

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

Integrating Career Theory and Practice

Recommendations and Strategies

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IN THE FINAL chapter of this handbook, we look to the authors who have contributed to this volume for ideas that can further the integration of career practice and theory. We want to underscore important ideas that they offer about how theory informs practice and how practice informs theory. In particular, we summarize the recommendations that they have articulated and the strategies that they have described in reflecting on and responding to the five central questions posed in Chapter 1:

- How can we increase the cohesiveness between practitioners and researchers?
- How can career theories be renovated to address the majority of individuals in society?
- What are the best prospects for building clearer connections between practice and theory?
- How can practice inform theory?
- What type of research can produce knowledge that is useful to practitioners in realistically addressing the complexities presented by diverse clients in various clinical situations?

In responding to these questions, the authors have offered eight distinct recommendations, with accompanying action strategies, for strengthening the union between career practice and theory.

IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AMONG PRACTITIONERS, THEORISTS, AND RESEARCHERS

The most frequently stated recommendation for improving the linkages between theory and practice focused on something that practitioners and researchers both need to do, namely, make a concerted effort to communicate with each other, continually and candidly. Lucas points out the irony that, after they complete the same graduate school curriculum, counseling psychologists who choose academic and those who choose practice paths become so different from each other that they no longer talk to each other. She urges more collegial involvement in which academicians and practitioners draw on their scientist-practitioner roots.

The very basis of the scientist-practitioner model assumes that the two activities of practice and research are mutually informative. However, it has not always worked that way (Goldfried, 1993). Career theorists and researchers have traditionally paid relatively little attention to enhancing the practice of career intervention, while, at the same time, career counselors have invested relatively little effort in contributing to the development of career theory and the improvement of career research. Although both groups offer several cogent explanations for their inattention to the issues of the other group, the fact remains that further integration of practice and theory requires more communication and interaction between practitioners and researchers.

In scientific inquiry, a distinction must be made between the context of discovery and the context of verification. Discovery of many important phenomena would, from all indications, seem more likely to occur in career counseling practice. Thus, practicing career counselors have the potential to offer their research-oriented colleagues significant hypotheses in need of investigation and to provide contexts and participants with which to examine these hypotheses. Because of the uncontrolled and potentially biased processes that produce practitioners' discoveries and hypotheses, the new insights must be verified under the controlled conditions mandated by research paradigms. From this perspective, practice provides the greater possibility for discovery, whereas research involves the confirmation of these discoveries. Together, discovery and verification propel development for the field of career counseling.

Collin points out, however, that participants in the current situation do not acknowledge the importance of this interaction. There is no question that practitioners who use research are the very ones who make the most important judgments about the adequacy of theories, yet these practitioners are "cast in inferior and dependent roles." Theorists and researchers exert unidirectional influence on

practitioners. She characterizes this unidirectional flow of information as a "vicious circle" and then contrasts it with a "virtuous circle" in which practitioners adopt a new role and position of influence by continually interacting with theorists and researchers. Ideas to address the assumed split in theory and practice require more collaboration on theory building and research by teams of theorists and practitioners. Given the current "vicious circle," it seems appropriate that Osipow asks academicians to "reach out and include practitioners in their thinking and research."

Toward this end, Holland suggests a number of ways that the interaction and communication among practitioners, researchers, and theorists could be improved. He suggests that career journals establish practitioner sections or forums devoted to articles about career theory and practice written by practitioners. Lucas recommends that these articles suggest ways to accomplish successful treatment in particular situations. Holland further suggests that changes in convention formats might also help. He urges program planners to explore convention venues for interaction within and between small groups composed of equal numbers of practitioners and researchers. This may be a first step in implementing Osipow's suggestion that academicians take the lead in creating teams of researchers and practitioners to learn from each other. Whatever we try, Holland asserts, should involve more face-to-face interaction and discussion.

