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CAREER COUNSELING

An Overview

Ruth has been out of the paid workforce for 8 years. Her youngest son recently started public school, and she would like to find a job. Ruth has a degree in medical technology and worked in a hospital lab for 5 years before her first child was born. In her geographic area, the job market for medical technologists is poor, so she'd like to consider some other job possibilities. She doesn't know what other options are available.

Harry has worked in the human resources department of a large company for over 20 years. He had been satisfied with his job and had received good performance evaluations. However, he was recently assigned new job responsibilities that he doesn't feel adequately trained to do. Last week, he received a negative report from his supervisor, and he's worried that he might lose his job. Harry has been depressed and angry, and his wife is concerned that he's drinking too much.

Joel is a high school junior who doesn't have any idea what he will do after graduating. His parents want him to go to college, believing that a college education will provide him with opportunities they did not have. However, Joel's grades have been mediocre, and he really doesn't want to go to college anyway. His guidance counselor tells him that he needs to make a decision soon.

Each of these situations represents a struggle with some work- or career-related concern. Because work plays a central role in most people's lives, successful pursuit of work activities is crucial to psychological well-being. Furthermore, vocational issues and mental health issues affect one another in individuals' lives, and work is an important component of overall well-being (Blustein, 2017; Juntunen, 2006; Swanson, 2012; Whiston, Fouad, & Juntunen, 2016). It is important for counselors to understand the crucial impact of vocational issues and to assist individuals in the choice and implementation of their career-related goals so that people's lives are enriched.

PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

The purpose of this book is to provide the reader with an understanding of elements of career counseling; hands-on, practical examples of how to apply career development theories to career counseling clients; career interventions in a variety of settings; and an appreciation of the overall importance of work in people's lives. We view the book as a bridge between career theory and career practice. We included chapters to help orient students to the interplay of work and mental health, the importance of incorporating a perspective about work in counseling, and as a primer to career counseling. We added material in this fourth edition to enhance the discussion of ethics in career counseling, and to highlight the role of the economy and the changing nature of the workforce that influence the career and work decisions individuals make, initially here in Chapter 1 and then throughout the book.

The book is organized to facilitate the integration of theory and practice. In Part I, Chapters 2, 3, and 4 present foundational material related to ethics, professional settings, and cultural contexts that underlie career counseling. Chapter 5 introduces "Leslie," the primary case example used throughout the book, and we apply a model of culturally appropriate counseling to Leslie's case. We then discuss the use of assessment in career counseling in Chapter 6, including results from Leslie's assessment instruments.

In Part II, we consider Leslie from new perspectives in Chapters 7 through 13 to demonstrate how theories can inform the way in which counselors view and work with their clients. In addition to Leslie, a secondary case with an extended analysis is presented in these chapters. Three additional brief cases in each chapter offer the reader more opportunities to practice the application of theory and interventions to individual clients. Because many of the theories have unique definitions and constructs, each theory chapter in Part II also contains three pedagogical tools: a set of questions inviting readers to engage in personal reflection, a summary of the key theoretical constructs, and a sample of possible counselor's cognitions from that theoretical perspective. We also include personal reflections and counselor cognitions in many of the chapters of the book, to invite readers to reflect on their own experiences and to guide counselors in deliberately attending to specific aspects of counseling.

We brought our own experiences as practitioners, researchers, and teachers to bear on our approach to writing this book. As practitioners, we believe that the theoretical orientation one adopts has a significant impact on how client issues are conceptualized

and treated. As researchers, we know that the ethical delivery of career counseling must be based on sound empirical findings; this is highlighted in the Ethical Code C.6.e of the National Career Development Association (2007), discussed in Chapter 2. Finally, as instructors, we are committed to helping students make connections between theory, research, and practice in ways that are ultimately in the service of clients. We have attempted to incorporate all our experiences into the structure of this book by choosing theories that have received empirical support, by highlighting how the theoretical propositions influence views of clients, and by providing considerable case information for analysis and discussion. We have also observed that some students learn best by applying the material to their own lives, and thus we have incorporated invitations for personal reflection.

