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WHAT ARE COUNSELOR AND CLIENT PERSPECTIVES
ON THE PREFERRED TIME FRAMES FOR THE
USE OF ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS IN
CAREER COUNSELING OF ADULTS
IN CAREER TRANSITION?

by
Ronald L. Sutton

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Masters of Arts Degree in the School Psychology
Program of Rowan University
April 29, 1997

Approved by _____
Professor

Date Approved 5-6-97

ABSTRACT

Ronald L. Sutton

What are counselor and client perspectives on the preferred time frames for the use of Career Assessment Instruments in counseling of adults in Career Transition?

1997

Dr. Dihoff, School Psychology Program

The purpose of this study was to examine the correlation between the timing of assessment instrument usage and the perceived value of assessment instruments for adult clients in career transition counseling settings. Comparisons of career counselor and adult client perspectives on assessment instrument usefulness were also studied. A mailed self-administered questionnaire was developed to collect data. Fifteen counselors and 47 clients, associated with the downsizing of a electric utility company's regional office in southern New Jersey, responded and formed the basis of all data analysis. An independent *t* Test for unequal groups was used to compare counselor and client ratings of assessment instrument usefulness. Results showed significantly higher ratings by the counselors as compared to the client ratings. A dependent *t* Test was used to compare client ratings of assessment instruments used during the initial stage of counseling to client ratings of instruments used later in the counseling process. Results showed significantly higher client ratings for assessment instruments used in the later stages of counseling. These results lend support to career transition theories and research on "job loss trauma" and other factors that may inhibit adults during the initial stage of career transition.

MINI-ABSTRACT

Ronald L. Sutton

What are counselor and client perspectives on the preferred time frames for the use of Career Assessment Instruments in counseling of adults in Career Transition?

1997

Dr. Dihoff, School Psychology Program

This study was conducted to better understand the dynamics of assessment instrument use for adults going through career transition counseling. Results showed that counselors rated assessment instrument usefulness significantly higher than clients. Also, client ratings of assessment instruments used during the initial stage of career counseling were significantly lower than client ratings of instruments used at later stages of counseling. These results lend support to previous "job loss trauma" research.

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Chapter 1: The Problem

Need

Based on the variety of assessment instruments available, the various methods and preferences of counselors and the many different client needs and perspectives, this study is being conducted to better understand the dynamics of assessment instrument use for adults going through career transition.

In career counseling assessment instruments are used at any one of three stages in the counseling process: upon intake, during the first two to four sessions to provide input for the remainder of counseling, or at later counseling sessions to provide additional confirming, complementary or conflicting information to explore further. Counselors select and use assessment instruments based on their training, experience, theoretical background and the counseling methods they feel most comfortable with and feel serve their clients well. Adult clients in career transition may offer a more complex set of issues than the career counseling theories and training were originally based upon. These complexities could include: job loss trauma, serious ongoing financial obligations, concerns surrounding the reasons for or justification of job loss, and anxiety over the need to initiate a job search after several years of stable and secure employment.

One way to explore this potentiality further is to conduct two collateral surveys of counselors and adult clients who have completed career transition counseling to compile

data on the timing and use of assessment instruments compared to the surveyed populations' perspectives on the value of instruments used.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to survey both career counselor and adult client populations on their experience and opinions regarding the value of assessment instruments in career transition counseling settings and the timing on the use of the instruments. This study examines the correlation between the timing of assessment instrument usage and perceived value of the instrument. Comparisons of counselor and client perspectives are also studied.

Hypothesis

Counselors tend to build up a comfort zone and a level of appreciation for certain specific assessment instruments based on past experience. They then use these familiar instruments in nearly all settings at prescribed times; largely ignoring other instruments, different timing or no test options that may better suit certain clients. While counselors should evaluate the timing and appropriateness of instruments prior to assigning them to clients, assessment instrument completion is often a required part of the initial intake process or is a standard feature of the first few counseling sessions.

It is hypothesized that adult clients in career transition will have perspectives on assessment instrument usefulness that will cover a much broader range than that of counselors, including clients who found little or no value in assessment results.

Where clients perceive little or no value in assessment instruments, they may have personality traits better suited for other counseling interventions or personality states, such as job loss stress or anxiety, which may inhibit assessment instrument effectiveness at the time the assessment instruments were undertaken. With the assumption that temporary personality states will tend to be most severe during the earliest phase of counseling, it is further hypothesized that client perspectives on the value of assessment instruments will improve as the instruments are administered beyond the initial intake time period.

This study is being conducted by surveying both career counselors and adults that have gone through career transition with counseling support. Independent variables in the study include the counselors and clients surveyed, the time frame categories selected to report assessment instrument timing and the rating scale selected to report the perceived value of the instruments. Dependent variables are the actual ratings and instrument timing reported by the surveyed populations.

Theory

The issue of careers first started to attract serious attention from psychologists, sociologists, and counselors at the turn of the twentieth century, when focus was on the study of vocational interests and development. This coincided with the Industrial Revolution and the mass migration from farming to cities for work. Parson's (1909) was the first to document the efforts of social reformers who counseled adolescents concerning their career choices. Much of this effort through to the 1950's was devoted to the measurement of interests and the analysis of career patterns (Spokane, 1991). Research during this period focused on empirical studies of career development theory rather than on counseling process or outcome.

Since the late 1950's the number of counselors and counseling psychologists increased with many defining career counseling as their principal role. According to Spokane (1991) "the sheer weight of career clients forced a shift in literature on careers away from career development theory and toward more practical career counseling and interventions".

Several career counseling theories have evolved over the last forty years. Starting with the trait-factor and person-environment fit counseling theories (Walsh & Osipow, 1990); person-centered career counseling, psychodynamic career counseling, developmental career counseling, the social learning theory of career decision making and social psychological career counseling theories have all evolved as major contributors to the field.

Regardless of a counselor's training or theoretical basis, there is a concept that all theories share which promotes the use of tests or assessment instruments in career counseling. This is the concept or sense of fit, often called congruence, and sometimes referred to as job fit or person fit. Super (1957) describes it as the implementation of the self-concept in a compatible job. According to Super, "holding and adjusting to a job is... a process of finding out whether that job permits...[the worker] to play the kind of role he wants to play" (page 191). This sense of fit is the central tenet in Holland's (1985) theory of career choice and, according to Spokane (1991), is a strong element in all other theories.

With the concept of congruence playing such a central role, the evaluation or assessment of a client's interests, skills, and abilities plays a major role in career counseling. For this reason the use of tests and assessment instruments are common place in career counseling. In varying career counseling settings, Spokane (1991) identifies three positions or time frames where testing is commonly introduced. The first approach, which he prefers, occurs in the mid stages of counseling after clients have clarified their interests and goals, and while final options for exploration are being generated. According to Spokane:

"When used at this juncture, tests confirm or narrow the options being considered. The tests are preceded by non test explorations to clarify the problem facing the client and the general parameters of the client's decisional process." (page 144)

Spokane goes on to indicate that too often testing is done at the beginning of counseling as part of the initial intake process or in conjunction with the first counseling session. He states: "Unfortunately, the early use of highly specific inventories may be more common than desirable". Early intensive testing battery administration may prematurely limit the self-exploration of career interests and options; and may reinforce the clients' belief that testing is the most important or meaningful part of career counseling.

In the third testing position, which is after counseling has started but still early in the process, Spokane endorses the use of tests that are self-guiding or convey large amounts of instructional content. Examples would include Holland's Self Directed Search and Schein's Career Anchors. Spokane believes these instruments promote client reflection, enhance self-knowledge, and provide an exploratory experience without narrowing the client's perspective.