Arranging opportunities for face-to-face communication, in and of itself, however, would be insufficient because the two groups will bring different languages to the encounters. Relating the two languages of practice and theory is itself a longstanding problem, one that Crites clearly describes. Language differences may, in part, explain why practitioners and researchers rarely communicate directly with each other. As Crites and Herr both observe, theorists tend to communicate in abstract words and concentrate on generalizable concepts, whereas practitioners tend to communicate in concrete words and concentrate on the contextualized particulars of an individual client's situation. Herr suggests that practitioners are less interested in the conceptual language of research and more interested in an understandable language that describes their work. In contrast, Crites writes, researchers seem more interested in decontextualized, abstract principles that are widely generalizable.

Jepsen approaches the language problem with the metaphor of clubs. He likens the segregation of theorists from practitioners to membership in two distinct clubs. The two groups employ different languages and rhetoric forms that make mutual understanding very difficult. He further notes that the metaphors of clubs, language, and rhetoric should assist in constructing promising topics for the dialogue between theory and practice. One way to begin such dialogue might be to ask practitioners to articulate for researchers and theorists the practical goals and intended outcomes that accurately represent their practices.

Leong deals with communication problems by first identifying three obstacles that block communication, namely, boundaries, cultures, and complexity. Then he suggests three strategies with which to confront these obstacles: contact,

communication, and collaboration. According to Leong, the first strategy would be to increase and facilitate the contact between scientists and practitioners. Without this contact, argues Leong, the two groups will remain isolated from each other with their different conferences and journals and seek solutions to only the problems that concern them. Similar to Holland, Krumboltz, and Arbona, Leong emphasizes the critical importance of increased communication. An understanding of each other's issues and concerns can only come about with communication. The third strategy suggested is collaboration. If researchers and practitioners can spend time together learning about each other's concerns, they are then ready to attempt an integration of the science and practice of career psychology.

Myers accurately and dramatically describes the current status of communication among researchers and practitioners: "theorists and practitioners—though both groups care about careers—come from different cultures, worship different heroes, communicate in different formats, and are incumbents of different occupations." Without striving to increase direct communication between the two "occupations," the field will not advance the integration of career practice and theory.

INCREASE THE APPLICATION OF EXISTING THEORY AND RESEARCH

A second recommendation articulated by the authors in this handbook implicitly argues that the theory-practice link can be strengthened if practitioners and theorists increase their attention to applying existing theory to practice and research. For example, Osipow enjoins practitioners to invest more of their own effort in applying theories and research to practice and not wait for theorists to do it. In this regard, Harmon explains that practice changes much more quickly than theory. Thus, practitioners must always go beyond existing theory in their work. They must use theory to the extent possible but then use their intuition and clinical knowledge to guide them where theory leaves off. She urges practitioners to use theory to the extent it applies to their clients, knowing that it will lag behind the problems clients present.

Several chapter authors offer specific suggestions for increasing the applicability of existing theory to practice. Swanson suggests that the link between trait-and-factor theory and person-environment fit counseling exemplifies the convergence of theory and practice, as illustrated by the continued value of the model and methods and by the flexibility and adaptability they continue to offer. She suggests that perhaps the most immediate need for theoretical revision is the clear and explicit inclusion of variables such as gender, race, and ethnicity. Despite the fact that career counseling has been steeped in the tradition of individual differences, some of these fundamental differences variables have often been overlooked, yet they remain critical given the diversity of clients requesting career counseling. A second direction in which both theory and practice may be modified is in the realm

of process variables in career counseling. Swanson notes that although person-environment counseling has been criticized for its inattention to the client-counselor relationship, it still offers a useful strategy for investigating the therapeutic relationship through the concept of person-environment correspondence. Finally, Swanson concludes that, taken together, trait-and-factor theory and person-environment counseling offer a useful framework for addressing the kind of questions that require attention in the theory and practice of career counseling. For example, what counseling techniques and conditions will produce what types of results with what types of clients?

