CHAPTER 8

CAREER COUNSELING PARADIGMS: GUIDING, DEVELOPING, AND DESIGNING

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Career counseling is a multifaceted discipline with three major paradigms. This chapter describes the three practice patterns, with their different approaches to career counseling. The distinct career counseling paradigms each emanated from a perspective taken by society during a particular historical epoch. Each point-of-view encompasses shared assumptions, common understandings, and collective values with which to structure social practices, including career counseling. During the past century, shifting social contexts moved perspectives to new vantage points from which to derive different social practices, again including career counseling. Three major approaches to career counseling derived from different ontological perspectives during the past century will be delineated along three main parameters: (a) philosophy of science or epistemology, (b) paradigm or pattern of practice, and (c) characteristic processes. As shown in Figure 8.1, perspective begets philosophy, philosophy begets paradigm, and paradigm begets processes and procedures. These parameters for differentiating approaches to career counseling, as used herein, are defined in Table 8.1.

This chapter uses the term *career counseling* loosely, considering it as a general rubric that covers a myriad of interventions and services. Career counseling services originated early in the 20th century with a process that Frank Parsons (1908) called "vocational guidance." Career counseling processes now include vocational guidance along with academic advising, career developing, career educating, career coaching, career constructing, job placement,

and life designing. These processes are not interchangeable; they have distinguishing characteristics that indicate with whom and when to use them (cf. Stone, 1986). Nevertheless, these specific processes each fit, in general, the definition of career counseling and, in particular, fit one of its three dominant perspectives. Of the numerous definitions for career counseling, I prefer the definition rooted in an National Vocational Guidance Bulletin editorial statement by Frederick Allen (1923): "Vocational guidance means the giving of information, experience, and advice in regard to choosing an occupation, preparing for it, entering upon it, and progressing in it" (p. 26). In 1937, a committee of the National Vocational Guidance Association, chaired by Fred C. Smith, revised the definition to read: "the process of assisting the individual to choose an occupation, prepare for it, enter upon and progress in it" (p. 772). In the 1930s, when D. E. Super was a student at Teachers College–Columbia University, the preeminent counselor educator Harry Dexter Kitson began each class by having his students recite this definition.

The pattern of practice that directs the conduct of career counseling may be called a paradigm. The word *paradigm* denotes distinct concepts and thought patterns. Kuhn (1996) described a paradigm as a conceptual model that defines a scientific discipline and structures a prevailing view of best practices during a particular time period. In Kuhn's (1996) book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, he described a scientific paradigm as follows: "universally recognized scientific achievements that,

COUNSELOR | Perspective ⟹ Philosophy ⟹ Paradigm ⟹ Processes | CLIENT

FIGURE 8.1.   Sequence of parameters for counselors' approach to clients.

for a time, provide model problems and solutions for a community of researchers" (p. 10). Paradigms derive from a perspective with ontological assumptions that frame a specific way of understanding the world. Accordingly, paradigms derived from different perspectives may include distinct conceptualizations and explanations for an identical object of study. When first introduced, each of the three career counseling paradigms discussed in this chapter caused intellectual upheaval among practitioners and researchers. These upheavals, however, did not cause a revolution in thinking. The new ideas did not replace the previous paradigm, instead, each new paradigm added to the repertoire for providing vocational assistance. A revolution would have involved an intellectual rupture that transformed the core values and foundational principles of the field. Thus, practitioners may view the three paradigms for career counseling as complementary and choose among them depending on the needs of a client.

This chapter begins by discussing the paradigm for vocational guidance that was devised during the Industrial Age. Early in the 20th century, counseling became established as a new field of practice. It emerged from the field of social work and its methods of "friendly visits" to help young people choose occupations. Before that time, most individuals did not really choose an occupation, they usually continued in the family occupation. If they did choose an occupation, it was from a few possibilities. The

rise of industrialization and urbanization opened numerous new options for young people who previously would have worked on a family farm or in a nearby village. Social workers developed the field of vocational guidance to help these newcomers to the city choose among the numerous industrial occupations.

Frank Parsons first used the term *vocational counselor* in 1908 (Allen, 1921). Since the founding of the counseling profession in 1908 (Savickas, 2011), practitioners have used a common language and select activities to craft its discourse and activities. Through repetition, these discussions and practices came to substantiate the field of vocational guidance. These repeated sayings and routine practices conferred meaning on the profession by giving it an identity, boundaries, and norms. Contemporary counselors maintain it through a pattern of discourse and practices that enable them to understand each other and make sense of client problems. Twenty-first-century students learn the discourse and its practices through university training programs that socialize novices into the career counseling profession.

