# Exploring Work Values: Helping Students Articulate Their Good (Work) Life

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*The current article builds on* Living the Good (Work) Life: Implications of General Values for Work Values *(Carlstrom, 2011) by presenting ways to address work values in career advising. The following questions are addressed in the current article: When should students explore work values in career advising? What career development and planning tasks and goals can advisors help them achieve with an exploration of work values? What advising settings and formats encourage exploration of work values? What activities help students address work values?*

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In the 21st century, when people who live in industrial and post-industrial societies reflect on the life they want to live, they need to resolve the role work will have in their lives. They must ask themselves questions about why they work, what they want to get from the work situation, and how the worker role will fit with their other life roles to help them experience meaning and mattering (Hartung, 2009; Rohan, 2000; Rounds & Armstrong, 2005). By understanding one's personal work-values system, the individual builds the fundamentals on which to develop answers to these questions about work. Thus, career advising helps students learn about themselves, academic and occupational options, and decision-making skills so they can implement satisfying and rewarding academic and career plans (Gordon, 2006; Hughey & Hughey, 2009), and therefore, academic advisors must address work values with students.

In 2011, Carlstrom addressed the importance of understanding students' personal work-values system. Specifically, he presented a language and framework for reflection, exploration, and development of answers to significant questions about work and life. Building on that framework, we discuss when work values can be addressed in career advising, student learning outcomes (SLOs) for using work values, settings where advisors can facilitate students' exploration of work values, and activities to use with students to address their work values.

## Career Advising and Addressing Work Values

Academic advisors need to know the best times and strategies for introducing career advising into a session. "Career advising is offered in an effort to help students understand the often complex relationships that exist between academic experiences and career fields" (Gore & Metz, 2008, p. 104), and therefore, it contributes to the integral academic advising that all students need (Gordon, 2006). It addresses the developmental issues related to career exploration and planning, and it may be provided by individuals with many different roles, including professional academic advisors, faculty advisors, career counselors who serve as academic advisors, or other student affairs professionals with appropriate knowledge and expertise.

The term *career*, and by extension *career advising*, can be viewed narrowly or broadly. From a narrow perspective, career advising focuses on helping students choose an academic major, program of study, or occupation. The advisor who takes this limited view typically reviews student qualifications and program admission requirements, prepares programs of study for academic majors, and perhaps uses interests to identify academic majors; although important to career advising, these activities do little to address students' work values. When viewed broadly, "as a lifestyle concept" (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2009, p. 12), career advising involves helping students understand and plan for the interaction of work with their other roles as contributors to a meaningful and beneficial life (Super, 1976). In essence, it becomes necessary in the process of addressing work values.

Many advisors approach career discussions with students from the narrow viewpoint simply because they feel more confident in talking about major choice and feel that their case loads do not permit the time to take a broader view. However, a meaningful

number of students present with career needs better served by taking the broader approach. For example, Duffy and Sedlacek (2007) found that 47% of first-year students sought careers consistent with their values and 29% considered careers based on their interests. Thus, the inclusion of work values and other factors connected with work values (e.g., life roles) in career advising potentially benefits a large proportion of students as early as the first year of matriculation.

**Student Learning Outcomes and Work Values**

We do not advocate that advisors forego the standard activities of career advising, such as helping students use their interests and skills to identify academic majors, determine if they meet requirements for acceptance into programs of study, and map out the curricular and cocurricular activities that prepare them to pursue an occupational goal. Rather, we encourage them to facilitate the use of work values in career advising, because an understanding of one's personal work-values system can contribute to the career planning process by increasing the chances of career and life satisfaction as well as by contributing to greater adaptability in the rapidly changing world of work. However, to choose the type and timing of activities that address work values effectively, academic advisors must know the work values relevant to the developmental goals (i.e., SLOs) they want students to achieve.

