A CENTER FOR RESEARCH, TRAINING, AND SERVICE IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT: THE NEED AND THE NUCLEUS.

A STATEMENT PREPARED
BY
DONALD E. SUPER,
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS AND SERVICES
AND
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE IN THE
HORACE MANN-LINCOLN INSTITUTE OF SCHOOL EXPERIMENTATION

TEACHERS COLLEGE
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ABSTRACT

There is a long recognized but newly acute need for vocational guidance for boys and girls of high school and college age and for adults of all ages. Industrialization and its modern manifestation, automation; the population explosion with its large number of entrants into the labor market; the demands made on our specialized manpower by rapidly developing economics at home and overseas; the dangerously competitive world situation and the resulting demand for effective use of higher level talents; these and other trends make the development and use of effective vocational guidance procedures imperative.

From its beginnings vocational psychology, the behavioral science which provides insights into human resources and tools for their appraisal and development, has studied occupations by means of the aptitudes and traits of the people engaged in them; the result is a differential psychology of occupations. The contributions which this approach has made to vocational guidance are numerous and important, but another important approach had been neglected. It is the study of careers, that is, the development of an understanding of the continuities and discontinuities in the work lives of men and women rather than of the static qualities of occupations. We need a developmental psychology of careers to supplement the psychology of occupations.

Teachers College has been in the forefront of research, training, and service in vocational psychology and vocational guidance for forty years. It pioneered in the psychology of occupations; it is pioneering today in the psychology of careers. Its Department of Psychological Foundations and Services is one of the largest producers of well-trained vocational

psychologists and counselors, and its staff and alumni include a substantial number of leaders in this field. Endowment which would encourage continued efforts along current lines, and facilitate new departures in this rapidly developing field, would do a great deal to ensure the development of an important nucleus into a healthy organism.

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That there is a real need for educational and vocational guidance has been recognized since the industrialized economics of Western Europe and America attained maturity, for organized vocational guidance services were founded in Belguim, France, and the United States during the years just prior to World War I. (In 1963, the National Vocational Guidance Association will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its founding in Boston.) The movement and the services in schools and community agencies started because of a recognition of the fact that large numbers of boys and girls who left school in their teens needed help in getting oriented to the world of work, in finding their place in it, and in getting started in it.

Today the needs of school leavers are no less real, for while educational and vocational guidance have made a great deal of progress since the days of Frank Parsons, the Boston engineer-lawyer-philanthropist who launched the movement, principles, methods, and staffing still leave a good deal to be desired. Furthermore, the population explosion which has followed World War II now results in much larger numbers of youth leaving high school each year, in search of an appropriate form of further education to better equip them for adult roles or in search of jobs in which they will be able to earn a satisfying living and achieve a degree of self-fulfillment.

Changes in the industrial system, and in particular the impact of automation on jobs, create vocational and educational problems for adults as well as for youth. Some must, and can be, upgraded to provide the needed skilled workers and technicians; others, unable to meet these demands, need help in readjusting to other types of semiskilled or service occupations. It is not just a matter of finding out for what to obtain retraining, but of rethinking one's role in a changed economy.

The challenges of developing economies in other countries make more demands on ours. The identification and effective use of our talents becomes imperative for not only for the survival and prosperity of our society, but for the welfare of many other societies as well. The instrument through which education identifies and helps talent to develop rather than leave it to its own devices in a complex and changing society is educational and vocational guidance; the behavior science which provides the necessary tools and skills is psychology. The sound and widespread development of vocational psychology and vocational guidance is therefore of central importance to education, to industry, to government, and to the general public. Vocational guidance is an instrument of educational and national policy; it is also an instrument for the self-fulfillment of individuals.

It is with the need in mind for the best possible knowledge and tools for vocational guidance that the theoretical status of the field is here discussed and that the nature of relevant research is considered; it is with a view to the healthy development of current research, and of the training and service for which research is the underpinning, that the following memorandum is written.

Occupations vs. Careers: a Question of Focus

Vocational psychology, from its beginnings early in this century until recently, was essentially the psychology of occupations. During the past decade the attention of some vocational psychologists has shifted, however, to the psychology of careers, and with this shift has come, in the judgment of many, a revitalizing of vocational psychology both as a challenging field for psychological research and as an applied specialty which can be of service in improving human adjustment. Thus Borow (1959), commenting on a study of the prediction of occupational choice, points to two projects which link the

concept of vocational choice with that of psychological development, and Wrenn (1959) in an editorial in the same journal points out that vocational counselors no longer conceive of vocational choice as "a simple matter of fitting vocational aptitudes to occupational requirements", but rather seek to organize existing knowledge of the determinants of occupational choice into theories derived primarily from the fields of sociology, developmental psychology, personality theory, and interest theory. Differential psychology, long the cornerstone and foundation of vocational psychology, is now one of several cornerstones in a building with a complex foundation.

