

Introduction

INTRODUCTION TO THIS ISSUE

by Rich Feller and Mark Denke

Working with adults in career transition is an increasingly complex and demanding task which falls within the job description of numerous professionals. Whether one calls oneself a career counselor, life coach, human resource or workforce specialist, keeping current with career assessment tools is a formidable challenge as demand for adult career interventions grows (Niles, 2002). Yet, career development specialists tend to use a limited number of tools with which they are trained. As Kapes and Whitfield note within their most authoritative classic *A Counselor's Guide to Career Assessment Instruments* (National Career Development Association, 2001), "Trustworthy information about what career assessment instruments are most used for career counseling and related purposes is difficult to obtain. The primary reason for this difficulty is that most users are familiar with only a few of the many instruments available". (p.3)

Identifying career assessment tools which add value to the adult counseling and career development alliance is critical to helping clients gain feedback, stimulate exploration and define goals. "Many resources exist that were originally designed for a high school or student population and that are not appropriate for experienced adults. Others are targeted primarily to outplacement, with a job search component that sends the wrong message for career development planning with the organization" (Simonsen, 1997, p.204). Helping organizations pair their development needs with tools that enhance employee performance and organizational goals is a measure of a consultant's worth as career development models are proposed.

Traditionally, career development models have focused on rather linear career decision models as if clients had unlimited time to learn about themselves, explore and make a "perfect" vocational choice. Increasingly, counselors are encouraged to help clients build and manage their careers to accommodate transitions that will occur over a lifetime (Jarvis and Keeley, 2002). Workforce development specialists working in a "manpower development" context have advanced insights to working with "second chance" clients or those recently confronted with the outcomes of a turbulent workforce. Many private sector career special-

ists focus on talent development, management skills and leadership competencies have joined a growing legion of "coaches" providing career development interventions to audiences reluctant to access therapeutic or psychological services.

While career development has been important, interest in career planning is at an all-time high and will become even stronger as we move into the future (Herman, Olivo and Gioia, 2003). Interest in Internet based career planning (Bowlsbey, Dickel and Sampson, 2002), technology enhanced occupational information (Harrington and Feller, 2004) and accountability and academic assessment within schools (Wall and Walz, 2003) has created a context where a survey of adult career assessment tools is most timely in a changing workplace (Feller, 2003).

The opportunity to identify professionals who use adult career assessment tools to write for this special issue offered a rare opportunity. The goal was to select a wide range of tools that address a number of different adult needs. In addition the *Journal* worked to include some well known tools used specifically in adult settings, a few new and very interesting tools not as well documented in academic literature but well used by private vendors, and case studies that would appeal to a wide readership. By providing an efficient and timely update to readers it is expected this special issue creates a unique source to specifically address adult career assessment. The article authors were encouraged to use their own creative writing style and include a case study. In each case they were asked to provide an explanation of the instrument, describe how they use it with clients, provide an explanation of why they use this particular instrument for this client need, and to offer their results using this instrument. From this project, it is hoped adult career development specialists will be encouraged to gain interest in adult assessment and be motivated to expand their assessment skill to help reach an expanded adult audience in search of building a satisfying and personally meaningful and productive career.

In *Using the Self-Directed Search, RIASEC Theory, and Related Holland's Assessments in Adult Career Counseling*, the application of Holland-based instruments and the use of RIASEC theory to career counseling for adults are highlighted. It illustrates how users can use four of Holland's assessment tools (the Career Attitudes and Strategies Inventory, Self-Directed Search Form R, Position Classification Inventory and the Environmental Identity Scale) to explore personal issues of clients as well as issues related to employment and organizational culture. **Janet Lenz, Robert Reardon, and Corey Reed** selected instruments developed by Holland that are widely used and very beneficial to practitioners of adult career counseling.

As a research supported technique in developing leadership skills based on multiple research projects and assessment studies, **Linda Hodge** and **David Workman** use The CAREER ARCHITECT® as a tool for planning and managing the development of managers, executives, and leaders. **Using the Career Architect to Assess and Develop Leadership Competencies** applies the tools of The CAREER ARCHITECT® to help users move toward integrating organizational human resource processes, tying together performance appraisal, succession planning, development planning, job specification, and assessment. These tools contain 67 core competencies and characteristics which Hodge and Workman indicate are important to leadership and organizational success.

