Facilitating Career Development

Module 3

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Career Development Theory **and Its Application**

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Learning Objectives:

When you complete this module, you will be able to:

1. Review key career development theories, models, and techniques and apply them to the client populations you serve.
2. Define the following terms: occupation, job, career, career development, career counseling, career assistance, career guidance, and career planning process.
3. Describe the steps in the career development process.
4. State the reasons why understanding career choice and development theory is important.
5. State the limitations of career choice and development theories.
6. Explain the importance of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to the work of a career services provider.
7. Describe in detail the assumptions that underlie each of the four theory types: trait-and-factor, learning, developmental, and transition.
8. Review the details of additional career development theories.
9. Describe specific ways each of these theories can be applied to client cases.

NCDA Competencies Covered:

- Career Development Models
- Assessment
- Labor Market Information and Resources
- Helping Skills
- Technology
- Consultation

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Introduction to Career Development Theories

(Learning Objective 1)

This module looks at the career development process. There are numerous theorists who have studied career development and outlined what they identified as important steps or milestones in the process. This module focuses on four theories: trait-and-factor theory (John Holland), social learning theory (John Krumboltz), developmental theory (Donald Super), and transition theory (Nancy Schlossberg). There are additional resources in the Appendices for theories not covered in-depth in this module.

By the end of this module you will have a good sense of not only the concepts of each of these theories, but also you will have the opportunity to apply them to your own career development so far, which will help you understand them better. You will also have a good understanding of the relevance of these theories to the people you serve and how to apply them in practice.



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Common Terms Used in the Career Development

(Learning Objective 2)

Before discussing career development theories, it is important to define several terms that will be used throughout the Facilitating Career Development curriculum.

Occupation: a defined set of work tasks commonly performed for the purpose of making a particular product or performing a specific service (example: teacher, iron worker, librarian).

Job: the performance of an occupation in a specific place for a specific employer (example: special education teacher for the Parksville School District, iron worker for the Belair Construction Company, reference librarian at City College).

Career: the combination of activities performed at any given life stage in all roles of life, including the role of worker.

Career Coach: a person who guides another in planning and managing their career and developing an array of options related to career goals.

Career Development: the sequence of career-related choices and transitions made over the life span.

Career Counseling: the process by which a professional counselor provides assistance to an individual client or small group of clients so that they can make informed career choices and transitions.

Career Assistance: the process by which a career services provider provides defined kinds of support to an individual client or a small group of clients, including helping to increase self-knowledge, find career information, make a decision about a career, and/or conduct a job search.

Career Guidance: a planned, sequential program of services provided to individuals or groups for the purpose of assisting them in making informed career choices and transitions.

Career Planning Process: the steps an individual takes in order to plan a career.

Figure 3.1 shows the career planning process. Note that the steps of the process are circular, illustrating that the process of career planning is never final, but is repeated again and again throughout life. The arrows go in both directions between the steps because individuals often need to return to a previous step. For example, a client might find possible occupations or jobs at Step 3, but after learning more about these possibilities at Step 4, returns to Step 3 to find other possibilities.

Clients will come to you at various steps in the process. Sometimes you will be unsure how to proceed in your ability to help. At these times, it is important that you seek consultation from a supervisor or trusted mentor.

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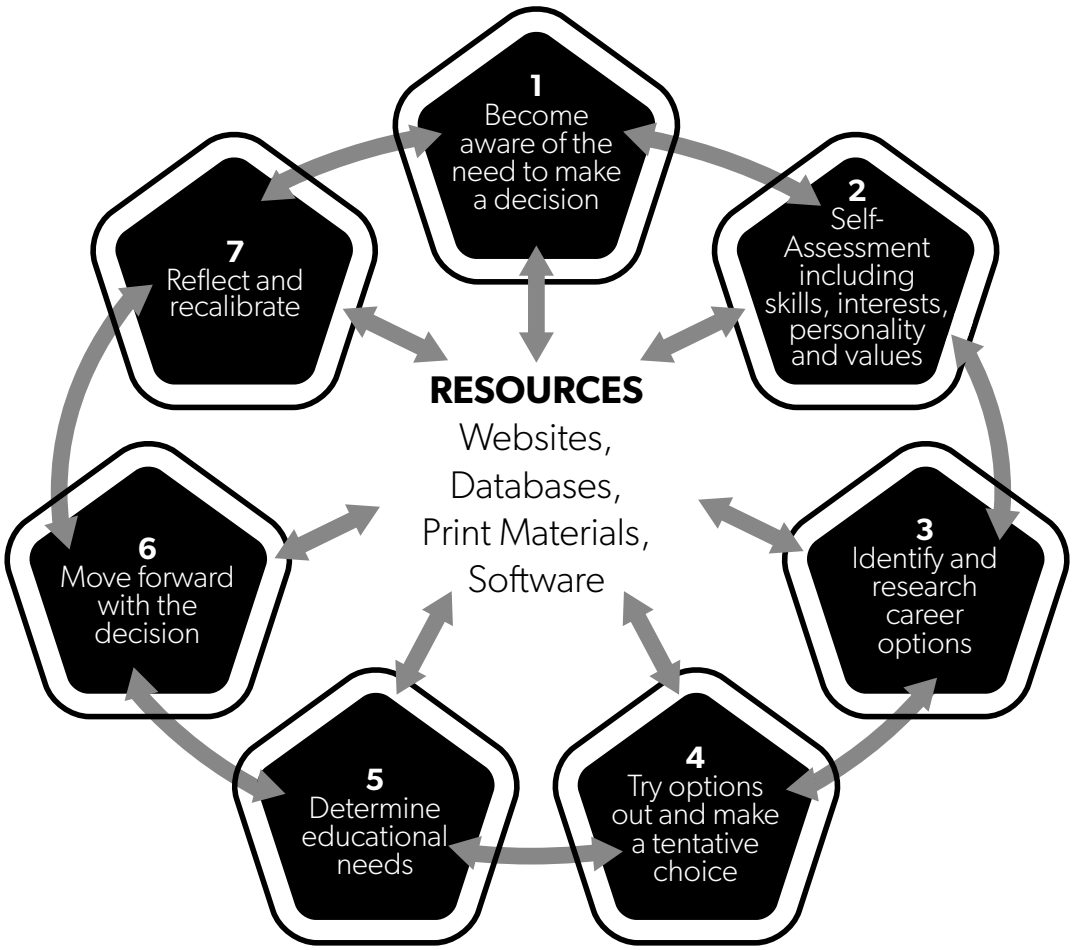


Figure 3.1 - The Career Planning Process
(Yale Office of Career Strategy, 2022)

Notice that there is an inner circle labeled "Resources." The central location shows that at all steps of the career planning process individuals need information, though the nature of the information will be different at each step. The resources referred to by this circle include, for example, information about occupations, schools and other training opportunities, programs of study, financial aid for education, and job-search strategies. The resources may also include information about ways to remove barriers to progress in the career planning process - ways such as obtaining help through referral agencies, ways to get help with childcare or eldercare, and sources of medical help.

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Steps of the Career Planning Process

(Learning Objective 3)

Step 1. Become aware of the need to make a decision.

The clients you serve may reach this awareness because they are faced with a transition in their lives. They may have lost a job, become dissatisfied with a current job, or have begun to prepare for high school or college graduation and are motivated to make a change. Regardless of the reason, the process of career planning and choice begins with a realization that a change is needed.

Step 2. Self-Assessment including skills, interests, personality and values.

As described later in this module, career theorists emphasize that individuals are more likely to be satisfied with work when there is a good fit between the characteristics of the individual and the work tasks of the job. Holland (1997) described this as congruence, a match between a person's interest and occupations or jobs. Super described this step as understanding one's sense of self – including interests, skills and abilities, values, and goals – and attempting to translate these characteristics into one's work role.

According to the Yale Office of Career Strategy, assessments (both formal and informal) can move the process forward with an understanding of the following:

- Skills: Many skills are transferable – meaning they can be used across a wide range of industries and functional areas. For example, communication skills are valued in all roles, making them highly transferable. It's important to take the time to identify your skills and how those may connect with career options.
- Interests: Your interests may change as you are introduced to new areas of study and new experiences. Reflecting on your interests, in conjunction with your skills, personality, and values is an important step in the self-assessment process. Use the questions below to begin.
    - What activities do you gravitate towards? What appeals to you about those activities?
    - What issues or causes are important to you?
    - When have you been happiest in life? What were you doing?
    - What classes have been your favorites and what appealed to you about those classes?
    - Who do you admire most and why?
    - If you completed an interest assessment, what are some of your interest areas? What doesn't interest you?
    - What are your strengths?

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- Personality: Your unique characteristics influence your thoughts, behaviors, decisions, and how you engage with the world. A good job for one person may be totally wrong for another.
- Values: Making choices consistent with your values is a key component of career satisfaction. Take time to define what your values mean to you. For example, the desire to make a difference is often cited as a career-related value, but that may look different to each person.

At this step of the process, you will be helping clients to state or clarify their interests, consider their values, better understand their personality, summarize their current skills, and formulate goals. An intake interview can be used to review interests, skills, and work experience. An assessment, such as an interest inventory, might be used at this step. You could also use reports detailing progress in school and past work experiences as resources. Finally, you may help clients identify short and long-range goals detailed in an action or employability plan. This process can occur throughout all the steps, not only during Step 2.

Step 3. Identify and research career options.

During this step you will help clients identify new occupational areas or jobs that fit with skills, interests, etc. In making this list, clients may use books and assessment tools or access information on the computer or internet databases. The result of this exploration step will be to generate a list of occupations or jobs so that each alternative can be carefully examined. The research will involve discovered facts and data that describes work tasks, skills required, training needed to enter the career field, forecasts about the growth of the professions, settings in which the work is done, and the range of salary expectations. You may teach clients how to research occupations and identify some of the best databases for that purpose. Your ultimate goal is to help clients find the kind of information they need, help them to understand its meaning, and incorporate it into their plan.

Once the research is complete, the next step is to reflect on what you found. It is important to identify the practicalities of each career area you are exploring, weigh the pros and cons, and evaluate how it matches up with who you are and what you want. Use the following questions to guide your reflection.

- What is your initial reaction to the career field after your research?
- What appealed to you about the field? What didn't appeal to you? List the pros and cons.
- What skills, knowledge, or experience do you still need to be competitive for entry in this field? Are you interested enough in the field to develop these skills or knowledge?
- How much adapting will be necessary for you to be satisfied in this career area? What will it take to get this career going? Is that a reasonable step at this point in your life?

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Step 4. Try options out and make a tentative choice.

In order to help clients in making a choice, you may recommend additional resources. Print and online resources could be used in addition to informational interviews with people who are already in the occupation/job or are knowledgeable about it. You may find a job shadowing opportunity or a co-op placement, internship/externship or volunteer experience. Upon completing this step, clients will have one or more options that best satisfy their needs and characteristics. As result of this step, the career or employability plan can be enhanced.

Step 5. Determine educational needs.

In this step, clients will identify the training, skills, or certification needed and obtain it. For high school students, this step involves making an educational plan in keeping with the occupational choices which may or may not include college. For college students, this step involves choosing a major to prepare for selected occupations. For an adult, this step may involve taking some course work at a local community college, via distance education or by returning to four-year college or university. The objective is to gain the knowledge and skills needed to move forward with the career decision. Questions regarding practicality also need to be raised. Does the client have accessibility to these options?

Step 6. Move forward with the decision.