We also wanted to incorporate our commitment to integrating contextual issues in conceptualizations of clients' concerns. We both have spent our careers conducting research and teaching students about the need to consider a client's gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and disability status when helping that client make career decisions. An individual's choices and decisions, or lack of choices, are shaped by his or her gender, family, disability, sexual orientation, social class, and culture, which in turn influence his or her schooling, access to resources, and interaction with the larger environment. Consider, for example, a Latina high school student from a traditional Mexican American family growing up in an affluent suburb of Los Angeles. Her career choices will be shaped by her gender, her family's cultural values, and their expectations of her post-high school decisions. Their expectations may be influenced by their degree of affluence, their beliefs about gender and work, and the influences of the schools in their community. Her expectations will be shaped by her acceptance of her family's expectations and her ability to navigate expectations from her peers, parents, and teachers at her school. Her parents may feel that her post-high school choices are limited to options of which they approve, while she has been encouraged to "dream big" by her counselor. All these factors will influence her decisions.

Change the example above to an African American heterosexual male student in rural Georgia, or a White gay male in rural South Dakota, or a White heterosexual female in an inner-city high school in Boston. While all these individuals may choose to go to college after high school, the contexts for those decisions are shaped by their gender, family, race/ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, schooling, and interactions with the mainstream culture in the United States. Fundamental to ethical practice is the consideration of clients' contextual factors, particularly gender and race/ethnicity. Readers will note the emphasis on the importance of context in several ways: Considerations of various contextual factors are integrated into each chapter, a specific chapter is devoted to cultural context in career counseling, and cases are included to represent the diversity of clients who seek counseling.

We wrote the book with two types of readers in mind. The first type is a student in a graduate-level course, such as theories of vocational psychology, foundations of career counseling, or practicum in career counseling, who is learning about theories of career development and how to apply these theories to clients. The second type of reader is an established counseling practitioner who wants additional resources to strengthen his or her delivery of career services or who is expanding the focus of his or her work to include career issues.

In this chapter, we begin with information about the changing role of the career counselor and the current labor market and several factors that will affect the future of work. We then focus on the role of theory in career counseling, beginning with a definition of *theory* and a description of types of career development theories. We then describe the theories selected for this casebook and discuss how to use theories, particularly as a means to develop hypotheses about clients. Finally, we discuss the development of hypothesis testing as part of career counseling.

WORK AND CAREER COUNSELING

What is work? The Merriam-Webster (2018) dictionary defines *work* as the "activity that a person engages in regularly to earn a livelihood." Work is a critical part of the lives of most adults in the United States. Individuals make many decisions about work: whether to work or not work, what work to do, how to prepare for that work, whether to change jobs or careers, or how to cope with the loss of work. And any of these decisions may lead individuals to seek help from a counselor. They may need help deciding between two or more choices, learning how to make decisions, pursuing more satisfying work, finding work, or coping with the loss of work. Consider that, by the typical retirement age of 65, a full-time employee will have spent approximately 80,000 hours working, and it becomes clear how central work is in people's lives. Blustein (2006) notes that work has particular psychological meaning for individuals, providing them with a means of survival and power, a way to connect to others, and finally, a means of self-determination and ways to express interests and passions.

This book focuses on the role of counselors in helping individuals with work and career-related decisions. We discuss other types of career interventions in Chapter 3 but most of the chapters focus on the practice of individual counseling. Frank Parsons is credited with beginning the field of career counseling in 1909 with the publication of his book *Choosing a Vocation.* He wrote about his work with adolescent boys he was helping at the Breadwinners Institute in Boston, noting that "In the wise choice of a vocation, there are three broad factors: (1) a clear understanding of yourself . . . (2) knowledge of the requirements . . . in different lines of work, [and] (3) true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts" (p. 5). His method was to help the young men engage in self-analysis, help them uncover their preferences, provide some guidance and analysis as well as an outlook on the available options, and provide advice on how to find a job (Pope, 2015).

In many ways, his model continues to shape the work of the career counselor. Career counselors still help people understand themselves, understand possible work options, and how to translate that information into jobs and careers, but the role of the career counselor has changed as the world of work has changed. Career counseling as a profession is influenced by the economic structure and the role that career counselors can play in preparing individuals to enter and be successful within that structure. Parsons was trying to help young men enter the labor force at a time of considerable labor unrest and income disparity, and this guidance was seen as a way to decrease juvenile delinquency (Zytowski, 2001). Parsons was working within, and helped by, the context of the progressive reform movements in Boston at the time, but he was clearly a visionary in many ways. In *Choosing a Vocation,* he persuasively argued for a scientific approach to selecting one's work life, he

provided a blueprint for training vocational counselors, and provided an amazing amount of occupational information on industries in the Boston area. In other articles, he also argued for a model to integrate vocational guidance into educational curricula (O'Brien, 2001). Many of his efforts form the basis of career interventions today.

