

Benchmark: Career Self-Assessment & Exploration Assignment

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Author Note

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I have no known conflict of interest to disclose.

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Abstract

This assignment is broken up into three major parts. First, the author details her experience using three career assessment instruments- the O*NET Interest Profiler, Value Sort Activity, and Spiritual Discernment Decision-Making Factors Survey detailed in Horton (2009). The author's personal results, reactions, and conceptualizations are detailed. The second major section is an occupational exploration. In this section, the author closely examines a career in meeting, convention, & event planning. Details such as preparation, opportunities, and economic benefits are discussed. The last major section of this assignment is a practical application in which the author must take a given hypothetical scenario and apply her knowledge of theories, cultural competence, assessments, and strategies to help the client find an effective solution.

Key Words: career assessment, career instrument, career exploration

Introduction

Career counseling is effective in helping clients plan for the future. Career counseling utilizes a number of theories, techniques, skills, and assessments. Through personal career self-assessment, career analysis, and a practical knowledge application, I was able to explore different facets of the career counseling profession. Taking the time to put myself in more of the client role helped me understand these components of career counseling, and allowed me to explore, my personal wants, needs, values, and strengths.

Part I: Career Self-Assessment

Career Instrument Results

O*NET Interest Profiler

After taking the *O*NET Interest Profiler*, I easily obtained my results. My highest score was in the social (S) personality domain with a score of twenty-five. Closely following that was the enterprising (E) personality domain with a score of twenty-three. The artistic (A) personality domain ranks third with a score of eighteen. Both the conventional (C) and investigative (I) domains received scores of one. Lastly, the realistic (R) personality domain received a score of zero. As it is clearly shown numerically, my top three categories scored significantly higher. It is interesting that they are all relatively close to another in terms of value as well. When looking into these personality traits, I feel as though I am a combination of them all.

Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey (2021) describes those who fall into the social type as generally kind, sympathetic, responsible, understanding, and warm. I feel like I can be all of these things, but I definitely am overwhelmingly responsible. I always ensure I meet due dates, keep myself organized, and meet the needed qualifications/pre-requisites. The enterprising personality type can be described as pleasure-seeking, agreeable, optimistic, and ambitious (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey,

2021). Out of these, I feel as though I align most with pleasure-seeking because I value enjoying the process of what I'm doing. Artistic persons can be described as introspective, emotional, independent, and expressive (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2021). I definitely am mostly emotional and introspective, as I feel as though I am emotionally aware and in-tune. I feel like these aspects of my personality align with the corresponding type rankings as well. I definitely am someone who likes to work with people and help them in various aspects. I think what sets me apart from others is I try to think of creative ways to benefit others. Due to these personality traits and character qualities, the two occupations that resulted from my primary interest area search were interior designer and various teaching jobs including preschool, kindergarten, middle school, as well as post-secondary.

Value Sort Activity

Moving onto the value sort activity, here I had to select my top values in a career from an intensive list. I first identified ten values, and then slowly identified my top three through the process of elimination. My top value from the list was excitement. Excitement is a feeling that is characterized by experiencing enthusiasm and eagerness (VandenBos, 2007). My second value that I identified was time freedom. While there is no direct definition of time freedom in the APA Dictionary of Psychology, it is quite self-explanatory. To me, time freedom is the ability to have a flexible schedule and have a healthy work-life balance. The value ranking at number three is the "quality of what I take part in." Again, because this is a phrase rather than a word, there is no direct definition. However, personally, I feel as though this could be defined as taking pride in what I deliver as a part of my job to clients or consumers. Putting these values together, I learned that I value a career that creates a sense of eagerness each day, allows me to work flexibly, and allows me to create a high-quality end result. My top two occupations that appeared based on these

principal value searches were Educational, Guidance, & Career Counselor/Advisor and Meeting, Convention, & Event Planner.

Spiritual Discernment Decision-Making Factors Survey

Another career instrument used for this assignment was Horton's (2009) Spiritual Discernment Decision-Making Factors Survey. After taking this survey, I found that I rated four decision-making factors as "very important" to me when making choices. These factors are (1) consulting with wise counsel, (2) considering personal desires and interests, (3) considering personal strengths, talents, gifts, and abilities, and (4) consulting the Bible. While I believe all that all the other factors listed are important, these resonated the most with my personal life and decision-making process. When I find myself making impactful life choices, such as a career path, I naturally am pulled towards asking those I trust for wisdom and clarity. I also heavily rely on scripture to provide a general course of action when I am struggling. However, I know that sometimes the lessons cannot be directly applied to my own life. I am also careful to not take scripture out of context. Especially when I know my decision will change what my daily life will look like, I always consider my personal wants, needs, talents, abilities, etc. This is not out of a selfish nature, but rather I examine if my choice would be something that I would enjoy and would be good at. This has become more important to me as I get older, as I have made decisions in the past that did not align with my talents, abilities, personality, and wants for a work environment. This led to a quick result of unhappiness, burnout, and emotional exhaustion. Aspects of work engagement- such as vigor and dedication- are associated with crafting a career towards strengths (Kuijpers et al., 2020).

Based on these factors, I am most likely to follow the Wisdom Approach with a Pragmatic Christian Wisdom Emphasis of spiritual discernment, as described by Horton (2009). This

approach has an overarching view that those who identify as Christians should rely considerably on their decision-making and reasoning abilities, their strengths, as well as consulting wise counsel (Horton, 2009). These foundational beliefs align directly with my factors ranked most important in the previous paragraph. In terms of the Pragmatic Christian Wisdom Emphasis, I feel as though I align with this because I use scriptures as a baseline but feel as though sometimes it cannot be taken literally.

Personal Reactions

Each of these instruments had unique pros and cons to them. For me, my favorite activity out of the three was the value sort activity. Out of the three activities, this one made me think the most. I related to a lot of the values listed on the page, so this activity really challenged me to engage in meaningful reflection and think about why I chose my answers. The cogitation process and focus on all positive aspects of a career was what I really enjoyed, and I am satisfied with my chosen results. The O*NET Interest Profiler was my second favorite. I thought the entire concept of this assessment was really interesting and fun to do. My results were not shocking, and I thought it was interesting to look through all the careers that could potentially be a good match for me. And lastly, the Spiritual Discernment Decision-Making Factors Survey results were definitely eye-opening. I thought that the reflection this activity sparked in me was necessary. It made me realize all of the things I could include God in when it comes to planning my future, so I definitely appreciated that as well.