If you are working with high school or college students, this step may involve getting a first job, internship, volunteering or obtaining the education needed to get that job. For adults, this step is likely to direct the individual towards a different job. This step also includes building essential employability skills. It is important to invest the time and energy into preparing for employment or future education. You may assist a client with techniques such as helping with resume writing, practicing interviewing skills, and searching for various opportunities or job openings.

Step 7. Reflect and recalibrate.

Take the time to step back periodically and determine if you are on a path that feels good and continues to align with your values. If not, what changes do you want to make. If you are satisfied, keep at it while at the same time preparing yourself for future transitions.

If one wants to think about another way of making a career-related decision, David Tiedeman's model is one that is worth examining (1961). He introduced a language and a model that can guide professionals as they work with clients who are approaching or in the middle of a career-related decision. He believed that individuals can be at different stages simultaneously for different career decisions. In the process of making a decision, an individual progresses through seven sequential stages:

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- Exploration. This stage is marked by random, exploratory consideration and is characterized by little progress toward choice except for the accumulation of ideas.
- Crystallization. This represents the first stage of progress but not attainment of choice. Alternatives are recognized and advantages and disadvantages are weighted. Temporary choices may occur. False steps often happen at this stage, but the information gleaned from those mis-steps is used for later decisions.
- Choice. This stage represents a definite commitment to a particular goal, although people have varying levels of confidence in their choices. At this time, satisfaction and relief are often seen along with an expression of singleness of purpose.
- Clarification. This step represents a process of closure after the choice is evaluated in a positive light. This is the time when details are planned and engagement in one's goals is quite elaborate.
- Induction. At this time, the decision is first implemented. People tend to be a bit hesitant to begin. Attention should also be given to the impact of the decision on self and others.
- Reformation. The individual is very engaged in goals and often spends time and energy making changes to fit in with the new situation.
- Integration. This is the last stage and represents a synthesis of what one has determined about self and others since the time the decision was originally made.

Tiedeman also talks about different decision-making styles. This information can be used when helping people understand how they make decisions and how they might want to change their style to be more effective. The styles are:

- Planning – the ability to recognize consequences and anticipate needs. Decisions are carried out deliberately and logically. When this style is used, individuals are called, "the architect of one's own future."
- Intuitive – involves little anticipation of the future but instead is characterized by attention to feelings and emotional self-awareness as the basis for making a decision. Commitment comes because it "feels right."
- Impulsive – with this style, one jumps quickly into a decision. It happens without much forethought.
- Agonizing – these decisions are made with excruciating intensity and typically are painful experiences with little satisfaction.
- Delaying – decisions are made very slowly and often decisions are deferred to a later time.
- Paralytic – there is an inability to move in any direction. The individual is frozen. Typically, a decision is never made.

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- Fatalistic – relates to a belief that all events and situations are predetermined so there is no point in making a decision.
- Compliant – the decision-maker is inclined to agree with others or obey rules to an excessive degree. The decision ends up not being one's own but instead is made to please others.

Tiedeman believed that planning is the most effective style but also believes that intuition can play a role in an effective decision.

The Importance of Career Development Theory

(Learning Objective 4)

Career development theories differ in their perspective. Many would say that they complement each other. Each theory is a set of assumptions, typically based on research that explains human behavior or phenomena. Students often tune out when they hear the word theory because they think it labels a very boring and useless set of ideas. There are three very good reasons for you to learn about the theories that are included in this module:

1. Theories about career choice and development attempt to explain both the factors involved in the career planning process and the way they work together. Since you will be working with countless individuals who are going through this process, theories can help you know how to assist your clients to identify what is important to them and what to consider when making a career decision.
2. Theories about career choice and development attempt to predict future events, such as satisfaction/dissatisfaction in a specific kind of work or things that career planners should be thinking about at a later life stage. Therefore, they can help you as a career services provider understand, for example, the job dissatisfaction of your clients or help you plan services for individual clients or groups of clients.
3. Theories provide guidelines, tools, and techniques for practice. Thus, they can help you draft a plan for assistance to individual clients and groups.

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Limitations of Career Theories

(Learning Objective 5)

Though there are profound strengths in the theories we will study, you also need to be aware of their limitations. It is important to remember that the theories, although they represent a serious approach to our work as career services provider, will not provide magic answers for us. They are, however, the best way we have to guide both our knowledge and our practice. Following are some of the limitations:

- Each theorist presented in this module (as well as those not presented in this module) views career choice and development from a different perspective and focuses heavily on specific selected aspects. Donald Super, for example, looks at the process of career development very comprehensively, studying and describing it across the entire life span and across multiple life roles. John Holland, on the other hand, focuses on the understanding of occupational choices at a given point in time. John Krumboltz centers on the learning process and how it affects vocational choice and change. Nancy Schlossberg focuses on transitions in multiple life roles, triggered by events and nonevents. Each theorist focuses on specific pieces of the career choice or development process; no one theorist presents a comprehensive picture, but rather leaves it to us, the practitioner, to find ways to pull together the various components to best help the client.
- Most of the theories presented in this module are supported by considerable research, though the approaches used, number of people used to test the theory, age and amount of data collected, and the makeup of the sample group vary tremendously across theorists. One common thread, however, is that minority groups and people with ethnic differences of all types have been under-represented. In other words, much of the research in the past has been conducted with white males from the middle class, though females have been much better represented in studies done in the last 15 years. Though this is changing, keep in mind that these theories may not apply as well to minority groups as they do to the groups on which they were originally formed and tested.
- Career development theory and practice are based on the culture of a specific country. The theories we will review have been developed in the United States; thus, be thoughtful about how well they can be 'translated' to other countries and cultures without research designed to determine whether they have the same meaning.
- There are many different types of career development theories, four of which will be described here: trait-and-factor theory, learning theory, developmental theory, and transition theory. For each type we will include: (1) the assumptions underlying the theory, that is, what professionals assume to be true about people and careers; and (2) the work of one major theorist,

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including specific tools, techniques, and practical applications related to each approach. Several other theories are briefly described at the end of the module. You may want to read more about these theories by exploring the references provided. Before we begin discussing the career theories, we will briefly review a foundational theory of human needs that can help us to better understand why an individual might or might not be ready to discuss career-related issues.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Career Development

(Learning Objective 6)

Abraham Maslow developed the Hierarchy of Needs (Figure 3.2) in the 1940s. According to this model, each of us is motivated by these needs. Maslow (1968) states that we must satisfy each need in turn, starting with survival itself. When the lower order needs of physical and emotional well-being are satisfied, we can then be concerned with the higher order needs that are related to personal development.

Maslow established five levels of needs:

1. Physiological needs: basic life needs including air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, etc.
2. Safety and security needs: protection, security, order, law, limits, and stability.
3. Love and belonging needs: family, relationships, work groups, and affection.
4. Esteem needs: achievement, status, responsibility, and reputation.
5. Self-actualization needs: personal growth and fulfillment. If one wants to be truly self-actualizing, the lower needs have to be taken care of to a considerable extent first.

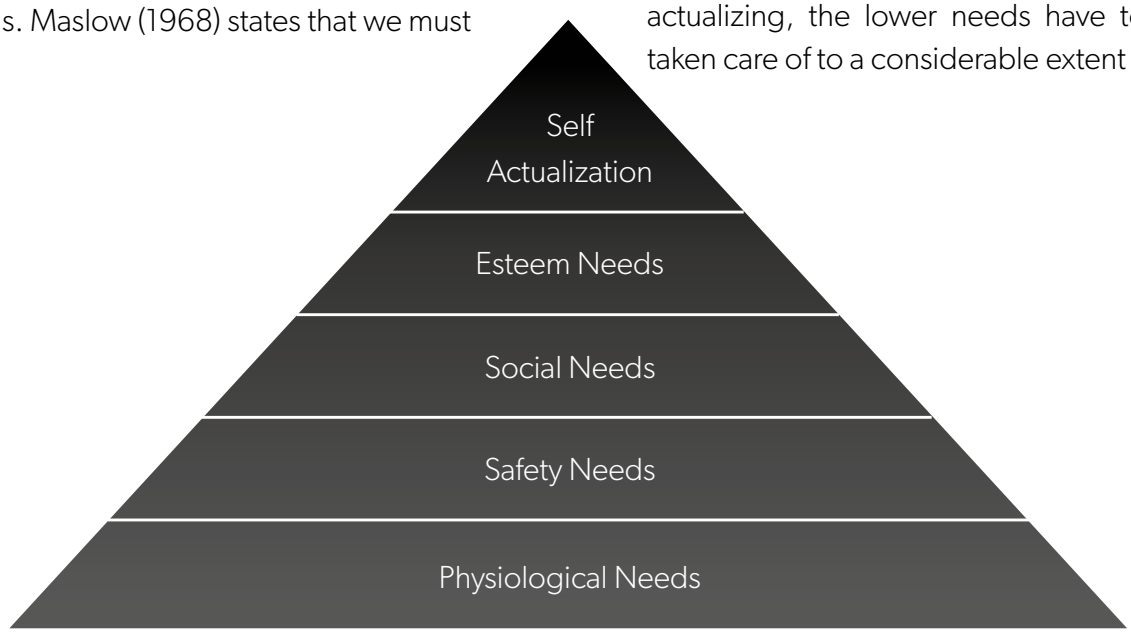


Figure 3.2 - Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

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What does this mean to a career services provider? According to Maslow, needs related to our work roles begin at his third level: love and belonging. Maslow would say we need to be sure that there are not deficits in physiological and safety needs before working with an individual on their work-related needs. Level 3 refers to becoming part of the work environment. As we move to Level 4, we are looking at reaching a high standard within one's work roles. When we are functioning at Level 4, we are achieving status at work and have a reputation in our field. To be self-actualized means that an individual has reached what Super would call a high level of career maturity. To Maslow, this means that an individual has a keen sense of reality; sees problems in terms of challenges; feels comfortable relying on his or her own experiences and judgments; is democratic, fair and non-discriminating, accepting of others, comfortable with himself or herself, and creative; and seeks peak experiences that leave a lasting impression.

An application of Maslow's theory follows. Julie is a 50-year-old Veteran who is divorced and has lost contact with her two children. She has worked at part-time jobs after leaving the military but after a few months on the job, she was typically let go because she had trouble getting along with coworkers and customers. She is officially homeless but reports that she has been sleeping on the sofas of family members for the past few months, but they are tired of her and want her out of their houses. They have threatened to put her "on the streets" if she doesn't make a concerted effort to look for a job.

After talking to Julie, you find out that she doesn't really have the "language" to talk about her interests or preferences, so it is difficult to help her identify a future for herself. She is not clear about why she lost her jobs or how she ended up in this situation. Maslow would say that it is important to begin by working on basic life needs first (Level 1) and safety needs (Level 2). It is clear that Julie also has issues when it comes to social needs. Once these issues are resolved, she is ready to move to what Maslow calls, esteem needs and eventually, self-actualization.

Maslow's needs hierarchy has been criticized because, in actuality, people sometimes do pursue higher level needs without meeting lower-level needs. So, as a career services provider, you might be discussing higher level needs first before focusing on the lower-level needs. For example, you could help an individual think about the most fulfilling moment in his or her life and identify skills, interests, and values that they were exhibiting.

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A Review of Career Development Theories

(Learning Objective 7)

The rest of the module is dedicated to understanding several career development theories. Similar to human development theories, career development theories consider the process and influences in the steps an individual takes throughout their lifetime as related to vocation and work. Throughout this section, you are encouraged to look at your own life, and the course of your own career to help increase your understanding, comfort and consideration of how to apply this knowledge in practice.