In Parsons' time, the choice of a vocation was made early in life and was viewed as a successful choice if the person stayed in that job. Clearly then the work of the career, or vocational, counselor was most important in early adolescence. Over the past 100+ years, however, the world of work has changed considerably so that now individuals move in and out of positions over their lifespan (sometimes not by their own choice), initial decisions are often made later than early adolescence, and there is a need for help at many transition points. Thus, the work of the career counselor has changed substantially over the years.

In the 1920s, '30s, and '40s, career counseling became more prominent on college campuses, counselors were needed to help veterans returning from World Wars I and II, and counselors were needed to help individuals find work during the Great Depression. Parsons' first factor (knowledge of self) became a catalyst for assessment tools to help individuals know more about their interests, abilities, and values, and those tools were used to help "match" the individual to a career. Career counseling was brief and focused on assessment. Career counselors provided information and earned the reputation of "three interviews and a cloud of dust" (referring to the Midwestern dustbowls of the 1930s). It could be argued that career counselors ignored Parsons' third factor to help clients "find true reasoning."

Donald Super (1953) used his presidential address for Division 17 (Counseling Psychology) of the American Psychological Association to outline the need to focus on the development of a career rather than just the one-time choice of a career. His theory, discussed more fully in Chapter 9, was developed in post–World War II America, when corporations were developing career ladders and occupational specialization was growing. Increasing attention was paid to career as a lifelong process and to critical developmental tasks needed to make good career decisions. At the same time, in the late 1950s, the U.S. federal government became concerned about preparing students to compete on scientific grounds with the Soviet Union. The National Defense Education Act was used to provide funding for schools to develop guidance programs, particularly to provide career development services. Some $77 million dollars was directed to this program from the late 1950s through the early 1960s. This funding led to a tremendous increase in the number of guidance counselors in the United States and to the development of guidance programs designed to help students make good career and educational decisions (Flattau et al., 2008). Super's developmental focus began to be infused into guidance programs, and career development became a significant focus for school counselors.

Twenty years later, there began a general movement to attend to more psychological aspects of career decision making, rather than focusing solely on providing information (Herr, Cramer & Niles, 2004). Career counselors were still helping individuals make good career choices but were also encouraged to be good therapists. Divisions between career counseling and more general mental health counseling were explored in a special issue of *The Career Development Quarterly* titled "How Personal is Career Counseling?" As Subich (1993) noted in her introduction to the special issue, all the authors decried the split between personal and career counseling. The authors argued for a greater application of

career counseling skills to workplace issues more broadly (Haverkamp & Moore, 1993) and a greater focus on personal identity and meaning (Davidson & Gilbert, 1993). Several authors also noted that, in essence, making a distinction between personal and career counseling trivialized the emotional aspects of making decisions about career and work.

More recently, career counselors' work has shifted in ways predicted by the authors of the 1993 special issue of *Career Development Quarterly*. Their efforts reflect the changing world of work, with more flux in the labor force necessitating many changes over the lifespan. Four decades of research on the role of gender, race, culture, social class, and sexual orientation, discussed more fully in Chapter 4, have resulted in considerably more attention to context in career counseling and the realization that work, and the factors that influence work choices, may differ across individuals. Career counseling is no longer viewed as focusing primarily on assessment or information giving about work options, because that was not meeting clients' needs, as we discuss in later chapters. Richardson (2012) issued a call for the field to be even more inclusive, from helping individuals choose careers to helping them "construct lives through work and relationship" (p. 191). She and other authors argue for a more holistic approach to career counseling addressing the entire range of work that people do in both the marketplace and in their personal care work (care for self and others). Today, career counselors are professionals who have specialized skills to help people make choices about their work and personal lives and the meaning of that work in their lives.

The National Career Development Association's (2009) *Minimum Competencies for Multicultural Career Counseling and Development* reflect the aforementioned changes to the provision of career counseling. The purpose of the Competencies is "to ensure that all individuals practicing in, or training for practice in, the career counseling and development field are aware of the expectation that we, as professionals, will practice in ways that promote the career development and functioning of individuals of all backgrounds" (NCDA, 2009). The nine competencies encompass the areas of career counseling that are deemed critical to effective practice. Career counselors must:

- Understand career development theory

- Be able to provide individual and group counseling skills in a culturally appropriate way

- Be able to provide individual and group assessment

- Be able to provide occupational information in a culturally sensitive way

- Be able to provide career programs for diverse populations

- Be able to provide coaching and consultation in a culturally appropriate manner

- Be able to engage in culturally appropriate supervision

- Act ethically and legally appropriate

- Be able to design and implement culturally appropriate research studies

In this book, we focus on each of these competencies (with the exceptions of supervision, consultation, and developing research studies).

