylor, 1997, p. 115). The inherent potential for dynamic variability that connectivity entails is such that it supersedes our bedrock model of causality.

In other words, our ability to think rationally and linearly, which has served us well for the past 500 years and provided a practical framework within which we have been able to make sense of ourselves and our surroundings, is now being eclipsed by a new perceptual approach that consciously embraces the use of irrational means to achieve concrete ends. Such is the basis of game theory. "Reason [has traditionally taught] that to achieve an end we have to proceed inductively: If I do a, then b, I will eventually arrive at z. The new logic teaches that it is only by proceeding deductively - by working backward from the outcome - that (one) can manage the storm of variables that will assault any ... strategy" (Wacker & Taylor, 1997, p. 16, 10).

Paradoxically, "technology is helping to dismantle the very vision of the world that in the past it fostered" (Castells, 1996, p. 23). Yet, at the same time, it is essentially an amplifier and extender of the human mind, which "for the first time in history is a direct productive force, not just a decisive element of the production system" (Castells, 1996, p. 32). In the words of a senior strategic planner for the 3M Corporation: "We are trying to sell more and more intellect and less and less



materials” (Peters, 1994, p. 10). Hock (1999) considers this “the age of mindcrafting since information is nothing but the raw material” (p. 262, our italics). “In this sense, the network enterprise makes material the culture of the informational /global economy: it transforms signals into commodities by processing knowledge (and imagination)” (Castells, 1996, p. 172). Indeed, this raw mental material may be compared with other practically inexhaustible resources such as the - still largely untapped-energy of the sun.

“Information can be utilized by everyone without loss to anyone. As far as we know, the supply of information is infinite; therefore, it does not obey any of our concepts or laws of scarcity. It obeys only concepts and principles of infinite abundance, infinite utilization, infinite recombination.” (Hock, 1999, p.199) In other words, “to the extent that we increase the value of the mental content of the composition of goods and services, we can reduce the value of the physical content” (Hock, 1999, p. 200). In turn, this may not only provide a replacement for our enormously wasteful use of matter but also foster a system where all people may come to live and to work in dignity.

The intrinsic nature of this nascent age of informational capitalism, and the open-ended field of connectivity that its network imperative engenders, encourages and facilitates the fullest possible expression of entrepreneurship. This latter is largely dependent on heightened creativity and innovation, the primary building blocks of mentation and information, which, in turn, are the raw material of the new economy. As Einstein put it - Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world (Viereck, 1929). We must begin to think holistically about this newly enfranchised human faculty if we are to develop a much needed new educational model and curriculum designed to inculcate and cultivate it with the same determination and commitment as are now applied to the teaching of literacy and numeracy.

## More than ABC

If imagination, creativity and innovation are indeed the new coin of the realm, is it any wonder that all our multifarious systems of education, from primary school through technical school to university and beyond, are being exhorted to produce graduates with a mastery of these important skills? However, few of our hard-pressed education systems or the intrepid teachers and administrators who manage them have proved equal to this task.

It may therefore come as a surprise to some, indeed many, that an instructive model for change may be found in a small, relatively remote rural community in a developing African nation. The author of this article had the good fortune, while doing his doctoral fieldwork and providing technical support to a local cooperative, to spend a few years in the early 1990s living in Tabaka in western Kenya, close to the shores of Lake Victoria. Tabaka is the epicentre of a vital soapstone-carving cottage industry. Its artisans, members of the Gusii ethnic group, have understood and responded to the world at large in a highly innovative fashion. In the process, and despite profound socio-economic and socio-cultural tensions and contradictions that have arisen because of acculturation, they have created an industry and a product predicated on visual cognition, language, and expression. In turn, this has now ensured gainful employment for several generations. The key to this success is to be found in the visually oriented bimodal education system that animates and underpins this highly successful community of learning (Esbin, 1998). Their “home-grown” approach is dependent in equal measure on formal Western-based schooling and informal indigenous training. The first arms students with the requisite literacy and numeracy skills to navigate today’s world. The second endows these same students with the requisite artisanal and entrepreneurial know-how to support themselves.

What may be deduced from the experience of the Tabaka artisans? The answer has broad relevance for educational practitioners and curriculum designers, as will become clear if

we see the Gusii bimodal education system as being embedded in several larger, enveloping educational constructs that include first Kenya, then the other developing nations, and then, even more generally, the industrial nations. The image is akin to that of Russian dolls stacked one inside the other. Bearing this image in mind, we shall briefly discuss each of these enveloping constructs in relation to common concerns.

If we examine the Kenyan educational experience and its correlation to employment, we find the Gusii community of Tabaka is above the national average on several counts. At present, for example, out of Kenya's total population of 29 million "some four million high school and college graduates can't find work" (The Ottawa Citizen, January 6, 1998, p. A6). This is particularly significant when one considers that half of the population is under the age of 25 years. This means that if 14% of the total population is unemployed, the proportion goes up to 27% for those under 25. Thus, although the educational enrolment of the total eligible population in Kenya is high, the results of such education provided are dismal.

Somjee's (1996) ethnography of Kenyan education points out that while visual arts and material culture played an important educational and socializing role in traditional East African agricultural societies, and while they still do in contemporary pastoralist societies, neither modality is thought to be an essential element in contemporary African education. Interestingly, Gusii society has had both pastoralist, and more recently, agricultural experience. It was also the last society in the region to be conquered by the British, and possible the one that put up the most resistance. While the Gusii suffer from the same disadvantages as Kenya's other 48 ethnic groups, their historic socio-cultural responses to adversity and change have proven to be salutary, enabling its artisan community of soapstone carvers to maintain important traditional visual media of instruction within their bimodal education system. This is a crucial point, because the success of their community-cum-industry can be directly related to this bimodality. In comparison, "during the last 30 years one national art and craft syllabus has been justified as an instrument that would end 'tribalism' and create employment

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opportunities equally for all the ethnic groups of Kenya. However, these did not happen ... There has been no evidence to show that the learning of art and craft has led to children becoming self-employed after leaving primary school” (Somjee, 1996, p.4).

We do not wish to suggest that visual arts training as practised in Tabaka is a panacea for Kenya’s education and employment crisis, only that it works very well for Tabaka. However, a growing body of research acknowledges the fundamental relationship between the visual arts and an expanded concept of intelligence and learning that goes beyond the mere development of literacy and numeracy skills (Campbell & Townsend, 1994). The power of this relationship is clearly revealed in the author’s study of the Gusii experience in Tabaka (Esbin, 1998). Ironically, the Kenyan government remains unmoved by the fact that a dynamic educational experiment has been unfolding on its own territory for the better part of this century, and is today debating “whether art education [can even be] viewed as ‘serious education’ at all” (Somjee, 1996, p.6).

Kenya’s massive demographic and employment problems are shared by many other developing nations. Indeed, the statistics are overwhelming in their bleak implications, with more than 100 million children, at least 60 million of them girls, with no access to primary schooling and with more than 900 million adults, two-thirds of them illiterate women. In addition, 100 million more children, and possibly as many adults, failed to complete basic education (Bission, 1995, p. 21). Moreover, at least 100 million new children enter the education system each year, thus repeating and extending many of these basic problems (Ordonez, 1995). In *The Progress of Nations*, a report published in 1995 by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), Ordonez writes as follows:

The traditional response-expanding existing education systems-fails to recognize that these groups are precisely those who find such existing education systems unsuitable for their needs, their circumstances, their aspirations, and their difficulties. The problem of reaching the unreached

will therefore not be solved by more of the same... In countries where the unreached are a majority, principally in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, conventional education systems are often not only unaffordable and irrelevant but also alienating to many of those they are intended to serve... Where the great majority of children do enter school, the central problem is the poor quality and low perceived relevance of the education on offer - and the high dropout rates that are the result. And when so many of those who do complete school cannot find jobs, millions of parents and pupils are voting with their feet. Even for those who are in school, we need to look closely at doing the right things rather than just doing things right. We must face anew the problem of education systems that turn out graduates who cannot find jobs, students who do not wish to return to their communities, and young people who are ill equipped to cope with either the difficulties or opportunities they will face... In recent decades, there has been progress in the skills of imparting literacy and numeracy, but there has been comparatively little progress in imparting life skills, social skills, and value skills. (Ordenez, 1995, p. 19)

In essence, it seems clear that the approaches of yesteryear, predicated on a nineteenth century industrial model that lauded standardization and uniformity and underscored by Cartesian philosophy that lauded linear binary thinking and specialization above all else, will simply no longer work today. It is actually quite simple. An education system needs to be relevant to the needs and contexts of its learners, and the system's structure needs accordingly to be flexible and tailored. By extension, the community must itself become a central partner in creating the new system.

One of the few hopeful examples in UNICEF's otherwise overwhelmingly bleak report already anticipates this crucial need in its examination of the replacement of traditional primary schools by "village educational centres-part day-care centre, part primary school, part adult learning centre-where skilled or literate adults do much of the teaching, where timetables bow to the needs of the agricultural seasons, and where the community is involved both in deciding on learning

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needs and in meeting them” (Ordonez, 1995, p. 19). Consequently, UNICEF emphasizes that fundamental reform will only come about if the community itself is involved. Interestingly, these centres appear to parallel the organic, intuitive growth of Tabaka’s bimodal education system. Returning ownership of education to the community will lead naturally to a re-examination of its content and purpose, and of its relationship to employment, to increased productivity, to local opportunity and need, and to the development of life skills. It will also mean that education systems are likely to support rather than undermine family responsibility for children.

The Gusii experience also proves instructive in that its cottage industry is part of an international trading network of similar indigenous communities producing their own artefacts for the Western market. In each of the developing countries that UNICEF examined, local versions of Tabaka may be found. However, as in Kenya, few of these systems have been studied in any formal manner. This is a curious and unfortunate oversight, given that Vygotskian and Neo-Vygotskian theories of the social basis for cognition and learning, which have gained great currency in many educational circles, would clearly support the concept of community-based education being tailored to the local needs of its members. I would suggest that these factors provide fertile ground for further examination, and that the overall constellation of these communities would benefit from such serious study.

When considering the final construct within which the Gusii community-cum-industry can be seen to be embedded, our analysis becomes somewhat elliptical and paradoxical. It would appear that the problems undermining educational practice in the developing world affect industrial nations as well. For example, the UNICEF report laments the lack of progress in developing skills that go beyond classical literacy and numeracy. Compare this with the following commentary by the Ontario Council of the Arts: *“The ‘3Rs’ - basic literacy and numeracy skills-while unquestionably important, are not enough. Creativity, adaptability, self-discipline, cultural literacy, tolerance, conflict-resolution, are a few of the ‘new basics’ needed to succeed in our highly complex world marketplace and*

*society.*” (Campbell & Townsend, 1994, p. 6) In a similar vein, the United States Secretary of Education has stated: “*We need to reinvent the public schools because our current system is an anachronism. And all this needs to happen in every community.*” (Newsweek, 2 December 1991, p. 52). He was referring to education in his own country, but he could very well have been speaking of the world as a whole.

Gardner (1993) has “identified at least seven basic intelligences located in different areas of the brain. These intelligences include: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily kinaesthetic (i.e., the use of the body to solve problems or make things), interpersonal and intrapersonal.” (Campbell & Townsend, 1994, p. 6) Members of the Tabaka community-cum-industry, trained bimodally as they are, utilize each of these intelligences in their daily practice in both individual and group contexts.

Five years ago, the member countries of the Council of Europe held a conference in Scotland during which they affirmed that “the creative development of young people is a top priority” (Campbell, 1997, p. 2). This tacit recognition reflects the growing concern about the correlation between education and employment that is central to every community and nation. The refrain is, once again, “basic literacy and math skills are not enough. To function in a world where the amount of information doubles in months and people will change jobs many times during their working years, students need a broader set of skills.” (Campbell & Townsend, 1994, p. 10) Thus, for example, “in its Employability Skills Profile, the Conference Board of Canada identified the most desirable employment skills in the Canadian workforce. They included the ability to communicate, think, learn for life, work well with others, adapt and be creative.” The Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) in 1990 and 1991 found that “arts education activity assists with the development of such high-level skills as sustaining complexity and ambiguity, problem solving, communication skills, self-discipline, and teamwork” (Campbell & Townsend, 1994, p. 9). Once again, these are highly interesting parallels with Tabaka.

It would seem that the very skills that the Gusii have developed and mastered in their never-ending struggle to survive and flourish, and that have given rise to their cottage industry, are those now in demand everywhere. In this context, the words of Zebedio Omwega Ong’esa, an 83 year-old carver whose life reflects all the vicissitudes of the Gusii experience, carry additional weight: “Before, there was no schooling for carving with our grandparents. I used to go to the ebitware (informal, traditional work group) and try to imitate what adults were carving and in time went on improving.” I personally believe that the carvings produced by the artisans of Tabaka are a touchstone to profound realizations about the human condition. Their work constitutes a visual language that speaks eloquently of the power of imagination and creativity through education to transcend and transform even the most destructive of experiences.

