Deliberations on the Future of Career Development Education in Canada

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Abstract

In October 2006, a think tank composed of career development educators from across Canada was held to facilitate an in-depth discussion of career development education in Canada. Think tank participants deliberated on educational requirements for career practitioners, curriculum content of career development programs, and the professional identity of the career development field. This paper outlines the summaries of these discussions, reviews relevant research, and poses questions for further reflection.

Introduction

Could we develop a model for career development education that suggests specific educational requirements for those fulfilling different roles within the field? What kinds of enhancements could be made to career development curriculum to ensure that practitioners meet the needs of today's clients? Can education play a role in enhancing the professional identity of the field? These are questions that participants of the "Advancement of Career Counsellor Education in Canada" think tank attempted to answer.

The "Advancement of Career Counsellor Education in Canada" research project was conceived in order to begin a process designed to articulate the educational background that the profession believes is necessary for entry into, or advancement within, the field. The first phase of this project involved the production of the *Directory of Career Counselling/Career Development Education Programs in Canada,* available online at Contact Point at *http://www.contactpoint.ca/resources/Directory_of_Education_Programs_2006.pdf*. The second phase entailed survey-ing Canadian career practitioners to gain a better understanding of the career paths and educational backgrounds of current practitioners. Over 1,100 career practitioners responded to the survey, and its results are also published in this issue of the *Canadian Journal of Career Development*. The third and final phase of the research project, the think tank, gathered career development educators from universities, colleges, and private training institutions from across Canada to facilitate an in-depth discussion of career development education in Canada (for a list of think tank participants, please refer to Appendix A). This paper outlines the summaries of these discussions and presents associated research. It is our sincere hope that these deliberations, indeed, this research project as a whole, will strengthen the field of career development in Canada and ultimately enhance the quality of career development services for the benefit of all Canadians.

A Model for Career Development Education in Canada

The Importance of Developing an Educational Model

In most professions, it is clear what type of education is necessary to fulfill different roles at different levels. For example, within the field of nursing, a nurse practitioner is an independent care provider with the broadest scope of practice relative to other types of nurses who, in addition to a nursing diploma or degree, holds one to two years of post-graduate training. In contrast, a practical nurse works under the direction of a registered nurse or doctor and has one to two years of college education. This type of clarity in education/occupational scope does not exist within the field of career develop-ment in Canada. There is currently much diversity in the training and quali-fications of practitioners in the field; furthermore, the training and education programs that do exist do not typically lead to clearly defined occupational roles.

In the absence of similar education-al guidelines, it has been possible (even easy in some cases) for those with no career-specific education to practice in the field. Without such career-specific education,

> many career guidance practitioners receive no thorough grounding in the basic theories of career guidance, little systematic exposure to the social and economic contexts and purposes of career guidance, and no systematic applied training in the techniques that form the basis of its practice (Organisation for Economic Co-opera-tion and Development, 2004, p. 99).

An educational model has the potential to draw attention to the impor-tance of career-specific education and to ultimately increase the level of train-ing required of career practitioners.

Unlike other countries, Canada does not lack training opportunities for career practitioners – in fact, there are currently 37 programs offered by 28 learning institutions in Canada that either focus entirely on career develop-ment or have a significant career devel-opment component. Further, several of these programs are offered online and are thus very accessible. What is at issue, though, is that these programs vary significantly in terms of entry requirements, length, curriculum con-tent, hours of required practicum place-ment, and nature of completion docu-ment (that is, certificate, diploma, degree, etcetera). Thus, one still has to ask: What type and level of education is required to enter the field of career development? What type of functions is an entry level practitioner qualified to

do? What type of education is required to advance within the field of career development, and how do the occupational roles of these advanced practitioners differ from those of entry level practitioners? The development of an educational model offers the opportunity to answer these questions.

The development of an educational model is also ultimately in the best interest of our clients. Currently, the array of job titles and qualifications of practitioners within the field makes it very difficult for consumers to know where to go or what to expect when they seek employment-related assistance. In a study designed to determine the extent to which major career theories and research inform the work of career practitioners with varied qualifications, Brown found that

> although many clients present with clarified expectations and needs for services, the service options available to clients and the definition of career counseling will largely depend on the training level of the career counseling professional. Consequently, a clearer description and distinction of those who provide services and the types of services available is needed to assist the consumer in the appropriate identification and attainment of his/her goals (2002, p. 125).

