



# Essential Elements of Career Counseling: Processes and Techniques (2nd Edition)

By Norman E. Amundson, JoAnn E Harris-Bowlsbey, Spencer G. Niles

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The second edition of this textbook focuses primarily on the practice of career counseling by describing some of the basic techniques and resources that can be used to support the theories of career choice and development. The authors present information and a structure that is robust and, as such, can be widely applied. They also address some emerging issues such as Web-based counseling and provide case studies throughout the text. A belief in quality career counseling is at the forefront of this book, as well as the exploration of various myths and emerging trends. Career counseling is defined and the competencies that counselors need to pursue as part of their training agenda are outlined. As a supplement, the text includes the NCDA guidelines for competency standards and ethical guidelines as appendices at the back of the book.

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### Editorial Review

#### From the Back Cover

With a practical and straightforward approach, *Essential Elements of Career Counseling* focuses primarily on the practice of career counseling by exploring the basic methods, resources, and courses of action that can be applied in conducting career counseling every day. Perfect for use either as a main text or as a supplement to a more theory-based text, this book not only covers the basic techniques of developing career choice but also explores the emerging trends in the field, such as web-based counseling and the creation and use of virtual career centers online.

Over the years, the authors have developed career counseling programs in an array of settings around the world that varied from secondary school systems to colleges and universities to unemployment systems to immigrant transition services. Through their experiences, they have found that whatever the context, certain basic methods apply to all quality career counseling. *Essential Elements of Career Counseling* is a synthesis of these universal methods that leads students through evaluation, action planning, and follow-through, and that take into account the various facets of each case such as the individual, the environmental context, the socioeconomic context, and new technology.

#### ***Special Features Include:***

- **An emphasis on the process** of career counseling as opposed to the theory that gives the text a robust, hands-on accessibility and that makes this book ideal as a supplement in introductory career development classes.
- **An emphasis of web-based counseling** and other internet-related resources that keep students up-to-date with emerging trends in the field.
- **End-of-Chapter Summaries** that help students to synthesis and retain what they have just read and are also ideal for quick reviews of the chapter's main points.
- A “**Quick Start**” chapter at the beginning of the book that outlines the main themes of the book and allows students to quickly acquaint themselves with the mainstays of the book’s processes while linking each one to corresponding chapters in the book.
- **Case Studies** are provided throughout the text, which add real-life examples of career counseling while illustrating concepts and practices covered in the main text.
- **An Appendix** is located at the back of the book, which includes the NCDA guidelines for competency standards and ethical guidelines and which help students in the details and particulars of their counseling training.

#### About the Author

Norman Amundson is a professor of Counseling Psychology at the University of British Columbia. A leader in the field of career development, Amundson recently received the Best Book Award from the Canadian Counseling Association for his book *Active Engagement* (Ergon Communications, 2003). His research focuses on counseling methods, unemployment, and changes in working life, while his numerous lectures, articles, workshops and seminars emphasize the importance of imagination, creativity, and action in the career counseling process.

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Over the years we have had the opportunity to develop programs and teach career counseling in many different settings. These settings include the school system, colleges and universities, unemployment centers, and immigrant transition services. All of these contexts present opportunities and challenges. What we have observed is that whatever the context, certain basic processes seem to define good career counseling.

In addition to our work within the United States and Canada, we have offered career counselor training in international contexts in both Europe and Asia. While there certainly were some cultural variables to be considered, there were some basic career counseling processes that seemed to fit a variety of intercultural contexts.

Our plan with this book is to focus on some of the basic career counseling processes that we have observed in our counselor training. We present information and a structure that is robust and, as such, can be widely applied. We also address some emerging issues such as Web-based counseling. To make the book more readable, we use case studies throughout.

Chapter 1 sets the foundation for the book. We affirm our belief in quality career counseling and explore various myths and emerging trends. In this chapter we define career counseling and outline the competencies that counselors need to pursue as part of their training agenda. As a supplement to this chapter we include the NCDA guidelines for competency standards and ethical guidelines as appendices at the back of the book.

A starting point in counselor training is usually a basic understanding of some career counseling theories. With this in mind, in Chapter 2 we briefly examine the work of John Holland, Donald Super, and John Krumboltz, as well as some theorists within the constructivist tradition. For illustration purposes we begin with a case study and then look at how the counseling process would differ depending on one's theoretical position.

In Chapter 3 we make the case that career counseling is more than an individual activity. It is important to take account of both individual and contextual variables. Career planning must be imbedded within social and economic realities.

The first three chapters lay a foundation for the career counseling process. In Chapter 4 there is an emphasis on the importance of the counseling relationship and an exploration of various ways of facilitating the relationship. There also are suggestions for how to cope with client reluctance.

In Chapter 5 the focus is on different ways of elaborating a client's career concerns. Part of this process is to define client constraint statements and to specify a clear direction. One way to view client concerns is to use metaphors as a means of visualizing the problem.

Chapters 6 and 7 address the exploration process. In Chapter 6 special attention is given to different ways of self-exploration. Within this chapter are illustrations of different questioning methods, storytelling, metaphors and structured assessment techniques. Chapter 7 shifts the exploration process to more contextual and economic factors. There also is consideration of how each person has his or her own personal labor market.

The impact of the World Wide Web on counseling is considerable, and in Chapter 8 we focus specifically on ways in which the Web can support career counseling practice. We discuss various websites for career assessment and information and also provide some guidelines for how to evaluate the quality of websites. In keeping with the process orientation of this book, we also explore ways of using the website in various counseling situations.

Chapters 9,10 and 11 move the counseling process forward from exploration to consolidation, decision making, action planning, evaluation, and follow-through. This is the point where information is brought together, decisions are made, and action plans are constructed. While this represents a specific counseling phase, it also is a time where sensitivity is needed to provide extra support and to revise plans when little progress is being made. The counseling process is not linear, and there needs to be a place for constant evaluation and adjustment.

In Chapter 12 we return to the issue of Web-based counseling and focus more specifically on the creation of virtual career centers. We discuss the components of a virtual career center, how local information needs to be incorporated, and ways of organizing the center for maximum effectiveness. Examples of sites are also provided.

The closing chapter, Chapter 13, briefly discusses some of the adaptations that need to be made to incorporate career counseling into various settings. In particular, we examine the school setting, the university, and different community contexts.

We hope we have accomplished our goals with this book. Most of our students have appreciated our practical emphasis on career counseling process and on the use of the Internet as a career counseling tool. In preparing the book we tried to present the material in a manner that is interesting, straightforward, and accessible to a wide range of people. We look forward to receiving your feedback about the material that we have included.

## **Users Review**

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#### **Edith Stewart:**

As people who live in the particular modest era should be up-date about what going on or information even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era which can be always change and move forward. Some of you maybe can update themselves by reading books. It is a good choice to suit your needs but the problems coming to anyone is you don't know which you should start with. This Essential Elements of Career Counseling: Processes and Techniques (2nd Edition) is our recommendation to make you keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and want in this era.

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