### **Where to from here? The new basics**

Working on the principle that phenomenological research always yields tangible benefits, a review of web sites on vocational training and guidance counselling revealed the existence of over 30,000 such sites. To give just one example, [www.campusmatters.com](http://www.campusmatters.com) is devoted to everything a student living in India could possibly wish to know about TVET. Valiant and productive efforts are clearly being made to address the challenges of finding one’s vocation in an ever more complex and competitive world. Interestingly, many of these initiatives appear to originate in the private sector, which seems to have begun to do some of the things that government bodies are still at the stage of thinking about. The cautionary subtext here is that the private sector may ultimately supersede existing educational institutions if they do not respond in a timely and proactive manner. Simply put, tradition-bound institutions with unwieldy structures will not be able to withstand such a powerful current. Ultimately life will out, and as nature abhors a vacuum new, more responsive forms will most assuredly emerge.

It is therefore essential that basic education should reconsider its focus. While it is crucial to teach literacy and



numeracy, and certain cognitive, affective and social skills, and while it is equally important to ensure students are provided with essential information on a wide range of subjects, this older approach needs to be supplemented, if not overtaken by a more vital and responsive one. What is called for is a new programme of basic education. Only when this is in place will TVET begin to find its true role and value at the start of the formative education process.

Students would then be taught how to think in context, in addition to being taught what to think about topics. In other words, emphasis should be placed from the start on helping them to understand the interrelatedness of life and all the myriad things within it. This new basic education would offer a curricular focus on whole systems and how they function in ever-broader contexts. By extension, students could be taught to begin to view their own individual lives, from beginning to end, as coming within this holistic framework. This would transform their sense of self and how the self relates to and has an affinity with the greater whole. It would also help to cultivate a healthy respect, indeed reverence, for both social and environmental health and well-being. It would help students to grasp the sense of the eighteenth-century poet Thomas Traherne's observation "When one picks a flower, one cannot but trouble a star" (Ridler, 1966).

From beginning to end, one's life is nothing if it is not a complete and self-contained temporal system of ontological continuity in the face and within the flow of constant, irreversible change and transformation. Being taught to take the long view can only be an asset in the emerging global economy, where nothing is certain but that incessant and unparalleled changes will move increasingly in the direction of synthesis and synergy. This is undoubtedly what UNESCO had in mind at the Seoul Congress of 1999 when it saw TVET as having a central position in the future, given its essential capacity to help individuals prepare themselves and develop the capacity for meaningful employment and a fulfilling life.

By extension, such sensitization to holism would begin to provide students with the enhanced perceptual foundation

necessary for another essential lesson that the new educational basics must include. This could be called the lesson of applied imagination, a theme we examine more fully in a soon-to-be-published book entitled *Making Fire: Towards A Unified Theory of the Applied Imagination*. In it we explain how the dual phenomena of holistic thinking and applied imagination must ultimately be seen as constituent elements of a broader domain of knowledge that has not yet been fully grasped but which the new basic education must encompass and impart. Accordingly, the central preoccupation, and the end goal, of what we have entitled the Transformatic Domain™ is purposeful transformation through the agencies of human imagination and creative expression. As such, it is primarily concerned with those processes through which something imagined can be made manifest.

A review of related literature reveals that at present efforts to develop the imagination and encourage creative expression form at best an educational hotchpotch. There is as yet no overarching collective institutional acknowledgement that our goal is for all students to master the basic skills required in this domain. Only arts education (through the fostering of creative self-expression in a variety of media) lays any authoritative claim to the development of certain intrinsic cognitive and affective elements associated with this nascent domain. There are two grave problems with this. First, in many places arts education itself is at best considered a marginal activity and therefore is generally inadequately supported, if at all. Second, the development and mastery of holism and applied imagination, which is the purpose of this emerging domain, is simply too important to be left solely to arts education, which has its own quite specific goals and conventions. (It is certainly not the intention of the author of this article, an avid visual arts student who has become a committed teacher-to decry the value of arts education-the purposeful inculcation of which must continue unabated.) It is clear that until this emergent domain is given its own place, and the same importance attached to it as to literacy and numeracy, the new basic education will never materialize as it should and must. Such a development, given its nature and scope, would of course require a multidisciplinary effort of considerable proportions.

However, this would simply reflect the dynamism of the overarching socio-economic trend towards convergence, synthesis and holism that has been described in this chapter.

There are several ways in which enhancing people's imagination and ability to think in context and with a view to transformation could contribute to the usefulness of TVET and guidance counselling in the context of basic education. Imagine, for example, the possible benefits of a training programme for waste engineers that would help foster their active visualization and awareness of the wider environment within which they are providing their services, be it the overall community or the overall ecosystem. Such lateral thinking has already transformed some waste collection centres into highly profitable and environmentally-friendly energy providers. This capacity for active holistic cognition and visualization can be similarly applied to practically any field of human endeavour. Interestingly, there is a growing and vital literature on sports psychology that expressly uses such techniques to enhance both individual and team performance.

Guidance counsellors, with the proper training, can play a profound and enduring role in encouraging young people to follow their hearts and to pursue their dreams. This kind of motivation and momentum would help both educators and students to see their shared learning environment in a wholly new light. School systems would become increasingly sensitized to the student as a whole person—a unique seed with significant inherent potentialities that can bear fruit throughout life—just as the whole person-cum-student would become equally-sensitized to the potentialities inherent within such a system. This kind of system could be thought of as a greenhouse where life in all its variety is encouraged to blossom and mature fully. Guidance counsellors could be seen as master gardeners who are concerned with the cultivation, growth and grounding of the seedling through many stages—first in the nursery, then in the greenhouse and finally in the great garden outside. More prosaically, the guidance counsellor would help basic education students to harness the transformative power of imagination and contextual thinking through the agency of TVET. As they implement and further such a holistic and systemic approach to life and livelihood students' connections with their teachers,

families and communities will be vitally enhanced and strengthened.

Equipped with these two fundamental and foundational constructs-(a) knowing one's place systemically as a miniature, ever-evolving eco-system within the greater scheme of life, and (b) understanding how to apply one's innate capacity to imagine and give form to one's imaginings-students may come to understand how best to envision their future and eventually develop a plan for self-directed growth and development consciously and conscientiously. In such a scheme, guidance counsellors would automatically be trained and sensitized to support students in a way that is simply not possible today.

In such a system, inspiration, for example, would become an integral element of the basic educational experience. There is incalculable benefit to be obtained from identifying and sharing with students inspirational stories about people just like themselves, who started from the same relative position, marshalled their resources, did what they could and achieved extraordinary results. The story of Helen Keller, for instance, acted as such a stimulus for the author of this article. Her courageous and brilliant example embodies a wonderful Koranic verse which reads "I was a hidden treasure longing to be known". This epitomizes the human condition and it is time to make it an explicit and central part of our basic education.

Such a grounding would prepare students for an ongoing process of incremental self-directed learning and discovery guided by sustained professional and vocational counselling. In essence, students would be taught to develop their own blueprint for living and for livelihood, the image of the blueprint being not just a literary device but a practical template and reference. A blueprint is needed when one sets about building a house, for example. However, a great deal of knowledge and skill is required to actually build even the most rudimentary dwelling. How much more will be required to erect the edifice of one's life and being? Students equipped with a blueprint of this kind which they themselves have defined could then be guided by educators to obtain the specific knowledge and associated skills required to give form to, and so actualize, their

respective blueprints. This integrated and systemic approach would invariably give students the confidence to blaze new trails as entrepreneurs and more generally to approach and appreciate their livelihoods, whatever those might be, in an altogether more positive manner. Essentially, the new basics, with TVET at their core, would help each student to form the most apt vision of the kind of person they wish to be. This would be the crowning achievement and the most intimate transformative expression of applied imagination and creativity. Such an educational approach would most assuredly be valid for anyone at any level, including in particular the world's marginalized and dispossessed.

### **Concluding thoughts: A brighter tomorrow conceived today**

A day will come when all humanity will understand that imagination is the greatest force in the universe and that its application requires the deepest wisdom. Such is the power and majesty of learning that one's dreams can be made to come true, with effort and persistence. This, in essence, is the impetus behind everything, both small and great, that is conceived and brought to fruition by human endeavour.

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## Chapter 5

# Reaching Marginalized People: Linking Skills Training and the World of Work

John Grierson, James Schnurr,  
and Craig Young

### Skills, training, enterprise, and livelihoods

**T**his chapter explores ways in which enterprise approaches to skills training can help marginalized people enter the world of work and why education and training systems should, and how they can, adopt enterprise approaches to skills training for employment, self-employment and enterprise. Emphasis will be placed on enterprise approaches to skills training. This emphasis on enterprise approaches is based on the relative success of such approaches in facilitating the socio-economic inclusion of marginalized people.

Education, training, employment, enterprise and work are wide-ranging, multifaceted concepts. This chapter uses a number of terms to subsume their diversity and complexity. The term livelihood is used to cover most aspects of the world of work, including employment, self-employment and enterprise. It is a useful conceptualization for two reasons: first, it recognizes and reflects the importance of the economic, social and cultural aspects of the world of work, and second, it is an inherently positive and people-centred concept, taking as its starting point people's strengths (assets) rather than their needs. A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required to earn one's living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and

assets both now and in the future, without undermining the natural resource base. (see <http://www.livelihoods.org/info/guidance-sheets.html>)

The term skills training is used as a generic term subsuming formal and informal forms of vocational and technical education and training. Skills are understood to comprise the capabilities needed to successfully enter the work of work, which means to secure a livelihood. Enterprise approaches to skills training for livelihoods are characteristically:

- 1 demand-driven, and hence responsive to the local socio-economic context;
- 2 strongly influenced in their characteristics and practices by the needs and perceptions of both those undergoing training (users) and those benefiting from, and often supporting, training (especially enterprises); and
- 3 underpinned by the capacity of enterprise to facilitate social inclusion and economic empowerment.

The focus of this chapter is on the marginalized. Definitions of the marginalized vary according to place, culture and circumstances, but they are generally understood to include women, youth (particularly out-of-school youth), those with special needs, indigenous peoples, rural and remote populations, and the homeless.

This chapter touches upon the contribution made by technology and open learning in meeting the needs of marginalized people. Technology is used in two senses. First, to refer to the array of production and management skills needed to secure a livelihood in local markets, and second to refer to the rapidly expanding range of information technologies being used to reach and serve marginalized peoples.

Many of the initiatives that reflect these characteristics are new and small-scale such as the United Kingdom's Citischool, in Milton Keynes, "a school without walls ... [where] instead of



moving from class to class, students move from workplace to workplace ... mainly in the city centre” (Citischool, 2002). The origins of the practices used by Citischool, and many other programmes, can usually be traced to programmes established long ago in developing countries, such as the Calcutta Youth Self-Employment Centre (CYSEC) (Grierson, 1997, pp. 21-26) and the vocational training schools of Bangladesh’s Underprivileged Children’s Education Programme (UCEP) (Swiss Development Cooperation, 2001, p. 37). Collectively this growing and global (if still modest) array of initiatives is demonstrating that enterprise-led approaches to skills training can help marginalized people improve their livelihoods in a wide variety of circumstances.

Training works better in a hospitable environment. While training can do little to create livelihood opportunities, it can be a key factor in empowering people to take advantage of available opportunities. Economic growth, the principal means of generating new economic opportunities, is, unfortunately, a blunt instrument, one that does not necessarily generate much-needed opportunities for marginalized people. For this reason there is a growing recognition of the need for pro-poor growth, meaning economic growth that responds directly to the needs and concerns of marginalized peoples. Skills training for the marginalized is most effective when set within the context of pro-poor growth, which provides a “hospitable environment” for it.

### **Context, challenge and opportunity**

Governments and development practitioners are becoming more aware that standard approaches to skills training require fundamental rethinking. This is especially true for programmes serving marginalized people, who in developing countries increasingly seek their livelihoods in the informal sector. Increasing access to skills training alone is not sufficient to overcome the barriers confronting marginalized people, nor is adding on an array of often costly support services following training. Many reform initiatives are limited to one or both of these mechanisms. They are not enough.

Often well-intentioned efforts at guidance and counselling are constrained by the lack of marketable skills among those being counselled, itself a reflection of the dearth of appropriate training opportunities. Guidance and counselling work best and are most efficient when they can focus on two things: first, matching learners with training opportunities that reflect current local market demand and second, facilitating the final steps in the transition from learning to work. At present the low priority given to skills training for the marginalized means that there is often both a shortage of appropriate learning opportunities and a high level of demand for skills that cannot be met. Guidance and counselling can do little to compensate for either of these shortfalls, but can do much to make the process more equitable and more efficient when adequate training opportunities exist that correspond to current market needs.

