

TRUE NORTH

In today's workplace climate, career advisory has gone beyond the simple act of placing clients into a job. It has become an intricate art of helping clients navigate workplace complexities and interweaving that closely with an individual's beliefs, values and principles. As a career professional, you are tasked with the all-important role of helping one find meaning and fulfilment in their job. You are instrumental in their search for a purpose-driven life; for their **TRUE NORTH**.

Our Training Programmes Are Going Virtual



In line with the Whole-of-Government's digital transformation efforts, we are in the process of converting all our training programmes, namely the Career Advisory Programme (CAP) and Career Facilitation Programme (CFP), onto a virtual platform. This move also comes timely, in light of the current Covid-19 situation.

More information will be shared on our website soon!

THOUGHTS ON THEORIES: FIVE PERSPECTIVES OF CASE CONCEPTUALISATION

It is widely accepted that career and employment counsellors use theories and models to conceptualise their clients' concerns and to select appropriate interventions. However, as the workplace and client demographics continue to change, it is important to avoid compartmentalising individuals into such models and recognise that every individual has their unique concerns which a single theory or model may not be able to address.

A special issue of the *Journal of Employment Counselling* (Neault, 2011) published 13 brief articles written by 17 career theorists and thought leaders, in which they each shared their current 'thoughts on theories'. Amongst them was a sharing of their preliminary thoughts on how they approach a single case from five different perspectives.

The Case

Tony is a 46-year-old Asian American mid-level manager for a large Telco firm and is currently managing a team of 15. The organisation has been restructuring over the past 18 months and there have been some layoffs which left everyone with more to do. Several new technology systems have also been introduced and Tony is finding it challenging to learn yet another way of doing business.

Tony's 50-year-old brother who have previously confided to him about his stressful work, had passed away last month due to a sudden heart attack. He had also recently learned that his best friend has been diagnosed with cancer.

All of this is proving to be a bit of a wake-up call for Tony. The passion Tony has had for his job is waning; the ongoing restructuring and added expectations are making Tony feel like the proverbial rat in the maze.

IN THE PIPELINE

Career Advisory Programme (CAP)

May intake: 27 May 2020
(Application closes: 15 Apr 2020)

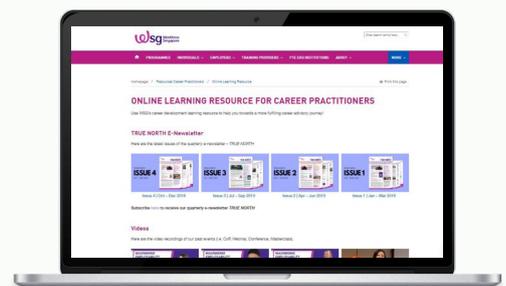
Jul intake: 1 & 15 Jul 2020
(Application closes: 20 May & 3 Jun 2020)

Career Facilitation Programme (CFP)

Jun intake: 1 Jun – 28 Jul 2020
(Application closes: 20 Apr 2020)

Aug intake: 3 Aug – 29 Sep 2020
(Application closes: 22 Jun 2020)

LOVING OUR NEWSLETTER?



You can now find all issues of **TRUE NORTH** and other career development resources on our new **Online Learning Resource (OLR)** for Career Practitioners.

Check it out here:
go.gov.sg/olr



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Chaos Theory of Careers

From a Chaos Theory of Careers perspective (CTC; Bright & Pryor, 2008; Pryor & Bright, 2011), Tony's stress and disillusionment may reflect a closed system thinking. A closed system is one in which all of the key influences are known and therefore outcomes are predictable and to some degree controllable.

Tony appears to have some expectations that change will come to an end at work. This is an unrealistic expectation, especially in a role that is heavily dependent upon information technology. The Creative Strategies card sort may be useful in helping him move beyond closed system probability thinking to open system possibility thinking.

Active Engagement Through Metaphors

Among the metaphors articulated from this case description, a follow-up would probably be focused on the 'rat in a maze' metaphor (Amundson, 2010; Amundson, in press) as it incorporates elements of pathway, pressure, a lowering of passion and even a new realisation.

The first phase would be to find out how the current situation looks from Tony's perspective. Next would be to explore how Tony got to this place. What happened to put him in this predicament? Lastly, the focus will shift to look at the future.

Happenstance Learning Theory

The Happenstance Learning Theory (Krumboltz, 2009; Krumboltz & Levin, 2010) is an action-oriented theory that believes that individuals learn best from our own actions. Tony will first be advised to brainstorm some possible first action steps before deciding the ones he's willing to take. A timeline will then be assigned to each action and future counselling sessions would focus on subsequent actions that Tony could take.

Career Engagement

Career engagement is defined as "the current emotional and cognitive connection to one's career; it is a state in which one is focused, energized, and able to derive pleasure from activities linked to work and other life roles" (Pickerell, 2013, p. 4). Individuals are in the zone of engagement when challenge and capacity are in balance (Neault, 2012); too little challenge leave individuals feeling underutilised and too much will leave them feeling overwhelmed. This is the situation Tony is experiencing.

To return Tony to the zone of engagement, there needs to be a reduction in the level of challenge he is experiencing or an increase in the available capacity. It may be most effective to work on reducing Tony's work-related challenges, either within his current workplace or by repositioning his career to a new setting. Reflecting on Tony's current situation through the lens of career engagement, career alternatives that might restore a satisfying mix of challenge and capacity can be explored.

Culture-Infused Career Counselling

Culture-Infused Career Counselling (CICC) is grounded by the value of social justice, through considering systemic and social influences on clients' career concerns, and through designing relevant interventions.

