Jump Start

Youth Career Guidance and Counseling

Counselor’s Manual

Youth Career Center (YCC)
Secretary of State for Vocational Training and Employment (SEFOPE)
Government of Timor-Leste

Youth Employment Promotion Programme
International Labour Organization – Timor Leste

* Designed and drafted by Busakorn Suriyasarn. Any comments or questions regarding this draft should be directed to the author via email: od@busakorn.org.
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PART 1

THE CAREER COUNSELOR

1. About Part 1

Looking for a job can be a daunting task for young people. Without proper guidance, young job seekers can get lost in an ineffective job search or end up choosing an unproductive career path.

Many young people entering the world of work for the first time often don’t recognize their own talents and skills or what they want in life. Timely and appropriate guidance on finding the right career path are therefore extremely crucial to ensure that young people make informed educational and occupational choices, so that they can make the best of educational and career opportunities.

Career counselors have a very important role to play in preparing young people for the world of work. This means helping them identify their own talents and skills, giving them up-to-date labor market information, and guiding them towards a suitable and viable educational and career path that will reward them with a meaningful and productive life.

In order to do your job effectively as a career counselor, it is important that you have a good understanding of your roles and duties, the situation of your clients, and what it takes to be a successful career counselor.

Part 1 provides career counselors with this information. It explains the meaning of career guidance and why career guidance and counseling for youth is important. It also gives a brief overview of the employment situation of Timorese youth and the government’s youth employment policy. Finally, it lays out the roles and key competencies of a career counselor, and explains the career counseling processes.

2. What is career guidance?¹

Career guidance is about:

a) advising people on how to find and keep a job
b) advising students to choose courses of study and training suitable for them
c) both a) and b)

If you choose a) or b) you are partly right. The correct answer is c). As you will see in the definition below, career guidance is not just about advising people on finding a job. It also means guiding them to make good choices in education and training that will lead to gainful employment in a choice of occupation best suited for each individual. Career guidance includes both educational and vocational guidance, linking learning and work.

2.1. Definition of career guidance

Career guidance generally means “services and activities” intended to help people to make “educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers.”² More specifically, this includes:

- Make information about labor market and about educational and employment opportunities accessible to potential job seekers, including students, fresh graduates, unemployed workers and workers looking for career change
- Organize, systematize and have such information available when and where people need it, for example at the career counseling centers, in schools and training centers, on public notice boards, or on the Internet
- Help people, especially young people, to reflect on their personal attributes, interests and aspirations and to evaluate their own skills and qualifications, and match these with training and employment opportunities
- Give advice to workers on how to manage their career, from finding the right job and how to keep it, to upgrading their skills and make the best of their career choice.

2.2. Career guidance to achieve social goals

A recent research conducted in Europe³ revealed that career guidance, counseling and providing career-related information is very beneficial in aiding society to achieve three important goals:

- **Lifelong learning** – Preventing early school dropouts, ensuring a knowledge and skills base to meet the challenges of the increasingly knowledge-based globalized economy, and promoting linkages between education, training and the world of work
- **Labor market efficiency** – Reducing mismatches between supply and demand for labour, addressing unemployment, and improving labor mobility
- **Social equity and inclusion** – Promoting reintegration of marginalized and at-risk groups into education, training and employment, and including previously excluded groups into general training programs and labour market services.⁴

2.3. Career guidance services and activities

Career guidance usually has five components. As you can see, counseling is just one part, albeit very important. Providing career information and education and job placement services make up other key components.

(1) **Career information** – Providing necessary career information is the cornerstone of all career guidance services. The information will help those who need it to plan for, obtain and keep the employment, whether paid or voluntary employment. The information provided generally includes, but is not limited to, information on choices of occupations, skills, career paths, learning opportunities, educational and training

³ A research conducted by the OECD, the World Bank, the European Center for the Development of Vocational Education and Training and the European Training Foundation, in Hansen, *Career Guidance*, p. 2.
institutions, government and non-government programs and services, and job opportunities.

(2) **Career education** – Career education gives people, especially students and potential job seekers, knowledge of the labour market. It helps young people understand their motives and values, and how to be part of their community and contribute to society. It equips them with skills to make education or training, and life or work choices, and tools to plan a career. Career education is delivered in educational institutions and sometimes in community organizations by teachers, career guidance counselors, or community leaders.

(3) **Career counseling** – Career counseling helps people to identify their talents and skills, clarify their aims and aspirations, and make informed career decisions. Career counselors assist clients in medium- and long-term career planning. They also help them to manage their career, as well as facilitate career transitions. It is the career counselor’s job to ensure that the clients commit to and follow the plan of action.

(4) **Employment counseling** – This basically means helping people to get and keep a job. More specifically, counseling people to identify their immediate employment goals, and to understand and access job and skill training opportunities. It also involves helping people to learn the skills needed to get and stay employed, for example, resume writing, preparing for a job interview, dealing with conflicts at work, etc.

(5) **Job placement** – Job placement involves job matching, arranging for or referring job seekers to job vacancies. Job placement services are provided by government or private agencies.5

3. **Why is career guidance important for youth?**

Young people are usually at a disadvantage in a competitive labor market generally because they lack experience and skills, as well as a good understanding of the labor market, to find a job. Many—especially students and first time job seekers—often don’t know what they want in life. They need guidance in clarifying their aspirations and goals, assessing their own skills and qualifications, and making informed life and work choices.

In the case of Timorese youth, a huge proportion lack a good understanding of the job market. They are uninformed of available career options and tend to have false and unrealistic expectations. For example, they all want the same type of salary jobs that are not enough to go around. This is partly due to little reliable labor market information available.

A youth employment study conducted by the ILO in 2007 study revealed that an overwhelming proportion of Timorese youth are poorly prepared for the job market. As much as 80 percent of surveyed employers said that young Timorese job seekers lacked general knowledge and over 60 percent said they lacked technical and professional skills. The youth themselves are well aware of their own inadequacy. Nearly 60 percent thought of

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themselves as having unsuitable type of education. Seventy percent felt they needed more education for the job and 53 percent felt too young and having little work experience.\(^6\)

**Weak linkages between training and education and the labor market, poor labor market information, as well as lack of appropriate career guidance for youth** have been blamed among the causes of high unemployment rates among Timorese youth. All these findings call for a systematic youth career guidance and counseling in Timor-Leste.

The need for career guidance is **critical during the school-to-work transition**, and even before. Career education from an early age helps young students to understand themselves and develop their own informed aspirations and expectations. It encourages exploration of self-identity, confidence and ability to identify the most suitable career path.

**Good preparation in job seeking is necessary for young people to make the right career choices for themselves and increase their chances of success.** In the medium and long term it also helps to reduce the problem of youth unemployment and underemployment.

### 4. What is the situation of Timorese youth employment?

Youth have a **significant relevance to national development and future.** It is often said that youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow. How young people fare today is a good indication of how the country will fare in the future. Their situations can have a strong social, economic and political impact on the country—as has been demonstrated in the recent past for Timor-Leste.

#### 4.1. Timor-Leste “youth employment challenge”

Timor-Leste is a young country not only in terms of history but also in demographics. Nearly half (48%) of the total population is under the age of 17, and almost 30 percent are youth—those aged between 15 and 29 years old. This young segment of the population is growing only larger, given the population large growth rate of 5.8 percent.\(^7\)

Although educational attainment has increased, particularly among younger Timorese, the current level of education and skills still fall short of the labor market demands. **Low education and skills combined with a mismatch between the supply of education and training and the skills demanded by the labor market** have negatively affected the labor market efficiency. The formal sector, mainly the government, the private sector and the non-governmental organizations including the United Nations and international agencies, can provide waged employment to only 12 percent of the labor force—a mere fraction.\(^8\)

Slow economic growth means there are few new jobs created each year. The small and still underdeveloped industry means the labor market is unable to absorb new entrants and reduce the backlog of the unemployed. To make matters worse, labor market information is not accessible to young job seekers; hiring practices are not transparent, putting job seekers outside the networks of connections at a disadvantage.

\(^6\) See International Labour Organization (ILO) and Secretary of State for Vocational Training and Employment (SSFOPE), *Youth Employment Study – Timor-Leste 2007*.


Not surprisingly, all these have contributed to the unusually high unemployment rates among young Timorese—a staggering 59% in Dili, 43% in the urban areas, over 20% in the rural areas. Many of the 15,000 – 20,000 young Timorese men and women entering the job market every year are left jobless and disheartened. With no waged jobs, they make do with low-pay, low-value, low-productivity and low-security jobs in the informal sector.9

Lack of employment has been the primary concern for youth. Many of them also feel that they have made a contribution to the independence struggle but are given little opportunity to contribute to the development of the country. They lack both skills and means to make themselves useful and their voices heard.10 Undoubtedly these frustrations about jobs and their roles in society played some role in recent youth-related agitation and violence.

