Career Watch

Newsletter from the ACPA Commission for Career Development

**MISSED A PROGRAM RELATED TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT AT ACPA?
ACPA CONFERENCE WRAP-UP EDITION**

FEATURES

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Farouk Dey, Ed.S, M.Ed., MBA
University of Florida

During the last few years, we have witnessed a dramatic shift in the US and global economy, which has had an impact on the career development of students on our campuses as well as our own careers and the way we deliver services. The world is indeed getting smaller and as career services professionals, we are adapting and working to find new ways to ensure that students are exposed to global opportunities, employers are dealing with recruitment and retention issues effectively, and the use of technology is maximized to enhance communication in a global community.

The Commission for Career Development seeks to examine these issues as well as the changing roles of career services in higher education within a student development framework. Members and Directorates of the commission have worked hard during the last several years to fulfill our mission by providing the ACPA membership with opportunities for professional development, knowledge and information exchange, and affiliation with the career development profession. If you attended the 2008 ACPA Convention in Atlanta, GA, you may have noticed our new initiatives designed specifically to help you connect with your profession and return to your campus with a renewed energy and a deeper insight on the recent trends in career development and higher education.

One of our newest programs developed by the Commission for Career Development was a site visit to an area recruiter, CNN, which allowed many career services professionals to learn about a global leader in communications as well as bring new employment opportunities back to their campuses. The Speed Networking program is another program that we recently developed for the ACPA membership provided an opportunity to graduate students and new professionals to network with seasoned student affairs colleagues. Both programs were very successful and we intend to expand them with more site visits and networking opportunities in the 2009 convention in Washington, DC. Of course, our participation in the ACPA Placement and Career Services continues to be stronger than ever with our Career Information Booth (the Lucy Booth), Mock Interviews, and PD Snapshots. We are grateful for the many volunteers who helped staff these programs to provide a very important service to candidates and employers at the convention. The Commission for Career Development was honored with a Service Award in recognition of our efforts at placement.

Our goal is to provide leadership in the field of career development by creating and promoting more opportunities for information exchange, professional development, and affiliation with the profession at a national and global level. Many of the programs you saw in Atlanta were pilot projects, so expect to see more in DC and beyond. I invite you to participate in this process and get involved in the commission committees, which are listed on our website. I also encourage you to submit program proposals for the 2009 convention to address the recent trends and paradigm shifts in career services and how they impact higher education.

I am excited about the future of the Commission for Career Development and look forward to collaborating with you to enhance our profession.

COMMISSION AT ACPA HIGHLIGHTS

ACPA SPEED NETWORKING

Business cards were flying across the room when over forty professionals participated in the first annual Professional Speed Networking event on Sunday before the conference in Atlanta. Both new and experienced career professionals spent 90 minutes exchanging ideas, making connections, answering questions and providing support for everyone involved. The event was a huge success and we are looking forward to the event next year! If you have any feedback regarding the Speed Networking event or would like to help coordinate the event next year, please contact Kristen Buchmann at kbuchman@fgcu.edu.

Kristen Buchmann
Florida Gulf Coast University

CNN SITE VISIT

One of the newest things that took place at this year's ACPA Convention in Atlanta was a trip to an area employer. For our inaugural site visit, the Commission visited the CNN headquarters. We were able to meet with Brooke Camp, one of the recruiters who works primarily with college and university interns. About 15 of us from the Commission were able to gain great insight into the efforts CNN puts into attracting the nation's most talented students. We got to ask questions in regards to how they recruit and what they are looking for in a candidate.

After our meeting with Camp, the group did a mini self guided tour and spent some time at the gift shop. This site visit was of great value to the Commission's members because we were able to network with a major employer that has a national reputation for excellence. Furthermore, conducting this site visit has helped the commission in laying the groundwork to coordinate other site visits in other convention host cities.