Systemic change is needed to enable the marginalized to access, absorb and apply livelihood skills (Grierson, 2000, pp. 25-34). These systemic changes need to address what UNESCO has identified as a training crisis (UNESCO, 1996). Grierson describes this as a crisis in three areas: a crisis of cost, a crisis of relevance, and a crisis of equity. Broadly speaking, most conventional forms of skills training cost too much, fail to impart the skills in demand in local markets, and do little to serve those most in need of skills, the socially and economically marginalized (Grierson, 2000, pp. 26-27).

Addressing these crises is a daunting and growing challenge. It is generally accepted that a further one billion children and adults will require education and training in the years to come. This one billion will need to be prepared for a world of work that is becoming increasingly complex and differentiated, yet more integrated and inter-linked. The opportunities emerging are both inequitably distributed and complicated by the challenges of keeping pace with frequent, externally driven and often radical change. The technologies of work and communications, the work environment, learning methodologies and work itself are all in a state of semi-permanent flux. These changes influence all aspects of learning. The world of knowledge and skills transfer is struggling to keep

pace with the need to customize skills training to respond to the needs of communities and individuals, and to do so while keeping costs at an acceptable level. The scale and pace of change place a particularly onerous burden on developing countries and countries in transition, where resources are limited and mechanisms for managing market-driven changes are weak.

There are no models or templates that can be broadly applied; the diversity of needs is simply too broad. However, there are approaches that have worked in specific circumstances, and valuable lessons can be learned from these successes that could be relevant to best practice, scaling-up and replication. The potential and the cost-effectiveness of enterprise approaches emerge as clear lessons to be learned, as do the benefits of open, people-centred approaches, the need to seek out and respond to the views of local markets and communities, and the power and effectiveness of information and communication technologies.

***The forces of change are forging a new culture of open learning***

Demand-driven learning requires more openness and flexibility in training and education. In essence, this creates a new and more challenging learning environment. A fluid combination of economic, technological and social forces is driving this paradigm shift in the culture of education. This new educational culture must respond to demands for increased accessibility from non-traditional clients, many of whom will have had little or no exposure to formal education and training systems. The outcomes they are seeking will not be achieved effectively by continued use of the traditional supply-driven approaches to skills training that are still adopted in most places. Skills training policy must adopt the new, open learning practices in order to offer a flexible array of livelihood pathways that will enable marginalized people to learn as they work and work as they learn.

The conditions in which marginalized learners pursue their livelihoods, with their fixed and inflexible time frames and schedules, often compel them to forego learning

opportunities. Independent, self-driven learning takes the marginalized person's motivations and constraints into account, and abandons traditional fixed time frames in deference to the learner's needs. Traditional skills training providers often find such adjustments difficult to make.

### ***The role of technology***

Readily available technologies can support the shift to new, open, interactive learning environments that respond to the learners' needs and wishes. Technologies are readily available that will help marginalized learners to overcome distance and access barriers. These technologies are rapidly becoming cheaper, easier to use, and more effective. The challenge for skills trainers is to design programmes that utilize existing communication and learning technology tools while working with technology providers to improve and expand the range of tools available.

### **Policies to create opportunity**

There is a need to strengthen institutional capacity for delivering training to the poor and marginalized and to encourage institutions to deliver these services. In general, training systems have not developed the attitudes, knowledge and skills needed to help marginalized people take advantage of useful training. This is in part due to the absence of policies to stimulate and guide the integration of enterprise education and livelihoods skills development into the formal education and training curriculum, establish linkages among non-formal and formal training programmes, and build links between training systems and the private sector. Nonetheless, despite a generally accepted view that "in the context of mass poverty in most developing countries, the critical role of training in furnishing badly needed skills ... seems particularly obvious and straightforward" (Bennell, 2000, p. 3), the need to address this problem is all but universal. The United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report (UNDP, 2001) reflects the broad reality that training for the marginalized is neither a common policy objective nor generally on offer as a basic social service. Training for the poor and marginalized as a means of poverty reduction is not generally seen as a priority.

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## Emerging education and vocational training policy

In many developing countries, education and skills development policies are being reformed to bring enterprise education and skills training into the formal curriculum of schools and training institutions. The implementation of these reforms is constrained by two key factors: first, reconciling welfare and poverty alleviation with economic development objectives, and second, the lack of institutional capacity to put social programmes into practice.

The formal education system is typically seen as the entry point to most forms of education and training. There is a need to look outside the formal system in order to create alternative pathways, particularly for marginalized peoples, and to introduce policies to ensure that they reach their destinations. In recent decades, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donors, and private sector institutions have begun to respond to the growing demand for livelihood and enterprise training. Many of their responses offer innovative non-formal training programmes for new labour market entrants which provide much of the training in the workplace. These programmes tend to be disconnected from formal social policy and do not make a clear distinction between poverty alleviation and broader economic development goals. Many are “one-off” pilot programmes, offering instructive examples which are not well publicized, while their methodologies are rarely replicated. Many of the lessons to be learned from them are straightforward and could be directly and usefully applied if the appropriate policies were introduced. They include the following:

*1 many benefits of learner-driven training approaches.*

Account needs to be taken of the insights and demands of learners both to help identify focus areas that reflect their insights and aspirations and to ensure that training is as accessible as possible. Learners need to be seen as customers.

- 2 *The need to be market responsive.* Enterprise-led approaches to training enhance efficiency and impact, first by co-opting the power and resources of the market, and second by closely linking training with local market demand.
  
- 3 *The importance of the local context.* Each community, like each market, is to a degree unique. Community involvement is needed to identify, assess and respond to these unique characteristics. Community involvement helps skills training programmes accommodate the interests of the learners, of the market and of the broader society.

The assimilation of these three lessons calls for considerable flexibility on the part of individual training institutions. Because it requires constant and long-term flexibility, it is management intensive, in terms of both time and skills. This, and the evolution in thinking and practice needed to prioritize and respond to customers, communities and markets, means that the necessary degree of systemic change is unlikely to occur, unless it is mandated and guided by policy.

### **Multiple pathways to and within the world of work**

Over a lifetime, it is typical for the work of the marginalized to proceed in cycles. Often the cycles are overlapping. Self-employment or enterprise activity can follow employment, or the reverse, each often interspersed with periods of unemployment. Frequently there are combinations of several forms of work. Sometimes the process involves the formal sector. More often, particularly in the case of marginalized people, the process unfolds in the informal sector where an increasing portion of the economic activity of marginalized peoples takes place. Over time, changing livelihood demands often compel cyclical changes in work status and encourage opportunistic combinations of employment, self-employment

and enterprise. Many individuals alternate regularly between employment and self-employment as their working life progresses. This is particularly true for those who start work early in life, as is characteristic of marginalized people.

In looking at education and training for the informal sector, McGrath, King, Leach and Carr-Hill (1995) identified six pathways to work. They can be broadly summarized in two: (a) from school to employment to self-employment or enterprise, and (b) from school to self-employment or enterprise to employment. As emphasized above, this is by no means a linear or a one-time-only process. Each of these broad avenues subsumes a number of alternative pathways reflecting various levels of schooling, types of work, degrees of formality of training, and other factors (McGrath et al, 1995). The fluid, complex, multidimensional reality of people's quest for livelihood is such that livelihood support programmes must include both employment strategies and strategies for self-employment and enterprise.

### **The respective roles of education and training**

The diversity described above is a useful weapon in the war on marginalization, and one that is particularly relevant to livelihoods. Seizing the opportunities inherent in this diversity presents a formidable challenge. It is increasingly recognized that systems intended to support one form of work, e.g., employment, must at least understand and often accommodate other forms of work as well. Education and training systems are only now coming to terms with the reality that they can no longer live within the comfortable confines of homogenous clientele hierarchical structures and narrowly-defined objectives. Education and training systems must help people develop the capacities needed to cope with stresses such as loss of work, as well as recognize and create opportunities, such as self-employment, as viable employment alternatives. Education and training each respond to this challenge in quite different ways. While each offers considerable transformation potential the fundamental difference between them is that

education makes a broad general contribution to people's development, while training usually makes a specific and more immediately applicable contribution.

Education is in a very real sense the base asset on which most human capital is built. Education results in the acquisition of general capacities that can be widely applied over time. A solid foundation of education enhances virtually all other efforts to build human capital. This is the rationale behind the many calls for Education For All. Education works best when delivered early, usually at a time when most other options for young people are either impractical (e.g., workplace-based training or training requiring literacy and numeracy) or undesirable (e.g., child labour). Education lends itself to the large-scale systematic delivery of standardized products. Even if only the basics (reading, writing and arithmetic) are addressed, education results in a sustained and synergistic array of civic, social, health and economic benefits (Lauglo, 2000, pp. 17-18).

In terms of human capital enhancement, the ability to access, absorb and apply virtually all employment-related skills is a function of training. However, due to the very different nature of training, there are unlikely to be calls for training for all. With few exceptions, training needs to be both specialized and situation-specific. Training is specialized in the sense that it seeks to impart a precise set of skills for a narrow range of tasks. The application of such skills is most effective when the training-to-work transition is short and the skills imparted closely match work tasks. Training is situation-specific in the sense that it is most effective when it responds to both the aspirations and ideas of those seeking training and the opportunities currently available in highly differentiated, fast-changing local markets. In marked contrast with education, the high levels of specialization and specificity called for in training mean that the large-scale delivery of standardized training programmes is seldom viable (Middleton, Ziderman, & Van Adams, 1993).



## **A way forward for skills training for marginalized people**

This chapter has considered aspects of the widely-recognized crisis of training and emerging evidence that enterprise approaches to skills training can deliver effective skills training for livelihoods to the marginalized. Figure 1, below, draws together and summarizes these elements.

The four factors noted in Figure 1 are interrelated. In virtually all cases, modifying any single factor will affect one or more of the other factors, either positively or negatively. For example, addressing equity and asset enhancement concerns (such as reducing marginalization) often increases costs and complexity, aspects that, if they can be provided for, can nonetheless be more than compensated for in terms of relevance. The art of designing useful employment support measures is that of finding an appropriate balance of factors in relation to local resources and circumstances.

**Figure 1. Factors influencing training for livelihoods**

Factor	Problem statement and proposed remedies (in italics)
<b>Relevance</b>	<p>There is a mismatch between training opportunities on offer and the skills and capacities in demand in local labour markets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Training should respond to local labour market demand and lead to some form of remunerative work (employment, self-employment or enterprise).</i></li> </ul>
<b>Cost</b>	<p>Training is expensive, due to specialization and the need to customize training to respond to current learners and current local needs, and due to inherently high unit costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Training can be made more efficient by involving local businesses in all aspects of training. Enterprise involvement can make training more efficient (through greater cost-sharing) and more effective (through constant orientation to local needs).</i></li> <li>• <i>Training programmes should make use of indigenous skills transfer systems (e.g., traditional apprenticeships) and avail able facilities (particularly local enterprises).</i></li> </ul>
<b>Equity</b>	<p>Training is often difficult to access and difficult to use, especially for those who, due to social or economic disadvantage, are in greatest need of work-related skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Make provision to overcome economic and social barriers to access and participation by, inter alia, adequate funding for basic provision, scholarships or vouchers for those in greatest need, and restructuring schooling in terms of location, schedules and vernacular languages.</i></li> <li>• <i>Training programmes should reflect and accommodate the circumstances and customs of those they serve. Training curricula, schedules and structures should address the needs and accommodate the social realities and multiple obligations of those they are intended to serve.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Asset Enhancement</b>	<p>Training initiatives are seldom designed and administered specifically to enhance livelihood assets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Training should provide the skills needed to grasp existing work opportunities and identify future opportunities;</i></li> <li>• <i>Asset enhancement should be assessed in terms of increased income, greater flexibility, reduced vulnerability to crisis and enhanced access to economic support networks.</i></li> </ul>

(Adapted from Grierson and Schnurr, 2000)

The report of the recent Cairo workshop on girls' livelihoods of the Population Council and the International Council for Research on Women (PC/ICRW, 2000) summarizes the principles of good training for livelihood skills for one particularly marginalized group, young women. The PC/ICRW workshop found that good training:

- recognizes the wider economic environment;
- offers training in new, demand-led growth areas and is wary of training in already crowded sectors;
- ensures that skills offered are matched to the needs of communities;
- encourages women and girls to train in new and growing sectors that are as yet "ungendered";
- keeps programmes simple and consistent;
- exploits traditional knowledge while being wary of traditional barriers; and
- recognizes that a business-like approach is more realistic and holds far greater potential for long-term success ((PC/ICRW, 2000, pp. 41-42).