CHANGING WORLD OF WORK

Theories of career development tend to be primarily psychological in nature; that is, they focus on characteristics of individuals that help explain the careers they enter, the ways that they adjust to work environments, or the processes by which they make career choices or changes. However, these theories do not exist in a vacuum: The larger economic and social systems in which an individual resides play crucial roles in the type of decision that is made or even whether a decision can or needs to be made at all. For example, when the national (or global) economy is booming, an individual may see many opportunities available and may feel little risk in deciding to leave a current job for one in another organization or field, or to pursue further education. On the other hand, when the economy is in a downturn, the same individual may see few opportunities and may not be able or willing to risk any work-related changes. When a labor market is relatively open (more jobs than workers), employers must offer better salaries and other benefits to attract well-qualified workers; when a labor market is relatively tight (more workers than jobs), employers do not have to compete for workers and may decrease what they offer. These economic factors obviously influence an individual's career development, at particular choice points and in the progression of one's career over a lifespan, and we continue to discuss these factors as we consider specific theories of career development.

In the more than 20 years since we wrote the first edition of this book, the world of work has changed fairly dramatically. We discuss labor force information in more depth in Chapter 14 but provide an initial overview of the current workforce and the projected changes in the workforce here. We want to help readers understand the major shifts in work that affect current workers and the future choices of clients making work-related decisions.

The workforce has become increasingly diverse, both in gender and in racial/ethnic diversity, in the past four decades (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018a). Women constitute 47% of the total labor force, are almost as likely to join the labor force as are men, and stay in the labor force after they have children. Their wage relative to men, which was 62 cents to the dollar in 1979, improved to 82 cents to the dollar in 2016, although clearly, more work is needed to ensure equality in pay between men and women. By race, the majority of the labor force in 2017 was White (78%), with 13% Black and 6% Asian. By ethnicity, 17% of the labor force was Hispanic or Latino, who may be of any race (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018a; U.S. Department of Labor, 2017).

The entire population in the United States is increasingly diverse in terms of race and ethnicity, with over a third of the U.S. population identifying as some racial/ethnic heritage other than White. The 2017 report from the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that Latinos represented over 18% of the population, an increase from 12% in the 2000 census (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011; U.S. Census Bureau, 2018b). African Americans were 13.4% of the population, Asian Americans were 5.8%, and 1.3% identified as American Indian. This racial/ethnic diversity in the population is increasingly reflected in the labor force, with a greater percentage of new entrants in the labor force identifying as racial/ethnic minority individuals. Because the increase in U.S. racial/ethnic diversity is still relatively recent, 78% of the overall labor force identifies as White/Caucasian, but, as we note below, the overall racial/ethnic diversity of the labor force is expected to increase in the next 10 years.

It is important to note that, while there is more racial/ethnic and gender diversity in the workforce, there are still considerable gender and racial disparities in occupational distributions. In other words, although more women are working, there are still pay inequities within the same occupation, and women and racial/ethnic minority men are much more likely to be in lower paying occupations. For example, African Americans and Latinos are much less likely to be in higher paying management and professional occupations and more likely to be in lower paying jobs in food preparation, custodial, transportation, and service industries (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018a). Asian Americans are more likely to be in scientific and engineering occupations and less likely to be in many service jobs (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018a).

The average age of the labor force has increased, as the large population of individuals born in the post–World War II years through the mid-1960s (the "baby boomers") is aging. The psychological contract between employers and employees, which stipulated employee loyalty in exchange for job security and retirement benefits, shifted in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Lent & Brown, 2013). Employers, facing increased global competition and an economic recession, restructured to have smaller organizations and fewer obligations to provide benefits or job security. This trend began in the private sector and more recently has affected public sector employees. The result has been much more of an onus on individual employees to be flexible, to be able to find new employment or careers throughout their lifetimes, and to save for their own retirement. Young workers will enter the workforce expecting to be responsible for their own career path and in fact, may relish the freedom it gives them to change and try new opportunities and roles. Older workers, however, may feel quite angry and at a loss at the changes in the workforce.

Another important demographic characteristic to consider in the workforce is disability. Using a broad definition, 27.2% of Americans in the general population report having a disability; 17.6% have a severe disability. Fewer than half of people with identified disabilities are employed, and disabling conditions are more prevalent for older individuals, increasing with age (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018a). However, the onset of a disability or a limiting medical condition may occur at any time, with consequences for individuals' career decisions.

