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The Unemployed Bring More Than Career Needs to Career Counseling

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**THE UNEMPLOYED BRING MORE THAN
CAREER NEEDS TO CAREER COUNSELING**

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An Abstract Presented to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Lindenwood College in
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Abstract

For much of its history career counseling has focused on the career needs of the unemployed (Herr, 1989). Career concerns were more oriented to economic health, to change of an occupation, to the development of pre-vocational skills and the preparation for work. Over the years an ever increasing amount of research has indicated the unemployed suffer many personal needs as a consequence of unemployment (Borgen & Amundsen, 1984; Kasl, Gore, & Cobb, 1975) in addition to career needs. These personal needs are both physical and mental (Banks & Jackson, 1982; O'Brien & Kabanoff, 1979).

In recent years a trend has been developing in professional counseling recognizing the relationship between career patterns and mental health (Crites, 1981). In the past decade a growing literature in economics, industrial psychology, organizational theory, and psychiatry demonstrates the relationship between unemployment and personal needs, both physical and mental (Herr, 1989).

The purpose of this study was to identify career needs as well as personal needs among a group of unemployed persons at an Employment

Assessment Program. A twelve statement survey was used in questioning the sample group of 38 unemployed persons. The survey results indicated a combination of needs among 63 percent of the sample group. The 63 percent or 24 people had at least one personal need in addition to their career needs. Thirty-seven percent or 14 members of the sample group indicated they had no personal counseling needs. One participant had neither career or personal counseling needs.

The results of the survey suggests the data concerning the personal counseling needs of the unemployed is in agreement with the findings of the current literature. Unemployed persons who come to career counseling may have personal counseling needs in addition to career needs.

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DEDICATION

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

For approximately the past fifteen years the American work place has been experiencing change (Lazer, LaBabera, MaLachan, & Smith, 1990). Among the principal causes for such change are high technology and an emerging global economy (Mosca, 1989). The words frequently used to describe the changing work place are corporate restructuring, take-overs, and downsizing.

Downsizing is a word used to soften the hardness and harshness of the reality it signifies. If one's company has been downsized, one generally, has been fired or laid-off from one's job. Losing one's job is an unpleasant experience and for many of the unemployed it may be a devastating ordeal (Steinweg, 1990).

The devastating experience of job-loss has been associated with a wide range of personal problems that are both physical and mental. These consequences of unemployment often may reach beyond the individual unemployed to encompass family members and society as well (Herr, 1989).

In recent years, research literature in industrial psychology, organizational theory, and psychiatry has demonstrated the relationship

between unemployment and personal needs (Herr, 1989). As a consequence of such findings, career counseling's response to the consequences of unemployment is being re-examined (Isaacson & Brown, 1993).

From its beginnings, career counseling has focused exclusively on the career needs of the unemployed (Gysbers & Moore, 1987). Career counseling's response to the consequences of unemployment has been typified by such services as aptitude and skills testing, personality assessments, the offering of career information, and the proper writing of resumes (Herr, 1989).

Recently, this stereotypical concept of career counseling has been recognized as restrictive. The traditional view of the purpose and potential of career counseling appears to be changing (Herr, 1989).

A growing volume of literature suggests the need for career counseling to extend its focus and services to embrace and respond to the personal needs of the unemployed in addition to their career needs (Gysbers & Moore, 1987, Brown & Brooks, 1991). Indeed, such efforts seem to be underway. Spokane (1991) presented specific models of career counseling integrating personal and career concerns. The National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC, 1991) has stated that one must first become a National Certified Counselor as a requirement for recognition as

a certified career counselor. Such a requirement would demand expertise in personal counseling as well as career related needs (Isaacson & Brown, 1993).

This trend in career counseling suggests a more appropriate response to both the personal and career needs of the unemployed (Crites, 1983; Herr, 1989; Spokane, 1991). With predictions for greater demand in career services in the years ahead, the present trend offers hope for a more practical and compassionate response to the personal and career needs of the unemployed.

The purpose of this research is to verify the trend the literature review addresses. The unemployed bring not only career needs to the counseling process but personal needs as well.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Unemployment

Each month, the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics announces the number of unemployed persons in the country. As the current year, 1995 begins, the January announcement stated that 7.2 million Americans were jobless. The method the Bureau of Labor Statistics uses has been disputed for some time (Shifron, Dye, & Shifron, 1983). Those who dispute the method believe the number of unemployed to be considerably higher (Rayman, 1982).

Isaacson and Brown (1993) described what are generally thought to be three types of unemployment:

Frictional unemployment is the temporary joblessness of individuals who are between jobs, are engaged in seasonal work, have quit their jobs and are looking for a better job, or are looking for their first job.