The development of a model could also serve to enhance the field's professional identity. Sunny Hansen, in a recent analysis of the career counselling profession's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, states that

> one of the threats that seems important to me is what I call the 'deprofessionalization' of career counseling. It seems that increasingly, in some sectors, it has become an 'anyone can do it' profession, a view that actually diminishes the profession (2003, p. 47).

An educational model would certainly go a long way towards reassuring the public and related professionals that the field of career development is a serious one requiring specific training and preparation.

An educational model that outlines the scope of practice at each level will also make it easier for practitioners to be cognizant of, and to adhere to, the boundaries of their level of training. Of particular importance in the field is the extent to which a career practitioner can or should provide personal counselling to their clients. That "career counsellors

are frequently challenged to work with a career dilemma that encompasses a range of diverse issues and factors in their clients' personal lives" (Chen, 2001, p. 524) has been well studied and is an accepted premise within the field. Many would agree, however, that personal counselling requires a higher degree of training than is offered by some of the existing programs, typically at least a master's degree. This is not always what happens in the field, however. In Brown's research, he found that both licensed psychologists/counsellors and non-licensed counsellors indicated that they do, in fact, address both personal and career issues in their work with career clients (2002). This is problematic given that some practitioners clearly do not have the level of training needed to be working with clients on such personal issues, but a model that outlines appropriate roles at each level of education will clarify the boundaries and make it easier for practitioners to know where to draw the line with clients and when to refer them on.

Another benefit of developing such a model is that it will provide a benchmark to see how programs at different levels connect to one another and thereby give us the opportunity to build bridges between certificate, diploma, undergraduate, and graduate programs. This will clarify how practitioners can advance within the field. Since there will very likely be both college and university programs within the field over the long term, an educational model will allow us to begin forming relationships that make sense between and among programs. The planned model will also be beneficial for any new programs being developed with respect to understanding how they can best fit into the current schema.

Finally, an educational model could help set the groundwork for certification requirements within the field. While the advantages and disadvantages of certification are beyond the scope of this research, it does seem obvious that a clearly articulated model could assist in the processes of certification that are beginning to take place in numerous provinces.

The Challenges of Developing an Education Model

Developing an educational model broad enough to incorporate the wide differences that currently exist in career development education across Canada is no small challenge. First, though the field is only in its adolescence, there are fully 37 programs that have either a significant or an entire career development focus. As stated earlier, however, these programs vary significantly; there are no less than seven different types of completion documents represented amongst these 37 programs: certificates of accomplishment, certificates, diplomas, undergraduate degrees, master's degrees, doctorates, and post-master's certificates. While most of these programs are strong in their own right and offer a valuable curriculum, it is the lack of similarity among many of the programs that makes it difficult to integrate them into a model.

Regional differences in career development education pose a second challenge to the development of a model. The differences between Québec and the rest of Canada pose a particular complexity, in that Québec is the only province to regulate the profession:

> To be licensed as a career counsellor by the College, candidates must meet the requirements set out in the regulations adopted under the Professional Code of Québec, which state that one must have a master's degree in career guidance and counselling (Turcotte, 2005, p. 7).

It should be noted, however, that not all career development work is regulated in Québec: "The two other major occupations in the field of career development are employment counsellors and career information specialists. These two occupations do not have specific educational and occupational requirements and are not regulated" (Turcotte, 2005, p. 7). In any case, this is clearly a very different picture from the rest of Canada, and once again, poses a challenge to the development of a nationwide model.

A third challenge involves the multitude of sectors in which career development work is carried out. "School counselors, community college and university career counselors and academic advisers, employment counselors, counselors in employee assistance programs, rehabilitation counselors, counseling

and clinical psychologists, and other helping professionals all provide career counseling in organizations and private practice, although with different purposes and intensity. These persons differ in training and knowledge about career counseling and in the approaches to career counseling that they use" (Herr, 2003, p. 11). The question is, how do we deal with these different notions of what type and level of training is appropriate for practitioners in these different sectors? Currently there are educational guidelines or standards for some (for example, guidance staff in secondary schools) but not for others (for example, practitioners in community agencies). It may be necessary for the model to evolve over time in order to encompass each of these sectors.

A fourth challenge is presented by the varying amount of career-specific curriculum within each of the existing programs. Dagley and Salter found in the United States that;

> special nondegree training programs for career development facilitators add a much needed emphasis in career development theory and research, but little in supervised counseling, whereas typical counselor preparation degree programs provide excellent supervised counseling training but little-to-no career development instruction or career counseling supervision (2004, p. 102).

