A Model for Career Centers to Support Student Career Development: A Delivery Tool for Modern Career Centers

By

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Applied Research Project

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Submitted to the Department of Political Science
Texas State University-San Marcos
In Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements for the Degree of
Masters of Public Administration

Fall 2012

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Abstract

Purpose. The purpose of this paper is to develop an ideal career center model that supports student career development and can be used by all career center directors. *Methods. A*n electronic survey was sent to 112 career center professionals to determine if the preliminary model was sound. Frequency distribution was used to present responses to the questions. Open-ended recommendations were also solicited to provide input in creating the revised model. *Conclusion.* The existing model was affirmed by career center professionals, and no changes or additions were needed. The resulting model consists of the following career development themes: career counseling, experiential learning, and employer connections.

About the Author

Christopher Jones currently works in recruitment for the Department of Defense and has been a career advisor for five years at Texas State University. He is heavily involved in employer outreach and marketing and is the Career Services Liaison to the Office of Alumni Relations, Veteran Affairs, the College of Liberal Arts, and the McCoy College of Business. Chris has presented on small business recruitment and retention at the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), the Southern Association of Colleges and Employers (SOACE), and other career consortiums. Chris serves on the SOACE Strategic Planning Task Force and is a NACE Management Leadership Institute 2011 graduate.

Chris also served on the San Marcos City Council for six years. He first won election to the post in December 2005 as a Texas State Senior. He served as Vice Chair of the Energy, Environment, and Natural Resources Steering Committee for the National League of Cities and State Director for Young Elected Officials Network. Chris has represented the City Council on the Convention and Visitor Bureau Board of Directors and chaired the Minority Tourism Board of Directors for five years. He also was a member of the Downtown Association, National Black Caucus of Elected Officials, Texas Municipal League, and the Texas Association of Black City Council Members.

In 2009, Chris was awarded the "Elected Public Official of the Year" by the Centex Chapter of the American Society of Public Administration. His email address is cjonespsi@me.com

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Career centers on college campuses must meet the growing needs of a diverse and ever-changing college demographic while fighting the financial challenges of a shrinking budget and dwindling auxiliary funds. Additionally, career centers must be able to justify their existence by highlighting how their services support a student's career development. Derived from these challenges is the need of a career center model that experienced and inexperienced directors can implement on their college campus to support student career development. Career center directors have the unique challenge of managing offices in these turbulent times. Many career center directors inherit antiquated centers with structures that are foreign to the young, developing college student. Career centers vary in composition as well as career development approaches. The characteristics of these centers and the absence of necessary components limit the director's ability to engage college students and negatively affect a student's career development. Thus, there is a need for an adaptable career center model that experienced and inexperienced directors can implement on their college campuses. A career center model that identifies services and aligns closely with student development will ensure that career centers properly engage and guide students through career development.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to develop a career center model that both supports student career development and can be used by all career center directors. This research is presented in the practical ideal type format found in *A Model Records Management System for Texas Public Utilities: An Information Science Tool for Public Managers, A Model for School Food Policy: How Schools Can Fight Childhood Obesity by Changing Children's Food Preferences* and *Models of Government Growth: Explaining State Government Employment Growth in Texas*

(Mears 1994), (McGee 2012), (McLemore 2008). Before examining the components of the model, we must first consider the differences between career centers and placement centers, understand the impact of budget cuts on career centers, and develop a basic understanding of career center underpinnings by examining the Modified Career Development Theory.

A. Career Centers Versus Placement Centers

A distinction must be made between career services and career placement. Historically, career placement was a function of career services, and, in industry-specific career centers, it still is. The shedding of placement as a career service is a result of changing times with an increase in privacy laws that govern the amount of information a university can provide to an employer and vice versa. Additionally, for large institutions with centralized career centers, identifying and maintaining relationships with the number of employers who can place most of a graduating class would prove costly and, in these economic times, impossible. A career services center provides students with the tools needed to be successful in their career search and career matriculation, while placement centers place students in jobs upon graduation. This study does not account for career centers with placement responsibilities.

B. Budget Cuts and Higher Education

While a functioning career center can offer services that align with the Modified Career Development Theory, it is important to understand the environment of budget cuts in higher education. According to Douglass;

The US is making large cuts in higher education, both public and private. State governments, which are still the primary funding source for public colleges and universities, are suffering equally difficult budget problems, likely for next year. Depending on variables such as political culture, the only means for universities to make

up for budget reductions are to raise additional revenue, principally tuition and fees, or

make significant cuts in programs. (2010, 6)

With the shift away from using placement numbers as a measurement of success, career

centers are vulnerable to significant higher education cuts. Traditionally, career centers are

housed within the student affairs division of universities. When there are large cuts in

university funding, student affairs divisions seem to be first to lose funding (University, NC State

2012; McGowan 2011). There have been cases, such as the Texas Tech realignment, in which

career services offices have been realigned to academic affairs divisions reporting to university

college deans. In these situations, it is easy to evaluate a career center's effectiveness based on

quantifiable placement numbers but showing how a career center supports student

development better aligns with academic practice and proves the value of the Modified Career

Development Theory. This theory allows a career center to evaluate a student's career aptitude

and provide the needed services. Developing a services model that supports the Modified

Career Development Theory can serve as a relatable justification for the existence of career

centers to academic deans.

C. Career Center Underpinnings and the Modified Career Development Theory

The Modified Career Development Theory used by career centers across the country is a

modified version of the Donald Super development approach (H. Taylor 1994) and serves as the

theoretical underpinning for career centers. Super's modified model, intertwined with the

Social Cognitive Career Theory, consists of four steps: discovery, exploration, reality testing, and

implementation (Gysbers 2009). This theory is important because more and more university

career centers are finding students who are at different stages of career development. This

theory aids in understanding students' developmental stage and prescribing a developmental

strategy to their career trajectory. However, there is no distinct connection between this theoretical underpinning and the services provided by career centers. We will use this developmental theory as the basis for the ideal career center. Career centers are complex and results driven. Furthermore, career centers must stay focused and not lose sight of the end user: the student.

Super's approach suggests that there are six vocational developmental stages:

1. Orientation to vocational choice

2. Information and planning

3. Consistency of vocational preferences

4. Crystallization of traits

5. Vocational independence

6. Wisdom of vocational preferences (Zunker 1990)

Super's theoretical approach spans a number of years. In 1953, when he first introduced his concept, it consisted of ten contentions. In 1957, he amended and expanded his ten contentions to twelve. In 1990, his twelve contentions were expanded yet again to include fourteen. These fourteen propositions are presented below:

1. People differ in their abilities and personalities, needs, values, interests, traits, and self-concepts.

2. People are qualified, by virtue of these characteristics, each for a number of occupations.

3. Each occupation requires a characteristic pattern of abilities and personality traits, with tolerances wide enough to allow some variety of occupations for each individual as well as some variety of individuals in each occupation.

4. Vocational preferences and competencies, the situations in which people live and work, and, hence, their self-concepts change with time and experience, although self-concepts as products

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of social learning are increasingly stable from late adolescence until late maturity, providing some continuity in choice and adjustment.

5. The process of change may be summed up in a series of life stages (known as a "maxi-cycle") characterized as a sequence of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement, and those stages may in turn be subdivided into periods characterized by developmental tasks. A small (mini-) cycle takes place during career transitions from one stage to the next or each time an individual's career is destabilized by illness or injury, employer's reduction in force, social changes in human resource needs, or other socioeconomic or personal events. Such unstable or multiple-trial careers involve the recycling of new growth, re-exploration, and re-establishment.

6. The nature of the career pattern, that is, the occupational level attained and the sequence, frequency, and duration of trial and stable jobs, is determined by the individual's parental socioeconomic level, mental ability, education, skills, personality characteristics (e.g., needs, values, interests, self-concepts), and career maturity, and the opportunities to which he or she is exposed.

7. Success in coping with the demands of the environment and of the organism in that context at any given life-career stage depends on the readiness of the individual to cope with these demands (i.e., on his or her career maturity).

8. Career maturity is a psychosocial construct that denotes an individual's degree of vocational development along the continuum of life stages and sub-stages from growth through disengagement. From a social or societal perspective, career maturity can be operationally defined by comparing the developmental tasks being encountered to those expected based on the individual's chronological age. From a psychological perspective, career maturity can be operationally defined by comparing an individual's resources, both cognitive and affective, for coping with a current task to the resources needed to master that task.

9. Development through the life stages can be guided partly by facilitating the maturing of abilities, interests, and coping resources and partly by aiding in reality testing and in the development of self-concepts.

10. The process of career development is essentially that of developing and implementing occupational self-concepts. It is a synthesizing and compromising process in which the self-concept is a product of the interaction of inherited aptitudes, physical makeup, opportunity to observe and play various roles, and evaluations of the extent to which the results of role-playing meet with the approval of supervisors and peers.