Mason M. Murphy
Arizona State University

My Career Path: A Director Profile

Andrea Lowe
Director of Career Services
Evans School
University of Washington in Seattle

I realized that I really wanted to work with college students in an advising role and she helped guide me through the ACPA directory of graduate programs.

After graduating with a major in communicative disorders I realized that I no longer wanted to be a speech pathologist; however, I did know that I wanted to work in an educational setting. While working full-time at the university that I had just graduated from, I learned about my future path through both trial-and-error and information gathering. I took some school counseling courses at a neighboring university and realized that wasn't the right audience (K-12). While taking the courses I started talking to some student affairs professionals and then visited the Career Development Office on campus. I found myself really interested in learning more about what the person on the other side of the desk was doing and how she got to where she was--something I could tell didn't happen very often in her world. I realized that I really wanted to work with college students in an advising role and she helped guide me through the ACPA directory of graduate programs.

While in graduate school at Western Illinois University's College Student Personnel program, I focused on career development and administration by doing a practicum, and then a graduate assistantship, with the Career Services Office on campus. With a very small full-time professional staff, the office heavily relied upon graduate assistants for career advising and programming. Along with two of my classmates, we were entrusted to open satellite offices on the campus to better serve the students.

Shortly after graduation in 2001 I started a new position, as a career advisor serving undecided, exploring students at the University of Wisconsin in an office whose primary function was academic advising. Through that position I was able to fine-tune my counseling, public speaking, and supervisory skills. While I loved that position, I came to realize that daylong counseling sessions with freshmen and sophomores was not a good fit for me; I needed to work with older students on their job search. I knew someday I would move on to a new position but did not think it would happen only two years into my first position post-graduate school.

A college friend of mine was attending the Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington, which is a graduate program that grants a Masters of Public Administration degree. The director of the career services office had just resigned so my friend sent me a link to the job description. I looked at the position description and thought that I wasn't ready, but at the same time the thought of moving out to Seattle was very appealing as it was something that was in the back of my mind for the past five years. Why would they hire me? I was only two years out of graduate school! As a career advisor, the bar is set very high for those applying and interviewing for career services positions so I had to put in the work to win the interview. To help me with my application, I consulted with my friend who was attending the school and asked for his student perspective who then forwarded my questions on to some of his classmates who gave me some advice on what they wanted in their director. To be informed for my application (and to also know what I was getting myself into) I contacted two career directors from other MPA schools for informational interviews. It didn't stop there; I also conducted an informal focus group with a few students from the University of Wisconsin's MPA program and had several career advisor friends look at my materials. I don't know if there was ever the moment where I said to myself "it is now time to be a director." I think I took an unconventional route and found a school that was small (1 staff person) who was willing to take a chance on me and let me grow as a leader. Now starting my fifth year at the school, my office has grown to include an assistant director--who I hired straight out of her graduate program last year.

I think there are a lot of different types of director positions at many different types of universities and a person needs to figure out which one best suits his or her personality and work style. I don't know if there is one career path, but I do know that an aptitude to lead intelligently is crucial.

There are some really tough skills to be learned to lead an office such as political savvy, fundraising, marketing, supervision, assessment, and working with performance measures. When you run an office, anything that happens (or doesn't happen) ultimately rests on your shoulders even if you weren't involved. Working in an academic department one of the biggest challenges is having what you do be validated by the dean and the faculty (and teach them to stop using the word "placement"). As for the career services field, I won't lie, it was a struggle for me when I started out as I was a young director and it was hard getting the acknowledgement from my peers that I might actually know what I'm doing. When I first started my position at the Evans School, I found that seeking out assistance from my peers, a lot of listening at meetings, and research on best practices had helped my peers overlook my age. I see many new professionals just coming out of graduate school (including my own MPA students) who immediately want to "fix" things in their new offices. You need to prove yourself before you can tell people that there is something wrong and there is usually a story behind the ways things are done that needs to be learned.