This is not universally the case in Canada, but it is true that the certificate and diploma programs in most cases have more career-specific content than the graduate level programs in counselling psychology (except in Québec, where undergraduate and graduate programs are career-specific). Once again, then, this poses a challenge in developing a model. How do we devise a model that incorporates, on the one hand, programs that are entirely geared to career development with those that are geared more specifically towards counselling on the other?

A final challenge will be to form a collaborative, rather than a competitive, approach to future discussions amongst educators. A culture of competition has historically existed amongst universities and colleges in Canada, as all vie for top students, faculty, and staff as well as for rankings and research dollars. Fortunately, more recent initiatives have demonstrated a new trend towards col-

laboration, such as the Campus Alberta Applied Psychology: Counselling Initiative, a partnership between the University of Lethbridge, the University of Calgary, and Athabasca University. This type of initiative demonstrates a will and an ability to work together, which bodes well for increased sharing and connections among career development programs and for the development of an educational model, even in this culture of institutional competition.

Presenting a Model for Career Development Education in Canada

In spite of the inherent challenges involved in the development of an educational model, members of the think tank were able to formulate a draft model for career development education. While the model requires further elaboration (a working group has been struck to continue its development), it does begin to classify the different types/levels of services provided by career practitioners. It also suggests educational requirements for each type of service.

Although differentiated roles within the field of career development have never been clearly defined, the notion that there are multiple roles within the field, rather than one singular role, is not new. Herr has argued that "career counseling can be seen as a continuum of interventions rather than a singular process" (2003, p. 11). Furbish also suggests that career services encompass a range of activities and differentiates between services that are job, occupation, or career related. He defines job issues as those that provide "assistance with the development of employment seeking skills such as CV writing, finding job openings and interviewing skills," occupational issues as those that call for "assisting clients to examine their preferences and investigate occupations that will satisfy those preferences," and career issues as those that "are concerned with the holistic integration of work within one's other life roles and adjusting to transitions within work-life patterns" (2003, pp. 3–4).

The draft educational model devised at the think tank sessions (see Figure 1) also recognizes the notion that there are multiple and distinct roles within the field. Based on previous

work done by Borgen and Hiebert (2006, 2002), the model suggests that services carried out by career practitioners can be broken into three types: advising, guidance, and counselling. Each has a different objective and serves a different function. Advising is focussed primarily on the problem at hand, and involves the provision of general, "non-personalized" information regarding a particular topic or focus. For example, describing different styles of résumés to a client would be considered advising, as would helping clients access career information or making them aware of other career services that are available. Guidance is broader in scope and involves the provision of information or psychoeducational services more directly tailored to the client's needs than the advisory function. Guidance requires the practitioner to first gather information about the client, often through an interview or other kind of assessment, thereby increasing the likelihood that services obtained are congruent with the client's unique needs. A practitioner who explains to a client how the results of an interest assessment might influence her occupational choice would be providing guidance. Counselling moves beyond information provision to broader issues and could include the;

> application of career counseling to stress reduction; anger management; integrating and resolving conflict between career and other life roles; helping persons reconstruct and reframe past experiences; learning ways to reduce their indecisiveness; assisting in modifying irrational career beliefs; addressing underlying issues that lead to work dysfunctions, including unresolved issues in the family drama being played out in the workplace; providing opportunities for displaced persons to vent their anger and their feelings about personal concerns; job loss; and the loss or diffusion of personal identity (Herr, 2003, p. 11).

Refer to Borgen & Hiebert (2006, 2002) and Hiebert & Borgen (2002) for more information regarding the distinction between advising, guidance, and counselling.
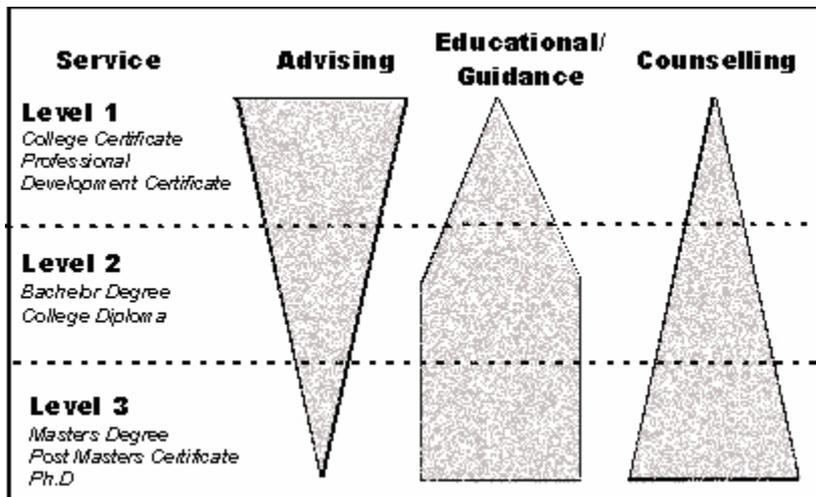
Figure 1: Draft model for career development education. The shaded areas represent the proportional amount of time service providers with differing types of education would spend providing the three principal types of service.