In discussing implications for practice and science from a person-centered perspective, Lent seems to agree with Swanson when she asserts that career counselors have often neglected relationship factors in favor of delivering information. If the two dimensions of counseling deal with communication and relationship, then the communication dimension has been disproportionately emphasized. Similar to Swanson's advocacy for the utility of the trait-and-factor model for studying the relationship dimension in career counseling, Lent cogently argues that the person-centered model offers a valuable paradigm with which to study the therapeutic relationship within career counseling. Another emerging strategy noted by Lent, one with implications for vocational science and practice, is to use the plethora of alternative research paradigms, including discovery-oriented psychotherapy research. Person-centered theory in the career counseling field may be enhanced through such research methods. Finally, Lent notes that person-centered theory may be useful to practitioners in four ways. First, person-centered theory protects against inaccurate diagnosis and incorrect application of special technologies by defining the goal of the assessment phase as understanding the client's worldview. Second, it clarifies at which point on the psychological helping continuum a particular intervention lies by separating occupational information and experiential counseling. Third, it focuses on perspective taking, a particularly important step in assisting the diverse population that continues to request career counseling. Fourth, it is consistent with methods of data gathering, such that practitioners may more comfortably take on the researcher role in their everyday work.

Jepsen examines the issue of applying existing developmental models of vocational behavior to the practice of career counseling. He suggests that converting developmental theories to a story form could facilitate practice applications. Such stories may be validated by counselors who will certainly offer modifications and elaborations. He also comments that the publication and discussion of more career counseling cases would certainly strengthen the theory-practice link, especially if the case presentations focus primarily on counseling rather than development. Jepsen urges practitioners to use qualitative or naturalistic methods to collect behavioral data about their practice experiences and then offer this information to theorists. Practitioners, unlike theorists and researchers, have access to unique data that may be more coherently assessed using idiographic, qualitative methods.

Qualitative data is rich in hypothesis generation potential; it also has the potential to identify lacunas in theory.

As an example of an effort to better apply existing theory to practice, Vandiver and Bowman propose a revision of Linda Gottfredson's theory of occupational aspirations, resulting in a more effective translation of the theory into practice. They note that Gottfredson's theory of circumscription and compromise provides a new perspective from which to comprehend the development of occupational aspirations. Their revision of Gottfredson's theory offers more flexibility in understanding how the dimensions of sex type, prestige, and interest interact to explain the unique career choices and compromises each individual makes. Using the revision of Gottfredson's theory, counselors can incorporate a broader base of information into their assessment and counseling practices.

An innovative idea for applying existing theory to practice is offered by Gati when he suggests that computerized career guidance systems may serve as laboratories for this work. Not only does he explain a mechanism by which existing theories can be tested for applicability; he actually illustrates how resolving problems and dilemmas in designing computer-assisted career guidance systems (CACGS) furthers the integration of decision theory with the practice of career intervention. Then he suggests and shows how practice can drive the improvement of theory.

The strategies offered by the authors of this handbook for moving toward the goal of better applying career theory to the practice of career intervention provide clear direction for the future. Moreover, they offer an initial agenda for dialogue and collaboration between practitioners and academicians, once communication among the groups is firmly established. The goal of better applying existing theories to practice seems to be widely endorsed, especially by adherents of each individual theory, who see the potential benefits in improved use of their preferred theory. In contrast, a related recommendation attracts fewer supporters. It deals with converging theories as a means of making them more applicable to practice.

USE FRAMEWORKS THAT LINK PRACTICE TO THEORY

Individual theories focus on particular problems; each one has a circumscribed range of convenient application. By systematically linking the theories based on their range of convenience, practitioners may be able to better apply the theories to individual cases. Gottfredson shows how this can be done by introducing a general purpose framework that uses subtheories as specific engines for specific problems. As a starting point, he notes that this framework serves as a reminder that vocational outcomes are functions of both persons and environments. The framework rests on five main ideas—career status, satisfaction, attainment, direction of activity, and work performance—and is supported by four secondary concepts—environmental competence, personal resources, life circumstances, and congruence. Gottfredson

presents this framework and follows it by using a map that shows how multiple partial theories may fit together into a comprehensive model of career status. Gottfredson explains that the selective use of partial theories tailored for specific career problems requires sound measures of the theoretical constructs that can be practically applied. Two such instruments are the *Position Classification Inventory* (Gottfredson & Holland, 1991) to assess person-job match and the *Career Attitudes and Strategies Inventory* (Holland & Gottfredson, 1994) to assess geographic barriers and interpersonal abuse.