Bennell (2000) proposes incorporating market-driven strategies into the design of pro-poor training strategies and finds that skills training for the marginalized "should be driven by a people-centred pedagogy which maximizes locally available skills and empowers people to learn for themselves." (p. 48). The learners themselves should influence training design and management, including resource allocation and utilization. These notions will not be easily absorbed.

### **Education and training are moving closer together and closer to the marginalized**

While the respective contributions of education and training remain sharply differentiated, the roles and responsibilities of education and training systems are becoming less and less so. There is a growing array of experiments which involve "vocalionalizing" primary and secondary education

curricula. Many education programmes now include entrepreneurship as a component of study. It is increasingly common to find re-orientation towards self-employment as a major component of training rehabilitation programmes, in some cases in the interests of the learners and in some cases as a means of institutional rescue (Hoppers, 1994). In many developing countries vocational training has become at least as much about enterprise and self-employment as about its traditional role of preparation for specific employment options (Grierson, 2000, p. 25). In general this is resulting in a new and positive recognition of the needs of marginalized people. For many training institutions and programmes marginalized people are clearly the emerging priority, albeit one for which they are as yet largely unprepared.

### **Training works best in an expanding economy**

In developing countries there has been a structural shift towards self-employment and the informal sector, for the most part as a somewhat desperate response to growing un- and underemployment. Large-scale unemployment and underemployment is a function of three inter-related problems: the dearth of employable skills, the lack of equitable access to either decent work or useful skills training opportunities, and the severe overall shortage of jobs (Crump, Grierson & Wahbah, 2000). Education and training can do little to increase the number of jobs. Appropriately structured economic growth is the key to solving the job shortage problem. Human capital development initiatives can, however, do much to expand the diversity and quantity of relevant training and to make access to training alternatives more equitable. Economic growth can and should generate livelihoods opportunities for the marginalized. Initiatives intended to enhance welfare and employability work best when overall labour absorption capacity is growing (ILO, 1999). Pro-poor growth has the specific objective of ensuring that growth includes opportunities for the marginalized. Training can and should impart the capacities needed to grasp the opportunities offered by an expanding labour market. Open, enterprise-led approaches to skills training are an efficient, effective and equitable means of giving marginalized peoples livelihoods skills.

Pro-poor growth is based on the idea that both poverty alleviation and economic growth objectives can be addressed simultaneously, provided that economic policies and support programmes are carefully structured to pursue both these objectives. Pro-poor growth demands an acute understanding of how national economies, local economies, and specific economic sectors work. Certain activities and sectors offer much better pro-poor growth potential than others. In Mellor's (1999) analysis, small-scale, non-farm enterprises, largely producing non-tradable (i.e., locally-consumed) goods and services are central to pro-poor growth. Mellor sees these small enterprises as the key to tomorrow's pro-poor employment. De Soto (2000) makes a compelling case for the potential of urban housing as a pro-poor economic sector. Pro-poor livelihoods initiatives are most likely to be effective when they focus on sectors that offer good growth prospects (such as transportation and waste management), many entry-level opportunities for micro-enterprise and self-employment (such as housing), and good prospects for disaggregation as opposed to economies of scale (light construction and many types of services, including appliance repair and hairdressing). Many sectors, such as waste collection and sorting, tend by their nature to favour local community-based enterprises. New growth sectors such as electronic assembly tend to be ungendered at the outset, and traditional sectors often lower gender barriers when they modernize and adopt new technologies (for example, machine-based shoe manufacture). Skills training for the marginalized works best when it complements and supports pro-poor economic growth.

## Conclusion

This chapter has presented the case for enterprise-led approaches to skills training for marginalized people. The emphasis has been on responding to the aspirations of marginalized learners, interacting with the markets in which they will seek their livelihoods and understanding the communities they represent.

It is useful to be reminded that while training can do little to generate either economic growth or job opportunities

it can do much to help seize opportunities that emerge in local markets. Training is more effective in an expanding economy, particularly if it is designed to interact with the economy. Training for the marginalized works best in a context of pro-poor growth, which is not limited to expanding, dynamic economies. As has been noted, the imperfect opportunities of the informal sector are often the only pro-poor opportunities available when an economy is stagnant or contracting. The logic of pro-poor growth applies, even when seeking opportunities in adverse conditions.

In all circumstances the fundamentals of enterprise-led skills training for the marginalized apply. Training needs to be relevant to the needs of local markets, however these might be structured, and to the needs and aspirations of marginalized learners. Training must be cost-conscious and ever in search of more efficient and cost-effective ways of operating. Training must be equitable; it must ensure that the marginalized can access, acquire and apply useful skills. Training must help enhance the assets needed to secure a livelihood and face the downturns and crises that life inevitably presents.

Enterprise-led approaches to skills training can help address and reduce social and economic marginalization.

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## Chapter 6

# Workplace Wellness and Worker Well-Being

**Norman Amundson and Jeff Morley**

**W**orkplace wellness and worker well-being need to be viewed from a systems perspective. While it is possible to discuss each component separately, their real significance derives from the relationship between workplace and worker. In this chapter we look at this relationship, first from the point of view of organizations and then from the point of view of individuals. We then examine programmes devised and efforts made to achieve workplace wellness and worker well-being that apply the findings of North American and European research while bearing in mind that individuals and groups exist in different cultural contexts.

### Workplace wellness

We shall start by reflecting on the need for workplace wellness. Going back in time, there are many examples of workplaces where wellness was not much in evidence. In the building of the pyramids one may assume that there was little wellness in the workplace. Even now there is no shortage of sweatshops that have high productivity but place little emphasis on workplace wellness. So why the concern about wellness in the workplace? The answer lies in the changing nature of work.

With the shift towards an information economy, there is an increasing need to go beyond the factory model and create a workplace that is knowledge-driven, with ample room for innovation, flexibility, quality and customer service. Within this context new working arrangements are being developed (Arthur, Inkson & Pringle, 1999). These new arrangements reflect a movement away from hierarchical structures and the disappearance of many traditional boundaries (Feller, 1995). The workplace is also being affected by globalization and a new



competitiveness. Work has become more project-driven, and the size of the workforce varies in response to economic demand. This creates new structures in the workplace as many workers are attached to firms for limited periods of time.

The workplace is also being affected by demographic and social trends. For many years the economy functioned with a labour surplus-too many people chasing too few jobs. But we are moving into a new era of worker shortage, especially in areas such as technology, medicine, teaching, policing and the trades. What complicates the situation is that there is not just a need for more workers but for highly skilled workers. Thus, there is an increasing need for TVET and the career paths that result from such training, at a time when in many countries, TVET is not viewed as a desirable option. The number one issue for many human resource departments is the hiring and retention of highly-skilled and valuable employees.

The distribution of resources within companies reflects the increased value attached to certain categories of employees, particularly those in management. Reid (1996) illustrates the growing distance between workers and managers by pointing to some alarming statistics. United States economic data from 1972 indicate that corporate executives made 44 times the income of the average corporate worker. By 1992 this ratio had increased to a stunning 222 to 1. This trend reflects a growing divide between the rich and the poor. With the move toward temporary, part time, and contract workers there are cost savings and also greater income disparities between workers and management. This income disparity will have repercussions on worker morale and worker commitment.

In these conditions, it becomes clear that a new and more dynamic organizational culture is needed and also that there are many weak links in the system. Moses (1997) sees a number of significant problems in the workplace, as many workers can see no meaning in their work and are facing burnout. She describes the pervasive career malaise as follows:

- People feel out of control, unable to make predictions about their future. They see little relationship between what they do and what happens to them.

- Many have no sense of personal satisfaction. They are not finishing work at the level they would like. They feel they are not making a meaningful contribution.
- Their self-confidence has been eroded. They are beginning to question their competence and feel they are losing their “edge”. They worry about the future.
- People are cynical about their employers, and pessimistic about their futures (p. 105).

One of the challenges of identifying dysfunction within the workplace is the fact that only a certain amount of dysfunction is visible in the corporate boardroom. Williams & Cooper (1999) indicate that factors such as poor service, difficult working relationships, low morale, poor quality of work, lack of innovation, and poor decision-making are often hidden from view for long periods of time. Factors such as staff turnover, insurance claims, legal claims, workplace accidents and sick leave are easily measured, but managers often fail to appreciate the full extent of organizational deterioration. While organizations are familiar with financial audits to assess their financial well-being, they are less familiar with the need to assess worker well-being. Many of the same principles apply here and the people in the best place to conduct this form of audit are those with a background in career counselling and human relations. As with a financial audit, it is usually helpful to have the assessors come from outside the company.

### **Worker well-being**

It is important to examine the impact of workplace wellness on the worker. Carroll (1996), for example, points out that, as with families, the by-product of dysfunctional groups is dysfunctional group members. The converse is also true: groups that are healthy promote positive attitudes and good mental health. The argument is that in a highly competitive, fast-paced, global work environment there is a need for a healthy workforce that is innovative, productive, flexible and project-committed. There is a need for workers who have sufficient well-being to work not only hard, but also in ways that lead to innovation and quality product development. The

dynamic that Carroll (1996) is describing is valid as far as it goes, but there are other elements that also need to be considered. To develop the argument in this way suggests that the influence only operates in one direction. From a systems perspective it is also important to examine the impact of the worker on the workplace. The relationship between workers and their workplace is dynamic and bi-directional and needs to be considered as such.

From the point of view of the worker, it is important to examine what exactly is meant by worker well-being. The World Health Organization and International Labour Office have defined worker health as follows: "The promotion and maintenance of the highest degrees of physical, mental and social well-being of workers in all occupations by prevention of departures from health and controlling risk" (Williams & Cooper, 1999, p. 5). While this definition broadens the notion of health, perhaps it does not go far enough. Williams & Cooper (1999) argue that two other factors need to be included. They are economic health, which does not mean economic wealth but rather having enough to maintain the necessities of life, and environmental health, the need for workplaces to have adequate light, acceptable noise levels, and so on. Another component of health that is receiving increasing attention is spiritual well-being, or the importance of the soul in the workplace (Briskin, 1998; Whyte, 2001). Used in this context, "soul" refers to the need for purpose and meaning in work independently of the pay packet. It is thus clear that health is now being defined in the broadest possible manner, and not just as physical well-being.

A broad definition of health is consistent with the emerging career counselling view that work and personal life have large areas of overlap (Amundson, 1998; Herr, 1999). Briskin (1998) suggests that there is a need to: "build a bridge between the world of the personal, subjective, and even unconscious elements of individual experience and the world of organizations that demand rationality, efficiency, and personal sacrifice. For the individual there is often no clear distinction between these worlds. We are both individuals and members of groups within organizations. We cannot leave behind who we

are when we are inside organizations any more than we can shut out the organization when we are alone. We carry inside us all the time both the organization in our mind and the person we think we are. When there is a fit, we sense harmony and balance. When these two worlds collide, however, the individual feels torn and alone” (p. xii).

Conflict between personal and work issues can occur in many different ways. For example, Hobson, Delunas and Kesic (2001), in a national United States study of stressful events, asked respondents to rate the perceived stressfulness of 51 distinct life events. Of the top 10 most stressful life events, none were specifically work-related. Instead, they reflected a number of potent life and family-related events such as death and dying, life-threatening illness, infidelity, divorce, and institutional detention. Despite the fact that there is no direct connection between these events and work, there undoubtedly would be some seepage from personal life into working life. The need for support and assistance is evident in both personal and working life. The authors use these data to call for the development, continuation, and expansion of corporate work/individual life balance programmes. They suggest that efforts by the employer to provide support during stressful periods would be likely to result in efforts on the part of employees to show their appreciation in some appropriate manner. This might result in increased motivation, greater productivity, better attendance, higher commitment, increased loyalty, and so on.

### **Cultivating a healthy workplace**

Workplace wellness is no longer an optional extra: many employers are fast realizing that providing a healthy working environment is something that translates into financial gain for the company. Kalbfleisch & Wosnick (1999) point out that payback for workplace wellness “comes in the form of fewer insurance and workers’ compensation claims, decreased absenteeism, lower turnover and higher productivity” (p. 17). Bearing this in mind many large companies have begun to operate workplace wellness programmes which typically emphasize physical fitness, health screening, counselling, and

giving up smoking. These programmes tend to be introduced in large firms and to focus on employees at the upper end of the salary scale (Donaldson & Blanchard, 1995). Little has been done to reach small businesses or employees with lower income levels. Another limitation is the narrow focus of many of the programmes.

Newer strategies for workplace wellness move towards viewing wellness not simply as a programme or combination of programmes for employees, but as an overarching organizational goal. Many organizations are taking an inter-disciplinary approach to promoting organizational health (Adkins, 1999). Operating a business or organization in a manner that nurtures healthy workplaces, as well as meeting organizational goals, may require some systemic change (Emiliani, 1998, Savolainen, 2000, Sugarman, 2001). However, systemic change need not be costly, drastic, or driven from the top down (Beard, 2000; Kennedy, 2001).

