Career Management: The Role of Career Counsellors in Building Strategic Partnerships Between Individuals and Their Employers

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ABSTRACT

Career Management: The role of career counsellors in building strategic partnerships between individuals and their employers. As career counsellors strive to bring their practices into the mainstream of business, there are many emerging career management issues that they could potentially address. This article reviews important changes in the world of work, including restructuring, displaced workers, survivors, continuous learning, and self-directed careers. It then explores the new roles that both individuals and employers play in a career development culture. Finally, it addresses specific mainstream niches where career counsellors can serve, including dealing with the psychological impact of change; building a resilient workforce; career planning, exploration, and work search activities; and training managers as career coaches and mentors.

RÉSUMÉ

La gestion de carrière : Le rôle des conseillers d'orientation professionnelle est d'établir des associations stratégiques entre les employés et leurs employeurs. Comme conseillers d'orientation professionnelle, ils s'efforcent de contribuer par leur expertise au monde des affaires. Ce faisant, ils sont confrontés à de nombreux problèmes nouveaux de gestion de carrière qu'ils pourraient éventuellement traiter. Cet article étudie les changements importants survenus récemment dans le monde du travail, notamment la restructuration, le déplacement du personnel, les survivants, l'acquisition continue du savoir et les carrières autogérées. Il étudie ensuite les nouveaux rôles que les individus et les employeurs jouent dans la culture de l'établissement de carrière. Finalement, cet article examine les services particuliers pouvant être assurés, pour le grand public, par des conseillers d'orientation professionnelle, comprenant entre autres, le traitement de l'effet psychologique du changement, l'établissement d'une main-d'oeuvre aguerrie, la planification de carrière, l'exploration et la recherche de différentes possibilités de carrière et la formation de gestionnaires en tant que formateurs et guides de carrières.

For several years now, Canadian career counsellors have been encouraged to move their practices into the mainstream (Bezanson, 1999). Hiebert and Bezanson (1995), offered a concise summary of issues that needed to be addressed if career development was to 'remain a vital force.' In the same year, the Canadian Labour Force Development Board published an important discussion paper entitled *Career Development: An Emerging National Strategy* (Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation, 1995). Yet, as we enter the new millennium, many career and employment counsellors do not seem to have made much progress toward becoming mainstream practitioners. As concerns grow about

reduced government spending (resulting in cuts to traditional career and employment programs and services), perhaps now is the time to revisit the status of career development in Canada and explore ways to better integrate our services with the emerging needs of the Canadian workplace.

Career counsellors have traditionally worked with clients during times of specific career transitions: between high school and post-secondary education or school to work, during periods of unemployment or re-entry to the workforce, or after an accident or other disabling event. Interventions have included job loss counselling, career assessments, career exploration activities, decision-making and goal-setting strategies, or work search skills.

Human resource (HR) professionals, on the other hand, typically work with people who are already employed, providing assistance with internal career pathing, training plans, benchmarking skills and competencies, corporate assessments, and, increasingly, exiting the organization. Although there is some overlap between the practices of career counsellors and HR professionals, the focus of interest for the two groups has traditionally been very different. Counsellors are primarily concerned with assisting the individual; HR specialists, in general, serve the needs of the organization (Human Resources, 1998).

What, then, does career development mean in today's corporate world? Recently, I had the opportunity to work with a focus group of HR managers from a large, Western-Canadian corporation. I engaged participants in a mind-mapping exercise where they linked words and phrases to central themes which included the word 'career' (e.g., career development and career management). In the corporate world, career management or development activities have traditionally been reserved for high potential employees, and usually focus on leadership development. Not surprisingly, the theme of leadership emerged consistently on the mind-maps; other major themes included mentoring and continuous learning.