During the 20th century, advances in the modern world and its societal perspectives brought changes in the organization of work and made it progressively more complex for individuals to make vocational choices and adapt to work roles. In a field that was once simply vocational guidance, two additional

TABLE 8.1

Parameters for Distinguishing Career Counseling Approaches

Perspective	Assumptive frame of values and beliefs that provide an ontological context for understanding the world.
Philosophy of science	Epistemology used from a particular perspective to validate sources of knowledge as well as to build theories and conceptual models.
Paradigm	A conceptual model used to outline a pattern of processes according to a particular epistemology.
Processes	A function or activities used to bring about a result specified by a paradigm.

paradigms emerged during the past century to address new sets of problems experienced by the members of society living in increasingly complicated times. Before considering the two more recent paradigms for career counseling, this chapter considers the foundational paradigm of vocational guidance.

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

In the first decade of the 20th century, society's widening perspective of empiricism led to the first scientific paradigm for career intervention, one that replaced the social work practice of friendly visits. In 1908, Parson called the paradigm vocational guidance (Allen, 1923). A guide is a person who leads newcomers through an unknown or unmapped landscape. In the case of job or vocational guiding, the newcomers had moved to the city from farms and foreign lands. Vocational guidance was devised by Parsons (1909) as a scientific approach, one that used "true reasoning" (p. 5) to match people to occupational positions. The first chapter of his influential book, *Choosing a Vocation* (Parsons, 1909) was entitled "The Importance of the Scientific Method" (p. 3). Parson's matching model for vocational guidance quickly evolved into what Kuhn (1996) described as normal science, and in some respects it remains so today. In normal science, practitioners and researchers apply a standard model to solve a familiar problem, which in career counseling involves matching people to positions. Over time, guidance personnel who practiced this normal science accumulated substantial evidence about typical problems and refined methods with which to address them.

Typically, counselors guide—that is direct or advise—the lost by recognizing who they resemble and then encouraging them to explore occupations in which they will interact with similar people. In the case of vocational direction, the guide relies not on recognizing physical landmarks but rather on recognizing the types of people occupied in different jobs. In short, the paradigm for vocational guidance concentrates on the construct of *resemblance*. Counselors observe individuals and identify their standing on some traits that differentiate among

occupational groups. Originally the problem-solving methods that guides used to recognize individuals and match them to occupational groups were palmistry and phrenology. As science progressed, counselors conducted the study of individuals using tests and inventories. The initial empirical approach to studying individuals was elegantly articulated in 1911 by Thorndike in his book entitled *Individuality*. The approach came to be known as differential psychology or the study of individual differences. According to Thorndike (1911), psychologists study common humanity to establish facts and laws in which to ground practice and then apply these principles to help individuals. The first formal definition for vocational guidance was presented by Payne (1923) at the convention of the National Vocational Guidance Association: "a scientific and continuing process whereby individuals are tested, measured, and evaluated, then advised concerning the lines of work and endeavor wherein their development is likely to be greatest" (p. 104).

Since that time, vocational guidance has been conducted predominantly from a perspective of empiricism or positivism. Thus, methods in the vocational guidance paradigm are characterized as scientific, empirical, rational, clinical, and problem solving. This scientific perspective on guidance, called "the Minnesota point-of-view" (Williamson, 1947), has three critical assumptions. First, vocational guidance should be based on objective data that provides a sound basis for action. Second, this data should be collected using scientific methods for measuring individuals' abilities and interests. And third, vocational guidance should assist individuals to evaluate the resulting data relative to their opportunities, choices, and goals. On the basis of these assumptions, Williamson (1939) in a book entitled *How to Counsel Students* formulated the first career counseling theory to articulate systematically and explicitly the vocational guidance paradigm. For decades known as trait-and-factor counseling, it is now referred to as person–environment fit counseling.

In first stating the paradigm for vocational guidance, Parsons (1908) outlined a matching model with three steps: (a) "study and understand" the self, (b) "get knowledge" about opportunities and

conditions of success, and (c) "reason correctly about the relations of these two groups of facts" (p. 3). Similar to all paradigms of practice (Kuhn, 1996), specific instantiations do not follow a rigid pattern. Each realization of the general pattern or conceptual model shows a flexible and creative application of the abstract template. For example, the matching model is used in individual and group guidance, computer-assisted guidance, and self-directed workbooks. Moreover, in these venues, fit can be determined using different criteria such as a collective, job, or organization. The predominant application of the model in vocational guidance concentrates on matching an individual to collectives of people who are employed in various occupations, with the best fit being to the collective a client most resembles. Alternatively, a counselor may determine how well an individual's abilities and interests match a position's requirements and rewards to predict job success and satisfaction. Another variation on the general template is matching an individual's values to an organization's culture. Each of these methods for matching is effective in vocational guidance as well as in academic advising and in job placement. Personnel selection and military classification reverse the paradigm in fitting positions to people, rather than people to positions.