One possibility is to view workplaces as eco-systems (Lewin & Regine, 2000). In nature even small changes to an eco-system can have a significant effect on the health of the whole system. Just as one virus can devastate an entire human or animal population, a relatively moderate change in water temperature can have drastic effects on weather patterns, as can be seen in the effects of an El Niño or La Niña. Organizations can also suffer from viruses or toxins. Unresolved conflict, confusing policies, poor communication, or even turbulent change, can have a severely negative or even toxic effect on entire workplaces. Inevitably individual workers come in to contact with such workplace toxins. Frost & Robinson (1999) have documented the heavy and damaging toll workplace toxins can take on workers. If not addressed they can spread like a cancer, in the end crippling a once healthy organization.

However, a healthy and fertile workplace requires more than just purging toxins. The World Health Organization considers that worker health involves promoting the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being in workers. How can an organization promote workplace wellness? What implications does promoting workplace wellness have for

workers and organizations in the new economy? If workplace wellness is not to be just a programme, where should organizations begin?

## **Common factors in healthy groups**

Almost every workplace involves some kind of teamwork. Research in the field of group counselling can be helpful in understanding what factors need to be in place for team members' experience of work to be positive. Borgen, Pollard, Amundson and Westwood (1989) have identified four factors required for groups to function in a healthy manner: inclusion, control, trust, and support. These same four factors are important for creating a healthy workplace. In terms of workplaces, inclusion means that employees feel a part of the organization, and/or their team. Research has demonstrated the positive and/or negative effects that individuals' presence or absence can have on group performance (Partington & Harris, 1999). Healthy organizations, managers and employees must recognize the importance of inclusion, and each must work to ensure that every employee feels included if the workplace is to perform with maximum efficiency.

Experiencing a sense of control in the workplace does not mean every worker must be the boss, but that every worker must feel that they can influence their work, and also influence their organization. When people feel they have a say in decisions that affect them, their work, their workplace and their organization, they have a healthy sense of being in control. They feel that they are part of the team. Wanberg & Banas (2000) found that employees' personal resilience during times of change was affected by: (a) their confidence in their ability to cope with change and (b) their feeling of participation in the decisions regarding the change process. The researchers defined personal resilience as a composite of self-esteem, optimism, and perceived control. Clearly, a healthy and balanced sense of being in control in their workplace enables workers to have more positive experiences at work, even in a context of workplace change.

**Trust** in the workplace is an issue that may be more complex and important than it seems to be at first glance. The importance of trust in the workplace might best be illustrated by considering the impact a breach of trust has on a relationship. In a marriage, for example, a betrayal of trust such as infidelity can cause irreparable damage. Even if the marriage survives a breach of trust, the healing process may be slow and difficult. Breaches of trust in work relationships may take many forms and can impact an entire workforce. How such breaches are handled can be crucial in the development of a healthy workplace. When breaches of trust are acknowledged, and the parties involved accept responsibility, for example, hope for repair exists. In fact when delicate issues are handled successfully, overall faith in the organization may even increase. Trust is not something that can be ordered or decreed. It develops over time, in the context of meaningful, ongoing relationships. Where trust does not exist, managers tend to exert influence on subordinates in more coercive ways and to be less dependent on employees (Wells & Kipnis, 2001). In return, employees try to put more pressure on managers and interact directly with them less often when they do not trust them. The general conclusion is that employees and managers both suffer when the level of trust is low. As with inclusion and control, a healthy atmosphere of trust in the workplace, at all levels, helps to ensure positive experience of work.

**Support** also is important in developing a healthy workplace. As with the other factors, support is not uni-directional. Just as workers benefit from the support of managers and the organization that employs them, so managers and the organization benefit from the support of workers. Peer support is also important, and may come from many sources. As sociologist Richard Sennett (1998) points out, if the nature of the work changes, the nature of peer support will also change. For example, the information economy has evolved to the point where even competitors in the high-tech computer field may share information. Thus, in order for organizations to remain healthy, there needs to be multi-level support, which can even include support from competitors, and this support is crucial to a healthy workplace.

## Work/family balance

Healthy groups are a result of more than working conditions and counselling groups. For most workers, their family is also very important. In years gone by, the work ethic prevalent in society often resulted in work being more of a priority than family for many people. Many organizations encouraged and even rewarded such “commitment” to the organization, promoting employees who worked over and above their required hours, or giving such employees bonuses. Although, promotions and bonuses are not inherently bad, many organizations are now realizing that promotion and reward systems can be counter-productive if they encourage behaviour that results in workers sacrificing their family to their career.

Today many organizations are realizing that workers who achieve a healthy family/work balance are healthier, more satisfied, and more likely to remain with the organization (Burke, 2001). In one large organization it was found that managers who achieved a better balance between their professional and personal lives were able to work fewer hours while maintaining productivity (Munck, 2001). Munck also found that managers with a better balance between their work and personal lives maintained a high level of customer service, with little or no impact on the company’s financial bottom line. In today’s economy productive workers are becoming a scarce resource, and organizations that promote work/family balance are becoming increasingly attractive to employees, especially those whose family make greater demands, such as employees who are parents, or caring for an elderly parent. Scharlach (2001) documented the strain experienced by working parents, and explored factors that could increase or decrease the felt level of strain. Scharlach found that having children under 6 years of age, a more demanding job, less satisfactory childcare arrangements and less workplace support all contributed to higher levels of stress. Disappointingly, Scharlach found that workplace programmes such as Dependent Care Accounts, Child Care Resource Guides, Parent Information Fairs, and adjusted work schedules did not significantly impact levels of work/family



interference. This research affirms the need for individuals, researchers and organizations to explore positive options for employees with family responsibilities in order to reduce role conflicts in an effort to create healthy workplaces that also make for healthy workers-both while they are at work and in other areas of their lives.

### **Benefits of workplace wellness**

The new economy is making recruiting and retaining valued employees more and more of a challenge (Sennett, 1998). Not only is the economy evolving, but demographics are changing (US Department of Labor, 2002) along with values. Two interesting groups at opposing ends of the spectrum in the new economy are young first-time workers (often referred to as Generation X), and older workers (often referred to as Baby Boomers). Although both Generation Xers and Baby Boomers are competing in the current labour market, it has been found that the two groups apply different values, as well as shared values, to determine what they want from employment (Jurkiewicz, 2000).

Culturally, it could be argued that young people entering the workforce for the first time have been raised in a society quite different from that of their parents. Unlike their parents who might have expected to be able to remain in that first job until retirement, new workers have come to expect to have several jobs over their working life, if not several different careers. This expectation has implications for younger workers' sense of what it means to make a commitment to an employer and/or to work as a part of a team. Karp and Sirias (2001) found that Generation Xers were actually more team-oriented than Baby Boomers, despite being more individualistic.

As organizations employ groups of workers from the whole age range, they are now faced with the challenge of creating team environments in which different generations can work happily side by side. Having witnessed the excesses of the preceding generation, with its hard-driving work ethic, younger workers are increasingly drawn to organizations that value healthy workplaces and a healthy work/family balance. Young

workers do not necessarily expect to remain with the same company for their entire lives, so if they perceive an organization as toxic, they are more likely to seek employment elsewhere. In the new economy highly-skilled workers are quite likely to find alternative employment. Similarly, older workers, including perhaps workers who have retired from their first careers, are increasingly sought after by organizations for their expertise, experience and wisdom. Many workers in this situation are not money-driven or wanting to work excessive hours to get ahead. These workers like to feel appreciated. They like to feel that they, and their work, matter.

Amundson (1996) has documented the significance of feeling that one matters in the workplace, suggesting that this feeling meets basic relationship needs, including the need to find meaning in life. He states, "Through mattering, interpersonal connections are restored, with positive implications for self-esteem and self-validation" (p. 45). People want, and can choose, workplaces that are healthy and balanced: workplaces that match their lifestyle. Workers both young and old are seeking meaning in their careers. Workers both young and old will be increasingly drawn to healthy workplaces where they will not only survive, but thrive. Healthy workplaces are the fertile ground that enables organizations to nurture workers, while themselves growing strong and flourishing in the new economy.

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## Chapter 7

# Building Positive Work Habits and Attitudes

Mary McMahon and Wendy Patton

Changes in the world of work over the past decade have significantly altered the psychological contracts that existed in the industrial era between workers and their employers, and workers and their work. Traditional concepts such as a job for life and loyalty between workers and employing organizations are on the decline in a world of work increasingly based on economically driven short-term contracts in which periods of unemployment and underemployment may be common (Patton & McMahon, 1999). Workers are being urged to become managers of their careers (Savickas, 2000) and to regard themselves as being self-employed. Further, it has been claimed that the new career will require “learning a living” rather than simply earning a living, as individuals strive to keep pace with rapid work changes.

These changes in the world of work are particularly evident in the entry of young people into the workforce. Indeed, the transition from education to work has attracted a good deal of attention from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in recent years (Sweet, 2000). It has also become a focus of attention in many countries since the mid 1980s, as high levels of youth unemployment and changes in the youth labour market have become evident. The social and economic costs of youth unemployment have become an object of concern for the governments of several countries. For example, social exclusion, particularly of young people who have dropped out of the education, training and employment system, and the potential benefits of guidance and counselling have recently been examined in Britain (Watts, 2001) and the latter have

been promoted in Australia through Structured Workplace Learning and other alternative learning pathways for young people (Patton, 2000b).

Attitudes to work are also changing, in parallel with changes in the world of work. For example, Hill (1997) observed that the decline of the work ethic was a recurring theme in the contemporary literature on work and that the attitude to work was increasingly becoming one of indifference, while time spent outside the work place was regarded as more important. A recent Australian study concluded that “occupational destiny is not all there is to life” for the post-1970 generation (Dwyer, 2000, p. 9). The participants attached at least equal importance to areas of their lives other than paid employment, and defined themselves not in terms of what they might or might not do in the paid workforce but rather “in terms of ‘mixed patterns’ of life that interconnect ‘being’ and ‘doing’” (Dwyer, 2000, p. 9).

Such findings challenge many preconceptions about the place of paid employment in people’s lives. Even during times of economic growth enough jobs may not be created and people in employment may not necessarily experience job satisfaction. Thus, the environment of the global economy raises questions about how positive work habits and attitudes may be developed. Indeed, the concept of positive work habits and attitudes itself may need to be rethought. For example, are the work habits and attitudes that were regarded as positive in the industrial era still appropriate in the post-industrial era, and would they be appropriate in all contexts? The focus of this chapter is thus threefold. First, several facets of the concept building positive work habits and attitudes are explored. Second, the notion of building and its complexity are illustrated. Finally, the role of guidance and counselling in building positive work habits and attitudes is discussed. Throughout the chapter questions will be raised for the consideration of policy-makers, school personnel, and career guidance and counselling practitioners.

## Exploring the concepts

Considering work habits and attitudes in society today necessarily involves considering what is meant by the term “work”. Traditionally, an economic view of work has prevailed: it is seen as “what people do in order to earn a living” (Brief & Nord, 1990, p. 2). However, this view of work has devalued other forms of work, such as unpaid work, work in the home, and voluntary work, and some forms of paid work have been valued more highly than others. For example full-time permanent work is more highly valued than casual or part-time work, and professional work is more highly valued than blue-collar and unskilled work. However, in a post-industrial era in which portfolio careers, casualization of the workforce, and the rise of a contingent workforce are commonplace, the traditional view of work may no longer be adequate.

The post-industrial era and the emergence of constructivist thinking have given rise to alternative ways of thinking about work (Savickas, 2000). Changes in the structure of work have seen a corresponding shift in thinking about the relationship between individuals and work. Increasingly, individuals are being viewed as the managers of their own working lives and attention is being paid to the meaning people attribute to the role of work in their lives (p. 59). Indeed, Brief & Nord (1990) contend that “work has no ultimate essence that can give it universal meaning” (p. 17). They claim that the meaning of work is tied to individuals’ attitudes, beliefs and values; shaped by the environment in which they live; and affected by their personal experience of work. The meaning of work involves a dynamic interaction between individuals and communities and this necessarily involves change over time. This is evidenced by Savickas’ (2000) description of the changes in working lives brought about by the shift in North America from an agrarian economy to an urban economy and then to a global economy. In the global economy, it is possible for individuals to have more than one work role and to ascribe a different meaning to each. For example, an individual may work part-time in a secure and stable role that pays well but is not satisfying or enjoyable in

order to work part-time in a field that is poorly paid and unpredictable, but provides creative and challenging opportunities.