The recession of 2008 heightened the sense that the world of work is rapidly changing, and that changes will only accelerate with new technological advances. As we discuss more thoroughly in Chapter 14, the Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes yearly projections of the fastest growing jobs, the occupations with the most projected growth, and projections based on demographic changes (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). It is important for counselors to understand and keep up with projected changes to help clients make good work-related decisions. We caution, though, that these are just projections, and often real-world events intervene to make the projections obsolete. For example, projections for an outflow of retirees from the labor force in early 2010 proved to be wrong as the economic recession of 2008 led many retirement funds to lose money and individuals decided to postpone retirement. Sometimes technological advances have far greater impact than previously thought, creating new jobs and changing others. Thus, it is important to be aware of labor market projections and economic influences that affect work and job opportunities but to keep in perspective that current economic factors are but one influence in people's lives.

DEFINITION AND TYPES OF THEORIES

A theory is a series of connected hypothetical statements designed to explain a particular behavior or set of behaviors. We have, for example, theories to explain how people solve problems (e.g., Heppner & Lee, 2009), to predict causes of stress in the workplace (e.g., Long, Kahn, & Schutz, 1992), or to describe how humans develop socially and psychologically (e.g., Erikson, 1968). Theories serve a very important purpose in psychology and in counseling; they help psychologists and counselors to conceptualize human behavior. In essence, theories guide us in making sense of very complex sets of information about how humans behave to help us understand them and to predict their behavior in the future.

One useful way to envision the role of a theory is to view it as a map (Krumboltz, 1994). Both maps and theories are representations of reality designed for a particular purpose to help guide the user's understanding of a terrain. Motorists use maps (or GPS devices) to facilitate traveling from point A to point B; counselors use career theories to help them explain a client's vocational behavior. Krumboltz notes that maps and theories can be useful for one purpose and not for another. Vocational theories, for example, are useful to help understand career choices but might be less useful in other situations.

Krumboltz (1994) also notes that theories designed to explain and predict complex human behavior must, of necessity, omit some aspects of behavior, distort other aspects to highlight them, and depict some unobservable conditions as reality. Thus, a vocational theory may include some variables that help explain career choices but may omit behavior related to interpersonal relationships. The theory may label some behavior to bring attention to it. The Theory of Work Adjustment (Dawis, 2005; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), for example, has a number of unique identifiers for work-related behavior, such as satisfactoriness, to highlight those aspects of behavior the theory is designed to explain. Other theories have developed labels to highlight behavior leading to a career choice rather than to highlight behavior in a work setting. None of the theories explains all work-related behaviors, and in this way, theories distort the reality of the very complicated behavior related to making career decisions prior to and following the entry into the world of work. And all theories make some assumptions about internal conditions that are not observable. Super's theory (Hartung, 2013; Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996) includes an assumption that vocational choice is the implementation of the self-concept; this is not directly observable, yet it is a central tenet of his theory.

CLARIFYING DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THEORIES AND THEORETICAL ORIENTATIONS

We have introduced several slightly different terms, which may cause some confusion: *theoretical orientation, career development theories,* and *career counseling theories.* The term *theoretical orientation* is most frequently used to describe one's general philosophical stance about the nature of personality and of therapeutic change, such as humanistic,

cognitive-behavioral, or family systems. One's theoretical orientation interacts with one's view of career development and of career counseling, although this interaction is rarely discussed because of the manner in which we often compartmentalize career counseling and personal counseling, or career issues and personal issues within counseling. We revisit the issue of "career versus personal" in Chapter 15.

Our discussion about career-related theories has, thus far, focused on theories of career *development* rather than on theories of career *counseling*; yet they are not identical. Theories of career *development* were devised to explain vocational behavior, such as initial career choice, work adjustment, or lifespan career progress. The goal of theories of career *counseling,* on the other hand, is to provide counselors with direction for how to work with clients; these theories are more akin to theoretical orientation as defined earlier.

The distinction between theories of career development and career counseling is an important one. In fact, Osipow (1996) contends that no career counseling theory exists. There have been, however, several models for conducting career counseling, and we will discuss one model in Chapter 4. Moreover, there have been some efforts to apply psychotherapy theoretical orientations to career counseling, such as psychodynamic career counseling (Watkins & Savickas, 1990) and person-centered career counseling (Bozarth & Fisher, 1990), as well as efforts to more explicitly link career development theories to career counseling (Savickas & Walsh, 1996).