In terms of the overall results of my self-assessment, I think they fit my self-perception pretty well. I perceive myself as a pretty open person, someone who likes to work with others, and has an overarching goal of being the reason someone remembers the goodness in humanity. I definitely am hyper-aware of my flaws, but I generally think that people perceive me this way as

well. I also perceive myself as a hard worker, and I really think that I can accomplish almost anything I set my mind to. I am very driven, and these self-assessment results definitely fall in line with who I am as a person and who I want to be come in the future.

When discussing the Holland codes, they are not spot on, but I think that the general ideas overlap. I believe that I do work well with almost all people, and I enjoy helping others. I have always had a goal of making a positive impact on the lives of others, and I'm learning that this is something that can be done in many ways and through many facets. I also think that I have always been creative in various ways as well. I enjoy crafting, writing poetry, and design. I feel as though I gain inspiration from unintentional things and events. This closely relates to my liking of starting and planning out projects, such as helping design weddings, various media-related items such as invitations, and party set-ups. The one thing I was surprised about in regard to my results is that the conventional category was not higher. When reading about the conventional category, Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey (2021) describe these persons as careful and obedient, which I feel I align with. The O*NET website states that conventional people pay close attention to detail and are good with routines, which I know are very true about myself as well.

Spiritual discernment is not something that has always come easily to me. In my past experiences, I admit, I did not use any type of discernment...let alone spiritual. However, because I have lived through many mistakes and wrong choices, it has enabled me to really appreciate the times where I can make good choices and look to God to lead me to where He has called me to be. I was raised as Christian, so there has always been some type of moral compass instilled in me through my faith. I generally have used that in my everyday decision making. As I have grown in my faith and become older, I have realized that spiritual discernment is not about judgment. It is about learning to lean on God in obedience. Right and wrong is something that I was taught from

a young age. As I live my life, though, I realize I struggle more with recognizing the difference between right and almost right.

Evaluation of Instruments

All of these assessment instruments can be examined for characteristics such as purpose, reading level, reliability, validity, gender fairness, and cultural fairness to determine suitability for me personally. In terms of purpose, I believe that they all aim to provide clarity in throughout the process of decision making and planning for the future. I also feel that the reading levels of all instruments- not including the Horton (2009) article, just the survey- are appropriate and could be utilized for people ages thirteen and above. Validity is high for all tools, as they all measure what they were intended to. In terms of reliability, because they results vary from person to person, and even amongst the same person at different times, reliability may be low. Because these instruments are pretty general in nature, and don't ask about gender or other impacts such as culture, race, age, gender, or disabling conditions, I feel as though this is something that could be explored in the future to make them more overall culturally competent.

With regard to any external factors that may have influenced my assessment results, I can only name a few. These factors are feeling slightly overwhelmed by all the instructions, being on a time limit, and general feelings of tiredness. These may have caused me to rush in reading questions and selecting answers.

Conceptualization

When forming an overall idea of these instruments and their results, I believe that they all agree with one another. Traits from the social, artistic, and enterprising *O*NET Interest Profiler* personalities definitely are in line with what I value in my career as well. I think that careers within these fields would allow me to build on what I value and where I see myself in the future.

According to Holland, in order to make a clear and confident career decision, a person needs to be differentiated- meaning they can identify an environment specific to them that will allow them to thrive based off their found personality type (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2021). Consistency, according to Holland, is the degree of relatedness between the different personality types (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2021). My top three codes are all closely related. I thought it was interesting that the social personality type is related to the conventional personality type, which I was surprised I did not rank higher on. In order to achieve a congruent work environment based on my top three Holland scores, I feel as though I need to have some direction, ability to help others, be creative, and act when needed. The biggest pattern I noticed throughout the assessments was that I really like to engage with others- whether that is helping someone else or seeking advice (someone helping me). Speaking on seeking counsel from others, my approach to spiritual discernment has influenced my career development and/or decisions by helping not make rash or sudden choices. This has helped me take time to seek out the Lord's plan and help from others to assist me in weighing my costs and benefits. Considering my past and present occupations, I can definitely see these assessment results reflected in my level of work satisfaction. For example, I used to work in child protection as an investigator, and it took all the life out of me (hence the low investigative score). Now I am a private nanny and wedding planner, which has greatly improved my overall quality of life and career satisfaction. If I were in the shoes of a Career Counselor, I would recommend that finding my passion will be the biggest influence on my life and that it's okay to decide something isn't the right fit.

Part II: Occupational Exploration

Career Field and Occupation of Choice Introduction

The occupation I have chosen to explore based on my top Holland types is a Meeting, Convention, & Event Planner. I mainly would choose to focus on weddings. The code for this occupation is ECS. I chose this because it is something I have always taken an interest in, and this assignment allows me to explore this. I also really like that it challenges me with one code that wasn't in my top three.

The Nature of the Work

The general nature of the work for this career is based on relationships and people driven. Regular duties- for both weddings and other events- are to meet with clients, engage with vendors and other parties involved, coordinate a timeline, design the layout and interior/exterior, and coordinating the event to make sure all goes to plan. To effectively carry out these duties, there are a number of skills that are needed. Some of the main skills are being able to manage change based on other people's actions and feelings, as well as trouble shoot when needed. At the end of the day, you are working to help bring someone else's vision to life, so it's important to be able to put your own feelings aside.

One of the things that I feel I would enjoy most about this job is the flexibility in scheduling it allows. The activities of this job and the typical workday go hand in hand. Each day is different than the one previous to it, which is another aspect that I think fits with my personality as well. Planning days are often filled with client meetings and event prep. This could look like creating invitations, websites, or physical pieces of the event. The actual days of events are a lot of setting up, coordinating, keeping a timeline, and making sure all the small details are correct.