The foregoing discussion prompts many questions:

- What is work? Is it understood similarly throughout the world?
- Does the term “work” refer only to paid employment, or does it also cover unpaid work?
- Is a pensioner who does hours of volunteer work demonstrating positive work habits and attitudes?
- Is a parent who chooses to stay at home to raise a family demonstrating “positive work habits and attitudes”?
- Is a long-term unemployed person who accepts unemployment benefits and who voluntarily monitors the environmental health of a region and makes it more salubrious demonstrating “positive work habits and attitudes”?

### **Thinking about “work habits and attitudes”**

To understand the concept of “work habits and attitudes,” we need to ask: “What exactly are “work habits and attitudes?”. Is the phrase “work habits and attitudes” synonymous with “work ethic,” a term that originated in the early 1900s when an economic meaning of the term “work” prevailed? Recently, Hill (1997) has used the phrase “work ethic and work attitudes” to describe personal qualities such as individual responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management and integrity. While it is difficult to dispute the value of such qualities, or the usefulness of promoting them, it is less certain that the term “work ethic” will endure in the post-industrial era, or even whether it is still relevant or appropriate.

Hagstrom and Gamberale (1995), for example, describe the rise of post-materialistic values and attitudes towards work such as “quality of life, self-expression, belonging and

intellectual satisfaction” (p. 475) which are important to young people in the post-industrial society. They contrast with the materialistic values and attitudes towards work of earlier generations, which focused on “economic growth, law and order, and security” (p. 475). Workers in the post-industrial era are more likely to place emphasis on “meaningful work and working with congenial people” than on “safe jobs and high income” (p. 476). The work ethic and attitudes of Generation Xers may well be viewed less favourably by employers, who are more likely to be from the baby boomer generation. More recently, it has been suggested that Generation Y workers have yet another set of work attitudes, which focus on flexibility and lifestyle (Simpson, 2001).

While Simpson (2001) cautions against assuming an absence of uniformity between generations, some generational differences do exist, perhaps as a function of age and life-cycle. These differences prompt several questions: What are the implications of a range of different attitudes to coexisting in a global economy? Are these different attitudes mutually exclusive or can they coexist? What contributions could each of them have to make?

A further consideration in relation to work habits and attitudes is their usefulness to individuals themselves and their relevance to their capacity to negotiate in, and navigate through, the complexity of the new world of work. In the global economy, where individuals are expected to be managers of their own working lives, to continue learning and training throughout life, and to seek paid employment several times in a lifetime, work habits and attitudes will be critical to self-management. Thus, whereas work habits and attitudes have traditionally been associated with paid employment, in the future they will have increased relevance to individuals’ capacity to be successful managers of their working lives, fashioning careers for themselves that provide personal meaning and vocational direction (Savickas, 2000). Young people will not only need to be aware of employer expectations, but will also need confidence and resilience and the skills of resourcefulness and enterprise to cope in a world where secure employment is not guaranteed.



There is a strong link between work habits and values and the call for individuals to consider themselves self-employed and responsible for managing their own careers. In this regard, Patton (2000a) suggests that as the world of work shifts from career models constructed by organizations to careers constructed by individuals, there will be a need for individuals to determine the meaning they attach to work and other life roles. It seems thus that in the global economy work habits and attitudes will involve more than their traditional association with paid employment in an organizational context.

In the past, an emphasis on “workforce development and job search philosophy” (ACES/NCDA, 2000) has dominated career guidance and counselling practice, and this is reflected in many government policies to promote technical and vocational education and training (TVET). A more contemporary view, promoting “growth and development of the whole person for work and other life roles over the life span” (ACES/NCDA, 2000) has received much less support and funding from governments. Attention needs to be paid to both philosophies (Hiebert & Bezanson, 2000). For example, job search skills and work habits and attitudes will need to be set in the context of life/career management, which will call for attention to be paid to roles other than paid employment, for example volunteer work.

To remain relevant to the needs of clients in the global economy, career guidance practitioners will need to adopt broader definitions of career and career development that recognize individuality rather than adopting a “one size fits all” approach to careers work. In addition, they will need to map their practice onto the emerging world of work, rather than the one which is fast sinking from view. If they are to address the emerging world of work, career services will have to be available across the lifespan and career information will have to reflect the permutations of career possible in the global economy. Career guidance and counselling professionals will need to become more vocal advocates of career services that reflect both a workforce development philosophy and a lifespan development philosophy. In addition they will need to become more involved in research into the outcomes and

delivery of career guidance and counselling services and TVET (Herr, 2000)

The above discussion prompts some further questions about work habits and attitudes:

- What exactly are work habits and attitudes? Can they be viewed as something akin to a character trait or could there be a more holistic and developmental interpretation?
- Do work habits and attitudes need nurturing, sustaining and maintaining?
- Are work habits and attitudes transferable in a global economy?
- How might work habits and attitudes for an individual be the same as, or different from, those of employing organizations, policy-makers and government bodies?
- Who should develop work habits and attitudes? Are they only applicable to workers or should employing organizations, policy-makers and government bodies also develop them?

### **Thinking about “positive” work habits and attitudes**

Value judgments about whether work habits and attitudes are positive may vary between individuals and organizations and from one task or culture to another. Thus, situational variables may influence whether or not work habits and attitudes are considered positive. This raises questions about the use of assessment instruments such as the Occupational Work Ethic Inventory (OWEI) (see Hill, 1997). If some work habits and attitudes are labelled positive and others labelled negative, several questions need to be addressed:

- Who is qualified to make this judgement?

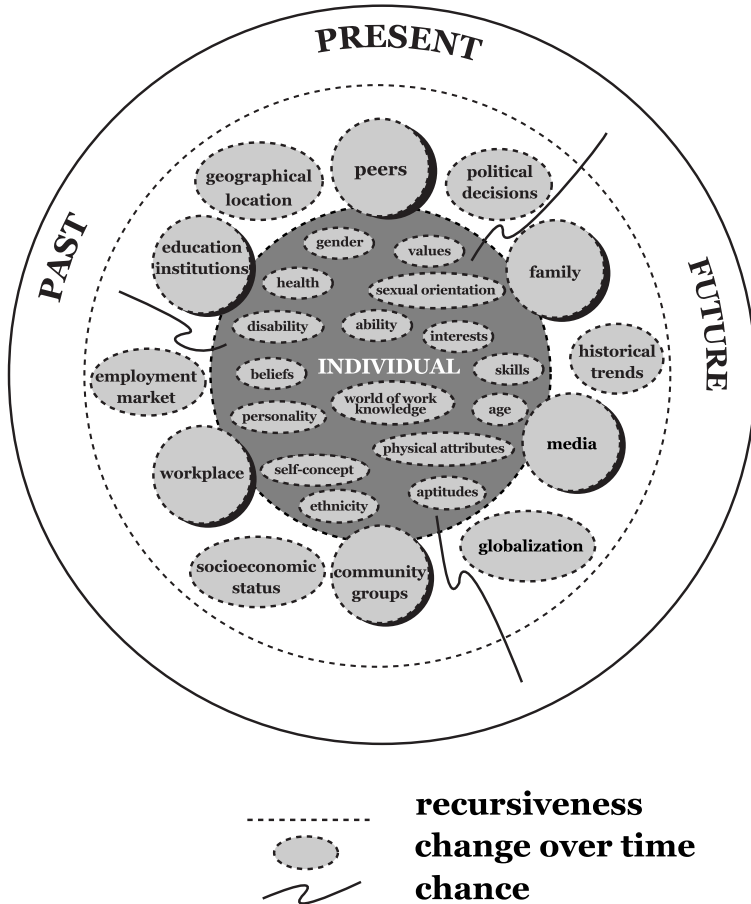
- Are positive work habits and attitudes applicable to all occupations and work settings in all cultures?
- Is a person who refuses to work for a company demonstrating positive work habits and attitudes? What if the company has exploited him/her in the past?
- Is a multinational company with billion-dollar profits that pays its employees well demonstrating positive work habits and attitudes? What if its profits are made partly by paying paltry wages to employees in Third-World countries and operating there with lower safety standards?
- Is a person who likes work, is a good employee, and earns a good income demonstrating positive work habits and attitudes? What if that person also gambles the income away and leaves the family struggling to make ends meet?

### **Illustrating complexity**

In their Systems Theory Framework of career development Patton & McMahon (1999) point out that individuals are participants in their systems of influence as well as receivers of information from those systems. Thus the meaning of work is shaped by people's beliefs, attitudes and values and the recursive interaction between individuals and their systems of influence. The social influences of family, school and workplace, as well as the environmental/societal influences of the employment market, political decisions, and socio-economic status, contribute to an individual's understanding of the meaning attributed to work. Increasingly, globalization and technology also influence the meaning of work.

Similarly, the development of work habits and attitudes is a product of a complex combination of influences. For example, Mackay (1997) suggests that the approach to work of Generation Xers has been influenced by their desire for better marriages, more time with their children, and a more balanced lifestyle than that of their parents (the baby boomers).

Australian research indicating that paid employment is no more important than other facets of life for the post-1970 generation (Dwyer, 2000) supports such claims. In similar vein, Simpson (2001) points out that Generation Y, a generation with significant exposure to multimedia and the first generation to undertake significant amounts of paid casual work during their secondary schooling, have different work attitudes from both



the baby boomers and General Xer

Figure 1 illustrates how work habits and attitudes may be developed in individuals through complex recursive interactions with the elements of the system.

The recursive influence may be direct or indirect. For example, a young person's work habits and attitudes may be influenced by a parent's attitude to work, which was itself influenced by long-term unemployment resulting from the closure of a mine brought about by an international trade policy agreed to by the national government. Underemployment and long-term unemployment have emerged as significant issues in the global economy. In a world where unemployment has been reported to be over 800 million worldwide (International Labour Organization, 1994), it is possible for adolescents to be facing third-generation unemployment and to never have had the experience of witnessing first-hand an adult in their family participating in paid employment.

As indicated by the Systems Theory Framework, career guidance and counselling and TVET may be an influence in the development of work habits and attitudes in young people at both an individual level and at a broader systems level. At an individual level, programmes such as career education, work experience, work observation and mentoring may be influential. In Australia there has been extensive government funding and promotion of TVET programmes involving school-based traineeships and apprenticeships. Such programmes not only forge closer links between schools and workplaces, but also assist in the development of "work habits and attitudes" in young people. Such programmes also have the potential to individualize the nature of the TVET pathways taken by young people as they move through the school system. However, in many countries these programmes focus on fitting young people into the existing labour market rather than on the more holistic concept of lifespan career development which prepares them for life/career management (Hiebert & Bezanson, 2000). At a broader systems level, career guidance and counselling professionals could thus play an advocacy role, urging governments and education authorities to provide career development programmes for all young people.

## Thinking about building

Whether work habits and attitudes are viewed as positive may also be a product of the interaction between elements of the system. Similarly, work habits and attitudes are formed as a result of the complex recursive interaction between elements of the system. To simplify this process is to deny its intricacies, its local nuances, and its specific nature. The formation of positive work habits and attitudes cannot be attributed to a single influence or carried out at a particular point in time. Rather it is a process of co-construction between individuals and the elements of their system of influence that occurs over time (Patton & McMahon, 1999). Thus family, schools, guidance and counselling personnel, policy-makers and employers all have a role to play in building the work habits and attitudes that will benefit to both society and individuals.

What emerges from consideration of the Systems Theory Framework of career development is that:

- Building is not something that can be done to an individual but rather a process of construction within an individual;
- Building is a subjective, qualitative process of construction within individuals rather than an objective, quantitative process;
- Building is not a one-off event, but rather an ongoing process of construction involving continuous refinement, reshaping and redevelopment;
- Work habits and attitudes cannot be attributed to a single influence but are the product of the repeated interaction of many influences;
- Guidance and counselling are but two influences in the building process.

## Issues and challenges for guidance and counselling

Building positive work habits and attitudes contributes to the preparation of the workforce, described by Herr (2000) as possibly “the most critical issue for any nation” (p. 15). In many countries, schools have been influential in preparing young people for the workforce (Sweet, 2000). For example, in many countries closer links have been forged between industry and schools thanks to the development of TVET programmes. Traditionally, industry has contributed to the development of individuals’ work skills, but its contribution to the development of positive work attitudes is uncertain (Hill, 1997). In this regard, Patton (2000b) has called for closer ties between Structured Workplace Learning and career guidance and counselling in the Australian education system.

In Australia there is some evidence of tension between career guidance and counselling and TVET, the latter currently receiving more government support and funding (McCowan, McKenzie, Medford & Smith, 2001). While TVET is regarded as useful, concerns have been expressed that TVET alone will not provide employees with the qualities employers are looking for in workers or individuals or with the skills enabling them to manage and develop their careers effectively (Smith, 2000). For example, Smith claims that TVET emphasizes training at the expense of “the student’s development as a learner, and of the development of generic qualities that prepare young people for successful participation in the workforce, both from a personal and an employer perspective” (p. 8). Increasingly, individuals need to identify and learn skills enabling them to manage and develop their careers effectively, an activity which traditionally has been the domain of career guidance and counselling. Career guidance and counselling professionals are thus called upon to demonstrate the complementarity of guidance and counselling to TVET and the potential social and economic benefits of collaboration between the two.