There are **Additional Training Resources** for this module located in **Appendix S-1.**

"Trait-and-Factor" Theory

Trait-and-factor theory is a broad category that overlays several theories and seeks to describe individual differences in personality types. The theory makes the following assumptions:

- Individuals have unique characteristics related to interests, abilities, needs, values, and personality traits.
- Occupations and jobs have unique characteristics related to work tasks, skills, demands, and rewards.
- The unique characteristics of both individuals and occupations/jobs can be measured.
- Workers and employers are most satisfied when there is a good match or "fit" between the characteristics of the worker and the characteristics of the occupation/job.

Video and Web Resources:

Please review the following websites for additional information on Career Theory and Models:

Debbie Osborn Career Theories and Models at Work

www.youtube.com/watch?v=VobMZUJhCAo

Chaos Theory of Careers

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGorz_vSmUk

Life-Career Rainbow and Psychology of Careers (Super)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEJlc1mbJj8

Interview with Mark Savickas

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTmGsSSKxcc

NCDA Closing Session on Career Theories – June 2012 [Video]

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLkhORZo0Sc

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When using this theory, considerable attention is given to how to classify these characteristics, how to measure them in some objective way, and finally, how to make a direct relationship between the characteristics of the individual and the characteristics of an occupation or job. Little attention is given to how persons have acquired the characteristics they possess.

The Vocational Choice Theory (Holland)

Part of the appeal of this theory is its simplicity. John L. Holland (1997) provides an outstanding example of a trait-and-factor theory applied to career choice and decision-making. Holland contends that career interests are an expression of the individual's personality. There are four basic concepts to Holland's theory:

1. People can be described as a combination of three or more of six types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional.
2. Environments (jobs, worksites, and schools) can also be described as a combination of the same six types.
3. People of a given type seek environments of the same or similar type.
4. If a person can find such a compatible environment, they are likely to be satisfied and productive.

The six personality types (Holland, 1997) can be briefly described as follows:

Realistic (R)

The Realistic personality type tends to prefer activities that entail the explicit, ordered, or systematic manipulation of objects, tools, machines, and/or animals. The Realistic person often has mechanical abilities and is a problem solver. Realistic types usually prefer occupations with tangible results or products that have physical demands, such as automobile mechanic, aircraft controller, surveyor, carpenter, truck operator, farmer, or electrician. They often describe themselves as practical and conforming.

Investigative (I)

The Investigative personality type often values the development or acquisition of knowledge. They may be independent, observant, self-motivated, introspective, analytical, curious, and task oriented. They often explore ideas, analyze data, and enjoy ambiguous or abstract tasks. Investigative people usually prefer occupations such as psychologist, professor (in a wide variety of fields), anthropologist, scientist, pharmacist, nutritionist, or chemist.

Artistic (A)

The Artistic personality type may prefer ambiguous, free, non-systematized activities that involve the manipulation of physical, verbal, or human materials to create art forms or products. Artistic persons frequently have an aversion to systematic and ordered activities.

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Instead, they tend to be independent, nonconforming, self-expressive, intuitive, sensitive, and emotional. They often value the creative expression of ideas, emotions, or sentiments. Innovation and imagination are frequently part of their work. They often like occupations that allow self-expression, such as composer, musician, stage director, writer, interior decorator, fashion illustrator, editor, or photojournalist.

Social (S)

The Social personality type prefers activities that involve working with others to inform, train, develop, cure, enlighten, or serve others through personal interactions. They are generally empathetic and nurturing, concerned for the welfare of others, and value humanitarianism. They usually have strong interpersonal skills and are good at teaching, explaining, guiding, and solving problems. They often work in educational, social service, and mental health organizations in occupations such as teacher, counselor, social worker, religious worker, nurse, clinical psychologist, or speech pathologist.

Enterprising (E)

The Enterprising personality type prefers activities that entail working with others to attain organizational or economic gain. Typically, they value status and frequently work in leadership positions. Usually, strong interpersonal and persuasive competencies are observed in enterprising types. These individuals can be ambitious, competitive, gregarious, and energetic. They are often seen in jobs that emphasize persuasion, selling, giving talks or speeches, and organizing activities and events. Enterprising types are often risk takers and tend to like occupations in sales, real estate, or management.

Conventional (C)

Conventional personality types tend to be conscientious, persevering, practical, orderly, precise, and accurate. They prefer activities that involve the explicit, ordered, and systematic manipulation of data such as keeping records, filing materials, organizing written and numerical data according to a prescribed plan, and operating a computer to attain organizational or economic goals. They usually establish and maintain routines, and typically aim to meet precise standards with attention to detail and perfectionism. Conventional types prefer occupations with clearly defined duties that organize office procedures and keep records. They typically work in organizations with well-ordered chains of command. Conventional occupations include bookkeeper, financial analyst, accountant, registrar, computer programmer, production editor, and cost estimator.

Holland (1997) theorized that individuals acquire their personal codes through a combination of heredity and environment. Because of heredity, individuals may be predisposed to a certain code. Further, parents and other adults help children develop and strengthen certain codes through the following chain of events:

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- Children are exposed to activities in the home, community, and school. This exposure may be broad or limited.
- Those activities that are positively reinforced (that is, rewarded or praised) in some way are more likely to become interests.
- Individuals seek to acquire abilities/skills to support their interests.
- Individuals assume values that are compatible with their interests and skills.

Holland believes that there is continuity over time in the kinds of work that people do and their occupational aspirations. These preferences become more stable with age, though there can be modification in one's code due to new educational or occupational experiences that are associated with positive reinforcement. His theory states that career interests can be changeable through approximately age 25. Not everyone agrees with this age limit.

An individual's personal code is expressed by two or three letters, such as SEA, RIE, CRE, etc., though it may have one or more ties in any position, such as S/EAC, RI/EC, CRE/I, etc. There are various ways that an individual can discover his or her personal codes:

- First, a career services provider may help clients identify their code through an informal assessment such as the Party Game, described in Module 4.
- Second, you may administer, with appropriate training, one of several interest inventories based on Holland's theory, including Holland's Self-Directed Search (2001). These inventories include the O*NET Interest Profiler, the Career Decision-Making System (CDM), or Career Liftoff.
- Third, a career services provider can develop a Holland code from the last three jobs the person has held or from the titles of three or four desired or ideal occupations that the client can name. You will need reference materials that codes occupations to do this.

Holland illustrated the relationship of the six types to each other on a hexagon (Figure 3.3). The letter R (for Realistic) is placed on the top left point of the hexagon, and then the remaining letters follow in the prescribed order. The six types are arranged in this structure with the understanding that the types adjacent to one another share more in common than the types that are opposite in the hexagon. This relationship is what Holland refers to as consistency. Higher degrees of consistency suggest more harmony.

Consistent Holland Code: The first two letters of an individual's code are "next door" to each other on the hexagon. These codes are RI, IR, IA, AI, AS, SA, SE, ES, EC, CE, CR, and RC.

Moderately Consistent Holland Code: The first two letters of an individual's code are one point away from each other on the hexagon. These codes are RA, AR, IS, SI, AE, EA, SC, CS, CI, IC, ER, and RE.

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Inconsistent Holland Code: The first two letters of an individual's code are across the hexagon from each other. These codes are RS, SR, IE, EI, CA, and AC.

Practically speaking, Holland theorizes that individuals who have consistent codes may have more internal stability (not being pulled by widely varied interests and values) than those with inconsistent codes, and he also states that jobs with consistent codes may actually be easier to find. They also typically can find an occupation where they have an opportunity to express all their interests.

Another characteristic of codes that appears to affect the ability to make career choices is what Holland calls *differentiation.* This refers to the degree of certainty or definition of an individual's interests. In other words, is there a clear distinction between the individual's likes and dislikes? This concept relates to the shape of a person's profile of scores on the six Holland types. If all six are quite low or quite high, the profile is called "flat" or "undifferentiated." If some scores are high and some are low, the profile has "peaks and valleys," and is called a differentiated profile. This simply means that the person has some areas of interest that are considerably higher than others. If an individual's interests are well defined, Holland believes that they are ready to make a career-related decision. Flat profiles can mean that individuals don't really know their interests. High flat profiles mean they could have many interests and might need to work on narrowing them down. A low flat profile could show minimal exposure to occupations and work activities, but could also show a weak self-concept or low self-esteem.

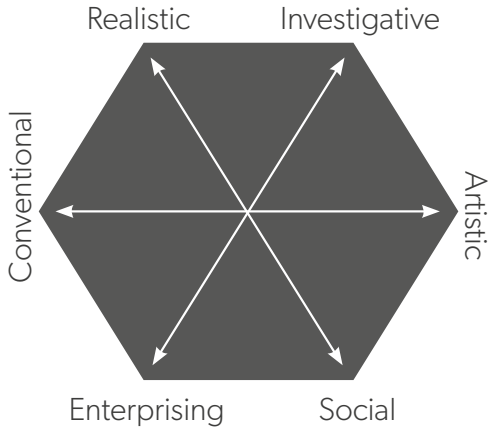


Figure 3.3 - Holland's Hexagon

Another concept in Holland's theory is that of *congruence.* This describes the degree of fit between an individual's personality type and work environment. A person is in a congruent environment when the personality type matches the occupational environment. The theory predicts that a person with a code of SI who works in a job with an SI code would generally be satisfied and productive. The theory predicts that the same person in a job coded RI, for example, would be dissatisfied and perhaps less productive.

In sum, Holland believes that a client is likely to be ready to make a vocational choice or change if their code is consistent (or at least moderately so) and well differentiated. If, on the other hand, his or her code is inconsistent and poorly differentiated, the client may not be ready for vocational choice or change and may need more extended service.

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Further, using this theory if the person is entering a job with a code the same or similar to his or her own, we could expect the client to be satisfied with the choice. There are many nuances to the interpretation of Holland codes. Career services providers should study Holland's theory in depth and interpret codes only under the supervision of an experienced career professional.

Just as individuals have codes, so do occupations, majors, and leisure activities. By using materials and books listed at the end of this module, you can assist clients to identify occupations, majors, and leisure activities that relate to their codes.

In addition, the Holland typology can be very helpful in organizing occupational information in the career center or in planning activities for individuals to explore various work environments. Another use of the codes is to summarize the past work experience of clients. For example, as mentioned earlier, you might ask a client to tell you the last three jobs that they have held. Using the Occupations Finder, you can assign a code to each of these three jobs. Then, calculate a Holland code from these. This type of calculation can help you to identify other positions for which you can assume that the person has skills. Of course, if the person disliked these past jobs, you might want to explore different possibilities.

Knowing a client's type allows a career services provider to make predictions. It can lead to a discussion about the kind of workplaces that would be satisfying and would lead to a higher level of adjustment.

Practical Applications of Holland's Theory

There are many practical applications of Holland's theory. Numerous assessment instruments (both formal and informal) are based on this theory. Having a Holland code is a useful starting point as one engages in career exploration and information gathering. It allows one to clarify interests. Consistency, congruence, and differentiation of the scores and work environment or lack thereof should all be topics of discussion. After that discussion, Holland would say the next step would be to locate occupations that relate to their code, focusing on occupations resembling all combinations of the code. Next, would be encouragement to explore those occupational alternatives through informational interviewing, researching the occupations, volunteering, taking courses related to the occupations, and/or job shadowing.

