

# Developing Counseling Practices From Career Theories

Duane Brown, Linda Brooks,  
and Associates  
*Career Choice and Development:  
Applying Contemporary Theories  
to Practice* (2nd ed.)  
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990.  
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Review by  
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More than 80 years have elapsed since Frank Parsons (1909/1967) presented the seminal model for career counseling. He advised counselors to help clients use the scientific method to relate their personal traits to occupational requirements and then match themselves to suitable occupations. Today, this matching model still dominates the practice of career counseling. Rather than replacing Parsons's matching model, three generations of theorists have produced conceptual models that elaborate or augment how practitioners think about matching people to positions.

Brown and Brooks prepared the second edition of *Career Choice and Development* to foster a fuller understanding of how to apply these theories to the practice of career intervention. To approach this goal, Brown and Brooks wrote eight chapters themselves and enticed major theorists to write another eight chapters. The theorists each use a standard outline to present their model, along with pertinent research and practical applications. Brown and Brooks, individually and together, wrote chapters that analyze the major theories and survey newer career models and counseling methods. The resulting broad topical coverage offers something to anyone in-

terested in career development. However, different people will like different parts of this clearly written book. Students may like the improved versions of classic theories concisely written by Bordin, Krumboltz, Roe, Super, and Tiedeman, along with their current collaborators. Practitioners may appreciate learning how the contributors' apply their theories to practice. Researchers will relish the sprinkling of heuristic ideas.

All readers could benefit from considering Brown and Brooks's main contention. They assert that the objective perspective of logical positivism permeates vocational psychology. As a result, most theorists advise counselors to help clients make realistic career choices based on self-evaluation. Thus, they encourage counselors to measure clients' objective traits and then guide clients to suitable occupational choices. Brown and Brooks recommend that readers heed theorists who urge counselors to help clients make purposeful career choices based on self-understanding. Theorists such as Bordin and as Miller-Tiedeman and Tiedeman advocate that counselors comprehend clients' subjective experience and then enhance client decision making by clarifying their choices.

As promised by Brown and Brooks, the book's major strength consists of ideas for practice. The suggestions range from general principles to specific techniques. At the abstract end of this continuum, Hotchkiss and Borow propose ways that counselors might work to change the social environment in which careers develop, and Brooks synthesizes the diagnostic and counseling methods arising from the different theories. At the concrete end of the continuum, Mitchell and Krumboltz explain how to combat mistaken ideas that inhibit decision making, and Bordin demonstrates the usefulness of single-interview counseling. A second strength of the book emanates from the intellectual stimulation prompted by new ideas such as Super's model of career development during childhood and Hall's description of career paths. A third strength stems from the contributors' emphasis on the future of career development theory and practice. Readers may wish to explore the prospects mentioned in Brooks's survey of emerging directions in career theory and in Brown's exposition of contentious issues and rising trends in career intervention.

Some readers may be disappointed with the chapter in which the contributors discuss their approaches to career counseling with the same client. Unfortunately, the case description runs only

651 words, with just a small portion being words that "K" might have used to describe herself. The lack of an interview transcript prevents readers from learning about K's perspective on her career development and deflects case discussants from explaining how they would deal with her subjective experience. Nevertheless, counselors will benefit from learning how the theorists think about the objective statements used to describe K.

In revising *Career Choice and Development*, Brown and Brooks substantially improved the book. They eliminated four chapters and replaced them with four new ones. Three of the new chapters increase coverage of current theory. The fourth chapter adds the case of K. The second edition offers a unique product to varied audiences. Students looking for a theory book can do better by reading Osipow (1983) or Arthur, Hall, and Lawrence (1989), researchers can do better by studying annual reviews, and practitioners can do better by perusing books about counseling methods. However, anyone who wants one book that integrates theory, research, and practice could not make a better choice than the second edition of *Career Choice and Development*. Brown and Brooks are to be congratulated for again prompting career development theorists to apply their models to the practice of career intervention.

## References

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