11. The process of synthesis or compromise between individual and social factors between self-concepts and reality is one of role-playing and of learning from feedback, whether the role is played in fantasy, in the counseling interview, or in such real-life activities as classes, clubs, part-time work, and entry jobs.

12. Work and life satisfaction depend on the extent to which an individual finds adequate outlets for abilities, needs, values, interests, personality traits, and self-concepts. Such satisfactions depend on establishment in a type of work, a work situation, and a way of life in which one can play the kind of role that growth and exploratory experiences have led one to consider congenial and appropriate.

13. The degree of satisfaction people attain from work is proportional to the degree to which they have been able to implement self-concepts.

14. Work and occupation provide a focus for personality organization for most men and women, although for some individuals this focus is peripheral, incidental, or even nonexistent. Then other foci, such as leisure activities and homemaking, may be central. Social traditions, such as sex-role stereotyping and modeling, racial and ethnic biases, and the opportunity structure, as well as individual differences, are important determinants of preferences for such roles as worker, student, homemaker, and citizen. (Allison and Cossette 2007)

These four principles aid in framing the Modified Career Development Theory. Further examination of the theory will best demonstrate this.

I. Self-Assessment

Self-assessment encourages students to ask and develop an answer around the question, "Who am I?" In the discovery stage of development, students should evaluate what they want from a career, develop personal goals, and understand their source of energy. As students go through this process, they should start reading self-assessment books and then consider taking an assessment test, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or Strong Interest Inventory.

II. Career Exploration

Career exploration is an opportunity for students to research in-depth career information. In this stage of student career development, students are encouraged to take courses that investigate career professions, conduct informational interviews with professionals in the field, and seek out student organizations.

III. Reality Testing

Reality testing is the next natural step in the career planning process. As described by many scholars, this is an opportunity to determine if a career fits the student's goals and aspirations. Some methods of reality-testing career choices are taking an internship or job shadowing opportunity to give students hands-on experience within the selected career field. Another common means of reality testing is participating in a study abroad program and developing proficiency in a foreign language. Students are also encouraged to participate in company events that are open to the public and practitioners within the field and look for volunteer opportunities. This stage in career planning also suggests developing a network of

people in the selected field and identifying contacts that might be able to provide additional insight about the company or industry. Finally, steps should be taken to expand roles and responsibilities in a student organization by running for a leadership position and being actively involved.

IV. Implementation

Implementation of a career strategy and plan would include taking advantage of the many services provided by career centers to connect with the employers. In addition to attending job fairs and taking advantage of on-campus recruiting, the student should also develop a strong network by attending different public functions offered by the interested company. Additionally, the implementation stage would include practice interview sessions, attending career fairs to learn more about available positions, retooling skills to align with information discovered at career fairs and through other employer research, and developing a portfolio of letters of recommendation from instructors and other professionals. Finally, students should accept a position that aligns with their career goals. Table 1.1 provides an illustration of how the Modified Career Development Theory relates to Super's 14 contentions.

Career planning and decision making are part of a lifelong process involving the various stages individuals must go through during their careers. A clear career goal or objective must be defined before jumping into the corporate world. One must remember, however, that the objective is flexible and may be revised according to the circumstances, such as during times of high unemployment and economic recession.

Figure 1.1 Visualization of Super's Contentions and Their Association to the Modified Career Development Theory

- Self Assesment
- Exploration

1-5

6-9

10,11

12-14

- Reality Testing
- Implementation
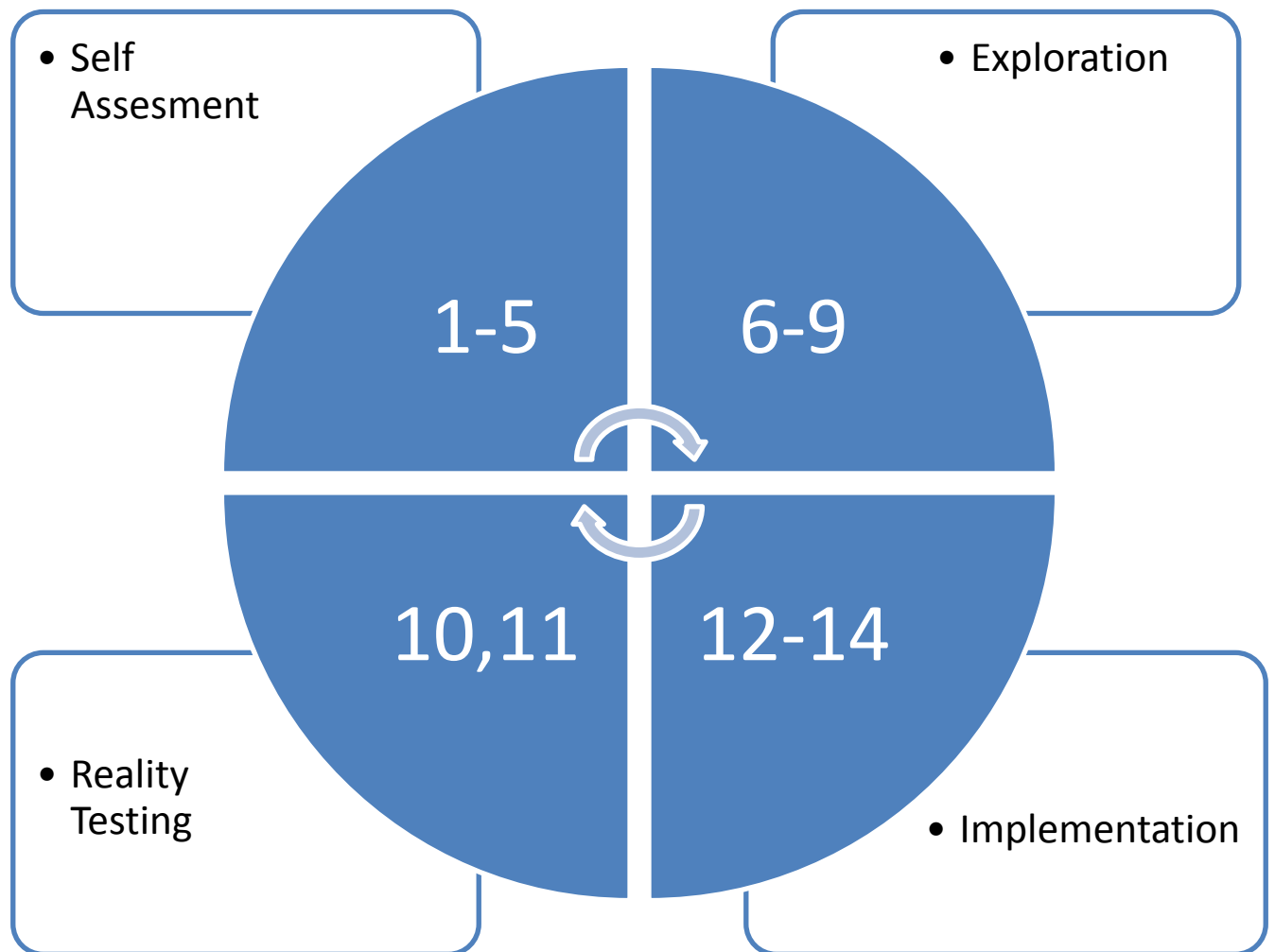
Chapter 2: Career Development Services

This chapter will outline the career development services that make up the preliminary career services model. This model is organized according to a coherent conceptual framework (P. M. Shields 1998). A preliminary career services model that could be used by experienced and inexperienced career center directors consists of three components: career counseling, career exploration, and career connections. The first section discusses the many aspects of career counseling and its value to the career services model. The elements of this component include career assessments, résumé assistance, practice interviews, and one-on-one career counseling/career coaching. The second section analyzes experiential learning. There are several elements that make up this section, including job shadowing, informational interviews, service learning, internship services, externship services, and part-time on- and off-campus jobs. The third component of the preliminary model is employer connections. Career fairs, on-campus recruiting, and employer relations will be discussed in this final component.

A. Career Counseling

Career counseling serves as the backbone of career centers and thus should be part of the preliminary career services model (Whiston 2003). Career counseling finds its roots in Frank Parson's three-step model, which still influences many practitioners' approach to career counseling (Blustein 2002). Additionally, professional organizations recognize the importance of career counseling by pointing out that there are consistent findings that career counseling is moderately to highly effective (Oliver and Spokane 1988). Recent research has provided some insight into the critical components of effective career counseling, specifically when helping clients make a career decision or choice (Brown and Krane 2000). Brown and Krane further point out that career counseling was most effective when it contained (a) individualized

interpretation and feedback, (b) occupational information, (c) modeling opportunities, (d) attention to building support of choices within one's social network, and (e) written exercises (2000). The fact that researchers continue to develop sound measures, evaluate existing instruments, and investigate constructs (such as interest) is a major strength of career counseling (Whiston 2003). This strength serves as the foundation to another noted strength of the career counseling field, which is that practitioners have an expanding knowledge base related to the career needs and issues of diverse groups of individuals (Whiston 2003). The literature articulates clearly that while there might be a rich history and substantial body of literature, there is a shortage of adequately trained career counselors, despite the increasing need (Hartung 2005). Hartung (2005) further explains that the interest in career counseling is low and the perception of career counseling is negative. Over the past nine years, there have been major rumblings in the career counseling community about outdated research that impacts around 50 percent of the advising population (Whiston 2003). "In the last 25 years there has been substantial research related to women's career development, but much of the research related to men is 50 years old" (Whiston 2003, 3).