Interesting differences, however, emerged between the phrases Career Management and Career Development where the latter is a term more traditionally used in the corporate world (Knowdell, 1996; Simonsen, 1997). The Career Development mind-map had a definite flavour of upward mobility, highlighted by words such as growth, stretch, movement, and development programs. Career Management, on the other hand, seemed to be more in keeping with the emerging self-directed career paths of the late 1990's, eliciting words and phrases such as planning, goals, continuous learning, skill development, keeping options open, and personal responsibility.

If we hope to bring our work as career practitioners into the mainstream of business, perhaps Career Management would be a better term to use since it seems to incorporate the needs of a full range of workers rather than just the high-potential employees typically targeted by HR practitioners in career development programs. Many of the constructs that the HR focus group linked with career, such as goals, planning, growth, continuous learning, skill development, and personal responsibility, to name a few, are integral to the work of counsellors.

Career counsellors, then, clearly have much to offer individuals and their employers as they work together to effectively manage careers in the new millennium (Stoltz-Loike, 1996). This article will integrate recent literature from the fields of counselling and business to highlight how the expertise that we already possess as career counsellors can provide many of the solutions urgently sought by HR practitioners and managers in the corporate world of today.

THE CHANGING WORLD OF WORK: EMERGING CAREER MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Before we attempt to enter the corporate mainstream, however, perhaps we need to gain a better understanding of the employers' perspective on the emerging career management issues in the changing Canadian economy. Understanding the changing workplace is important, as well, if we are to effectively help our individual clients (Stoltz-Loike, 1996). Much of what we see and read offers us contradictory information.

Although many authors today encourage individuals to approach their jobs as if they were running their own businesses (Bridges, 1997; Hakim, 1994; Porter, Porter, & Bennett, 1998), the reality of corporate Canada is that managers and leaders are continually involved in making downsizing, reorganization, and succession-planning decisions that allow little room for individual input or self-managed careers. In my practice as a career counsellor, I daily encounter employees who have very little control over how they do their corporate jobs (or whether or not they will make it through the next major reorganization) yet are reluctant to exit their organizations and leave behind tenure, pensions, and benefit plans. Ironically, however, I am called to consult with employers who want their staff to become more resilient and self-directed. How can these apparently conflicting agendas be satisfied?

A brief look at the news reported daily on television, in newspapers, and magazines reminds us that the world of work today is vastly different than it was a few short years ago. Academic researchers have documented some of these changes; it is worth noting, though, that most of the work on the new economy is found in the business rather than career counselling literature (Stoltz-Loike, 1996). Many authors chronicle the impact of restructuring, reorganizing, and downsizing organizations (Hall & Mirvis, 1995; Noer, 1993; Peiperl & Baruch, 1997; Stoltz-Loike, 1996; Sullivan & Harper, 1996; Watts, 1996; Watts, Hawthorn, Hoffbrand, Jackson, & Spruling,1997). As a corporate consultant, I am aware that many employers are increasingly concerned about recruiting and retaining the best employees, and enhancing the productivity of their remaining workforce in these uncertain, leaner times. Because of all these changes, Baruch and Rosenstein (1994) conclude that "(c)areer planning and managing is one of the most important areas in the field of human resource management" (p. 59).

Historically, career management was synonymous with succession planning, leadership development for high-potential employees, and corporate training. Today, however, career management activities involve a cross-section of workers at different career stages. Although some career specialists advocate integrating

career development with other HR initiatives (Kaye & Leibowitz,1994), organizational career development in Canada, overall, is still rather informal and haphazard. Often, services and programs are not aligned with specified goals and very little specific assistance is offered to plateaued workers (Bernes & Magnusson, 1996). Other authors address similar concerns wherein employees who are solid performers, but plateaued, are often given fewer developmental opportunities (Hall, 1991; Mason, 1991).