Cyclical unemployment is the situation that arises from changes in the level of business activity during the course of the business cycle, the factory worker on lay off because demand has fallen, for example.

Structural unemployment is the joblessness that occurs when technological change or similar factors eliminate the need for that worker. The worker can no longer sell his skills because there is no demand for them (p. 84).

Labor force is another term that is sometimes used in different ways (Isaacson & Brown, 1993). The labor force embraces all employed civilians and the armed forces within the United States, plus those who are unemployed, but seeking work and available to work. Unemployment statistics are usually quoted as a percentage of this total figure. Individuals not in the labor force include retirees, those engaged in their own housework, students, the long-term ill, and the discouraged worker (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1995). The exclusion of the discouraged worker from the ranks of the unemployed is a point of dispute (Shifron, Dye, & Shifron, 1983; Rayman, 1982).

A discouraged worker is a person without a job who wishes to work but is no longer looking for work because the jobless person believes no job is available (Bowman, 1984). Since the jobless person is not looking for work, that person is no longer counted as unemployed (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1995). Sometimes unemployment figures appear to improve since the discouraged workers who have stopped looking for jobs are dropped from the unemployment statistics even though

they are still unemployed. These individuals become the "hidden unemployed;" there are still 15 million such individuals (Thurow, 1982). If discouraged workers are included with the government estimates, the cited figure of 7.2 million unemployed might jump conservatively to 22 million, or 14 to 15 percent of the possible employable population (Raymond, 1982). When these numbers are considered in conjunction with families, the consequences of unemployment may reach 50 million people or approximately 20 percent of the United States population (Steinweg, 1990). As disheartening and alarming as the above statistics may be, even more disheartening and devastating are the consequences of unemployment that accrue to the job loser, the family, the community, and society as a whole (Herr, 1989; Jones, 1989; Steinweg, 1990).

Consequences of Unemployment

Research has consistently demonstrated that the costs of unemployment are born not only by individual workers, but also by their families and communities (Herr, 1989; Liem, & Rayman, 1982; Steinweg, 1990). The loss of work is a stressful event that has been linked to the onset of both psychiatric and physical illness (Jones, 1989).

Distress about unemployment is associated with a wide range of personal and social problems (Herr, 1989). Levine (1964) has reported

that while there are individual differences in coping with unemployment, the virtually predictable emotional and cognitive consequences include boredom, identity confusion, lowered self-esteem, guilt and shame, anxiety and fear, anger and depression. These reactions are typically accompanied by psychological, cognitive, and behavior outcomes.

As a result of a major study of unemployed persons from a variety of educational, cultural, and work backgrounds in Canada, Borgen and Amundsen (1984) offered the opinion that the experience of unemployment can be likened to an emotional roller coaster. The roller coaster is comparable in its impact and stages to the grief process associated with the loss of a loved one (Kubler-Ross, 1969): denial, anger, beginning depression and acceptance.

These same authors referred to Maslow's model of needs in describing the consequences of unemployment. According to Maslow's model, as needs at the bottom of the hierarchy are satisfied, other needs emerge. Borgen and Amundsen (1984) suggested unemployment is accompanied by a need shift involving tumbling down from need levels attained under previous employment to more primitive need levels that are dominant under unemployment. The psychological reactions under such circumstances are not only those of loss as defined by Kubler-Ross, but also feelings of victimization similar to those experienced by persons who

find themselves in the role of victim as a result of rape, incest, disease, and crime. Such feelings include shock, confusion, helplessness, anxiety, fear, and depression (Janoff-Bulman, & Friese, 1983). Individuals experiencing job loss react to the stress of job loss not only in psychological ways but in physical and behavioral ways as well (Herr, 1989).

Research has well documented the physical manifestations of the stressful reaction to job loss. Such physical reactions to job loss include coronary disease, hypertension, ulcers, headaches, cirrhosis, chemical dependency, and early death (Brenner, 1979; Kasl, Gore, & Cobb, 1975; Warr & Jackson, 1984). Higher illness rates among children of unemployed fathers, and increased incidents of delinquent and criminal behavior likewise are consequences of unemployment (Aiken, Ferman & Sheppard, 1968; Tiffany, Cowan, & Tiffany, 1970). Unemployment is a threat to health and the broad quality of life (Liem & Rayman, 1982), and the consequences of unemployment touch not only the unemployed and his/her family but all parts of the system of which the unemployed is a part (Herr, 1989).