We present nine primary career-advising SLOs associated with work values and with two main traditions of using work values in career planning: matching and meaning making (Hartung, 2009). According to the matching tradition, advisees identify and evaluate academic and career options by comparing knowledge about the self (e.g., work values) with knowledge about options (e.g., occupational rewards). Through the meaning-making tradition they experience meaning and mattering through work often facilitated by the development of a personal career narrative.

Not mutually exclusive, matching and meaning making both depend on the achievement of the first four SLOs to be demonstrated: students understand work values, work value types, motivational goals, and the dynamics of a work values system. In the fifth SLO, students articulate a personal work-values system. These five SLOs benefit students even if not applied to matching or meaning making. For example, students who achieve the first four SLOs can define and provide personal examples of work values, work value types, and motivational goals in work as well as explain the importance of them in career planning. These foundational outcomes create a basis on which to work on the other SLOs, and although some students achieve them prior to completing high school, most entering postsecondary education still need assistance laying this groundwork.

Students who have achieved the fifth SLO, articulating a personal work-values system, can crystallize and prioritize work values and work value types. Advisors help students at this point clarify and develop a stable personal work-values system. Crystallization has been achieved when "individuals can identify [work values] and tell how the values influence their behavior" (Brown, 2002, p. 48), and prioritization allows students to rank order clear values in terms of self-determined importance. Thus, students who can articulate their personal work-values system describe a clear picture of their overarching motivational goals for work and determine whether their work-value type priorities complement or conflict with each other. Many young people making career choices lack full awareness about their own values and must be encouraged to grow cognizant of them (Brown, 2002). Students who have crystallized and prioritized their work values likely possess a clear understanding of their behavior and have clarified, set, and taken action to achieve both short- and long-term goals (Brown, 1995; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2009; Rokeach, 1973).

Further, only after crystallizing and prioritizing their personal work-values systems can an individual tackle the SLOs necessary for the matching tasks. Advisors must recognize that the levels of clarity may change throughout the life span, and students may exhibit a basic level of clarity and general sense of stability in their personal work-values system prior to completion of postsecondary education and training. However, the extent of clarity and stability will likely vary by life experience and developmental level. For example, traditional-aged college students who matriculate directly from high school may not have been forced to choose between work value priorities when making important life decisions nor have they likely been denied the opportunity to fulfill a work value priority. Therefore, their levels of clarity and stability do not match those with extensive life experiences outside of academia.

The sixth and seventh SLOs relate to the matching tradition. Through the sixth SLO, students understand the connection between work values and occupational possibilities, and through the seventh SLO, they evaluate the match between the personal work-values system and an occupation. Work values, just like interests and skills, allow one to understand both the person and work environment (Smith & Campbell, 2006) and can be used to examine the match between people and occupational possibilities. A good fit between an individual's work value priorities and his or her work environment is associated with positive outcomes, such as job satisfaction and tenure (Rounds & Armstrong, 2005). Further, when they make decisions consistent with their work value priorities, students minimize the risks involved in the career choice process (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2009).

Through the eighth and ninth SLOs, associated with the meaning-making tradition, students understand the significance of work values and use them to develop a personal career-development narrative: a story about "how an individual practices, enacts, and makes meaning of an occupational choice" (Hartung, 2009, p. 9). We agree with Hartung (2009) that work values, more so than interests and skills, make developing a meaningful life story the center of an individual's decision: "Career stories reveal the themes that individuals use to make meaningful choices and adjust to work roles" (Savickas, 2005, p. 57). Life stories have played an increasingly important role for students between the mid-20th century and the start of the 21st century because changes in the world of work resulted in greater worker responsibility to manage their own career in a personally meaningful way that matters to the individual (Patton, 2000). Unlike for those employed in the mid-20th century, when many organizations took responsibility for providing the structure and support of a worker's career development (Feller & Whichard, 2005), contemporary workers likely experience more transitions and uncertainty, and thus face a greater need for a life story that can provide a meaningful and stable sense of self (Hartung, 2009).