The psychology of individual differences has made great contributions to vocational psychology and to vocational guidance, contributions without which there would be no such fields. Both in order to make this clear, and to point up important differences between a psychology of occupations and a psychology of careers such as is needed if advances are to be made, it will help to review briefly some of the great landmarks in the history of occupational psychology.

The Psychology of Occupations

Occupational psychology began, for all practical purposes, with the study of individual differences in the intelligence of soldiers who, in civilian life, had been employed in various occupations. This led to the identification of occupational intelligence levels (National Academy of Sciences, 1925). This work led, in turn, particularly in the United States but also in Great Britain and in other countries, to the carrying out of a number of important research and demonstration projects in the relationships between individual differences and occupational membership and success. In America the major landmarks were the Minnesota Mechanical Abilities Project (Paterson et al., 1930: mechanical aptitude can be tested and predicts success

in junior high school shop courses), the publication of the Strong Vocational Interest Blank in 1927 (Strong, 1943: occupations can be distinguished by their interests, these can be measured, they predict occupational choice and stability), the first longitudinal study of vocational choice and success (E.L. Thorndike, 1931: such studies are feasible but the relationships between the first aptitude tests at age 12 and occupational status at age 21 are very slight), the Minnesota Employment Stabilization Research Institute (Paterson and Darley, 1936: occupations can be differentiated by their aptitude and interest profiles and these can be useful in vocational counseling and in retraining the unemployed), the publication of the General Aptitude Test Battery of the US Employment Service in 1947 (aptitude tests can be standardized, validated, and used for counseling and placement for many occupations), the Thorndike and Hagen (1959) study of the relationships between an extensive battery of tests and the later occupations of 10,000 men (occupational membership can be predicted, as can type of occupation in which success will be achieved, but degree of success in the occupation cannot well be predicted), and the Talent Project currently being carried out by Flanagan and associates (1960: nationwide testing for the study of the distribution and flow of talent is feasible). In each of these projects a major contribution, but not always the sole result, has been the publication of data on occupational differences in aptitudes or interests as shown by standard tests, thus making available to counselors instruments and norms (dealt with in detail by Super and Crites, 1962) which can be used in matching men and jobs (Bell, 1940). As the work of the Employment Stabilization Research Institute (Paterson and Darley, 1936) and of the British National Institute for Industrial Psychology (Earle, 1933) further showed that tests of known occupational validity make possible better vocational counseling, it is little wonder that the readily usable tools of

differential psychology made the trait and factor approach to occupations the cornerstone of vocational psychology and guidance.

Shartle (1952) has defined an occupation as a group of similar jobs and positions, a position being a group of tasks performed by one person. The study of an occupation by psychometric methods therefore yields data about a static entity, about the characteristics of people doing a particular type of work at a certain point in time. It is well established that this is useful information for matching men and occupations or jobs, whether in vocational counseling or in personnel selection. But the procedure tells nothing about careers, as will be made clear below.

Careers vs. Occupations

A career is the sequence of occupations, jobs, and positions throughout a person's working life (Super et al., 1957). The definition may be extended beyond the working life to include pre-vocational and post-vocational positions such as those of student (preparing for work) and pensioner (retired from work), as in the study of the exploratory years which is part of the Career Pattern Study (Super et al., 1957), in the cognate Harvard Studies of Career Development (Tiedeman, 1958; O'Hara and Tiedeman, 1959), and in the retirement studies at Teachers College and at Chicago (Lorge and Tuckman, 1952; Friedman and Havighurst, 1954). The emphasis in the psychological or sociological study of careers is on continuity in the lives of individuals and on patterns of continuity in the lives of groups (Super, 1954). In the psychology and sociology of occupations, on the other hand, we have seen that the emphasis is on the characteristics of the occupations as revealed by the people in them. Furthermore, when the study of the occupation is psychometric, it is on the stable characteristics of the occupation, with considerations of time and sequence disregarded. Thus while the psychology of occupations has been

essentially differential psychology, the psychology of careers is essentially developmental psychology. Both, it should be clear, are needed: in stressing the need for a psychology of careers, the intent is to combine it with the psychology of occupations in order to constitute a sound and workable vocational psychology, a psychology of vocational development or of career development.