Working Conditions

For this career, the working conditions are unique as well. For example, there may not be a steady work environment. From my experience, there are often "home bases" or offices that

event planners work out of, but the fulfillment of their jobs are done in various venues, with various people, in various locations. There is often a team of people who work with one another in planning, but the clientele is always varying. This career brings working with closely trusted people in putting together small details, but also calls for being able to report to stakeholders or clients. The planning stages may take place during typical work hours- such as nine AM through 5 PM- but majority of the time, the hours fluctuate. Most events will be on the weekends, which is a big factor for some people. Also, events are typically held in the evening or at night, so there will be times where planners are there past midnight. Supervision during events may vary, depending on who someone is working for, who is leading the event, relevant stakeholders, and what the plan of action is for each event. In this career, you work with many populations of people, but mostly adults who are financially able to pay for a larger scale event. With all of these different factors in mind, psychological aspects of work setting are also important to take notice of. Because the work you present is a direct reflection of you and your capabilities, stress levels can be high. Crisis situations can arise- such as no-show staff, weather delays, etc. A professional in this industry must be able to work with set deadlines, manage a team, and complete multiple tasks to create a big picture event.

Preparation and Qualifications

In order to be successful in this career, certain preparations and qualifications are necessary. According to the National Center for O*NET Development (2010), this is a level four career- meaning that some college or a bachelor's degree is usually needed. In terms of skillset, a successful person within this has the skills of active listening, attention to detail, effective communication, multitasking, and reading plans and work-related information (National Center

for O*NET Development, 2010). The use of technology is also important, as a lot of preparation and communication are used with software like Microsoft and Canva.

Above all though, this field highly relies on experience and personality. The only way one can begin to understand the world of planning and coordinating is to do it. I have heard from professionals who have their own business within this field that experience can replace a degree any day. On top of experience, it is important that that professionals within the field are stress tolerant, cooperative, adaptable, and dependable (National Center for O*NET Development, 2010).

Opportunities and Future Outlook

Within this field, the opportunities and future outlook are definitely bright. The National Center for O*NET Development (2010) states that new job opportunities are very likely in the future for this field. This workforce size can definitely vary depending on location, as they are usually bigger in cities and highly developed areas. This profession is located all throughout the world, as there are events that take place worldwide with no boundaries. The workforce is made up of various personalities and backgrounds, as some people do this as a side job as well. Continuing with the high variability within the field, the size of corporations and firms also differs. Some major businesses have hundreds of planners and employees, while some are just a handful of people working together.

One note that needs to be discussed is the job security, advancement, and related opportunities. In terms of security, I feel as though this job may have less than others. This is one of those careers where you are going to get out what you put into it. It may take time, hard work, and sacrifice, but someone can build a very successful planning business from the ground up. I also want to touch on the fact that, post the COVID-19 pandemic, the world is more aware of the

possibility of quarantine and shut down. If something like this were to happen again, this industry tanks. However, as long as we live in a healthy world, there are lots of opportunities to grow and advance. This is something that allows for mentorships, various internships, and assistant type of roles.

Economic and Non-Economic Benefits

The economic and non-economic benefits for this career are also factors that are important to discuss. Usually, entry-level positions in this field are assistant positions. This is the position that I currently hold within my company. For workers in the planning field in general, the average salary is \$52,560 (National Center for O*NET Development, 2010). On the low end of the income spectrum, some planners make roughly \$32,050 (National Center for O*NET Development, 2010). On the other end, some professionals can make over \$92,000 annually (National Center for O*NET Development, 2010). This field allows for large-scale flexibility in terms of benefits. Most companies, however, may not offer insurance or retirement. These benefits are dependent on the size and funding of the company. Depending on if someone is full-time, part-time, or independently contracted, benefits such as vacation and sick leave may differ as well. In my personal opinion, those who are in this business reap more non-economic benefits, such as high personal satisfaction, the ability to help others achieve their visions, a flexible work schedule, and the ability to dictate the use of their personal and professional time.

Disadvantages and/or Special Situations

While some view the flexible hours as a plus, this does also mean there are irregular hours, night work, and the high possibility for over time. It is the responsibility of the planner to help set up and breakdown, so this means arriving to the event early as well as staying late. On top of this, depending on the location of the business, there are also busier seasons. For example, the busiest

seasons are winter and fall in Florida. It is too hot during the warmer months of the year to hold outdoor ceremonies and events. This work field may also require travel, again, dependent on the event itself and where the planner is centrally located.

Reflection

Overall, certain aspects of the occupational characteristics and requirements appealed to me. These include the ability to create a flexible schedule and have the ability to work with people on creating some of their most memorable moments. On the flip side, the aspects that disappointed me are the potential of lack of benefits such as retirement and paid vacation. However, for me, I feel as though the positives outweigh the negatives. While it is important to have security in your job, I don't want to feel stuck in what I plan to pursue professionally. I have experienced this before, and it has taught me that I would rather enjoy what am doing and have a sense of both pride and passion. Through this assignment, I have learned that every job, no matter how appealing it seems, will include some type of sacrifice. These occupational characteristics and requirements fit with my current interests and values because it allows me to explore the artistic and creative side of my personality, as well as engage with people and be social. These also align with my career goals, as I aim to love what I do and help others in the process of that.

Throughout this process, I have discovered that using career information and available resources has both advantages and limitations. The same will hold true when using them in my future career of counseling as well. Some advantages include giving some direction and can open up lots of topics for discussion. At times, my clients may not have any idea what their interest are or what they want to do. These tools can be good place to start to "clear the fog" and get them thinking. Some limitations include clients becoming dependent on them and potentially causing more confusion. If the results yield some unexpected result, this may add to the burden of things

to work through. Ultimately, the client is the one who is going to make the final decision, and it's important to recognize that they're the ones choosing the right path- not the machine or the personality test.