In addition to using SLOs to identify work value goals in career advising, advisors must know which of the many settings and formats of academic advising may be conducive to career advising activities that help students explore work values. The identification and use of proper advising venues constitute process and delivery outcomes, as described in assessment literature, and contribute to the achievement of specified SLOs (Robbins, 2009, 2011). Although advisors can address some of the outcomes and activities in individual sessions, many students will require more advisor time than available in typical appointments. For example, conducting a work values card sort could be completed during an individual advising meeting, but helping students develop a meaningful personal career narrative informed by an understanding of their personal work-values system cannot be completed in a single advising meeting. Therefore, advisors must consider different advising settings and formats to incorporate activities in useful ways. For example, group formats may provide the time required to achieve certain outcomes. In addition to an ongoing career advising group, advisors could include a unit on work values in a first-year student seminar course or teach an academic and career decisions course. They can also encourage students to choose work values as a topic for papers or class presentations in speech and writing courses, develop podcasts or self-guided career advising materials, refer students to offices on campus that provide access to online career guidance systems, or recommend an academic and career decisions course.

## Career Advising Activities to Develop Work Values

### Articulating a Personal Work-Values System

Specific activities have proven useful in helping students learn about work values–related constructs and dynamics such as work value types (i.e., SLOs 1 through 4) and articulate their personal work-values system (i.e., SLO 5). Although advisors often address the foundational SLOs 1 through 5 separately, they often incorporate the corresponding activities simultaneously. For example, students must engage in activities to learn about different work values before they can crystallize and prioritize their own.

To transmit appropriate career information, advisors first must address work or general values and then need to determine whether to use a formal or an informal system to educate students about them. They face four work-value systems: formal–work, formal–general, informal–work, and informal–general. The decision to use work or general values depends upon the needs of the student (Rounds & Armstrong, 2005). For example, if the purpose of career advising involves evaluating a student's fit with occupations, then the advisor

pursues a discussion of the work values system with the student. However, to help students develop a personal career narrative that addresses the values a student wants to express in various life roles (e.g., worker, family member, community member) (Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996), the advisor would use either a work- or a general-values system paradigm.

Formal work-values systems provide the names and definitions of values and value types, and they may also describe the dynamic relationships between values and value types (i.e., the values that are compatible or conflict) (see Carlstrom, 2011). Informal work-values systems emerge from talking with students about their priorities, and the advisor helps students identify, create labels for, and define the work values based on these conversations. The informal approach does not require many resources or materials, and the personal interactions contribute to the relational aspect of advising. However, because students may not consider the full range of values, advisors need skills for recognizing values as they emerge from students' personal examples across the full range of values, and such in-depth advisor–advisee interactions take time, especially to lay the foundation created by SLOs 1 through 5. Therefore, we recommend that advisors give strong consideration to using a formal work-values system.

Several formal work-value systems offer advantages for the advisor: the O*NET work values found in the *O*NET Work Importance Locator* (WIL) (McCloy et al., 1999b) and the *O*NET Work Importance Profiler* (WIP) (McCloy et al., 1999a), the *Work Values Inventory* (Super, 1970), the *Life Values Inventory* (Crace & Brown, 1995), and those included in comprehensive computer-assisted guidance systems (e.g., Career Locker [University of Wisconsin–Madison, The Center on Education and Work, 2014]; SIGI$^3$ [Valpar International, 2014]; Kuder Navigator [Kuder, 2014]) that may be available to students on campus. Formal general-values systems include Schwartz's (1992) *Value Survey*; the Allport-Vernon-Lindsey *Study of Values* (Kopelman, Rovenpor, & Guan, 2003); and the Rokeach (1975) *Value Survey*. As highlighted in Carlstrom (2011), we recommend the use of the O*NET system to address work values because it is the most comprehensive (Rounds & Armstrong, 2005) and is connected with occupation information. We also recommend the use of Schwartz's (1992) system to address general values because it provides a structural model of values, shows cross-cultural validity, and allows people to explore values at three levels. In the examples used in this article, we focus on the O*NET system of work values (McCloy et al., 1999a, 1999b) as understood through the lens of Schwartz's (1992) values theory.