Because I work in a small school I am able to balance the strategic parts of being a director with the day-to-day advisement of students. I love my job because I am able to focus in on a specific field and learn as much about it and the type of employers who might hire my students. Throughout the years I have realized that I need to work with older students who are focused in a specific area that aligns with my values. I think I've found that combination by being at the Evans School.

I highly recommend that those aspiring to be a director should find a mentor, and it should be someone who is willing to be candid about what it takes to be successful running an office. Additionally, ask your current supervisor if there is room for you to sharpen your skills in budgeting, supervision, and public speaking. Seek out professional development opportunities that will allow you to attain those skills and to network with professionals in the field.

Overcoming Career Decision-making Paralysis: Strategies from a Perfectionism Therapy Group

Presented at ACPA 2008 by:

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A major focus of The Courage to Be Imperfect group is learning how to identify perfectionistic thoughts and behaviors.

Perfectionism has been implicated in a wide range of mental health concerns relevant to college students, including social anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and obsessive-compulsive disorder (Antony, Purdon, Huta, and Swinson, 1998); worry and procrastination (Stober & Joormann, 2001); and depression (Hewitt & Flett 1991). Perfectionism has also been posited as a relevant factor in career choice and career development (Slaney, Ashby, & Trippi, 1995), and has been specifically linked to problems that students encounter in the career decision-making process (Emmett & Minor, 1993; Leong & Chervinko, 1996). Emmett & Minor (1993) found that, among gifted students, perfectionism and sensitivity to others' expectations were the most frequent contributors to difficulty making career decisions and, in fact, became more pronounced as students approached college graduation. Leong & Chervinko (1996) distinguished between the impact of socially prescribed perfectionism (i.e. exaggerated belief of others' expectations of the individual) and self-oriented perfectionism (i.e. exaggerated expectations of oneself) within an undergraduate sample. They noted that socially prescribed perfectionism had a negative impact on career decision-making, whereas self-oriented perfectionism had a positive effect on career decision-making. To attenuate the adverse emotional and vocational impact of maladaptive perfectionism, we developed a therapy group in which students learn strategies to modify aspects of their perfectionism that hinder rather than help them in their daily lives.

This group, entitled The Courage to Be Imperfect, was adapted from Antony and Swinson's (1998) self-help book When Perfect Isn't Good Enough. Students assess the impact of perfectionism on their lives and pinpoint areas that are negatively affected. They create individualized action plans in which they implement strategies for changing perfectionistic thoughts and behaviors. Sessions involve brief lectures, engaging activities to illustrate the content, small group work to apply the concepts and skills to group members' unique issues, and large group sharing. The group format provides students with opportunities to learn that they are not alone in their struggles, to try out new "imperfect" behaviors, and to receive feedback from their peers. Initial outcome data has shown a statistically significant reduction in members' perfectionism, depression, and anxiety over the course of treatment.

A major focus of The Courage to Be Imperfect group is learning how to identify perfectionistic thoughts and behaviors. Some examples of perfectionistic thoughts that are particularly relevant to career decision-making are: black and white thinking (e.g., believing that there is only one "right" career choice and/or that the choice is permanent); catastrophic thinking (e.g., believing that choosing the "wrong" career would be disastrous or horribly disappointing to others); and interpersonal sensitivity (e.g., being overly influenced by the opinions of others, even those from people who have little or no relationship to the individual). Perfectionistic behaviors implicated in career indecision include: not knowing when to quit (e.g., gathering career data beyond the point of being helpful), avoidance (e.g., delaying decisions due to feeling overwhelmed by the need to choose the perfect career), and excessive checking and reassurance seeking (e.g., continually seeking confirmation from others that one is making the right vocational choices).

Several of the recommendations for overcoming career decision-making difficulties discussed in the perfectionism group include:

- Remember there isn't necessarily a "wrong" choice when it comes to picking your career.
- Note that heightened anxiety is often a sign that two career choices are equally appealing, as opposed to a warning that you are in danger of making a terrible mistake.
- Remind yourself that although selecting a career is a big decision, it's not irreversible.
- Set a limit on the amount of career-related information you will gather.
- Keep other people's advice and opinions in perspective.
- Clarify your career values and prioritize those that are most important to you when choosing a job.
- Realize that you know your own career interests, skills, and passions the best.
- Tolerate the ambiguity and uncertainty inherent in career planning.