A large and growing young population can be either an asset or a liability, depending on how the country chooses to manage it. Timor-Leste can choose to address this difficult “youth employment challenge” in a positive and proactive manner, with a clear strategy and plan to mitigate the problem and implement workable solutions. Doing so it will turn this large pool of young Timorese into a human capital, by giving them opportunities to engage in productive activities and thereby ensuring the country’s path to sustained prosperity.

Alternatively, if it chooses to neglect this youth challenge, it can expect more difficulties in continuing unemployment, poverty and social exclusion among its young population, which will most certainly exacerbate social and economic instability in the country.


The Government of Timor-Leste has responded with a strategy to make Timorese youth into a valuable asset of the nation. The Youth Employment Action Plan (YEAP) 2007 adopted by the government aims to tackle the youth employment challenge on four fronts: (1) employment generation, (2) employability, (3) entrepreneurship, and (4) equal opportunities.11

(1) Employment generation – Given the structural limitations of the country’s economy and labor market, the situation calls for a new approach to macro-economic and employment policy that will create jobs, especially for young workers. This involves the following actions:

- **Investing in labor-intensive public works programs** that are “youth-oriented” in their employment creation; employing young, unemployed workers in the improvement of infrastructure such as irrigation systems, forestation, urban sanitation, schools and community centers
- **Providing subsidized/training wages** to encourage employers to hire young workers and contribute towards training
- **Promoting productive employment opportunities in sectors that have high youth employment intensity**, particularly the agricultural sector where 77 percent of

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11 *Timor-Leste Youth Employment Action Plan (YEAP) 2007.*
working youth are employed; incorporating more modern agricultural techniques and value-added and higher-return agricultural activities

- Exploiting new opportunities for youth in emerging sectors such as tourism, media, information technology, education, health and service industries
- Protecting the rights of young workers in the informal sectors and facilitating formalization of informal economic activities by making it easier for young people to engage in self-employment; increasing access to training and business start-up resources, simplifying business regulations, formalizing employment contracts, and improving working standards

(2) **Employability** – There is a clear need to address supply-side distortions and to improve synergies between demand and supply of youth skills and expertise. Also, youth employability needs to be considered in a broader sense, in that it encompasses skills, knowledge and competencies that enhance a young person’s ability to secure and retain a job, as well as to excel at work and cope with change. The functionality of the supply-side intermediaries such as schools, vocational institutions and universities, career guidance and information mechanisms need to be reviewed and strengthened.

- Reducing the proportion of youth who enter the labor market prematurely by employing measures to reduce the drop-out rates at the primary level, increase the enrolment rates at the junior and secondary levels, and withdraw children from child labor and reintegrate them into formal or alternative education
- Establishing linkage support programs between educational institutions and the business/commercial sector that will set up internship, work experience scheme, apprenticeship and on-the-job training, and address the skills mismatch problem by involving employers in the development of school and vocational training curricula
- Establishing a Labour Force Development Institute (LFDI) that functions as a standards and competency board for vocational education and serves to accredit vocational training providers, establish (in partnership with the relevant ministry sectors) national competency standards and develop a national qualifications framework
- Launching Youth Career Centers (YCC) that serves to improve labor market information, provide employment and career counseling, facilitate in finding work, and provide other support services to assist young people in their employment search
- Providing soft-skills training programs to enhance productivity of working youth and to increase employability of unemployed youth, for example organization, time management, communication, team working, leadership and service delivery skills

(3) **Entrepreneurship** – Timorese youth need encouragement and assistance to develop and foster entrepreneurial spirit and drive. There is a widespread misconception among them that self-employment is the means of last resort: only 3 percent of in-school youth and 14 percent of out-of-school youth want to be self-employed. This is because they tend to see self-employment as low-value, low-prestige activities such as selling petty goods and services from kiosks or off the road-side stalls. Another

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major obstacle for young people to become serious entrepreneurs is the lack of capital and resources to start-up a business. Hence the responses are:

- **Supply-side measures to promote a vibrant youth entrepreneurial culture and help to develop business acumen among youth;** introducing entrepreneurship curricula in secondary schools and universities, and providing specialized training in entrepreneurship (e.g. starting up a business, management and productivity improvement) at vocational training institutions

- **Promoting self-employment by individual and institutional support;** using experienced and successful business people are “role models,” mentors and coaches, to inspire young people to see self-employment as a genuine and viable career alternative, and the Youth Career Centers can also facilitate access to work space or business incubators for new entrepreneurs

- **Correcting credit market failures by introducing formal credit lending facilities that serve self-employed youth;** addressing the need for credits among youth in the form of financial grants, low-interest loans, youth-specific micro-credit schemes; the Youth Career Centers can serve as facilitators in exploring strategic alliances with finance institutions (banks, micro-credit institutions) to provide credit schemes to young entrepreneurs

(4) **Equal opportunities** – The gender gap in employment among male and female youth, as well as in the general population, is still large. A significant minority of youth (29% of in-school youth and 23% of out-of-school youth) perceive inequality between the sexes in vocational education. Sex segregation in educational and vocational fields means more Timorese men are working in “heavy” technical jobs in engineering, electrical and construction, while women are concentrated in “soft” occupations like handicrafts, weaving, salt making, bakeries and tailoring, as well as petty trades such as selling fruits and vegetables.13

This sex segregation has had a negative impact on the choices of employment and career opportunities for young Timorese women. In addition, traditional attitude that considers a woman’s career as secondary to her role as mother and housekeeper prevents many young women to participate fully the job market. While putting family first is a good traditional value, confining women to family-related activities and certain occupations also has disadvantages in modern economy. Firstly, women are deprived of several career choices and better paying jobs. Secondly, many young families are also missing a chance to have double income and improved standards of living. Thirdly, society misses an opportunity to benefit from women as a valuable human capital to advance national economic development and social progress.

To promote equality between men and women in employment and opportunities to contribute to nation building, two key measures are recommended:

- **Disabling gender stereotypes in curricula and gender segregation in education;** making school curricula and vocational education more gender sensitive, providing career guidance services that are gender equal in perspective in schools and colleges, promoting gender awareness campaign among policy makers,

educators, vocational training providers, employers and youth to ensure a gender-

equal learning environment

- Creating institutional capacity to advance gender equality goals and monitor
changes in attitudes and practices in employment and education; developing
practical tools for data collection and gender analysis of the labor market,
education and vocational training; building capacity among government agencies
to design and implement strategies to promote gender equality in the labor market;
and make government offices into model employers with gender-equal
recruitment and employment practices

5. What makes an effective career counselor?¹⁴

A career counselor needs to have a set of general, basic
competencies, in other words attitudes, knowledge and
skills that all career guidance practitioners should have. These are called core competencies.

5.1. Core competencies

There are four main areas of career counselor’s core
competencies as follows:

(1) Professional behavior – A career counselor must
demonstrate appropriate ethical behavior and
professional conduct in the fulfillment of his/her
roles and responsibilities, specifically:
• Follow the code of ethics and apply ethical
decision-making model (see Annex 1)
• Demonstrate a commitment to lifelong
learning and professional development
• Demonstrate advocacy and leadership in
advancing clients’ learning, career develop-
ment and personal concerns
• Follow case and project management
procedures
• Carry out duties in a timely and responsible
manner
• Use analytical skills and focus on solutions

(2) Interpersonal competence – A career counselor
needs to demonstrate effective interpersonal
communication skills, namely:
• Recognize diversity and respect social,
cultural and gender differences among clients and colleagues
• Work effectively with others in the team

¹⁴ Information about roles and competencies of career counselor is taken and adapted from the Canadian
Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners, 2004: www.career-dev-guidelines.org/career-
development-handbook; and Hansen, Career Guidance, op cited.
• Use good listening, verbal and writing skills to foster communicative and collaborative interactions with clients
• Use facilitation techniques with individuals and groups
• Give clear explanation of services and constructive feedback to clients
• Encourage client self-reliance and self-management

(3) **Career development knowledge** – A career counselor must have a good understanding and appreciation of career development, specifically:
• Demonstrate knowledge of lifelong career development process
• Keep up-to-date with educational, training and employment trends, labor market development and social issues
• Apply and integrate theory and research into practice in career guidance, career development, counseling and consultation
• Identify major components of the career planning process
• Identify major organizations resources and community-based services for career development available
• Have skills to design, implement and evaluate guidance and counseling programs and interventions

(4) **Needs assessment and referral** – One important responsibility of all career counselors is to guide clients to identify their own interests and values and assess their skills and qualifications, so that educational or career choices can be appropriately identified. This means a career counselor needs to:
• Respond to clients’ needs
• Have adequate familiarity with assessment tools and methods
• Know how to use basic assessment tools and methods to work with clients to identify and clarify goals
• Understand their capacity and limitations
• Share assessment results with clients, ensure that the clients understand the results including any limitations of the results, and compare the results with clients’ goals
• Match clients with jobs or refer clients to appropriate employment or training sources

5.2. **Specialized competencies**

In simple work settings, core competencies may be sufficient to deliver career guidance services, but in other settings where service delivery is comprehensive career counselors need to have additional **specialized competencies**.

