

Guest Editor's Comments

Employment counselling has been practiced in Canada for many years. Most employment counselling assistance is provided by employment counsellors working in Canada Employment Centres across the country. Clients they serve are largely adults who have been away from formal education for an extended period of time.

While the literature is replete with articles on counselling and psychology, little research has focused specifically on employment counselling and on the clients who require and would benefit from employment counselling.

In recent years, the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, given its mandate to provide employment counselling assistance to the public, has increased its leadership in this area. The articles selected for this special issue demonstrate some of the employment counselling initiatives currently underway in Canada.

Philip J. Patsula and James E. Boyle are developing a training program on the assessment component of employment counselling. Their article describes this component as the first step in the employment counselling process. They indicate that the process of assisting clients to move from articulating their employment concerns in constraint terms to articulating them in contingency terms is crucial and affects their progress towards resolution of employment difficulties.

William A. Borgen and Norman E. Amundson are developing a training program to assist employment counsellors to conduct effective group employment counselling sessions. Their article describes the application of a problem-solving group approach to employment issues. This 7-step approach has been designed for specific application within an employment counselling setting.

The information provided in these first two articles represents, of course, only a small portion of the work currently being undertaken in these areas. Both of the aforementioned initiatives have been facilitated by the success of the *Test Certification Program* which was developed and implemented within the CEIC in the last three years and which is described in the article by M.L. Bezanson, G. Busque, P. Jean, and A.J. Monsebraaten. This program was the first attempt by the CEIC to implement a competency-based training program and its success is evidenced in the fact that over 1,000 employment counsellors are now certified in testing.

W. Robin Andrews evaluated many recorded test interpretation interviews submitted by counsellors as part of the test certification requirement. He has contributed, in collaboration with C. Fred

Johnston, an article addressing technical and ethical considerations in taping client interviews and providing practical advice to counsellors on how to avoid difficulties in taping and benefit professionally from the learning opportunities provided through recorded interviews.

J.A. Gordon Booth and Monique Laurin-Dumas conducted research on the client case studies submitted by employment counsellors along with their recorded test interpretation interviews. Their research shows that although correlations between tested aptitudes and self-estimated aptitudes are significant, CEC clients tend to underestimate their aptitudes. They also demonstrate the relevance of the self-estimate strategy for adult CEC clients.

The remaining articles focus specifically on the types of clients most likely to benefit from employment counselling. Edward G. Knasel describes a 7-dimensional model and specifications for an instrument to measure the career adaptability of young blue-collar workers. This research holds promise for the development of a Canadian instrument to be applied within the employment counselling setting.

M. Catherine Casserly has contributed a review of the literature researched in order to develop a Canadian inventory of work-related values. Her research suggests that while Canadian workers have many work-related values in common with workers in other industrialized countries, they place a certain priority on the particular values of ability development, cultural identity, risk-taking and the opportunity for impact.

Many other promising initiatives are underway in employment counselling. Employment counselling tools to facilitate the work of employment counsellors are constantly being developed and improved. A system for evaluating the effectiveness of employment counselling is being researched. Individual counselling techniques adapted to employment counselling are being developed. Regular readers of the *Canadian Counsellor* can look forward to reading of these developments in future editions.

I hope readers of this special edition on employment counselling will find the articles informative and thoughtful. I would like to thank the authors who submitted articles for publication, the members of the editorial committee, and in particular my assistant, Line Champagne who worked many hours to produce a completely bilingual edition of the *Canadian Counsellor*.

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