In the course of normal science, eventually a theorist will derive a synthesis of the accumulated knowledge and techniques. For the vocational guidance paradigm, the grand synthesizer was John Holland (1959) who analyzed and synthesized the available evidence about personality traits and ability factors into a theory of vocational personality types. His elegant system for vocational guidance matches both individuals and occupations to six prototypes. Then an individual's vocational personality type and fitting occupations are indicated by a vector of resemblance to the six prototypes. The great value of Holland's system lies in its ability to organize simply and apply quickly vast amounts of evidence and information.

The philosophy of science that supports the vocational guidance paradigm can be located in Stephen Pepper's (1942/1970) epistemic model of world hypotheses. Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that studies the sources and limits

of knowledge. In practice, epistemology analyzes how one builds theories and models. Pepper's system offers a concrete means for identifying and articulating the epistemological position that structures vocational guidance's paradigmatic processes. Pepper's epistemic system uses root metaphors to foster conceptual clarity, comprehension, and insight regarding a philosophy of science. Vocational guidance exemplifies the paradigm that Pepper named *formism*. It stresses categorization of things. Formism assumes that reality is stable and that observers can perceive the essential qualities in individuals. With its root metaphor of similarity or type, formism attempts to answer the question "What is it like?" by classifying objects in the world. Of course, for vocational guidance, the question became "Who does the client resemble?" For formism, the theory of truth is correspondence.

Practitioners of vocational guidance manifest the formist epistemology as they use a standardized and familiar lexicon or stock of words with which to think, write, speak, and work. This common language crafts a discourse about the activities that they have found to be acceptable and useful. Students of vocational guidance must learn its language to communicate appropriately about its methods and skills as well as to perform its functions and activities. Instructors, of course, systematically incorporate this language instruction in their courses. To identify the lexicon of vocational guidance, I applied methods from "the study of English for specific purposes" (Bhatia, 2008, p. 161) to vocational guidance conventions, such as repeated phrases, dominant themes, exemplary quotations, and preferred explanations. Exhibit 8.1 presents a lexicon familiar to practitioners of vocational guidance.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

As is typical in the history of science, vocational guidance as the normal science enjoyed a long period of stability and cumulative growth in methods and materials. In the 1950s the stability of the vocational guidance paradigm was shaken by changes in the organization of society following World War II. U.S. society experienced the growth

Exhibit 8.1.	
Vocational Guidance Lexicon	
Ability	Measurement
Adjustment	Occupational classification
Aptitude	Personality traits
Congruence	Placement
Employment	Resemblance
Fit	RIASEC
Individual differences	Satisfaction
Interests	Success
Jobs	Trait-and-factor
Matching	Types

of a middle class who lived in suburbs from where they commuted to work in hierarchical corporations. These bureaucratic organizations pursued the goals of efficiency and rationality through specialization of functions and a hierarchical arrangement of relationships and responsibilities. The bureaucratic hierarchy motivates employees with prospects of progressive promotions and salary increases during a lifetime career. Thus, career as a life path through a corporation emerged as both a creation and value of bureaucracies.

With these societal changes came a new perspective on career counseling. It was diametrically opposed to the Minnesota point of view, challenging its core assumptions and its guidance paradigm. From the humanistic perspective on career counseling, counselors viewed individuals not just as objects of study but also as subjects with agency. The challenges posed by humanism's perspective unsettled and energized the discipline for the next 25 years as opposing camps debated each other at conferences and in journal articles (Blocher, 2000; Bordin, 1949).

In response to the hierarchical arrangement of work and taking the perspective of humanism, many counselors called for a new approach to career counseling. Because guidance mainly focuses on matching people to positions, many counselors concluded that it was less effective for assisting clients plan how to advance along career paths and climb the ladder of success. The ensuing *revolutionary science* or *paradigm shift*, to use Kuhn's (1996) terms, brought forth the career development model. In the physical sciences, a

paradigm shift means one can no longer reasonably hold to the old paradigm. For example, it would be difficult for a contemporary physicist to still posit that ether carries light. In the social sciences, however, a new model may offer a profound change in the perception of events, yet individuals may still adhere to the older model. This is what occurred in the 1950s, some practitioners adhered completely to the vocational guidance paradigm, yet others moved to a career development paradigm, and still others tried to combine the two paradigms. Counselors who combined the models highly valued the scientific achievements of vocational guidance. They choose to preserve the empirical model yet highlighted the boundaries of its useful functions—guiding, advising, and placing. Beyond these boundaries, they championed a second paradigm, which I call the career development paradigm.