Economists have demonstrated that the state of the economy in North American society over the past 100 years is a useful predictor of rates of hospital admissions for mental illness and suicides (Brenner,

1979). In these studies, job loss was frequently a proxy measure for the state of the economic climate (Herr, 1989). Studies of schizophrenia in relation to the economy have shown a close relationship between illness onset, treatment outcome and changes in employment and the economic situation. Warner (1985) presented evidence that the poorest or lowest socioeconomic classes most negatively affected by labor conditions and unemployment were at greater risk for schizophrenia. The socioeconomic conditions today are greatly influenced by certain factors that are contributing to a changing economy and have the potential of producing high levels of unemployment (Shifron, Dye, & Shifron, 1982).

Contributing Factors to Unemployment

In 1982, Naisbitt published his book, *Megatrends*. Naisbitt, considered a leading authority on America's deeply rooted social, economic, political, and technological movements, detailed the country's shift from industrial production to a provider of services and information. He saw the decade of the 90's as a time of great change and forecast the coming of a global economy. This prediction of the 1980's has become a reality of the 1990's (Lazer, LaBabera, MaLachan, & Smith, 1990).

Global expansion and targets for global specialization are seen as central themes underlying the strategies of the world's most powerful

corporations. Economic forecasters are of the opinion that global expansion will continue to foster frenzied jockeying for world wide strategy positions, as evidenced by the rash of mergers, joint ventures, spin-offs, and corporate take-overs (Laser, et. al., 1990).

Business may be good for corporate America but that does not seem to be the case for American workers. In the past, worker displacement, resulting in structural changes in the economy, remained confined to industrial occupations such as manufacturing (Laser, et. al., 1990). The recent trends toward corporate restructuring, global competition, and downsizing has created a new group of dislocated workers including upper and middle management, and disproportionate unemployment among older workers and reassessment of careers (Imel, 1993).

The aforementioned trend is an on-going experience for the American work force. In a 1991 issue, *Business Week* offered the disheartening news that in the third quarter of 1991, corporate America announced plans to do away with 147,507 positions. The article stated that the downsizing trend is more than a passing phenomenon. In 1991, a look at the dismal employment figures gave rise to the opinion there would be a lot more restructuring in order to make companies strong enough to compete in the world market (Koritz, 1991).

U.S. News & World Report staff spent a week talking with AT&T employees to experience first-hand how downsizing had changed work place behavior. AT&T had cut nearly 120,000 people from its work force in the past seven years and planned to trim an additional 14,000 during the next two years. It has had to realign its work force to compete with regional Bell companies and rivals like Sprint and MCI, as well as a host of foreign players (U.S. News & World Report, 1992).

The survivors of corporate downsizing are like recovering survivors of a lost war . . . grateful to be alive, uncertain what they are living for. Some have found opportunity among the carnage of fallen colleagues, but others have become distressful and fearful, that they may be hit next (U.S. News and World Report, 1993, p. 21).

As America reaches the middle of the last decade of this century, its citizens are becoming more aware of a gloomy statistic. One out of four Americans is now a number of the contingency work force, people hired by companies to cope with unexpected or temporary challenges, part-timers. Such workers typically lead far riskier and more uncertain lives than the permanently employed. They are usually paid less and almost never get benefits. A few analysts of trends predict that by the year 2000,

fully half of all working Americans, 60 million people, will have joined the ranks of part-time workers (Fortune Magazine, 1994).

In recent years technological advances have restructured the ways by which work is done (Mosca, 1989). American workers now live in a society where repetitive industrial tasks are performed by robots and assembly processes are monitored by computers. The application of technology can and will reshape work and life styles because technical advances will eliminate and create jobs (Shertzer, 1985). It has been predicted that positions such as postal clerks, clerical specialist, and secretaries will be replaced by technical devices capable of reading, sorting, taking oral commands, and writing from oral dictation. By the year 2000, it is a possibility that machines could replace more than half the current assembly line workers of the 1980's, keeping in mind that many workers already have been replaced (Mosca, 1989).

The impact of unemployment extends throughout the fabric of American society (Steinweg, 1990). The consequences of unemployment impact the lives of many in a variety of ways that are harmful (Herr, 1989). In terms of human suffering and misery the consequences of unemployment demand a compassionate, informed, and practical response (Pryor & Ward, 1985). If this response is to be forthcoming it, most

probably will come from one of three sources presently assisting the unemployed.

Response to Unemployment

Job placement, out placement programs, and career counseling are three principal and traditional methods of responding to the unemployed (Isaacson & Brown, 1993). A brief review of these traditional methods of responding offers some insight as to the nature of the response, its scope and limitations, and the effectiveness of each in responding to the many and varied needs resulting from job loss.

Job placement agencies may be either public or private, both have many things in common and also some differences. Both have strengths and limitations.