The basis of this study supports these views on the proper timing and use of assessment instruments. Adults going through career transition are likely to benefit most from counseling experiences that permit them to identify the problem(s) and begin to explore career options prior to extensive use of assessment instruments.

Definitions

The term **career transition** refers to the indefinite period of time immediately following the loss of employment for many adults due to an employer initiated layoff, downsizing, reorganization or plant closure. These mid-career terminations typically catch employees off-guard or somewhat unprepared causing significant emotional reactions. Such terminations are not associated with poor performance, resignations, or terminations for cause. The **career transition** period starts with the notification of job loss and may include either immediate loss of employment or a period of a few weeks or months on payroll in order for the employee to seek out other potential positions within the current company. The transition period ends upon obtaining new employment.

Immediately upon notification of job loss many larger employers provide career counseling services for effected employees through outplacement companies; or employees may seek out private or community based career counseling to assist them in their job search. **Career counselors** are the individuals providing these services to the adults in career transition.

The term **career assessment instrument** refers to any career oriented psychological, skill, interest, aptitude or personal style survey, questionnaire, measurement, or "test" that provides interpretative feedback to the counselor and adult client during counseling or career group workshop sessions. **Clients** are the adults in the career transition period.

Assumptions

It is assumed since this is an anonymous self-administered questionnaire, dishonesty or carelessness will have no significant impact on the responses. The questionnaire has been designed to preclude this type of confounding data. Of the individuals mailed questionnaires, it is assumed that those who do not respond either do not have data to contribute or, if provided, would not significantly impact the results obtained.

Although a rigorous reliability and validity evaluation of the questionnaire has not been established as part of this study, the questionnaire was designed to contain content validity. The three time periods (within the first two weeks of counseling, after 2 weeks and before 5 weeks, and at or beyond 5 weeks) used on the questionnaire to identify when assessment instruments were administered, are consistent with the three stage career transition counseling models identified in the research (Healy, 1990; Ladd, 1993; Kirk, 1994; McDaniels, 1989; Rak & O'Dell, 1994; Spokane, 1991). Assessment instruments listed on the questionnaire are based on available research regarding assessment instruments prevalent in career counseling. In the development of the questionnaire, instructions and cover letter, the nine volume Survey Kit (Fink, 1995) was thoroughly referenced to design an appropriate survey tool. A five item Likert scale was used on the questionnaire to gather data on the perceived usefulness or value of assessment instruments. The questionnaire, instructions and cover letter were also reviewed with senior department advisors consulting on thesis studies prior to mailing to surveyed

populations. Based on the homogeneity, or internal consistency, of all surveyed items, the reliability of the questionnaire is assumed to be adequate for the purposes of this study.

An undetermined but significant number of the career transitioned clients in this study went through two transition periods with separate and different counselor assistance. The first period being an internal, within the company, period of a few weeks to a maximum of 90 days still on the payroll to permit the client to seek other potential employment with the current employer. Where other employment was not available or where the person decided not to accept or pursue the available jobs the second transition period began with the termination of employment. Counseling during this second period of transition was provided by an outplacement company for up to six months. With the two separate and distinct career transition periods, clients were instructed to report the timing of assessment instruments based on the time period they worked with the counselors assigned.

Another assumption in this study has to do with the immediate availability of counseling at the start of the career transition period. This is the typical practice of most counseling services and outplacement firms that contract with companies downsizing. The subjects (counselors and clients) in this study followed this practice. However, where significant delays occur between job loss and the beginning of counseling, the findings on the use and timing of assessment instruments in this study may not apply in such conditions.

Limitations

The limited number of career transitioned adults and counselors surveyed for this study represent the total population impacted by a downsizing reorganization at a large electric utility's nuclear generating headquarters (2200 employees) located in southern New Jersey. This population was selected based upon the availability of names and addresses to the researcher through employment with the utility. While this is a convenience sample vulnerable to selection bias due to non probability sampling, it does provide a moderately large study group in an area not previously well researched.

Another limitation of this study is the career counselor sample (15 individuals) surveyed is not of sufficient size to evaluate additional elements such as counselor identified time periods for using assessment instruments.

Overview

Pertinent literature is reviewed in chapter 2. Thereafter the design of the study will be presented, followed by the analysis of the results and a summary of the study. The study will be conducted by using self-administered questionnaires to collect counselor and client data.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Introduction

Soon after the turn of the twentieth century career counseling got its' start with the need to advise adolescents on career choices. Several historical summaries (Spokane, 1991; Walsh & Osipow, 1990; McReynolds, 1986) identify Parsons (1909) as the first to document these efforts by social reformers, psychologists and sociologists. Farming was no longer the only major employment source in the economy. With the Industrial Revolution cities grew in economic power and the migration of the work force into numerous new occupational fields resulted. The transition from school-to-work has been the primary focus of career development and career counseling theories since that time (Ballantine, 1993).

It has only been within the past twenty years that adult mid-career change or career transition issues have received the attention of researchers. As an indication of the developing trend, and in response to corporate downsizing and plant closures or relocation, outplacement counseling services grew thirteen-fold from 1980 through 1993; from a small \$50 million to a \$650 million per year enterprise (Kirk, 1994). Kirk indicates similar growth has occurred in public sector career counseling devoted to adults seeking mid-career changes or responding to job loss as a result of downsizing or plant closures. The effectiveness of counseling interventions for this population has not been thoroughly studied (Anderson, 1993).

The literature and research that has been identified for this study, which will be reviewed in further detail throughout this chapter, suggests a mixed bag of moderate success along with short comings in career counseling services to this adult population. The literature reviewed in this chapter will be organized under the following issue oriented topical headings: testing, job loss trauma, personality states and traits, timing, career transition counseling models, and concludes with a summary.

Testing

The use of assessment instruments, or “tests”, in career counseling is commonplace. One representative study (Watkins, 1993) indicated that 92% of career counselors regularly use tests with their clients; with 80% of their clients being given at least one instrument to complete. In another study (Zytowski, 1994), six different instruments were reported as each having greater than one million copies per year usage for counseling.

Many of the tests used in counseling, including most ability tests and some personality inventories, are outgrowths of the Binet, the Army Alpha and Beta, the AGCT of World War II or the Woodworth Personal Data Sheet (Goldman, 1994; Matarazzo, 1990). These were all developed for screening or selection purposes; not for counseling. According to Goldman the current tests developed from this earlier generation of tests, along with more recent multiple aptitude batteries, have very limited differential

predictive value in counseling. This conclusion has been supported by a number of other studies and authors (Betz, 1992; Bradley, 1994a; Matarazzo, 1986; Prediger, 1994; Zytowski, 1994; Herr & Cramer, 1996).

When the effectiveness of a test is evaluated in a selection context, such as whether or not to hire, or in career counseling, the concern is how well the test results predict some future performance (referred to as the criterion). The higher the predictive validity of a test, the more adequately one can forecast group achievement of the criterion and, to a lesser extent, individual criterion performance. In career counseling the problem is clients often are looking for an accurate prediction of their own individual future performance; not that of a group (June & Smith, 1986; Tinsley, 1992; Galassi, Crace, Martin, James & Wallace, 1992). These researchers found that the largest portion of career counseling clients, 48.9% or higher, had expectations that testing results would provide them a personal career/person match. The results were similar for clients surveyed on a pre-counseling basis and those surveyed after three counseling sessions (Galassi et al.).