This model demonstrates the proportional amount of time that practitioners with different credentials would spend offering the three different types of services: advising, offering guidance, or counselling. The use of such graphics to demonstrate the intensity of various roles is based on previous work done by think tank participant Kris Magnusson (Magnusson, Day, & Redekopp, 1993; Magnusson, 1992). The model suggests that a Level 1 practitioner, who would fulfill primarily an advisory function (and minor roles in guidance and counselling), would require a career-specific college or university certificate. A Level 2 practitioner, whose function would be primarily the provision of guidance (but who would also fill some advising and counselling functions), would require either a career-specific diploma or undergraduate degree (though the latter exists only in Québec at the present time) or a non career-specific diploma or undergraduate degree plus a career-specific certificate or diploma. A Level 3 practitioner might perform a minor advising role, but his or her main functions would be either guidance and counselling, or designing and coordinating career services. Typically, these types of roles would require a master's degree, post-master's certificate, or doctoral degree in counselling psychology or a related field.

Worthy of discussion is the larger counselling role at Level 3. It is becoming increasingly commonplace to expect that those performing a counselling role have at least a master's degree in the counselling field. For example, in most American states, counselling is a regulated occupation requiring one to hold a minimum of a master's degree in counselling or a related field, plus a defined amount of supervised practice in the field. In Canada, there is no governmentally regulated credentialing of the profession, but the Canadian Counselling Association awards their 'Canadian Certified Counsellor' designation only to those holding an appropriate master's degree in counselling that includes a compulsory practicum. The draft model presented here reflects the notion that a higher level of education is indeed required to perform counselling functions.

Members of the think tank agreed that job titles should be created and used consistently to represent the three different levels presented in the model. While there is not yet consensus on what these titles should be, it was suggested that a Level 1 practitioner could be termed a *Career Advisor,* a Level 2 practitioner a *Career Practitioner,* and a Level 3 practitioner a *Career Counsellor.* An umbrella term to describe each of these types of roles within the field of career development must also be determined. This paper, and many others in the field, consistently uses the term *Career Practitioner* to refer to those performing any type of role within the field of career development. Naturally, if the Career Practitioner title becomes the standard term used to denote Level 2 practitioners, we will need to devise a new umbrella title term.

One of the benefits of this draft model is that it incorporates all programs at all levels as they currently exist. It recognizes that each fills a specific need and does not put any program in jeopardy of being lost or deemed irrelevant. Another benefit is that it acknowledges that some roles within the field do not require in-depth counsellor training – a benefit given that the existing non-degree programs tend to have less counselling-specific curriculum and fewer supervised practicum hours.

A potential drawback of the model is that it could ultimately lead to more expensive service delivery, a risk inherent in any initiative that moves towards professionalization (OECD, 2004). Several think tank participants voiced concern that this model could indeed be ignored or rejected by primary funders concerned about service delivery costs. Communicating the benefits of this educational model to all stakeholders in the field will thus become an important task for the educators group.

Next Steps for the Model

While the draft model presented in this paper has made great strides in defining occupational roles and corresponding educational requirements, we must remember that this is only its preliminary form; elaboration in several areas will further clarify and enhance the model. For example, the specific curriculum to be covered at each level needs to be determined, as does the number of hours of required, supervised practicum for each level.

As mentioned earlier, communication of the model to members of the field is also important and needs to be considered along with further refinements. How to communicate the model and with whom will both be important questions to consider. One approach would be to let the logic and value of the model speak for itself, rather than trying to fervently impose it on the field. The model's inherent logic and simplicity bodes well for its potential to have an important future impact on the field of career development in Canada.

As the field continues to grow and mature, it is possible that we will begin to see the development of educational specializations within the field. The possibilities for such specializations are numerous, but one might specialize in working with new Canadians, for example, or in working with individuals diagnosed with a mental illness. Similarly, the need for career development training for linked professions, for example, social workers or human resources professionals, is also beginning to be recognized and may start to be developed some time in the future. How or if such specialization and training for linked professions becomes incorporated into this model will need to be determined. One approach would be to link specializations and training for linked professions to the model, rather than actually embedding them within it.