The new paradigm introduced a developmental psychology of careers to supplement Holland's (1959) differential psychology of occupations. In championing the paradigm, D. E. Super (1957) called for a shift from the focus on occupations and differences between the people in them to a focus on careers and how individuals develop them over a lifetime. From this humanistic perspective, career is a lifelong process, in contrast to occupational choice, which is a point-in-time event. Holland positioned individuals as actors in six distinct work environments, whereas D. E. Super positioned individuals as agents who manage their own lives. Thus, the career development paradigm concentrates on agency as individuals exercise control over the nature and quality of their lives by coping with a sequence of social expectations or developmental tasks. Three elements constitute the career development paradigm or general pattern: (a) *assess* developmental status and situation, (b) *orient* to challenges and identify needed resources, and (c) *develop* the needed resources. During the second half of the 20th century, this general pattern was applied in two domains—schools and counseling services.

The movement that some called deliberate psychological education (Moser & Sprinthall, 1973) extended the career development paradigm into

schools and universities by presenting curricula, courses, and workshops designed to foster learning of career development attitudes, beliefs, and competencies. When delivering career development interventions, counselors act as educators. In some cases, counselors are aided by career development facilitators who, although not trained counselors, incorporate career development information or skills in their work with students, adults, employees, or the public (Powell, 2014). For their subject matter, career educators and facilitators typically use D. E. Super's (1957) grand narrative of developmental tasks organized into the career stages of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. Career education follows the general paradigm of assess-orient-develop. In particular, career educators assess students' degree of progress along the exploration stage continuum of *crystallizing* a preference for an occupational field, *specifying* a choice in that field, and then *implementing* that choice. Second, career educators orient students to their imminent developmental tasks. Third, career educators foster students' readiness and resources for coping with those tasks by helping them to learn and practice relevant attitudes and beliefs, such as optimism and self-efficacy as well as competencies for making decisions, seeking information, solving problems, and searching for jobs.

Similar to career educators who work with students, career coaches who work with adults instruct their clients or groups on developing a career. Rather than D. E. Super's (1957) model of career stages, executive coaches are more likely to use a model of professional careers that progresses along the continuum of apprentice, colleague, mentor, and sponsor (e.g., Dalton, Thompson, & Price, 1977). Nevertheless, coaching interventions still follow the general paradigm of assess-orient-develop. Typically, they (a) assess developmental status in terms of clients' current situation, goals, and competencies; (b) orient clients to opportunities, challenges, and barriers as well as provide feedback regarding knowledge and skills need to achieve their goals and develop their careers; and (c) develop the needed knowledge and skills.

In addition to focus on developing a career, the humanistic perspective focuses attention on the agentic person who develops that career. In particular, it focuses on dimensions of the self, including self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. In part, the impetus for concentrating on the self in career development interventions arose from an influential definition of career counseling presented by D. E. Super in 1951: "the process of helping a person to develop and accept an integrated and adequate picture of himself [sic] and of his role in the world of work, and to convert it into reality, with satisfaction to himself and benefit to society" (p. 2). D. E. Super conceptualized occupational choice as implementing a self-concept, work as a manifestation of selfhood, and career development as a continuing process of improving the match between the self and situation.

The self-concept locus of career development (D. E. Super, 1963) advances a humanism that views individuals as rational agents who possess the inner resources for growth (Moustakas, 1956). The meaning of experience originates within the person. Furthermore, development rises from within as individuals discover who they are and unfold their careers. The humanistic model of the self rejects the empiricist idea that the parts (e.g., traits) explain the whole. Rather, it asserts that the whole explains the parts. Moreover, adherents of this humanistic perspective assume that an essence at the core of individuals drives them toward self-actualization (Maslow, 1954; Rogers, 1951), individuation (Jung, 1933), and wholeness (Perls, Hefferline, & Goodman, 1951). In comparison to vocational guidance's empirical perspective on the objective actor, career development's humanistic perspective focuses on the subjective agent.

Given humanism's perspective on the self and personal agency, many practitioners adapted for use in career development counseling the theories they used in personal counseling for psychological problems (Bordin, 1955). This meant that psychological counseling for career development originated under the auspice of clinical psychology, rather than as a part of the career development paradigm (D. E. Super, 1957). To this day, many counselors, if not most, see a sharp divide between personal counseling and career counseling (Subich, 1993). Counselors were especially attracted to humanistic psychology models that concentrate on attitudes

rather than facts and emphasize helping clients rely on their own inner wisdom to realize their potential for growth and self-actualization. Of course, the first personal counseling theory to be applied to career development was nondirective counseling (Rogers, 1942), which brought a psychologically oriented counseling theory into career development. In writing specifically about vocational counseling, Rogers and Wallen (1946) asserted that that there was no justification for a separate discussion of vocational issues in nondirective counseling. "The counselor in any case, should be interested in the person not just in the initial problem . . . educational and vocational difficulties are personal problems" (p. 90).