Life Stages and Career Patterns

When the decisions and adjustments which people are called upon to make are analyzed,as in Buehler's (1933) pioneer work and in Havighurst's (1953) more recent study, it is found that the developmental tasks of one period of life tend to differ from those of another period of life. This is, of course, hardly a novel observation. But the careful analysis of the life tasks characteristic of a given stage of development, and the characterization of each stage according to the nature of its developmental tasks, is novel. Such an approach led Buehler to identify five life stages: growth (birth to about age 14), exploration (15-24), establishment (25-44), maintenance (45-64), and decline (65 on), the principal developmental process of each life stage being the basis for naming it. Ginzberg and associates (1951), Super (1957), the Career Pattern Study (Super et al., 1957), and some of the Harvard Studies in Career Development (Tiedeman, 1958, O'Hara and Tiedeman, 1959) have made use of these concepts.

Analyzing a different type of data, Miller and Form (1951) arrived at a somewhat similar classification of life stages. Their interest, unlike Buehler's and Havighurst's, was exclusively in occupations. Their data were the occupations engaged in by a representative sample of men throughout their life spans. Analyzing these for stability and change in the sequence of work which makes up the career, they identified work periods which they named

the initial (while in school), trial (early full-time work which is often short-lived), stable (normally in mature adulthood), and retirement work periods (after giving up employment). They extended these concepts, however, in two particularly helpful ways.

First, they recognized, implicitly if not explicitly, that the concept of stages should not be applied rigidly; instead, they noted that careers can be typed in the same manner as life stages. Analysis of stability and change in the career showed that some men continue to change about throughout life, while others have stable periods followed by new periods of trial leading to stabilization for a second or third time. Thus they identify stable (direct entry into the life-work), conventional (trial leading to stability), unstable, and multiple-trial careers. The processes which characterize the life stages are, therefore, processes which continue more or less throughout life, often in the sequences of initial-trial-stable-decline. Tiedeman (1958) has used this concept in his development of a theory of position choice, in which each decision concerning the occupancy of a position is viewed as involving exploration, establishment, and maintenance.

Secondly, Miller and Form classified men at each of the socio-economic levels according to career patterns, and found the expected economic determinant: stable and conventional career patterns are more common at the higher socio-economic levels, multiple-trial and unstable patterns at the lower socio-economic levels.

These life stage and career pattern concepts and findings raise a number of questions in the realm of vocational psychology which were never raised by data on individual differences in relation to occupational status. Parental socio-economic status is, Davidson and Anderson (1937), Miller and Form (1951), and others have shown, the starting point of the adult career pattern and one of its major determinants, but it is not the only determinant, as shown by the

substantial numbers of persons whose careers are not what would have been predicted on the basis of the parental status. Intelligence, we know, is related to adult occupational status, and so are interests. But what are the other determinants of movement from position to position as the career unfolds, and how do the interaction of these determinants, and the achievement of a given position at any one point in the career, influence the movement toward and the attainment of the next position? These questions have not been the subjects of investigation by sociologists, who seem to have been interested primarily in social status when studying mobility, nor of economists, whose interest in labor mobility has been in the extent of movement and in its relationship to economic variables such as rates of pay. Neither have they been investigated by psychologists, who with few exceptions have been oddly unaware of the concept of and findings concerning careers.

Career Prediction versus Occupational Prediction.

The classical problem in vocational guidance (Super, 1954, 1957, 1961) has been that of predicting occupational choice or occupational success; the classical method has been that of relating test scores prior to entry into the labor market to occupational status some time later. The researcher and the counselor deal, in this model, with status at two points in time. Intermediate and subsequent statuses are disregarded: despite the fact that the counselor is well aware of the needs and problems of training and entry, and despite widespread recognition of the facts of occupational mobility, this model matches youth and jobs and assumes that, once the match is made, the lucky pair lives happily ever after. This model may be called the occupational prediction model.

But interest in vocational development or career development has led some theorists and researchers to become interested in what we may call the

career model, in the problem and method of career prediction.

Whereas an occupation is, by definition, a group of jobs and positions, and hence essentially a group of tasks performed by one person, a career is the sequence of occupations, jobs, and positions in the life of an individual. Some persons would, it is true, restrict the use of the term career to a sequence involving more than mere time, work, and a person, to a ladder-like progression involving vertical mobility. But others consider it more useful to have the term denote any sequence in the life of one person, be the mobility vertical or lateral, the occupations related and on the same ladder or unrelated and on different ladders.