A common theme among perfectionists is the extraordinary pressure they feel to optimize every experience. This may lead to agonizing over what to order at a restaurant or what color shirt to purchase. When it comes to major life decisions such as career choices, the land mines increase exponentially. If a student is feeling paralyzed by the prospect of selecting a career, exploring maladaptive perfectionism may prove fruitful.

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MILLENNIALS AND THE JOB SEARCH: CAN DIFFERENT GENERATIONS CO-EXIST?

Our suggestion to X-er, Boomer, and GI employers is to be honest with Millennial job seekers.

Presented at ACPA 2008 by:

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Articles, journals, books, graduate school courses, and even television news documentaries are focusing on one population of students -- the Millennial generation. The definition of this generation varies based on whom you ask; however, most say the Millennials begin with the 1980-1982 cohort and end with 2000 cohort.

The Millennials are purportedly replacing the "hero" generation of the GIs, with whom they share many common characteristics. Millennials are known for the following seven traits: Special, Sheltered, Confident, Team-Oriented, Achieving, Pressured, and Conventional. While some of these traits are valuable assets in the workplace, employers may view others as challenges to the current work environment or unrealistic expectations by employees. So the question becomes: can different generations co-exist in today's job search and workplace?

Alyssa Rosenberg believes they can. In her article on www.governmentexecutive.com on February 26, 2008, she warned employers not to paint all Millennials with the same brush because they can be different from one another. Rosenberg instead encourages employers to seek out Millennial employees who are a good fit for the job, the office culture, and the work-style.

We believe they can too. After researching literature, web articles, and blogs, watching media pieces, and polling our peers, we have come to the conclusion that it is the responsibility of both the Millennial employee and the X-er, Boomer, and GI employers to learn about one another's generations and make smart job search choices.

For the Millennial employees, one key element is to know what you value. The literature from Howe & Strauss (2000 & 2006) speaks about Millennials' rising desire to say close to family and other people whom they value, obtain consistent structure and feedback, develop relationships with co-workers, achieve balance in their lives, and find purposeful, yet fun work. Millennials should also be aware of their reputation of being comfortable working in groups, having a level of efficiency, multi-tasking, and continuously learning.

Once they understand their generational and personal values, our suggestion to these Millennial job seekers on how to match their traits and values to the job is three tier: (1) Think holistically – about the job, the environment, the location, etc; (2) Ask employers questions which get to the heart of job "fit"; (3) Be realistic – no job is going to be perfect in every form or fashion.

For the X-er, Boomer, and GI employers, we ask that you try not to generalize Millennials too much. However, we will give you fair warning on some of the good and not-so-good elements of working with Millennials. Things to be cautious of are Millennials' high need for supervision, structure, balance, and praise, high expectations, over-confidence, laid back attitude and attire, and openness to both criticize things and offer suggestions.

While we know employers may think these Millennial newcomers lack creativity and toughness and may need a bit too much attention for some tastes, Millennials also have much to offer offices with their skills of collaboration, optimism, multi-tasking, technology, and work ethic. They value achievement, sociality, and diversity and will bring those elements into the job and the office.

Our suggestion to X-er, Boomer, and GI employers is to be honest with Millennial job seekers. Millennials want to know what they are signing up for ahead of time. Tell them the "real deal" about the job and the office culture because, if you mislead them to believe something that is untrue about either of those, Millennials will be apt to leave for another venture that aligns more with their traits and values. Susan Heathfield's also has ideas for employers in her article (2007), Eleven Tips for Managing Millennials:

1. Provide structure
2. Provide leadership and guidance
3. Encourage them
4. Work in teams
5. Listen
6. Give them challenges and allow for change
7. Take advantage of their technological literacy
8. Let them network
9. Support their need for a work/life balance
10. Provide a fun, employee-centered workplace
11. Allow them to multi-task

To continue the discussion about Millennials in the Higher Education workplace, visit our ACPA presentation website at http://higheredryan.org/acpa2008/. The site contains the presentation PowerPoint, videos, and references.

