## Becoming a Career Counselor Checklist
(adapted from NCDA’s Professional Statements, http://www.ncda.org)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>I have limited skills and/or knowledge in this area</th>
<th>I have moderate skills and/or knowledge in this area</th>
<th>I am very skilled and/or knowledgeable in this area</th>
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</table>

I want to help others learn about themselves, their options, and how to help them make their dreams come true.

**Career Counseling Roles – I can effectively:**

- Help individuals clarify life/career goals.
- Conduct group counseling sessions focusing on career issues.
- Administer inventories to assess abilities, interests and other factors to identify career options.
- Interpret inventories to assess abilities, interests and other factors to identify career options.
- Utilize career-planning systems and occupational information systems to help individuals better understand the world of work.
- Help clients improve their decision-making skills.
- Assist clients in developing individualized career plans.
- Understand and effectively teach job-hunting strategies and skills.
- Provide appropriate resume writing critiques.
- Help clients resolve personal conflicts on the job through practice in human relations skills.
- Assist in understanding the integration of work and other life roles.
- Provide support for persons experiencing job stress, job loss and career transition.
- Integrate career theory into the practice of career counseling.
- Utilize various career counseling resources, including books, assessments, and online tools.
- Apply the ethical standards specific to career counseling.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to the role that various personal issues, such as race, age, disability, culture, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, etc. may impact career decision-making process, and discuss these issues with clients.
- Establish and maintain a productive consultation relationship with people who can influence my clients’ careers.
Create, organize, lead and critique career workshops.
Collaborate with other professionals to plan for client success.
Use technology specific to career counseling.
Locate and utilize funding sources for career counseling activities and programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Development Theory - I have knowledge of:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseling theories and associated techniques.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theories and models of career development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual differences related to gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and physical and mental capacities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical models for career development and associated counseling and information-delivery techniques and resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human growth and development throughout the life span.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role relationships which facilitate life-work planning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information, techniques, and models related to career planning and placement.</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Individual and Group Counseling Skills - I can effectively:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish and maintain productive personal relationships with individuals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish and maintain a productive group climate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborate with clients in identifying personal goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and select techniques appropriate to client or group goals and client needs, psychological states, and developmental tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and understand clients’ personal characteristics related to career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and understand social contextual conditions affecting clients’ careers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and understand familial, sub-cultural and cultural structures and functions as they are related to clients’ careers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and understand clients’ career decision-making processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and understand clients’ attitudes toward work and workers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and understand clients’ biases toward work and workers based on gender, race, and cultural stereotypes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge and encourage clients to take action to prepare for and initiate role transitions by:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- locating sources of relevant information and experience,
- obtaining and interpreting information and experiences, and acquiring skills needed to make role transitions.

Assist the client to acquire a set of employability and job search skills.

Support and challenge clients to examine life-work roles, including the balance of work, leisure, family, and community in their careers.

**Individual/Group Assessment – I can effectively:**

Assess personal characteristics such as aptitude, achievement, interests, values, and personality traits.

Assess leisure interests, learning style, life roles, self-concept, career maturity, vocational identity, career indecision, work environment preference (e.g., work satisfaction), and other related life style/development issues.

Assess conditions of the work environment (such as tasks, expectations, norms, and qualities of the physical and social settings).

Evaluate and select valid and reliable instruments appropriate to the client’s gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and physical and mental capacities.

Use computer-delivered assessment measures effectively and appropriately.

Select assessment techniques appropriate for group administration and those appropriate for individual administration.

Administer, score, and report findings from career assessment instruments appropriately.

Interpret data from assessment instruments and present the results to clients and to others.

Assist the client and others designated by the client to interpret data from assessment instruments.

Write an accurate report of assessment results.

**Information/Resources – I have knowledge of:**

Education, training, and employment trends; labor market information and resources that provide information about job tasks, functions, salaries, requirements and future outlooks related to broad occupational fields and individual occupations.

Resources and skills that clients utilize in life-work planning and management.
Community/professional resources available to assist clients in career planning, including job search.

Changing roles of women and men and the implications that this has for education, family, and leisure.