Canadian Career Development Curriculum

Reflections on the Current Situation

The first phase of this research project involved the development of the *Directory of Career Counselling/Career Development Education Programs in Canada*. While gathering data about their programs from directors and coordinators in order to compile the directory, additional inquiries were made about the type of curriculum each covered. Most programs contain at least some common content, including but not limited to career development theories, interviewing skills, group facilitation skills, career assessment, ethics, and working with diverse populations.

Beyond this, there are some significant differences depending on whether the program is non-degree or degree

granting. For example, career information, work trends, and work search techniques tend to be covered more often in the non-degree programs, whereas degree programs tend to expand their coverage of general counselling theories. When the career development education model (described in the section above) is more fully developed, it will be important to link different types of curriculum with the different program types/levels.

Another area of divergence was in the number of practicum hours required by programs; they ranged from no practicum requirement to as many as 770 hours. Shorter practicum requirements were connected for the most part with the certificate programs, while greater practicum requirements tended to be associated with diploma, undergraduate, and master's programs. If students enrolled in the certificate programs are already working in the field of career development, they have a natural venue where theory and practice can come together. However, for those not working in the field and/or who have no career development experience, providing an appropriate mechanism for them to connect theory and practice presents a serious challenge. Since the practicum is an ideal way to help students link theory and practice, further discussion by educators of what constitutes a practicum and how many practicum hours should be required is important.

An equally important aspect of helping students relate theory to practice is effective, career-specific supervision. McMahon identified the lack of importance paid to supervision and the relatively few professional articles written about supervision in the career counselling literature as long ago as 2003. Without supervision, especially for a student or a beginning practitioner, it is challenging to put theoretical knowledge into practice. This lack of supervision may also suggest to the trainee that career work is neither complex nor difficult enough to require supervision, a fundamentally incorrect assumption/perspective. It should also be noted that inadequate supervision becomes even more serious as the scope of career development practice expands.

The Importance of Expanding the Curriculum

In addition to working on a draft educational model, the think tank included discussions on what curriculum should be taught at the various levels of practice and how to effectively incorporate new concepts and ideas. Curriculum issues included the following questions: How should personal counselling and career counselling be reconciled in career education programs? How, and to what extent should cybercounselling content be incorporated into the curriculum? Finally, how should career counselling knowledge and skills best be provided to allied professional programs? These issues are discussed later in this paper.

The area given the most attention and that would require the greatest curriculum changes concerned the development of competencies that would expand the focus of career development education beyond providing services to the individual; these changes would help career practitioners address broader issues related to organizational and societal influences. Many of the career challenges individuals face are not the result of individual shortcomings, but rather arise from known deficiencies in systems and/or policies. To effectively address big picture problems, a practitioner needs such knowledge and skills as advocacy, social planning and social policy, social action, and community development. Through inaction or a lack of attention to macro issues, career practitioners can in fact become a part of the problem. Arthur summarizes these points succinctly: "Career practitioners need to consider how their work inadvertently supports the status quo and be prepared to address social forces that pose as systemic barriers to people's growth and development" (2005, p. 41).

An example from public policy helps to illustrate how this expansion of the work of the career practitioner can better serve clients. In most countries, career development has been the object of public policy. Nonetheless, career practitioners have not usually been involved in the creation of public policy. Thus, the profession is delegated to carrying out the notions and policies of the government in power without hav-

ing much affect on them. This lack of direct involvement leads to policies that can adversely impact the delivery of who gets service, how they access that service, and what services are provided (Herr, 2003). When working with immigrants, the counsellor is often obliged to help individuals deal with the constraints imposed by immigration policy or professional certification bodies. These constraints at minimum appear to be fundamentally unfair, and they are, in fact, often inequitable. This is clearly an area where the direct experience of career practitioners could very positively affect public policy; it could potentially have an important, long-term impact on the conditions of employment for many immigrants and refugees while also making more effective use of the national talent pool.

Interestingly, the founder of the field of vocational psychology, Frank Parsons, was committed to social change, social justice, and social action. Dr. King Davis defines social justice as follows:

> Social justice is a basic value and desired goal in democratic societies and includes equitable and fair access to the societal institutions, laws, resources, opportunities, without arbitrary limitations based on observed, or interpretations of, difference in age, color, culture, physical or mental disability, education, gender, income, language, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation (2004, p. 236).