In developed countries where career guidance and counseling is well established, staff of a career counseling center as a whole will likely combine all of the following specialized competencies although individual counselors may choose to develop expertise in different specialties.

In Timor-Leste where career guidance and counseling is still new, career counselors will need to develop the following specialized competencies.
(1) **Assessment** – Career counselors with assessment expertise need to have a very good knowledge of assessment instruments and methods. They know the difference between standardized and non-standardized assessment, and have a good idea what to assess and which assessment tools are appropriate for different groups of clients (e.g. women, men, youth, older people, people with high or low education, people with disabilities, people from different languages and cultures).

They must be able to perform the following:

- Identify areas of assessment.
- Identify standardized and informal assessment instruments and methods to assess these areas.\(^\text{15}\)
- Determine applicability and appropriateness of instruments and methods for individual and group clients.
- Use available sources to learn about clients (e.g. resumes, discussion with clients, past tests, portfolios, work samples).
- Determine assessment goals and expectations of clients of the assessment.
- Explain to clients the assessment process and any limitations of the chosen instruments and methods.
- Conduct assessments with clients (administer the selected instruments, follow procedures and score results).
- Interpret data accurately and thoroughly and ensure results are valid (e.g. check for consistency with clients’ profiles, use validity scales, consider clients’ perceptions regarding validity of the performances).
- Review and validate results with clients (e.g. compare results with clients’ goals, compare results of standardized assessments with informal clients’ assessment if any, consider limitations of the assessments and results, make sure clients understand their results).
- Help clients examine their own interests, skills, goals, and commitment levels.
- Help clients assess their strengths and barriers, considering:

- **cognitive domain** (e.g. potential, learning styles)
- **affective domain** (e.g. self-concepts, personality traits, values, work environment preferences)
- **behavioral domain** (e.g. achievements, work histories)
- **contextual domain** (e.g. ethnicity, culture, life roles, career maturity, spirituality)

- Work with clients to identify the next steps, review clients’ plans and revise the action plans if necessary
- Identify situations that might require referring clients to specialized services
- Initiate and facilitate effective referral for the clients to the appropriate sources
- Keep up-to-date with changes in the field of career development assessment.

(2) **Educational guidance** – In most countries educational institutions, including schools, technical or vocational training institutes and universities, have guidance counselors who provide career education and counseling to students. In cases where guidance counselors are not among the staff of the education institutions, career counselors from career guidance institutions may come in to provide the services in collaboration with teachers. Some youth and community leaders may also develop this expertise and provide educational guidance as part of their community services.

Educational guidance counselors need to:
- Demonstrate concerns for students’ potential and skills to facilitate their achievement
- Help students to improve self-awareness and develop viable career aspirations
- Give students information about current labor market situation and educational and career options
- Guide individuals or groups of students to develop educational plans and career paths
- Help students in their course selection and decision making process
- Help students to overcome learning difficulties
- Motivate students to take part in social activities and cultural exchange programs that will broaden their perspective and enhance their potential
- Consult with parents or guardians of students on educational progress and development
- Help teachers to improve teaching methodologies and to implement guidance within the school curriculum
- Consult with parents, teachers, tutors, social workers, administrators and other agents to enhance their work with students
- Coordinate and stimulate students’ creativity to build their own programs (studies and work)

### Notes on assessment tools
- Assessment instruments and methods are constantly being created and updated. Keep up with the changes in the field.
- Assessment tools only complement career development process; they do not replace it.
- Assessment tools should be culturally sensitive and appropriate for clients.
- Different clients require different assessment methods.
- Be aware of the validity and reliability of standardized assessment instruments and the trustworthiness of informal methods.
- Give clients an opportunity to retest if they are dissatisfied with the results of the assessments.
Use an effective referral process for assisting students and others to use special programs, services and networks.

(3) **Work development** – Career counselors who specialize in work development focus on developing opportunities for clients and guiding them on job search strategies. They primarily liaise with employers and job sources, develop and maintain an up-to-date pool of work-related opportunities, conduct job placement, and support clients to maintain employment.

Career counselors specializing in work development need to:

- Determine the target job market (identify potential employers and clients’ employment goals, and compare employers’ and clients’ profiles)
- Liaise and maintain contact with employers and job sources such as government agencies, non-profit organizations, unions and employment-related agencies, as well as training and educational institutions
- Identify employers’ needs and expectations (e.g. number and type of vacancies available and skills required) and screen employers (according to their needs and suitability, clients’ skills, wages and benefits offered, and potential problems)
- Negotiate workplace opportunities and agreements with employers for clients (e.g. employment contracts, training opportunities, wage subsidies, benefits)
- Present job vacancies and work-related opportunities, including self employment, to clients and facilitate appropriate job selection
- Coach clients on job search strategies and skills to enhance chances of success (clarify clients’ needs, interests, goals, qualifications and work conditions desired, and help clients to identify job sources, complete job application, prepare for interviews and personal presentations)
- Monitor progress and follow up and seek feedback from clients, employers and co-workers on the appropriateness of the job search strategies and job placement
- Identify problems concerning job matches and strategies to solve the problems with clients and employers (e.g. propose additional skills training if clients’ skills are inadequate, mediate conflicts, find another job option if the job match is unsuitable, or explore self-employment opportunities with clients)
- Maintain employer information files and a database of employers and job sources (document employer contacts and follow-up and regularly update the information)
- Identify and keep informed about relevant employment legislation (e.g. occupational health and safety, employment standards, wages, employment equity, workers’ compensation).

(4) **Counseling** – Those specializing in career and employment counseling need to have knowledge of career development issues and the dynamics of vocational behavior (e.g. decision making in career change and transition). They should have a thorough understanding of theories and models of career development and counseling.\(^{16}\) They

\(^{16}\) There are a number of theories and models of career development and counseling which often have a basis in the fields of psychology and social theories. Major career development theories and models are, for example, *developmental* (Super, Pelletier, Noiseux and Bujold), *trait-factor* (Holland), *social learning* (Krumholz, Mitchell), *constructivist* (Peavy), *decision making* (Janis and Mann, Harren, D’Zurilla and Goldfried, Tiedeman, Gati, Falardeau and Roy), *contextual factors* (Betz, Hackett, Astin, Riverin-Simard, Spain), and *work development* (Fournier, Limoges, Allard and Ouellet). Those pertaining to counseling are, for example, *behaviorist* (Wolpe, Skinner), *choice theory* (Glasser), *cognitive* (Piaget, Kohlberg), *cognitive-behavioral* (Ellis, Meichenbaum), *constructivist* (Mahoney), *feminist* (Gilligan), *humanist* (Rogers, Maslow), and *psycho-
should also be highly competent in assessment and facilitating clients in both one-on-one and group settings.

Counselors with counseling expertise must be able to:
• Explain major theories and models pertaining to career development and counseling
• Have knowledge of decision making and transition models to prepare and plan for transitional stages of clients (e.g. school-to-work transition, career shifts, retirement, job dismissal, downsizing)
• Synthesize theories and models to establish and continually refine a personally-held method of practice with clients, which integrates interdependence of life planning, work and society
• Identify sources of labor market information, and apply it in career counseling
• Keep up-to-date with various types of educational, training or employment opportunities and resources available, and evaluate the quality and appropriateness of these opportunities and resources for clients
• Understand the main factors related to the personal development of clients and the dynamics of their individual behavior
• Use individual and group counseling techniques (see (7) facilitation below)
• Identify influencing factors (family, friends, educational and financial constraints and opportunities) and biases attitudes (that stereotype others by race, gender, age, social status and culture) in career decision making
• Explore issues and help clients understand relevant aspects of their situations (e.g. personal characteristics, aspirations, interests and values, family and community contexts affecting careers, attitudes towards work, barriers, and career decision-making process)
• Identify barriers to career development in clients (e.g. clients may be dealing with language or literacy issues, discrimination, disabilities or gender issues, or struggling with addiction or family dysfunction; they may have unrealistic self perception, low motivation, lack of work ethics, or difficulties dealing with unemployment or illness; they may face organizational challenges such as restrictive policies or workplace accommodation issues, etc.)
• Help clients prioritize issues and guide them on developing a career plan
• Coach clients on job search strategies and skills to enhance chances of success (clarify clients’ needs, interests, goals, qualifications and work conditions desired, and help clients to identify job sources, complete job application, prepare for interviews and personal presentations)
• Establish and maintain a collaborative relationship with clients that is respectful, engaging, motivating and non-judgmental

Tips on counseling
Career and employment counseling is a continuous process. Counselors guide clients to solve specific work or life issues and help them develop a personal life and career plan.