Part III: Practical Application

Given the scenario, my personal positions may potentially influence how I address this client's concerns. For example, because I do not identify with the Asian race or culture, I may have trouble understanding the different perspectives in this situation and the weight they hold. Another position that may influence my approach is my personal opinion on what I think is best for the client. Because our methods of spiritual discernment differ as well, there may be a disconnect on how we discuss seeking guidance from God and the Holy Spirit. And lastly- which is potentially the most impactful one- while it will always be my goal to understand the client and let them take the lead in planning their future, counselors are human too. It is human nature to automatically feel like we have the correct answer. To ensure that I do not impose my personal positions, spiritual discernment approach, or values on the client, I plan to let the client act as the expert in their own life. I will take the approach that I am there to help the client discover what their top priorities, truths, and values are. To do this, I will want to explore the client's life prior to coming to college. I want to understand the client outside of the college and career planning process. Many postmodern theorists believe that the professional should never become blind to the impact of a person's unique and individualized life experiences can provide meaning and a purpose when it comes to a career and related decisions and behavior (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2021). To ensure the focus remains on the wants and needs of the client, I will keep this in mind as we progress through our work together.

To achieve this goal, three counseling strategies I could use with this client are the implementation of additional assessments, the inclusion of positive psychological interventions (PPIs), as well as the use of technology/information resources. In this particular case, the inclusion of additional assessments is important because the client has been heavily influenced by the Interest Profiler and the related results on O*NET. While this information may be helpful, it should be weighed amongst other results as well. This allows the client to have more exposure to different methodologies, which may spark further self-discovery and discussion. Personality, skills, and/or interests could all be assessed. Some examples could be the Big Five Personality Test, a Personal Strengths Inventory, and the Motivational Appraisal Personal Potential assessment (Yale University, 2023).

Next, the addition of PPIs in career counseling aims at including interventions that result in hope, strength, adaptability, and empowerment (Owens et al., 2019). To make this more inclusive for various cultures, its encouraged to assess “What intervention, prevention, or promotion approaches, by whom, is most effective for this individual under which set of circumstances, taking into account their specific concern, positive psychological functioning, intersecting identities, and contextual considerations?” (Owens et al., 2019, p.306). By utilizing this skillset and answering these questions, I would allow the client to explore the career path that makes the most sense for her own life, as well as explore what she enjoys and what her strengths are. This also aligns with ASCA Code A.4.d- which speaks about developing a positive attitude.

Lastly, the use of technology/information resources, such as a virtual career centers and smartphone applications, could also be beneficial. These resources would allow the client to explore more detailed parts of various careers- such as experience required, degree required, salary, etc. These are all important factors when choosing a career, and the client may feel more secure in

her ultimate decision if these have been explored and addressed. This supports the NCDA's code F.1.c., which discussing the utilization of outside assistance when necessary and appropriate.

Conclusion

To summarize- within the body of this assignment, I have utilized various career assessment instruments, completed an in-depth analysis of one of my current jobs, and utilized my knowledge in a practical application scenario. Overall, it can be seen how useful these tools can be in providing guidance towards future endeavors. These tools have proven to be useful and effective in career counseling, but it is important to remember that they are best utilized in conjunction with debrief and discussion.

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Presentation link: https://watch.liberty.edu/media/t/1_2c0ltkvc



BENCHMARK: CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PROPOSAL ASSIGNMENT FOR 10TH GRADE STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

By: Annalise Giordano

COUC 522

Fall 2023

Introduction

WHAT:

Career development program designed specifically to meet the needs of target population

WHO:

10th grade students who live in foster care

WHERE:

Short term: Hillsborough County, FL high schools

Long term: national implementation

WHEN:

After program proposal is approved

My career development program will be designed specifically for 10th graders who live in foster care. The program will include all genders, religions, races, ethnicities, etc. of the student body. This is a population that is generally underserved and overlooked. My program will include X, Y, Z, but I will elaborate more on that later in the presentation. To start out, this program will be implemented in select public high schools within Hillsborough County, FL - which is where I currently reside. My long-term goal for this career counseling program is for it to reach national levels of implementation. There is a presenting need for this population throughout the country. It is my hope that this proposal is approved, and then from there the planning and implementation process can begin.

RATIONALE



Moving into the body of the presentation, I will now go over the rationale for the target population as well as the program as a whole.

Rationale: Target Population

Why students in foster care?

- Vocational development is an essential part of growing up and successful employment. This element of development is often disrupted in the lives of students in foster care to instability and the hardship faced to due challenging life circumstances (Gates et al., 2019)
- Once students transition from foster care to living on their own without support, they often face unemployment, underemployment, and poverty (Gates et al., 2019)

Hillsborough County Children Removed to Foster Care During October 2021 through September 2022	Count	Rate	State Rate	Rank (high=1 to low=67)
Total Removals to Foster Care	1,024	30.8 per 10K	26.0 per 10K	37
Average Monthly Removals to Foster Care	85.3	2.6 per 10K	2.2 per 10K	36
Reentries to Foster Care	198/1,024	19.3%	19.8%	31.5
Reentries to Foster Care within 12 months of Previous Discharge	81/1,024	7.9%	7%	24

(Florida Child Welfare Measures., n.d.)

First off, I want to provide the rationale for this program as a whole. To start off, I will answer provide evidence as to why the target population of 10th grade students in foster care was chosen. I will break it down piece by piece. So first, “why choose students in foster care?” As stated on the previous slide, the youth within the foster care are underserved and generally do not receive the services needed to help promote a positive future. I previously worked in the field child protection as a provisionally certified investigator, so have I seen first-hand how children and families are impacted by the lack of support and the overall system itself. My strategy used for determining the specific career development needs of this target population in my county is based off of my own personal experiences, my previous co-workers experiences, and the data collected from Hillsborough County, FL. The most recent data from Florida Child Welfare Measures from October 2021-September 2022 shows that there was just over 1000 removals in just one year. Per 100,000 cases, 30.8% of them resulted in children being placed in foster care. Just from county data alone, it can be seen how large this population is.

For all high schoolers, vocational and career development is an essential part of creating and maintaining a meaningful and successful future. According to

Gates et al. (2019), this particular element of development is often disrupted in the lives of students in foster care to instability and the hardship faced to due challenging life circumstances. By choosing to target this population, the issues of unemployment, underemployment, and poverty faced once students live independently can be combatted.

Rationale: Target Population

Why 10th grade?

- 9th and 10th grade are critical time periods for career development and planning but are often overlooked. Knowledge-based intervention implemented in this time period can lead to higher college application and attendance rates (Bhat & Stevens, 2021).
- Other areas of enlightenment include:
 - Colleges
 - Majors
 - Careers
 - Steps needed to accomplish identified goals (Bhat & Stevens, 2021)

Next up, why 10th grade students?