Methods of good use of computer-based career information delivery systems (CIDS) and computer-assisted career guidance systems (CACGS) to assist with career planning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Promotion, Management, and Implementation – I have knowledge of:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designs that can be used in the organization of career development programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs assessment and evaluation techniques and practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational theories, including diagnosis, behavior, planning, organizational communication, and management useful in implementing and administering career development programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of forecasting, budgeting, planning, costing, policy analysis, resource allocation, and quality control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership theories and approaches for evaluation and feedback, organizational change, decision-making, and conflict resolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional standards and criteria for career development programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal trends and state and federal legislation that influence the development and implementation of career development programs.</td>
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</table>

**I can effectively:**

- Implement individual and group programs in career development for specified populations.
- Train others about the appropriate use of computer-based systems for career information and planning.
- Plan, organize, and manage a comprehensive career resource center.
- Implement career development programs in collaboration with others.
- Identify and evaluate staff competencies.
- Mount a marketing and public relations campaign in behalf of career development activities and services.

Coaching, Consultation, and Performance Improvement – I can effectively:

- Use consultation theories, strategies, and models.
- Establish and maintain a productive consultative relationship with people who can influence a client’s career.
Help the general public and legislators to understand the importance of career counseling, career development, and life-work planning.

Impact public policy as it relates to career development and workforce planning.

Analyze future organizational needs and current level of employee skills and develop performance improvement training.

Mentor and coach employees.

Diverse Populations – I can effectively:

- Identify development models and multicultural counseling competencies.
- Identify developmental needs unique to various diverse populations, including those of different gender, sexual orientation, ethnic group, race, and physical or mental capacity.
- Define career development programs to accommodate needs unique to various diverse populations.
- Find appropriate methods or resources to communicate with limited-English-proficient individuals.
- Identify alternative approaches to meet career planning needs for individuals of various diverse populations.
- Identify community resources and establish linkages to assist clients with specific needs.
- Assist other staff members, professionals, and community members in understanding the unique needs/characteristics of diverse populations with regard to career exploration, employment expectations, and economic/social issues.
- Advocate for the career development and employment of diverse populations.
- Design and deliver career development programs and materials to hard-to-reach populations.

Supervision – I can demonstrate:

- Ability to recognize own limitations as a career counselor and to seek supervision or refer clients when appropriate.
- Ability to utilize supervision on a regular basis to maintain and improve counselor skills.
- Ability to consult with supervisors and colleagues regarding client and counseling issues and issues related to one’s own professional development as a career counselor.
- Knowledge of supervision models and theories.
- Ability to provide effective supervision to career counselors and career development facilitators at different levels of experience.
Ability to provide effective supervision to career development facilitators at different levels of experience by:

- knowledge of their roles, competencies, and ethical standards
- determining their competence in each of the areas included in their certification
- further training them in competencies, including interpretation of assessment instruments
- monitoring and mentoring their activities in support of the professional career counselor; and scheduling regular consultations for the purpose of reviewing their activities

**Ethical/Legal Issues – I have knowledge of:**

Adherence to ethical codes and standards relevant to the profession of career counseling (e.g. NBCC, NCDA, and ACA).

Current ethical and legal issues which affect the practice of career counseling with all populations.

Current ethical/legal issues with regard to the use of computer-assisted career guidance systems.

Ethical standards relating to consultation issues.

State and federal statutes relating to client confidentiality.

**Research/Evaluation – I can effectively:**

Write a research proposal.

Use types of research and research designs appropriate to career counseling and development research.

Convey research findings related to the effectiveness of career counseling programs.

Design, conduct, and use the results of evaluation programs.

Design evaluation programs which take into account the need of various diverse populations, including persons of both genders, differing sexual orientations, different ethnic and racial backgrounds, and differing physical and mental capacities.

Apply appropriate statistical procedures to career development research.
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Technology – I have knowledge of:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Various computer-based guidance and information systems as well as services available on the Internet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standards by which such systems and services are evaluated (e.g. NCDA and ACSCI).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ways in which to use computer-based systems and Internet services to assist individuals with career planning that are consistent with ethical standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of clients which make them profit more or less from use of technology-driven systems.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Methods to evaluate and select a system to meet local needs.</td>
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</tbody>
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Hopefully, this checklist has provided you with a useful snapshot of where you are presently, and given you a clear roadmap of your strengths (to capitalize upon), areas for improvement, and can serve as a springboard for your personal career planning and management.