Public agencies are funded by either the federal, state or local government. Every state has a state employment security service (SESA), in some states it is called the Job Service. In other states it is referred to as the Employment Service which is a state operated service that works within the general structure, regulations, and operating procedures established by the United States Employment Service (USES).

Because each SESA is state operated some variation in structure and operating procedures are found from state to state. Overall however,

there are far more similarities than differences, and most SESA'S offer parallel services. The services provided include the following:

a) **Placement:** Applicants are registered, classified, selected, and referred to prospective employers. Orders for workers are received, and applicant qualifications are matched with the employers specifications so that referrals can be made.

b) **Counseling:** Applicants without previous work experience are provided assistance through aptitude tests and counseling so that appropriate classification and referrals can be made.

c) **Collection of Information:** Collection of labor market information, changes and trends in the local employment situation are assessed regularly; pooling this information at the state and federal level increases the service available to those seeking work and provides a current picture of employment across the nation.

d) **Cost:** Services are offered without charge.

The public job placement agencies appear to offer assistance to the unemployed general population with no cost involved. This assistance seems to be restricted to services that are focused on the career needs of the unemployed, and seemingly inattentive to the personal consequences of job loss.

Private agencies offering job placement have many different purposes making it difficult to provide a simple classification system. Some are regular profit seeking businesses, some serve the general public, while others limit their clientele to a particular group. Some work primarily for the job seeker; others serve the employer, and others handle only short-term, temporary jobs (Isaacson & Brown, 1993).

For profit job placement agencies contract with the job seekers to assist them in finding a satisfactory position with the understanding that a fee will be charged to the service if the person accepts the job. Generally most fees constitute at least one month's salary, which would be due in full the moment the individual accepts a position.

Special placement agencies may limit their clientele to a specific occupational or professional group. Some agencies serve only technical occupations, while others may handle only educational positions. Closely related to this type of placement agency is the union hiring hall, which serves only members of the organization, or the professional registry such as nurses who accept private cases. A few placement agencies limit their activity to what are labeled executive searches, or head hunting. These companies are employed by organizations to find a person for a specific position rather than the customary reverse order. The position to be filled

is usually top management. Fees are typically paid by the employing organization for these services (Isaacson & Brown, 1993).

Private agencies offer at least most of the same services as the public agencies. Private agencies seem more restrictive than public agencies in as much as they deal with specific employers/employees. Private agencies by reason of the fees charged for their services eliminate a sizeable portion of the unemployed from the use of their services.

Out placement services are offered by the employer to employees whose jobs have been terminated for one of the variety of reasons such as technological advances, business mergers, downsizing, and other causes. Such services are most often offered to exempt employees (who are salaried and not reimbursed for overtime). Such services may at times, be provided to non-exempt employees (salaried and reimbursed for overtime) and hourly workers. The out placement process is very intense. A counselor may spend over 100 hours with a candidate and the candidate may spend over 300 hours in his out placement activities (Isaacson & Brown, 1993).

Employers may hire an external consulting firm or offer their own internal placement services. External placement firms are expensive, typically charging a fee equal to 15 percent of the employee's salary. Such

external services carry a certain prestige and the employees feel a sincere effort is being made in their behalf.

Some companies offer an alternative to internal and external out placement assistance by offering what they call assistance for displaced workers. This assistance takes the form of paid time off for conducting job searches, relocation opportunities with other units of the company, job fairs, and liaisons with public agencies such as SESA.

Out placement services offering job placement opportunities is, generally, a very costly and very intense process. Usually, a great amount of time and energy is demanded of the unemployed person in completing the tasks required by the out placement agency. The services offered by the agency are, normally, quite costly (Isaacson & Brown, 1993). Possibly, such tasks and expenditures could lessen the number of unemployed to whom such services would be available.

Career Counseling

Picchioni & Bonk (1988) believe career counseling may have had its origin during colonial times. During that early period in our history, workers were trained in an institution for the specific purpose of studying occupations and the requirements for performing them.

In 1909, Frank Parsons published *Choosing a Vocation*, in which he presented a career counseling model to develop self-awareness, to provide information about vocations, and have individuals choose a career using true logic. His model became the trait and factor approach to career development (Isaacson & Brown, 1993).

Since the conclusion of World War II in 1945, there has been a proliferation of theories and an ever increasing number of tests and measurements related to the field of career counseling. There are personality theories (Holland & Nichols, 1964; Roe & Siegelman, M., 1964), development theories (Ginesberg, Ginesberg, Axelrad, & Herma, 1951; Super, 1990), social learning theories (Krumboltz, Mitchell, & Jones, 1976), economic and social theories (Hotchkiss & Borrow, 1990; Warnath, 1975), theories of decision making (Jepsen & Dilley, 1974; Mitchell, 1975), and various theories for specific groups, such as women (Rand & Miller, 1972), and ethnic groups (Osipow, 1975; Smith, 1975).