In addition to being interested in the person, counselors also should be interested in development. According to Tyler's (1969) influential book entitled *The Work of the Counselor*, "the psychological purpose of counseling is to facilitate *development*" (p. 16). Developmental counseling theory (Blocher, 1966) concentrates specifically on psychological counseling as a "facilitator of development" (p. 61) and thus easily was extended to career development issues. Crites (1981) and Walsh and Osipow (1990) reviewed client-centered and development counseling theories as they have been applied to career development issues as well as the extension of psychodynamic, behavioral, and social–psychological theories to career development. Subsequently, several problem-solving and social-learning approaches to personal counseling have been applied to career development issues, including frameworks based on cognitive information processing (Peterson, Sampson, & Reardon, 1991), social learning (Krumboltz, 1996), and social cognition (Brown & Lent, 1996).

Crites (1981) explained that personal counseling approaches for career development are more pragmatic than theoretical. Each personal counseling approach uses as its basic instrument the interview interaction, with its complimentary dimensions of relationship and communication. Moreover, each approach seems to concentrate on solving problems irrespective of theoretical orientation. In personal counseling for career development, the general paradigm of assess-orient-develop becomes (a) assess presenting problem and its antecedents,

(b) clarify and specify the problem, and (c) resolve the problem through instrumental learning. Kidd (2006) described these three phases as enabling understanding based on assessment, exploring new perspectives through challenging inaccurate beliefs and giving information, and forming plans and setting goals.

Pepper's description of the organismic epistemology fits the career development paradigm, particularly for developmental and client-centered counseling as well as career education. The organismic perspective attempts to answer the question, "How does it develop?" The root metaphor is development in the sense of an inherent tendency toward increasing integration through progressive steps or stages. Its theory of truth is coherence. Actualizing an organismic epistemology, the career development paradigm highlights an individual's inherent drive to grow toward wholeness through increasing organization and integration. In this philosophy, the self as agent is the source of his or her own development. As agents for their own lives, individuals must develop their inner resources to ready themselves for the next life stage and its tasks. The formist epistemology, actualized in the vocational guidance paradigm, asks who the client or actor resembles. The organismic epistemology, actualized in the career development paradigm, asks about the agent's progress in making a career and implementing a self-concept.

Using methods from the study of English for specific purposes, Exhibit 8.2 identifies key words in the lexicon of career development education.

Exhibit 8.2. Career Development Lexicon	
Attitudes	Life planning
Beliefs	Maturity
Career education	Planfulness
Choice content	Role salience
Choice process	Self-concept
Competencies	Self-efficacy
Decidedness	Self-implementation
Decision making	Stages
Developmental tasks	Transitions
Exploration	Work values

LIFE DESIGNING

Similar to the guidance paradigm, the development paradigm also enjoyed a long period of widespread use and cumulative growth in methods and materials. Yet, as happened to the guidance paradigm, dramatic social changes, possibly starting with the 1973 oil crisis, cracked the foundations of the development paradigm. With the flattening of hierarchical corporations and the dejobbing of employment, a 30-year career trajectory with a single employer has become outmoded for most people. The destandardized, individualized life courses that people now experience no longer conform to D. E. Super's (1957) metanarrative of a predictable, progression of career stages. Rather than move through normative stages, a majority of people now change jobs about every 5 years (Mulins, 2009) as they occupy short-term assignments characterized as temporary, contingent, contract, adjunct, or part time. These assignments increasingly are being referred to as projects, especially when compensation is tied to tasks accomplished rather than time spent. Accompanying the concept of projects is a new office arrangement for employees who work mostly at home or on the road. The arrangement called *hoteling* enables employees to reserve flexible space when they need an office.

When corporations supported 30-year careers and provided permanent work stations, they in a sense owned careers and in many ways organized employees' lives. Without a corporate holding environment, individuals now own their careers and design their own lives. The resulting "individualization of the life course" (Beck, 2002) shifts responsibility for career from institutions to individuals. People must "get a life" (Habermas & Bluck, 2000) and bridge transitions in that life by using autobiographical reasoning (Alheit, 1995) and identity work (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). Thus, careers no longer reside in companies, and instead they reside in individuals and the big stories or autobiographies that they tell about their working lives and the social spaces they occupy. Accordingly, managing a post-traditional career, which may be boundaryless (Arthur, 1994) and protean (Hall, 1996), requires reflexivity.

