



*The Poetry Challenge,
thrown to the delegates on
opening night, and indeed
how they rose to the occasion!*

*In '99 we spoke of Queens
And Kings and Princes too
In '01, the left has won
And Royals are "taboo"*

*In two short years, the Princes
changed
Indeed they did transform
Full knaves and workers, all but one
Lads Irish don't reform!*

*We moved what was a thinking tank
To one intent "to do"
We plan to shift tectonic plates
And John, we love you too!*

*Seventeen countries have convened
Four multi-nationals too
Possibilities are brilliant
"Blinding grand" what we might do*

*Our global conversation starts
We're thrilled to welcome you
Your wit and warmth and thought
and grace
And wine and champagne too!*

*Our Bards we throw this challenge
Ere Tuesday close does come
A verse from each and every team
And then your work is done*

*Do write in your own language
The richer we will be
The cadence is 8, 6, 8, 6
We'll make "Global Poetry"!*

Room for but a few bards here.



*The full poetic volume will be
on the website.*



8 facts we know for sure...

Mark Savickas (USA Team, 1999; International Steering Committee, 2001) stated "it is time for career development specialists to become policy actors who help to develop and guide our national work forces. To be policy actors and make our research findings more useful in public policy arenas, we must focus our knowledge, publicize our findings, articulate our insights and contribute facts we know for sure to debates regarding work force development and career guidance." Here are 8 facts we know for sure, adapted from Mark's longer paper published in *Making Waves*, the proceedings from Symposium 1999 (also available on our website). See the original paper for appropriate references.

Eight facts that career specialists know for sure:

1. *Childhood socialization influences adult work performance and job satisfaction.*

Young adolescents who demonstrate "planful competence", (a composite of self-confidence, dependability, and making good use of their intellect), make better life choices, seek social support when needed, deal with challenges of worklife and indicate satisfaction with their careers as adults (e.g., two different 50 year longitudinal studies).

2. *Part-time work affects the socialization and development of adolescents.*

Work can be a key social context affecting the development of youth. The capacity to work in childhood predicted mental health and capacity for relationships at mid-life, surpassing family problems and all other childhood variables in predicting success in adult life. By the age of 47, men who were "competent and industrious" at age 14 were twice as likely to have warm relationships with a variety of people, five times

more likely to be well paid for their adult work, and 16 times less likely to have suffered significant unemployment. Intelligence was not an important mediating factor. When school learning is explicitly connected to work, the impact is even stronger.

3. *Career Interventions contribute to the achievement of successful school-to-work and job change transitions.*

Abundant evidence supports the effectiveness of at least the following:

- The availability of quality information.
- Helping people connect their personality traits and their personal meaning-making systems to work choices.
- Coaching and Practising work-search skills
- Helping people identify jobs which are easiest for them to move into and what specific skills they need to acquire.
- Helping people identify their interests for career and educational decision making.

4. *Congruence between the worker and the work improves performance.*

Congruence refers to the degree to which there is a person-work "fit", that is the ability, interest, and personality of the worker find a reasonable connection with the work requirements, routines, relationships and rewards. When the "fit" is suitable, workers demonstrated increased levels of work satisfaction, commitment and productivity. With respect to productivity, this translates into dollar value for the employer, the company and indeed the country.

5. *Workforce Policies, which are "career sensitive", influence the productivity of workers.*

- Cumulative findings over 85 years demonstrate that using recruitment procedures based on person-work "fit" substantially increased productivity, output and learning ability of workers.
- Orienting new employees with a "map" of their new organization, its norms, attitudes and beliefs, the work context, and providing time to connect with others increases performance, satisfaction and



retention.

- Family-friendly policies, such as flexibility in scheduling in response to child or elder care responsibilities, result in less conflict and stress between work and family which in turn increases productivity.

6. The transition for employment bound youth can be smoothed.

Unemployment rates for youth just out of high school remain high. However, when linkages between schooling, adolescent employment and adult careers are made, through co-operative work-education, internships, apprenticeships, they appear to be quite successful in reducing drifting and floundering during the first five years after completing high school. In contrast to viewing school as preparation for work, making school completion work promotes early stabilization in suitable employment as well as an interest in continuing education and training.

7. Work can be structured to foster emotional well-being.

Good jobs foster mental health; poor jobs cause distress. Good jobs usually provide substantive complexity, challenge, feedback, variety, and autonomy. Jobs are even better in this regard if they include significant tasks with which workers can identify. Poor jobs involve excessive workload or responsibility, role ambiguity, forced overtime, conflicting roles, tasks more complex than ability, and lack of control over job demands. If particular jobs cannot be redesigned to promote health, then employers can be prompted to provide workers with training in coping with occupational stress. Workers experience less strain if they cope with stress by recreation, self-care, social support, and rational problem solving. These four types of coping behaviors have direct effects on reducing job strain.

8 Individual differences among aging workers can be used to retain and retrain productive workers.

Workforces in Western societies are aging rapidly. Restructuring and downsizing of industries have had

disproportionate negative effects on older workers. We know from empirical research that as workers age, individual differences increase, with some workers maintaining and even improving their skills while others lose their initiative and let their skills deteriorate.

What are some of the policy implications based on what we know for sure? Consider these:

- Work attitudes form early; career development and workforce policy should take a developmental perspective;
- School initiatives should explicitly link school to work and cultivate part-time workplaces as resources for youth development;
- Employers of students should be encouraged to provide "moderate" work hours, and to improve opportunities for skill development on the job.
- Occupational Information Delivery Systems should continue to be supported.
- Person/Work "fit" should be an important value in policy about work and workers.
- Employers should be encouraged to make use of person/work "fit" recruitment and advancement tools as an aid to increasing worker productivity.
- Tighter links between schooling, adolescent employment and adult careers should be promoted as a means to support success for employment bound youth.
- Public policy should promote "Good" jobs in themselves, and as an important tool for enhancing mental health among its citizens.
- Public policy should support the teaching of common-sense stress management and coping techniques where jobs are less than "quality".
- Workplace "family friendly and family sensitive" policies should be promoted and encouraged as important tools for sustaining family and community.
- Productive older workers are a valuable resource in themselves and their knowledge and skill should be made accessible to new workers.

A Call for More:

Challenges to all career practitioner Symposium participants and their networks:

We know more that the eight facts above. What can you add that is known for sure and that can contribute to helping policy makers use our theory and research findings in generating new policies and making decisions on provision of career programs and services across the lifespan? Send contributions and references.

Research on the impact and cost effectiveness of career guidance and counselling remains weak or at the least not well known. Provide any research documentation of any outcome research, cost benefit models and reports. We will provide a synopsis of all contributions.

These are both works in progress. More progress is needed. This is a rich opportunity for the international community to contribute to each other and through these contributions, to support and inform policy.

From Germany:

(translated from the original German)

We experienced sharing with others

Instead of rushing alone

To invent everything anew.

We've connected ideas

Exchanged global experiences

And listened to precious advice.

What we are taking home

Helps to solve problems;

And to reach goals

with strengthened commitment.