What, then, do career practitioners need to know about the corporate world before they can more successfully offer services to today's workers? Restructuring of many organizations has resulted in flattened corporate hierarchies and major layoffs, leaving both displaced workers and disenfranchised survivors in the wake. Add to that the impact of innovative technologies, global competition, and the exponential growth of information, and today's emphasis on continuous learning begins to make sense. Finally, given that people are increasingly moving between organizations or industries as they pursue their career paths, the need for self-managed careers becomes more compelling. The next several sections will expand on these important changes in the corporate world of today.

Flattened corporate hierarchies

> As older, bewildered, and disenfranchised workers search for a stable place to complete their careers in the midst of constant change, other workers find their earlier successes in ascending a career ladder cut short by a free-fall into an interdisciplinary, self-managing team environment. Meanwhile, younger workers search for meaning in a world lacking in commitment to anything beyond survival from one quarter to another. No wonder careers are in pandemonium. (Brousseau et al., 1996, p. 55)

Bejian and Salomone (1995) tell us that "an orderly, step-like career path . . . is now the exception rather than the rule and represents only 10% of the workforce" (p. 54). Many authors have tried to offer new models for organizational career development that replace the image of a corporate ladder (Herriot & Pemberton, 1996; Kaye, 1982; Moses, 1997; Peiperl & Baruch, 1997). The common theme seems to be one of flexibility to maintain employability, involving moves in all directions (rather than just 'up') and often including periods of contract work or self-employment. Organizations today are struggling to become more fluid and flexible in order to accommodate the quickly changing needs in a global economy. Much of the middle layer of management is already gone and numerous teams form and disband daily to work on diverse projects. A static, hierarchical model just doesn't fit today's corporate world. The result, however, is a workforce with little job security and much confusion about the new employment contract.

Displaced workers

As major corporations and government organizations implement their downsizing and restructuring programs, countless workers continue to be displaced. Although outplacement firms have traditionally offered services to

displaced workers, due to the large numbers of employees now affected, many organizations offer transition support in in-house career centres. In some cases, these centres have been so successful that they are now accessible to all employees in the company, whether exiting or not (Caudron, 1994; Fuertes, 1998). Many displaced workers today have experienced multiple job losses over the past few years. In one transition centre that I work in, we have had several participants who, within only three years, have lost their jobs, found new ones within the same organization, and then lost their jobs again. Such major changes compound with other life events to add to the stress of displaced workers, who often describe their experience of job loss as a roller-coaster ride (Amundson & Poehnell, 1993).

Disenfranchised survivors

It is sometimes thought that those who manage to keep their jobs after a major corporate reorganization are the lucky ones. Yet, as Caudron (1996) reports,

> Employees who survive a downsizing feel anything but relief. More often, they feel anxious and betrayed. HR can help these employees by providing emotional support, role clarification, and career management assistance . . . [Yet,] even if companies do recognize survivors have special needs, there is an ugly Catch-22 involved: Companies downsize for monetary reasons, and programs to help remaining employees cost money. (p. 38)

Other research confirms that the stress responses to changing organizational demands include decreased productivity, increased illness and absenteeism, and costly business errors (Noer, 1993; Stoltz-Loike, 1996). One has to question how productive employees can be when they are angry, frightened, and unhappy, not to mention exhausted from doing the work of two or more people after a downsizing. Unless new psychological contracts are negotiated and trust is reestablished, the current restructuring blitz seems destined to result in profound difficulties for organizations (Herriot & Pemberton, 1996).

Continuous learning

Regardless of the psychological impact of change on displaced workers and survivors, they, like all workers today, need to engage in continuous learning if they are to remain employable (Corporate Council on Education, 1992; Greller & Stroh, 1995; Hall & Mirvis, 1995). While last-minute learning is often promoted as the only effective method to keep up with changing skill requirements, sometimes this approach to learning offers too little, too late. Obsolescence, especially for mid-career workers, has a negative impact on both individuals and organizations, resulting in diminished job satisfaction and morale, fewer promotions, increased turnover and absenteeism, and lower productivity (Hall & Mirvis, 1995). However, in today's world of work (where fewer people are trying to get more done), finding time for continuous learning is becoming increasingly difficult. Employers find it hard to allocate time for learning during the work day and employees resent having to commit more and more of their own time to work-related courses and learning projects.