I. Career Assessments

The ideal career service model to support student career decisions and development should provide students access to career assessment "VIPS": values, interests, personality, skills, and goals. Having assessments that evaluate these areas of a student's personalized career development (PCD) strongly supports the discovery stage of the Modified Career Development Theory. Making assessment tools available that evaluate these four areas is not enough to support the theory fully. Additionally, career centers must provide counseling or

discussion to help students better understand the meaning of career assessment. Wood introduced five principles to guide practitioners in the use of career (Wood 2009)assessments:

1. Career assessments should help individuals thrive.

2. Career assessments are a part of the career development process.

3. Competency in assessment principles is requisite to ethical and effective use of career assessments.

4. Knowledge of career constructs/career development phenomena and subsequent research is fundamental to the use of career assessments.

5. Evaluation is a professional obligation to the client. (2009,19)

It is important to encourage students to use evaluations and career assessments. Counselors have an ethical obligation to monitor client progress and identify needs for change in strategy and approach. This will assist career development practitioners in maintaining a high quality of professional work (Wood 2009).

The ideal career service model to support student career decisions and development should provide students access to career assessment VIPS.

II. Résumés

Career centers must provide résumé services to their students, and the ideal way to develop such services in support of student career development is by helping students develop an interest-based résumé. They should then aid in the transition from an interest-based résumé to an experience-based résumé and adequately provide feedback from employers regarding their impressions and expectations of these two styles of résumés.

Helping students develop an interest-based résumé can take different forms. However, the goal of an interest-based résumé is to help the student better understand and relate their

interest to the needs of an employer. There are rare cases in which a student provides an interest résumé to an employer (Crosby 1999). These résumé should start by outlining a summary of qualifications needed to obtain the career goals. That should be followed by an education section, which outlines the educational requirements and professional licenses needed to obtain their career goal. The experience section outlines experience, including assessments, that support traits found in three to four job descriptions of the considered position in the field (ACPA 2008). This student should take three to four copies of job descriptions or postings from different companies and identify skills patterns. These outlined patterns, which emphasize relevance, make up the experience section of an interest résumé. Below this section, students need to outline their involvement in student and professional organizations. Doing so will raise their credibility in the field of the career goal. Once the student has started career explorations, the career center director should guide them from the interest-based résumé to an experience-based résumé. The career center director should help facilitate this transition through a series of discussions and follow-ups that will encourage the student to identify usable experiences, accomplishments, and innovative processes.

Once these events have been identified, the career center director should help the student translate them into documentable skills and experiences. However, career center directors should use caution when helping students develop a résumé format. A prospective employer expects to learn about the personality of the student from a résumé, and employers feel that standard templates take away from the view of personality (Koncz 2001). While it might be a good idea to have a starting template, it is more important for students to understand employer expectations and basic grammar principles for résumé writing. Career center directors should encourage students to evaluate the résumé of three or more

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practitioners from different companies to determine a proper résumé format. The ideal center would provide students with career-specific résumés. Additionally, career centers should be evaluating employers who hire based on the different aspects of student résumés. Once this information is obtained, it should be published in such a way that students can access and understand employer résumé expectations.

III. Practice Interviews

In support of student career development, career centers should help students prepare for job opportunities as well as employer interactions by offering mock interviews. Mock interviews give the student the opportunity to frame their mind around recruitment methods used to discover more about candidates. Mock interviews should resemble real interviews in that they are industry specific as well as insightful as to what the student would experience in different stages. Most employers who participate in on-campus interviews use behavioral-based interview questions to determine if the student would be a strong fit for their company. Thus, in support of student career development, the ideal career center should reinforce the STAR method of interview preparation. The STAR method teaches one how to respond to a behavioral-based interview by discussing the specific situation, task, action, and result of the circumstance being described (Scivicque 2008). Additionally, career centers should reach out to professors if they are preparing a student for a technical interview. The career center should record the mock interview and use it as a reference when providing feedback. The career center should also provide the student with a copy of the interview and encourage additional review.

IV. One-on-One Career Counseling

Career counseling and employer exposure are combined as an integrated function in every career planning and advising service. Career counseling begins long before college and continues long after college. This lifelong process is initiated and, over time, furthered by career counseling when the student enrolls in college (Henderson and Dalton Fall 2010/Winter 2011). The service is a voluntary election on the part of the student, and the process continues whether or not the student seeks professional aid. In order to support the student's career development, counselors should adopt a counseling method that emphasizes the importance of students making career decisions based on sound research and information (Kaldor and Zytowski 1969) use what is known as "decision concepts" in a theory of occupational choice that maximizes expected gain and includes the variable indifference (for instance, the person's attitude when the utility of two occupations is equal) (Tolbert 1974). This concept is important because it allows counselors to provide support for students based on the reality of their career development and not the prescribed expectation of where they are in their career development. It has been argued that even students with good self-knowledge and information about their options end up making very poor decisions, and all the positive effort to improve self-knowledge and occupational insight is undermined by poor decision making (Reardon, et al. 2000). A career counselor or career coach should help students to improve their decision making by providing resources such as the Career Thoughts Inventory, Career Decision Scale, or the Career Beliefs Inventory. This in turn supports student career development theory.

B. Experiential Learning

Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) comes from the intellectual origins in the experiential works of Dewey, Lewin, and Piaget (Kolb, Boyatzis, and Mainemelis 2000). ELT provides a

holistic model of the learning process and a multilinear model of adult development, both of which are consistent with what we know about how people learn, grow, and develop (Kolb, Boyatzis, and Mainemelis 2000). The theory is called "experiential learning" to emphasize the central role that experience plays in the learning process, an emphasis that distinguishes ELT from other learning theories. Experiential learning has also been described as "a pragmatic approach to learning" (Hickcox 2002, 16). Many authors specifically credit John Dewey's progressive education movement, initiated in the 1920s and 1930s, for giving rise to experiential learning programs in schools throughout the latter two-thirds of the twentieth century (Dewey 1930). Contemporary models of these initiatives include co-op programs (required for some professional degree programs like engineering and architecture), practicum experiences, and service learning projects that place students in community worksites. As discussed by Hickcox, Dewey, and Meiklejohn, the concept of experiential learning in higher education comes from an interest in broad-based learning communities and has evolved over time (Hickcox 2002). All of these writers have noted that such efforts produce dramatic changes not only in what is taught, but also in how it is presented; this, in turn, positively benefits and supports the Modified Career Development Theory. The ideal career center model to support a student's career development should provide the student with experiential learning opportunities. Experiential learning specifically supports the exploration and reality testing sections of the career development model.

I. Job Shadowing

Job shadowing is closely observing experienced workers by following them on the job (Hamilton and Hamilton 1997). The advantages of a student's participating in a job-shadowing program would include one-on-one work time with a seasoned or skilled professional and job

shadowing opportunities typically lasting anywhere from three days to one month. Patricia and Henry McCarty (2006) of Appalachian State University argue that career centers improve their reputation by offering and/or facilitating job shadowing: "It is unfortunate enough that not all program areas require students to complete an internship, but even more disconcerting is that even fewer (< 10% of our university's business programs) include a job-shadowing experience" (202). In many universities, it is the job of the career center to provide students with information for job shadowing experiences (McCarty and McCarty 2006). Career centers should help students arrange their own job shadowing experience by providing resources such as a list of employers or contacts who are interested in hosting students, liability paperwork, and guidance on how to get the most out of the shadowing opportunity. Professors use case studies and a variety of simulations, but many times they don't offer real experience (McCarty and McCarty 2006).

II. Informational Interviews

Informational interviews are very simple opportunities for students to have a conversation with people who can serve as models for their future (Decarie 2010). Decarie further explains the developmental opportunities as "valuable tools for improving writing, editing, and interviewing skills, and they are also extremely valuable in improving the soft skills that are valued by employers, such as confidence, adaptability, the ability to set and keep deadlines, the ability to manage risk, and so on" (2010). The ideal model to support student career development should provide students with information, contacts, and basic guidelines needed to perform an informational interview (Bryan and Mullendore 1993). Additionally, career counselors or advisors should work with students to develop appropriate interview questions before the interview and, at the student's request, aid in developing answers to

these questions. Some scholars on this issue believe a student should go through some type of curriculum dedicated to prepare them for this experiential activity (Croft 1995). Decarie describes most of the literature about informational interviews as the "learn as you go approach (3)." There are some standard rules to consider before performing an informational interview such as providing students and employers with prepared questions, receiving their permission to record the interview, scheduling the interview, and advising students not to misuse the opportunity. It is important that students establish the interview as an information gathering opportunity and not a job interview. This activity supports the Modified Career Development Theory by giving the student another opportunity to find out more about their desired profession.