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Activity 1: The Case of Joseph

*Joseph is a 22-year-old high school graduate. He was in the Army for four years as a radar repairer who installed and maintained radar equipment. He did his job well and was proud of his service. Since returning from his military service, he became employed as an assistant to an electrician (The official title in O*NET is a "Helper Electrician"), which led him to consider a career in construction. Lately, he has been questioning that decision. Joseph is also committed to giving back to his community and serves as a volunteer youth recreation team leader at a local youth program on weekends. Joseph says that during the week, it's all he can do to get out of bed in the morning. But, on weekends, even after a long work week, he feels excited and energized to work with the youth. During your first meeting, you find out that he took an assessment before he left the Army. He brings you a copy of his assessment report, and you see that his Holland code is SE.*

There are a number of issues presented here, but for now we will just focus on Joseph's Holland code. As one thinks about Joseph's level of dissatisfaction, Holland would look closely to examine the degree of congruence between Joseph's code and the codes of his job and volunteer position.

If you are not already familiar with it, O*Net is a website that includes a vast amount of labor market information that will help you and the clients you serve understand more about their occupations of interest, including Holland Codes (called Interest Codes on the website). We will explore this site more in Module 7. Using a computer, navigate to O*Net Online (www.onetonline.org) to search for Joseph's three occupations:

1. First, look up "electronics repairer," which is the O*Net occupation most similar to his job in the military. Enter the code here:

   _____.

2. Next, search for "Helper-Electrician" to find out the code for his current job and enter it here:

   _____.

3. Finally, look up "recreation worker," find the code for this occupation and enter it here:

   _____.

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As Joseph reported earlier, his code is SE.

In your search of O*Net, you will have determined that the codes for each of the occupations listed above are RC, RC, and SE. Holland would probably conclude that since Joseph satisfactorily worked in an RC job while in the military, it made sense that he looked for a similar job when he joined the civilian workforce. However, this wasn't the case. Joseph was very dissatisfied with his job. When you see that the volunteer job has a code of SE, as do his assessment results, you can begin to understand his higher level of energy and enthusiasm for that work.

The possible source of conflict is his reported high level of satisfaction with his volunteer position, which in fact is more congruent with his code of SE. Let's examine Joseph's code further. The first letter of his code, S, involves working with people, teaching, helping, etc. He does not have an opportunity to express those interests in his current job, but does in his volunteer position. In thinking about the second letter of his code, E, one would also want to consider the lack of opportunity for leadership when working as an assistant versus the experiences that he probably has at the youth program, where he has a chance to express those interests and show those skills while working with the youth.



Notes:

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Homework 1: Reflections on Holland's Theory



Holland's theory has a variety of applications. Consider each scenario below and write a few sentences on how a career services provider might use Holland's Theory to advise the following clients:

1. A high school student comes to you for help in making a four-year plan. How could you use Holland's theory and related tools to help?

2. A college student is feeling pressured to declare a major and comes to the career center for help. How could you use Holland's theory and tools to help?

3. An adult who has had three prior jobs comes to the workforce center office for help in finding another job. How could you use Holland's theory and tools to help?

4. Your school principal has recently taken a course in which she learned about Holland's theory. She directs you to develop services for students that are based on this theory. What would you do?

Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life. - Confucius

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Learning Theory (Krumboltz)

John Krumboltz is a leader when it comes to applying learning theory to career development and choice. The theory is based on the application of Bandura's 1977 social learning theory to career decision-making. Bandura emphasizes the influence of reinforcement, cognitive information processing, and classical behaviorism on human behavior. His theory is based on the following set of assumptions:

- Though heredity is an important consideration, people's behavior is largely controlled by what they learn.
- Learning occurs when people receive either positive or negative reinforcement. When individuals receive a reward, their behavior is likely to continue. When the behavior is ignored or punished, the behavior is likely to become less frequent or disappear.
- Learning can occur either through chance or planned reinforcement.

In this particular theory, unlike the trait and factor theory, little attention is given to the characteristics either of individuals or occupations. Instead, attention is focused on how to develop desired behaviors and how to eliminate negative behaviors. Two types of learning are important, according to Krumboltz. *Instrumental learning* occurs when positive outcomes follow a given behavior. For example, if you help your sister with her homework and your parents praise you for your contributions, you are likely to learn that this kind of behavior is valued and appreciated in your family. Likewise at work, if you contribute to a research project and are rewarded for your contributions, you will probably want to work as a member of this team again.

Associative learning occurs when people observe outcomes that are experienced by others. For example, if you observe someone during a job interview and they eventually are offered the job, you would probably adopt the behaviors you observed so that you would also get a job.

Practical applications of Krumboltz's theory include:

- Teaching skills and behaviors that clients need to learn related to career decisions, job searches, job retention, etc.
- Providing positive reinforcement for those behaviors that will benefit the client/student.
- Creating opportunities such as job shadowing, observations or role models, etc. in order to provide associative learning experiences.
- Identifying role models for clients.
- Teaching clients to recognize and take advantage of planned happenstance.

An example of an informal way to apply Krumboltz's learning theory is to teach a step-by-step process for decision making. The steps will then form a framework that can assist clients in making choices. This approach reflects his belief that learning can occur in a way that leads to positive outcomes.

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Step 1: Define the problem.

Step 2: Establish an action plan.

Step 3: Clarify values.

Step 4: Identify alternatives.

Step 5: Discover probable outcomes.

Step 6: Eliminate alternatives systematically.

Step 7: Start action.

In each of these steps, difficulties may be overcome by instruction on topics such as: how to write a resume, how to conduct a job search, how to use career and labor market information, etc. Not only practice in these areas, but also positive reinforcement leads to learning, according to Krumboltz. He believes that it is also important to attend to the elimination of negative career beliefs. For career services providers, this can possibly be the basis for a referral to someone who is trained to work with a more psychological approach to these issues.

Happenstance

More recently Krumboltz has incorporated the concept of *planned happenstance* into his approach. Happenstance is defined as chance occurrence, accident, or coincidence. The term "planned happenstance" might seem like a contradiction but in fact, Krumboltz talks about ways to prepare oneself for happenstance. He actively supports indecision. In fact, he describes it as desirable and sensible because it then allows the opportunity for one to benefit from unplanned events. That is where the attitude of "planning" comes into play; adopting a conscious attitude of receptiveness to your own interests and to chance events and taking steps to act on them. He believes that it is important to not just wait for opportunities but to create them and be ready to respond to them once recognized. This refers to an attitude of planning, while at the same time, being open to unexpected opportunities that may affect career planning. So, we need to teach clients/ students how to be aware of their surroundings, take a risk, even with rejections as a possible outcome, be adaptable, and open-minded.

Because the core of this theory is that unpredictable social factors, chance events and environmental factors are important influences on clients' lives, career services providers should help clients approach chance conditions and events positively. The following five skills that we need to teach and encourage will help one recognize, create, and use chance to create career opportunities:

1. Curiosity: exploring new learning opportunities
2. Persistence: exerting effort despite setbacks
3. Flexibility: adapting to changing attitudes and circumstances
4. Optimism: viewing new opportunities as possible and attainable
5. Risk Taking: taking action in the face of uncertain outcomes

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In sum, the goal is to be in the "right place," at the "right time," with the "right tools."

For more information read, Luck is No Accident 2nd Edition John Krumboltz and Al Levin 2012 Impact Publishers.

Practical Application of Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory

The following concepts are typically used when applying this theory: instrumental learning, associative learning, reinforcement (both positive and negative), modeling, observing, practicing, and happenstance.



Activity 2: The Case of Constance

Constance is a 52-year-old woman who has worked for the same IT company in the marketing and public relations department since she graduated from college. She was laid off six months ago after a larger conglomerate bought the company. She thought she could easily get another job given her 30 years in the field and her excellent references. It hasn't worked out that way. When you first meet Constance, you notice that she is very quiet and her confidence is low. Her unsuccessful job search campaign has taken its toll. She tells you that she has applied for several openings that were very similar to her former job, but she was competing with others who, she guesses, were younger and more outgoing. She said she didn't even get called in for an interview.

"I want to look back on my career and be proud of the work and be proud that I tried everything."
- Jon Stewart

Because of her long-term employment with the same company, Constance has not looked for a job in years, so she doesn't really know how to search for openings except through the want ads in the newspaper and by using her informal network of friends and former colleagues. Her long-term goal is to stay in the community and find steady work, but she is willing to also work on short-term projects. Someone mentioned to her that she should go back to school; her skills might be outdated and, because she worked for the same employer all those years, her knowledge of the field might not be broad enough or up-to-date. She thought that was an odd thing to suggest.

How would a career services provider apply the basic concepts of learning theory when working with Constance?

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After finding out Constance's concern and actively listening to her experiences, thoughts, and feelings, the next task was to brainstorm some ideas about next possible actions that Constance could take. Ideas that either the career services provider or Constance might suggest could include building a resume, moving to another town, asking friends for advice, taking a night school course, or creating a portfolio. The career services provider would ask her to pick the one task she would be willing to do soon and ask for a deadline date and time when she would e-mail or call the career services provider with the results of her action. Then, they would build on what Constance learned and repeat the process to determine the next action step. Constance remains in charge of which actions she will and will not undertake. The career services provider provides continuing support for her active explorations. Her actions will not only teach her new skills, but she will gain confidence and may also create a product to bring to her next job interview.

This description only begins to describe how a career services provider could work with Constance when using this theory. In your assignments, you will be asked to put together ideas, using these same concepts, to prepare Constance for her next action step.



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Homework 2: Reflections on Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory



You may find Krumboltz's Theory helpful in your work as a career services provider. Using the scenarios below, write a brief response to each.

1. Make a list of possible action steps you might add as you brainstorm with a client like Constance.

   _____

2. Describe how you could use Krumboltz's theory to help an adult who has been out of the job market for a long time and is concerned about how to handle a job interview.

   _____

3. Why would Krumboltz see value in helping clients find positive role models?

   _____

4. Think about times when happenstance events affected your career. Based on your experience, list some ideas describing how you might help a client respond to happenstance events.

   _____

Developmental Theory

The third type of theory, developmental theory, focuses on how careers unfold over the life span. These theorists believe that the factors that contribute to growth and maturity are complex and multifaceted. The theory is based on the following assumptions:

- Life can be divided into a specific number of age-related stages. Each stage has a list of specific tasks that should be accomplished during that stage.
- If the tasks of a given stage are accomplished, an individual is developmentally on schedule or mature and is, therefore, more likely to accomplish the tasks of the next life stage.
- If the tasks of a given stage are not accomplished during the appropriate time, however, the individual is developmentally off schedule or immature and may have difficulty in the life stages that follow.

The Career Development Theory of Donald E. Super

Super's Propositions

The leading developmental theorist is Donald Super. There are three aspects to his theory: self-concept, life span, and life space. His theory builds upon the following propositions:

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1. People differ in their abilities, personalities, needs, values, interests, traits, and self-concepts.
2. People are qualified, by virtue of these characteristics, for a number of occupations.
3. Each occupation requires a characteristic pattern of abilities and personality traits, with tolerances wide enough to allow both varieties of occupations for each individual and some variety of individuals in each occupation.
4. Vocational preferences and competencies, the situations in which people live and work, and hence, their self-concepts change with time and experience. Self-concepts, as products of social learning, are increasingly stable from late adolescence until late maturity, providing some continuity in choice and adjustment.
5. This process of change may be summed up in a series of life stages characterized as a sequence of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. Multiple-trial careers involve new growth, re-exploration, and re-establishment.
6. The nature of the career pattern (that is, the occupational level attained and the sequence, frequency, and duration of trial and stable jobs) is determined by the individual's parental socioeconomic level, mental ability, education, skills, personality characteristics (needs, values, interests, traits, and self-concepts), career maturity, and by the opportunities to which an individual is exposed.
7. Success in coping with the demands of the environment depends on an individual's readiness to cope (career maturity).
8. Development through the life stages can be guided, partly by facilitating the maturation of abilities and interests and partly by aiding in reality testing and in the development of one's self-concept.
9. The process of synthesis or compromise between the individual and social factors and between self-concept and reality is one of role-playing and of learning from feedback, whether the role is played in fantasy, in the counseling interview, or in activities such as classes, clubs, part-time work, and/or entry-level jobs.
10. Work satisfactions and life satisfactions depend on the extent to which the individual finds adequate outlets for abilities, needs, values, interests, personality traits and self-concepts. Satisfaction depends on establishing oneself in a type of work that provides growth and exploratory experiences.
11. The degree of satisfaction people attain from work is proportional to the degree to which they have been able to implement their self-concept.
12. Work and occupations provide a focus for personality organization, although for some persons this focus is peripheral, incidental, or even nonexistent. Leisure activities and homemaking may be central.