Savickas shares Gottfredson's preference for a technical eclecticism rooted in a systematic linking of specific theories to particular career problems. He provides a framework intended to link theory and practice. His framework casts the career theories into a structural model that accounts for the major dimensions of work in people's lives, describes the measurement techniques associated with each unit in the model, and identifies the career intervention that best expresses each theory in action. Savickas then explains how distinct presenting problems are best approached by using certain theories, measures, and interventions. Following the framework and its associated Decision Tree may be a way that counselors can become even more systematic and eclectic in rigorously applying pertinent theory to particular clients. Savickas hopes that the framework can be used to stimulate and facilitate research on career intervention, especially following Lucas' suggestion of constructing minimodels for subpopulations of clients and, in so doing, advance a science of practice. A related recommendation articulated by several authors requires going well beyond converging existing theories to improve their applicability to practice; this recommendation focuses on construction of new theories.

CONSTRUCT CAREER COUNSELING THEORIES

Whereas many participants in the two "convergence conferences" that inspired this and a previous book thought that theory-practice integration projects should concentrate on improving the applicability and use of existing theory, others thought that a need existed for construction of new theories. In the main, those who called for new theories argued that existing theories deal with vocational development, not career counseling. From this viewpoint, practitioners might benefit from collaborating with theorists in constructing theories of career counseling. Swanson's chapter in this handbook can be read as a creative and insightful response to this call. She articulates the difference between the trait-and-factor theory of vocational choice and adjustment and the person-environment counseling model and methods. After drawing this important distinction, she describes how the theory of vocational behavior has informed the theory of career intervention and seems to urge a more reciprocal interaction between the two in the future. To use Collin's term, Swanson appears to call for establishing a *virtuous circle* among adherents to the Minnesota point of view.

Rather than dealing with existing theoretical approaches, Walsh offers a blueprint for constructing a career counseling theory by discussing principles that could structure a unified theory of counseling career. He lists several principles inspired by work in the psychotherapy literature that deal with a unified theory of therapeutic process. For example, one principle suggests that all career counseling models assume that the exchanges between counselors and clients lead to significant change in a client's career behavior and attitudes. A second assumption is that the quality of the counseling relationship is a central contributor to the career counseling process. A third assumption is that all models of career counseling involve information gathering. A fourth assumption is that all career counseling models involve cognitive, behavioral, and affective learning. Finally, a fifth assumption is that career decision making hinges on compromise. Taken together, these principles could form the nucleus of a career counseling theory.

Krumboltz and Chartrand, two authors who stress learning conceptions of vocational behavior, both offer new theories of career counseling in this handbook. Krumboltz, in publishing, for the first time, a learning theory of career counseling, discusses learning as the focus of counseling. He suggests the use of assessment instruments to stimulate new learning, the application of more educational interventions, the selection of learning outcomes as criteria of success, and the reduction of distinctions between career and personal counseling. Helping clients create more satisfying lives for themselves is a general goal shared by many helping professions. Krumboltz hopes that practitioners who use his new learning theory will no longer be matchmakers but instead will generate learning experiences for their clients that address a wide array of personal as well as career issues. To Krumboltz, the general goal of the career counselor is to promote positive learning. For the career development profession, the practical implications involve the task of career counseling becoming a national priority, professional career counselors assuming a leadership role, and counseling becoming more central to the mission of schools of education. According to Krumboltz, conceiving of career counseling as a learning experience puts it as one of the central educational goals of the nation. Under a learning theory, career counseling becomes central to the educational enterprise. Counselors can be viewed as educators responsible for tailoring learning experiences to accomplish cognitive, emotional, and behavioral goals.

Chartrand, in presenting for the first time her theory of sociocognitive career counseling, notes that theories of career development and adjustment were created to explain vocational behavior, whereas models of career counseling are created to guide practice. In general, the major theories have done a fairly good job of mapping out theoretical networks that explain vocational behavior. However, these theories, Chartrand observes, do not answer many of the questions that arise in counseling practice. Theories of career development were not devised to address how clients view their problems or how they view counseling. Theory sometimes remains several steps removed from the applied goal of changing behavior. Chartrand explains that, in practice, counselors seek to address specific client problems,

whereas theorists seek to explain universal behavior. Each serves a very different purpose, and consolidating them, Chartrand argues, would ignore their critical difference. A more viable option than consolidation is the construction of career counseling models that incorporate and complement theories of vocational development. In that context, Chartrand constructs a sociocognitive-interactional model for career counseling as an initial effort to complement the sociocognitive theory of vocational development. The social cognitive component addresses the counseling content and the interpersonal component addresses interpersonal functioning, both in terms of individual style and the dynamic counseling process.