III. Service Learning

Service learning has been defined as a community-based approach to teaching (Jones and Abes 2004). Service-learning courses characteristically place students in contact with people and communities that are very different from their own (e.g., racial-ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, social class groups) (Education 2010). These opportunities tend to promote self-reflection, personal awareness, and scrutiny of certain aspects of identity previously taken for granted (Jones and Abes 2004). Traditionally, service learning originates in the classroom setting as a part of a class curriculum, and students receive course credit for their participation. However, the ideal career services model would originate service learning in student organizations. Career centers in conjunction with a volunteer services office or community relations office collect potential projects, organize them according to student organization classifications, and provide student organizations with the opportunity to select these projects. Career centers should develop methods that allow student organizations to reflect on their

projects. For example, students could write a series of seven reflection papers or develop

reflection presentations covering fundamental topics such as the scope of the project,

community stakeholders, potential career connections, important issues surrounding the

project, potential resources, career networking, and conclusions (Sipe 2001). Additionally,

career centers should schedule two to four meetings with the student organizations to explain

the project, outline career objectives, assess potential resources, and evaluate student learning

outcomes (Sipe 2001). While the academic-originated method of service learning is beneficial,

student organization-focused service learning allows students to mold relationships based on

contributions to a community. It also leverages the experiential component of student career

development by focusing the project on an organization of people with similar interests. Service

learning supports student career development by allowing students of like interest to work with

a community or practitioners to achieve a community service goal.

IV. Intern Assistance

Career centers to support student career development should provide students with the

necessary resources to obtain an internship. The US Department of Labor defines an internship

as an arrangement in which college students and career changers lend their talents to

companies in return for an opportunity to develop business skills, learn about a new industry,

and gain exposure to the work environment (Relerford 2004). An internship is also defined as a

"structured and career relevant work experiences obtained by students prior to graduation

from an academic program" (Taylor 1988, 393). Taylor (1988) argues that, by having internship

experience, students have a greater crystallization of self-worth, a firm understanding of what

values align with their chosen career path, and higher levels of satisfaction with and stronger

intentions to remain on the first job. Internships are truly valuable to student career

development, and thus career centers should provide students with contacts, counseling, and advice about their internship experience as well as information on how to protect their interest and avoid being abuse d NACE provides students with this information by outlining the following seven criteria:

1. The experience must be an extension of the classroom, a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.

2. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.

3. The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.

4. There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student's academic coursework.

5. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.

6. There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.

7. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals. (NACE, A Position Statement on U.S. Internships A Definition and Criteria to Assess Opportunities And Determine the Implications for Compensation 2011, 317)

Programs that described internships or work-based learning activities, including the importance of the mentoring relationship as forming part of academic qualifications, are well documented in the literature. "Mentoring is such a vital aspect of internship supervision that it deserves separate consideration. It may be the most valuable contribution that supervisors can make to an intern's education" (Bastian and Webber 2008, 115). In comparison to literature about internships, there has been limited attention

paid to students' undertaking paid employment in college institutions as learning experiences.

V. Externship Opportunities

The ideal career center should provide students with externship opportunities. Externships are one- or two-day trips, hosted by an employer, in which students learn about the many employment functions that support the operations of a company. Employers are encouraged to have representatives from the supporting departments present to discuss employment functions and their career path. To conclude these sessions, employers outlines their recruitment matrix and answer questions from the students. Externships support student career development by exposing students to diverse career opportunities based on their level of interest in the field.

VI. Part-Time Employment

Part-time on-campus and off-campus employment can also provide students with experiential opportunities. While this form of employment helps with education expenses, it also can allow students to explore and develop employment skills. Warhurst notes that corporate image and brand are of growing importance and that employers increasingly place an emphasis on the different ranges and types of experience required from their employees (Grugulis, Warhurst, and Keep 2004). More and more employers are looking to work history to determine if a candidate is a good fit. Part-time on- or off-campus jobs are a great opportunity for students to learn valuable soft and professional skills. College graduates today compete with candidates who are seeking employment after being laid off from a previous position. In some cases, these candidates have years of work experience. In today's economy, part-time

employment experience is an essential. Additionally, with a saturated market, there is an expectation that students have experience that teach them basic soft skills.

Research involving the Glasgow hospitality industry highlighted the following:

- 83 percent of employers attached some importance to employees' dress sense or style.
- 78 percent of employers attached some importance to employees' voice or accent.
- 70 percent of employers attached some importance to employees' physical looks.

Martin and McCabe (2006) concluded, "These 'soft' skills, with an emphasis on the social and aesthetic, were seen as the most important to employers" (8). Part-time on-campus and off-campus employment support student career development by allowing students the ability to further explore the skills necessary for their industry.

C. Employer Connections

Connecting students with employers who offer career opportunities is a basic function of career centers. Due to the increasingly competitive job market, more and more emphasis is being placed on soft skills. According to Cohen and Etherege (1975) the interview is the single most important factor in bringing together the job seeker and organizations offering employment. The ideal career center should provide a diverse array of opportunities and resources for student interaction with employers. Traditionally, career centers have hosted career fairs, on-campus interviews, information sessions, and networking events in attempts to recruit and sustain employer relationships. Employers are both vital partners in the education process and primary customers of career services. Career services must offer services to employers that reflect students' interests and employers' needs. Career Centers could provide

employers with information about academic departments and students (within legal and policy guidelines), assisting in recruiting student populations, arranging experiential learning opportunities, and organizing individual employer recruiting and college relations consultations (NACE 2006). Career services should seek to identify the range of employers it will serve and articulate policies to guide their working relationship with each of these constituencies.

I. Career Fairs

Career centers should host career fairs to help employers recruit, screen, and hire qualified candidates. A career fair hosts a large number of recruiters and potential employers, giving them the ability to provide information about available positions and their company as a whole (Smith 2011). Also referred to as "job fairs," they are great opportunities to learn about a range of possible jobs and a means for students to get a foot in the door. One of the major challenges facing career centers today is ensuring employers and students see the value in participating (Green 2012). Student complaints about job fairs traditionally derive from the feelings they develop based on their discussions with the employment representative (Babbush 1982). Students want to know that the company representative at the career fair has the ability to make hiring decisions. Students also complain about employers who do not accept résumés. Career centers encourage students to bring résumés, but a majority of the recruiters don't take them and direct students to their website to apply. This action by employers should influence how career centers prepare candidates. Career centers should encourage students to conduct research on employers before the career fair (Babbush 1982). Career centers should publish information about employers before the career fair. Career centers should publish all positions which employers want to fill before the career fair. Employers have an expectation that students will be knowledgeable about their company and open positions before they visit them

at the career fair table. Career centers should provide students with information on how to apply for positions before the job fair. Additionally, career fairs allow students to discover the vast array of employment opportunities in the world from a single location. Hosting career fairs supports student career development by giving students the opportunity to implement the first stage of their career strategy.

II. On-Campus Recruitment (OCR)

The ideal career center should provide students with on-campus recruiting (OCR) opportunities, a method used by employers seeking to hire interns and entry-level employees from college campuses (Bechtel 1993). Career centers support OCR by hosting information sessions where employers provide students with basic information about their company and the positions they want to fill (Ratcliffe 2004). Career centers also support OCR by providing on-campus locations for employers to interview students as well as by maintaining and coordinating interview schedules for qualified students. Finally, career centers support OCR by responding to résumé requests. Employers will request student résumés that meet their basic hiring requirements, and career centers should be equipped to respond to these requests. This is why it is essential for career centers to provide students with an electronic database in which student résumés can be housed, searched, and accessed by OCR staff (Powell and Kirts 1975). Additionally, career centers should develop OCR policies that protect student and employer interests. OCR can be a great way for students to attain their first job or internship.

III. Employer Relations

Developing and maintaining relationships with employers or potential employers is an essential function to support student career development. Developing employer relationships should utilize all forms of media. Career centers should do this by using personal contacts,

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publications, and new forms of media (Powell and Kirts 1975). Developing community

relationships can also support building new relationships with employers, thus, it is essential

that the local and regional community know what is going on in a career center. Powell and

Kirts (1975) argue that "because of the long-term societal implications, the public must hold a

basic awareness of actions and circumstances occurring in institutions of higher education" (1).

Once career centers develop relationships with employers, there must be a steady stream of

communication in order to maintain the relationship. Career centers must survey the needs of

their employers and ensure they are making meaningful connections with their students.

Gauging employers' interests is most efficiently done through job fair and OCR surveys.