Bhat & Stevens (2021) found that 9th and 10th grade are critical time periods for career development and planning. However, these are often overlooked. Majority of the time, school counselors meet with students junior and senior year, when time for the planning phase has diminished. Knowledge-based intervention implemented in the beginning of high school can lead to higher college application and attendance rates. By introducing students to career development earlier, they have the opportunities to learn about other areas of enlightenment, such as colleges, majors, different careers, and the steps needed to accomplish their unique identified goals. This way, when the time does come for applications, SATs, ACTs, letters of recommendation, etc., they have an idea of what is the right path for them.

Rationale: Career Development Theory

John Krumboltz's Learning Theory of Career Counseling

Factors that influence career decisions

- Genetic endowment & special abilities
- Environmental conditions and events
- Instrumental and associative learning experiences
- Task-approach skills (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2021)

Factors that influence beliefs about oneself

- Self-observation generalizations
- Worldview generalizations
- Task-approach skills
- Actions (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2021)

Why use this theory as a foundation?

- Students are allowed to make mistakes and change their minds
- Unforeseen circumstances (happenstance) are accounted for (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2021)
- Highlights the importance of learning experiences and task approach skills in students (Ireh, 1999)
- Emphasis is on teaching students' decision-making techniques and effective ways to utilize them in career making decisions (Ireh, 1999)

The last part of the rationale section is the career development theory section. This particular intervention is based on John Krumboltz's Learning Theory of Career Counseling. This theory is based on the same assumptions of Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasizes the interaction between a person, their environment, and the behaviors that are reinforced. According to Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, (2021), Krumboltz's theory asserts that there are four different factors that influence career decisions and beliefs about oneself.

Starting with career decisions, the factors are

Genetic endowment & special abilities: these are things like race, gender, intelligence, and abilities

Environmental conditions and events: cultural, social, political, and economic forces, which are out of our control

Instrumental and associative learning experiences: this is our behavior repertoire, meaning what behaviors were reinforced and what behaviors were punished. And I want to clarify that in sense sense, punishment is not what it sounds like. Rather, it is a behavior that results in a consequence that makes it occur less.

Task-approach skills: skills such as decision making, problem solving, goal setting, information gathering, and values clarifying.

Moving on, the Factors that influence beliefs about oneself are

Self-observation generalizations: the beliefs we hold about our selves, who we are, and what we are capable of

Worldview generalizations: our beliefs about the world and how it functions

Task-approach skills: same as previously stated

Actions: our learning experiences and the behaviors we engage in. in terms of career counseling, these include These actions include applying for a job, entering a training program, applying to college and graduate school, changing jobs, and taking other steps to progress in one's career

So why use this theory as the foundation and rationale for this program?

To put it simply,

- Students are allowed to make mistakes and change their minds
- Unforeseen circumstances (happenstance) are accounted for (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2021)
- Highlights the importance of learning experiences and task approach skills in students (Ireh, 1999)
- Emphasis is on teaching students' decision-making techniques and effective ways to utilize them in career making decisions (Ireh, 1999)

PROGRAM STANDARDS



Wrapping up the rationale, I am now going to move on to the program standards.

Program Standards: ASCA

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindset and Behavior (M&B) Standards

Mindset 5

(American School Counselor Association, 2021)

“Belief in using abilities to their fullest to achieve high-quality results and outcomes”

Mindset 6

(American School Counselor Association, 2021)

“Understanding that postsecondary education and lifelong learning are necessary for long-term success”

Behavior Standards Learning Strategies (B-LS)7

(American School Counselor Association, 2021)

“Long- and short-term academic, career and social/emotional goals”

Part one of the program standards come from the American School Counselor Association (or ASCAS) Mindset and Behavior standards.

2 standards come from the mindset portion, while one comes from the behavior portion.

The first mindset I selected is mindset 5, which states “Belief in using abilities to their fullest to achieve high-quality results and outcomes.” This discusses a mindset that students should develop through intervention. Often times, I have seen children in foster care struggle with a positive self-image due to the chaos and loss. This is something that this certain population can definitely benefit from, so this is a program standard that will help participants not only in the career development realm, but other areas of life too.

The next standard is based off of Mindset 6, which reads “Understanding that postsecondary education and lifelong learning are necessary for long-term success.” This intervention is focused around career and vocational development, so this sets the stage for a relevant learning objective, which be discuss shortly.

The last standard based off of ASCA is from the Behavior Standards Learning Strategies #7 which says, “Long- and short-term academic, career and social/emotional goals.” This standard highlights how all of these areas are intertwined and will have an impact on one another.

Program Standards: NCDG

National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG) Framework

Personal Social Development Domain

(National Career Development Association, 2004)

Goal 1. “Develop understanding of self to build and maintain a positive self-concept.”

Educational Achievement and Lifelong Learning Domain

(National Career Development Association, 2004)

GOAL 2. “Participate in ongoing, lifelong learning experiences to enhance your ability to function effectively in a diverse and changing economy.”

Career Management Domain

(National Career Development Association, 2004)

GOAL 2. “Use a process of decision-making as one component of career development.”

The second half of the program standards come from **National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG) Framework**.

The first standard is goal one under the Personal Social Development Domain which states “Develop understanding of self to build and maintain a positive self-concept.” this is closely related to the first domain under the ASCA standards, and it discusses how oneself image or self-concept plays a role in what we believe we are capable of as individuals. This relates to the jobs and careers student may believe that are capable of.

The second standard is goal 2 under the Educational Achievement and Lifelong Learning Domain, which reads “Participate in ongoing, lifelong learning experiences to enhance your ability to function effectively in a diverse and changing economy.” As we know, college may not be for everyone. I included this standard to help students understand that there is no one single correct path in life. These student’s have learned firsthand that factors outside of our control impact us, and this shows the importance of understanding life-long learning and adapting.

The last standard is goal 2 under the career management domain, and it says, “Use a

process of decision-making as one component of career development.” From this point on, the target population will have to navigate a number of different choices and decisions. By ensuring that student’s have a clear decision-making strategy, they hopefully will be more likely to choose an option that results in a positive impact.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



Now that I have identified the program standards from both the American School Counselor Association and the National Career Development Guidelines, I will present the learning objectives for this program.