Whereas personal counseling for career development fosters retrospective reflection, designing one's own life summons prospective reflexivity. Reflection means considering what happened, whereas reflexivity means examining a situation before acting. For example, Dorothy in the *Wizard of Oz* showed reflexivity, not reflection, when she asked, "Now which way do we go?" The individualization of the life course requires that people prepare for and adapt to possibilities and problems by repeatedly asking themselves, "which way do I go?" As the life course has become deritualized, the self must be explored and constructed in a process that reflexively connects personal and social change (Giddens, 1991). The life course and its kaleidoscopic role structures becomes a "biography of choice" (Heinz, 2002) as adults of all ages increasingly are expected to repeatedly weigh alternatives, enact choices, and evaluate outcomes.

Individualization of the life course, a hallmark of the 21st-century globalization, has moved the counseling profession to a new vantage point from which to view career counseling, one focused on how individuals design their own lives. The career counseling paradigms of guiding and developing needed to be supplemented with a new paradigm that fully addresses the life-designing needs of insecure workers with precarious jobs (Kalleberg, 2009) and individual life courses in risk societies (Beck, 2002). Practitioners no longer promote planning for 30-year employment in a single organization, but instead they foster employability that includes preparing for possibilities and adapting to changes. Counselors now speak of career management rather than career development because development requires a stable holding environment, something organizations no longer offer.

The 21st-century perspective on career counseling moves from the empiricism of objective vocational guiding and the humanism of subjective career developing to the social constructionism of projective life designing. Although the terms objective and subjective commonly are used, the term *projective* merits some explanation. For present purposes, projective means to extend oneself outward into social contexts to constitute the self, design a life, and construct a career. In a sense, the

meaning of projective life designing is analogous to the meaning of projective techniques (e.g., Rorschach inkblots) in which a person responds to ambiguous stimuli. In the postmodern work world, individuals must respond to and interact with ambiguous social opportunities and complex societal offerings. In short, their work lives consist of a series of projects and what had been career development becomes project management. The humanistic perspective on career development explains that meaning arises from within, unfolding from an individual's essential nature. In comparison, the constructionist perspective moves meaning-making outside of the individual and into the social realm where individuals interact with other individuals. From the constructionist perspective, career is viewed as a relationship between an individual and society, a coconstructed project rather than consciousness of an object or self-consciousness of subject. This shift in perspective moves career counseling from a humanistic view of the self as in the person to a constructionist view of the self as in a performance.

The constructionist perspective on social performance focuses on the centrality of language in making a self and building a career, with the central tenet being that "we live in language." Concentrating on the linguistic space in which individuals interact challenges the humanistic idea of a coherent, unified self that makes rational decisions. Rather, the self is a continually emerging product of language, coconstructed by an individual and society. It is substantiated in social roles that individuals perform. The self in a social role is called identity. Because people play many social roles, they have multiple identities. Rather than being fixed and stable, contemporary identities may be temporary, shifting, and fragmented. Individuals are no longer embedded in contexts that proclaim their identities for life (e.g., an organizational career lasting 30 years). Individuals need to repeatedly reconstruct their identities, which are viewed as performances rather than as ascribed traits. While possessing multiple identities that change, individuals still seek a sense of self-continuity by authoring life stories that show unity, coherence, and meaning (Sadeh & Karniol, 2012).

Uniqueness of individuals, not differences or development, have become the focus of a third perspective on career counseling. The constructionist perspective prioritizes individuality, not individual difference variables that are differences not persons (Lamiell, 2003). To attend to individuality, constructionist's life-designing paradigm for career counseling deals with making a self, shaping an identity, crafting a career, and composing a life (Savickas, 2012). Accordingly, the life-designing paradigm for career counseling takes a broader perspective than the vocational guidance and career development paradigms. Its purview is the course and content of life structures designed and constructed by individual strategies and choices. During the course of their lives, individuals structure and restructure their pattern of life roles by changing the salience and prominence of certain roles in relation to other roles in the theaters of work, friendship, intimacy, leisure, and citizenship. At its fullest, life designing prompts individuals to reflexively consider life-course strategies and structures as they envision and build a life arranged with viable and fulfilling roles that interact to produce well-being. When life designing focuses narrowly on the work role, the intervention still may be called life designing because work is a part of life. With a narrow purview on career, however, applications of the life-designing paradigm also have been called *career style counseling* (Savickas, 1989), *narrative career counseling* (Cochran, 1997), a *storied approach* (Brott, 2001), *vocational designing* (e.g., European Society for Vocational Designing and Career Counseling [http://www3.unil.ch/wpmu/esvdc]), *self-constructing* (Guichard, 2009), *career designing* (Pukelis, 2012), *career constructing* (Maree, 2013), and *story crafting* (McMahon & Watson, 2012). The diverse names appear because the career counseling profession has not yet determined a name for this relatively new paradigm. For our purposes, *life designing* is the appropriate name, having been established after lengthy negotiations among colleagues from seven countries (Savickas et al., 2009).