Bingham and Ward give a precis of a third new career counseling theory (Ward & Bingham, 1993; Bingham & Ward, 1994; and Fouad & Bingham, 1995), the culturally appropriate career counseling model. The counseling process model that they have developed in collaboration with Fouad consists of seven steps:

1. Establish a culturally appropriate relationship
2. Identify career issues
3. Assess the influence of cultural variables
4. Set counseling goals
5. Implement culturally appropriate interventions
6. Support client decisional processes
7. Ensure that the client implements plans and the counselor follows up with client

Bingham and Ward describe each step in the model and illustrate the model with a case example.

Clearly, the contributions proffered in this volume by Swanson, Krumboltz, Chartrand, Bingham, and Ward presage a new direction in the career field, one with the goal of better integrating career theory and practice. The specific strategies that they explain and model present innovative ideas that open a new domain with special opportunities for practitioner-theorist communication and collaboration, especially with regard to clinical case studies.

CONDUCT RESEARCH BASED IN CLINICAL CASES

Collaboration on developing theories of career counseling will certainly require clinical research involving studies that examine the theories as they pertain to particular clients in unique situations. Harmon urges researchers to approach this work inductively from the problems that practitioners routinely encounter. This would help them focus theory development on the more difficult career problems such as chronic indecisiveness, job dissatisfaction, feelings of hopelessness about getting a job, and discouragement concerning changing jobs. Harmon counsels

theorists to recognize, from cases described by practitioners, that many contemporary career problems are beyond the individual's control and may actually rest within a larger set of problems in modern living.

Lucas suggests a practitioner-scientist model in order to increase the clinical relevance of career research and strengthen the natural relationship that exists between practitioners and researchers. In this discussion, she uses Holland's Social and Investigative personality types to consider practical ways to prompt practitioners to convert their clinical questions into research projects. She further suggests that in addition to describing individual cases that scientists and practitioners develop—from case-based research—models or minitheories should consist of treatment protocols for frequently encountered career problems in specific populations. According to Lucas, such a scientist-practitioner or a practitioner-scientist engagement allows both parties to make unique contributions to theory-practice integration. Lucas notes that, although current research methodology cannot address fully the nature of the career counseling process, practitioners' involvement in case research would help them to refine their own counseling hypotheses. Recognizing one's own biases and thinking more objectively can both function as crucial checks on one's work. This perspective may even reveal the need to attend to new issues that arise in clinical practice as modern society transforms itself into a form that affirms multiculturalism.

FOCUS INTEGRATION PROJECTS ON THE CULTURAL CONTEXTS OF CAREERS

Modern career theories were constructed for an industrial culture that requires hierarchical organizations and rewards individual achievement. These theories, using the dictates of 20th century science, emphasize decontextualized abstract principles and universal generalizability. Contemporary theory construction and renovation, according to Herr, must increasingly become contextualized and particular, especially in understanding and explaining the behaviors, problems, and situations brought to career counseling by increasingly diverse groups of clients. Furthermore, Collin points out that the career field requires innovation from perspectives that attend to context because the context of career has become turbulent, with the work environment changing rapidly to meet needs of information society.

Arbona suggests that the field needs to reformulate its questions regarding the relationship between ethnic/racial group membership and vocational development, paying closer attention to issues of social class and access to education. To date, qualitative studies suggest that Hispanic college students and graduates may not be all that different from their White counterparts regarding career-related variables. Other qualitative studies suggest that low-income Hispanic collegebound high school students are similar to their mainstream counterparts in various aspects of

vocational development. However, Arbona asks, Is it possible to expand career theories so that they apply to poor, uneducated Hispanics? Or do we need to develop new theories that may relate to the life experiences of these groups? According to Arbona, attending to the needs of poor, uneducated Hispanic children and youth will take more than expanding existing theories of vocational behavior. She suggests that it may require the field to move from the study of careers to the study of work in people's lives so that theory and practice may focus on work at all levels of the educational and prestige scales. Or it may require that the field shift its attention from career choice to cognitive and academic development.