Learning Objectives

1.

One third of the way through the program, student participants will be able to identify their interests and personal strengths.

2.

Two thirds of the way through the program, student participants will be able to identify possible post-secondary education and learning experiences that are of interest to them.

3.

By the end of the program, student participants will be able to set 3 SMART goals regarding their college and/or career planning, and then identify one they would like to pursue.

Based on the 6 standards I previously identified as both important and foundational for this proposed program, these are the three learning objectives that state what student participants going through this program will be able to accomplish.

The first learning objective is “One third of the way through the program, student participants will be able to identify their interests and personal strengths.” This is based on ASCA Mindset 5 and NCDG **goal one under the** Personal Social Development Domain.

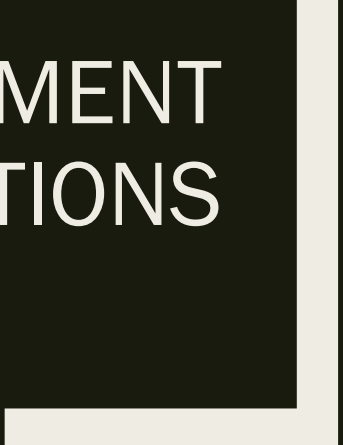
The second learning objective builds on the first, stating that “Two thirds of the way through the program, student participants will be able to identify possible post-secondary education and learning experiences that are of interest to them.” This supports ASCA Mindset 6 and NCDG **goal 2 under the** Educational Achievement and Lifelong Learning Domain. The information learned from the first learning objective is applied here.

The third learning objective states “By the end of the program, student participants will be able to set 3 SMART goals regarding their college and/or career

planning, and then choose one that is the most attainable.” This supports ASCA standard B-LS 7 and NCDG goal 2 under the career management domain through the act of setting goals and making a decision on which is most attainable.

These learning objectives will help provide the framework of guidance and clarity for students who may lack a vision for the future. For some of the target population, their lives are lived on a day by day basis and it's hard to envision anything meaningful for the future. By providing the skeleton of the framework and providing both knowledge and support, the students will have the ability to give life to the plans.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS



Career Development Interventions: 1

Personal Interest Inventory

- Faith or religion
- Solving numerical problems
- Conducting experiments
- Leading a team
- Helping others
- Working individually
- Patterned workdays
- Reading
- Writing poetry
- Working with children
- Painting and drawing
- Working as a part of a team
- Investigating and drawing conclusions
- Learning new languages
- Composing music
- Athletics
- Non-structured schedules
- Cooking/working in the kitchen
- Vehicle repairs
- Problem solving
- Taking and following instruction
- Paying attention to details
- Theater
- Helping a production team
- Learning about the human experience
- Concrete answers
- Politics

The first career development intervention is a personal interest survey. This is directly linked to the first learning objective. Here, I have compiled a list of possible interests that 10th graders may have. It is important to note that this list is by no means exhaustive. Every student will have different interests and may be able to help add to the list. It is my hope that it can be added to as the number of program implementations increase. I chose to create the list rather than copy it from an interest profiler because majority of them do not align with what 10th graders understand and focus on.

For this particular intervention, I will have students go through this list, and I identify 5-10 interests that they feel play a role in their lives. If they feel the need, they can add something not present on the current list. This portion will be done independently, as I do not want the answers to be persuaded in any way. This is just to give students an idea of what they really like to do. For some, this is not something that has ever really been considered.

For the facilitator, the instructions for this step would be to provide students with a copy of this list, advise them to look over it independent and identify a handful of interests on the list that they relate to, roughly 5-10. students can circle or highlight

these interests. Once this is done, they can move onto step two, which I will go over on the next slide.

- My top five interests are:
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
 - 4)
 - 5)
- How do I know these are my interests?
- Where do these show up in my life?
- How do my interests and school overlap?
 - 1)
 - 2)
- How do my interests and other areas of my life overlap?
 - 1)
 - 2)
- One way I will engage in my interests this week is...
- One career that I think utilizes these interest is...

Step 2 of this intervention is applying the interests identified to the students life. Independently, students will have the chance to fill out a worksheet with the following questions.

****READ SLIDE****

This allows the student to explore how their interests overlap with their daily lives. By exploring what student's believe they are intrinsically drawn to, they are exploring different task-approach skills- as we discussed under the career theory rationale.

Ideally, this would be the backside of the personal career inventory worksheet, so that the students can easily transition to this part of the activity. Once the activity is completed by all students in attendance, answers can be shared and discussed amongst the group.

Overall, this is a partly individual and partly group interaction.

Career Development Interventions: 2

Personal Strength Inventory

- Self-belief
- Experimental design
- Self-belief
- Self-regulation
- Social skills
- Study skills
- Teamwork skills
- Written communication
- Drawing data-based conclusions
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Honesty
- Planning and organization
- Leadership
- Speaking skills
- Creativity
- Ability to adapt
- Emotional regulation
- Empathy
- Curiosity
- Kindness
- Love of learning
- Dedication
- Positivity
- Confidence
- Courage
- Humor
- Gratitude

The next intervention is a personal strength rest survey. Again, this is directly linked to the first learning objective. This is similar to the previous intervention in terms of direction and style, except that what is being explored is different. Similar to the interest inventory, this list is not exhaustive and is meant to spark thinking and reflection.

For this particular intervention, I will have students go through this list, and I identify 5-10 personal strengths that they feel they possess. If they feel the need, they can add something not present on the current list. This portion will be done independently, as I do not want the answers to be persuaded in any way.

For the facilitator, the instructions for this step would be to provide students with a copy of this list, advise them to look over it independent and identify a handful of interests on the list that they relate to, roughly 5-10. students can circle or highlight these interests. Once this is done, they can move onto step two, which I will go over on the next slide.

- My top five strengths are:
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
 - 4)
 - 5)
- How do I know these are my strengths?
- Where do these show up in my life?
- Ways I can implement my strengths in school are...
 - 1)
 - 2)
- Ways I can implement my strengths in other areas of my life are...
 - 1)
 - 2)
- One way I will apply my strengths this week is...
- One career that I think requires these strengths is...