So a counselor might describe her general therapeutic theoretical orientation as cognitive-behavioral, her view of career development as guided by Holland's (1997) typological theory, and her work with clients as following Fouad and Bingham's Culturally Appropriate Career Counseling Model (1995) of career counseling, with the central attention to the client's cultural context. These descriptors do not contradict one another, because they all influence how this particular counselor views her clients and affect her in-session behavior and interventions with clients. Counselors develop their theoretical affinities through exposure to different perspectives and through their own clinical experience.

We advocate that career development theories be used in career counseling to help practitioners determine the most appropriate and effective tools to help clients. This is an ideal situation, however, and one met with some skepticism by practitioners and researchers alike. Lucas (1996), for example, points out that "counselors insist on relevance, [and the theory-driven research published in] journals [does] not provide it" (p. 82).

The biggest concern voiced by practitioners is that career development theories explain pieces of vocational behavior, but no client ever walks into an office with just the exact piece explained by the theory. Practitioners contend that some theories do not adequately explain the career behavior of women, racial and ethnic minority clients, or lesbian and gay clients. They find that other theories do not discuss the interface between work and family or that they do not adequately address the myriad problems a client brings to counseling that include both career and personal concerns. This book does not specifically address the split between practitioners and academicians; there still remains the need for practice to inform science in a substantive way (Osipow, 1996; Sampson, Bullock-Yowell, Dozier, Osborn, & Lenz, 2017). But we are suggesting that a counselor's solid theoretical grounding helps shape the way the counselor approaches the client and the questions he or she will ask. The counselor's preferred theory will also help determine the types of assessment tools used in counseling, as well as the interventions and techniques employed.

DEVELOPING HYPOTHESES AND A "WORKING MODEL" OF THE CLIENT

Each client who comes for career counseling brings a unique set of personal characteristics and life experiences. Yet a number of common dimensions can guide a counselor's work with clients. The specific dimensions of interest to a particular counselor will be determined by his or her theoretical orientation and the theories of career development and career counseling to which he or she subscribes.

One way in which career development theories influence career counseling is that they suggest hypotheses for further consideration and exploration. Walborn (1996) describes a hypothesis as "an educated hunch that is grounded in theory" (p. 224) or that may emerge from the interaction between the client and counselor. Developing and sharing hypotheses with the client are critical components in any type of counseling or therapy, particularly in career counseling. Regardless of theoretical orientation, counselors have hunches about clients' presenting problems and what might be done to assist them. We demonstrate in Chapter 4 that many of these hypotheses should be informed by knowledge of the client's cultural contexts. Moreover, counselors "must be aware of where they are taking the client and, to do so, they must be aware of their hypotheses" (p. 225).

The language we use throughout this book reflects our focus on generating and testing hypotheses, and we strongly encourage the reader to adopt the inquisitive frame of mind that underlies hypothesis generation and hypothesis testing. The structure of the book offers many natural places for the reader to pause and reflect on (a) what is known about a particular client; (b) whether the reader's hypotheses have been confirmed, have been disconfirmed, or need further elaboration; and (c) additional hypotheses or speculations that the reader might make about a client. For example, in Chapter 5, Leslie's case history is first presented and summarized; then, in Chapter 6, assessment information is discussed and illustrated. The reader will form some impressions about Leslie based on her career history, so the reader can articulate those impressions before reading the section with Leslie's assessment results. Then the reader will review the assessment with his or her impressions and hypotheses in mind and search for confirming and disconfirming evidence.

Development of hypotheses begins with the very first exposure to the client, whether in person or through written intake case information, and is an ongoing process throughout counseling. Hypothesis development may need to be an explicitly conscious exercise for new counselors, but it becomes an automatic process as counselors gain experience. It is important for counselors to be aware of and be able to articulate the hypotheses that they form, whether consciously or unconsciously.

Refinement of hypotheses continues throughout counseling. Walborn (1996) suggests a number of benefits of continual development of hypotheses, including helping the counselor remain an active rather than passive listener, keeping counseling sessions focused, providing alternative interpretations of the client's problem, and fostering a collaborative relationship between counselor and client.