An effective counselor:
• follows up with clients during different stages of the career counseling process
• is respectful, non-judgmental and empathetic
• helps clients to develop self-esteem and be goal-oriented
• detects clients who are at risk and refers them to other specialized services
• looks for patterns with clients and use this information to adjust future practice.
• Monitor progress and adjust the process and goals as necessary to increase probability of success, and keep records of the outcomes.

(5) **Information and resource management** – Having an up-to-date information and resource system is extremely important for the effectiveness of career guidance services and activities. Typically an organization that provides employment and career counseling services has at least one staff member responsible for information and resource management. Such staff members normally have a degree or are professionally trained in library sciences, information management or related fields.

Their job is to develop and maintain an information resource base for the career counseling center. The information must be organized systematically and easy to access by clients, career counselors and other staff members. Specifically, information and resource management officers need to:

• Appreciate the important role of information and resource management in career development and have necessary information management skills required
• Identify available information from various sources (e.g. government agencies, professional journals and publications, public or commercial career development-related resources, Internet sources, experienced colleagues)
• Consider and anticipate the needs for information of clients, staff and community
• Collect up-to-date career development information to meet identified needs.
• Organize the information using a classification system or a combination of systems that is logical, easy to use and flexible for continued expansion (e.g. by month/year, by industry or group of occupations, by subject such as job search techniques, occupations, employment opportunities, working overseas)
• Use information technologies to provide educational and occupational information to clients and staff (e.g. using databases, computer-based educational and career guidance programs, the Internet)
• Facilitate access to information of clients, staff and community by:
  - answering questions
  - directing them to appropriate resources
  - expanding their range of options
  - providing instructions, when necessary, to ensure that they are able to locate and use resources, and do research
  - encouraging clients to apply information to career planning and decision making
• Coach clients on job search strategies and skills to enhance chances of success in the job search (clarify clients’ needs, interests, goals, qualifications and work conditions desired, and help clients to identify job sources, complete job application, prepare for interviews and personal presentations)
• Update information and resources on an ongoing basis and determine when to eliminate dated information

[Career development information]
- occupations (content and skills and competencies required)
- educational and training opportunities
- job vacancies
- self-employment opportunities
- information for migrant workers
- labor market trends
- labor laws
- financial assistance
- job search strategies
- employers' profiles
- instruments for self-assessment, action planning and career guidance
• Track patterns of information requests and incorporate these patterns in future planning.

(6) **Program/service management** – In any organization that provides career guidance and counseling, program managers, or sometimes counselors in supervisory positions, are responsible for program or service management. They are the ones who have “the big picture.” This means it is their job to manage the operation and to ensure that the program and service delivery of the organization as a whole is well run and meets the set objectives and target.

Program/service managers need to:
• Have sound knowledge and experience in career development field
• Have proven skills to organize and manage educational, guidance, counseling and placement services
• Keep up-to-date with relevant literature, trends and issues in the field
• Identify target populations for career development, guidance and counseling
• Conduct needs assessment prior to the planning and implementation of programs
• Inventory resources relevant to program planning and implementation
• Manage (design, implement and supervise) programs and interventions
• Evaluate effectiveness of programs and interventions
• Use results to enhance programs by recommending institutional improvements
• Manage and supervise personnel and staff development
• Promote community awareness of the program and services.

In addition to organization and management, program/service managers need to have **research and evaluation** competencies. In this respect, the managers must:
• Have knowledge of research methodologies, data gathering and analysis techniques (including gender analysis)
• Promote research projects on career development, guidance and counseling
• Use presentation methods to report the outcomes of the research
• Interpret results of the research
• Integrate and motivate staff members to integrate the research results into the guidance and counseling practice
• Apply up-to-date evaluation models and methods in the evaluation of guidance programs and interventions.

(7) **Facilitation** – Career guidance and counseling requires an intensive degree of human contacts and interpersonal communication. A large part of the career counselors’ job involves personal interviews and consultations, and group facilitation. Therefore all career counselors must have adequate knowledge and skills to facilitate individual and group learning. To ensure this competency among staff, a career development organization needs to have a source of this expertise within the organization. These could be the program manager or career counselors among the staff.

Career counselors with facilitation expertise need to:

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• Describe commonly accepted principles of facilitated learning in career counseling.
• Have knowledge and skills in various facilitation techniques and be able to choose appropriate techniques to address clients’ different learning styles and facilitate their learning, for example:
  - **brainstorming**: generating ideas within a group without evaluation and selection
  - **career fair**: representatives from various work and educational institutions set up displays to present information about their companies or institutions
  - **case study**: a scenario based on a real work situation or problem
  - **coaching**: a collaborative approach used to enhance performance and motivate individuals or groups towards goal achievement
  - **demonstration**: performing skills while describing it
  - **field trip**: a planned visit to a specific area or site to study it
  - **game**: two or more individuals participate in a fun, hands-on activity (for the purpose of learning)
  - **group discussion**: exchanging information among people in a group
  - **guest speaker**: a knowledgeable person is invited to speak and/or answer questions
  - **job shadowing**: an individual spends time with a person on the job to observe what they job responsibilities are and what knowledge, skills and attitudes are required to fulfill those responsibilities
  - **learning circle**: participants sit in a circle and speak in turn without interruption
  - **lecture**: a verbal presentation to explain and teach (with little interaction with the audience)
  - **mentoring**: matching an individual with a knowledgeable and motivated person who guides the individual’s professional and personal development
  - **modeling**: using self to demonstrate appropriate behavior
  - **multi-media**: a combination of media forms used to stimulate learning
  - **panel**: a structured presentation that allows a person with expertise to share knowledge, attitudes and/or skills on a given topic with an audience
  - **project**: an exercise for which participants follow a designed process to come up with individual results (e.g. personal presentation, marketing plan)
  - **reflection**: thoughtful consideration of one’s learning (e.g. journal writing)
  - **retreat**: a learning experience that takes place away from the work environment
  - **role-playing**: an unrehearsed, informal dramatization in which clients act out a prescribed scenario
  - **small group activity**: dividing a large group into sub-groups of two or more to encourage participation

Facilitated learning principles

- Clients are their own experts about who they are, what they know and what they want to learn.
- Clients bring prior experiences, strengths and challenges to learning situations.
- Clients learn best when they can relate the learning to their own life and previous knowledge.
- Clients need to take responsibilities for and are capable of directing their own learning (although some may need extra help).
- Clients look to the facilitator for leadership, especially at the beginning of a learning situation when more structure and support are needed.
- Clients have different learning styles therefore a variety of techniques should be used to enhance learning.
- **Storytelling**: sharing past experiences about self or others (e.g. clients are asked to share success stories to motivate other clients)
- **Volunteering**: individual provide services to an organizations and in return gain work experience and contacts
- **Work Experience**: individuals spend time on the job to learn through training and experience about the responsibilities, knowledge, skills and attitudes required for a particular job

- Prepare for program/service delivery by reviewing the plan, content, delivery process, learning materials, and evaluation methods, specifically:
  - allow adequate time for preparation
  - ensure a good knowledge of the content through research and consultation
  - review past experiences in the delivery of programs with similar objectives and purposes, identify challenges and come up with options to deal with them
  - identify the needs of clients and objectives
  - select specific content and review/develop materials to present to clients that are appropriate for their needs
  - identify effective delivery processes and the learning techniques to use
  - develop a marketing plan (for service delivery) for internal stakeholders and external partners
  - determine desired learning outcome of clients (i.e. what they should learn at the end of the program or learning exercise)
  - select the evaluation methods (e.g. surveys, focus groups), design evaluation instruments as required, and choose evaluators (the evaluation should cover both content and process, the expectations of clients and the sponsoring organization, and whether the objectives are met)

- Determine program/service delivery logistics (e.g. budget, location, size of group, time frame, logistical support needed)

- Determine clients’ existing competencies by:
  - listening to clients’ experiences (focus on strengths, abilities and experienced challenges that impact learning)
  - asking questions to identify the barriers that clients perceive as obstacles (e.g. age, gender, language, lack of skills, work history, personal issues)
  - reviewing portfolio, if available
  - determining clients’ commitment
  - reviewing assessment results, if available

- Delivery program or service that meet clients’ needs and maximize clients’ learning. Facilitate clients’ learning in a step-by-step process:
  - set the stage for the session (either one-on-one or in a group)
  - orient clients to the topic by discussing the purpose of the session (e.g. how the learning can be applied and help client)

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**Tips on clients’ competencies**

Career counselors need to create learning activities that are compatible with clients’ competencies in order to enhance success.