From its very beginnings, career counseling has been significantly oriented to economic health, to choice of an occupation, to the development of pre-vocational skills, and the preparation for work (Herr, 1989). Until recently, some observers have argued that problems individuals experience can be classified into those for which personal counseling is appropriate and those for which career counseling is

appropriate (Herr, 1989). Such traditional and restrictive views of the purpose and potential of career counseling are slowly changing in the face of growing evidence that career development and human development are connected (Crites, 1981).

Recent authors (Brown & Brooks, 1991; Gysbers & Moore, 1987; Spokane, 1991) have emphasized the interrelations of mental health problems and career problems. These authors suggest that the stereotypical concept of career counselors who provide simplistic career counseling services is becoming less influential. Crites (1981) is among the increasing number of observers who have questioned the narrow goals of career counseling. Crites stated "vocational and personal problems are different, but do interact career counseling often embraces personal counseling" (p. 11).

Gysbers & Moore (1987) are of the opinion that career counseling involves such activities as identifying and eliminating irrational beliefs that may preclude career planning or the establishment of career plans. Brown & Brooks (1991) define career counseling as a process aimed at facilitating career development that involves choosing, entering, adjusting to, and advancing in career. They also suggest that career development occurs over the life span and interacts with the development of other life roles. Isaacson & Brown (1993) predicted that career counseling will be

increasingly recognized as a counseling specialty that requires expertise in personal counseling as well as career related assessment and intervention specialties.

The demand for career counseling is increasing and will continue to do so. The need for well trained career counselors is vital for the profession and the people who have need of career counseling services. Isaacson & Brown (1993) noted the demand for career counselors has led to the entrance of some poorly trained professionals into practice. During this time of transition Isaacson & Brown (1993) stated "caveat emptor is the watchword" (p. 397).

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Subjects

In order to demonstrate that the unemployed have personal needs as well as career needs resulting from job loss, the assistance of a local government employment assistance program was sought. This government EAP was very cooperative and readily agreed to provide the opportunity to administer the survey instrument to a sample group of unemployed persons.

The subjects represented a convenience sample and consisted of 38 unemployed people. The sample was comprised of 21 men and 17 women. The mean age of the sample was 41. The median tendency was 41.5 and the modes were 45-48-50. The ages ranged from 21 - 60. The length of unemployment of the sample group had a mean of 9.47 months, a median of 4.5 months; and a mode of one month. The range of unemployment was one month to sixty months.

Materials

Subjects were given a cover letter that briefly explained the purpose of the survey and requested their participation. Appendix A is a sample of the survey and directions for answering and completing the survey.

Instrumentation

The survey consisted of twelve statements regarding the needs of the unemployed. Five of the statements (1, 3, 6, 7, and 11) attempted to identify the career needs of the unemployed. Seven statements (2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12) addressed the personal needs of the unemployed. A Likert scale was constructed with the choices being strongly agree, mildly agree, mildly disagree, strongly disagree, and not applicable. The time frame for participating in the survey was five to ten minutes.

Procedure

The survey instrument was distributed over a two day period to 40 unemployed persons. Participation in the survey was voluntary. The survey was distributed both days as the participants entered the facility to begin the day's program. At the conclusion of the first session of the day, the surveys were collected. At the conclusion of the second day, 40 surveys were collected. Two of the surveys were rejected because the responses were not complete.

CHAPTER 4

Results

The results of the data gathered from the 38 participants in the sample group are presented through descriptive analysis. Two tabulations are given in the analysis of each of the twelve statements. The first tabulation is a numerical analysis of how many individuals in the sample group chose a particular response to the given statement. The second tabulation is given by percentage with the percentage of the entire sample group represented in the number of individuals choosing a particular response to the given statement.

Descriptive Analysis

1. I need help in obtaining more information about available jobs.

Figure 1

Choice	Number	Percentage
1. Strongly agree	28	74%
2. Mildly agree	7	18%
3. Mildly disagree	1	3%
4. Strongly disagree	2	5%
5. Not applicable	0	0%
TOTALS	38	100%

2. I need help in understanding how I feel about losing my job.

Figure 2

Choice	Number	Percentage
1. Strongly agree	2	5%
2. Mildly agree	10	26%
3. Mildly disagree	7	19%
4. Strongly disagree	10	26%
5. Not applicable	9	24%
TOTALS	38	100%

3. I need help in writing a resume.

Figure 3

Choice	Number	Percentage
1. Strongly agree	5	13%
2. Mildly agree	15	39%
3. Mildly disagree	7	19%
4. Strongly disagree	6	16%
5. Not applicable	5	13%
TOTALS	38	100%

