

Career Construction Counseling With a Mid-Career Black Man

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Career construction counseling for a mid-career Black man is examined. The author implemented a case study design and purposively selected the participant. The intervention and follow-up occurred over a period of 21 months, and the Career Construction Interview (CCI; Savickas, 2011a) was used to gather data. Savickas's 8-step strategy was followed to complete the participant's life portrait. After the intervention, the participant demonstrated an improved sense of self and willingness to deal more adaptively with career-life-related challenges. More research is needed to determine the long-term effects of this kind of intervention and to show its applicability in group contexts.

Keywords: career construction counseling, Career Construction Interview, mid-career development, life themes, career adaptability

Traditional career theories may not provide a satisfactory basis for interventions aimed at dealing with constantly changing 21st-century career environments, nor adequately address the needs of marginal workers (Savickas, 2013). Life design (Savickas et al., 2009) offers a viable conceptual framework for the development of new constructs for investigating working lives and understanding 21st-century change and its effect on people. This paradigm emphasizes identity rather than personality, career adaptability rather than maturity, stories in addition to scores, and action to help people navigate transitions during their lifetimes.

The fifth economic wave (Gurri, 2013) calls for an approach to career counseling that takes into account changes in the postmodern world of work—an up-to-date approach to help career counselors assist clients in navigating repeated career transitions. Such an approach would involve obtaining “subjective” data about clients in addition to “objective” test results, and interpreting and integrating the data to promote effective career counseling. Counselors would then be in a position to elicit clients' career-life stories, get clients to authorize these stories, and, eventually, help them move forward productively. In the present study, career construction was used as a theoretical and intervention framework for analyzing and interpreting a client's stories and own reality (Savickas, 2005, 2014).

Career Construction Principles and Practices

Underlying career construction theory (Hartung, 2013; Savickas, 2011a) is the notion of career as story (career-life story) and counselor

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