Based on earlier research (McCabe, 1956), Goldman (1994) has concluded that where a predictive correlation of .60 exists for a test, which Goldman comments is a high correlation for tests predicting success in an occupation, an individual client can be told:

"...people with a 50th percentile score on the test have two chances in three of achieving somewhere between the 21st and 79th percentile on the criterion ... True, if the test score was as high as the 93rd percentile or as

low as the 7th, the range would be narrowed to only 40 percentile points, and that is with only 68% confidence ... To obtain a 95% level of confidence, we would have to extend the range of predicted outcomes even more than that." (page 215)

Goldman and the other researchers that support his findings (Healy, 1990; Bradley, 1994; Prediger, 1994; Zytowski, 1994; Herr & Cramer, 1996) all caution against using tests in a counseling setting as predictors of future performance in an occupational field. Healy warns:

"...pursuit of occupational-fit matches may lead clients to mistakenly assume that the occupational choice will confer identity rather than to recognize that creating one's identity requires strengthening one's understanding and skills for selecting and meeting [new] challenges" (page 216).

These researchers each identify acceptable uses of tests in counseling. Although their terms and descriptions may differ, each suggests tests be used to promote career exploration, self-discovery, and the identification of career options which can then be applied to self-estimates by the client. This is called reformed career appraisal by Healy, discrimination testing by Herr and Cramer, discriminant testing by Zytowski and profile similarity testing by Prediger. These authors and others (Kapes & Vacha-Haase, 1994; Mastie, 1994; Mehrens, 1994; Subich & Billingsley, 1995) suggest expanded use of tests designed for client self-administration, self-scoring and that provide immediate

instructional feedback, such as Holland's (1985) Self-Directed-Search and Schein's (1990) Career Anchors. While research supporting these observations is lacking, these authors and others (Robbins, Chartrand, McFadden & Lee; 1994) believe clients take on a more active involved role in such tests and are able to integrate these test results with their own self-estimates and with continued counselor support; rather than simply relying on counselor led interpretations of most other tests.

The low level of test and measurement competency of counselors has also been identified as a contributor to poor testing practices (Goldman, 1994; Prediger, 1994; Zytowski, 1994). They comment on the absence of, or relatively low level of, test and measurement training in most graduate programs for counselors. Other research (Watkins, 1993; Watkins, Campbell & Nieberding, 1994) supports these observations. However, with larger membership in professional societies, which are promoting greater testing competency, and the advancement of certification and licensing requirements, these researchers believe the level of testing competence may be improving.

In the career counseling of adults dealing with career transition, another factor which may impact testing use is the job loss trauma often reported with this population.

Job Loss Trauma

In dealing with an adult going through career transition (job loss) counselors face a much more complex set of circumstances which also has testing implications not yet

well researched. Those laid-off in mid-career, to some extent, initially lose their identities, status in their communities, contact with friends and close associates, and the ability to provide for their families. Often the loss of security is keenly felt where long term employment or organizational loyalty was a major part of their identity and values. Dismay, disbelief, misplaced blame, or feelings of guilt are often initial reactions to losing one's job. These observations are supported by several doctoral dissertations (Anderson, 1993; Bennett, 1995; Ladd, 1993; Lekan, 1993; Maysent, 1995; Shapiro, 1995) and published studies (Kirk, 1994; Knowdell, Branstead & Moravec, 1994; Rak & O'Dell, 1994). Bennett also identified that poor termination notification practices by employers can also contribute to the trauma of job loss, in addition to negatively inhibiting the person to move forward. Stress management interventions are suggested by Maysent and Kirk.

Kirk (1994) reports that this initial trauma period, which he calls "regaining equilibrium", generally lasts one to two weeks, but can last four to six weeks in extreme cases. During this period Kirk suggests that counselors concentrate on providing laid-off workers psychological and financial "first aid", a safe place to talk through thoughts and feelings, and helping them to slowly regain basic coping skills. Kirk cautions against the use of any career assessment instruments or attempts to make career based decisions during the regaining equilibrium period. He does support testing during the next stage in the career transition counseling process.

The concept of job loss trauma in adult career transition populations is a significant factor in this study on the timing and perspectives on testing. It is assumed to delay client readiness and motivation for learning that needs to occur in career counseling and impacts the timing and sequence of career counseling actions. Unfortunately, this area has been under researched.

Personality Traits and States

While job loss trauma, noted above, may cause temporary personality states that are effective barriers to career assessment, one study (Brummer, 1992) suggests that some individuals going through career transition may have personality traits which significantly impact their perception of career assessment testing. In a survey of 164 career transition clients on the value of outplacement services, Brummer observed that the variable occupational type accounted for 74% of the variance in the perceived value of testing services. Individuals with technical, engineering, accounting, or computer information systems occupations tended to rate the value of career testing much higher than individuals with purchasing, sales, general management, and administrative occupational backgrounds.

Additional research is necessary to support the view that personality traits or occupational history may impact the perceived value of testing.

Timing

One recent career transition researcher (Lekan, 1993) concluded, after a case study analysis of twenty men and six women in outplacement, that "the restoration of self-confidence is the watershed phenomenon that is needed before rebuilding can take place". This supports Kirk's (1994) recommendation that a two week period to regain equilibrium is needed prior to any in-depth career assessment actions.

Another career transition researcher (Ladd, 1992), also using a case study analysis of ten outplacement clients, noted a more complex relationship resulting from the job loss trauma. Ladd suggests the full career transition period reflected a process that was cyclical rather than linear in nature. Clients were observed throughout transition as having their good days (involved, engaged and moving forward) and, without warning, their bad days (preoccupied with feelings associated with their job loss). These observations appear consistent with the "wilderness" phase of a popular transition management model (Bridges, 1991).

The researcher of this study has also informally noted an apparent cyclical pattern in the emotional states of career transition clients. Bridges suggests that the frequency and intensity of "feeling lost" subsides with time and actions to move forward through the transition period.

Two separate career transition studies (Lekan, 1993; Shapiro, 1995), which support the initial effects of job loss trauma, also noted another factor that could impact career assessment timing. Shapiro calls it “critical reflection”, Lekan refers to it as “reflective learning”. Their findings suggest that adults in career transition learn from reflecting on their experiences, past and present, including mistakes, and are able to change previously held beliefs about self, work, and their future direction based on reflective learning. According to these researchers, this learning capability is primarily observed during the mid and later stages of career transition counseling. They believe the period of job loss trauma may interfere with these capabilities.

Career Transition Counseling Models

Several career counseling models expressly suited for career transition settings have been identified (Healy, 1990; Ladd, 1993; Kirk, 1994; McDaniels, 1989; Rak & O’Dell, 1994; Spokane, 1991). The models are either specific to career transition settings or are broader models of career counseling which take into account any initial barriers to counseling; such as job loss trauma. Four of the six models identify three stages of counseling that, while terms differ, appear to be comparable. The two other models (McDaniels; Rak & O’Dell) are four stage models, each with the last stage being a post job placement follow-up evaluation. Both of these models come out of the social service sector and were designed for special needs clients. The authors each identify career assessment as part of the second stage of counseling.

Healy, Kirk, Ladd, and Spokane each specifically caution against jumping into testing too soon. Kirk and Ladd express concerns about the job loss trauma period in career transition. Healy and Spokane express concerns about the potential for test misuse too early in the counseling process. Career assessment in each of the models is focused on the discriminant testing model rather than predictive testing.

Summary

An extensive literature search conducted for this study has not identified adequate levels of research specifically focused on assessment instrument usage in career transition settings. However, significant literature and published research have been reviewed for several important issues closely related to the subject area of this study.

Career development theories developed since the early 1990's have primarily been based on the school-to-work transition and, until very recently, ignored the adult mid-career transitions that have become commonplace with corporate downsizings and plant closures.