Tony would have to share with the career counsellor what aspects of his identity, his relationships, and other aspects of his current life contexts that he believes are relevant and to begin with the influences that he feels matter most in exploring his preferred career goals.

Closing Thoughts

One's theoretical foundations are influential in shaping everyday interactions with clients and what counsellors identify as their clients' underlying problems and why. These theories, coupled with the Case Conceptualisation Model (CCM) can be helpful in developing case conceptualisation.

SOURCE: Walz, Garry R., and Jeanne C. Bleuer. "Thoughts on Theories: Case Conceptualization From Five Perspectives." *VISTAS*, 2013, www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/vistas/thoughts-on-theories.pdf.

A LOOK BACK @ THE LAST QUARTER



GROUP CAREER COUNSELLING (GCC)

In February 2020, we had the privilege of having Dr Richard Pyle, an expert in the field of GCC, deliver two runs of the Group Career Counselling Masterclass. Over the two-day masterclass, learners gained an understanding on the theory, research and principles underlying GCC. They also learnt techniques and practice of skills to effectively deliver GCC.

Sponsored by WSG in partnership with the People and Career Development Association (PCDA), both runs of the masterclass drew a sold-out attendance of 55 career practitioners from both the private and public sectors.



CAREER DEVELOPMENT TECHNIQUES FOR CAREER PRACTITIONERS WORKING WITH PERSON WITH DISABILITIES (PWD)

The recent Masterclass on Career Development Techniques For Career Practitioners Working with PWD on 24-26 Feb welcomed 30 career practitioners from WSG, e2i, MOE, SG Enable, Abilities Beyond Limitations and Expectations Ltd, Autism Resource Centre (S), MINDS, SAVH, SPD, The Singapore Association for the Deaf and TOUCH Community Services Limited.

Organised by WSG in partnership with SG Enable, participants learnt from our international experts; Tina Ancitl (Certified Rehabilitation Counsellor) and Aaron Leson (Master trainer for the National Career Development Association).

As Singapore moves towards becoming a more inclusive society, WSG recognises that it is important for Singapore's career practitioners to be equipped with the skills to serve the career needs of this societal group.

THE ROLE OF A CASE CONCEPTUALISATION MODEL

A Case Conceptualisation Model (CCM) helps a clinician to manage, control and steer the direction in which a case will advance.

GENERIC CASE CONCEPTUALISATION MODEL (CCM) AND SAMPLE QUESTIONS



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Are you equipped with a strong understanding of the various theories and models needed to develop effective case conceptualisations?

SOURCE: Meichenbaum, Donald. "The Role of a Case Conceptualisation Model and Core Tasks of Intervention." The Melissa Institute, May 2014, www.melissainstitute.org/documents/Conf18-Meichenbaum-CaseConcept.pdf.

FURTHER READINGS



Thoughts on Theories: Case Conceptualization From Five Perspectives



The Role of a Case Conceptualization Model and Core Tasks of Intervention



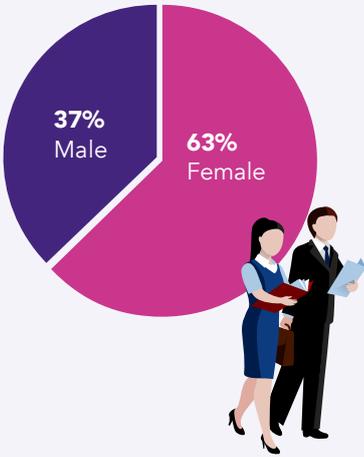
Developing Case Conceptualizations

CPD IN NUMBERS

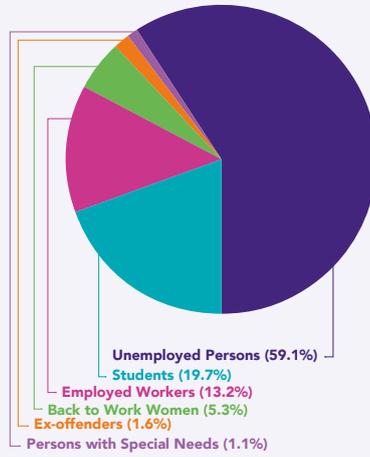
The first WSG Career Development Framework (CDF) Credentials opening in 2020 attracted 41 career professionals!

Here are some interesting statistics:

Credential Holder's Profile:



Breakdown of Client Profile:



Avg hour per practitioner:



1,584
Contact hours



455
Non-Contact hours

Total no. of clients seen:

25,127



Avg no. of clients seen per practitioner:

613

* Based on declaration of contact and non-contact hours in the past 3 years.

Find out more:
bit.ly/cdf_credential



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SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS!

As part of WSG's effort to improve and better contribute to the career development community, we continuously seek feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of the e-newsletter and explore areas of improvement.

We seek your help to share your views by participating in our short survey. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated!

Do the survey here:
go.gov.sg/true-north-survey



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JOIN US



Are You...

- ✓ Tertiary qualified in career development/ advisory related discipline such as human resource, career development, psychology, counselling or coaching?
- ✓ Trained in career advisory, career facilitation and/or career development?
- ✓ ACTA certified with minimum 5 years' experience in facilitating adult learning, curriculum & courseware development, designing of course assessment plan and conduct of assessment?

And Do You...

- ✓ Have at least 3 years' working experience in any of the following roles – career coach/officer or counsellor; education and career guidance (ECG) counsellor; employability coach; career, training and job search advisor or career consultant?

To apply, send your resume to cpd@wsg.gov.sg. Only shortlisted applicants will be notified.



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Careers Connect Group