Life designing may be distinguished from personal counseling for career development in two major ways. First, life designing was originated under the auspices of vocational psychology, and not as an extension of clinical psychology. Life designing is a counseling theory that implements a

theory of vocational behavior called career construction theory (Savickas, 2005). Second, life designing is a postmodern counseling theory that views meaning as in the performance rather than the modern view of meaning as in the person. Thus, life designing concentrates on autobiographical narratives to script the next episode in a career (Cochran, 1997), rather than traits inside the person. In life designing, career counselors concentrate on a client's autobiography in the form of the big stories a client tells and wishes to enact. These macronarratives help counselors to understand a client's uniqueness and appreciate the emotions that move them. To be useful to clients, counselors provide a format for telling their story. This systematic narrative inquiry focuses client reflection on narrative themes in their stories and then encourages them to extend these themes into the future as they reflexively design the next chapters in their lives. I chose the word "useful" carefully. In the vocational guidance paradigm, counselors act as authorities as they *help* clients. In the career development paradigm, especially in personal counseling, counselors *facilitate* clients in exercising their own agency. In the life-designing paradigm, counselors endeavor to be useful to clients as they *collaborate* jointly in coconstructing meaning and resolving problems.

The life-designing paradigm for career counseling has been delineated with three phases: (a) construct career through small stories, (b) reconstruct these micronarratives into a macronarrative or life portrait, and (c) coconstruct intentions that lead to the next action episode in the real world (Savickas, 2012). Let us consider these three phases in turn, beginning with construction of a career story.

Construction

When individuals have been dislocated from a narrative that gives meaning or have exhausted their current stories, they begin narrative processing of their biographies (Heinz, 2002). If these individuals seek counseling to assist them in this identity work, counselors begin life designing by inquiring about clients' current career narrative and the incidents that are destorying it. Then counselors interview clients to learn how they constructed that narrative. During the interview, counselors ask

clients to narrate micronarratives or tell small stories about how they have made a self, shaped an identity, and constructed a career. These fundamental stories are the base materials that counselors will rearrange into a macronarrative that highlights what is at stake in the challenges to be met and the choices to be made.

Reconstruction

The rearrangement occurs through narrative reconstruction. The problems that clients face usually cannot be resolved by using the same story that creates the problems. Life designing involves clients in a quest for a different perspective from which to review their lives and revise their narratives. Career counselors collaborate with clients to position a new perspective from which they may selectively and creatively reinterpret the past to shape an identity narrative that addresses transition and transformation. This reconstruction cumulates insights by repositioning client micronarrative or small stories into a macronarrative or autobiography. Revision should amplify the theme in a client's identity narrative to better direct, regulate, and sustain efforts to cope with current concerns, challenges, and choices. When necessary, restorying also should modify mistaken ideas and challenge career barriers. When completed, client and counselor have remembered preexisting story elements along with new constructs into an identity narrative to sustain future aspirations and structure life roles. Remember that in this narrative reconstruction, the counselor as carpenter scaffolds new meaning in collaborating with the client who as architect authorizes the reconstruction.

Coconstruction

To consider the client's current concerns, life design counselors summarize the reconstructed macronarrative in the form of a life portrait. The coconstructed identity narrative should become a portrayal of personhood that prompts clients to concentrate autobiographical reasoning on the role transitions being confronted. This *biographicity*, that is using autobiographical reasoning to redesign one's life, seeks to comprehend the current dislocation in a way that clarifies priorities, mobilizes central

tendencies, and increases the possibility of transformation. To reflexively extend the life portrait into the future, client and counselor join together in candidly crafting moves in meaning to produce a unifying message that signals and compels a choice. From a fresh perspective, using new language and a reorganized meaning system, clients may clarify what is at stake in the next episode of their career story. This self-clarity enables clients to make their intentions more apparent to themselves and their counselors. Invigorated by this clarity, clients may envision the next scenes, crystallize intentions, and begin to act. Then, action in the real world furthers self-making, identity shaping, and career constructing. When the processes of reconstruction and coconstruction stall, counseling may turn to healing narratives.

Healing Narratives

It has long been known that career counseling can be therapeutic (Crites, 1981). In this regard, the life-designing paradigm includes more than just the process of designing. It may include the process of healing. Stone (1986) includes healing in his comprehensive survey of generic processes in counseling (e.g., guiding, developing and facilitating). Psychological healing is a more general term than psychotherapy, which is just one form of healing (Jackson, 1999). Psychological healing in life design career counseling may arise implicitly from a narrative restorying that challenges implicit beliefs about self and others. Healing also may be occasioned by confiding secrets, confessing fears, and grieving losses.