Howard Rosenberg and **Shayn Smith** apply the computerized DISCOVER career-planning program, published by ACT Inc. to assist users in their career development, self-assessment, and job searching. DISCOVER allows clients to plan their career paths0. by providing structured feedback and advice tailored to fit their needs. The process directs clients to complete a series of inventories which track their preferences in a number of areas. Based on the answers provided, DISCOVER creates a personal profile. DISCOVER also provides additional information on countless topics including job search tips, career field information, building a career portfolio, how to find an internship and career planning. In **Using the DISCOVER Career Planning Program with Adults** the authors provide a case study of a 45 year old female at the University of Colorado's Career Services Center to demonstrate the program's ability to turn a client's interests, values, experiences, and abilities into viable career choices.

The Highlands Program is reviewed by **Anne Angerman**, a clinical social worker who became a licensee to better serve her clients who struggle with a lack of career satisfaction. This innovative and efficient technology enhanced program (soon to be Internet based) helps clients identify their natural talents. The Highlands is an extensive 3.5 hour assessment available on CD consisting of timed work samples. Results lead to a 25 page report with feedback and coaching sessions integrated within the process. In **Using the Highlands Program (THP) to Enhance Adult Career Planning** the case of a 30 year old is explained.

Melinda Mendenhall explains the principles and elements of a job search model, provides a case study of its use, and suggests ways to use a very unique and well received tool to assess competencies of clients in **Assessing Applicants with the Ultimate Job Search Kit**. This kit has quickly become the resource of choice for career center and workforce center counselors and coaches who help clients assess their competen-

cies, develop their interviewing skills, and prepare an effective job search. The kit and "flash cards" have received rave reviews as a tool for promoting self awareness and career planning skills of clients. As a counselor I've (Feller) found this model very effective in helping clients assess their performance through a behavioral interview model.

While hundreds of thousands have completed the **Johnson O'Connor Research Foundations (JOCRF)** aptitude testing little is written about this tool. As a counselor educator I (Feller) recently completed the tool to learn more and could see that my colleagues needed to learn of its strengths, availability and reach. **Ortrun Neidig** and **Wendy Bigelow** offer case studies of a 37 year old bookkeeper and a 24 year old multi-aptitude person which offers insight to the depth of this aptitude test battery in their article **Using the Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation's Aptitude Testing to Guide Career Decisions**.

StrengthsFinder is a talent assessment instrument developed exclusively for the Internet which is been popularized very quickly by the best selling book **Now Discover Your Strengths**. Available in 18 languages the web-based tool helps clients learn about their individual strength themes and how to leverage talents within those themes toward individual and business outcomes. The 34 themes which provide a most helpful language to help clients assess their strengths in a most innovative way are defined within **Kenneth Tucker, Tonya Fredstrom** and **Jim Harter's** article **The Gallup Organization's StrengthsFinder Instrument**.

Career decision-making is a journey with many paths to explore which may not necessarily lead to one "best" decision. Thinking about themselves with the use of the proper assessment instrument can help clients challenge their own assumptions and broaden their vision of career decision-making. In **Applying the Career Decision Making System (CDM) to the Career Transition Needs of Adults**, **Bill Stone** reports on his company's use of the Harrington-O'Shea Career Decision Making System (CDM) as an effective source of help for adults with career transition issues.

Understanding how the Strong Interest Inventory (SII) is used in various settings is essential to any counselor's training. In **Using the Strong Interest Inventory with Adult Clients in an Integrated Model of Career Counseling**, **Jo-Ida Hansen, Bryan Dik, and Brandon Sullivan** at the University of Minnesota discuss how career consultants and counselors can gain a better understanding of the SII instrument. This more in-depth article shows how a review of personal and professional background, and test results can be invaluable in the establishment of appropriate career goals.

Linda Berens and Victoria Roberts in Multiple Lens Method of Assessing Personality Type, introduce various methods of assessing a person's personality type. This article puts personality type assessment to practical use. The authors first give an introduction to personality typing, its history, and modern implications. They then help the reader understand the differences in type as well as dispelling some common myths and connotations of terms used in typing. Additionally they give tips on how to interact with particular types in order to communicate with them most effectively.