- Determine clients’ competencies during initial contact so that appropriate learning can be incorporated into interactions with clients.
- Be aware of the different levels of openness to learning and be sensitive to the learning capacity of clients.
- Give opportunities for clients to explore their preferred learning styles.
- Sometimes clients have low opinion of themselves but their true abilities become obvious later as they gain more confidence. Be flexible and sometimes re-evaluate clients’ competencies throughout the process.
- use the session plan as a guide (but be flexible for any emerging clients’ needs and take advantage of ‘teachable’ moments, when clients are open to learning particular things)
- communicate ideas and interact effectively with clients (e.g. ask questions, acknowledge and build on clients’ comments, summarize ideas)
- use analysis and feedback skills to facilitate understanding
- support clients’ self-directed learning by showing them how and where to find information and how to use the information appropriately
- conduct evaluation to get clients’ feedback
- close the session by summarizing key points of the discussion and helping clients to reflect on their experiences of the learning and how they will apply what they have learned

- Conduct evaluation, analyze the feedback, follow up with the original individuals or groups if necessary, and use the feedback to improve the content and delivery of the program or service

(8) **Coordination and community capacity building** – Sustainable career development is a result of connections between individuals and their community resources. Career development practitioners can play an important role in both maximizing opportunities for clients within the community and fostering community development. They can achieve this by promoting community partnership and participation to increase self-sufficiency and enhance productivity within the community.

Counselors focusing on coordination and community capacity building must:

- Have skills to initiate and maintain effective relationships with key community partners (e.g. government offices, NGOs, businesses, educational and training institutions, religious or community organizations, youth centers)

- Survey and conduct analysis of existing community human, physical and financial resources:
  - establish a human resource database by profiling community members and encourage involvement of community groups in the profiling process
  - analyze profile data to determine community strengths and organize human resources information according to economic sectors
  - make an inventory of public and private infrastructures (public and community services and businesses)
  - identify potential resources that can be developed (e.g. undeveloped sites, potential bus routes or other facilities)
  - train staff, volunteers and community helpers to profile individuals and identify resources

- Work with community partners to assess community capacity, specifically:

  
  Why is coordination and community capacity building important?
  - To better coordinate services for clients within the community
  - To connect clients with employment training and entrepreneurship opportunities and community resources
  - To help communities respond to the diverse needs of client groups and situations
  - To bring the community together to build a focused long-term strategy to reduce unemployment and promote economic growth
  - To establish and maintain resources that develop and engage the local labor force
  - To encourage use of local resources rather than depending on external services
  - To build a self-reliant community
- gather data and assess clients’ needs for community services in training, education, career development and employment, family and community support, financial services
- determine matches between current services provided and clients’ needs
- stimulate dialogue that focuses on discovering assets, gifts, abilities and resources of the community
- develop a link between community information channels and public services and businesses
- help community to establish structures and processes for tracking trends and patterns of needs

• Work with the community to develop a community vision and link the vision to labor market needs through workshops, public forums and group presentations

• Work with the community to determine the gaps between visions, goals and capacity

• Work with the community to develop action plans to address economic, social, educational and employment goals and help to ensure plans are realistic, attainable and measurable within reasonable timelines

• Work with the community to implement action plans:
  - encourage a sense of ownership by helping them to develop a core group of community partners to lead the implementation process
  - work with individuals to help them identify their roles
  - promote an environment that encourages sharing of resources and volunteerism

• Work with the community to evaluate action plans, specifically helping them to:
  - establish evaluation criteria
  - identify and create evaluation tools
  - collect and analyze data
  - create reports with recommendations
  - revisit plans and revise them as necessary

• Help the community and individuals identify employment and lifestyle alternatives to increase and introduce new work and educational options and to build an adaptable workforce, specifically:
  - identify specific skills in the human resource inventory and develop life-role profiles of individuals in the community (e.g. unemployed, underemployed, entrepreneurs, people in transition)
  - identify employment and income-generating gaps
  - develop and distribute materials on work alternatives such as:
    o entrepreneurship
    o self-employment
    o contracting
    o consulting
    o work sharing
    o talent pooling

**Tips on community capacity building**
- Fostering community development takes time. The role of the career development practitioner is to support the community’s efforts, not to drive them.
- Addressing economic, social, educational and employment goals is the community’s work. Career development practitioners can support this by acting as resources. They are not meant to lead these activities.
- Visioning, setting goals and planning require skilled facilitation and should be done with a group of committed and involved community citizens, businesses and organizations.
- Nuturing young talent is as important to the future of the community as is the development of the mature populations.
• Develop and deliver workshops on workability, basic life skills and on radical
change in the changing world of works
• Train volunteers as mentors and coaches (these people could be school
officials, community leaders or government officials responsible for labor
market initiatives)
• Work with local, national and international resource networks for educational and
vocational guidance.

5.3. Career counselor competency model

The core and specialized competencies of career counselors can be conceptualized in the
following graphic model as shown in Figure 1 below. Both types of competencies rest on the
foundation of the Code of Ethics (see Annex 1).

![Career Counselor Competency Model](image)

**Figure 1: Career Counselor Competency Model**
(Adapted from figure 1: Competency Model for Career Development Standards and Guidelines in
*Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners – Snapshot*, 2004, p. 7.)
6. Who are the target clients of the Youth Career Centers (YCCs)?

YCCs are established to serve youth. Youth here mean women and men aged between 15 and 29 years, single or married.

YCC target clients comprise the following groups of young women and men:

- Students in junior and senior secondary schools and vocational schools
- School leavers
- School drop-outs
- Students in post-secondary institutions (universities, technical colleges)
- Young unemployed men and women
- Young employed men and women seeking another job or career change
- Special groups (e.g. disabled workers, young unemployed mothers and fathers, demobilized soldiers, children in child labor, migrant workers returning from overseas, workers seeking jobs overseas)
- Young men and women seeking self-employment
- Enterprises (large, medium and small).

7. What are the job functions of YCC counselors?

Now that you know the core and specialized competencies of career counselors and how your clients are, this section describes the job functions and responsibilities of YCC counselors.

YCC counselors are given functions that correspond to YCC mission and mandate (see more details on YCC in Part 3). For effectiveness in operation, work is shared and divided among YCC counselors. While all YCC counselors share a set of basic job duties, the counselors are grouped according to three main specialized functions to streamline and serve main target clients effectively as follows:

1. **Schools-visiting counselors** – focusing mainly on providing career education and educational guidance to students at their schools, universities and vocational training institute; coordinating with educational and training institutions on preparing students for the job market; and improving linkage between education and training with the local labor market demands

2. **Employers-visiting counselors** – focusing mainly on coordinating with and providing services to enterprises and employers; creating and facilitating employment opportunities for clients through job placement, internships, apprenticeships, work-study programs, on-the-job training, as well as promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment among target clients

3. **Center-based counselors** – focusing on providing career and employment counseling services to clients at YCCs; providing labor market and career development information to clients and the public; ensuring seamless operation of center-based administrative work and service delivery.
7.1. Basic job functions of all YCC counselors

While the descriptions of the schools-visiting and employers-visiting counselors suggest that these two groups of counselors will be actively working outside of the center, this does not mean that only the center-based counselors are working in the office. All YCC counselors will spend sufficient amount of time in the office. It is likely that counselors may rotate duties in order to learn other aspects of the job.