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Jazz up Your Career Presentations!

Presented at ACPA 2008 by:

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Popular culture is often my inspiration for engaging presentations.

You're a career professional; of course you can talk about resumes and interviewing for hours! Unfortunately, your college student audience may not share your passion, and even the most dynamic presenters need new material every once in a while. "Jazz Up Your Career Presentations" provided new career development presentation material at the 2008 ACPA Conference. Session attendees learned a few new strategies to get an audience thinking about important career topics like choosing a major, interviewing skills, and salary negotiation.

When creating a new activity, I always begin with identifying my plan of attack, pinpointing the learning objectives, and assessing the needs of the audience. This sets the stage for working with time and space constraints, and helps organize the resources needed to meet a specific audience's expectations. Sometimes this means gathering feedback from a few audience members ahead of time to identify wants and desires, likes and dislikes. If face-to-face data collection is not possible, even a quick check of related student groups on Facebook or MySpace can yield terrific insight into a potential audience. Evaluation is also critical. An activity may flop, sending you back to the drawing board, or may require just a few minor adjustments before the next successful presentation.

Popular culture is often my inspiration for engaging presentations. Hit TV shows, game shows, movies, songs, news events, books – anything current or catchy is fair game. For example, the "Cold Case" activity encourages participants to treat the job search process like a detective investigating an unsolved case. To uncover the hidden job market, the job seeker must use keen observation and engage others in mutually beneficial conversation to confidently and assertively develop and follow a network of leads. In today's tough job market, candidates must be amateur detectives.

Even board games, especially some of the oldies but goodies we grew up with, can be modified for terrific small group activities. A modified version of "Chutes and Ladders" is great to use with first year students and their parents. When a player lands on the space for "overslept and missed class," of course they take a tumble down a chute. But the "signed up for a new campus group at the Student Organization Fair" square leads you straight up a ladder. Consider all the possibilities for "Career Twister," "The Game of Life," and "Career-opoly."

Sometimes, I receive a call to present with less then an hour to prepare, and I need activities that require little to no prep time. I like to keep some fortune cookies on hand for a quick round of "Career Fortune." Every participant reads their fortune, adding "in my career" at the end. After laughing at a few fortunes that do not make a bit of sense, several insightful sentiments may spark interesting questions surrounding career questions and queries. When I have more time to prepare, I can use an online bingo generator to print cards, and a group of 20 to 200 students can play "Career Bingo." Interactive activities like these can energize a class presentation, kick start an Orientation session for parents and new students, or rejuvenate your student peer counselor training. When you build your repertoire of activities, you are prepared for any presentation, even last minute requests.

Infusing your presentations with interactive activities not only energizes your audience, but it energizes you! Jazzy activities like "Hire or Fire" and the "Friends & Family Plan" can breathe new life into your career development interactions with students, parents, and colleagues. If you are interested in a copy of the handouts from this ACPA session, you can contact the author at klindsay@heidelberg.edu.

About the Author:

Currently the Director of Career Development at Heidelberg College, Kristen has also worked successfully with students at large state universities over the past 12 years. Through teaching courses, training professionals, and presenting career topics to students, parents, faculty, and staff, she has developed an extensive repertoire of presentation activities. Her past presentations at national conferences (NACE, MwACE, ACPA, First Year Experience, NACADA) include topics as diverse as middle management, strategic planning for Career Centers, career development activities for First Year Students, and infusing professional development with productive fun activities.

Career Counselor in Trouble: Freud to the Rescue

Presented at ACPA 2008 by:

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A client who projects anger onto the career counselor is much less likely to open up about what is stopping him/her from exploring their career aspirations.