4. I need help in finding a purpose in life.

Figure 4

Choice	Number	Percentage
1. Strongly agree	10	26%
2. Mildly agree	6	16%
3. Mildly disagree	4	11%
4. Strongly disagree	6	16%
5. Not applicable	12	31%
TOTALS	38	100%

5. I need help in feeling better about myself.

Figure 5

Choice	Number	Percentage
1. Strongly agree	11	29%
2. Mildly agree	9	24%
3. Mildly disagree	4	10%
4. Strongly disagree	6	16%
5. Not applicable	8	21%
TOTALS	38	100%

6. I need help in knowing how to find a job.

Figure 6

Choice	Number	Percentage
1. Strongly agree	18	47%
2. Mildly agree	11	29%
3. Mildly disagree	6	16%
4. Strongly disagree	0	0%
5. Not applicable	3	8%
TOTALS	38	100%

7. I need help in knowing what my skills are.

Figure 7

Choice	Number	Percentage
1. Strongly agree	15	40%
2. Mildly agree	10	26%
3. Mildly disagree	8	21%
4. Strongly disagree	2	5%
5. Not applicable	3	8%
TOTALS	38	100%

8. I need help with family problems.

Figure 8

Choice	Number	Percentage
1. Strongly agree	6	16%
2. Mildly agree	4	11%
3. Mildly disagree	4	11%
4. Strongly disagree	11	29%
5. Not applicable	13	33%
TOTALS	38	100%

9. I need help in dealing with stress.

Figure 9

Choice	Number	Percentage
1. Strongly agree	12	32%
2. Mildly agree	5	13%
3. Mildly disagree	5	13%
4. Strongly disagree	8	21%
5. Not applicable	8	21%
TOTALS	38	100%

10. I need help to stop worrying what others think of me.

Figure 10

Choice	Number	Percentage
1. Strongly agree	6	16%
2. Mildly agree	6	16%
3. Mildly disagree	7	18%
4. Strongly disagree	8	21%
5. Not applicable	11	29%
TOTALS	38	100%

11. I need help in learning how to interview for a job.

Figure 11

Choice	Number	Percentage
1. Strongly agree	15	40%
2. Mildly agree	13	35%
3. Mildly disagree	7	18%
4. Strongly disagree	0	0%
5. Not applicable	3	7%
TOTALS	38	100%

12. I need help in saying how I feel about my job loss.

Figure 12

Choice	Number	Percentage
1. Strongly agree	5	13%
2. Mildly agree	0	0%
3. Mildly disagree	9	24%
4. Strongly disagree	14	37%
5. Not applicable	10	26%
TOTALS	38	100%

Combining the number of responses of agreement (strongly and mildly agree) and combining the number of negative responses (mildly and strongly disagree) the data reflected the following results regarding career needs and personal needs among the sampling group.

The statements concerning career needs are reflected in questions 1, 3, 6, 7, and 11.

Figure 13

State- ment	Agree		Disagree		Not Applic- able		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1	35	92%	3	8%	0	0%	38	100%
3	20	53%	13	34%	5	13%	38	100%
6	29	76%	6	16%	3	18%	38	100%
7	25	66%	10	26%	3	18%	38	100%
11	28	74%	7	18%	3	18%	38	100%

The statements concerning personal needs are reflected in questions 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12.

Figure 14

Statement	Agree		Disagree		Not Applicable		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2	12	32%	17	45%	9	23%	38	100%
4	16	42%	10	26%	12	32%	38	100%
5	20	53%	10	26%	8	21%	38	100%
8	10	26%	15	40%	13	34%	38	100%
9	17	45%	13	34%	8	21%	38	100%
10	12	32%	15	40%	11	28%	38	100%
12	5	13%	23	61%	10	26%	38	100%

Ranking of statements with percentage of agreement regarding needs of the unemployed.

Figure 15

Statement	Rank	%
1. Help in obtaining more information about available jobs	1	92%
6. Help in knowing how to find a job	2	76%
11. Help in learning how to interview for a job	3	74%
7. Help in knowing what my skills are	4	66%
3. Help in learning to write a resume	5	53%
5. Help to feel better about myself	5	53%
9. Help in dealing with stress	6	45%
4. Help in finding a purpose in life	7	42%
10. Help to stop worrying about what others think of me	8	32%
2. Help me understanding how I feel about losing my job	8	32%
8. Help with family problems	9	26%
12. Help in saying how I feel about my job loss	10	13%

Descriptive and Statistical Analysis

There were 40 surveys distributed and 40 surveys were returned. Of these 40 surveys, two were considered invalid. Therefore, 38 of the 40 surveys, or 95% of the surveys were usable surveys.