Counselors use all sources of available information to generate hypotheses. Moreover, counselors look for consistent themes across several sources of information as well as for

inconsistencies between sources. For example, John's highest interest inventory scores are in the artistic area, and he reports that the course he enjoyed most last semester was art history. However, he is performing poorly in a photography course this semester. These bits of information provide both consistency and inconsistency, resulting in a hypothesis that merits further investigation: John enjoys artistic, flexible, creative environments as a spectator; he doesn't have artistic skills or abilities, nor does he enjoy producing art. How does the counselor then test this hypothesis? The most direct way is to simply offer the hypothesis to John to see how he reacts and to invite him to gather evidence related to the hypothesis. For example, John's counselor might comment, "You seem to have a *strong interest* in artistic activities but perhaps more as an observer or appreciator of art rather than as a 'doer' of art. How does that fit?" The goal is to help John discover something new about himself or to clarify something he already knows and help him integrate it within his view of himself.

Sometimes, a client already knows what the counselor offers as a hypothesis; for example, it may be quite clear to John that he doesn't have strong artistic skills but that he still enjoys learning about art. At other times, a client may not have thought about his or her interests and activities in quite the same way that the counselor has presented the hypothesis, and further discussion helps clarify information about himself or herself. It therefore becomes very important that the counselor makes it clear that the hypotheses are just that—hunches about the client that await further evidence and verification.

Counselors communicate the hypothetical nature of their statements via several methods. First, counselors use tentative language when offering hypotheses to clients so that they are not perceived as statements of fact. For example, a counselor might say, "I'm wondering if you might prefer selling ideas rather than selling products," or "It seems that you're most comfortable in situations where you clearly know what's expected of you." Second, counselors engage clients in a collaborative effort to develop and examine hypotheses, primarily by paying attention to the development of the counselor–client relationship. If the client feels that he or she is in a comfortable, collaborative relationship, then the client will be more likely to disagree with the counselor if the hypothesis is not accurate. The counselor might ask, "What do *you* think? How does that fit with what you know about yourself?" Finally, counselors need to remind themselves (and their clients) that they are offering hypotheses that are in need of further evidence and to search thoroughly for such evidence: "What other experiences have you had that support your pursuing an artistic career? How else might you 'test out' your interests and skills?"

Walborn (1996) argues that verbal disclosure of a counselor's hypotheses about the client is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for effective therapy. The way in which hypotheses are shared with the client depends on the stage of counseling; the client himself or herself; the strength of the client–counselor relationship; and, perhaps, the theoretical orientation of the counselor. Within the realm of personal-emotional counseling, Walborn suggests that the presentation of hypotheses differs by schools of therapy. Humanistic approaches use reflection as the major technique because it directs the client's attention to something that the counselor deems important. Explicit disclosure of hypotheses is a fundamental basis of cognitive approaches, and hypotheses are most often related to a client's faulty cognitions. Finally, a variety of methods are used to disclose hypotheses in

psychodynamic approaches, such as interpretation and catharsis. These stylistic differences in how hypotheses are offered and explored also may be seen in career counseling. For example, counselors using Holland's theory of vocational personalities might use a didactic style, and constructivist counselors would be likely to develop a collaborative approach to developing hypotheses with the client.

A final point is that counselors need to judge whether their hypotheses are accurate. First, the counselor must consider whether the hypothesis is culture bound. In other words, is the hypothesis appropriate for the client's culture and gender, or is it based on the counselor's own cultural background? Accuracy may be determined by the client's reaction to the hypothesis and by gathering further evidence to test its veridicality. Furthermore, Walborn (1996) suggests that the *process* of developing and sharing a hypothesis actually may be more important than the *content* of the hypothesis. In other words, one outcome of hypothesis testing is that the client learns self-exploration skills, which is important in and of itself.

A caveat about formulating hypotheses about clients: Hypotheses and "working models" should never be used to label prematurely, infer conclusions, or make judgments about clients. While it might be tempting for a counselor to think he or she has the client "all figured out," the counselor should always remain open to new evidence and be prepared to alter his or her view of the client in response to new information. Research examining how counselors form and test hypotheses suggests that counselors tend to pay more attention to new information that confirms their hypotheses at the expense of information that disconfirms their hypotheses. This research serves as a reminder that counselors need to consider as much information as possible (Garb, 1998; Pfeiffer, Whelan, & Martin, 2000; Spengler & Pilipis, 2015; Spengler et al., 2009).

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

The book consists of three sections. Career counselors, of course, need to be competent in a number of areas related to counseling, including understanding the career counseling process, conceptualizing a client's problem in a helpful manner, and being aware of various practical issues affecting career services. Thus, the three sections are organized to first, provide an overview and introduction to the fundamentals of career counseling; second, to provide an overview of theoretical perspectives to provide a foundation for client conceptualization; and, third, to provide some practical information on career interventions, world-of-work information and integrating career and mental health concerns.