The use of testing instruments for assessment in career counseling has been an accepted practice since the earliest days of counseling. However, there is now a large body of research that questions the validity of tests when used in counseling to predict success in occupational areas. Research has also indicated that clients all too often look to testing to provide this type of prediction. Although not yet researched adequately, several

authors in the field recommend the use of client self-administered self-scored tests that provide instructional feedback materials. This is believed to foster the active involvement of clients in the process of career exploration, self-discovery and the identification of career options. Studies support the use of tests in a manner that promotes these types of self-estimates; often referred to as discriminant or discrimination testing. However, a generally low level of counselor competence and training in testing has also been reported.

Literature reviewed regarding adult career transition issues strongly suggests that a period of job loss trauma exists for nearly all individuals when they first lose their jobs. These studies recommend that early counseling sessions should be devoted solely to regaining equilibrium, deferring all assessment actions. Each of the counseling models reviewed provided for this period of trauma recovery.

From the literature reviewed it appears that there is potential for the misuse of assessment instruments in career transition settings. Further research is needed. This study may be a modest beginning toward eventually filling this void.

Chapter 3: Design of Study

Samples

Participants in this study consist of those individuals who respond to a mailed self-administered questionnaire. The sample of respondents is described in detail in chapter four. Ninety adults who have gone through career transition during the past thirty months and the fifteen counselors who have provided these individuals with career counseling and consulting support will be solicited to participate in this study.

These career transitioned adults and counselors represent the total population impacted by a downsizing reorganization at a large electric utility's nuclear generating headquarters (2200 employees) located in southern New Jersey. This population was selected based upon the availability of names and addresses to the researcher through employment with the utility. While this is a convenience sampling vulnerable to selection bias due to non-parametric sampling, it will provide a moderately large study group in an area not previously well researched.

Of the 90 career transitioned adults, 26 are female (28.9%), 64 male (71.1%), 7 black (7.8%), 6 Asian (6.6%), and 77 Caucasian (86.6%). They range in age from 28 years to 66 years old and were from professional, technical and administrative occupational areas, including managerial, supervisory and non-supervisory. Production line workers and trade/craft workers are not represented; these were not part of the reorganization at the utility. The mean length of employment with the utility is in excess

of ten years. During the career transition period 24 (26.7%) of the individuals pursued other employment with the utility successfully; the remainder terminated their employment after an initial internal transition period of up to 90 days, either deciding not to pursue other utility positions or without successfully landing another position at the company. Contracted career counseling services were provided both during the initial 90 day internal transition period and for an additional six months after employment termination.

The fifteen counselors surveyed include one human resource employee of the utility who received special training to provide career counseling in career transition settings, along with counselors from two other consulting organizations contracted to provide career counseling and outplacement consulting services. Eight of the counselors are female (53.3%) and 7 male (46.7%). Precise age, experience and educational backgrounds of the counselors are not known; an estimate of the range of ages is mid thirties to mid sixties, with a minimum of 3 years counseling experience and educational backgrounds ranging from bachelors to doctorate degree. More complete information on counseling backgrounds will be provided in chapter 4, based on questionnaire responses.

Measures

With the lack of previous research in this area, the questionnaire used was developed specifically for this study. A copy of the cover letter that accompanied the

questionnaires is Appendix A. The questionnaire and instructions for counselors are included as Appendix B. The questionnaire and instructions for clients are included as Appendix C. While the instructions and background data requested of each group were tailored to the group, the questionnaires for both groups were identical, with the exception of two descriptive words in column headings added for clarity.

Although the reliability and validity of this questionnaire have not been established as part of this study, it was designed to contain content validity. The three time periods (within the first two weeks of counseling, after 2 weeks and before 5 weeks, and at or beyond 5 weeks) used on the survey to identify when assessment instruments were administered, are consistent with the three stage career transition counseling models identified in the research (Healy, 1990; Ladd, 1993; Kirk, 1994; McDaniels, 1989; Rak & O'Dell, 1994; Spokane, 1991). As indicated in chapter 2, these researchers warn against the use of assessment instruments during the initial stage of career transition counseling, variously referred to as the intake, regaining equilibrium, or job loss trauma stage.

In the development of the questionnaire, instructions and mailed cover letter, the nine volume Survey Kit (Fink, 1995) was referenced to design an appropriate survey tool. A five item Likert scale was used on the questionnaire to gather data on the perceived usefulness or value of assessment instruments. The questionnaire, instructions and cover letter were also reviewed with senior department advisors consulting on thesis studies prior to the mailing to surveyed populations. Based on the homogeneity, or internal

consistency. of all surveyed items, the reliability of the questionnaire is assumed to be adequate for the purpose of this study.

Design

This study and the analysis of the results of the questionnaires will be a descriptive design. Both the adults having gone through career transition (the clients) and the counselors are historical cohorts providing retrospective data on career assessment instruments previously used.

Questionnaire responses will be categorized into two primary groups: counselor responses and career transitioned adult (client) responses. Within the client category the assessment instruments reported as used will be grouped into two time periods for analysis: instruments administered within the first two weeks of counseling and instruments administered after two weeks of counseling. The latter group combines two time periods included on the questionnaire (>2 ≤5 weeks and >5 weeks), which is consistent with the career transition counseling models and the use of assessment instruments in the models.

Within these categories measures of central tendency will be obtained for the value/usefulness ratings of assessment instruments in each of the counselor-client and two time period groupings for instrument administration. Where a counselor or client rates more than one assessment instrument, the mean rating of all instruments rated by the

individual will be used in the analysis. Analysis will be by one-tailed *t* Test computed using SPSS version 6.1.

An acceptable level of significance of $p = 0.05$ is selected for this study, considering the non-parametric nature of the sample (small size, one geographic location and employer, occupational and demographic limitations) and the initial use of the self-administered questionnaire.

Variables and Testable Hypotheses

The independent variables are the counselor - client categorizing of questionnaire responses and the two career assessment instrument administration time periods in which client questionnaire responses will be grouped.

The dependent variables are the value/usefulness ratings of career assessment instruments provided by questionnaire respondents.

The first null hypothesis is: Counselors value/usefulness ratings of career assessment instruments administered will not be different than the value/usefulness ratings of clients.

The first alternate hypothesis is: Counselors value/usefulness ratings of career assessment instruments will be higher than the value/usefulness ratings of clients.

Analysis of data for the first hypothesis will be by independent one-tailed *t* Test for unequal groups.

This first set of hypotheses was selected for this study based on literature (reviewed in chapter 2) that supports the possible effects of client personality traits and states on the value of assessment instruments and on the importance of timing in assessment instrument administration in career transition counseling settings. These factors also contributed to the development of the following second set of hypotheses.

The second null hypothesis is: Client value/usefulness ratings of those career assessment instruments administered during the initial stage of counseling (≤ 2 weeks) will not be different than the client ratings of instruments administered during later stages of counseling (>2 weeks).

The second alternate hypothesis is: Client value/usefulness ratings of career assessment instruments administered during the initial stage of counseling (≤ 2 weeks) will be lower than client ratings of instruments administered during later stages of counseling (> 2 weeks).

Analysis of data for the second hypothesis will be by dependent (paired samples) one-tailed *t* Test. Only the questionnaires of those clients reporting usage of assessment instruments in both time periods (≤ 2 weeks and > 2 weeks) will be used for this analysis.

Procedures

In conducting the analysis for the second set of hypotheses, any client data on assessment instruments in which "can not be determined" is indicated on the client questionnaire will not be included in the analysis. The questionnaire includes a "can not be determined" column to discourage respondents from guessing the assessment instrument administration time period.

During the analysis of the first set of hypotheses, comparing client-counselor value/usefulness ratings, the data on assessment instrument administration time period will not be factored into the analysis. A limitation of this study is that the counselor sample (15 individuals) surveyed is not of sufficient size to evaluate additional elements such as counselor identified time periods.