There is evidence that in many countries the provision of career information, as of guidance and counselling services,

is not regarded as a high priority, and is therefore not funded or supported appropriately (Sweet, 2000). For example, in Australia one of the agreed national goals of schooling states that when students leave school they should “have employment related skills and an understanding of the work environment, career options and pathways as a foundation for, and positive attitudes towards, vocational education and training, further education, employment and life-long learning” (Ministerial Council for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 1999). However, the reality of career guidance and counselling service provision in schools is less than ideal: government policy and reports have not as yet resulted in consistent national practice in education, training and employment services. Unlike other countries, there is no formalized government or statutory authority or system in Australia that oversees the provision of career guidance and counselling services to the population.

While there is no doubt of the importance of guidance and counselling, it is the nature of guidance and counselling and the role it can play in the development of positive work habits and attitudes that merits close consideration. Career counselling, for example, will increasingly move away from trying to fit individuals into a mainstream culture and towards promoting diversity and enabling individuals to plan their own lives by recognizing the place of work in a range of life roles.

One of the most fundamental challenges for guidance and counselling in a global economy, despite the rhetoric vaunting its worth, is to actually secure a place in the systems of influence of all individuals. Without a place in this system of influences, guidance and counselling will not be able to contribute to the building of positive work habits and attitudes. For many young people, guidance and counselling does not enter their system of influences until secondary school, and sometimes not even then. Traditionally, it has not been part of elementary or primary school, which are formative years in terms of values and attitudes. Nor has career guidance and counselling been traditionally easily accessible to adults. It has thus had little, if any, direct influence on their lives. Indirectly, guidance and counselling may have had an influence on gov-



ernment policy development, but such indirect influence is generally invisible to individuals.

Guidance and counselling also faces challenges in the global economy, even where it has secured a place in individuals' systems of influence. It is only one of many influences contributing to the development of work habits and attitudes in the context of the global economy, so a broader initiative will probably be needed. Several authors, including Patton & McMahon (1999) and Savickas (2000), have expressed concern about the capacity of traditional approaches to guidance and counselling to meet the needs of individuals in a global economy. However, it could widen its influence by working systemically, for example with policy-makers, communities and organizations.

In order to have the broad influence needed to be effective, new approaches to the preparation of career counsellors will probably be necessary. Some writers, including Patton & McMahon (1999), have observed that graduate student counsellors and newly qualified counsellors tend to move out of career counselling as they find it too boring. Career counsellor training and coursework has been perceived as less than ideal by students, and has been called upon to become more holistic and creative (Patton & McMahon, 1999). Such challenges provided the impetus for the drafting of a position paper entitled "Preparing counsellors for career development in the new millennium" (ACES/NCDA, 2000), which essentially urges counsellor educators to rethink the preparation of career counsellors.

## Conclusion

Attention has been focused throughout this chapter on the meaning of the concept of "building positive work habits and attitudes" in a global economy. While it may well be a global issue, it is not possible to suggest a global solution. Indeed, to do so would be to ignore its individual nature and the influence of "cultures, traditions, and institutional arrangements" (Sweet, 2000, p. 21) in different nations. What has been possible has been to raise questions that could

stimulate debate amongst TVET and guidance and counselling practitioners, policy-makers, and other stakeholders. Issues and challenges for guidance and counselling in a global economy have also been identified. In particular, career guidance and counselling is being called upon to parallel the evolution of its clients and of the world of work by changing and adapting, rethinking its traditional processes and content, and defining its place in the community. If it does so it will maintain its relevance in the global economy and contributes to the development of work habits and attitudes in both individuals and the community.

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## Chapter 8

# Where To From Here? Guidance and Counselling Connecting With TVET

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**T**his monograph has addressed some major issues related to implementing and maintaining technical and vocational education and training programmes. There is a need to recognize the wide range of communities and cultures in which TVET exists and the concomitant need to build community and workplace capacity to allow the maximum benefit of TVET programmes to be realized. TVET needs to be situated within the context of basic education and lifelong learning and there is a pressing need for TVET programmes to reach groups in society that may be marginalized for various reasons. A major aim of this monograph has been to discuss ways in which guidance and counselling can contribute to the successful development, implementation and maintenance of effective TVET programmes. In fact, it is our contention that guidance and counselling are essential for the goals of TVET to be fully realized and that they should for that reason be fully integrated with all technical and vocational education and training programming.

We shall conclude the monograph by highlighting some of the themes that recur in several chapters and giving some specific examples to illustrate them. Many of these themes were validated in focus group discussions held as part of a UNESCO-sponsored conference on TVET held in Adelaide, Australia, in March 2001. The points raised in this chapter thus reflect the views of individuals from 10 countries, in addition to representing those of various contributors to the monograph.

## The perceived status of TVET

Focus group participants and chapter authors alike point to the need to improve the perceived status of TVET programmes in the communities where they are offered. Currently, TVET is often seen as a poor alternative to university or college courses, and the career paths resulting from TVET programmes are often seen as less desirable as far as the career success of young people is concerned. Focus group participants and monograph authors advocate reshaping the perceived status of TVET so that it is viewed as a viable, perhaps even preferred, option. Given current and emerging technological needs in most societies in the world, it is important that TVET-related career paths begin to be viewed as legitimate and valued alternatives.

At a structural and political level, it may be necessary to re-think the nomenclature that exists in most countries to refer to different levels of education and training. As long as people talk about levels of education, it is likely always to be the case that university education will be seen as the top level, college and technical education (including TVET) will be at the next level down, apprenticeship education will come further down, secondary education will be seen as below higher education, and so on. We encourage readers to reconsider the terms they use to describe the education and training that people undertake to prepare them for paid employment.

As mentioned in our opening chapter, we think that it would be more useful to think in terms of circles of education and training in which educational and training experiences were recognized as different rather than as of a higher or lower level. This reformulation would help to acknowledge that different types of experiences are needed to prepare people for different types of paid employment, and that all types of employment are interconnected and need to be equally valued if society is to function smoothly and effectively.

## **TVET and higher education: The need for permeable boundaries**

Given the rapid rate of social and career-related changes in all areas of the world, focus group participants felt strongly that TVET needed to have a secure place in the diversity of educational and vocational opportunities that are emerging. As Esbin (Chapter 4) points out, there is a need for education systems to be flexible and tailored to the needs of learners, and for individuals to think of themselves in the broader, changing contexts of their societies. This requires a re-thinking of the relationship between different components of education. If education is to be for all, and if it is going to be accessible throughout life, partnerships need to be negotiated among all educational sectors in order to ease the transition of students from one sector to the other. If education systems are going to be responsive to the changing aspirations of individuals and the evolving needs of the larger social context, transition from one component of the education system to another must be seamless. Specifically, this will require a recognition of relevant courses and programmes in different educational sectors, and the attachment of more importance to prior learning assessment. It will also require an infrastructure of guidance and counselling personnel to assist young people and adults to navigate the myriad educational, vocational and career options that are emerging, and to do this in a way that is sensitive to the cultural and socio-economic context of the individuals and families involved.

### **Developing a multi-component, service-oriented approach**

The need for advisory, guidance, and counselling services is apparent in the comments of focus group members and in the various chapters of this monograph. Some countries have no services to advise students what courses to take; there seems to be an assumption that they know what they want to do and how to do it. It is also important to remember who needs to be considered in decision-making processes

connected with exploring educational opportunities. The wishes of parents, the broader family and the individual all need to be considered. When working with parents and other family members, it is important to inform them of the value of TVET programmes in terms of job and career opportunities and to point out that these programmes have more value and status than in the past. In order to do this effectively, counsellors and other personnel need to get out of their offices, visit remote areas, interact with members of the community and inform them of the TVET-related opportunities that exist and that are emerging. However, in some countries, counsellors and guidance workers have low status, which makes it difficult for them to offer an effective service. Guidance and counselling personnel may need to recruit assistants in order to convince others of the value and utility of TVET programmes. They may also need to publicize the value-added benefits of guidance and counselling services for TVET programmes in order to obtain the support of clients and decision-makers.

Effective counselling, guidance and advisory services can often help to maximize the return on investment of money spent on TVET programmes. For example, in some countries, money is wasted because students lack commitment to the programme being offered: they drop out of the programme before they finish or having finished it they then seek employment in an unrelated field. Focus group participants pointed out that even in programmes where there is a 50% gender split in enrolment, many young women do not enter employment after completing the programme as they are seen as taking jobs from young men.

### **Social and cultural considerations**

The nature of multi-component, service-oriented guidance and counselling services will vary from one country to another. In some cultures, for example, people are reluctant to seek help. In some areas of the world career-related problems are viewed as minor problems, not to be taken seriously, and guidance and counselling service providers may be consulted only in connection with major problems, crisis situations, and various types of emergency. In some regions career and life

choices tend to be more permanent, while in others there is more fluidity. In some countries, parents who are educated are very directive with their children, while less educated parents tend to adopt a more hands-off approach. Family members may thus need to be involved in the process to varying degrees, depending on the background of the client.

In most regions of the world, there are important differences between rural and urban youth that may require different types of intervention. Many focus group participants said that in their country the best students tended to come from rural areas, while the opposite was reported by others. In some cases, the best students are often girls, who finish training, but do not take up the occupation for which they were trained. This means that the type of service, the manner in which the service is provided, and the range of people involved in any decision-making process will probably vary from one country to another and even within the same country from one population group to another.

Cultural differences do not just affect services provided to youth, but need to be taken into consideration for all age groups. As Van Esbroeck (Chapter 3) points out, in some countries there is no statutory age for retirement and people remain economically active for many years longer than in North America. One of our colleagues told us, for example, about his uncle who lived in a mountainous region of Europe where he worked as a surveyor. He retired at age 84 because his instrument man (who was 79) wanted to retire and the uncle could not be bothered to train a new instrument man. The uncle did not go through the transition experienced by many North Americans around the age of 65, but continued to do a job that he found fulfilling. Furthermore, at age 84 he would approach retirement very differently from someone who was retiring at age 65. This story underscores the importance of considering individual circumstances when planning career guidance and counselling services.

One observation that holds true regardless of cultural or individual circumstances is that a holistic approach to guidance and counselling services will be needed in order to maximize



individual satisfaction and national productivity. Training must extend beyond the traditional emphasis on knowledge, skills and attitudes that underpins an economically-driven approach to include values, interests and beliefs, which are the focus of a community capacity driven approach (Bezanson et al., Chapter 2). It is clear that TVET will not be effective if it confines itself to supply-driven approaches. A supply and economically-driven model operating in the context of contemporary societies will not be able to keep pace with the multitude of crises that constantly create mismatches between training-on-offer and demand in local markets. What is needed instead, is an holistic, learner- and worker-oriented approach that helps people explore the full range of their potentialities in the light of labour market realities, and embark on a lifelong journey towards personal, and hence social, fulfilment.

### Clarifying terms

In order to enhance advisory, guidance, and counselling services' support of TVET, the contribution each service can make to improving the acceptance, availability, and success of TVET programmes must be identified. In some instances the terms advice, guidance, and counselling are used interchangeably, implying that they all address the same needs and meet the same goals. Although the boundaries between the three are somewhat fuzzy, there are differences between them. We described some of these differences in Chapter 1, and we shall now expand on that discussion.

**Advising** in the career or vocational context involves disseminating information on a certain topic or focus. The emphasis is on the information, and the integrity of the information is largely dependent on the reliability of the provider's knowledge or experience. Advice can be given on many subjects, for example how to enter a field, succeed in a job interview (Hagevik, 1998; Smith, 1998; Stasny, 2001), prepare for a career (Anderson, 2001), or face job loss (Chaplain, 1999). Advice may be given by someone with knowledge of a particular field, such as a photographer who advises students on the personal or academic requirements for a successful career in photography (Farrell, 1997; Levine, 2000). Typically,

the provider of advice focuses on the topic and does not modify the information according to the audience: the characteristics of the information-seeker do not affect the content of the advice. In general, advice-seekers have already identified themselves with the topic and are looking for specific information on that topic (Borgen 2001).

**Guidance** involves personalizing information to suit the particular needs of the client. Unlike advising, the success of guidance hinges on gaining specific information about the client by means of formal and informal assessment processes, and then providing information chosen for its relevance to the client. Interaction between guidance practitioners and their clients often takes the form of an interview, or information-gathering process, that establishes the type of information the practitioner will provide. The focus of the exchange, and the direction of the interview with all its twists and turns, are determined by the client's needs and do not reflect the practitioner's interests alone (Wilden & La Gro, 1998, p. 176).