Additionally, having an understanding of employer needs can prove helpful in providing options

or suggestions when problems or situations arise. There should be a systematic way of

documenting all employer contact, so career centers should develop contact summary reports

to ensure employers' needs are met. Once these relationships are established, and with

employer approval, career centers should add the employer to their directory and provide

students with access. Career centers should also develop an employer prospect list based on

feedback from students, faculty, and staff suggestions as well as an evaluation of employer

attendance at other universities. A continuous effort to expand the career services directory is

crucial (Powell and Kirts 1975).

Chapter Summary

Analysis of career centers and their need to justify their existence by highlighting how

their services support students' career development has revealed the need to develop a

preliminary model that supports student career development. The elements of this preliminary

model represent the most important aspects of student career development. The model allows

career center directors to develop their programs and services with direct links to career center

underpinnings. It also emphasizes key career center services that support students' career

development. This model is applicable to both centralized and decentralized career centers. A

complete copy of the preliminary model is available in Table 2.1. The next chapter discusses the

methodology used to conduct this study.

Table 2.1: *Preliminary Career Center Model*

Categories	Sources
CAREER COUNSELING Career centers should provide career counseling	(Whiston 2003), (Blustein 2002), (Oliver and Spokane 1988), (P. M. Shields 1998), (Vernon G 1990)

Career Assessments
  o Career centers should provide counseling after career assessments
  o Career centers should provide career assessments
	(Brown and Krane 2000), (Hartung 2005), (Crosby 1999)

Resume Assistance
  o Career centers should provide résumé assistance
  o Career centers should aid students in the development of an interest-based résumé
  o Career centers should provide students with career-specific résumés
  o Career centers should provide students with survey data from employers about résumé expectations
	(Wood 2009), (Koncz 2001), (ACPA 2008)

Practice Interviews
  o Career centers should provide practice interviews
  o Career centers should reinforce the STAR method of interview preparation
  o Career centers, at the request of the student, should record practice interviews and use it as a reference when providing student feedback
  o Career centers should provide students with a copy of their practice interview, if requested
	(Scivicque 2008), (Reardon, et al. 2000)

One-on-One Counseling
  o Career centers should provide one-on-one counseling
  o Career counselors should adopt a counseling method, which emphasizes the importance of students making career decisions based on sound research and information
  o Career centers should provide students with resources to improve their decision making
	(Henderson and Dalton Fall 2010/Winter 2011), (Tolbert 1974)

Table 2.1: *Continued*

Categories	Sources
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING Career centers should provide students with experiential learning opportunities	(Dewey 1930), (Hickcox 2002)

Job Shadowing
  o Career centers should provide students with the resources to participate in job shadowing
  o Career centers should provide students interested in job shadowing with resources such as a list of employers or contacts, liability paperwork, and guidance on how to get the most out of the shadowing opportunity
	(Hamilton and Hamilton 1997), (Kolb, Boyatzis and Mainemelis 2000).

Informational Interviews
  o Career centers should provide students with the resources to conduct informational interviews
  o Career centers should provide students with sample informational interview questions
	(Decarie 2010), (Croft 1995), (Bryan and Mullendore 1993), (Croft 1995)

Service Learning
  o Career centers, in collaboration with other campus offices, should provide student organizations with the resources to participate in service learning
  o Career centers should provide students participating in service learning with the opportunity to process and reflect on their experience
	(Education 2010) (Jones and Abes 2004) (Sipe 2001)

Intern Assistance
  o Career centers should provide students with the resources to obtain internships
  o Career centers should provide students with counseling and advice about their internship experience
  o Career centers should provide students and employers with NACE guidelines for internships
	(NACE 2006), (Bastian and Webber 2008), (Relerford 2004)

Externship Opportunities o Career centers should provide students with externship options	(Education 2010)
Part-Time Employment o Career centers should provide students with the resources to obtain part-time on- and off-campus jobs	(Smith 2011), (Arkansas 2008), (Grugulis, Warhurst and Keep 2004), (Jones and Abes 2004), (Sipe 2001), (Martin and McCabe 2006)

Table 2.1: *Continued*

Categories	Sources
EMPLOYER CONNECTIONS Career centers should provide students with a diverse array of opportunities to interact with employers	(Smith 2011)
Career Fairs ○ Career centers should host career fairs ○ Career centers should provide support as need to employers' recruitment and screening of qualified candidates	(Smith 2011), (Green 2012), (Babbush 1982)
On Campus Recruiting ○ Career centers should coordinate on-campus recruiting ○ Career centers should support employers interested in hosting information sessions ○ Career centers should provide employers with on-campus locations to interview students ○ Career centers should maintain and coordinate employer interview schedules ○ Career centers should maintain an electronic student résumé database ○ Career centers should develop OCR policies that protect the interest of students and employers	(Babbush 1982), (Ratcliffe 2004)
Employer Relations ○ Career centers should run and maintain an employer relations program to recruit and sustain employer relationships ○ Career centers should maintain a steady flow of communication with employers ○ Career centers should biannually survey the needs of their employer partners. ○ Career centers should document employer contact and participation ○ Career centers should maintain an employer directory and database that students can access	(Powell and Kirts 1975) (NACE, NACE Student Survey 2010 2010)

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methods used to improve the preliminary model, which supports the Modified Career Development Theory developed in Chapter 2. The primary method of analysis is electronic surveys of career center directors. It must be noted that career center directors also include assistant and associate directors.

A. Electronic Survey

Electronic surveys were sent to 112 career center professionals to evaluate the preliminary model and find ways to improve it. Each question asked the directors to evaluate the relevance of the service based on a five-point likert scale, were one represents "not essential at all" and five indicates "extremely essential."

The candidates who received the survey have been selected from career centers across the country. All professionals surveyed have been or are currently active members of NACE. These experts were sent an email explaining the research, and within the email was a link to the electronic survey. These career center professionals represent a cross-section of practitioners in the career services field. Career center professionals were selected for this study because they determine services offered in career centers.

The questions asked in the survey correlate directly with the preliminary model. Both closed and open-ended questions were necessary in order to ascertain validity. The closed-ended questions focused on whether or not the career center director believed the element presented was truly relevant to the topic. The open-ended questions allowed for the expert to contribute unique material to the new model's development.

The electronic surveys began by asking professionals questions about services provided by career centers. Respondents were asked about the model as a whole. Then each component was separated in order to determine if the elements within the components made sense and were sufficient. Results of the returned survey will be presented in an abridged format.

Table 3.1: *Operationalization of the Ideal Model*

Categories	Question#	Measurement
CAREER COUNSELING **Career centers should provide career counseling**	**1,9**	**Open Ended & 5-Point Scale**
Career Assessments		
o Career centers should provide counseling after career assessments	2	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should provide career assessments	2	5-Point Scale
Resume Assistance		
o Career centers should provide résumé assistance	3	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should aid students in the development of an interest-based résumé	3	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should provide students with career-specific résumés	7	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should provide students with survey data from employers about résumé expectations	8	5-Point Scale
Practice Interviews		
o Career centers should provide practice interviews	4	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should reinforce the STAR method of interview preparation	5	5-Point Scale
o Career centers, at the request of the student, should record practice interviews and use it as a reference when providing student feedback	6	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should provide students with a copy of their practice interview, if requested	1	5-Point Scale
One-on-One Counseling		
o Career centers should provide one-on-one counseling	1	5-Point Scale
o Career counselors should adopt a counseling method, which emphasizes the importance of students making career decisions based on sound research and information	5	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should provide students with resources to improve their decision making	9	Open Ended

Table 3.1: *Continued*

Categories	Question#	Measurement
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING **Career centers should provide students with experiential learning opportunities**	**19**	**Open Ended**

Job Shadowing
   ○ Career centers should provide students with the resources to participate in job shadowing
   ○ Career centers should provide students interested in job shadowing with resources such as a list of employers or contacts, liability paperwork, and guidance on how to get the most out of the shadowing opportunity
	11
	
	11
		5-Point Scale
		
		5-Point Scale

Informational Interviews
   ○ Career centers should provide students with the resources to conduct informational interviews
   ○ Career centers should provide students with sample informational interview questions
	12
	
	12
		5-Point Scale
		
		5-Point Scale

Service Learning
   ○ Career centers, in collaboration with other campus offices, should provide student organizations with the resources to participate in service learning
   ○ Career centers should provide students participating in service learning with the opportunity to process and reflect on their experience
	18
	
	18
		5-Point Scale
		
		5-Point Scale

Intern Assistance
   ○ Career centers should provide students with the resources to obtain internships
   ○ Career centers should provide students with counseling and advice about their internship experience
   ○ Career centers should provide students and employers with NACE guidelines for internships
	13
	
	13
	
	14
		5-Point Scale
		
		5-Point Scale
		
		5-Point Scale

Externship Opportunities ○ Career centers should provide students with externship options	15	5-Point Scale
Part-Time Employment ○ Career centers should provide students with the resources to obtain part-time on- and off-campus jobs	17	5-Point Scale