Career prediction, then, involves taking into account the sequence of occupations, jobs, and positions which a given person is likely to occupy. It may be unnecessary to undertake predicting the total sequence from cradle to grave, or even from high school or college until retirement. But to have a better understanding of the nature and determinants of this sequence, and the systematic organization of these data in such a manner as to facilitate the prediction of the academic and of the early occupational positions of a career, would be of great practical value to counselors and to clients.

Teachers College as a Center for Work In Vocational Development

Teachers College has for approximately forty years been a center for research and service in vocational development and vocational guidance. Starting in 1922 with E.L. Thorndike's long-term study of the Prediction of Vocational Success (1931) and continuing today with R.L. Thorndike's 10,000 Careers (with Elizabeth Hagen, 1959), Super and Overstreet's Vocational Maturity of Ninth Grade Boys (1960), and Super's continuing Career Pattern

Study, the flow of facts and ideas concerning vocational development from TC has been steady and influential. Starting in 1927 with H.D. Kitson's appointment to a professorship for the training of vocational counselors, continuing today with D.E. Super, A.S. Thompson, Abraham Jacobs, J.P. Jordaan, and K.F. Herrold active in a nationally and internationally known program in counseling and personnel psychology, TC has been and is a leading producer of key people in vocational counseling, as shown by recent alumni who now occupy important positions at universities such as Harvard, Iowa, and California (Berkeley), and in governmental agencies in capitals such as Washington, New Delhi, and Cairo.

Current research activities in vocational psychology and vocational guidance at TC center in the Department of Psychological Foundations and Services, the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation (HMLI), and the Institute of Psychological Research. R.L. Thorndike and D.E. Super are the most active investigators, with the collaboration of Elizabeth Hagen, A.S. Thompson, J.P. Jordaan, and research assistants. The Career Pattern Study (D.E. Super et al.), a 20-year project of the HMLI, has an annual budget of about $25,000 from endowment which must be used for educational experimentation, a supplementary three-year grant of about $33,000 per year from the U.S. Office of Education, and is now seeking an additional grant of $30,000 yearly for three years from the National Science Foundation in order to open up a new line of research in vocational development. The HMLI provides a logical base for such activities. In the Institute for Psychological Research, R.L. Thorndike is now planning a 40-year follow-up of the subjects first studied by E.L. Thorndike in 1922.

Current teaching activities center in the Department of Psychological Foundations and Services, in which Thorndike, Super, et al. have professorial

appointments. One-year graduate programs lead to the MA in Vocational Counseling or Personnel Techniques (about 40 students enrolled in each program last semester); a two-year program leads to a Professional Diploma in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling (45 students last semester); a three-year program leads to the doctorate in Personnel Psychology (15 students enrolled last semester); and a four-year program (including a one-year internship) leads to the Ph.D or Ed.D. in Counseling Psychology (50 students enrolled last semester). In addition, substantial numbers of students in other departments or specialties take courses in testing, appraisal, counseling, and the psychology of vocational adjustment, taught by staff members.

Current service activities include testing and counseling in the Guidance Laboratory (J.P. Jordaan, Executive Officer) of Teachers College and in a variety of field services. Students engaged in supervised practice in the Guidance Laboratory test, interview, and counsel adolescents and adults, applying knowledge and using skills acquired in formal study. Field workers and interns in cooperating schools, colleges, community agencies, and hospitals similarly use in the field knowledge acquired on the campus, and staff members work cooperatively with these agencies in developing and supervising the services. For example, Columbia College recently appointed a full-time director to its new Counseling Center: the director was originally an intern supervised by A.S. Thompson in a counseling service developed for Columbia undergraduates by Thompson, Super, and the Dean of Columbia College; the vocational counseling services at Drew University in Madison, N.J., and at the Vocational Service Center of the New York YMCA, are currently being expanded and strengthened by the placement of interns and by visits of TC staff members. In addition, faculty members serve on the usual local, state, national, and international committees and serve as consultants to a variety

of organizations and institutions concerned with the development of vocational guidance services.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Teachers College has, in it present organization and staff, important resources for work in vocational psychology and vocational guidance, and is continuing to make important contributions in research, teaching, and service in this field which it seeks to expand. It has a forty-year-old tradition of leadership in vocational psychology and vocational guidance, and in its current pioneering work in career or vocational development has injected new vigor into these fields. It has significant related research projects under way, some of them partly financed on a long-term basis by endowment funds, some supported by short-term grants from outside sources. It has, in the process of development, additional plans for research and service in vocational psychology and vocational guidance which require additional financial support. This programmatic research would benefit particularly from endowment which would encourage increased and continued effort along these lines.

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