Parsons demonstrated in his writings a concern for the marginalized and less fortunate in society (O'Brien, 2001). Until recently, however, both the theory and practice of career counselling have been developed primarily to assist those who live in relative affluence. Those who are less fortunate and who need to work simply to meet their basic needs of shelter and housing have been largely neglected (Whiston, 2003).

There has recently been renewed interest in returning to the roots of career counselling as they were established by Parsons. This calls for a more expansive conceptualization of career theory and practice in order to help clients deal with issues like poverty, discrimination, and oppression. For example, Guichard (2003) discussed career counselling's evolving goals and called for career practitioners to create a new context for research and practice,

one that would attend to the broader context of human development in order to meet the needs of the human community without neglecting the individual in the process.

In related work, Hansen argues that it is no longer enough to match people to jobs. She calls for a more holistic approach to career counselling that requires various life roles and other life dimensions to be taken into account. "A weakness of career counselor education programs is the reluctance or inability to see career counselors as change agents who can help not only *individuals* to change, but *systems* to change as well" (2003, p. 45). She recommends that training programs expand the curriculum to include related life roles as well as work roles, and that organizational career development be built into training programs. She recognizes that working to meet the needs of a diverse population is an important first step but goes on to say that "the work has just begun" (Hansen, 2003, p. 45). She evidently believes that expanding the curriculum to include the counsellor's role as an advocate and an agent of change presents a challenge.

In keeping with career practitioners working with a broader conceptualization, there has been a developing commitment to working with multicultural populations in a way that recognizes and is sensitive to cultural differences. The number of journal articles addressing culturally competent careeer counselling continues to increase. This interest and concern with cultural differences has been extended to an even broader perspective to encompass diversity that includes gender, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, social class, ability, and religion. In fact, our curriculum research indicates that diversity is covered in all of the programs surveyed in some way, and that a full 43 percent devote an entire course to diversity issues.

Arthur, however, goes well beyond calling for cultural sensitivity and competence in career counselling, advocating that perspectives on social justice be incorporated into the roles and intervention methods of career practitioners. She also calls for career practitioners to develop the competencies needed to bring about institutional change and to

carry out social action roles and systemic interventions. In fact, she has developed 17 competencies that would afford career practitioners the skills to support social justice interventions. She states that "ultimately, the linkage between social justice and career development needs to inform curriculum design for career practitioners" (Arthur, 2005, p. 143).

A review of social work education may provide insights into how such social justice competencies could be built into the education of career practitioners. Social work is a values-based profession. All education for the profession promotes the development and advancement of knowledge and skills that further clients' well-being and promotes social and economic justice. Within this overarching framework, the curriculum is divided into "micro" and "macro" practice. Micro practice involves interventions aimed at problems confronting individuals, families, and small groups; macro practice, on the other hand, concerns social work interventions designed to bring about change in organizations and communities. In most social work programs, a student chooses to concentrate on either micro or macro practice, but must also take some courses from the other area.

The social work education approach may not be a complete model for the field of career development. It does, however, provide some guidance as to how we might strive to meet two general objectives. The first is to build in the values associated with social justice as a part of the foundation of the career development profession and its educational aims. The second is to build into the curriculum the development of some general skills and awareness regarding macro issues for all members of the profession and perhaps allow some to develop specialized skills in this area.

Roadblocks to Incorporating Macro Issues into the Curriculum

As with any proposed change, there will be uncertainty and some reluctance. What is proposed will require significant adjustments to a program's curriculum, and this will only happen if educators are convinced of the value and importance of the changes and thus

motivated to incorporate them into the program of study. The motivation and education of educators are particularly important since each program's curriculum is typically very full, and there are many competing interests regarding what might be included. Further, phase one of this research project revealed that little attention is currently paid to macro issues in the programs, possibly because many of the educators themselves are graduates of individually focussed educational programs that do not naturally lend themselves to a macro viewpoint. Hiebert, McCarthy, and Repetto make a related point: "Career counsellor education primarily stems from a psychological background (versus a career development, adult transition, or labour market background), and does not address the diverse career paths and complex labour market that clients encounter" (2001, p. 1). It will be essential to find mechanisms that will keep educators at all levels informed about, and involved in, the evolution of the curriculum.

