

Constructivist Assessment in Career Counseling

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A constructivist approach to assessment in career counseling presents an opportunity for counselors to gain insight into clients' stories, amplify clients' self-awareness, and develop with clients a future orientation through action steps. The author presents four strategies for constructivist assessment using "The Storied Approach" (Brott, 2001) as the framework for the counseling process. The four constructivist assessment strategies include the life line, card sorts, life roles circles, and the goal map.

KEY WORDS: career counseling; constructivist assessment; strategies; life line; card sorts; life roles circles; goal map.

As an evolving profession, career counseling in the 21st century is emerging through postmodern (narrative) approaches (e.g., Brott, 2001; Cochran, 1997; Miller-Tiedeman, 1988; Peavy, 1996; Savickas, 1993). The process of career counseling is used to assist clients in uncovering themes and meanings in their personal stories so that they can take action in preferred directions. Client narratives uncover the subjective perspective with the counselor and client as co-collaborators in the counseling process: the emphasis is both on the relationship and in the process. Goldman (1992) explained that clients play an active rather than passive role, and the emphasis is on learning about one's self within a developmental framework.

Narrative approaches to career counseling provide an opportunity for a shift in the purpose of career assessment. Postmodern approaches

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