Table 3.1*: Continued*

Categories	Question#	Measurement
EMPLOYER CONNECTIONS **Career centers should provide students with a diverse array of opportunities to interact with employers**	**30**	**Open Ended**
Career Fairs		
o Career centers should host career fairs	20	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should provide support as need to employers' recruitment and screening of qualified candidates	21	5-Point Scale
On Campus Recruiting		
o Career centers should coordinate on-campus recruiting	21	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should support employers interested in hosting information sessions	24	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should provide employers with on-campus locations to interview students	22	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should maintain and coordinate employer interview schedules	21	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should maintain an electronic student résumé database	23	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should develop OCR policies that protect the interest of students and employers	21	5-Point Scale
Employer Relations		
o Career centers should run and maintain an employer relations program to recruit and sustain employer relationships	29	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should maintain a steady flow of communication with employers	27	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should biannually survey the needs of their employer partners.	27	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should document employer contact and participation	28	5-Point Scale
o Career centers should maintain an employer directory and database that students can access	29	5-Point Scale

Prior to conducting any electronic surveys, this research project was cleared in writing by the

Institutional Review Board of Texas State University-San Marcos and found to be exempt from review

(Request number EXP2012s2136). Additionally, no confidential or identifying information was collected

during the course of this project, so no privacy practices are required to be disclosed to subject

participants. A statement of the research purpose was included in the electronic survey, and all relevant

information was disclosed to respondents prior to participation in the project. No monetary or compensatory benefits of any kind were provided for participation in this project. Career center professionals participated in order to gain a better understanding of which services support student career development. An electronic "thank you" was included in the survey. Consent from the research advisor, as well as the researcher, is required before any information from this project in any form may be released. The research advisor is:

Hassan Tajalli, PhD

Texas State MPA Program / Professor of Political Science Texas State University – San Marcos

Chapter Summary

The methodology chapter gives expanded details on the survey methods used in conducting the research. The chapter also explains how results are reported and what steps are being taken to ensure protection of human subjects. The next chapter will discuss the results of the survey. The survey responses will be discussed in depth.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the results of the electronic survey. In this chapter detailed descriptions of each sections of the survey will be discussed in relation to the career center model.

Survey Results

A basic description outlining the purpose of the survey was provided in the solicitation email, LinkedIn profiles, and Facebook posts. Respondents were asked to rate the value of a service to a career center or a student's career development using a five-point Likert scale, where one is "not essential" and five is "extremely essential." This portion of the "results" chapter outlines each section as listed in Table 3.1 and then discusses respondents' overall feedback of each section and the entire model. Each table shows a rounded percentage of the frequency distribution.

Survey Respondents

This survey was sent to 112 career services professionals across the country. Sixty-seven respondents returned the survey, resulting in a 60 percent response rate. Eighty-one percent of survey respondents represent centralized career centers with student populations ranging from 1,300 to 60,000. The respondents worked in offices with staffs ranging from one to thirty-five, and 80 percent of survey respondents were from public institutions.

Table 4.1: *Respondent Demographic Information*

Demographic Question	# Respondents	Percentage %
Is your career center centralized or decentralized?	**65**	
• Centralized	53	81.54%
• Decentralized	12	18.46%
What is the size of your school?	**66**	
• Less than 5000	4	6.06%
• 5,000-10,000	7	10.61%
• 10,000-30,000	30	45.45%
• 30,000-60,000	25	37.87
What is the number of full-time staff members in your career center?	**66**	
• Less than 5	13	19.7%
• 6-20	40	60.6%
• 21-40	13	19.7%
Is your university public or private?	**66**	
• Public	53	80.3%
• Private	13	19.7%

A. Career Counseling

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to evaluate each counseling service on the

basis of importance to student career development.

Table 4.2: *Career Counseling Survey Results*

Categories	% Not Essential	% Essential
CAREER COUNSELING **Career centers should provide career counseling**	**3%**	**97%**

Career Assessments
     o   Career centers should provide counseling after career assessments
     o   Career centers should provide career assessments
	4%
	
	 4%
		96%
		
		 96%

Resume Assistance
     o   Career centers should provide résumé assistance
     o   Career centers should aid students in the development of an interest-based résumé
     o   Career centers should provide students with career-specific résumés
     o   Career centers should provide students with survey data from employers about résumé expectations
	1%
	 1%
	
	 22%
	
	 4%
		99%
		 99%
		
		 78%
		
		 96%

Practice Interviews
     o   Career centers should provide practice interviews
     o   Career centers should reinforce the STAR method of interview preparation
     o   Career centers, at the request of the student, should record practice interviews and use it as a reference when providing student feedback
     o   Career centers should provide students with a copy of their practice interview, if requested
	1%
	 6%
	
	 13%
	
	 3%
		99%
		 94%
		
		 87%
		
		 97%

One-on-One Counseling
     o   Career centers should provide one-on-one counseling
     o   Career counselors should adopt a counseling method, which emphasizes the importance of students making career decisions based on sound research and information
     o   Career centers should provide students with resources to improve their decision making
	3%
	 6%
	
	 3%
		97%
		 94%
		
		 97%

Overall the responses to the career counseling sections were supportive of the proposed model.

However, the responses to question seven were surprising. More than 20 percent of career services

professionals thought that having libraries of career-specific résumés was not essential. This is surprising

because in the past three years seniors were most likely to use the career center for résumé help (NACE, 2012 Student Survey 2012; NACE, Student Survey 2011 2011; NACE, NACE Student Survey 2010 2010).

The comments in response to the open-ended question covered a range of topics. One specific response raised the question about the difference between counseling and advising. The respondent stated that it is important to distinguish between actual counseling and advising and indicated that there is equal value to the coaching method. There is a distinct difference between career counseling and advising. All survey questions were designed around the understood concept of career counseling. Career coaching is a valuable method and was almost included in the model. However, this method is fairly new and lacks adequate peer evaluation and a depth of theoretical support. Career coaching is a valuable method but should not replace career counseling.

B. Experiential Learning

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to evaluate each experiential learning service on the basis of importance to student career development.

Table 4.3: *Experiential Learning Survey Results*

Categories	Question#	Measurement
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING **Career centers should provide students with experiential learning opportunities**	**2%**	**98%**

Job Shadowing
   o Career centers should provide students with the resources to participate in job shadowing
   o Career centers should provide students interested in job shadowing with resources such as a list of employers or contacts, liability paperwork, and guidance on how to get the most out of the shadowing opportunity
	2%
	
	2%
		98%
		
		98%

Informational Interviews
   o Career centers should provide students with the resources to conduct informational interviews
   o Career centers should provide students with sample informational interview questions
	5%
	
	5%
		95%
		
		95%

Service Learning
   o Career centers, in collaboration with other campus offices, should provide student organizations with the resources to participate in service learning
   o Career centers should provide students participating in service learning with the opportunity to process and reflect on their experience
	19%
	
	19%
		81%
		
		81%

Intern Assistance
   o Career centers should provide students with the resources to obtain internships
   o Career centers should provide students with counseling and advice about their internship experience
   o Career centers should provide students and employers with NACE guidelines for internships
	5%
	
	5%
	
	5%
		95%
		
		95%
		
		95%

Externship Opportunities o Career centers should provide students with externship options	19%	81%
Part-Time Employment o Career centers should provide students with the resources to obtain part-time on- and off-campus jobs	11%	89%

The respondents believed that experiential learning was essential to student career development. Nineteen percent of respondents did not feel externship programs were essential to student career development. Upon further evaluation of the survey, a majority of this 19 percent were from decentralized career centers. Statistically, decentralized career centers do not have a large number of staff. These responses also correlate with a theme found in the written responses from this section that suggest career centers should provide students with the resources, but students should take the initiative to schedule experiential activities. This correlates with question fourteen because externship programs traditionally are organized and chaperoned by career centers. The same assertion can be made about service learning activities. Overall, experiential learning requires a passel amount of career center staff support but is essential to a student's career development.

C. Employer Connections

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to evaluate each employer connection service on the basis of importance to student career development.