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Self-Concept

The most central statement of Super's theory relates to the importance of an individual's self-concept (Super et al., 1963) in the process of career choice and development. According to Super (and many other psychologists), each of us has a self-concept, that is, a picture of who we are and what we are like. This is a blend of how we see ourselves, how we would like to be seen, and how we think others view us; this includes both subjective and objective information. People use this understanding of self when they identify career goals and plans.

The formation of a self-concept begins as soon as a baby realizes that they are a separate being from mother and father. The growth and richness of the self-concept continues throughout our entire lives. Its development is influenced by the culture in which we live, the family in which we are born, the experiences that we have, and the events that befall us. According to Super, our perception of how well we can perform in a specific area (such as what we are like as a student of mathematics or how well we can get along with others) is either increased or decreased by the kind of reinforcement we receive. For example, if we do well in mathematics courses, get high scores on mathematics exams, and are often commended by teachers for our knowledge in this field, we are likely to feel good about our abilities in math. That is, we have a strong self-concept related to our capability in mathematics. If, on the other hand, we do poorly in mathematics courses, receive low scores on mathematics examinations, and are often told by our teachers and parents that we need to do better, we will have a low self-concept related to mathematics.

We form pictures of ourselves in many different areas of our lives. Sometimes these views are realistic, clear, and well-defined and other times they are unrealistic, imprecise, and poorly defined. Super says that these parts of the self-concept related to work form the vocational self-concept. It is Super's central theme that individuals seek to live out their vocational self-concept through their choice of work (Super, 1957; Super et al., 1963).

Thinking about this idea may trigger several other thoughts in your mind. If a person has a poorly defined or negative self-concept, they might be more likely to make less-than-satisfying vocational choices. A second is that work may be boring and meaningless if people are unable to view it as an expression of their vocational self-concept, i.e., their abilities (what they can do best), their interests (what they like most to do), and their values (what they think is really important to do). A third thought is related to how we provide feedback to our children, family members, students, employees, and friends. According to Super, this feedback is tremendously important.

Though we do not want to give them false impressions of themselves, it is important both to career choice and life in general that as career service providers we provide them with positive support and help them achieve the most positive view of their capabilities as possible.

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Life Span - The Length of One's Career

In the past, many believed that young people in high school would make one career choice that they would pursue throughout their working life. Once that choice was made we assumed that individuals would get the training needed to enter their occupation of choice, get a first job in it, and continue in that occupation until retirement. This concept of a one-time vocational choice is no longer relevant in the United States. Our world has permanently changed with the ever-widening expansion of technology.

Super identified a series of developmental tasks one typically encounters and connected these tasks to stages and sub-stages of career development. Super's concept of career development is that of progression throughout the entire life span. Super et al. (1963) defined five specific life stages related to career development. These stages and a brief description of each are provided below:

Stage Name	Typical Tasks
Stage 1	Focus on physical growth, formation of the self-concept, and early exploration of interests and abilities.
Stage 2	Learning about many different areas of work and their requirements; progressively making a commitment to a specific area of work, getting training for it, and beginning to engage in it.
Stage 3	Getting firmly settled into an occupational field; making contributions to that field of wok and being very productive, perhaps being promoted to higher levels of responsibility.
Stage 4	Maintaining the current position in work; updating skills as needed to stay competitive with younger people; planning toward retirement at the end of this period.
Stage 5	Slowing down and doing a gradual separation from paid employment; engaging in a different lifestyle that includes more leisure, family and community activities.

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Super and his colleagues originally described these stages as linear, but they later recognized that individuals recycle through stages and tasks throughout their lives. These five stages of career development are accompanied, and driven, in Super's theory, by five developmental tasks. These are tasks related to learning and planning that are necessary in order to move through these stages successfully and at the correct time. These tasks are named and defined as follows:

- ***Crystallization:*** the process of considering a variety of vocational options, discarding some, and ultimately limiting the list to a few that most appropriately use one's interests and abilities. The process also involves a clear formation of a vocational identity or vocational self-concept. This task includes understanding the factors that need to be considered when making a vocational choice (interests, abilities, values, self-concept), understanding the factors in the environment that may affect personal goals (the economy, the labor market, hiring practices, etc.), knowing how to set goals and progress toward them, and learning in detail about the occupations under consideration.
- ***Specification:*** the process of committing to one occupation over others that have been under consideration, knowing and engaging in the training needed, feeling confident in the choice, and moving forward with commitment.
- ***Implementation:*** the process of completing the training for a selected occupation and of getting a job related to that training.
- ***Stabilization:*** the process of settling into a field of work, experiencing the benefits of having made a good choice, and making contributions to the field and to the employer.
- ***Consolidation:*** the process of further commitment to the occupation or field of work chosen with the seniority and productivity that comes with experience.

Vocational Maturity - Completing Tasks on Schedule

A further concept in Super's theory is that of vocational maturity (Super and Overstreet, 1960), one that he researched for at least 20 years. In Super's view, vocational maturity can be described simply as accomplishing the above five tasks (and their multiple subtasks) "on schedule," that is, during the age range in which one would optimally do so. According to Super's theory, if an individual does not accomplish these tasks and sequence at the time proposed, they may not possess the needed skills to make informed and satisfying career choices.

Later in his career, Super did acknowledge that the age range associated with the task was not the critical piece; the importance lies with completing the task itself and that many

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people recycle through these stages not only once but a number of times. Please refer to the National Career Development Guidelines (see ***Appendix S-1: Additional Training Resources*** for the website address) for a list of the tasks and subtasks that need to be completed at each age/stage.

Throughout all these tasks the individual's self-concept is a central and all-important factor. A second important factor is the ongoing process of the compromise between what an individual may desire or be able to do and the opportunities available to that person due to external forces outside his or her control.

> *The best way to predict the future is to create it.* - Abraham Lincoln

An Adapted Theory

The world and, therefore, the context in which career choices are made has changed tremendously since Super's first statement of his theory in the 1950s and 1960s. Super himself acknowledged this fact in his later writings of the 1980s and 1990s. Due to the changes both in the views of people and the views of corporations, the "lifetime career" described by Super is much less a reality now than in the 1950s and 1960s. Thus, Super acknowledged in his later writings that it might be typical for people to go through the life stages of Growth, Exploration, and then early Establishment and, after a short time, go back to Exploration and make a different career choice, perhaps never reaching the stage of Maintenance in a given occupation. He also acknowledged that people may approach these tasks and stages at different ages as a larger percentage of women enter the workforce, larger percentages of people retrain or increase their formal education in the adult years, and corporations continue to "downsize, right-size or globalize."

Life Space - The Breadth of One's Career

In 1980, Super introduced the third major concept of his theory. He defined career as the combination of life roles that one plays at a given age or life stage, and he graphically depicted this concept as a rainbow (Super, 1980). He proposed that these life roles are lived out in different "theaters," namely in the home, the school, the workplace, and the community. So as career services providers, we not only need to be concerned with an individual's worker role but also, according to Super, with the simultaneous combination of life roles. He proposed that there are eight life roles and that individuals may choose to play any combination of them. These life roles are as follows:

- ***Son or Daughter:*** This is the time and energy that one spends throughout life in relating to parents. This role begins at birth and often continues until the age of 50, 60, or 70 until the death of both parents. In childhood, the son or daughter role takes up a great deal of time. As a child grows up and becomes increasingly independent, this role involves less and less time and effort. When parents become elderly, they may need special care, either in their own home or in a child's home. The son or daughter role may again demand a lot

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of time and energy. The theater for this role is the home. In the early years, it is the parents' home; in later years, it may be the child's home.

- ***Student:*** The student role is the next one to develop in chronological order. It begins when a child enters formal schooling. For most people, this role continues through age 16 at a minimum. For most, it continues through graduation from high school or college.

  An increasing number of people assume the student role periodically throughout their lives. That is why it appears several times on the Life-Career Rainbow (Figure 3.4). A systems programmer or a sales representative enrolled in a workshop or short-term training is temporarily playing the role of student again. A woman who raises a family and then decides to attend college is likewise playing the role of student again. The predictions are that workers of the 21st century will upgrade their skills through training on a continual basis. The theaters for the student role are vocational and technical schools, community colleges, universities, the home (with the advent of web-based training), and the workplace itself.

- ***Worker:*** This is the third role in chronological order that we typically assume as we mature. This role begins with the first paid job and continues until complete retirement from paid employment. It appears that workers will hold multiple jobs in sequence in the 21st century. The theater for the worker role is the office, the laboratory, the hospital, the school, the home, or any place from which a person might work remotely in this electronic age.

- ***Spouse or Partner:*** The fourth role that we may assume is that of husband, wife or partner. Some people never play this role. Others assume it with the same partner from early in life until their own or their partner's death.

- ***Home Manager:*** The fifth role involves maintaining the place where one lives. In Super's definition, the home manager role includes tasks done by either a man or a woman, such as cooking, shopping for groceries, selecting home furnishings, doing home repairs, and the like. The amount of time spent in this role varies greatly from one home to the next, depending upon the importance given to its appearance and how much of the needed work is done by others. The home manager role begins when a residence separate from one's parents' home is established and continues as long as a person is responsible for maintaining a residence.

- ***Parent:*** The sixth role is that of parent, raising children and maintaining a relationship with them. Normally, the parent role requires the most effort in the first 15 years of a child's life. It will then taper off as the child becomes more and more independent and ultimately moves out on his or her own. If, however, a son

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or daughter returns to the parent's home to live, perhaps with a spouse or a child, the parent role may continue. The places in which this role is typically played are the home, the school, and the community.

- ***Leisurite:*** Super coined this new word to describe seventh role and the time and energy that one spends in leisure activities, including such things as reading, watching television, playing sports, and going out for dinner. This role is usually played in the home or in the community.
- ***Citizen:*** This term describes the time and energy spent in nonpaid volunteer activities in the eighth role. Work may be donated to the local hospital, school, or some community activity.

Super developed the Life-Career Rainbow (Super, 1980), shown in Figure 3.4, to depict a person's career. Distance from left to right on the rainbow represents time, with birth at the far left and death at the far right. Each band represents one of the major life roles. For specific individuals, some bands may not exist at all because they are not playing those roles. Also, for specific individuals, some bands will be wider than in this model, representing the proportion of time spent in those roles as compared to the total life space, a term used to describe all of the time and energy that we have. He uses the term life roles to describe the various pursuits (such as student, worker, parent, citizen, etc.) that we follow in various theaters or places (such as school, work site, home, community, etc.).