Subich attends to issues of diversity as she seeks to improve the translation of theory into practice by investigating the uniformity myth that is implicit within modern career assessment models, measures, and materials. She invites readers to more fully integrate an appreciation of individual uniqueness into the practice of career assessment. In considering future directions, she recommends attention to psychometric concerns, contextual assessment, acculturation, and qualitative assessment. In terms of psychometric concerns, she notes that specific instruments used in career assessment would benefit from review and revision. The construction technologies of these assessment tools often do not fully acknowledge information about individual differences. In contextual assessment, Subich sees the need for more standardized instruments to measure environmental or contextual variables relevant to a client's career concerns. For example, environmental barriers are a contextual factor that is often ignored in career assessments, yet it is very relevant to the vocational behavior of members of minority groups. Just as contextual assessment may aid in the understanding of occupational choice, so too may assessing a client's level of acculturation or stage of identity development contribute important information regarding the role of these individual differences factors in vocational behavior. Subich explains that recognition and assessment of an individual's level of acculturation or stage of identity development exemplifies the essence of counselor attention to individual difference variables. Finally, Subich underscores the need to use more qualitative-oriented procedures and idiographic interpretations in assessing contextual and acculturation career variables.

Bingham and Ward demonstrate how attention to issues related to diversity can strengthen the integration of career theory and practice. Toward this end, Bingham and Ward describe three instruments that they have developed to assist counselors in the assessment and treatment process with ethnic minority women. The *Multicultural Career Counseling Checklist* (Ward & Bingham, 1993) focuses on issues of racial and ethnic identity. The *Career Counseling Checklist* (Ward & Bingham, 1993) assesses the client's knowledge about the world of work, self-confidence, and the client variables of age, race, gender, and disability. The Decision Tree assessment focuses on whether to emphasize personal or career concerns with a client. These instruments are best used within a culturally appropriate career counseling model such as the one developed and described by Bingham and Ward (this volume). In addition to using insights from scholarship on multiculturalism to advance

theory-practice integration, the literature on constructivist and feminist praxis provides ideas for furthering practice-theory integration.

RECONSIDER ASSUMPTIONS THAT SEPARATE PRACTICE FROM THEORY

The transformation from an industrial society to an information society has recently prompted a reexamination of the assumptions on which modern career theories rest. Part of this reexamination includes particular attention to linkages between theory and practice. For example, Meara suggests that the field become more in touch with the assumptions of industrial society, on which career counseling is built. She draws attention to two assumptions in particular. First, career theory and practice assume that individuals are oriented toward the future. Theorists and practitioners emphasize long-term goals, ranging over the whole life span. Second, theory and practice are normative and prescriptive about how clients ought to decide, preferring that they be rational. Nevertheless, Meara wonders if the values of rationality and future orientation are still the "coin of the realm in contemporary life." If not, then those among us who see no future for themselves are not well served by career planning theories or services. Collin shares Meara's point of view and applies it to organizations and the context of work. Collin argues that the new learning and self-designing organizations, which fit the needs of the information age, require new views of career, especially views that go beyond the concentration on individualistic, future-oriented goals.

Richardson also suggests that we need to reexamine our assumptions and then reconceptualize career counseling to resolve the false splits between theory, research, and practice. The first step in the reconceptualization process is to assert a central belief in the value and importance of work in people's lives as a basic and essential human function and activity. The second step, according to Richardson, is to retire the label *career counseling* and refer to this practice as counseling and psychotherapy with a specialty in work, jobs, and careers. Richardson uses both terms, *counseling* and *psychotherapy*, in order to emphasize the counseling process rather than career content, to reduce the distinction between healthy and sick or normal and pathological, and to further suggest that people be viewed from developmental and contextual perspectives. Richardson uses all three terms—*work*, *jobs*, and *career*—to acknowledge that although work itself is the central concern regardless of location or context, jobs and careers do provide an important context for much work in our society.