All YCC counselors are required to perform a set of basic job functions including:

1) *Labor market information provision and dissemination*
   - Collect relevant and up-to-date labor market information (e.g. labor demands and supply in various economic sectors, occupational and labor market trends, new development on labor laws and small business regulations)
   - Collect relevant and up-to-date career development information (e.g. job vacancies, educational and training opportunities, self-employment opportunities, information about employers, job search strategies and tools, assistance programs and services available)
   - Provide and disseminate labor market information and career development information to clients, as well as career development programs and services provided at YCCs and by other service providers
   - Respond to requests for labor market and career development information from clients and the public as appropriate

2) *Client registration and initial needs determination*
   - Conduct client registration for YCC services
   - Conduct initial client interview to assess clients’ employment and counseling needs (see Unit 1: The First Interview in Part 2 and Phase 1 under 8.2 The individual needs determination process below)
   - Refer clients to appropriate YCC services or other service providers as appropriate for clients’ needs

3) *Job placement*
   - Register job vacancies and employment-related opportunities
   - Match suitable job seekers with recorded job vacancies
   - Refer suitable candidates to prospective employers and employment sources
   - Facilitate clients’ access to vocational training, skill upgrading, on-the-job training, internship and other employment-related opportunities

4) *Career guidance and counseling*
   - Help clients develop a suitable career path and a career plan
   - Help job seekers find their first job
   - Help unemployed clients to overcome employment difficulties and guide and support them to find employment
   - Help employed clients to maintain effective employment or guide them on career change
   - Provide support and guidance to job seekers on job search strategies and preparation (e.g. where and how to look for jobs, how to write resume, job application and cover letter, how to prepare for job interviews)
• Provide basic advisory services on self-employment (e.g. self-employment opportunities, legal and regulatory requirements for business start-up) and refer clients to entrepreneurship training opportunities and other support programs for self-employment

(5) Program and administrative support
• Implement and support career guidance programs and services as assigned
• Monitor and ensure quality of service delivery
• Collect and compile clients’ data for database purposes
• Regularly consult with YCC Coordinator on cases and problems
• Organize and file documents as appropriate
• Submit reports to YCC Coordinator as required
• Perform other tasks as needed and required.

7.2. Specialized job functions for schools-visiting counselors

YCC counselors in the schools-visiting category need to identify educational and training institutions in their area that they plan to target. They should compile a list and continue to maintain and update this list of their target clients.

In addition to the basic job functions in 7.1, they have specialized job functions as follows:

(1) School visits
• Conduct regular visits to formal, vocational and technical schools and universities to promote and help to establish career development (education, guidance and counseling) services at these institutions
• Coordinate with these institutions on the design, preparation and arrangement of career development activities prior to each visit
• Prepare in advance appropriate materials, tools and presentations to ensure professional delivery and successful execution of school-based activities
• Collect information regarding students’ employment process for analysis

(2) Youth employment promotion
• Give school-based clients (students, teachers and school administrators) information about YCCs
• Explain youth-targeted career development and employment programs and services by YCCs
• Provide information on job vacancies and employment-related opportunities
• Promote self-employment and entrepreneurship as a genuine and viable employment option to students

(3) Career education and educational guidance
• Provide students information about current labor market situation, particularly concerning youth employment
• Increase awareness among students about the reality of the labor market
• Help students to identify their own talents, skills and interests and consider different educational and career options
• Guide individuals or groups of students to develop viable educational or training plans and career paths
• Give students information about self-employment opportunities and facilitate their access to entrepreneurship training and opportunities to learn from experienced businesspeople and role models
• Encourage students and help them to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for employment
• Motivate and refer students to use special programs, services and networks to enhance their career development potential

(4) **Strengthening linkage between education and training and the labor market**
• Work with teachers, school administrators, parents, the community, and other agents to improve employability of students
• Help teachers to improve teaching methodologies and to include educational and career guidance in school curriculum
• Train teachers and school guidance counselors to deliver career guidance and counseling services to students
• Work with employers-visiting counselors to coordinate among educational and training institutions, employers and other relevant agencies, to create more training and employment opportunities for students (e.g. work-study, internship, apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs, subsidized wage employment programs).

7.3. **Specialized job functions for employers-visiting counselors**

YCC counselors in the employers-visiting category need to be connected with employers in both public and private sectors. In addition to government, non-governmental and community organizations, they need to establish and maintain contacts within the business community in their area and identify potential employers in large, medium and small enterprises.

They should also develop relationship with professionals and successful businesspeople who are potential employment sources and sources of contacts and ideas in creating and locating employment and training opportunities for YCC clients.

In addition to the basic job functions in 7.1, they have specialized job functions as follows:

(1) **Employer visits**
• Conduct regular visits to employers and employment sources
• Prepare appropriate information and materials prior to visits to ensure professional presentation and discussion with employers
• Identify employers’ needs and expectations (e.g. number and type of vacancies available and skills required) and screen employers (according to their needs and suitability, clients’ skills, wages and benefits offered, and potential problems)
• Maintain employer information files and a database of employers and job sources (document employer contacts and follow-up and update the files and database as the information changes)

(2) **Youth employment promotion**
• Give employers and employment sources information about YCCs and YCC youth-targeted employment programs and services
• Encourage employers to hire young workers through cooperation with YCCs to promote youth employment (with YCCs as a conduit to develop young workforce and to help employers to obtain better qualified workers)
• Obtain information on job vacancies, employment-related opportunities and self-employment opportunities from employers and employment sources
• Consult with professionals and the business community on creating self-employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for youth

(3) **Job placement**
• Share information on job vacancies, employment-related opportunities and self-employment and entrepreneurship opportunities with YCC offices and other YCC counselors
• Present job vacancies and employment-related opportunities, including self-employment, to clients and facilitate appropriate job selection
• Refer suitable candidates to employers and arrange for interviews
• Negotiate workplace opportunities and agreements with employers for clients (e.g. employment contracts, training opportunities, wage subsidies, benefits)
• Monitor progress and follow up and seek feedback from clients, employers and co-workers on the appropriateness of the job placement
• Identify problems concerning job matches and strategies to solve the problems with clients and employers

(4) **Strengthening linkage between education and training and the labor market**
• Seek cooperation from employers to create and cooperate in skill development and employment-creation programs for youth
• Liaise with schools-visiting counselors to coordinate among employers, educational and training institutions and other relevant agencies, to create more training and employment opportunities for students and young workers (e.g. work-study, internship, apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs, subsidized wage employment programs).

7.4. **Specialized job functions for center-based counselors**

Center-based YCC counselors focus on service delivery to clients who come to the center to receive guidance and counseling. For the most part, center-based counselors perform the basic job functions listed under 7.1, but they provide more in-depth services in such areas as needs assessment, counseling and facilitation, and case management. They are also responsible for information and resource management and research and evaluation.

Center-based counselors have the following specialized job functions:

(1) **Client needs assessment**
• Identify areas of assessment for individual or group clients
• Identify clients’ employment and counseling needs on the basis of four employability dimensions: (1) career decision making, (2) skills enhancement, (3) job search, and (4) employment maintenance (see Unit 2: Needs Assessment & Profiling in Part 2, and also 8.1 The client assessment and problem solving process and 8.2 The individual needs assessment process below).
• Use appropriate standardized or informal assessment tools with clients (administer the tests, follow procedure and score results; or give clear instructions to clients in case of self-administered tests – see Unit 2 in Part 2 and assessment under 5.2 above)
• Interpret assessment data accurately and thoroughly to ensure valid results
• Review and validate results with clients (e.g. compare results with clients’ goals, check clients’ perception of results, consider limitations of the assessments and results, make sure clients understand their results)
• Work with clients to identify the next steps (career guidance or specialized counseling according to needs, or referral to job matching and placement services or other employment assistance programs and services)

(2) Counseling and facilitation
• Use individual or group facilitation techniques to provide counseling services to clients (see facilitation under 5.2 above)
• Help clients to understand their situation, examine their own interests, values and skills, clarify their career goals (see counseling under 5.2 above)
• Work with clients to assess their strengths and barriers for employment
• Help clients prioritize issues and develop an action plan (see Unit 4: Career Planning in Part 2, and also 8.1 Phase 3, 8.2 Phase 3, and 8.3 The client action plan below)
• Coach clients on job search strategies and skills
• Help clients develop attitudes and skills to maintain effective employment
• Help clients in developing strategies for self-employment

(3) Case management
• Ensure quality and continuity of services to clients by following the case management process (see 8.4 The case management process below)

(4) Information and resource management
• Organize labor market, career development and other information at the center in a system that is logical, easy-to-access and flexible to expand (e.g. by month/year, by industry or group of occupations, by subject such as job search techniques, occupations, employment opportunities, working overseas)
• Use information technologies to provide educational and occupational information to clients and staff (e.g. using databases, computer-based educational and career guidance programs, the Internet)
• Update information and resources on an ongoing basis and determine when to eliminate dated information
• Track patterns of information requests and incorporate these patterns in future planning (see information and resource management under 5.2 above).

8. What are the career guidance and counseling processes?

There are different but interrelated processes in career and employment counseling. The following processes have been developed for front-line career guidance counselors working on a day-to-day basis in schools, government employment and career institutions, or private agencies.
The four key processes as follows:\textsuperscript{18}

- The counseling assessment and problem-solving process
- The individual needs determination process
- The client action plan
- The case management process.

8.1. The counseling assessment and problem-solving process

This process is an assessment component of career counseling. It helps the career counselor to understand that his/her role within the total delivery of services is based on the unique employment-related needs of each client.