Step 2 of this intervention is applying the strengths identified to school, the student's personal life, and careers. Following the same model, students will have the chance to fill out a worksheet with the following questions on their own.

****READ SLIDE****

Exploring these allows for students to reflect on these aspects of Krumboltz's theory-genetic endowment & special abilities, Instrumental and associative learning experiences, Task-approach skills, and self-observation generalizations.

Once the activity is completed by all students in attendance, answers can be shared and discussed amongst the group.

Overall, this is a partly individual and partly group interaction.

Career Development Interventions: 3

Potential Pathways and Roadblocks

- Identify 3 potential pathways post high school graduation for each individual student
 - *Community college*
 - *Trade school*
 - *4-year university*
 - *Workforce*
 - *Specialty training*
- Identify circumstances that may block success in potential pathways
 - *Finances*
 - *GPA, grades, SAT score*
 - *Lack of outside support*
- Come up with solutions that may mitigate the impacts of roadblocks identified above
 - *Integrate personal strengths*



The third career development intervention is an exercise that explores pathways and roadblocks for the future. For this specific target population, there are a number of potential roadblocks. For this intervention, it will be done individually- just a facilitator and a student- just because sensitive information can be covered. This could be done in one of two ways- these prompts on the slide could be done on a worksheet, or the participant could engage in the topics in a simple verbal discussion.

So first, the student will identify potential pathways post high school. Some options include Community college, Trade school, a 4-year university, the blue-collar Workforce, or Specialty training for professions such as cosmetology, hairdressing, etc.

The next component of this is identifying circumstances that may block success in the potential identified

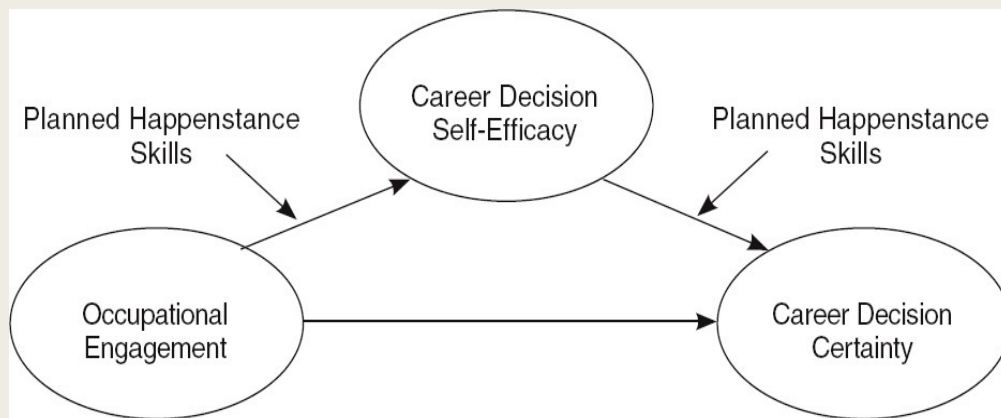
pathways. For this population, this could be circumstances such as Finances, GPA, grades, SAT scores, Lack of outside support, lack of stability, addiction, cyclical abuse, the list goes on.

The last step is to help the student come up with solutions that may mitigate the impacts of roadblocks identified above. These could be as simple as creating a weekly study plan or getting a tutor. It could also mean joining a psychoeducational group or working with social services. The aim here is to have the student's take some of their personal strengths they previously identified and apply them here.

This activity directly addresses learning objective 2. Going back to Krumboltz's theory, this intervention explores students' environmental conditions and events , instrumental and associative learning experiences, task-approach skills, worldview generalizations, and actions. This portion of the program also addresses happenstance, which addresses the occurrence of unplanned obstacles. Within Krumboltz's theory, these obstacles are not looked at in a negative light, as they provide learning experiences and continue to shape what someone wants to do with their career and their future in some way.

Kim et al. (2014)

A Moderated Mediation Model of Planned Happenstance Skills, Career Engagement, Career Decision Self-Efficacy, and Career Decision Certainty



The Career Development Quart, Volume: 62, Issue: 1, Pages: 56-69, First published: 05 March 2014, DOI: (10.1002/j.2161-0045.2014.00070.x)

Before I go over the last career development intervention for this program, I want to review an article titled “A Moderated Mediation Model of Planned Happenstance Skills, Career Engagement, Career Decision Self-Efficacy, and Career Decision Certainty” authored by Kim et al. (2014). This article concluded that career engagement strengthens students' decisions regarding their career through feelings of self-efficacy when they had the skills to approach happenstance. Put simply, when students were prepared with life skills that dealt with unplanned occurrences, they were more likely to discover unexpected career opportunities.

In this article, happenstance skills include Curiosity, Persistence, Flexibility, Optimism, and Risk Taking.

As it can be seen, when students are made aware that unforeseen circumstances can occur, it can actually have positive effects. Rather than being discouraged, students are learning to have the ability to seek new opportunities and learn from mistakes, mishaps, or even bad luck. And with this population in particular, a lot of them have been on the receiving end of the consequences of someone else's actions... so it is particularly useful.

Career Development Interventions: 4

SMART Goal Setting and Decision Making

S.M.A.R.T GOAL

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Time-Bound



Set a SMART goal for each of the identified potential pathways set in the previous activity



Assess each goal with each student

Feasibility
What is needed to succeed?
What level of interest does the child have?



After discussing each goal, the student will identify their top goal from the list



Create an action plan for accomplishing this goal

The last career development intervention that I will detail discusses SMART goal setting and decision making. Working with the facilitator, students will set 3 SMART goals regarding their 3 identified potential pathways set in the previous activity. Again, this could be done through a verbal discussion or could be put on a worksheet- Whatever the student prefers. Like the previous activity, this will be done individually, as sometimes sensitive information can become a topic of conversation. This way, students feel more comfortable letting their guard down. Because confidentiality cannot be promised in a group setting, this activity is not the most appropriate.

This development is directly related to the third learning objective of the program.

****REVIEW SMART GOAL AND READ SLIDE****

Reviewing the Krumboltz's theory basis for this activity, instrumental and associative learning experiences, task-approach skills, and actions are explored. This also satisfies the program standards of creating goals and using decision making skills (as they are "picking" one top goal).