Nothing makes a counselor reconsider his/her career choice like the difficult client. We have all been challenged by the client who is completely unmotivated to change. What we propose in this article is a way to view these challenges through a new lens, a psychodynamic lens that sees these challenges as opportunities. The article that follows uses clients' career narratives as a tool to identify the defenses we hypothesize are the cause of clients' career roadblocks. Once identified, counselors can intervene based on assessment of the level of defense and what is being defended against.

George Vaillant provides through his copious research a very technical but succinct definition of ego defenses (Vaillant, 1992). He defines ego defenses as innate involuntary regulatory processes that allow individuals to reduce cognitive dissonance and to minimize sudden changes in internal and external environments by altering how these events are perceived. Based on this view, no matter how supportive the therapist, or how eager or motivated the client, there is something inherently challenging, even dangerous about opening oneself up to the life changing potential of career counseling. Therefore ego defenses are very much in operation, either as a support or impediment to the career counseling process. These defenses are a major means of managing conflict and affect, are relatively unconscious, discreet, reversible, and are adaptive as well as pathological.

Defenses can be placed on a continuum from a more adaptive and facilitative of growth, to less adaptive and far less facilitative of growth and change. They can be viewed in a hierarchy from more primitive to more mature. For example, a defense like suppression allows a person more control of awareness and more active choice if he/she feels anger but chooses to talk oneself into dealing with it later at a more appropriate time. The individual is allowed a more adaptive pattern of behavior. In contrast, if the individual is using projection as a defense against anger, then he/she does not own the anger but gives it to someone else. The individual is therefore temporarily left feeling some relief, but in the long run, there is some difficulty in owning or making use of that feeling. A client who projects anger onto the career counselor is much less likely to open up about what is stopping him/her from exploring their career aspirations.

Defenses help maintain the sort of homeostasis that is necessary to navigate interactions between the self and the world. Each of us has a limited selection of defenses and defensive ways that we use to deal with the world around us. When a defense is in operation, anxiety or discomfort is usually more manageable. In this respect, defenses operate reflexively and instantaneously out of conscious awareness. Therefore, defenses are very adaptive; they allow us to move forward while maintaining an internal status quo. For example, if you are angry at your significant other, a defensive use of humor allows you to crack a joke thereby indirectly releasing the tension and allowing for your relationship to continue without the direct addressing of your concern. In the short term, this allows a moment to be saved, but in the long term, the things that bother you go unaddressed. In a career session, let us say that the client jokes about not wanting to clean toilets forever. This allows real fear of being trapped in a humiliating unfulfilling future rise to the surface indirectly.

In order to adequately work with defenses, assessment is key. First, the career counselor keeps eyes and ears peeled for signs of defensive patterns. Initially, listen to the client's narrative. As the client speaks, his/her associations are rich with ways in which he/she deals with the things that bring discomfort. There are themes that begin to emerge. For instance, the client who is always almost passively looking toward the counselor for answers may be acting out of a defense pattern and trying to get the counselor to act out his/her defensive script. Looking for patterns of such actions is often referred to as assessing transference. From the counselor's perspective, feeling annoyed, angered, or even afraid of a client might be an indicator of some important information about the client's defenses.

Secondly, assess the level of defense. If a defense is more primitive, the counselor is more apt to use interventions that are more supportive in nature. For instance, all interventions can be placed on a continuum from supportive to expressive (Gabbard, 2005). Looking at the anger example used earlier, to directly confront the client might make him/her far more anxious the very thing they are defending against. Supportive interventions such as reflection and clarification are recommended to deal with less mature defenses. More mature defenses such as humor allow for more directive or expressive response.

By using appropriate interventions, the counselor assists either directly or indirectly in helping the client move closer to what is being defended against, and to what is keeping the client from moving forward in his/her career journey.

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SUPERVISING MIDDLE MANAGERS

Authored by:

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Middle managers report great frustration in the lack of promotion and mobility available to them.