Questionnaires will be mailed to the identified counselors and clients (adults in career transition) by the second week of January 1997. The cover letter and instructions indicate that the questionnaire should be completed and returned within the week received. The researcher will follow up with telephone calls to as many non-respondents as possible by mid February 1997 to encourage their participation. Analysis and reporting of the results of the study will be concluded by the end of April 1997.

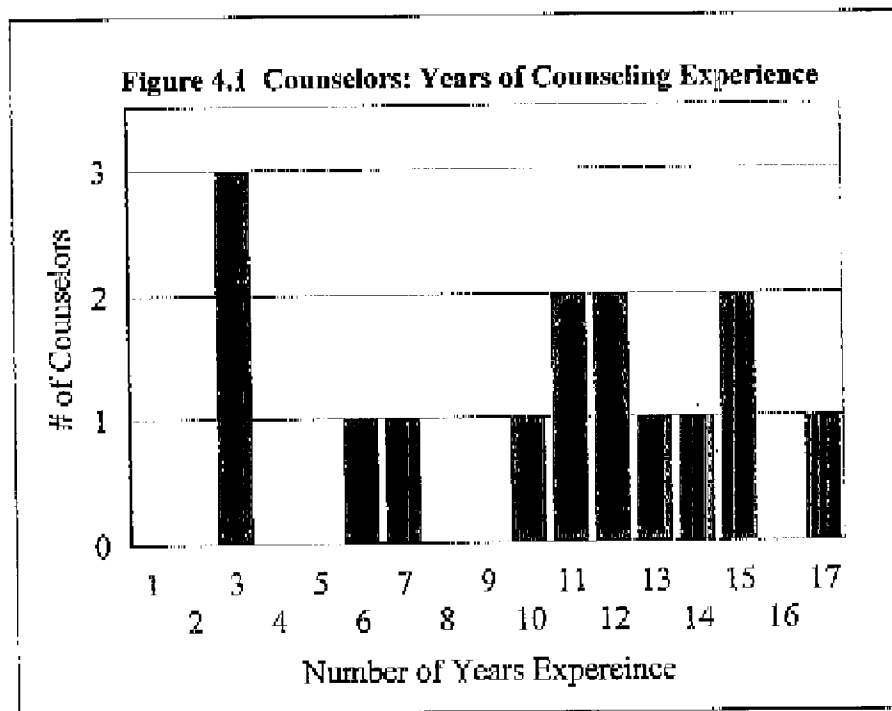
Summary

The design of this study has limitations with respect to the non-parametric sample of counselors and clients and the development and initial use of a self-administered questionnaire. However, the homogeneity of surveyed items and content validity were primary considerations in the design of the questionnaire. The extensive review of previous literature and research provided the basis for questionnaire development and the establishment of testable hypotheses. In chapter 4 the analysis of results will be presented.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Results

Responses to the Questionnaire

All fifteen of the counselors identified in chapter 3 completed and returned questionnaires. Eight of the counselors are women, with a mean average of 9.4 years career counseling experience. The seven male counselors have a mean average of 11.0 years career counseling experience. All fifteen counselors are Caucasian. The counseling years of experience range and frequency are shown in Figure 4.1 below:



In the questionnaire, counselors were asked to describe their background and training in the use of career assessment instruments. A summary of their replies follows:

- 7 counselors; formal training and extensive career counseling experience
- 3 counselors; Ph.D. in counseling psychology
- 2 counselors; extensive career counseling experience
- 1 counselor; certified in instruments
- 1 counselor; MA counseling psychology
- 1 counselor; no training/studied interpretation materials under supervision

The counselors were asked to identify the career assessment instruments they used with the majority of their clients and ignore reporting on instruments they seldom use or no longer use for the majority of their clients. Counselor assessment instrument usage is summarized in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 below:

Table 4.1 Number of Assessment Instruments Used per Counselor	Number of Instruments
Range	2 to 9
Mean	4
Median	4
Mode	3 and 4

Table 4.2 Assessment Instruments Used by Counselors	Number of Counselors Using Instrument
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator	15
Strong Interest Inventory	10
Campbell Interest & Skill Inventory	8
Holland's Self-Directed Search	7
Assessing Your Work Style	6
16 Personality Factor Questionnaire	4
Career Anchors	4
Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal	2
Kuder Occupational Interest Survey	1
Personality Research Form	1
Temperament & Values Inventory	1
Word & Number Assessment Inventory	1
<i>Total Number of Instruments Reported</i>	<i>60</i>

Of the 90 career transition clients identified for this study, 10 clients could not be contacted either because their current addresses could not be obtained or the questionnaires mailed were returned undelivered without forwarding addresses. Of the remaining 80 clients mailed questionnaires, 51 (63.8%) clients completed and returned questionnaires. Four (5%) of these responding clients indicated that they either did not utilize assessment instruments during the career transition period or were unable to recall or retrieve information on instruments used. The questionnaire responses from the remaining 47 (58.8%) clients form the basis for all client data analysis. Characteristics of these clients are identified in Table 4.3 below:

Table 4.3 Client Characteristics	All Clients	Male	Female
Total Number (and %) of Clients	47 (100%)	33 (70.2%)	14 (29.8%)
Racial/Ethnic identification:			
• Caucasian	40 (85.1%)	29	11
• African/American	5 (10.6%)	2	3
• Asian	2 (4.3%)	2	0
Age of Clients:			
• Range	28 - 66 yrs.	36 - 66 yrs.	28 - 52 yrs.
• Mean	45.0 yrs.	47.3 yrs.	39.4 yrs.
• Median	44 yrs.	45 yrs.	39.5 yrs.
# of months in Career Transition*:			
• Range	1 - 22 mos.	1 - 22 mos.	3 - 14 mos.
• Mean	5.9 mos.	5.8 mos.	6.0 mos.
• Median	5 mos.	5 mos.	5.5 mos.
Counseling Time Periods Assessment Instruments were used by Clients			
• only \leq 2 weeks	10 clients	8 clients	2 clients
• only $>$ 2 weeks	2 clients	2 clients	0
• both \leq 2 weeks and $>$ 2 weeks	35 clients	23 clients	12 clients

* Note: 39 clients (83%) have completed their career transition period and are now re-employed. 8 clients (17%) are still in career transition; with a range of 3 to 22 months, mean of 9.1 months, and median of 7.5 months of career transition.

In the questionnaire clients were asked to identify the assessment instruments that they used, the time period during counseling when each instrument was used and then to rate their perceived value of each instrument used. Tables 4.4 and 4.5 summarize the client assessment instrument usage.

Table 4.4 Number of Assessment Instruments Used per Client	Total # of Instruments Used/client	Used in \leq 1st 2 weeks of counseling	Used in $>$ 1st 2 weeks of counseling
Range	2 - 10 instrs	1 - 5 instrs.	1 - 9 instrs.
Mean	4.7	2.2	3.4
Median	5	2	3
Mode	5	2	3

Table 4.5 Assessment Instruments Used by Clients	Number of Clients Using Instrument
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator	43
Campbell Interest & Skill Inventory	26
Strong Interest Inventory	26
16 Personality Factor Questionnaire	26
Career Anchors	22
Holland's Self-Directed Search	20
Assessing Your Work Style	16
Word & Number Assessment Inventory	13
Temperament & Values Inventory	13
Personality Research Form	7
Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal	5
Kuder Occupational Interest Survey	2
Locus of Control Inventory	1
Dynamics of Decision Making	1
Harrington-O'Shea Career Decision-Mak'g.	1
Human Synergistics Lifestyles	1
<i>Total Number of Instruments Reported</i>	223

Restatement of Hypotheses

The first null hypothesis is: Counselors value/usefulness ratings of career assessment instruments administered will not be different from the value/usefulness ratings of clients.