Table 4.4: *Employer Connections Survey Results*

Categories	% Not Essential	% Essential
EMPLOYER CONNECTIONS **Career centers should provide students with a diverse array of opportunities to interact with employers**	**4%**	**96%**

Career Fairs
   o   Career centers should host career fairs
   o   Career centers should provide support as need to employers' recruitment and screening of qualified candidates
	
	 5%
	 8%
		
		 95%
		 92%

On Campus Recruiting
   o   Career centers should coordinate on-campus recruiting
   o   Career centers should support employers interested in hosting information sessions
   o   Career centers should provide employers with on-campus locations to interview students
   o   Career centers should maintain and coordinate employer interview schedules
   o   Career centers should maintain an electronic student résumé database
   o   Career centers should develop OCR policies that protect the interest of students and employers
	
	 8%
	 3%
	 9%
	 9%
	 0%
	 8%
		
		 92%
		 97%
		 91%
		 91%
		 100%
		 92%

Employer Relations
   o   Career centers should run and maintain an employer relations program to recruit and sustain employer relationships
   o   Career centers should maintain a steady flow of communication with employers
   o   Career centers should biannually survey the needs of their employer partners.
   o   Career centers should document employer contact and participation
   o   Career centers should maintain an employer directory and database that students can access
	
	 4%
	 5%
	 5%
	 5%
	 2%
		
		 96%
		 95%
		 95%
		 95%
		 98%

Respondents agreed that the employer connections section of this survey was essential to student career development. All questions in this section were rated at or above 90 percent. The

comments from the open-ended sections consistently mentioned employer networking activities such as career fairs and on-campus recruitment. The comments to the open-ended question in this section of the survey mentioned the use of alumni and alumni databases to aid in students' career development. While the use of alumni would be supportive of student career development, the category was intentionally not placed in the proposed model because alumni services cite these activities as their responsibility (CAAE 2011).

Chapter Summary

Respondents were pleased with the model. While there were many suggestions made by respondents to improve the model, none of the suggestions was mentioned at a frequency to suggest changes to the proposed model.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The "conclusion" chapter will summarize all of the data presented in the results chapter, reaffirming the preliminary model. This chapter will also briefly discuss the limitations of the research and yield future areas of practitioner-based study.

A. Final Career Center Model

Based on the data collected in the electronic survey, the proposed career center model has been affirmed by career center professionals. The professionals provided several comments related to the model. However, none of the comments were mentioned at a frequency level to suggest changes to the preliminary model. In these turbulent times this model can serve as a criterion to evaluate the services offered by career centers, understanding its basis is founded in student career development theory. It is important to restate that this model seeks to align with student career development and thus the value of its components. It is also worth noting that students obtaining jobs after graduation is not an adequate measurement of this model but rather career maturity. Career maturity, as reminded by Super, is a psychosocial construct that denotes an individual's degree of vocational development along the continuum of life stages and sub-stages from growth through disengagement (Allison and Cossette 2007).

B. Career Counseling, Experiential Learning, and Employer Connections

On average, 90 percent of survey respondents believed "career counseling, experiential learning, and employer connection" activities were essential to student career development and a valuable service that career centers should provide. There were several comments suggesting additions to these sections, but none were mentioned at a frequency level to prompt additions or changes to the model. This model remains unchanged because survey respondents recognize that career counseling, experiential learning, and employer connections provide students with more than the tools to find an immediate job but rather tools to use throughout their life-long careers.

C. Limitations of Research

A research project of this scope can be applied to virtually any career center. However, it is important to remember the purpose and intended audience of this research as mentioned in the introductory chapter. The purpose of this research is to develop a career center model that supports student career development. As mentioned in the literature review, external circumstances and changes in student behavior can have an effect on student career development. The career center model does address student career development as assessed by career professionals today. As student needs change, this model must be updated to address these changes. Additionally, not all career centers have the resources to carry out the activities mentioned in this model and, therefore, should use this model as a goal to work toward. Changes in services delivery methods, such as centralized, decentralized, hybrid, and future models, could also determine the effective implementation of this career center model. In such cases, modifications to the model can be made to address the unforeseen changes.

D. Future Areas of Practitioner Study

The career center professional has access to and daily involvement with students, which, in turn, gives them the ability to develop activities to address student needs. While the mentioned activities are not an exhaustive list, they provide a framework for future development. The very nature of an ideal model study suggests the possibility of expansive review (McLemore, 2008). According to Shields and Tajalli, "an ideal model study begins with a question and ends with a question (2006, 315)." In the case of this research, a study assessing this model to the practice of a specific university career centers would be helpful. Additionally, a study on the proper methods to survey career maturity would aid career professionals in reminding university administrations that career centers have an expansive responsibility to provide students with the tools and resources needed to development along the career continuum of life stages and sub-stages from growth through disengagement. Simply, the expedient use of placement numbers to justify the existence of career centers lacks the needed depth to evaluate their

long lasting contribution to the life long career matriculation of students. Career centers teach life

lessons.

Chapter Summary

This chapter summarized the data presented in the results chapter, reaffirming the preliminary

model. This chapter also discussed the limitations of this research and future areas of practitioner study.

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Appendix

1. Career Center Survey

2. Responses to Career Center Survey

3. Institutional Review Board Certificate of Approval

Career Center Survey

Question	Measurement
1. One-on-one career counseling	5 Point Scale
2. Career assessments	5 Point Scale
3. Resume assistance	5 Point Scale
4. Practice/mock interviews	5 Point Scale
5. Training in the STAR method of interview preparation	5 Point Scale
6. Recorded practice/mock interviews	5 Point Scale
7. Libraries of career-specific resumes	5 Point Scale
8. Resources outlining employer resume expectations	5 Point Scale
9. In your opinion, is there any other Career Counseling service or resource which would be absolutely valuable to student career development or a career center?	Open Ended
10. Follow-up counseling & advising after internship completion	5 Point Scale
11. Job Shadowing resources and contacts	5 Point Scale
12. Informational Interviews resources and contacts	5 Point Scale
13. Internship resources and contacts	5 Point Scale
14. Consistent guidelines that define and govern internships	5 Point Scale
15. Externship resources and contacts	5 Point Scale
16. Cooperative education resources and contacts	5 Point Scale
17. Part-time job resources and contacts	5 Point Scale
18. Service learning resources and contacts for student organizations	5 Point Scale
19. In your opinion, is there any other Career Exploration service or resource which would be absolutely valuable to student career development or a career center?	Open Ended
20. Career fairs	5 Point Scale
21. Facilitation of on-campus recruiting programs	5 Point Scale
22. On-campus facilities for employers to interview students	5 Point Scale
23. Student resume database	5 Point Scale
24. Employer information sessions	5 Point Scale
25. Networking opportunities and programs for students & employers	5 Point Scale
26. Electronic directory of employer partners or contacts accessible by students	5 Point Scale
27. Data from employer needs assessments and surveys	5 Point Scale
28. Employer activity and outcomes reports	5 Point Scale

29. Employer-prospect list, based on student, faculty and staff suggestions	5 Point Scale
30. In your opinion, is there any other Career Networking service or resource which would be absolutely valuable to student career development or a career center?	Open Ended
31. In your opinion, are there any other model components that would be valuable to student career development or a career center?	Open Ended

Survey Results

Questions	Number of Respondent	% Not Essential at all	% Not Essential	%Neutral	% Essential	% Extremely Essential
1. One-on-one career counseling	67	1.5	1.5	1.5	9	86.6
2. Career assessments	67	1.5	4.5	20.9	22.4	50.7
3. Résumé assistance	67	1.5	0	4.5	13.6	80.3
4. Practice/mock interviews	67	1.5	0	4.5	28.4	65.7
5. Training in the STAR method of interview preparation	67	1.5	4.5	9.0	43.3	41.8
6. Recorded practice/mock interviews	67	1.5	11.9	29.9	32.8	23.9
7. Libraries of career-specific résumés	67	4.5	17.9	44.8	22.4	10.4
8. Resources outlining employer résumé expectations	67	0	4.5	29.9	43.3	22.4
10. Follow-up counseling and advising after internship completion	67	3.1	9.2	32.3	36.9	18.5
11. Job shadowing, resources, and contacts	67	1.5	7.6	34.8	30.3	25.8
12. Informational interviews, resources, and contacts	67	0.0	1.5	24.2	39.4	34.8
13. Internship resources and contacts	67	0.0	1.5	7.7	18.5	72.3
14. Consistent guidelines that define and govern internships	67	0.0	4.6	27.7	38.5	29.2
15. Externship resources and contacts	67	3.1	15.4	24.6	32.3	24.6

16. Cooperative education resources and contacts	67	0.0	15.2	22.7	28.8	33.3
17. Part-time job resources and contacts	67	7.7	4.6	21.5	29.2	36.9
18. Service learning resources and contacts for student organizations	67	6.1	13.6	42.4	27.3	10.6
20. Career fairs	67	3.0	1.5	12.1	33.3	50
21. Facilitation of on-campus recruiting programs	67	0	1.5	6.1	33.3	59.1
22. On-campus facilities for employers to interview students	67	0	4.5	9.1	21.2	65.2
23. Student résumé database	67	1.5	6.1	28.8	34.8	28.8
24. Employer information sessions	67	0	6.2	13.8	47.7	29.2
25. Networking opportunities and programs for students and employers	67	0	0	3.	28.8	68.2
26. Electronic directory of employer partners or contacts accessible by students	67	1.5	1.5	15.4	32.3	49.2
27. Data from employer needs assessments and surveys	67	1.5	1.5	15.4	32.3	49.2
28. Employer activity and outcomes reports	67	1.5	3.0	25.8	40.9	28.8
29. Prospective employer list based on student, faculty, and staff suggestions	67	3.0	1.5	37.9	36.4	21.2