The twelve statement survey consisted of five statements which referred to career needs and seven statements referred to personal needs. Four of the career statements scored higher than any personal need statement. The lowest score of 53 percent for a career need was matched by a 53 percent score, the highest ranking personal need.

There were 14 members of the sample group of 38, or 37 percent, who indicated they had no personal needs resulting from unemployment. Three of these 14 were women and the remaining 11 were men.

One respondent, a male, indicated his needs embraced all seven personal need statements. Three persons, one male and two females listed one personal need. One man and one woman stated they had two of the personal needs. Six respondents, three men and 3 women, indicated three personal needs each. Five personal needs were acknowledged by two men and two women. Three persons, one man and two women, listed six personal needs. Fifty-two percent of the men indicated some need for

personal counseling and 82 percent of the women acknowledged a similar need.

Career Needs Statements

The five career needs addressed in the survey each received over fifty percent of agreement from the sample group. The statements addressing career needs were numbers 1, 3, 6, 7, and 10.

Statement 1, addressed the need of more information about job availability. It received 92 percent of agreement and only 8 percent disagreement. No one thought the content of the statement was not applicable.

Statement 3 dealt with the need for help in writing a resume. Among the career statements, this received the lowest percentage of the five. Fifty-three percent represented the 20 people who expressed agreement; 34 percent or 13 persons did not agree with this particular need, and 13 percent or 5 members of the sample group considered it not applicable.

Statement 6 inquired about the need for help in knowing how to find a job. This statement received the second highest positive response with 29 people or 76 percent agreeing with the need to be helped in this

manner. Six persons, 13 percent did not agree with this particular need, and 18 percent or 3 members of the group found it not applicable.

Statement 7 referred to the need for help in knowing what one's skills were. Sixty-six percent or 25 persons agreed with this need while 10 people or 26 percent disagreed, and 3 people or 18 percent found this need did not apply in this situation.

The final statement in this group of career needs is statement 11. It addressed the need for help in how to do an interview for a job. Seventy-four percent, or 28 members of the group agreed to this need. Seven members, or 18 percent disagreed, and 3 people or 18 percent found this need did not apply.

Personal Need Statements

The seven personal need statements in the survey are numbers 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12. The highest ranking personal need was statement number 5 with 53 percent or 20 participants identifying this need for help in feeling better about oneself. The lowest ranking statement pertaining to personal needs was number 12, which received 13 percent or 5 persons who recognized the need for help in saying how they felt about their job loss. There were 14 people in the sample group who indicated they had no personal needs resulting from job loss. This is 37 percent of the

sample group. On the affirmative side, 63 percent of the sample group recognized one or more personal needs as a result of job loss.

Statement 2 addressed the personal need for help in understanding how one feels about losing one's job. Thirty-two percent, or 12 persons, saw this as a personal need. Forty-five percent or 17 persons expressed a negative opinion for this need. Nine persons, or 23 percent of the sample group believed the statement was not applicable to themselves.

Statement 4 presented the need for help in finding a purpose in life. Forty-two percent, or 16 persons, were in agreement while 26 percent, or 10 persons, disagreed. Thirty-two percent, or 12 members of the sample, felt the statement was not applicable.

Statement 5, the highest ranked among the personal needs, presented the need for help in feeling better about oneself. Fifty-three percent or 20 people endorsed this need. Ten persons, 26 percent, were in non-agreement. Twenty-one percent, or 8 members of the group, considered the statement not applicable to their situation.

Statement 8 expressed the personal need for help with family problems. This statement received the second lowest ranking of all twelve statements. Twenty-six percent, or 10 persons, agreed with this need while 15 members of the group, 40 percent, disagreed. Thirteen members of the group, 34 percent, felt the statement was not applicable.

Statement 9 received the second highest ranking among the personal needs, the need of dealing with stress. Seventeen people, 45 percent, agreed this was a need. Thirty-four percent, or 13 people, disagreed with the statement. Eight individuals, 21 percent, thought the statement to be not applicable.

Statement 10 inquired about the need for help to stop worrying about what others think of one who has lost a job. Almost one third of the respondents agreed with this. Twelve persons, 32 percent, agreed. Fifteen persons, 40 percent disagreed, and 11 persons, 28 percent, felt the statement was not applicable.