Practitioners and educators will also need to be convinced of the worth of expanding the curriculum and profession into new and less familiar areas of practice. In part because of their educational backgrounds, and especially in the early years of work, most practitioners are focussed on helping the individual and are not invested in learning how to change large systems and how those systems impinge on their client's lives. In later years, practitioners often develop a frustration with "the system," but they have not, for the most part, developed nor practiced the skills to effect change within it. In a survey of practitioners conducted in the second phase of this research project, macro skills like lobbying government, addressing social justice issues, advocating for clients, program promotion, management, and administration were all consistently rated less important than skills related to direct client work. If practitioners were to realize that career practitioners could and should influence social and political systems and could see a way to help their profession do that, the value they see in their work could change substantially (especially in later years) and provide strong support for the curriculum changes we propose. Effectively instituting these proposed changes will require a program of continuing education for practitioners.

One further roadblock is the lack of quality resource materials on macro issues, including social and economic justice, which can be readily utilized in a classroom or practice setting. This dearth makes it much more difficult for educators to experiment with incorporating these ideas or to adopt recommended curriculum changes. The development of effective educational resources must be a key aspect of an implementation strategy. As is outlined below, a newly formed educational group is beginning to develop educational resources, some of which emphasize social justice and macro-level issues.

Next Steps for the Curriculum

There was considerable support and enthusiasm at the think tank for the evolution of program curriculum towards providing theoretical and practical content on the ideas and values of social and economic justice and on the development of the skills required to promote social change. It is important to note that we are at the very beginning of this endeavour; it is no small task to evolve a curriculum (or curriculum guidelines) on a national level, given the requisite acceptance of the stakeholders of the development of a new lens and an expanded set of competencies. However, if we as educators were able to incorporate social justice competencies into the curriculum on a nationwide level, Canada would clearly become a leader on the international stage.

The extent to which the various aspects of macro practice should be included at each level of training in the model discussed above will need careful consideration and discussion. For example, it would seem plausible that practitioners involved primarily in advising would need only a general awareness of macro practice issues and their importance as part of the career development environment. This awareness could perhaps be acquired from a well-designed course or module. On the other hand, practitioners primarily involved in counselling would be expected, from a macro perspective, to be able to engage in social planning initiatives, demonstrate advocacy skills with individuals or systems, and contribute to the designing of social policy as it relates to the world of work. A person would need to have at least one course, and perhaps more, that deals with macro theory and practice in order to work in the macro arena.

As noted earlier, a number of other curriculum questions and challenges arose that were not discussed in the depth they deserve owing to time constraints. One issue concerned the interface between career counselling and personal counselling. Career counselling cannot be neatly separated from the counselling that affects the other aspects of the client's life. Because of their particular education, some counsellors are able to deal with many of the major issues in clients' lives, including career issues, personal issues, and even some associated with mental health. Others will not be able to work with these broader issues and problems because they lack the required education, but at a minimum, career practitioners should have the knowledge to recognize personal problems and, when necessary, effectively refer clients to appropriate professionals. This interface will become clearer as the model develops and as the roles of various career professionals are more completely defined.

Cybercounselling, another curriculum issue addressed by the members of the think tank, currently receives little coverage in the training programs we reviewed. Although there has been skepticism of cybercounselling, especially as it relates to ethics, many career practitioners are clearly innovating and engaging in the practice of distance advising/counselling. Cybercounselling presents numerous complexities for career education, for example: What new or different competencies are needed to act effectively from a distance? Can these competencies fit within existing programs? To what extent should students generally be trained in these areas? Do we need a distance career development specialization? These complicated questions require much more discussion.

Yet another issue was how career education can best interface with the

curriculum of related professions like social work, human resources, and vocational rehabilitation. These practitioners work with clients whose presenting problems are, for the most part, not directly work related. However, since work is so central to most people's well-being and can cause so much distress, work and career issues are often major contributing aspects of a client's problems. Thus, some knowledge of career development theory and career counselling techniques, as well as awareness of the possibility and importance of referral when career issues are paramount, would benefit related professionals and help them help their clients. We need to consider how important this is to the field, and whether it is possible to raise awareness within our educational institutions so that there is a role for career education programs to provide service courses in allied programs.

A preliminary step has been taken since the think tank, namely the establishment of a group of educators interested in developing written materials on current issues and advances in the field of career development in Canada. The exact form this publication will take is still under discussion, but social justice and social justice competencies as they pertain to career development will be a major focus. It is our hope that this work will lead to the development of an introductory text providing students and faculty with details and overviews of macro issues and a few more badly needed resource materials treating advancements and best practices in Canada. The development of these and other resource materials would help immensely to address pedagogical issues while easing the process of curriculum adjustment.