The content of this article has been summarized from a presentation delivered at ACPA 2008 entitled "Voices from the Middle: Purposeful Supervision of Middle Managers." Research and presentation were conducted by Danielle McDonald (Georgia Tech), Merideth Ray (Georgia Tech), and Ann Pitini (Northern Kentucky University) in addition to the author of this article.

Much has been written about supervision and professional development of new professionals in student affairs. Little has focused on the supervision of middle managers, yet this group spans multiple generations and many administrative levels within the university. Middle managers can be identified as coordinators or directors of administrative units (Rosser, 2004). Typically they are in roles that are above the front-line employee and below the executive level decision-maker. Their responsibilities often include planning, supervision, budgeting, and programming. They may continue to have direct interaction with students in some capacity. In most universities, the layers of middle-management are deep, and can include both new and experienced workers of all age groups.

It can be difficult to skillfully supervise such a diverse group. Yet a recent survey of this population revealed that the vast majority are looking for similar types of involvement from their supervisors, regardless of type of university or generational identity of the manager. Strategies to address their needs are grouped below into three categories: the big picture, mobility, and recognition.

The Big Picture
Middle managers bring experience to the table. They regularly interact with both front line staff and student populations, meaning they have a strong pulse on the daily operation and personality of the organization. Long tenured managers have institutional memory to contribute to strategic planning. Supervisors of middle managers should leverage this unique perspective by involving staff in strategic goal-setting for the department/division.

Two areas where managers often face a crunch are budget planning and staff supervision. Often middle managers are asked to do more with less: as budgets shrink, program funding is cut but there is still an expectation of meeting stated departmental objectives. They face the front-line staff and students in delivering messages about budget cuts, but often are not privy to the planning which identified from where the cuts would be made. Furthermore, middle managers often supervise new professional staff, whose turnover rates and training needs are high and whose responsibilities the manager must cover in the interim. In light of budget cuts or staff transition, supervisors of middle managers should help staff focus on both the bigger, long term objective as well as prioritizing work, making realistic decisions about resources, and communicating the plan above and below in the organization.

Mobility
At large universities there are often layers of middle management, and few opportunities to move into the executive level. Middle managers report great frustration in the lack of promotion and mobil-ity available to them. Knowing that Generations X and Y are resume-builders, focused on gaining experiences that will help their careers, supervisors of these middle managers can focus on creative staffing needs that allow for flexibility and perceived mobility. Addressing career boredom or promotion frustration could be as simple as reassignment of responsibilities. Supervisors could offer spotlight assignments in larger college committees, instead of retaining those opportunities themselves. Supervisors might allow for job sharing, or move flexible assignments from one employee to another to enable employees to build a larger and more well-rounded skill set, and to continue to feel challenged by the position. Connecting managers with mentors outside the department is also desirable, as managers consider how to maximize their current experiences and prepare for future endeavors.

Recognition
Middle managers who supervise new professionals, graduate assistants, or have continued contact with students are often asked to write nominations and recommendations for recognition. Yet the good work of middle managers is not always recognized by supervisors, formally or informally. While many respondents to the survey indicated that their supervisors were supportive in helping sort out a problem or giving advice, unsolicited praise about performance was not regularly provided. Supervisors can address this by providing positive feedback more frequently. For middle managers, praise is more appreciated when focused on expertise, knowledge, experience, outcome and/or competence rather than task-execution.

Middle managers can be self-sufficient in managing their departments or programs, demanding little supervision time and focusing mainly on updates and information. By being aware of the desires and frustrations of their staff, supervisors can help their middle managers grow and develop, be retained in their positions and feel appreciated for the many unique qualities they have to share. We work hard to deliver such products to our student body and our new professionals. Addressing middle managers is the next step.

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GROUP CAREER COUNSELING: PRACTICES AND PRINCIPLES

Reviewed by:

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I highly recommend this monograph to any professional or paraprofessional interested in group career counseling

Group Career Counseling: Practices and Principles, 2007, National Career Development Association, written by K. Richard Pyle, Ph. D.