In addition to this introduction and overview, the initial section (Part I, Foundations) includes chapters related to ethical guidelines relevant to career counseling (Chapter 2), different settings in which career interventions may occur, such as schools, higher education institutions, and community settings, as well as the structure and process of career counseling (Chapter 3), contextual factors influencing work-related decisions (Chapter 4), and using assessment in career counseling (Chapter 6). We also introduce our main case of Leslie in Chapter 5, providing basic information about her context and work history. We build on the case of Leslie throughout the book as we consider her from a variety of different perspectives.

The second section (Part II, Theories) provides an overview and practical applications of career theories. The theories discussed in this book are attempts to explain some career-related behavior. Each theory overlaps with the others in some ways, but each has distinct constructs. In some ways, however, each theory may be viewed as attempting to explain different aspects of the proverbial elephant; depending on the theorist's vantage point, different aspects of behavior are emphasized.

Although there is considerable overlap among the major vocational theories discussed in this book, they each explain some unique work-related behaviors and thus are useful guides for counselors. Without a theoretical framework to guide us, we would find it very difficult to make sense of the information clients might bring to us about their work-related problems. To return to the map or GPS analogy, we consult a road map before we leave on a trip to know the best way to get to our destination; without a map, we may wander aimlessly. So a good theory helps us represent reality, understand behavior, and assist clients in understanding their behavior.

We chose seven different theoretical approaches for inclusion in Part II of this book. Three of the theories have long histories of scholarship and recognition (Hackett, Lent, & Greenhaus, 1991): Holland's (1997) typological theory of persons and environments, Dawis and Lofquist's (1984; Dawis, 2005) theory of work adjustment, and Super's (Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996) life span, life space approach. The fourth theory, Lent, Brown, and Hackett's (1994) social cognitive career theory, has achieved considerable stature in the past 25 years. A fifth theory, Gottfredson's (2005) theory of circumscription and compromise, was included despite having less empirical support because of its appeal to practitioners and its explicit attention to early socialization. We also include two chapters on more recent theories to highlight new approaches and perspectives: Blustein's (Duffy, Blustein, Diemer, & Autin, 2016) psychology of work theory and Savickas's (2018) career construction and life designing paradigm.

A danger in presenting each theory separately is that this organization might foster a polarization of the theories, as well as the implication that one must choose a specific theory and not deviate from that choice. Nothing could be further from the truth. What we hope will become evident throughout the book is that each theory has some unique and useful perspectives to offer a consideration of Leslie, the primary case described in Chapter 5. Moreover, each theory may be particularly useful for a specific type of client, as evidenced by the additional cases provided in each chapter. Despite the organizational structure, we encourage the reader to think integratively across the theoretical perspectives, and we provide some assistance in doing so in the last chapter (Chapter 16). There, we model how we as counselors might approach a case from an integrated theoretical approach, and we summarize how each theoretical perspective added to our understanding of Leslie.

Finally, the third section of the book (Part III, Applications) highlights additional competencies that career counselors need to develop. Chapter 14 includes a review of the types of available occupational information and the practical ways that world-of-work information is used in career counseling. In Chapter 15, we provide an overview of the importance of a holistic perspective of the client, and the frequent need to integrate career and noncareer concerns, but also provide some perspectives and guidelines on when a referral to another counselor is indicated. Finally, in Chapter 16, we summarize our approach to career counseling, and present ways of using multiple theoretical perspectives in working with clients, building on the theories in Part II.

SUMMARY

We have presented the preceding issues in some detail, because each is crucial to considering how to apply theories of career development to real client issues.

We encourage you now to return to the three vignettes at the beginning of this chapter—brief stories of Ruth, Harry, and Joel. Imagine that any one of these people has come to you for counseling. What impressions do you have of each one? What do you think about his or her work or career concerns? What additional information would you like to know? How might you begin to address the concerns these people have expressed?

Now think back to a time when you had career or work-related concerns, such as an unsatisfying job, an inability to find work, or uncertainty about which career direction to choose. How did these concerns affect other aspects of your life? How did you resolve the concerns? Use the questions in Box 1.1 to guide your personal reflection.

BOX 1.1
PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What have been some of the key transition points in my own career and work history? How did I make decisions along those points? Who influenced my decisions?

- What assumptions does society make about work? Do I agree with those assumptions?

- How have economic factors influenced my decision making?

- How has my context (gender, family, race/ethnicity, religion, disability status) helped shape my career decisions?