Statement 12 received the least recognition of all the statements on the survey. The statement presented the need for help in saying how one feels about losing one's job. Five persons, 13 percent, agreed. Sixty-one percent, 23 persons disagreed. Ten persons, 26 percent, felt the statement was not applicable.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

Analysis

While the analysis of the data indicated that 14 individuals (37 percent) had no personal needs, 24 individuals (63 percent) indicated at least one personal need and 18 individuals indicated three or more personal needs as a consequence of unemployment. Although the data seems to reflect the current literature which acknowledges that the unemployed have personal needs as well as career needs, there are some limitations in this research effort.

Limitations

The sample group was relatively small, consisting of 40 individuals who returned 38 valid responses. Even though this small group in its responses seemed to reflect the current literature regarding personal needs of the unemployed (Herr, 1989; Borgen & Amundsen, 1984), additional research in this matter can only help to lessen any continuing dispute about the appropriateness of career counseling addressing the personal needs of the unemployed. Eliciting and understanding the needs of the client is basic to the process of counseling. Perhaps the more one asks, the more

one we will understand, and be better prepared to respond to the needs the client brings to counseling.

The instrument consisted of twelve statements. The statements were very briefly expressed in a simple sentence. Five minutes may have been the maximum time needed to answer the twelve statements. The simplicity of the survey statements was intentional. However, in choosing simplicity and brevity, the possibility of identifying more specific needs was sacrificed. In developing another instrument in the future, perhaps more specificity would promote a more accurate reflection of needs. Future studies are needed utilizing reliable, valid instruments with greater numbers of subjects.

Professional Counseling

In light of the subjects expressed need for assistance with both personal and career issues the "caveat emptor" of Isaacson & Brown (1993), seems particularly noteworthy. However, the very fact that the criticism of career counseling comes from a number of professionals in the field of counseling may be viewed as a positive sign that the profession is unafraid of self analysis or self criticism. Needs have been recognized; a better way to address these needs is being developed.

Cost Factor

Another issue which resulted from the literature review and the collected data was the cost of career counseling and the number of people who express both career and personal needs. The only agencies offering "no cost" assistance to the unemployed are government funded agencies. Private job placement agencies and out placement agencies, both internal and external seem relatively costly. The cost in these latter instances are to the employer or the unemployed person. Indeed cost factor would seem to be prohibitive for the lower strata of unemployed. If such is the case, a percentage of the 7.2 million people unemployed this year would not have career counseling services available to them.

Perhaps the trend to meet the personal needs of the unemployed might extend to the cost factor for career counseling. Prior and Ward (1985) spoke of a compassionate, informed, and practical response to the human suffering and misery that follows unemployment. One way of responding in a compassionate and practical manner might be for the counseling profession to find some way to provide their services at a minimal cost to the less affluent.

Educating in the Future

Just as the career counselor must be prepared to address the present and future needs of the unemployed, so too, must the employee be better prepared to meet the challenges of a changing world. One of the important aspects of an employee's preparation might be in the way the employee understands the meaning of a "career".

The likelihood of today's employee remaining with the same company for 40 years is remote (Mosca, 1989). As Isaacson & Brown (1993) suggested, the meaning of a career may need to be understood, not as a permanent, life-long position with one company, but rather the totality of work one does in one's life time. This would include education designed for work preparation as well as participation in work itself. Workers in today's job market and in the future need to be flexible to change, open to continuing education and accept personal responsibility for their employability (Mosca, 1989).

These are new ideas, new approaches to the world of work. It is a different way of thinking for today's worker. Such a change in thinking about the world of work may be a positive step in reducing the career and personal needs of a worker, who, in the future may not have a job.

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APPENDIX A

Introductory Letter

My name is Jerry Curtin. I have almost completed my classes for a Masters degree in Professional Counseling. I am very interested in the needs of people who have lost their jobs. It would be of great help to me if you would give your response to the statements on the following page. I thank you for helping me. I hope what I am doing may be of help to those who are unemployed.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Please give the following information:

Age _____ Sex _____ Length of Unemployment _____

Read the statements listed below. Circle the number which best describes your own personal experience. If you strongly agree with the statement, circle #1. If you mildly agree with the statement, circle #2. If you mildly disagree with the statement, circle #3. If you strongly disagree with the statement, circle #4. If the statement does not apply to you, circle NA.

Since losing my job I need:

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----|-----|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NA | 1. | help in obtaining more information about available jobs. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NA | 2. | help in understanding how I feel about losing my job. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NA | 3. | help in learning to write a resume. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NA | 4. | help in finding a purpose in life. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NA | 5. | help to feel better about myself. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NA | 6. | help in knowing how to find a job. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NA | 7. | help in knowing what my skills are. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NA | 8. | help with family problems. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NA | 9. | help in dealing with stress. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NA | 10. | help to stop worrying about what others think of me. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NA | 11. | help in learning how to interview for a job. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NA | 12. | help in saying how I feel about my job loss. |