

Fact sheet 4.2.1ef

KNOWLEDGE EVALUATION FORM 4.2

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer the following questions. Then compare them with the solutions given at the end of this form. If you have questions about how your answers match up, please discuss these with your course tutor.

- 1) What is the “Social Justice Case” for supporting the careers of members of particular populations?
 - a) The Social Justice Case means that members of disadvantaged groups should be supported to comply with current social expectations, in order to prevent negative perceptions about the company.
 - b) The Social Justice Case means that members of disadvantaged groups should be supported to comply with rules and regulations such as Equal Opportunities or Anti-Discrimination Acts in various countries.
 - c) The Social Justice Case means that members of disadvantaged groups should be supported to comply with demands of equity so that people can thrive despite historic injustices and ongoing discrimination.

- 2) What are the limits of the “Business Case” for supporting the careers of members of particular populations?
 - a) There are strong arguments that the self-regulating free market in goods and services ensures optimal matches between positions and talent. Helping people who do not secure positions may be socially desirable but does not lead to better performance.
 - b) If you only focus on the business case you are likely to focus only on those from whom the greatest, the most immediate and most visible productivity gains are to be expected, while others for whose advancement more investment would be needed are left by the wayside.
 - c) As more and more enterprises subscribe to diversity management, the competitive advantage gained by engaging in human resources development and career counselling for equal opportunities and equity wears out.

- 3) Which of the following statements pertains to critical-reflective practice?
 - a) Think about how your own background impacts on your reception and reaction to people who have a different background from you.
 - b) Work on assumption that people normally have reasons for the way they act, respond, or are inactive and irresponsive
 - c) Do not simply accept the version of reality that clients present to you – always question their accounts to help them to acquire a more realistic picture of their own situation and the opportunities that are actually open to them.

- 4) Which of the following statements pertains to attentive counselling?
 - a) In order to understand individuals you need to understand the difference in collective experiences as well!
 - b) To constantly inquire and learn in cooperation is much more important than to have fixed knowledges about specific groups
 - c) Modify your own approach so you can speak to the target group's need rather than trying to teach them to adapt to yours

- 5) Which of the following is a specific challenge when working with disadvantaged target groups *in organisations*?
 - a) The counsellor needs to be aware of how past and present experiences of discrimination can lead to lower expectations so that people may not aim for careers adequate to their full potential
 - b) The client may encounter obstacles that they do not feel able to address by themselves. In such cases the counsellor may need to take on the role of an advocate and support the initiation of change.
 - c) The counsellor may need to engage in networking activities to mobilise support for development conducive to good career outcomes and cannot always rely on simply “activating” the client, e.g. to apply for external funding.

Expected answers 4.2.1ef

Expected answers:
Q1=c; Q2=b; Q3=a; Q4=c; Q5=b.

SOLUTIONS

Question 1

The correct answer is **c**). Social justice in careers means that we try to achieve equal opportunities – and already at the point of entry people come with different sets of disadvantages and privileges. While career professionals and human resource development will not be able to fix the problem at a societal level, reducing the impact of current and historic injustices by supporting those affected by them is a matter of professional decency. Statement a) belongs to the business case – i.e. negative economic effects of bad publicity are averted by playing to expectations about, for example, the representation of women and people of colour in managerial positions. Statement b) simply refers to the minimum standards of corporate citizenship – of course a company must comply with the law of the land! But if that was enough, we would already have equal opportunities and there would be no need for a social justice case. The social justice case is one for mere decency and fairness acknowledging that we currently do not have equal opportunities and therefore it is not sufficient for organisations not to discriminate but they (and career counsellors accordingly) must also get active to counteract specific disadvantages caused by social conditions, cultural assumptions – and their own organisational structures

Question2

3



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The correct answer is **b**). Statement a) can only be right if, for example, women really were less fit for being managers than men – and there is both common understanding and strong evidence that this is not the case. That they are so heavily underrepresented simply means that the market does not – for a whole host of reasons – work here and that affirmative action is needed. Statement c) does not work as an argument because if more and more businesses make full use of the potentials of all (and not just white middle-class men..), those who still privilege some groups and exclude others will simply fall behind. But b) is a real concern: the business case is not equally valid for all and for some more effort is needed to even out the effects of disadvantage and discrimination. There are also not entirely unjustified concerns about diversity window-dressing, i.e. enacting policies with maximum publicity and minimum effort, which is most likely if the business case is the sole motivator. This also is why we must not lose sight of the social-justice case as part of our professional responsibility.

Question 3

Statement **a**) is the right answer because this is the core element of critical reflection, namely to ensure that you are aware that your own position colours your perception of others, your assumptions and your expectations. The point of critical-reflective practice is to counteract this. Statement b) pertains to “attentive counselling” which requires an attitude of critical reflection, but in addition requires the counsellor to actively respond to clients’ specific situations, e.g. by adjusting the setting or timing of counselling. Statement c) is *critical*, but not *reflective*. While it is a good idea to get clients’ to cast a critical look at their own habits and assumptions, this can easily slip into a logic of suspicion in which the counsellor risks coming across like an investigating police officer rather than a partner in a professional working alliance, undermining the trust which is vital for good counselling.

Question 4

Statement **c**) is the correct answer – which becomes clear if you replace “speak” by “attend”. Attentive counselling is all about paying attention to the conditions and motives of the client and, crucially, adjust professional praxis to these. Statements a) and b) pertain to critical-reflective practice as they focus on the cognitive aspect while attentive counselling translates such insights into a changed professional practice in relation to the life worlds and experiences of the client

Question 5

All answers are correct in their own right, but only statement **b**) specifically reflects on the situation of counselling within an organisation since, uniquely, here the counsellor may have the opportunity to

combine the roles of career professional with that of an organisational consultant. Statements a) and c) are applicable in all career counselling situations where people experiencing disadvantage are concerned – the counsellor cannot, then, retreat to an entirely individualistic stance, but has to be aware of experiences with discrimination and disadvantage (statement a) and be prepared to engage in social systems interventions, i.e. not just “activate” the client to deal with their experiences in an empowered way, but get active yourself in networking for support where necessary and available.