Self-directed careers

This need for continuous learning, combined with virtually unlimited combinations of career paths, has resulted in a new approach to career development, self-directed careers, involving a sequence of renegotiations of the psychological employment contract (Herriot & Pemberton, 1996). There is some evidence that this 'free agent' style of career results in workers who both fare better and are more loyal than those following more traditional career models (Stroh & Reilly, 1997). However, is it reasonable to expect employees to take charge of their own careers? In fact, do most organizations today even provide environments where self-managed careers are a possibility? In the next section, a new model for career management-one which involves a partnership between individuals and their employers-will be presented.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: A NEW MODEL FOR MANAGING CAREERS

Many authors stress the joint responsibility that individuals and organizations share in managing careers in today's world of work (Noer, 1993; Orpen, 1994). Although it is debatable whether or not career management enhances job performance (Noe, 1996), there is evidence that satisfied employees are more committed to their organizations, work harder, and are more productive and successful (Caudron, 1994; Stoltz-Loike, 1996). If career management, then, can positively impact employee satisfaction, it seems clear that organizations, as well as individuals, will benefit. Csikszentmihalyi (1990, 1997) identifies several reasons that employees find work dissatisfying and resent their jobs: the jobs are perceived as pointless, boring and routine, and stressful. He reports that the 'greatest source of stress in the workplace is the feeling that no one is interested in supporting our goals' (1997, p. 113). Self-directed careers, then, in the absence of commitment from organizations to foster career development, are likely to result in frustration rather than success. The next two sections will review the specific roles that individuals and their employers must play if this strategic 'career management' partnership is to work.

The individual's role

The career resilience literature (Collard, Epperheimer, & Saign, 1996; Waterman, Waterman, & Collard, 1994) suggests that career management is a joint responsibility involving individuals and the organizations that employ them. In fact, many organizations strategically recruit individuals who are interested in their own career development (Mason, 1991); other organizations clearly expect employees to self-manage their careers (Brown, 1996; Engels, 1995; Lancaster, 1995). Research supports that managers who actively self-manage their careers (which may include leaving their organizations and even switching industries) fare better than those who are less self-directed (Stroh & Reilly, 1997).

Much has been written recently to help individuals 'take charge' of their careers (Bridges, 1997; Foord Kirk, 1996; Hakim, 1994; Harkness, 1997; Moses,

1997; Porter, Porter, & Bennett, 1998). A common theme in many of these books is for individuals to adopt an 'entrepreneurial spirit,' approaching their jobs as if they were running a business. Some authors talk of protean careers (the name is derived from the Greek god, Proteus, who changed shape at will) as careers that encompass movement between occupations, employers, and often industries (Mirvis & Hall, 1994). Self-directed or protean careers have several characteristics in common: a commitment to continuous learning and skill enhancement, a willingness to embrace corporate goals, and an attachment to a wide network of professional colleagues and mentors (Collard et al., 1996).

The employer's role

Employers committed to fostering the career development of their employees and providing environments in which their employees will thrive can concentrate on four key strategies: offering challenging opportunities, supporting skill enhancement, communicating and collaborating on meaningful goals, and providing clear feedback about job performance (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 1997). All of these strategies require commitment from both managers and employees, and mutually respectful 'adult-adult' work relationships (Collard et al., 1996).

Employees with supportive managers are more likely to engage in subsequent development activity (Noe, 1996), and supportive coworkers and supervisors can buffer the effects of work-related stress (Walsh & Srsic, 1995). Therefore, it seems important in today's challenging work environment, that employers structure the workplace such that managers and their employees are supporting each other to achieve corporate and personal goals. Often, employees need to get their manager's permission to participate in career management activities (Fuertes, 1998). It is important, then, that managers understand that career management can lead to more successful careers for employees, which, in turn will result in a harder working and more committed staff, a clear benefit to the organization (Orpen, 1994).