Professional Identity an the Role of Education

Career development educators, like others involved in the field of career development, are concerned with the field's professional identity. That the services provided by career practitioners receive little visibility and are not generally well understood or sought out by the general public is a commonly felt frustration for those working in this field. A 2006 CERIC survey conducted

by Ipsos Reid found that when seeking career planning assistance, a majority of Canadians seek the help of relatives/friends/neighbours (68%), co-workers/associates (67%), or newspapers (67%) rather than the services of a career specialist (47%). That more Canadians would seek career assistance from a friend or relative over a career practitioner offers some proof that "career counseling's identity status resembles that of a client who lacks vocational identity and clearly articulated goals" (Niles, 2003, p. 73).

Of particular concern to educators with respect to professional identity is the number of titles being used within the field to describe this work. In the survey carried out as phase two of this research project, respondents were asked to indicate their job title. Significantly, a full 37% of respondents did not fit into one of 13 common job titles used in the field. (This issue does not carry over to Québec, where 69% of respondents fit into just one job title: conseiller d'orientation). This diversity of titles is also seen in the names of career development education programs across the country. While some program titles use the term "career practitioner," others use "career counsellor," 'career management professional," "career facilitator," or "career development coach." Clearly this unrestrained use of titles in the workplace and in our program descriptions needs to be addressed, and educators can play a positive role through further development and communication of the education model outlined in the first section of this paper. This model has the potential to begin a process of making titles more descriptive, consistent, and meaningful, both to those in the field and to the general public.

While raising the professional identity of the field is no small task, and further, is one that will most certainly require a multi-faceted effort on the part of practitioners, employers, associations, and government alike, it is the educators' hope and belief that both increasing the profile of career development specific education (through the draft model presented earlier in this paper) and enhancing its curriculum will serve an important function in this regard. Indeed, McCarthy (2001) does

suggest that training has a dominant effect in establishing a professional identity.

Conclusion

As was outlined earlier, this research project was conceived in order to begin a process designed to articulate the educational background that the profession believes is necessary for entry into, or advancement within, the field of career development. This paper developed out of the third phase of the project; bringing together educators from across Canada to a think tank in order to discuss these educational and professional issues. Although subsets of this group meet with some regularity for other purposes, this was the first meeting of career educators that included representatives from French- and English-speaking Canada, from universities and colleges, and from the private sector. Informal reports from participants suggest that these discussions set the stage for some significant progress towards developing an innovative and comprehensive framework for the education of career practitioners in Canada.

The development of an educational model has the potential to be a major step forward for the field. It has the potential to define exactly what education is required to enter the field of career development, how one could advance within the field, and how the occupational roles of the entry-level person differ from those of an advanced practitioner. This clarity of definition alone would help draw attention to the importance of career-specific education and the services that career practitioners have to offer. A well-developed model would also offer consumers more clarity to help them access the type and scope of service they require. This work is far from complete, but we hope that the energy and enthusiasm this project has generated will provide impetus to move the model forward.

The think tank brought to light many important discussions on curriculum that were as valuable as the discussion of the model. With representatives from all educational sectors, the deliberations afforded a rich dialogue on how the curriculum could evolve and expand. One area requiring significant effort is the inclusion into the curricu-

lum of a social justice lens and macro practice competencies. The development of an appropriate curriculum and its adaptation into current Canadian career education programs would advance the field and make international leaders of Canadian career education programs. This challenge is indeed daunting, but it is also tenable. There was a spirit of co-operation among the participants at the think tank that we believe will support the initiative's forward momentum.

We would like to thank the educators who attended the think tank for their enthusiastic support of this research project and for the tremendous contributions that set the stage for more discussion and forward movement. We would also like to express our thanks to CERIC for their professional and financial support of this endeavour.

Appendix A
Think Tank Participants

Nancy Arthur	University of Calgary
Robert Baudouin	Université de Moncton
Marie-Denyse Boivin	Université Laval
Bruno Bourassa	Université Laval
Mildred Cahill	Memorial University
Deborah Day	Acadia University
Edwidge Desjardins	Université du Québec à Montréal
Carmen Forrest	First Nations University
Marcelle Gingras	Université de Sherbrooke
Bryan Hiebert	University of Calgary
Kon Li	Kwantlen University College
Kris Magnusson	University of Lethbridge
Greg Morrow	George Brown College
Nathalie Perreault	OrientAction
Geoff Peruniak	Athabasca University
Deirdre Pickerell	Life Strategies Inc.
Natalee Popadiuk	Simon Fraser University
Blythe Shepard	University of Victoria
Rob Straby	Conestoga College
Beverley Walters	Bow Valley College

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