There are 12 steps of action in four phases in this process, which is particularly \textbf{applicable to clients who are unemployed or having difficulties finding a job} and seeking immediate employment. The process is best conducted in individual interviews.

Phase 1: Identification of the employment difficulty

\textbf{Step 1. Establish a collaborative relationship}
- Mutual respect and sincerity
- Agreement as to the nature of the work to do together
- Free sharing of information
- Respect for the privacy of the client.

\textbf{Step 2. State the employment challenge, obstacle or difficulty}
- No need to go into specifics at this point
- Obtain the client’s perspective on the issue.

\textbf{Step 3. Formulate the statement of employment difficulty}
- Use the client’s words
- Define the cause of employment difficulty from the client’s perception.

\textbf{Step 4. Establish the purpose of the interview}
- Introduce the purpose of the interview (which is to identify the client’s employment needs and come up with a plan to achieve the client’s employment goal)
- Verify the client’s motivation to the process
- Pay attention to signs of resistance in the client.

Phase 2: Clarification of the employment difficulty

\textbf{Step 5. Clarify the cognitive, affective, behavioral and contextual aspects of the difficulty}
- Identify the client’s thoughts, perceptions and assumptions
- Determine the client’s feelings and emotions resulting from the difficulty

\textsuperscript{18} The four processes have been developed by Catherine Casserly of the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development, Canada, cited in Hansen, \textit{Career Guidance}, pp. 98-106. The content of all four processes here is retained. The content is slightly simplified and information is added for clarity.
• Identify the actions which the client has undertaken in order to resolve his/her difficulty
• Define the impact of the difficulty on the client’s life (i.e. self and family).

**Step 6. Clarify personal and environmental resources and limitations in relation to the employment difficulty**
• Identify who the client is (i.e. education, aptitude, motivation, interests, abilities, challenges) – counselor may use standardized or informal assessment tools for this purpose
• Define the client’s environment and access to resources (e.g. personal and family resources, family support, available community or public services).

**Step 7. Clarify the client’s values in relation to the employment difficulty**
• Help the client’s identify his/her values – counselor may use additional assessment tools for this purpose
• Define the impact of the client’s values on his/her employment situation.

**Phase 3: Development of an action plan**

**Step 8. Formulate a counseling goal and generate options**
• Transform the statement of employment difficulty into an action statement, for example, “If I want to …, then I must …”
• Brainstorm possible solutions.

**Step 9. Validate and prioritize option**
• Analyze the pros and cons of each option, considering the client’s resources and limitations
• Choose the most appropriate option or options to resolve the employment difficulty.

**Step 10. Establish the Action Plan**
• Translate the priority option(s) into concrete actions that both the client and the counselor agree upon
• Validate the client’s motivation and commitment to carry out the actions. (See more details of the client action plan in 8.3.)

**Phase 4: Implementation and evaluation**
(This phase continues after the initial interview. The counselor will help the client in and follow up with the implementation of the Action Plan and evaluate the level of success and modify the actions and goal as necessary.)

**Step 11. Verify the achievement of the counseling goal**
• Encourage, support and guide the client throughout the implementation
• Verify if the Action Plan activities are completed
• If goal is not achieved, examine the situation and modify the actions or goal, if required
• Record and document each interaction with the client.

**Step 12. Determine client self-sufficiency**
• Both the counselor and the client assess if they can independently pursue a goal in any of the four employability dimensions (see 8.2 and 8.3).

8.2. The individual needs determination process

This process helps the counselor to identify the client’s employment needs on the basis of four employability dimensions: (1) career decision making, (2) skills enhancement, (3) job search, and (4) employment maintenance.

The individual needs determination process takes a client-centered approach to address the employment needs that could be addressed by appropriate referral to counseling services provided within the organization or by other service providers. It helps to identify the support, the type of counseling needs, and the follow-up required for each client.

The process can be used with a wide range of clients who need guidance and counseling in different stages of career planning and employment, from students making a career, educational and training choices, new graduates looking for their first job, and workers looking for a new job, to currently employed persons considering skill upgrading or ways to retain and improve current employment.

Individual needs assessment is a process that should be conducted in the first individual interview with each client. It involves eight steps in three phases as follows:

Phase 1: Needs determination

Step 1. Open the interview
- Greet the client and make the introduction
- Establish the client’s objective (in seeking the counseling service)
- Establish the purpose of the interview (collaboratively)
- Confirm target (consider if the client is eligible for program or services that the organization can provide)
- Refer non-target client to other available services suitable for the client.

Step 2. Gather information
- Gather data on the employability of the client
- Determine the career or employment goal of the client (may need additional research on the part of the client; the goal may be self-employment)
- Determine whether the client meets the requirements to achieve the goal (e.g. educational and occupational qualifications, skills and experience, certifications, licenses, business start-up resources)
- Determine the client’s readiness for job search (e.g. job search skills such as resume writing, time to dedicate to job search, transportation, child care, appropriate clothing), or readiness to start own business in the case of self-employment
- Determine the client’s ability to maintain work (e.g. health, child care arrangements, transportation, housing, relationship at work, competencies)
- Gather data on eligibility for available support programs and services
- Gather data on personal and financial needs.
Step 3. **Determine needs**
- Summarize the information obtained in Step 2 and confirm with the client
- Identify need(s) of the client
- Obtain the client’s agreement on identified need(s).

Step 4. **Examine eligibility**
- Summarize the client’s information and compare to eligibility requirements of available programs or services
- Confirm that the client understands why s/he is or is not eligible for a particular program or service.

Step 5. **Examine options and interventions**
- Describe to the client available options that respond to the client’s needs
- Help the client choose the options relevant to the client’s needs
- Confirm selection for further services
- Review rights and obligations (of the client and the counselor) as needed
- Agree on option:
  1. Referral, as appropriate, to another service within the organization or to another service provider
  2. Develop an action plan.

Phase 2: Action planning

Step 6. **Develop the Action Plan**
- Discuss and develop action plan steps
- Finalize the Action Plan
- Establish dates for follow-up meetings.

Step 7. **Obtain the client’s commitment to the Action Plan**
- Outline the follow-up and the corresponding time frames
- Ensure the client’s commitment to the Action Plan
- Identify counselor, employment specialist or case manager for the client
- Close interview.

Phase 3: Documentation completion

Step 8. **Complete documentation (paper, forms, case notes, etc.)**

8.3. The client action plan

The client’s action plan is a series of steps or activities developed by the client with the guidance of the counselor. The purpose of the action plan is to provide practical steps to overcome the client’s employability needs and a concrete, actionable blueprint to achieve the client’s goal.

**Employability needs** include:
(1) **Career decision making**: skills and knowledge related to making career choices or to being able to come to one or more decisions regarding a career choice

(2) **Skill enhancement**: generic or essential skills associated with most occupations, and the specific skills required for a specific occupation

(3) **Job search skills**: skills required for effective job search or for independence in job search

(4) **Employment maintenance skills**: competencies related or conducive to an individual’s ability to maintain or retain employment.

The client’s action plan includes the options and interventions that the client decides are the most appropriate to address his/her needs.

The action plan must contain the following:
- clear agreement on what the intervention consists of
- clear statement of responsibilities of the client and of the counselor
- clear agreement of planned date of completion of intervention
- clear agreement of where the intervention will be completed
- statement of what the action is intended to achieve or address.

**8.4. The case management process**

The case management process is a combination of client-centered support activities and timely documentation of each client’s progress. It includes recording outcomes and results of clients’ efforts to resolve their employment and career problems (i.e. find work or return to school).

The process enables the counselor to ensure that clients (who are involved in activities designed to meet identified employment needs) receive the ongoing support and follow-up necessary to promote successful completion and positive results.

Case management begins after the initial individual interview with a client and after the client’s Career Action Plan has been developed. The case management process involves eight stages of intervention as follows:

**Stage 1. Review client’s Action Plan**
- Prior to meeting with each client, review all existing documentation and notes and ensure that all documentation is clear and complete
- Gain clear understanding of client’s needs, resources, issues, opportunities and plans
- Identify any inconsistencies, inaccuracies or potential problems
- Review financial aspects (for example, did the client receive any promised financial assistance).

**Stage 2. Contact client for follow-up**
- Contact client in person or by telephone
- Explain the purpose of client follow-up as part of case management (which is to record successes and addresses challenges and problems)
- Clarify client’s expectation of the follow-up intervention as part of the agreed upon Action Plan
• Identify any inconsistencies, inaccuracies or problems
• Verify client’s understanding as compared to written documentation
• Revise records with any new or changed information
• Confirm next follow-up date.