Of course, effective career management involves strategically planning for skills enhancement as well. Many authors address the serious need for planned and co-ordinated on-the-job training to supplement formal education (Duarte & Lewis, 1995; Mason, 1991), especially in the area of interpersonal communication and team skills. At Intel, for instance, a key management responsibility is to help employees understand the shifting demand for their skills and to encourage appropriate training; supervisors at Reuters, as well, are required to provide candid guidance, in essence, not encouraging employees to pursue inappropriate training or careers (O'Reilly, 1994). Realistic, unambiguous feedback for all workers, especially those that find themselves plateaued, is essential if employees are to be equipped to effectively self-manage their careers (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Hall, 1991).

Many organizations today are also concerned about retaining their best people. Research tells us that companies that foster self-directed careers and offer enriched environments in which their employees can grow and develop will find

that they are better able to recruit and retain good staff (Stroh & Reilly, 1997). However, fast-tracking high performers need to be clearly told that they are wanted, especially when they see many of their colleagues being let go (Hall, 1991). Several innovative corporate programs today foster career enrichment rather than upward mobility. Strategies include lateral moves, temporary reassignments, cross-functional projects, and external placements (Caudron, 1994). Most companies, however, are just scratching the surface in helping their employees to effectively manage non-hierarchical careers. In the aftermath of downsizings, mergers, and major corporate restructuring, and with the need for increased productivity and a flexible workforce, there is a growing concern in the corporate world about building a career development culture (Knowdell, 1996; Simonsen, 1997; Stoltz-Loike, 1996).

Inevitably some employees will need to move on. There is an increasing trend toward providing in-house career centres and transition services, staffed by a combination of corporate employees and external consultants — such centres can help to facilitate both internal career moves and gracious exits. Typical services for displaced workers include one-to-one counselling and coaching and workshops on the transition process, financial planning, self-assessment, career exploration, and work search skills. Sometimes workshops on entrepreneurial options (i.e., franchising, consulting, or starting a business) are offered as well. Most in-house centres provide an extensive career resource library, computer workstations, Internet access, phone messaging system, and other clerical support.

MOVING CAREER COUNSELLING INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF BUSINESS

It seems apparent, then, that there are a number of opportunities for counsellors to offer their expertise to the corporate world. In Britain, Watts and his colleagues (1997) call for a lifelong, coherent provision of high-quality career guidance to motivate individuals to engage in continuous learning and to ensure that organizations are equipped with the flexible workforces that they will need to thrive in the new economy. A recent report on the Canadian Guidelines and Standards for Career Development points out that Canadians, too, are increasingly seeking career development support from a wide variety of service providers (Human Resources, 1998).

It is important to note, however, that as counsellors move into the mainstream of business they will find themselves serving two client groups, employees and their employers. The working alliance literature offers some insights on how to gracefully make this shift: it is critically important to respect the client's perspective, collaborate, and offer sufficient structure that the counsellor is perceived as expert, attractive, and trustworthy (Stoltz-Loike, 1996).

Respecting the client's perspective implies that there is a shared understanding. Counsellors who have worked primarily with students or the unemployed may, however, have limited understanding of the experience of their corporate clients, whether those clients are individuals or organizations. One way to gain such an understanding is to spend some time in the corporate world, just as we

encourage our clients to job-shadow and take on temporary projects, we could benefit from similar strategies ourselves. Another solution would be to take some business courses, either as electives during counsellor training or for ongoing professional development; conferences and seminars offer further opportunities to mingle with our corporate peers. Such learning experiences will quickly help to identify differing perspectives between counsellors and those employed in the business world.