With the facilitator though, it is important for them to remind students that it is okay

to change their mind. If they are taking action- small or big- to accomplish their identified goal and they no longer have an interest, it is always an option to explore a different goal or even create a new one. This really opens the door for the idea of exploration, learning from experience, and making decisions based on what students feel is best for them individually. Facilitators should be open to helping student's revise or recreate a goal and or action plan.

DELIVERY



Now, I will move into the details of the delivery and implementation of this program



Delivery Methods

- 1. Get school approval for program implementation
- 2. Consult with administrators, school counselors, and school social workers to review program standards, learning objectives, and interventions
- 3. Discuss feedback
- 4. Identify eligible group participants
- 5. Meet with potential participants and send home a parental consent form

Note: special consultation with Department of Children and Families (DCF) or Child Protective Services (CPS) is also appropriate. As a part of social services, investigators and case managers may be able to mandate or suggest student involvement in this program

Delivery Methods

To deliver this program, there are a number of steps involved. In schools, the general process will look like
1,2,3,4,5

Note: special consultation with Department of Children and Families (DCF) or Child Protective Services (CPS) is also appropriate. As a part of social services, investigators and case managers may be able to mandate or suggest student involvement in this program

MARKETING, RESOURCES, & COSTS



Moving onto some more details, I am going to go over program marketing, resources, and potential costs

Program Marketing

Building a Better Tomorrow Today

Flyers posted around school and in school related areas/events

Flyer and information given to social services, DCF/CPS, school counselors

Approaching student and families who have qualifying participants in private

Program marketing.

To market this program, in the most effective way, I plan to use a funneling strategy. I want to avoid directly calling students out in front of others in any type of way, as the target population can already be marginalized by their peers for a number of reasons.

As seen on the screen, the top of the funnel is the most generalized group. Flyers posted around school and at school events or areas may lead to word of mouth spread of the program.

The middle of the funnel is a more generalized population- the ones who may know students who qualify. Resources could be given to them to pass on or keep in their offices for people who show an interest

The last way to market this program is to quietly approach students in foster care who attend the school where this is being implemented. Their foster parents could be looped in as well in regard to information and consent.

Building A Better Tomorrow Today

An in-school program for 10th grade students in foster care

GENERAL INFORMATION

This is a career development program designed specifically to meet the needs of 10th- grade students who live in foster care

- Upholds on American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindset and Behavior (M&B) Standards and National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG) Framework
- Free of charge to families
- Led by school counselors

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- One third of the way through the program, student participants will be able to identify their interests and personal strengths.
- Two thirds of the way through the program, student participants will be able to identify possible post-secondary education and learning experiences that are of interest to them.
- By the end of the program, student participants will be able to set 3 SMART goals regarding their college and/or career planning, and then choose one that is the most attainable.

INTERVENTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- Personal interest inventory and exploration
- Personal strength inventory and exploration
- Identification of potential pathways and roadblocks
- SMART goal setting and rationale decision making

FORMAT & DELIVERY

- In-person; Both individual and group sessions

Please contact Annalise Giordano
for questions and enrollment
inquires

(123)-456-7890 EXT. 0001
Agiordano2@liberty.edu

This is an example of a flyer that could be posted and handout out upon request. All of the information on the flyer has been information we have gone over. It would give anyone some general yet important information

Resources & Potential Costs

RESOURCES NEEDED

- Access to data regarding colleges, costs, attendance rates, etc. (free via internet)
- Paper for flyer handouts and worksheets
- Availability of counselors for follow-up (if-needed)
- Knowledge about career counseling
- Knowledge about social services, DCF/CPS, foster care system
- Allotted time and day of the week for program implementation

POTENTIAL COSTS

- Materials (paper, copies/printing, pens, pencils, highlighters) ~ \$25
- Small snacks or fidgets for student participants ~ \$50

Now moving onto the resources needed and potential costs of this program. Because this is going to be implemented during the day at school majority of the resources needed are free or of little cost. For this project, I identified the following resources, a lot of which a school already has on on site or has access to:

Now, the potential costs to implement this program are also relatively low. I estimated on the higher end of the slide, as sometimes its better to be over prepared.

READ SLIDE and discuss

PROGRAM EVALUATION



Lastly, I am going to go over the proposed program evaluation.

Program Evaluations

1: Pre- and Post- test

1. Which should be considered when choosing a career or college path?

- Grades and GPA
- Personal interests and strengths
- My environment
- All of the above

2. Post-secondary pathways include what options?

- Trade school
- Community college
- 4-year university
- Employment
- None of the above
- All of the above

3. The acronym S.M.A.R.T stands for?

- Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound
- Special, manageable, affordable, relevant, thoughtful
- Safe, measurable, adaptable, rational, thorough

2: Participant Survey (Pre and Post)

Likert Scale 0-5

1. I can identify my interests.
2. I can identify my strengths.
3. I can integrate my strengths and interests in a real-world setting.
4. I can identify potential pathways for my future based on my wants and needs.
5. I know what roadblocks may hinder my progress.
6. I have the ability to overcome obstacles.
7. I can set goals for my future.
8. I hold the belief that I can be successful in the future.
9. I have a plan for my future.
10. I allow myself to learn and grow through change and mistakes.
11. Additional Thoughts: (optional)

My program evaluation plan includes 2 methods. Each will assess and determine if the intended outcomes (the learning objectives) have been achieved throughout the course of the program achieved.

The first evaluation is a pre and post test- meaning the participants will fill it out at the start of the program and at the end. It is three simple questions, and it will assess the students on some of the content provided during the program. This is not a content-heavy group, but through providing resources and discussions, students will have the opportunities to learn new terms and information. This measures if what we want to teach is actually being developed within the student.

Our second evaluation is a pre and post participant survey. Students will read 10 statements and identify on a 0 to 5 point likert scaler where they fall with 0 being not at all and 5 being 100% confident. This allows facilitators to measure student self-efficacy, which was discussed earlier in this presentation about being a pivotal factor. Students also will have the opportunity to note any additional thoughts if needed.

THAT CONCLUDES MY PRESENTATION!

See next slide for references and citations.

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