Have you ever wondered how to better serve a growing need for career counseling services? In this monograph, Group Career Counseling: Practices and Principles, Dr. Richard Pyle has drawn upon his experiences in leading career counseling groups for almost 30 years to inform practitioners of the utility and benefits of such groups.

Dr. Pyle prefaces the monograph with a list of objectives, including the following:
- The differences between group career counseling and other counseling groups,
- Description of a group career counseling program, and
- Strategies and guidelines for implementing group career counseling programs.

The author delivers a thorough overview of the topic of group career counseling. His monograph serves to provide more information to an area that is lacking in the textbooks and journal articles. Dr. Pyle addresses his monograph primarily to counselors and paraprofessionals, as well as to other professionals in the social services field. He provides the reader with descriptions of the different types of counseling groups, and offers a compelling rationale of the need for more research and literature in the area of group career counseling. Dr. Pyle describes the main goal of the career group facilitator to be that of assisting the group members to gain a better understanding of themselves in relation to the world-of-work.

Drawing upon different theoretical approaches, this book provides the reader with a specific group career counseling model. It is based on three 90-minute sessions that could be modified to four or six group meetings. In this description, explicit examples of career group activities are provided, and scripts for the group leader are presented. In addition, Appendix A includes instructions for three activities that can be incorporated into group sessions. The author describes educational and community settings that are appropriate for career groups. Pyle has led over one hundred career counseling groups with a variety of populations, including middle and high school students, students in higher education, armed services personnel, individuals in career transitions, and one-stop customers. This knowledge and experience is useful in persuading the reader that career groups can be successful interventions.

One strength of this monograph is the chapter reviewing the history of career groups. It is interesting to read about the evolution of career groups in the U.S. Pyle added to this by providing a chapter of future directions, including the use of new technology in group career counseling.

Although the author describes the therapeutic benefits of participating in a group, and relates group career counseling to different counseling theories, certain practical details are not included in the monograph. Specifically, professionals and paraprofessionals interested in running a career counseling group might be interested in learning more about how to start a career counseling group. More suggestions about the screening of potential group members and ways to market a group career counseling program would be welcome. Also, different methods for evaluating the effectiveness of a group would have been useful.

I highly recommend this monograph to any professional or paraprofessional interested in group career counseling. It is available from NCDA at the bargain price of $25 to nonmembers and $15 to NCDA members. Sample chapters and the table of contents are available at http://www.ncda.org. Dr. Pyle's specific examples and activities are excellent practical, hands-on resources for leading a career group. This resource might also serve as a call for more research in the area and as motivation for others to continue to learn more about this career intervention. Career groups can be a cost-efficient way to provide services to a larger number of individuals.

Submit an article for the next Career Watch Edition!

The next edition of Career Watch, the ACPA Commission for Career Development's newsletter, will be published in November. Submit an article today and you could become part of a resource for hundreds of career professionals.

ACPA defines the "Power to Imagine" as a concept that "inspires us, sparks our creativity, renews our spirit, and refocuses our commitment to our profession". The next edition of Career Watch will focus on imagining collaborations that work. If you are taking part in collaborations that works (e.g. program, service, employer partnership, sponsorship, etc.) between career services and another entity consider writing a brief article for the next edition.

Submission Instructions

Deadlines:

09.05.2008	Notification of Interest
09.26.2008	Draft Article Due
10.24.2008	Final Drafts Due

Topics for submissions include:

- Articles on collaborations that work
- Book/article reviews related to career services and collaborations
- Director profiles (career path, struggles and advice) of someone with experience in creating collaborations that work

Submissions and notification of interest can be sent to Wil Jones at wajj@umd.edu. Articles should be between 500 -700 words and include proper APA citations.

Power to Imagine:
COLLABORATIONS THAT WORK

University Career Center
and The President's Promise

ACPA Commission for Career Development -
Career Watch Newsletter
c/o Wil Jones

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