Stage 3. Confirm commitment
• Validate client’s commitment to the Action Plan
• Confirm the counselor’s support of the Action Plan
• Confirm commitment of the counselor to follow through on his/her part of agreed upon activities (e.g. obtain labor market information or financial support for the client).

Stage 4. Coordinate intervention activities
• Liaise with service providers (e.g. a training institution, a community health facility or specialized counseling services)
• Confirm start and finish dates for client’s intervention
• Ensure that service provider can meet expected service standards to meet identified needs of the client
• Monitor client’s progress (in person, by phone)
• Record information on client’s file.

Stage 5. Support client’s progress
• Throughout the process, support client by providing encouragement and reinforcement
• Determine continued suitability of intervention(s)
• Identify and address any problems/concerns as they arise
• Recommend remedial action if necessary
• Ensure that client is aware of consequences of actions
• Document any changes
• Verify if client’s needs are met, i.e. problems resolved satisfactorily.

Stage 6. Reassess or adjust client’s Action Plan
• Work with client to adjust his/her Action Plan as necessary (record progress or problems and how they have been resolved)
• Ensure that client is fully aware of the content of his/her Action Plan and expresses commitment to it.

Stage 7. Confirm the Action Plan
• Confirm completion of the Action Plan (in part or in whole) with client
• Determine outcomes/results
• Record outcomes/results.

Stage 8. Follow-up
• If possible, follow up with client at predetermined times (e.g. at one month, and at four months) to identify client’s success or need for further interventions.
Annex 1
Codes of Ethics

The Code of Ethics provides ethical principles for those offering direct services in career guidance and counseling. It reflects and compliments aspects of core competencies required of professionals working in career development.\(^{19}\)

1. Ethical principles for professional competency and conduct

1.1. Knowledge/skills/competency
• Value high standards of professional competence.
• Deliver professional knowledge, skills and expertise of high standards.

1.2. Self-improvement
• Be committed to the principle of lifelong learning to maintain and improve both professional growth and the development of the field in the areas of knowledge, skills and competence.

1.3. Boundary of competency
• Recognize the boundaries of own competency and only provide services for which one is qualified by training and/or supervised experience.
• Arrange for appropriate consultations and referrals based on clients’ best interests.

1.4. Representation of qualifications
• Do not claim nor imply professional qualifications or professional affiliations that may imply inaccurate expertise and/or endorsement.
• Be responsible for correcting any misrepresentations or misunderstandings about own qualifications.

1.5. Marketing
• Maintain high standards of integrity in all forms of advertising, communications, and solicitation.
• Conduct business in a manner that enhances the profession.

1.6. Relations with institutions and organizations
• Assist institutions or organizations to provide the highest caliber of professional service by adhering to this Code of Ethics.
• Encourage organizations, institutions, customers and employers to operate in a manner compatible with the Code of Ethics.

1.7. Respect for persons
• Respect and stand up for the individual rights and personal dignity of all clients.
• Do not condone or engage in sexual harassment.
• Promote equality of opportunity and provide non-discriminatory service.
• Refer clients who fall outside the organizational mandate to appropriate services.

1.8 **Abide by the Code of Ethics and relevant laws**
- Abide by all of the by-laws outlined in this Code of Ethics and comply with all relevant local and national laws and regulations.
- Inform others (colleagues, clients, students, employers, and third party sources) about the Code of Ethics and relevant laws and mechanisms available if violations of such code and laws are perceived to have taken place.
- Take appropriate action to try to rectify a situation if ethical, moral or legal violations are perceived to have taken place by a colleague, whether a career development practitioner or not.

1.9 **Use of information and communication technology**
- Be aware that all aspects of the Code of Ethics apply in use of information and communication technology as in other contexts of service provision.
- Provide clients with relevant information about themselves, as is appropriate for the type of relationship and service offered.

2. **Ethical principles for career development practitioner-client relationship**

2.1. **Integrity/honesty/objectivity**
- Promote the welfare of clients by providing accurate, current and relevant information.
- Assist clients to realize their potential and respect clients’ rights to make their own informed and responsible decisions.
- Be aware of own personal values and issues and avoid bringing and/or imposing these on clients.

2.2. **Confidentiality**
- Respect the privacy of the individual and third party referral source and maintain confidentiality of information as is appropriate for the type of relationship and service offered.
- Inform clients and customers of the limits of confidentiality.
- Take all reasonable measures to respect privacy when offering services in a group, family, class or open setting such as a career center.
- Be aware that confidentiality also applies to the use of information and community technology such as voice mail, faxes, email and the Internet.

2.3. **Releasing private information**
- Release confidential information under the following circumstances:
  - with express permission of the client
  - where there is clear evidence of imminent danger to the client*
  - where there is clear evidence of imminent danger to others*
  - where required by law, such as in reporting suspected child abuse or upon court order
(* action should be taken following careful deliberation and consultation with the client and other professionals; the client should be encouraged to take personal responsibility as soon as possible).
• Attend to privacy and security in the maintenance and release of all records, whether records are written, on audiotape, or videotape, computerized or electronically stored.

2.4. **Informed consent**
• Honor the right of individuals to consent to participate in services offered, dependent upon the rights the individual has such as in being legally required to attend school.
• Fully inform clients as to the use of any information collected during the offering of services, and ensure that information collected will only be used for its intended purpose or obtain the consent of clients for any other use of the information.
• Inform clients and customers about the types of service offered and the limitations to service, as much as is reasonably possible given the type of service offered, including information about the limits to confidentiality, legal obligations, and the right to consult with other professionals.
• Take special care to respect the rights of the individual, in the case of minors or dependent individuals, and involve the parents or guardians where appropriate.

2.5. **Multiple relations**
• Be aware of the ethical issues involved in having personal relationship with clients.
• Avoid having conflicting relationships whenever possible. If such a relationship cannot be avoided, take responsibility to prevent harm and ensure that the judgment is not impaired, and avoid exploitation.
• To this end, utilize informed consent, consultation, supervision and full disclosure to all parties involved.

2.6. **Conflict of interest**
• Avoid and/or disclose any conflicts of interest which might influence professional decisions or behaviors.
• Do not exploit any relationship to further personal, social, professional, political, or financial gains at the expense of clients, especially if the situation would impair objectivity.
• Work to resolve any conflicts of interest with all parties involved giving priority to the best interests of the client.

3. **Ethical Principles for professional relationships**

3.1. **Consultation**
• Reserve the right to consult with other professionally competent persons ensuring the confidentiality of the client is protected.

3.2. **Respect for other professionals**
• Make full use of the resources provided by other professionals to best serve the needs of the client, including professional, technical, or administrative resources. This means understanding and respecting the unique contributions of other related professionals and seek to avoid duplicating the services of other professionals.
• Balance the responsibility to clients and to follow service providers. For example, when a complaint is voiced about other service providers, or inappropriate behavior is observed, follow the appropriate channels to address the concerns.

4. Ethical Decision-making Model – steps in ethical decision making

The Ethical Decision-making Model complements the Code of Ethics. It offers career development professionals a process to follow, and cues, such as emotional reactions, which may help in making thoughtful ethical decisions and resolving ethical dilemmas that arise.

4.1. Recognize that an ethical dilemma exists.

• Watch for emotional response that is often a cue to make an ethical decision, such as feeling uneasy about a situation, questioning oneself or the client’s action, or feeling blocked or uncomfortable in a situation with a client or colleague.

4.2. Identify the relevant ethical issues, all of the parties involved, and the corresponding pertinent ethical principles from the Code of Ethics.

• Check one’s own feelings of discomfort and what these may tell about the situation. Explore also the feelings of the client or a third party involved in the dilemma.
• Follow one of the Codes of Ethics that offer enough guidance to resolve the situation, or, in the situations where more than one code is relevant or there is more than one course of action, proceed further with this model.

4.3. Examine the risks and benefits of each alternative action.

• Examine short-term, ongoing and long-term consequences for each person involved, gather additional information and consult with a trusted colleague.
• Check one’s own emotional reactions to each solution and those of others involved in the decision. Determine if enough time has been allowed to contemplate the situation. Try to project the various solutions into the future and envision the possible scenarios as each decision is enacted.

4.4. Choose a solution, take action and evaluate the results.

• Act with commitment to one of the solutions, checking that the solution continues to feel the best that can be done in the situation for all involved.
• Assume the responsibility for the consequences of the decision and be willing to correct for any negative consequences that might occur as a result of the action taken. (Determine if the outcome feels right and reengage in the decision-making process if the ethical dilemma remains unsolved.)

4.5. Learn from the situation.

• Examine each ethical situation to consider the factors that were involved in the development of the dilemma and to see if any future preventative measures could be taken.
• Examine the lesson learned and how the experience might affect future practice.