The results of the counselor - client questionnaire responses on the value of assessment instruments are summarized in Table 4.6 below:

Table 4.6 Summary of Counselor & Client Assessment Instrument Value Ratings

Populations	# of individuals	Mean Value Rating	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean
Counselors	15	4.3307	0.474	0.122
Clients	47	3.3219	0.633	0.092

The analysis of this data using an independent sample *t* Test for unequal groups results in a *t*-value of 6.58 with *df* = 31.37 and two-tailed level of significance of ($p = <.001$). Based on these results, the first null hypothesis is rejected.

With the observed level of significance satisfying the design level of significance ($p = <.05$), support for acceptance of the first alternate hypothesis is established. The first alternate hypothesis is: Counselors value/usefulness ratings of career assessment instruments will be higher than the value/usefulness ratings of clients.

The second null hypothesis is: Client value/usefulness ratings of those career assessment instruments administered during the initial stage of counseling (≤ 2 weeks) will not be different than the client ratings of instruments administered during later stages of counseling (> 2 weeks).

The results of questionnaire responses of the 35 clients that rated the value of assessment instruments in both time periods (≤ 2 weeks and > 2 weeks) are summarized in Table 4.7 below:

Table 4.7 Client Value Ratings of Assessment Instruments by Time Period

Counseling time period Instruments were used	Mean Value Rating	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean
On or during the 1st. two weeks	2.59	1.009	0.171
Beyond the 1st. two weeks	3.9131	0.884	0.149

The analysis of this data using a dependent (paired sample) *t* Test results in a *t*-value of - 4.54 with *df*= 34 and a significant correlation ($r = -.655, p = <.001$). Based on these results, the second null hypothesis is rejected.

With the observed level of significance satisfying the design level of significance ($p = <.05$), support for acceptance of the second alternate hypothesis is established. The second alternate hypothesis is: Client value/usefulness ratings of career assessment instruments administered during the initial stage of counseling (≤ 2 weeks) will be lower than client ratings of instruments administered during later stages of counseling (> 2 weeks).

Summary

Both null hypotheses are rejected based on the results of the data analysis. Support for the acceptance of both alternate hypotheses is obtained from the data analysis. The analysis and observed results are summarized in Table 4.8 below:

Table 4.8 Summary of Analysis and Observed Results for Both Null Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Analysis	Mean Difference	<i>t</i> - value	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
1st. Ho: No difference in counselor vs. client assessment ratings	Independent <i>t</i> Test, Unequal groups	1.0088	6.58	31.37	.000
2nd. Ho: No difference in client \leq 2 wks. vs. $>$ 2 wks. assessment ratings	Dependent (paired sample) <i>t</i> Test	1.3231	-4.54	34	$r = -.655$ $p = .000$

Further discussion of these results will be presented in Chapter 5, along with a complete summary of the study.

Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusions

Summary

The purpose of this study was to survey both career counselor and adult client populations on their experiences and opinions regarding the value of assessment instruments in career transition counseling settings and the timing on the use of the instruments. This study examined the correlation between the timing of assessment instrument usage and the perceived value of assessment instruments. Comparisons of counselor and client perspectives were also studied.

Counselors select and use assessment instruments based on their training, experience, theoretical background, and the counseling methods or tools they feel most comfortable with; and feel serve their clients well. However, adult clients in career transition seem to offer a more complex set of issues than most career counseling theories and training were originally based upon. These complexities include: job loss trauma, loss of status and stature, serious financial uncertainties, concerns surrounding the reasons for or justification of job loss, and anxiety over the need to initiate a job search after several years of stable and secure employment. Based on such complexities, some theorists and authors (refer to chapter 2 for more information) have suggested that the use of assessment instruments for adults in career transition should be deferred after the first two weeks of counseling. The initial two week period of career transition counseling is referred to as the “job loss trauma” or “regaining equilibrium” period.

A self-administered questionnaire was developed for this study and data was gathered from 15 counselors and 47 career transition clients regarding assessment instrument usage, timing and the perceived value or usefulness of assessment instruments. The respondents were involved in an electric utility company reorganization and downsizing in southern New Jersey during the 1994 to 1996 time period. The 100% participation rate of counselors and the relatively high rate of client response (63.8%) to the questionnaire can be attributed to the past working relationship that the researcher had with these individuals.

Based on the analysis of this data both null hypotheses were rejected. Further, with the observed levels of significance for both sets of hypotheses satisfying the study design level, support for the acceptance of both alternate hypotheses was established. Tables 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8 provide a summary of the data analysis. The two supported alternate hypotheses are:

1st. **H_i**: Counselors value/usefulness ratings of career assessment instruments will be higher than the value/usefulness ratings of clients.

2nd. **H_i**: Client value/usefulness ratings of career assessment instruments administered during the initial stage of counseling (≤ 2 weeks) will be lower than client ratings of instruments administered during later stages of counseling (> 2 weeks).

Conclusions

The conclusions reached, based on the analysis of data, are presented here in regard to the two hypotheses examined. Results suggest:

- 1) that counselors tend to place a greater value on assessment instrument usage than do adult clients in career transition.

- 2) that clients tend to place a greater value on assessment instruments when the instruments are administered after the first two weeks of counseling, rather than during the first two weeks.

Discussion

The conclusions identified above lend support to much of the theory presented in chapter 1 and the research reviewed in chapter 2. Career development theories developed since the early 1900's have primarily been based on the adolescent school-to-work transition and, until very recently, ignored the adult mid-career transitions that have become all too common place with corporate downsizings and plant closures.

With the concept of congruence, also referred to as job fit or person fit, playing such a central role in career development theories, the assessment of clients' interests, skills, and abilities plays a major role in career counseling. For this reason the use of tests and assessment instruments are common in career counseling. In varying career

counseling settings, Spokane (1991) identifies three positions or time frames where testing is commonly introduced. The first approach, which he prefers, occurs in the mid or later stages of counseling after clients have clarified their interests and goals, and while final options for exploration are being generated. Spokane goes on to indicate that too often testing is done at the beginning of counseling as part of the initial intake process or in conjunction with the first counseling session. He states: “ Unfortunately, the early use of highly specific inventories may be more common than desirable” (page 144). Early intensive testing battery administration may prematurely limit the self-exploration of career interests and options; and may reinforce client tendencies to view the testing activity as the most important or meaningful part of career counseling.

Counselors tend to build up a comfort zone and a level of appreciation for certain specific assessment instruments based on past experience. This is, in part, supported by the results of the first hypothesis in this study, where counselors rated the value of assessment instruments significantly higher than clients. Counselors may then use these familiar instruments in nearly all settings at prescribed times; largely ignoring other instruments, different timing or no test options that may better suit certain clients. While some counselors may evaluate the timing and appropriateness of instruments prior to assigning them to clients, assessment instrument completion is often a required part of the initial intake process or is a standard feature of the first few counseling sessions.

This study suggests those adult clients in career transition have perspectives on assessment instrument usefulness that cover a much broader range than that of counselors, including clients who found little or no value in assessment results.

Where clients perceive little or no value in assessment instruments, they may have personality traits better suited for other counseling interventions or personality states, such as job loss stress or anxiety, which may inhibit assessment instrument effectiveness at the time the assessment instruments were undertaken. With the assumption that temporary personality states will tend to be most severe during the earliest phase of counseling, this study further suggests that client perspectives on the value of assessment instruments will improve as the instruments are administered beyond the initial intake time period.