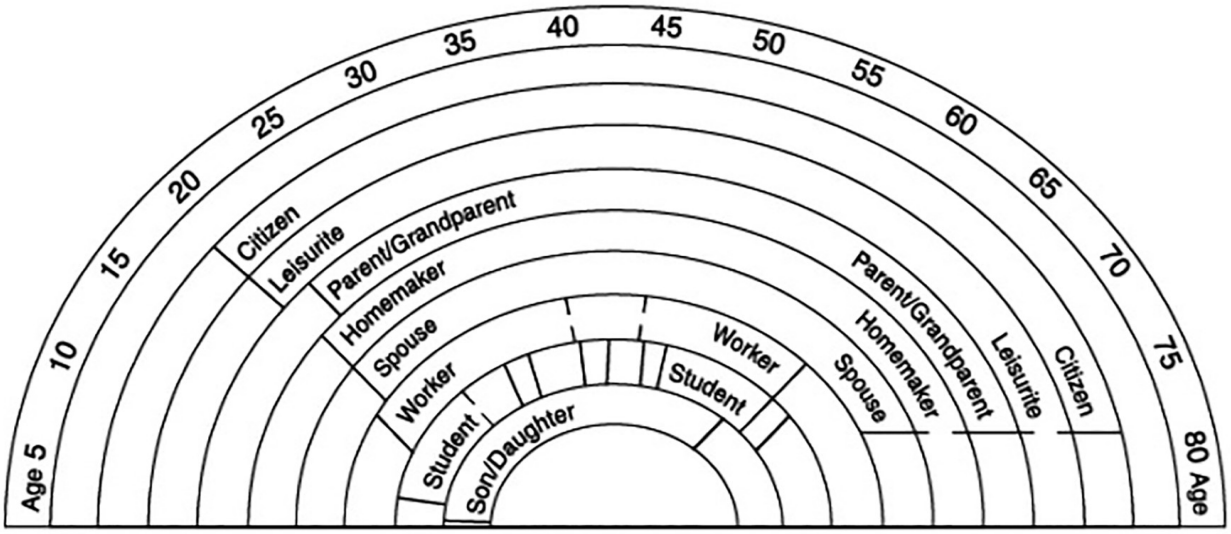


Figure 3.4 - Super's Life-Career Rainbow

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Life roles also have varying shades of intensity (focus and meaning), which Super represented by use of shades of color. He proposed that roles that are of greater psychological value have brighter color. Of course, the width, intensity, or even the existence of these roles varies over time. Let's look at the definitions of these roles, which are played in different theaters (places). The various roles depicted in the Life-Career Rainbow overlap and affect each other. Most people play several roles simultaneously in several theaters. For a university student, for example, career may be the combination of the student, son/daughter, and worker roles. For many adults, career may be the combination of student, parent, son or daughter, spouse, worker, and citizen. The satisfaction and stress that one experiences in life are often directly related to the number and combination of roles being played. Assuming additional roles means that some existing ones will receive less time and attention than they did previously. Leaving a role or reducing commitment to it can, on the other hand, provide more time and energy to devote to remaining roles. Retirement is an example of this opportunity. When the 40–50 hours/week that one spent in paid employment are concluded, there is a wealth of available time and energy to devote to other roles, such as citizen, homemaker, grandparent, and/or leisurite.

Some roles may take much more time than others. Thus, the width of the different bands in one's career rainbow may vary. Some bands may be much brighter than others as well, that is, have more intensity. Further, roles change over the life span. While the worker role may be very demanding during the Establishment stage, it may be less so during the Maintenance or Disengagement stage. Similarly, the role of parent is very demanding in the child and adolescent years of a child's life, but typically much less demanding when the son or daughter is an adolescent and then an adult.

In general, then, life and career may be viewed as an attempt to live out a self-concept through the blending of a selected number of life roles, each of which makes different demands on energy and time. All these life roles together fill the life space. To the extent that this blend of roles can be successfully played and is satisfying to the individual, we can say that a person has a successful career. If the blend of roles does not bring satisfaction, it may be necessary to add, delete, or change the intensity or content of them.

In Module 4, the Rainbow will be included as one of many examples of informal instruments that were developed from Super's theory.

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1. ***Ability utilization:*** *being able to use one's skills and knowledge*
2. **Achievement:** *the feeling that good results have been produced*
3. ***Aesthetics:*** *finding or making beauty*
4. ***Altruism:*** *being able to help others*
5. ***Autonomy:*** *being able to be independent*
6. ***Creativity:*** *being able to discover or design new things or ideas*
7. ***Economic Rewards:*** *making a lot of money and having a high standard of living*
8. ***Lifestyle:*** *being able to plan one's activities and live the way one wants*
9. ***Physical activity:*** *having an opportunity for physical activity*
10. ***Prestige:*** *being acknowledged for what one has accomplished*
11. ***Risk:*** *having dangerous or exciting challenges*
12. ***Social interaction:*** *being with other people and working in a group*
13. ***Variety:*** *being able to change activities frequently*
14. ***Surroundings:*** *having a pleasing environment for work or other activities*

The Importance of Values

In the latter years of his life, Super led an international study called the Work Importance Study (Super and Sverko, 1995). The purpose of this study was to identify a list of values that people attempt to attain through work and to determine whether there was a difference from culture to culture in the importance of these values. The 14 values identified by the study, with brief definitions, are on the left.

As we can see, Super emphasized an understanding of one's sense of self when making a career decision. It is the uniqueness of the individual that needs to be recognized and understood. Super also introduced a second graphic (in addition to the rainbow) as part of his theory that not only looks at factors within oneself but also examines influences present in the environment. (See Figure 3.5) The entire arch represents an individual's career. Each stone in the arch symbolizes an influential factor. The arch represents both biological factors and what he referred to as "geographic" factors – the influences that are part of the environment. An individual's characteristics make up the column on the left (e.g., values, interests, etc.). Influencing factors in the environment form the column on the right (e.g., labor market and the economy, family, stereotyping and discrimination). At the top of archway is the culmination which he titles "Self." Although many criticize Super for his overemphasis on the individual and underestimates of the environment and culture, this model seeks to even out the discussion and puts equal weight on all the influences included in the archway.

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In summary, Super says that our careers are made up of the activities in the various life roles that we choose to play. The amount of time and energy invested in each of these roles may vary at different times in the life span, thus adjusting the appearance of our personal Career Rainbows. The self-concept should be ideally expressed through a combination of these roles. Further, one's interests, abilities, and values can be used in various life roles, not only the role of worker. Theoretically, individuals who play only two or three roles may find life boring and unsatisfying. On the other hand, individuals who play multiple roles intensely may enjoy much life satisfaction. When some roles are removed or decreased, it is important to fill the available "life space" with new or expanded roles. Individuals can exert much control over their lives and careers by choosing and managing the content and degree of commitment to each of these roles. Internal variables - interests, skills, and work values - are critical pieces in the career choice and development process. However, external variables also play a powerful role and, especially in the 21st century, there will be constant interplay between these two sources of influence.

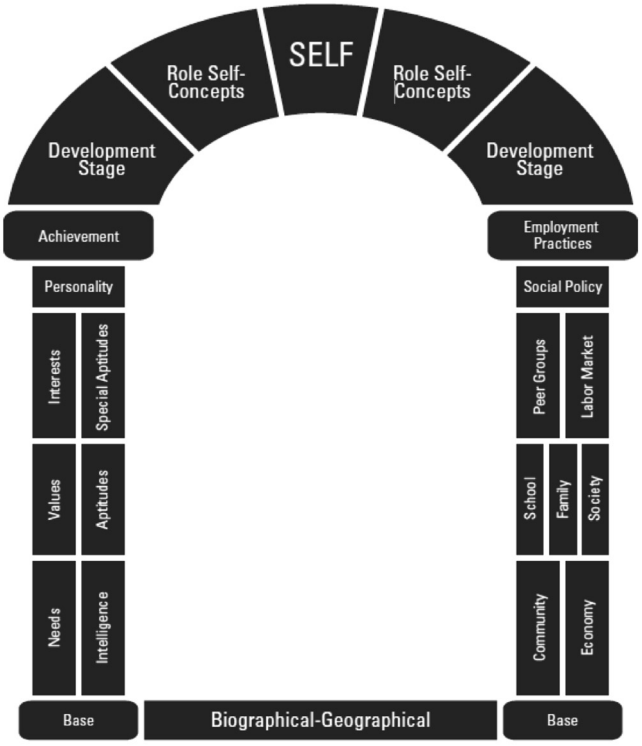


Figure 3.5 - Archway of Career Determinants

Practical Application of Super's Theory

Super stated that the development of one's self-concept is influenced by one's culture. When applying his theory, one would see the importance of helping the client/student explore cultural influences and in particular, those influences that have an impact on one's career development and perceptions of the work role. The Career-in-Culture interview (Ponterotto, Rivera, & Sueyoshi, 2000) is a semi-structured interview protocol that "seeks to obtain information about the individual's family influence; cultural background; worldview; environmental factors, including societal barriers; and perceived personal strength." The interview seeks to facilitate the individual's understanding of factors that influence career decisions. Questions from the protocol might include the following:

- What type of occupations were you aware of growing up? Tell me about your cultural and ethnic background.
- How has your family influenced your career goals?

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- How would you describe your role/ obligations in your family?
- Who are some of the people in your community that influenced your career development?

Other practical applications of this theory include:

- Using the Career Rainbow to assist young people in planning for future life roles and
- to assist adults in balancing their life roles, and giving each the time and energy they choose to give them.
- Assisting individuals in assessing their personal values and exploring how to express them in their different life roles, including that of worker.
- Assisting people in understanding their vocational self-concept and then applying it to the selection of an occupation or a job.



Activity 3: The Case of Rene

Rene is a college sophomore with a declared major in finance. Because of the pandemic, much of her freshman year was spent in online classes. This semester she is back in the classroom and is concerned about the many transitions that she needs to make. Studying remotely made her life as a student much easier.

Rene has a speech impediment and as a result has always preferred classes and part-time work that didn't involve talking much in public or in large groups. She had significant hearing loss as a young child and although her hearing aid helps quite a bit now that she is older, she was repeatedly told when she was younger that she was difficult to understand. She still stutters when nervous and tends to stumble over words when speaking before a group. She grew up believing that a behind-the-scenes job would be the best place for her.

She was relieved when she found out that her first semester and a half were going to be delivered remotely. When she finally moved onto campus, she was fearful and disappointed. In her classes she learned that she will be required to make several presentations that will affect her grades. That is causing her quite a bit of anxiety. In addition, she is already fearful of the internship interviews and the actual internship that she will need to complete her degree.

She also has more immediate concerns. She selected finance as a major because she thought that finance-related occupations would give her the opportunity to work quietly on her own without embarrassing herself. She recently found out that her understanding of the field contained a lot of

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misconceptions. She would likely be working with a team and speaking with customers on a regular basis. She can feel herself beginning to get depressed and is unsure whether she should stay in finance after all. If not finance, then what?

How would a career services provider work with Rene using the developmental theory? The basic principles of Super's theory would be examined to see how they could help Rene move past her concerns. The self-concept is of the utmost importance when applying this theory. Each of us has a picture of who we are. Sometimes these views are realistic, clear, and well-defined. Is that the case with Rene? Rene's sense of self includes a heavy emphasis on her hearing impairment and her difficulties speaking in public. Super would say that we need to work with Rene on moving from that negative self-concept to one that is more positive. From first glance, it looks like Rene's career decision to pursue finance was based on her negative self-concept. According to Super, that can lead to a decision that is ultimately unsatisfying. If using the developmental theory, time would be spent re-examining that decision.