Young and Valach draw on constructivist epistemology in suggesting four points that could contribute to greater integration of theory and practice. First, counseling itself is career-relevant action, like other career-relevant actions in which the client participates. As action, the authors note, counseling can be understood from the perspective of manifest behavior, conscious cognitions, and social meaning. These same perspectives can be used in career counseling research. Second, the emphasis

on cognitive processes and social learning highlights the characteristics of interpretative career counseling. Interpretation in career counseling emphasizes language and discourse. The words and sentences used are not only talk about career, they are also both individual and joint action that actually construct career. Third, in addition to the individual action of the client and counselor, career counseling can be considered as joint action. Together the client and counselor produce new action in counseling, which could not have been produced by either alone. Finally, in an action approach, career research, theory, and practice closely interrelate, allowing easy transition from one to the other.

As the field reconsiders its assumptions and incorporates insights from constructivist and feminist scholarship, it must not lose sight of its most useful and culturally appropriate knowledge. Myers counsels practitioners and academicians to keep our best knowledge, "to stay focused on the stability of work, the constancy of work motives, and the enduring relationships between individual personalities and occupational environments, and the persistent centrality of work in the lives of humans." As new knowledge emerges concerning the integration of career theory and research, it must be transmitted to the next generation of practitioners, theorists, and researchers.

CHANGE TRAINING TO STRENGTHEN THEORY-PRACTICE INTEGRATION

Although academicians have escaped the attention of many involved in projects to improve linkages between theory and practice, Harmon focuses her attention squarely on them in asking professors to value the practice ambitions of their students as much as they value their students' research ambitions. Moreover, she urges professors to be creative in having students think about the theoretical implications of their practice as well as in helping students to reframe practice as basis for theoretical innovation and development. And she gives some very practical advice for improving the theory-practice nexus when she asks professors to encourage their students to evaluate clinical interventions for their thesis and dissertation research. Savickas agrees with Harmon that more evaluation and clinical research is needed. He asserts that most current research focuses on questions of "what can we know and how can we know." The integration of theory and practice will be better served by research that focuses on questions about "what should counselors do, how do counselors know what works, and can counselors do it better." Walsh actually suggests a research agenda that may produce knowledge that is useful to practitioners in working with clients, an agenda exemplified by research that concentrates on idiographic models, the Big Five, and practical intelligence. Collin goes a step further than Harmon, Savickas, and Walsh when she implies that academicians, in her model of a virtuous circle, should relinquish their traditional power as producers and purveyors of knowledge and become facilitators of practitioners' research and teachers of research design.

Fostering an appreciation for linkages between career theory and practice may require the revision of graduate school curricula pertaining to vocational psychology and career counseling. One direction worth exploring is to devise a course, or at least a segment of one, that is based in case studies. Early in this century, American pragmatists advised researchers that theory should begin with practice, not abstractions. Following this sage counsel, professors could generate theoretical issues from clinical cases in increasing depth. Theory would remain a cornerstone of the graduate curriculum, yet the clinical case would be the starting point for each discussion. In this way, the theory enterprise would start with student questions, not faculty lectures. Students, given greater responsibility for their own learning, would be expected to identify the theoretical concepts that they need to know for their practice. Accepting this responsibility for generating theory from their own cases would stand students in good stead for their careers as practitioner-scientists.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has highlighted eight recommendations, articulated by the authors in this handbook, for strengthening the union between career practice and theory. The major recommendations for a project that would more completely integrate career practice and theory call for improving communication among theorists and practitioners so that they can collaborate in better applying existing theories, devising frameworks that systematize the simultaneous application of multiple theories, and constructing career counseling models. Furthermore, the recommendations include testing the revised and newly developed theories by clinical research based in case studies that attend to the full range of career concerns presented by clients living in diverse contexts and experiencing the turbulent transformations caused by the conversion from an industrial society to an information-intensive one. As these goals are met, academicians must also seek to innovate their vocational psychology and career counseling curricula to account for and further strengthen the integration between career theory and practice.

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