In dealing with adults going through career transition counselors face a complex set of circumstances that also has testing implications not yet well researched. Those laid-off in mid-career, to some extent, initially lose their identities, status in their communities, contact with friends and close associates, and the ability to provide for their families. Often the loss of security is keenly felt where long term employment or organizational loyalty was a major part of their identity and values. Dismay, disbelief, misplaced blame, or feelings of guilt are often initial reactions to losing one's job. These observations are supported by several doctoral dissertations (Anderson, 1993; Bennett, 1995; Ladd, 1993; Lekan, 1993; Maysent, 1995; Shapiro, 1995) and published studies (Kirk, 1994; Knowdell, Branstead & Moravec, 1994; Rak & O'Dell, 1994). Bennett also

identified that poor termination notification practices by employers can also contribute to the trauma of job loss, in addition to negatively inhibiting the person to move forward.

Kirk (1994) reports that this initial trauma period, which he calls “regaining equilibrium”, generally lasts one to two weeks, but can last four to six weeks in extreme cases. During this period Kirk suggests that counselors concentrate on providing laid-off workers psychological and financial “first aid”, a safe place to talk through thoughts and feelings, and help to slowly regain basic coping skills. Kirk cautions against the use of any career assessment instruments or attempts to make career based decisions during the regaining equilibrium period. He does support testing during subsequent stages in the career transition counseling process.

The initial two week period of career transition counseling, according to Lekan (1993), is sensitive because “the restoration of self-confidence is the watershed phenomenon that is needed before rebuilding can take place”. In two separate studies (Lekan, 1993; Shapiro, 1995) the importance of “critical reflection” or “reflective learning” in career transition was noted. Their findings suggest that adults in career transition learn from reflecting on their experiences, past and present, including mistakes, and are able to change previously held beliefs about self, work, and their future direction based on reflective learning. According to these researchers, this learning capability is primarily observed during the mid and later stages of career transition counseling. They believe the period of job loss trauma may interfere with these capabilities.

The findings of this study lend support to much of the research and literature related to career transition counseling stages and the use of assessment instruments, particularly during the initial two week stage of counseling. Results suggest that career counselors should defer the use of assessment instruments until after the initial two week period of counseling.

While the study has significant limitations regarding the initial design and use of the questionnaire and the small convenience sample of counselor and client participants, it does provide meaningful analytic information on the perceived value or usefulness of assessment instruments at different stages in career transition counseling. The observed levels of significance ($p = <.001$) satisfy acceptable standards for a study of this nature.

Implications for Future Research

While the career counseling of adults in mid-career transition has received researcher and theorist attention during the past decade, very little research has focused on the use of career assessment instruments for this population. This study has been an attempt to focus research on the use of assessment instruments in career transition counseling settings.

The framework provided in this study should form the basis for future research in this area. Future studies of much larger more representative populations should follow. Nationally based career management or outplacement companies, or organizations such

as the American Counseling Association or the International Association of Career Management Professionals, could provide future researchers the counselor and client populations necessary and the sponsorship to undertake such work. With larger populations the relative value or usefulness of individual assessment instruments could be reported along with counselor perceptions on the timing of assessment instrument usage. Larger studies could also undertake a more rigorous examination of the reliability and validity of the questionnaire format developed in this study.

Rather than focus on historical data regarding the perceived value of assessment instruments, future research could correlate the timing of assessment instrument usage with measurable outcomes of the career transition period. Measures that could be considered include: the time period to land the next position, the salary comparisons between former and new positions, or a measure by the clients of the overall effectiveness of the career counseling provided.

Another area for future research includes validity studies of individual assessment instruments in career transition settings. A related area, already well researched, is the predictive versus discriminative uses of assessment instruments for adults in career transition. Previous work in this area may provide a basis for research into career counselor assessment instrument administration, interpretation, and qualifications.

Studies such as the above will receive the full support and cooperation of this researcher.

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Appendix A: Cover Letter Mailed with All Questionnaires



01/09/97

Dear Associate and Friend

As I approach the completion of my Masters Degree at Rowan College, I am in the research data collection stage of my thesis. I have chosen to study an aspect of adult career transition and the use of career assessment instruments with this population. We both know all too well, in today's world career transitions are major challenges that most adults must face at some point in their work lives. This reality of the working world is not yet well researched or fully understood, and as such, is good territory for relevant thesis work.

In order to gather the data necessary for the thesis, I need your help (for 15 to 20 minutes) by completing the enclosed questionnaire, six easy steps explained in the instructions. Your participation is important to me since the number of informed people I can survey is very limited. **Please take the time now, or within the week, to fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me in the enclosed ready-to-mail envelop.**

Your identity, participation and the information you provide will remain strictly confidential. Information from this study will only be reported in a compiled statistical form. I will personally compile the data and maintain strict control of completed questionnaires. All completed questionnaires will be destroyed after the thesis is approved and published. If you would like to receive a summary of the completed study, I will be happy to mail it to you. The questionnaire has an area for you to indicate this interest (also include your name on the questionnaire if you want a summary of the study).

I appreciate your cooperation. Feel free to call me at (609) 769-1130 if you have any questions or just want to say Hello. I hope this New Year will be a good one for you.

Sincerely

P.S. A personal note/update: In September I started my own consulting practice in organizational career management, working with companies and individuals who want to take proactive steps to improve productivity and meaningful career opportunities and avoid or minimize career transition disruptions. If you would like more information I would be pleased hearing from you; and if you have a contact or referral you believe I should meet, please feel free to call, E-mail or stop by anytime!

Non Sutton ❖ 19 Chestnut Drive ❖ Woodstown, NJ 08098

e-mail: nonsutton@ml.com ❖ phone: (609) 769-1130

COMPLETION INSTRUCTIONS AND INITIAL SURVEY DATA

For the purposes of this study career assessment instruments are defined as career oriented psychological, skill, interest or personal style assessment surveys, questionnaires, measurements or "tests" that provide feedback to you and/or the client during counseling and career workshops.

Step #1 - Please complete the initial survey data requested below. Your identity and information provided will remain confidential. Information from this study will only be reported in a compiled statistical form.

INITIAL SURVEY DATA	
Your Name: _____ (optional; will be maintained confidentially)	Number of years career counseling/outplacement consulting experience: _____ (years)
Gender: M or F (circle one)	Your racial/ethnic identification: _____
Date this Questionnaire is completed: ___ / ___ / ____ (Mo/day/Yr)	Do you wish to receive a summary or abstract of the results of this study? (Yes/No)
Briefly summarize your background/training in the use of career assessment instruments: _____	

_____ (Yes/No) For the majority of your career transition clients, during counseling, career workshops or transition/outplacement consulting, do you use career assessment instruments that provide results or feedback to you and/or your client?	
- If yes, continue with Step #2 below.	
- If no, after completing the above, simply return your questionnaire in the enclosed envelop (see Step #6 below).	

Step #2 - Review the list of Assessment Instruments in the left hand column on page #2. Place a check mark in the [A] column next to the instruments you have used with the majority of your career transition clients. Do not check mark instruments you seldom use or no longer use for the majority of your clients. If you normally use any instruments not listed, write the instrument name at the bottom of the left hand column and check mark column [A].

Step #3 - For each of the instruments you checked in column [A], identify when from the beginning of counseling sessions do you usually request that clients complete the instrument. Although the timing may vary with different clients, please indicate your practice for the majority of your clients. Indicate this time period under heading [B] which has 4 options from which to select. Try to avoid using the "Can not determine time period" column if at all possible. Please place a check mark in the most accurate column; do not mark the lines between columns.