Super would also look at the developmental tasks that one needs to complete before making a career-related decision. For that, the National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG) can be used to determine which tasks she has completed, and which still need to be mastered. A number of tasks listed in the NCDG still appear to need attention. Examples are:

- Identify your interests, likes and dislikes
- Identify your abilities, strengths, skills, and talents
- Identify your work values needs

When looking at the stages defined by Super, it also helps us determine what work needs to be done before a career decision is made. It appears Rene is just beginning to enter the Exploration stage but has yet to complete many of the tasks that are part of exploring one's sense of self and the different kinds of work that she wants to do. Again, the career services provider would guide her through those tasks.

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Homework 3: Reflections on Super's Theory



Super's Theory can be applied in a variety of settings and ways. Use the prompts below to write a few sentences in response.

1. Use the National Career Development Guidelines (See ***Appendix S-1: Additional Training Resources***) to determine which tasks a student/client needs to complete in order to reach what Super calls "career maturity."

2. Think about and make notes on how you would use Super's theory to develop career services for middle school students? High school students? College students? Adults who are in their 40s–50s? Adults of traditional retirement age?

3. If a person could not work in an occupation that uses his or her interests, what might Super suggest as a way to use those interests? Write down your thoughts.

4. Look at Super's Propositions at the start of this section. Which do you think would be relevant and worth examining for middle school students? High school students? College students? Adults who in their 40s–50s? Adults of traditional retirement age?

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Constructivist Narrative Approach

This postmodern approach to career development is built on many of the same assumptions as Super's theory (Savickas, 2005). In summary, choosing and entering an occupation is a process by which one clarifies and implements a work self-concept. As we will learn, a wide variety of assessments have been developed to measure interests, values, abilities, and other characteristics. Those who subscribe to the narrative approach believe that people are more than the sum of their scored responses on inventories and assessments. According to these theorists, it is important to also understand and consider the context in which individuals relate to, interact with, and find meaning. In other words, these theorists believe that people cannot be separated from their environment. According to this theory, the client's narrative of past experiences, current meanings, and future actions is the story that reveals one's self-knowledge (interests, abilities, achievements, values, motivation, etc.) and thus has also been referred to as the "storied approach."

This storied approach is based on the following assumptions (Peavey, 1995):

- An individual's change process is constant, and it is often marked with conflict and resolution.
- The individual comes to know self through a process of constructing (putting knowledge together to form a whole). The goal is to engage the client in self-awareness and self-assessment to uncover the underlying values on which future choices and decisions will be made.

In the narrative approach we are facilitators, not experts. As with all assessments that are connected to Super's theory, a better understanding of self is the most important goal. With this approach, we use broad and open questions to hear stories from the individual. The other goal is to better understand how one wants to express that sense of self. Themes are an integral part of the process. Those themes can include emotions, thoughts, perceptions, needs, regrets, and goals. Our role as facilitators is to help draw meaning and extend the story into the future. At the end of the interview, it is expected that the process will lead to goals and future actions.

There is typically a reason for each question in a narrative approach. For example, when asking someone about role models, the person identified is usually their ideal self which gives clues to the attributes they want to connect with. The concern is not with who the role model is but instead, what is admired. This question helps to identify values, morals, and the way of addressing a problem. If asked



Notes:

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about a favorite school subject, the response indicates interests, skills, values, and knowledge that intrigues us.

The narrative approach can also be used to focus on culture and ethnicity. Through interview questions, a professional can better understand how these issues impact one's career decisions. Examples of those questions are: How has your family influenced your career goals? Who are some of the people in your community that influenced your career goals? What types of occupations were you aware of when growing up?

Transition Theory - 4S Model (Schlossberg)

Nancy K. Schlossberg was one of the first theorists to concentrate on transitions. She examines how people recognize and integrate transitions in a way that enables them to move forward in a positive way. Her assumptions are similar in many ways to those of developmental theorists. Transition theorists focus on points in time when change is occurring, rather than on the total life span. As a career services provider, one would examine the factors that determine how an individual will cope with a transition rather than on its outcomes.

This approach operates from the following set of assumptions:

- Life is characterized by change and an ongoing series of transitions.
- Transitions can be viewed as events (or nonevents) that cause change in an individual's roles, relationships, or routines.
- Transitions have varying degrees of impact on different individuals, depending upon a number of factors.
- Success in life may be more closely related to the ability of individuals to cope effectively with change and transition than to life's events in general.

Schlossberg's (1989) theory is a clear and useful example of transition theory. She defines transition as an event or nonevent that results in change. An event is something that happens, such as getting accepted into a school of your choice, marriage, having a child, or getting promoted. A nonevent is something that was expected to happen but did not, such as not being admitted to the school of your choice, not finding a marriage partner, not having the child you hoped to have, or not getting promoted.

In order to qualify as a transition, Schlossberg says, the event or nonevent has to result in a change in roles, daily routines, and/or personal relationships. Each transition is viewed as unique, even if two people experience the same transition, because each brings a different combination of strengths and challenges to it.

I think everyone should experience defeat at least once during their career. You learn a lot from it. - Lou Holtz

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Schlossberg's 4S's Model

Schlossberg proposed a model that is called the "4-S model" (Figure 3.6). There are four parts to a transition: the situation, the self, the supports, and the strategy. Further, she proposes that the severity of a transition can be measured and controlled by a careful analysis of the first three (situation, self, supports) and that it can be controlled through the development of a strategy (the fourth component of the model).

Situation: A transition is often triggered by a specific situation. The situation can be understood by answering the following questions:

- How severe is the situation? How much change is required in roles, relationships, and routines?
- What is the timing of the transition? Is it happening at a good time or a bad time? An expected time or an unexpected time developmentally?
- How much control does the person have over the transition? Are there some options from which to choose?
- How permanent is the transition? How long will this new situation last?
- What else is going on in the person's life at the same time? Is energy being spent on transitions in other life roles at the same time?



Figure 3.6 - Schlossberg's 4S's Model

Self: The inner strength and experience of an individual are critical elements in coping with transitions. Think about the answers to these questions: What is the client's general outlook on life? Do they tend to see the cup as half full or half empty?

- Where is the client's center of control? Do they believe that life can be largely controlled from within or that people are pawns of fate controlled by external powers or events?
- Does the client possess skills such as being able to manage stress, be assertive if needed, and make decisions?
- Does the client have a track record of being able to face transitions and deal with them effectively? How much resilience or adaptability do they have?

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Supports: The availability of people, services, resources, and agencies is a third critical element in being able to deal with transitions. Questions to ask related to their availability include the following:

- Does the client have friends and family who can help to get through the transition?
- Is there sufficient money or other material resources to carry the individual through the transition period?
- Are there agencies or other service providers that can provide support through the transition?

Strategies: After completing the first three steps of the 4-S model, this fourth one sets the stage for action by developing a plan to move through and out of the transition. One needs to be sure to include all issues discussed during the first three steps into the plan. In this step, the client and you consider these questions:

- What are some ways to see this situation in a different and more positive light?
- Are there some inner resources that could be further developed?
- Are there some additional support people or agencies that can help?
- What are some alternatives to move the client out of this situation? Which of these seems to be the best?
- What are the steps that need to be followed to pursue that alternative?
- What is the time frame for accomplishing each of these steps?

Though Schlossberg's theory relates to all kinds of transitions, you are likely to encounter many clients who are in transition because of job loss. Asking questions like those above during the intake interview can help you and the client take realistic stock of the situation.

Practical Application of Schlossberg's 4-S Transition Theory



Activity 4 The Case of Jeremy

Using Schlossberg's 4S Transition Theory (situation, self, support, and strategy), a career services provider can provide a framework to support Jeremy to meet the challenges he faces.

Jeremy is a college senior and is worried about graduation. He will graduate with a B.S. in Business Administration with a focus on Information Systems and Operations Management. He has done well in his classes and has enjoyed his internships with Amazon and Macy's. He loves database management and hopes to land a job with a small company in the southern part of the state. He has several concerns.

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One is his student loans. He is deeply in debt. That makes him very anxious. He knows that he will need to start paying back his loans within the next year, which means that he not only needs a job right away, but also he needs a good-paying job. He can't help but wonder whether these financial pressures will make him so anxious in the interview that he will present himself poorly. Why would anyone hire a new graduate, he is thinking, when they can hire an experienced person? He is also concerned because even if he is offered a position, he has no idea how to ask for the salary that he will need to get by.

Let's look at this scenario through the "eyes" of Schlossberg's 4-S Transition Theory.

Situation: Jeremy is graduating and wants to work for a small company in the southern part of the state. He has a huge debt from his four years in college. He struggles to interview effectively in mock job interviews because he thinks about his debt so much and easily gets distracted. He wants and needs a good paying job.

Fortunately for Jeremy, many of the issues noted above are well within his control, including: (1) acquiring a more realistic perspective on how much debt he actually has; (2) evaluating his own skills to strengthen his self-concept; and (3) locating salary-negotiating books to build his self-confidence in his negotiating skills. This is a permanent transition for him (as opposed to a temporary one like moving into a dorm room), and there is a high probability he can do this successfully.

Self: Unfortunately, his "inner strength" currently would be described as having a low internal locus of control. To help reverse this, a career services provider would ask Jeremy a variety of questions to refocus his internal locus of control to show him how he has made decisions effectively in the past and managed stress well. To do this, one would ask questions that would make him revisit successful transitions he has made in the past (like successfully applying for and completing two internships) and ask him questions to strengthen his self-concept (incorporate the use of a portfolio to remind him of all the great things he has successfully completed).

Support: Jeremy has a variety of support services and people to help him in this process, so he won't have to make this transition alone. The people and services include: (1) academic advisors and career services providers to assist with his interviewing; (2) university loan officers and financial planners to develop a plan where he could effectively live within any salary and manage his debt at the same time; (3) individuals/supervisors he worked with at his prior two internships to help him network; and (4) fellow business-school students graduating with him for use in networking and moral support.

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Strategy: (Use the space below to outline Jeremy's action plan or strategy)

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Homework 4: Reflections of Schlossberg's Theory



In the space provided beneath each item below consider the ways you can use the 4-S model in your work.

1. Think about and make notes about how you could use Schlossberg's theory to structure an interview in your work as a career services provider with an adult who is unemployed and facing a number of barriers in other life roles, or describe how you could use this theory with a high school student, college student, or a worker who is about to retire.

2. Develop a more detailed Action Plan for Jeremy, complete with who is doing what and when.

3. Think about and jot down some notes about how Schlossberg's theory could be used to identify problem areas that need to be referred, and list resources in your community that could be used for referrals.

4. Describe the kinds of clients who might profit most from the application of Schlossberg's approach.

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Other Theories

(Learning Objective 8)

Remember, there is no one "correct" theory. You may likely borrow from each of the theories already presented in your own work. Following are additional career development theories you should be familiar with as a career services provider.

The Integrative Life Planning Theory of Sunny Hansen

Hansen (1997) defines integrative life planning (ILP) in a way that is similar to Super's approach, as a way of seeing self and world that takes into account both personal development and the contexts in which we live; local, national, and global change; work, family, education, and leisure changes; cultural changes and the changing roles of women and men; the relative importance of various life roles (that is, learning, loving, working, relaxing); the need for reflection on one's own developmental priorities for mind, body, and spirit; and the importance of change itself, both personal and social (p. 17).

She uses the metaphor of quilting to describe her holistic theory. "Weaving our Lives into a Meaningful Whole" is the center of the quilt surrounded by six life patches. She advocates that individuals who make career choices and help others to do so should be mindful of six critical tasks:

1. Finding work that needs doing and that provides economic self-sufficiency in changing global contexts

   Hansen talks about creativity, social justice, and entrepreneurial projects as ways to find solutions to human challenges. She identified 10 areas of work that are worthy of our attention: preserving the environment, constructive use of technology, understanding changes in the workplace and family, accepting changing gender roles, understanding and celebrating diversity, reducing violence, reducing poverty and hunger, advocating for human rights, and discovering new ways of knowing.