Open-Ended Responses for "Career Counseling"
1. Helping students identify and articulate their strengths.
2. A robust website with links to this information is the only reason why I gave some lower ratings. There is a ton of career info online and students need help navigating it. Not sure physical libraries are as useful as they once were.
3. Cover letter and communication content when sharing skills with an employer.
4. internship and co-op
5. Online resources
6. If you mean an outside consulting service, no. However, providing trained staff career counselors, yes. I think it also would be good to offer the faculty perspective as well.
7. Timeline information regarding the job search for various industries
8. Connection between career development services and experiential education (internship) development, advising, and placement
9. Resources giving students access to information about specific career fields online is best
10. Cover letter assistance
11. Graduate school planning assistance
12. Assistance negotiating job offers
13. Academic advising
14. Yes, the relationship between career decision making and choosing a major.
15. Cover letter preparation assistance
16. Research preparation (informational interviews, job shadow, etc.)
17. Training on networking and professional communication
18. Learning that they don't have to do it themselves and that it often takes a team to get a job. Networking skills and social media presence are now an essential part of what students need to develop.
19. First year orientation/coaching on the process to be career ready upon graduation.
20. Teaching a monthly class to incoming freshman or transfer students. Communications skills (written/oral), résumé/cover letters, mock interviews/dining etiquette.
21. Information on professional image and networking skills.
22. Job postings
23. Drop-in hours
24. Workshops
25. Career fairs
26. Assessments - MBTI, FOCUS2, Discover, SIGI, Kuder Journey, etc.
27. Major and occupational information

28.	Career panels of alumni who inform as to how their careers developed. Assessment of student learning outcomes from career service activities.
29.	Private offices
30.	E-counseling (online chat)
31.	Teaching how to conduct informational interviews with a professional
32.	Job and internship database
33.	Career panels
34.	Personal branding/social media, student essays/applications for graduate or professional school, networking events/career panels, subscriptions to contact information/data mining tools, alumni databases, career fairs, internship/job databases, campus recruiting databases, student check-in/kiosk/notes system.
35.	On-campus recruitment
36.	Workshops on résumés, interviewing, job search, business etiquette, working a career fair. Also, a majors fair, where students can talk with academic advisors, faculty, alums, and upperclassmen.
37.	Industry-focused resources
38.	Brief career advising assistance that doesn't require an appointment; a well-designed website that can support service delivery; internship resources; workshops; distance advising.
39.	Career centers should be engaged in helping students gain greater career exploration and experiential exposure; facilitate connections between students, alumni, employers, and faculty.
40.	Networking
41.	Informational interviewing/externships
42.	Group-based career development programming
43.	Providing training on how to market oneself, network with employers, and appropriate use of social media.
44.	Self-assessment
45.	Understanding world of work
46.	Networking events that offer students the opportunity to connect with employers and recent college graduates (employed) so that they are able to gather information about an organization, what to expect first day on the job, etc.
47.	Alumni placement data. Not the numbers that have jobs, but where alumni and recent graduates got their first job or where they are working now.
48.	Opportunities for practical work experience (co-op, internships, etc.)
49.	Guides for creating written career plans, developing job search campaigns, first-job survival skills, etc.
50.	The book, *How to Get Any Job*, by Donald Asher is an essential resource.
51.	Document review: in addition to résumés, cover letters, networking letters, thank you letters, personal statements, research or teaching philosophies, writing samples, statements of purpose, etc.

52.	Resources for international students or for domestic students looking to go abroad. (e.g., Going Global). Many times international students do not know what career options they have based upon their visa status.
53.	Hi Chris! I think it's important to distinguish between actual counseling and advising. I'm not sure if your survey takes this into account. I answered five interpreting the question to mean counseling OR advising. I think actual counseling is a nice but other models, such as coaching, etc., are equally valuable. Also, your options seem to point mostly to the nuts and bolts of learning career management skills. The part of career advising I find most complicated, time consuming, and necessary has more to do with self-assessment and getting students motivated to even start career planning in the first place.
54.	Alumni networking is absolutely essential
55.	Career searching and online networking

Open-ended Responses for "Experiential Learning"	
1.	Mentor programs/matching
2.	Internships.com
3.	Again, the faculty perspective is important when considering a career.
4.	Access and guidelines for use of social media in the career exploration process
5.	Trips to employer sites
6.	Programs with alumni and/or employers to comment on résumés, reinforce skills sought
7.	Educating students in the importance of gaining experience and leadership during college
8.	Use of LinkedIn to connect with professionals in the field or mentors/alumni connections for career advice or guidance on how to get into a specific field
9.	Externships, visiting companies with students, more or less "field trips." Experiential education program, structured class, or workshops to prepare students.
10.	Some type of assessment like career leadership to be available at a student's option
11.	Social media tools and site visits to explore different employers.
PURPOSE?	
12.	Note that career centers do not have the power to dictate uniform standards for internships as at most institutions this in in the hands of the academic department and/or employer.
13.	Networking
14.	Job search skills
15.	Dinner etiquette
16.	NA
17.	International exploration opportunities.
18.	The Vault II

19.	Resources and contacts are always useful, but we also need to educate students on how to approach contacts, build relationships, and ask for help.
20.	Links and access to print and online information (e.g., candid career web library of informational interview videos) for more behind-the-scenes research into careers. Information on LinkedIn (currently) and other tools for exploring career paths and organizations.
21.	Technology

Open-ended Responses for "Employer Connections"
1. List of contacts for employer cultivation
2. Mentor database; active alumni who are willing to support current students in their career development and as site supervisors for career exploration or employers upon graduation
3. An electronic job posting system that students and alumni can access.
4. Alumni networking connections
5. Site visits to employers
6. Alumni networking nights
7. Nothing said about alumni -- alumni as agents for specific companies and alumni in general. Probably one of the most important strategic resources that employers are not using.
8. Career training and development workshops
9. Alumni mentorship programs
10. Better participation from academic units to identify potential employers.
11. Events for informal networking. Professional etiquette dinner, hospitality meet and greet sessions
12. Use of LinkedIn or other social media as a connection tool to meet professionals in the field.
13. Networking activities in remote locations, such as alumni/employer receptions, virtual career fairs, consortium activities
14. No
15. Alumni networking events
16. Alumni LinkedIn group
17. Ability to do Skype sessions with employers
18. Facility tours
19. City tours (ex. The city of Huntsville, AL hosts a corporate bus tour for seniors every year to encourage students to accept a job in Huntsville, AL). Note: Huntsville was one of the few cities in the country to expand employment during economic downturn."
20. Appropriate on line systems to assist students with networking with employers
21. Structured programming relating to social networking resources (e.g., LinkedIn)

22.	Networking should be with alumni of the institution first, before networking with employers.
23.	While I can see value in having all of these elements, from experience I can say they are not essential. At small liberal arts schools, for example, these activities are very limited, but students still manage to secure jobs and internships. I think "teaching students to fish" is more important that providing the fish served up. Alumni networking databases to me are a good resource, though with LI today, this "open source" networking can be even more powerful.
24.	On-campus events; webinars

Open-ended Responses for the "Overall Model"	
1.	Integration with academic advising, both where this is centralized and decentralized. Advisers need to understand career development and how to guide students themselves or refer to career center.
2.	Salary negotiation
3.	There are other elements of pre-service skills development, such as an understanding of workplace issues and expectations, protocols, etc.
4.	Job posting system
5.	Marketing strategy
6.	Required visit to a career advisor for every rising sophomore (prior to junior year)
7.	Virtual tools are important. I noticed that you did not mention the use of online media, software, or tools (other than databases) as a possible component.
8.	LinkedIn
9.	Employers in residence
10.	We have 3, each retired from a profession and industry that spend 8-12 hours a week in the office meeting with students and teaching student development workshops/classes.
11.	Alumni mentoring program
12.	Theory based approach to service delivery; assessing for readiness to determine level of services needed, see FSU's CIP theory, www.career.fsu.edu/techcenter
13.	Alumni networking programs
14.	With easy access to the Internet - virtual career fairs, information sessions, and networking events.
15.	In an ideal world, career development would be integral to students' overall development - included in discussions of academic advising and valued by the institution as ONE of the important outcomes for students. Being an informed and contributing world citizen living in our democracy is also good, but having no job to support yourself, pay your loans, and take care of your family is not going to help you much in the broader goals (i.e., Maslow). Interested in your results!
16.	Peer educators
17.	Faculty input/buy-in

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Institutional Review Board

Request For Exemption

Certificate of Approval

Applicant: Christopher Jones

Request Number : EXP2012S2136

Date of Approval: 03/26/12

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Assistant Vice President for Research
and Federal Relations

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Chair, Institutional Review Board