Step #4 - Using your best judgment and the 5 item rating scale under heading [C], identify the value or usefulness of each of the instruments that you checked in column [A]. You are asked to rate the value or usefulness that you believe the clients receive from each instrument in comparison to the value of other transition or outplacement support the clients receive. Please circle the most accurate rating #; do not indicate an "in between the numbers" rating.

Step #5 - At the bottom of page #2, the last row marked [D] is intended for you to provide an overall rating of the value or usefulness of all the assessment instruments you use often. Please circle the most accurate rating #; do not indicate an "in between the numbers" rating.

Step #6 - If you have any comments or observations regarding the use of assessment instruments or concerning this survey, you may write them at the bottom of page #2 (or attach a note). Please return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelop. **THANK YOU!**

QUESTIONNAIRE ON CAREER ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS USED IN CAREER TRANSITION SETTINGS
 (Please refer to page #1, Instructions and Initial Survey Data, before completing the following)

Listing of Instruments Below	[A]	[B]				[C]				
		Counseling Time Period Instrument is Used (one check mark for each instrument used)				Value of Instrument in Comparison to other Transition Support (circle one rating/instr. used)				
*write in any other instruments used at bottom	Check mark only those instruments used often	Within the first 2 weeks of counseling	After 2 & before 5 weeks of counseling	On or after 5 weeks of counseling	Can not determine time period	High Value 5	4	Moderate Value 3	2	Low Value 1
Campbell Interest and Skill Survey (CISS)						5	4	3	2	1
Career Anchors (self-scored workbook)						5	4	3	2	1
Harrington-O'Shea Career Decision-Making (CDM)						5	4	3	2	1
Kuder Occupational Interest Survey (KOIS)						5	4	3	2	1
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)						5	4	3	2	1
Assessing Your Work Style (self-scored MBTI workbook)						5	4	3	2	1
Personality Research Form (PRF)						5	4	3	2	1
Self-Directed Search (Holland's SDS; self-scored workbook)						5	4	3	2	1
16 Personality Factor Questionnaire (16 PF)						5	4	3	2	1
Strong Interest Inventory						5	4	3	2	1
Temperament and Values Inventory (TVI)						5	4	3	2	1
Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal (WGCTA)						5	4	3	2	1
Word and Number Assessment Inventory (WNAI)						5	4	3	2	1
*						5	4	3	2	1
*						5	4	3	2	1
*						5	4	3	2	1
[D] OVERALL OPINION OF ALL INSTRUMENTS USED						5	4	3	2	1

Comments:

Page 1 of 2 **QUESTIONNAIRE ON CAREER ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS USED IN CAREER TRANSITION SETTINGS**

COMPLETION INSTRUCTIONS AND INITIAL SURVEY DATA

In completing this questionnaire it will be helpful for you to refer, for a few minutes, to your career transition files on any career assessment instruments used during your career transition. Career assessment instruments are career oriented psychological, skill, interest or personal style assessment surveys, questionnaires, measurements or "tests" that provide feedback to you or the counselor during counseling and career workshops. Your files will help you to recall the name(s) of the instrument(s) and refresh your memory about their usefulness or value and also the time period you used them. This questionnaire can be completed in approximately 15 to 20 minutes, including the review of your assessment instrument files.

Step #1 - Please complete the initial survey data requested below. Your identity and information provided will remain confidential. Information from this study will only be reported in a compiled statistical form.

INITIAL SURVEY DATA	
Your Name: _____ (optional; will be maintained confidentially)	Your age at the start of the Career Transition period: _____ (years)
Gender: M or F (circle one)	Your racial/ethnic identification: _____
Career Transition Beginning Date: ____/____/____ (Month/Year)	Career Transition Completion Date: ____/____/____ (Mo/Yr. or circle: still current)
Date this Questionnaire is Completed: ____/____/____ (Mo/day/Yr)	Do you want to receive a summary or abstract of the results of this study? (Yes/No)
<p>_____ (Yes/No) During your Career Transition, and while provided counseling, career workshops or transition/outplacement consulting, did you complete any assessment instruments which provided results or feedback to you and/or your counselor?</p> <p>- If yes, continue with Step #2 below.</p> <p>- If no, after completing the above, simply return your questionnaire in the enclosed envelop (see Step #6 below).</p>	

Step #2 - Review the list of Assessment Instruments in the left hand column on page #2. Place a check mark in the [A] column next to any instruments you personally used during your transition period. If you used any instruments not listed, write the instrument name at the bottom of the left hand column and check mark column [A].

Step #3 - For each of the instruments you checked in column [A], identify when from the beginning of counseling sessions did the counselor or transition consultant ask you to complete the instrument. Indicate this time period under heading [B] which has 4 options from which to select. Try to avoid using the "Can not determine time period" column if at all possible. Referring to your transition files may help you to identify the time period for each instrument. Please place a check mark in the most accurate column; do not mark the lines between columns.

Step #4 - Using your best judgment and the 5 item rating scale under heading [C], identify the value or usefulness of each of the instruments that you used. You are asked to rate the value or usefulness you personally received from each instrument in comparison to the value of other transition support you received. Please circle the most accurate rating #; do not indicate an "in between the numbers" rating.

Step #5 - At the bottom of page #2, the last row marked [D] is intended for you to provide an overall rating of the value or usefulness of all the assessment instruments you used. Please circle the most accurate rating #; do not indicate an "in between the numbers" rating.

Step #6 - If you have any comments or observations regarding the assessment instruments you used or concerning this survey, you may write them at the bottom of page #2 (or attach a note). Please return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelop. **THANK YOU!**

QUESTIONNAIRE ON CAREER ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS USED IN CAREER TRANSITION SETTINGS
 (Please refer to page #1, Instructions and Initial Survey Data, before completing the following)

Listing of Instruments Below	[A] Check mark only those instruments used	[B] Counseling Time Period Instrument was Used (one check mark for each instrument used)				[C] Value of Instrument in Comparison to other Transition Support (circle one rating/instr. used)				
		Within the first 2 weeks of counseling	After 2 & before 5 weeks of counseling	On or after 5 weeks of counseling	Can not determine time period	High Value 5 (circle one rating #/instr. used; no between scores)	Moderate Value 3 2		Low Value 1	
Write in any other instruments used at bottom										
Campbell Interest and Skill Survey (CISS)						5	4	3	2	1
Career Anchors (self-scored workbook)						5	4	3	2	1
Harrington-O'Shea Career Decision-Making (CDM)						5	4	3	2	1
Kuder Occupational Interest Survey (KOIS)						5	4	3	2	1
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)						5	4	3	2	1
Assessing Your Work Style (self-scored MBTI workbook)						5	4	3	2	1
Personality Research Form (PRF)						5	4	3	2	1
Self-Directed Search (Holland's SDS; self-scored workbook)						5	4	3	2	1
16 Personality Factor Questionnaire (16 PF)						5	4	3	2	1
Strong Interest Inventory						5	4	3	2	1
Temperament and Values Inventory (TVI)						5	4	3	2	1
Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal (WGCTA)						5	4	3	2	1
Word and Number Assessment Inventory (WNAI)						5	4	3	2	1
*						5	4	3	2	1
*						5	4	3	2	1
*						5	4	3	2	1
[D] OVERALL OPINION OF ALL INSTRUMENTS USED						5	4	3	2	1

Comments:



Registration Sheet Mode	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Divide files
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Storage Setting	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FRONT SIDE	<input type="checkbox"/> F/B 2 PAGE <input type="checkbox"/> F/B 1 PAGE
<input type="checkbox"/> NORMAL	<input type="checkbox"/> FINE
<input type="checkbox"/> TEXT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PHOTO
Dark	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Light

Total Number of Marks					
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6