Using the Strong Interest Inventory and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator in Career Counseling by **Judith Grutter and Jean Kummerow** provides an overview of both instruments as well as strategies for integrating them in several career development and career management applications. The Strong Interest Inventory (SII) and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) are two of the most widely used assessments of occupational and personality interests. While the Strong Interest Inventory is designed to gain information about preferences and inclinations, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is a personality assessment designed to provide feedback about an individual's patterns of behavior.

The **Kuder Career Search with Person Match** helps clients discover their career interests, provide the opportunity to explore a variety of occupations and promote lifelong career planning by professionally recording career development activities. **Sarah Toman** demonstrates the effectiveness of this career assessment tool as an easy way to manage and utilize individual and composite information in **Advantages to Vocational Counseling When Using the Kuder Career Search with Person Match**. The twenty to thirty minute internet-based assessment, with immediate online scoring is impressive. In the case of Joel, she uses this instrument to compare a fictitious client's interests with the interests of people working in a variety of occupations and creates an electronic and career portfolio allowing Joel to revisit the results online at any time.

Noted human resource scholars **Jerry Gilley and Ann Maycunich Gilley**, reporting in **Using the Birkman Method for Career Planning**, illustrate how the Birkman Method successfully attends to broad life planning, developmental planning and performance planning. This very efficient article provides a thorough overview of a complex but user-friendly tool which they use with clients in leadership development and team building to career planning and individual development. A detailed case study of a human resource client is most instructive in seeing the tools rich value and potential.

An innovative leader and change agent in career development, **Dick Knowdell** offers a rare printed look into card sort methodology with **Card Sort Assessment Tools**. For years his workshops teaching the use of card sorts have been a favorite to many. This article offers a history, explanation of intent, and case study to help user's see the power of using card sort methodology to help clients make personal assessments.

Fourteen articles tied to some of the most exciting adult career assessment tools available appear in this special issue of the *Journal*. While the selection of the assessment tools was subjective and far from complete, this collection offers encouragement and a hopeful sign of the future. A future that allows career specialists options among powerful assessment tools tied to specific adult client needs with some assurance that reported outcomes can be facilitated, is a worthy goal. Assessment has always played a role in career planning; yet adult career development is a relatively new term and concept (Herr, 2002). Within recent years the need to meet specific adult career planning needs has been greatly advanced by the *Career Planning and Adult Development Journal*. We hope this special issue, facilitated by the work of Steven Beasley, Managing Editor, offers another link to important concepts necessary to offer meaningful and comprehensive career development interventions for adults.

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Chapter 1

SELF-DIRECTED SEARCH, RIASEC THEORY, AND RELATED HOLLAND ASSESSMENTS IN ADULT CAREER COUNSELING

by Janet G. Lenz, Robert C. Reardon, and
Corey A. Reed

John Holland's RIASEC theory (1997) and his instruments have been widely and successfully used in career counseling practice since 1970. This article provides a brief review of tests Holland has authored that are particularly relevant to adult career counseling. The authors describe counseling issues and techniques for using Holland-based resources with adults, and conclude with an adult case history that illustrates the use of the Self-Directed Search Form R and other Holland-based assessments. Review of Instruments

We selected four instruments developed by Holland that we believe are especially useful in adult career counseling: (1) Career Attitudes and Strategies Inventory (CASI), (2) Self-Directed Search Form R (SDS:R), (3) Position Classification Inventory (PCI), and (4) Environmental Identity Scale (EIS) (Psychological Assessment Resources, 2002; Reardon & Lenz, 1998).

Career Attitudes and Strategies Inventory (CASI)

Typically, there may be many factors involved in adult career counseling. The CASI (Holland & G. Gottfredson, 1994; Gottfredson, 1996) is designed to identify issues outside the RIASEC typology that are relevant to the client's situation. The CASI can be used as a screening tool to identify adults who might benefit most from completing the SDS:R or those who might need more intensive career counseling. The CASI is self-administered, scored, and interpreted in 35 minutes. It includes scales measuring Job Satisfaction, Work Involvement, Skill Development, Dominant Style, Career Worries, Interpersonal Abuse, Family Commitment, Risk-Taking Style, and Geographical Barriers, and a checklist of 21 potential career obstacles, e.g., health, finances, that concern many adults in relation to their career development. In addition