“Right Sizing” the Workforce: Changing Roles and Responsibilities for Vocational Psychologists

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Right-Sizing

• The right number of people providing a good or service delivered effectively and efficiently that produces a profit for the company and the shareholders

• Do Vocational psychologists and Career Counselors have a role in Right Sizing the workforce?
Right Sizing - 2

• The right number of people who want to work providing goods or services in an efficient and effective manner that makes a profit for shareholders AND serves the greater good for people.
Agenda

I. Unemployment and Underemployment

II. Natural and Human-Made Disasters

III. Urban Poverty

IV. Changing Demographics
FEAR

• Fear
I. Unemployment & Underemployment

- Current global and economic crisis
- Fear that “there is not enough”
- Correlation between job and life satisfaction is .44%
I. Unemployment & Underemployment

- Unemployment
  - Global unemployment: 6.2% \(\ldots\) that is 205 MILLION People
  - 15 million in the United States
  - Youth unemployment (15–24) is 12.6%
    - 40% in Spain
    - 23.6% in North Africa
I. Unemployment & Underemployment

- Underemployment
  - International Labor Organization reports vulnerable rate of 50.1%
  - 1.2 billion workers earn less than $2.00 per day
I. Unemployment & Underemployment

- Underemployment
  - 20% in the US who earn over $1,000,000 capture nearly 50% of all income
Changing Societies

• As countries move from Agrarian to Industrial to knowledge societies how does the role vocational and career counselors change?
I. Unemployment & Underemployment

• Would vocational psychologists and career counselors believe they have a role in helping the world through changes in moving from a manufacturing society to a knowledge/information society?

• If we collaborate with economists can we better predict right occupations and right numbers of workers?
Ethical Questions

• Is it ethical and or acceptable to help individuals select careers for which there is no demand?
II. Natural and Human-Made Disasters

• What role might vocational psychologists and career counselors play in the aftermath of a disaster?
“I have no idea who I am today; and I don’t know how to figure out, who I will be tomorrow.” — Hurricane Katrina survivor
A Role for Social Cognitive Career Theory

- Work efficacy, job search, outcomes expectations after a disaster
- Would offering vocational and job help after a disaster fill a potential social justice mission of right-sizing the work force?
II. Natural and Human-Made Disasters

• How soon after a disaster should we begin interventions and research?
Wounded Warrior

• What is our role in the life of an injured soldier?
Wounded Warrior

“I served my country and provided all this, and come back and what do I have now? Maybe a lot of bad memories that I don’t want and skills that nobody recognizes.”

Source: Daniel Nichols, former chief of staff for the Labor Department's Veteran Employment and Training Services (VETS)
Wounded Warrior

• Perhaps now is the time for vocational psychologists to lend our skills to returning veterans.
III. Urban Poverty

• Is there a role for vocational psychologists and career counselors with populations in urban poverty centers?
III. Urban Poverty

- 1975: 28% of the world’s population lived in cities
- 2000: 50% of world’s population lived in cities
- Women and Children make up over 70% of those living in poverty
III. Urban Poverty

- “Vocational psychology has been ambivalent about issues pertaining to the struggles of people who have little, if any, access to the opportunity structure” (Blustein, et al. 2005)
- Combination of Emancipatory communitarian and Social Cognitive Theories might help
III. Urban Poverty

• How do we make a difference in the lives of urban youths who spend their days hanging out?
• Bottom up, top down approach
• Do we have something to offer urban planners and government policy makers?
IV. Demographic Shifts

• Will our scholarship and practice change with demographic shifts?
• Low birth rates in Spain and Italy
• Germany will lose 20% of its population in next 40 years
IV. Demographic Shifts

- **Projected significant worker surpluses:**
  - India: 47 million
  - Pakistan: 19 million
  - Vietnam: 7 million
  - Indonesia: 5 million
  - Philippines: 5 million
  - Mexico: 5 million

IV. Demographic Shifts

- Projected significant worker shortages:
  - United States: 17 million
  - China: 10 million
  - Japan: 9 million
  - Russia: 6 million
  - France, Germany, Spain: 3 million
  - UK, Italy: 2 million

IV. Demographic Shifts

- Working age is 18-64 years
- 63% of the population was in this group in 2008
- It will be 57% by 2050
Four Major Forces

1. Current Unemployment and fear that there will not be enough
2. Natural and human-made disasters
3. Rise in urban poverty
4. Changing Demographics
• Do vocational psychologists need to expand the definition of work?
• Paid vs. Non-paid work
What can you Do?

1. Dream Big
2. Select part of vision on which you will work that matches your skills
3. Develop and implement a plan
4. Measure the results
5. Adjust the plan
6. Form Productive Partnerships
7. Advocate
Getting Ready for Change

a) “Know thy self”
b) Work and Spirituality
c) Critical Thinking
d) Cultural Literacy
e) Flexible in the Face of Change
f) Relationships
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Student Affairs Focus & Mission

The mission of Student Affairs is to foster student learning and promote student success through engagement and involvement in community, academics, diversity, and leadership.
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Student Affairs Core Values:
LEADERS

- Learning
- Excellence
- Assessment
- Diversity
- Ethical Leadership
- Relationships
- Spirit
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Student Affairs Vision for Students

• Understanding and Managing Self
• Engaging Others in a Diverse World
• Succeeding as a Professional
• Student Affairs Website:
  www.memphis.edu/studentaffairs
Challenge

• Determine What is Unacceptable
• Push Hard for Change
• Move the Unacceptable to Acceptable
Another Walk in the Park

- Turn your…
  - Depression to **Joy**
  - Anxiety to **Excitement**
  - Fear to **Faith**
THERE IS ENOUGH!