**Career counselling** is an interpersonal process that moves beyond providing client-relevant information to broader issues, such as career development, work-adjustment, work-dysfunction, and integration of life roles with other work roles that may or may not be directly related to work (Herr, 1997). It involves exploring the other person's point of view, tentatively offering other angles for consideration, and discussing possible action planning with the client (Borgen, 2001). Given the broad definitions of the term "career" provided in this monograph and elsewhere, the wide range of work, vocational, and life-role issues that these definitions imply, and the rapid and chaotic nature of the changes currently taking place, the role of counselling in career/life planning can be seen as crucially important.

## Integrated services

If the aim is to develop an effective set of services in support of TVET, it is clear that advice, guidance and counselling are all needed. However, given the bias against TVET in some cultural and social contexts, and the various factors that cause many TVET participants either not to complete programmes or not to use their training to find employment, subsequently we need to reconsider how these services are offered. Advisory services are most appropriate for people who are seeking information, who know how to use it, and who are receptive to the advice they are given. Guidance can help people to consider their suitability for different career and educational opportunities, to explore alternatives they may not have considered previously, and to engage in appropriate decision-making about their future career/life path. Counselling is required in situations where people need to explore their views and attitudes related to career and educational opportunities, their personal level of readiness to pursue various options, their cultural and social contexts, and the need to include others who may be important in the decision-making process for that person. Part of the exploration process in counselling will assist the person seeking service, and significant others involved in the process, to consider the opportunities available from a fresh perspective, and then engage action planning activities that are appropriate both for the person involved and for those around them (Borgen, 2001).

The current situation is that advisory services are readily available in many countries. Guidance services often are available in basic education, but are frequently not accessible to those outside the school system. Counselling services are more rare, especially outside the school system, even in the so-called more developed countries. In situations where there is a bias against TVET opportunities and the career paths leading from them, people often deprive themselves of meaningful educational and career opportunities because they cannot see themselves as part of the TVET system. This unfortunate situation is often based on outdated assumptions

and beliefs on the part of both service-providers and service-seekers.

We believe that an integrated and holistic approach is needed that provides advice and guidance to those who need it, and offers counselling to those who need help in seeing the vast array of possibilities that are available to them. This integrated and holistic approach would begin with a client-needs assessment in order to determine whether advice, guidance or counselling would be most appropriate. Without this preliminary, much time and money could be wasted providing information about opportunities that clients were reluctant to pursue, because they could not “see themselves” in those roles (Borgen, 2001). An integrated and holistic approach to guidance and counselling services has the potential to resolve many of the problems associated with fragmented approaches and help implement a learner- and worker-oriented approach that is capable of meeting individual and social needs throughout life.

### ***Managing chaos***

It is a recurring theme in this monograph that the concept of career encompasses both job and non-job-related issues, throughout life, in a context of rapid and chaotic change. The changes concerned are not just more rapid than those experienced in the past, Major changes are taking place on a multitude of fronts, each acting as a catalyst for change on every other front (Esbin, Chapter 4). The situation is as controllable as an ever-growing, billowing cloud. The result is that many people feel they have lost control, are unable to make predictions about their future, and have little sense of personal accomplishment in their work (Amundson & Morley, Chapter 6). All the authors acknowledge the need for career-related services that enable clients to make better-informed decisions in this sea of change, and to make them on the basis of a feeling of individual self-worth. The goal is to help clients to be more self-sustainable and self-confident in contexts of rapid change, so that they can become the managers of their own careers and more “chaos competent” (Borgen, 2001). Within this context, it is essential that services be described clearly in terms of what they can and, perhaps more importantly, cannot do. It also challenges educators to reconsider the range of

competencies needed to offer a more seamless and integrated counselling, guidance and advisory service.

## **Education for all and lifelong learning**

An area of great importance when considering guidance and counselling in relation to TVET is the concept of education for all throughout life. It focuses on the importance of access to and viable participation in educational opportunities irrespective of age, culture, gender, socio-economic level or ability. For this to happen, lifelong learning must become a fundamental right for all, in exactly the same way as basic education is a fundamental right for all. Achieving that goal requires going beyond resource availability to address participation rates and education and training outcomes, especially for marginalized people. A meaningful lifelong learning programme needs to tap into the learner's own motivation, so that it becomes self-driven by the learner's creative imagination (Esbín, Chapter 4), and to be offered in a context and time frame convenient to learners, especially those who belong to a marginalized segment of society (Grierson et al., Chapter 5).

Lifelong learning is not an optional extra. People continue to learn throughout their lives, in formal and informal contexts, and in work-related, community, and institutional settings. There is a need to encourage people to plan their learning, rather than leave it to chance. Furthermore, when advocating the importance of education for all throughout life, it is important not to make the connection between education and job so inflexible as to cut people off from the wide range of opportunities and resources that are available to them. Education for all needs to be seen as giving people the equipment to make a journey on their own. By tying education too closely to one job, we narrow and restrict the purposes and benefits of education, and we may set people up for what they perceive as failure when the job for which they have trained disappears from the labour market. When this happens people may be too rooted in their present because they are not equipped to explore, or focus on, other opportunities. The main purpose of a lifelong learning focus is not to overcome problems, but to help individuals develop in a manner that allows them to

respond effectively to changes and new developments (Van Esbroeck, Chapter 3).

To be truly effective, lifelong learning needs to be accompanied by lifelong career guidance and counselling services. Lifelong guidance and counselling services will help ensure that a broader range of the population will be able to see opportunities for themselves in TVET and other educational and training experiences, and to orchestrate their own lifelong learning. It will also help them to be welcomed as full participants in the educational programmes they enter and to make better use of the education they receive. In order for this to happen, policy-makers and practitioners need to work together to motivate all citizens to participate in the process of lifelong learning and help them to see a wide range of opportunities, including TVET and the career paths resulting from it, as viable for them.

### **Policy-makers and service-providers working together**

The integrated, holistic, lifelong approach to guidance and counselling services, interfaced with TVET and other education and training opportunities, presents a challenge for practitioners and also an opportunity to assume new roles. The issues discussed in this monograph, and the need to address those issues, will be most effectively addressed by policy-makers and service-providers working together towards common, or at least complementary, goals. For example, services could be operating on a holistic model, but still labour under restrictions imposed by a funding authority. On the other hand, a policy supporting holistic, one-stop, integrated services could be in place, but not operational because the service-providers have outdated beliefs or false assumptions about TVET or other education and training alternatives. Thus, both policy-makers and service-providers will need to take a broader view of the nature of the services and resources available for career exploration, including work experience, job shadowing, co-op education, and "take your child to work" initiatives. They will also need to recognize the contribution

that can be made by other information sources, such as people who are already employed and personal networks.

In some countries, there will need to be a substantial expansion of the infrastructure in order to support guidance and counselling services and promote TVET. Policy changes will be needed to create and maintain such support structures as labour market information systems, job posting services, job banks, and career development information resources. Dialogue with service-providers will be vital to ensure that policies are realistic and help to maximize client support. For the system to work well, practitioners, agencies, funding authorities and policy-makers will need to see themselves as partners in a larger undertaking that represents the entire community, linking community development, capacity-building, and community economic development, and working together to address the needs of the people they serve more successfully.

### **Training for service-providers**

When preparing TVET and guidance and counselling to play meaningful roles in the twenty-first century, one of the greatest challenges centres around the need to prepare service-providers for the new roles they will need to assume. Currently, the prevailing view is that the provision of career services is largely a one-way process. While this may be true of advisory services, it should not be true of guidance or counselling. However, the misconception persists. The preparation of service-providers is often haphazard and even trained counsellors have often not received sufficient training in key areas of vocational or career development. Designing and implementing the type of training that will prepare career advisers, guidance workers and counsellors to work in the multiple-role, integrated service system that is advocated in many of the chapters in this monograph is thus a necessary, if somewhat daunting, task.

## ***Focus of training***

Participants in the focus groups we mentioned at the beginning of this chapter had no doubt that training in the careers area needed to be broad in focus and to be provided for both practitioners and policy-makers. Career guidance and counselling processes need permeate teacher education in school, college, university and adult education settings, in order to encourage learners to consider the broadest possible range of options. At a philosophical level, people need to realize that guidance and counselling must become integral parts of the TVET system and of the lifelong learning process.

Training in guidance and counselling needs to emphasize that the process is one of collaboration between the service-provider and the client. Although advice may be given from the perspective and within the frame of reference of the information provider, guidance and counselling must always be seen as client-driven, tailored to the needs and circumstances of the service-seeker rather than determined by the service-provider. Guidance workers and career counsellors will need to learn how to obtain labour market information, especially from informal sources such as newspapers and other media reports, because often there is no infrastructure for collecting and disseminating formal labour market information. They will need to understand that a basic aim of career guidance and counselling services is to increase clients' confidence and self-directedness as they make informed career/life decisions (McMahon & Patton, Chapter 7). Focus group participants were in no doubt that career guidance and counselling would need to have an educational and/or developmental focus, that the focus should be on assisting clients in developing the attitudes, processes and skills they need for career/life exploration and decision-making.

## ***Content of training***

Focus group participants were also convinced that the training of career service providers needed to have a broad scope, to take in a wide range of people and to give them the tools needed to reach a broad audience. The range of



service-providers would thus include counsellors, guidance workers, career advisers, teachers, counter staff, managers and supervisors and policy-makers. Training should also cover a wide range of formats, giving students first-hand experience of the multitude of delivery formats they would be using with clients, which would include: face-to-face classroom instruction, CD-ROMs, the Internet, videoconferencing, and hands-on learning through experience. There was agreement that the content of training would need to extend beyond the traditional curriculum to include training for service-providers on how to market their services to potential clients and also how to convince administrators and managers of the need for guidance and counselling services, and service outcomes. The training should incorporate a mentoring component, and to be cost-effective should be delivered through a Train the Trainer format with comprehensive manuals for both participants and trainers. The training approach would also need to provide a model of the desired attitude to clients, one of respect and collaboration, fostering a relationship of trust.

### ***Scope of training***

We believe that in order to adequately address the challenges outlined in this monograph, and prepare guidance and counselling service-providers to assume their new roles in an integrated, holistic service system, it will be important for the scope of training to extend beyond service-providers themselves to include supervisors, managers, businesses and policy-makers in both government and the private sector. In order for training to be effective, there needs to be commitment from government and policy-makers to provide follow-up, so that trainers will have resources and time to do the training, participants will have permission and opportunity to use their new skills, and ongoing resources and infrastructure will be available to support the mandate for a broader service.

## **Process model for training/service delivery**

On the basis of the focus group discussion, we suggest that the following process model be used to train teachers, guidance workers and counsellors to help provide adolescents and adults with information on and access to TVET programmes. The process is illustrated in Figure 1 below. The model has client needs at its centre and requires ongoing involvement and communication among the key partners involved in developing, implementing and maintaining the effectiveness of TVET programmes. The process would begin with a needs assessment, to increase service-providers' understanding of the issues faced by a broad cross-section of community groups rather than restrict their focus to groups known to be most at risk of social exclusion in the post-industrial society (Hake, 1999; Hiebert, Collins & Robinson, 2001). It would then continue by familiarizing service-providers in training with the broadened mandate of service provision before providing the actual training in service delivery. The training model would continue with a focus on follow-up, involving ongoing monitoring, support and coaching of service-providers in the field, in order to consolidate learning and promote field applications of what has been learnt. The process would continue with an assessment of community needs to determine how they had shifted as a result of trained service-providers working more effectively with clients, and lead into a lifelong learning professional development model for service-providers.

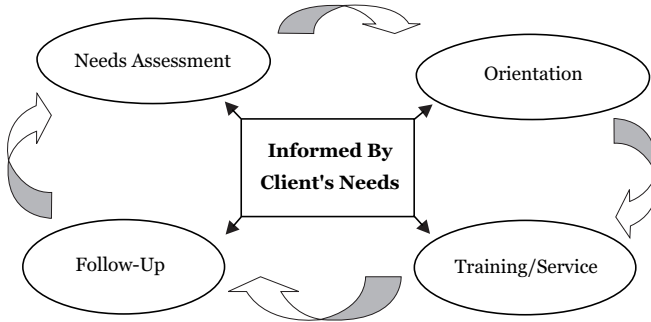


Figure 1. Suggested training and service delivery process

## Conclusions

Some people are able to set clear life goals and devise plans for achieving those goals, but many more are not able to do this. In many areas of the world both groups are living in a context of ongoing and escalating change that can appear to derail career/life plans. In order to address the challenges currently facing TVET in terms of acceptance, access and the use of training, there needs to be an expanded awareness of its place in the present world context, and of the new-style guidance and counselling service that is needed to support it. The purpose of this monograph has been to highlight some of the issues that need to be addressed in order to enhance the viability of TVET programmes, given the challenges presented by an ever-changing global labour market.

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