Counsellors, then, need to understand and respect the needs of both individuals and their employers and offer programs and services that fit the organizations that they hope to serve. This may require significant modifications to methods and materials, agendas, language, and presentation style. Although the common expectation is that the corporate world pays much more than the not-for-profit sector that has employed many counsellors over the years, we need to be aware that most organizations today are working with limited budgets and are expected to do more with less (Sullivan & Harper, 1996). However, corporate workshop participants have typically been exposed to expensive training in the past. Their expectations are high, their time is valuable, and they demand timely, high quality, and innovative presentations and materials. Counsellors also need to monitor the language that they use. I recently received feedback that the description of a workshop about transitions that I was offering to a corporate audience sounded too much like a counsellor talking! Many corporate clients are wary of anything that sounds like therapy, afraid that they might be expected to deal with their emotions in public. Counsellors may also speak in language that focusses more on the needs of the individual than the organization. It is important to learn to present concerns in language that makes a business case, rather than asking for something solely because it is 'good' for the people.

There seem to be numerous ways, however, that counsellors can help organizations today. Herr and Cramer (as cited in Bernes & Magnusson, 1996) identify several: developing programs for plateaued and displaced workers; providing interpersonal skills training, stress management and teambuilding workshops; training interviewers; and assisting with employee recruitment, assessment, and performance evaluation. Other possible fits include dealing with the psychological impact of change; building a resilient workforce; facilitating career exploration, goal setting, action planning, and work search; and training mentors and career coaches. In the next few sections several specific strategies for moving the work of career practitioners into the mainstream of business will be addressed.

Dealing with the psychological impact of change

An obvious niche for counsellors is to help employees express their feelings about their careers and deal with the stress of change (Hall, 1991; Stoltz-Loike, 1996). It is generally agreed that venting is an important step for survivors of corporate restructuring, as long as they are also given the opportunity to develop good coping skills. To this end, the State of Oregon once contracted a series of workshops entitled How to Be a Survivor and Thrive, focussed on uncorking the

negative energy building in the work force. Unfortunately, the facilitator ended up being nicknamed Dr. Feel Bad, but the workshops were successful in clearing the air and freeing up employees to become more productive (Caudron, 1996). Noer (1993) describes a similar intervention to restore healthy relationships at work, beginning with damage control, followed by grieving, then breaking away from co-dependency, and finally, altering organizational systems to accommodate the new employment contract (of self-directed careers and adult-adult relationships) that many contemporary authors describe (Bridges, 1994; Collard et al., 1996; Hakim, 1994). Noer cautions, however, that

> Intervention success seems to be a function of the skill of the facilitator, the stage of the group, the level of trust, the culture of the organization, the emotional authenticity of the group, and a number of other factors, not all of which are yet understood even by trained facilitators (1993, p. 37).

Building a resilient workforce

Another niche for counsellors is to help organizations build a resilient workforce. Employees today need to develop metaskills including adaptability, tolerance of ambiguity and uncertainty (or the ability to embrace surprise), an exploratory attitude, and self-awareness (Blustein, 1997; Hall, 1991). Clearly these are areas in which counsellors have some existing expertise. Employees also need to learn how to benchmark their skills to keep themselves employable (Epperheimer, 1997). Career counsellors can teach workers how to maintain their employability at peak levels by ensuring that their skills have kept up with fast-paced changes in their occupation or industry.

Exploring career options

Traditionally, there are two aspects to career exploration: enhancing self-awareness and gaining a better understanding of the world of work. There is evidence to suggest that both of these offer benefits to employees. Blustein (1997), for example, suggests that career exploration "by making the unknown slightly more known . . . may be able to reduce some of the stress that accompanies change" (p. 272). Nevill (1997) takes a different angle, stating "The more I know about myself and the more I know about my environment . . . the safer and more secure I will be" (p. 290-291). It has also been reported that employees engaged in career exploration are more willing to participate in other developmental activities (Noe, 1996), obviously important in an era of continuous learning.