With some clients, the life-designing paradigm for career counseling moves explicitly and deliberately into therapeutic conversations intended to heal the plots in clinical dramas (Lieblich, McAdams, & Josselson, 2004). Typically therapeutic conversations occur with clients who have constructed self-defining stories that hurt yet cannot be readily and reasonably reconstructed. They come to life designing because some transition or trauma has dislocated them from their career narrative and, in doing so, has resurfaced self-defining stories filled with pain. Frequently these painful stories are seen in early recollections that, for most people, show

their perspective on current problems and, for many people, show a preoccupation that must be turned into an occupation. Yet, for some people, the early recollections express pain. When intense affect surfaces during life designing, career reconstruction cannot proceed until counselors address more fundamental concerns and conflicts expressed in these self-defining touchstones. The metaphors for making meaning and judgments contained in the early recollections may exacerbate problems in dealing with the transition. They must be deconstructed before these clients may explore possibilities beyond what they themselves and others have defined as a limit.

Deconstructing is a narrative way of working that disrupts what clients take for granted by discussing what their stories assume, overlook, omit, or forget. It takes apart self-limiting ideas, confining roles, and cultural barriers. Thus, deconstructing negative narratives helps clients to loosen identification with old loyalties and enables them to rethink who they are and who they become. Deconstruction encourages clients to retell their life stories with more nurturing narratives that meet current needs by providing a fresh take on familiar themes. Healing narratives increase the integration and coherence of life stories that at first sounded fragmented and chaotic, thereby leading to improved mental health (Noam, 1988). Of course, this self-reauthoring takes time because clients must tell their new stories repeatedly, and to diverse audiences, to make the stories meaningful (Järvinen, 2004).

In Pepper's (1942/1970) system, contextualism is the epistemology derived from the constructionist perspective and actualized in the life-designing paradigm. The contextual epistemology defines reality as ongoing and dynamic events. The individual is seen as constantly changing, especially through interaction. Action itself is conceptualized as behavior infused with meaning. Contextualists make distinctions; they do not make classifications. Formism, such as RIASEC's general types (Holland, 1959), removes the context, whereas contextualism highlights the particulars of the context (C. M. Super & Harkness, 2003). According to Pepper (1942/1970), contextualism attempts to answer the question,

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Exhibit 8.3.
Career Designing Lexicon

Adaptability	Identity
Career capital	Biographicity
Career roles	Calling
Cultural competence	Career construction
Employability	Life-course strategies
Flexicurity	Life designing
Hope and resilience	Mattering
Job crafting	Meaning
Life-long learning	Narratability
Preparedness	Self-construction
Psychological contract	Volition

"how does it happen?" The root metaphor is an act in context with a truth criterion of pragmatic "successful working" (pp. 232–233).

Again using methods from the study of English for specific purposes, Exhibit 8.3 identifies key words in the lexicon of life designing. The stock of words pertaining to adaptability and to identity appear in separate columns in the table.

CONCLUSION

The contextual paradigm of life designing does not replace but rather takes its place alongside the formist paradigm of vocational guidance and the organismic paradigm of career development, as delineated in Table 8.2. Depending on the needs of a client, counselors may shift perspectives from empirical guidance to organismic developing to contextual designing. The vocational guidance paradigm applies formist epistemology and takes empiricism's perspective on objective individual differences. Counselors who guide and advise

regard clients as actors who may be characterized by scores on traits and who may be helped to match themselves to occupations that employ people who they resemble. The career development paradigm applies organismic epistemology and takes humanism's perspective on subjective individual development. Counselors who educate and coach regard clients as agents who may be characterized by their degree of readiness to engage in developmental tasks appropriate to their life stages and who may be helped to implement new attitudes, beliefs, and competencies that further their careers. The life-designing paradigm applies contextualist epistemology and takes a social constructionist perspective on projective individual narratives. Counselors who design and heal regard clients as authors who may be characterized by autobiographical stories and who may be encouraged to reflect on life themes with which to reflexively construct their careers. Depending on a client's needs and social context, each paradigm for career counseling—whether it be modernity's guiding, late modernity's developing, or postmodernity's designing—is valuable and effective for its intended purpose.

To clarify thinking about the plurality of perspectives on career counseling, this chapter has described differences in philosophy, paradigm, and processes. Other counselors may make different distinctions, but the three paradigms of guiding, developing, and designing provide an integrative framework for systematizing and synthesizing understanding of the major approaches to career counseling. Practitioners may use the framework to distinguish among the major career counseling approaches and their range of applications.

TABLE 8.2

Parameters of Career Counseling Approaches

Paradigm	Perspective	Philosophy of science	Processes
Vocational guidance	Empiricism	Formist	Guiding, advising, placing
Career development	Humanism	Organismic	Educating, coaching, facilitating, psychological counseling
Life designing	Constructionism	Contextualist	Designing, healing

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