2. Connecting family and work

   This is a very important task to her. It was critical that we all understand the changing patterns that are possible. She started with Super's ideas about life roles and took it deeper and broader. Not only do we need to understand the work and family roles, but it is important to see how they impact the career-related decisions that we make.

3. Valuing pluralism and diversity

   Dr. Hansen recognized early on that we must be aware of and understand all kinds of differences. At the same time she emphasized the continuing examination of our own biases and attitudes.

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Examples included in her writings focus on race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, and regionality.

4. Exploring spirituality, meaning, and life purpose

   One's life purpose is the task that is the center of the theory from which life's meaning and sense of self are generated and understood. Defining purpose and exploring what one wants to do with that purpose is the substance of all the tasks. This is also true for us as professionals, not just for our students and clients. Ethics and values exploration are also an important part of this task.

5. Managing personal transitions and organizational change

   Making decisions is an important part of this task. Take a look at Schlossberg's 4S theory as way to work with this task.

6. Attending to our health

   Dr. Hansen recognized that there are specialists working in these areas so attention to this task often requires a referral. She also talks about the topic of health equity. That connects us back to Finding Work That Needs Doing.

You may want to read more about this theory by exploring the references at the end of the module (e.g., Hansen & Suddarth, 2008).

Chaos Theory

Chaos Theory has been called the Science of Surprises. It teaches us to expect the unexpected. It has been used to study patterns of dynamic systems that are sensitive to a wide variety of conditions. It is widely used in the sciences and fields which generate complex data points. Weather can be used as an example to illustrate its underlying principles. Weather patterns are usually predictable in the near future but as time goes on, more factors continue to influence the weather and it becomes increasingly difficult to predict what will happen. Chaos theory represents an attempt to take seemingly random data points and actually build a picture of dynamic systems.

Chaos theory has not only been applied in the sciences. It has also been used to improve the understanding of human behavior. The Chaos Theory of Careers is an adaptation of that approach. Like other theories, it seeks to understand one's career path and helps to maximize satisfaction in one's future career. It moves us away from a linear approach and instead expects and seeks to understand uncertainty. Those who follow this theory no longer subscribe to a predictable and linear future that happens in isolation of internal or external factors. Instead of seeing this uncertainty as something to be feared, this theory appreciates the complexity of our lives and incorporates the belief that change is inevitable and that external factors will continue to have an impact on one's career in unexpected ways.

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Many believe that this theory is more helpful to individuals who face an ever-changing labor market and an unsure future. They believe that career planning does not occur in isolation away from influences such as family, culture, and the economy. Predictability is impossible so decisions are made with the understanding that they are likely temporary. Skills are needed to cope with these complexities and to understand how career planning fits in.

Bright and Pryon (2012) talk about embracing the possibilities that this theory leads to. It means having flexible goals and the ability to react to unexpected changes and opportunities. How would you work with clients when using this approach? Chaos Theory of Careers believes that it is important to distinguish what we can control and what is not in our power. That means that time spent helping a client/student understand themselves better is well worth the time. It helps the individual understand what they need for satisfaction in a job. At the same time, the individual needs to understand that they can't control what happens to the labor market because of a recession or a pandemic. It means that we spend time on self-exploration but also in becoming more resilient in the inevitable face of change. Another way we can assist is to support a Plan B when Plan A doesn't work out. In addition, we can reframe the words that we use such as, instead of being "undecided," we can use the term, "open-minded." We can encourage preparation but not a completely detailed Plan A. We talk about goals that are a little "fuzzier" and that are flexible and short-term.

As professionals in the field of career services, we are well aware of the difficulty of predicting where labor market trends will move. Identifying one's professional identity for the next few decades just isn't a realistic goal anymore. The world is chaotic and this theory embraces that. Instead of being disorienting, the supporters believe it can be liberating.

Cognitive Information Processing Theory

Cognitive information processing (CIP) (Sampson, Lenz, Reardon, & Peterson, 1999) is an approach to career development and services that has generated a great deal of attention. It looks at three factors: (1) self-understanding; (2) occupational knowledge; and (3) how we cognitively process this information. The authors present these domains as a pyramid with self-knowledge and occupational knowledge as the base, decision-making skills in the middle, and metacognitions (this component includes self-talk, self-awareness, and the monitoring and control of thoughts) at the top. Four assumptions make up the foundation for this theory:

- There is an interaction between cognitive and affective processes that occurs during all career decisions.
- Available cognitive operations and knowledge determine an individual's capacity for solving career problems.
- Knowledge structures (and knowledge about our own career development) are always evolving.

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- The goal of working within this theory is to enhance the client's information processing skills set.

CIP is focused on helping clients to better understand the way that they think and how these thinking patterns influence their career decision-making. Specifically, the CIP model challenges career practitioners to ask how they can help clients to acquire self-knowledge, occupational knowledge, career decision skills, and metacognitions (awareness of their thinking processes) in order to make effective career decisions. Each of these domains represents an element of a client's development that could be addressed by a career services provider. The authors of the model provide a seven-step outline that can direct one's interventions:

1. Conduct an initial interview introducing the clients and identifying concerns and skill levels within each domain.
2. Make a preliminary assessment of the client's career decision-making readiness.
3. Collaborate with the client to identify gaps in knowledge.
4. Identify goals that will close the gaps.
5. Develop an individual learning plan.
6. Have the client execute the learning plan.
7. Review client progress.

Social Cognitive Career Theory

The social cognitive career theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994) attempts to add a larger context to one's thinking about career development and career planning by looking at many facets of an individual's life and how they interact. Not only does it consider individual and environmental factors, but it is also based on the critical relationship among self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals in the career decision-making process.

"Self-efficacy" (Bandura, 1986), means that people's beliefs in their ability to accomplish goals help to determine the actions they will take. This theory supports the notion that it is one's beliefs about one's sense of self-efficacy that determines whether one is willing and motivated to pursue a career or educational path.

There is the underlying assumption when one talks about self-efficacy that one tends to move towards tasks and occupations depending on his or her beliefs about success. Interventions by career services providers are suggested when individuals have inaccurate self-efficacy beliefs or expectations (low self-esteem) that are perceived as insurmountable. Thus, this theory would support a focus on overcoming obstacles and giving encouragement as critical factors. As with other theories mentioned earlier in the module, the goal is to help students and clients find a career that matches their interests, values, and skills.

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Strengths-based Approach

According to the strengths-based approach, focusing on an individual's strengths will result in an individual who is more likely to become engaged, confident and empowered. In a number of work settings, organizations often focus on faults or deficits. This approach changes the focus from problem solving and deficits to a focus on strengths and successes. It is a theory that emphasizes the power of the individual in terms of self-knowledge and self-determination (Schutt, 2007). Typically, the work within this approach is client led, with a focus on future outcomes and the strengths that the people bring to a challenge. Empowerment results from being treated with respect and having strengths acknowledged and enhanced. This approach orients a career facilitator to focus first on listening and identifying the person's strengths and resources, to clearly understand their goals and aspirations for the future, and to then support them in addressing any barriers or blockages as they move toward their goals.

The instrument, CliftonStrengths is based on this theory. It is an online assessment that asks individuals to rate their level of agreement with a series of statements related to each of the 34 themes. The results are used to identify the individual's top five, or dominant, strengths. They are divided into four categories:

1. Strategic thinking: Analytical, Context, Futuristic, Ideation, Input, Intellection, Learner, Strategic
2. Relationship Building: Adaptability, Connectedness, Developer, Empathy, Harmony, Includer, Individualization, Positivity, Relator
3. Influencing: Activator, Command, Communication, Competition, Maximizer, Self-assurance, Significance, Woo
4. Executing: Achiever, Arranger, Belief, Consistency, Deliberative, Discipline, Focus, Responsibility, Restorative

Practical Application

(Learning Objective 9)

Homework 5: Applying Career Development Theory



1. Select one of the theories described in this module and describe how it has helped you to understand or think about your own career development in a new way (1–2 pages, single-spaced).
2. Describe how you would work with the case of Trisha if you were following trait and factor theory, learning theory, developmental theory, and transition theory. Be specific about the different approaches taken as a result of following the different theories.

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Trisha, a 35-year old woman, has been in and out of the courts for the past six years. At one time, she was incarcerated for dealing drugs. Recently, she was arrested for writing bad checks. The judge is giving her one more chance. As part of his judgment, she needs to work with you to try and find meaningful work that will keep her out of his court. You don't know much about Trisha, but you do know from her files that, while in prison, she completed her GED and successfully completed courses in bookkeeping. At that time, she exhibited a high level of motivation and received fairly good grades. She seems to have lost that sense of purpose. Before her incarceration, Trisha held a warehouse job and had just learned how to electronically manage inventory with a sophisticated software system when she was sent to prison. Since she has been out of prison, she has held a number of part-time jobs related to data entry. She worked at a hospital, for the city parking authority, and for a telecommunications service center, but each job lasted less than six months.

The only other information you have about Trisha is that her mother has been a bookkeeper for a law office for many years and is well respected in the community. Trisha is the mother of three children who are 12, 10, and nine years of age. She has had no relationship with their father for more than five years. Her mother was willing to provide shelter, food, and transportation for Trisha and her children on and off for the past few years, but now she has health problems of her own and is no longer able to support them. The judge sends Trisha to you for help.

There are many career development theories. This module focused on four main theories and the concepts of each. These theories provide the foundation for the work of a career services provider. You are encouraged to investigate other theories and utilize those that make the most sense for the work you do and the clients you serve. There are additional resources in the Appendices for theories not covered in-depth in this module.



Notes:

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Disclaimer: Hyperlinks to external internet sites noted throughout this publication are for information only. NCDA makes no claims, promises, or guarantees about the completeness, accuracy, currency, content or quality of information contained in the links provided in this curriculum.

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Facilitating Career Development

Module 3

Student **Appendices**

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Appendix S-1: Additional Training Resources

Resource List

The following is a list of online references and resources used in or recommended for this module of the curriculum. By the very nature of the Internet, this list cannot be inclusive of all available resources. As such, the authors and NCDA invite recommendations from NCDA instructors and participants on references and resources for all modules.

This list will be updated on NCDA's website (www.ncda.org) periodically.

Note: The National Career Development Association and the authors and editors of this list of resources make no claim as to the accuracy and validity of the information presented on the web- sites below. The content of the sites below are the property of their respective owners and editors. No warranty, either express or implied, is made by the inclusion of a website on this list.

Module 3. Career Development Theory and Its Application

- O*NET:
  www.onetonline.org/
- Interest Profiler:
  www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip
- CASVE Career Development Cycle:
  career.fsu.edu/sites/g/files/imported/storage/original/application/5c3f072ff201f82422d1f936f3abccb8.pdf
- National Career Development Guidelines:
  www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sp/compentencies_ncd_guidelines
- Report on Effective Career Guidance:
  eunec.eu/sites/www.eunec.eu/files/members/attachments/report_on_effective_career_guidance.pdf
- Strengths-Based Approach:
  www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/product/47/_PARENT/layout_products/false
  www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/news_article/7006/_PARENT/layout_details/false
- Debbie Osborn Career Theories and Models at Work:
  www.youtube.com/watch?v=VobMZUJhCAo

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- Chaos Theory of Careers:
  www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGorz_vSmUk
- Life-Career Rainbow and Psychology of Careers (Super):
  www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEJIc1mbJj8
- Interview with Mark Savickas:
  www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTmGsSSKxcc

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