Although counsellors clearly have much experience in facilitating career exploration, keeping abreast of career planning models and innovations that suit employed workers is crucial. Some of the linear, developmental models based on matching individual traits to suitable career options are not viable in these times of rapid change (Otte & Kahnweiler, 1995). In emerging theories of career development, serendipity is given serious consideration (Krumboltz, 1998; Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1999; Watts, 1996; Williams et al., 1998). Savickas (1993) suggests that career counselling in the new millennium will be a more interpretive and less directive practice, much more similar to personal counselling and

psychotherapy than it has been in the past. Career counsellors, then, might need to build in a combination of one-to-one, self-directed, and group interventions to facilitate a comprehensive career exploration strategy.

Goal setting and action planning

Another oft-used counselling strategy involves setting clear goals and developing action plans to accomplish them. Several authors highlight the importance of these steps in coping with the changes in today's world of work (Blustein, 1997; Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1999; Savickas, 1993; Stoltz-Loike, 1996; Watts, 1996). Orpen (1994) tells us that employees who systematically plan their careers tend to be more successful and feel more positive; goal-setting and action-planning skills, then, can be important additions to an individual's toolkit.

Facilitating effective work search for the new millennium

Another important career management skill for today's workers is the ability to successfully find and secure work within their organizations and externally. Several researchers report on successful work search interventions including structured weekly counselling (Stoltz-Loike, 1996) and lunchtime job clubs (Fuertes, 1998). Such programs, however, need to be flexible enough to fit around organizational needs. Counsellors, therefore, need to be prepared to offer their services in non-traditional times and locations.

Training career coaches and mentors

Many managers and supervisors today are expected to act as mentors and career coaches to their employees (Moses, 1995), yet training for this role is sometimes overlooked (Mason,1991). Bernes and Magnusson (1996), for instance, reported that "(b)oth career planning and career management services were deemed to be more effective when supervisors received training in career counseling" (p. 571), yet they found that only 43% of the organizations participating in their study provided such training. Many managers also experience difficulties communicating with their employees in times of uncertainty (Hall, 1991).

Career counsellors, then, could provide a service to organizations by training and coaching managers in basic counselling, communication, and career management strategies. Marriott International, for example, has trained their managers in a four-step model for career coaching: first, helping employees conduct a comprehensive self-assessment of interests, skills, and values; then offering ongoing feedback; next, helping employees create realistic career goals; and, finally, helping with developing do-able plans (Caudron, 1994). Many career counsellors would be more than competent to offer such training and support.

CONCLUSION

There is good evidence that organizations that hire specialized, highly trained career practitioners are equipped to offer more formal career development services, and that the more formal services are, in fact, rated as more effective

(Bernes & Magnusson, 1996). It was reported in the same study, however, that although the key goals for career development services included enhancing job satisfaction, and employee productivity and motivation, and decreasing turn-over, these goals were not necessarily met by the services provided. The research-ers conclude that "the current acceptance of career development services may be based on their good intentions rather than on their demonstrated impact on organizations and employees" (p. 572).

Therefore, if counsellors hope to move away from their dependence on em-ployment in government-funded programs for the unemployed and enter the corporate mainstream in larger numbers, they will need to be more proactive and accountable, offering cost-effective programs and services that can be demon-strated to contribute significantly to the organization's business goals. Career counsellors are uniquely qualified to support individuals and their employers in the rapidly changing world of work. Possible interventions range from those more traditional to counselling (e.g., dealing with the psychological impact of change), through specific career management strategies (e.g., exploring career options, goal setting, action planning, and facilitating effective work search) to corporate training, as career practitioners assist with introducing managers and supervisors to emerging responsibilities as career coaches and mentors.

Within mainstream business, career management is becoming recognized as one of the most important areas in HR (Baruch & Rosenstein, 1994). With so much to offer, career counsellors wishing to enter this emerging market need only to focus their expertise, fine tune their services to adjust to the corporate culture, and begin to speak in language that mainstream workers and their em-ployers can understand.

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