To achieve the first four SLOs using the O*NET work values (McCloy et al., 1999a, 1999b) advisors help students learn the connection between work values and career planning; the definitions, motivational goals, and examples of the 21 individual work values, 6 or 7 basic work value types, and 4 broad value types (see Table 1); the circular structure of work values (i.e., the correspondence between and individual work values, basic work-value types, and broad value types); and the ways that individual work values, work value types, and broad value types complement or conflict with each other. For example, students learn that the basic work-value type *recognition* encompasses the individual work values of recognition, advancement, authority, and social status; those who highly prioritize recognition are motivated by work environments that provide opportunities to attain a dominant position, lead, advance, and experience prestige (Dawis, 2002; National Center for O*NET Development, n.d.). Furthermore, they learn that recognition is associated with the self-enhancement broad-value type and thus has a complementary relationship with achievement, but a conflicting relationship with the basic work-value type *relationships*, which belongs to the self-transcendence broad-value type (Carlstrom, 2011; Schwartz, 1992). We refer readers to more details and references provided in Carlstrom (2011).

Advisors may selectively choose the topics with students. For example, students with relatively little work and life experience may learn more from a discussion about broad value types, while students with more experience may need to talk about individual work values (Rounds & Armstrong, 2005).

If academic advisors use the O*NET work values system (McCloy et al., 1999a, 1999b), they will need to choose either the six or seven basic work-value type organization (Carlstrom, 2011). The computerized O*NET work value self-assessments (e.g., WIP) and occupational information materials (e.g., National Center for O*NET Development, n.d.) are comprised of the six basic work-value type organization. However, by using the WIL card sort, advisors can employ

**Table 1.** Definitions of work value concepts

| Concept | Definition |
|---|---|
| Values | "Values are cognitive-affective lenses through which people rank order events, outcomes, actions, and social interactions based on the extent to which they will help fulfill their needs and wants, i.e., achieve their conception of . . . the good life." (p. 34) |
| Work Values | The cognitive–affective lenses through which people rank order "the events, outcomes, actions, and social interactions . . . in the worker role . . . and work setting" that will help them develop an individualized conception of the good work life (p. 35). There are 21 individual O*NET work values (McCloy et al., 1999b). |
| Work Value Priorities | The level of importance or desirability people attributed to an individual work value or work value type. |
| Basic Work-Value Types | Groupings of individual work values "based on similarities in motivational goals" (p. 36). O*NET work values can be grouped in 6 or 7 basic work value types (McCloy et al., 1999b). |
| Broad Value Types | Umbrella of basic work-value types is based on similarities in motivational goals. There are 4 broad value types (Schwartz, 1992). |
| Work Value System | List of individual work values, corresponding work value types, definitions, underlying motivational goals, and statements about which values and types are complementary or conflicting. |
| Personal Work-Values System | The collection of an individual's work-value priorities of all work values or work value types. |

*Note*. Definitions from Carlstrom (2011, pp. 33–43) except as noted. Used with permission.

the seven basic-work value type organization, which has not been validated. If the student wants to examine the connection between work values and occupational information, then the six basic O*NET work-value types may be the best choice. However, we recommend the seven basic O*NET work-value types grouping for students ready to reflect upon the dynamics and potential work-value conflicts as reflected in Schwartz's (1992) circular model.

Upon development of a sufficient understanding of work values (i.e., SLO 1), students can engage in activities to help them crystallize and prioritize their work values (i.e., develop a personal work-values system). For example, advisors can ask students to identify examples of the work values and work value types in their life and reflect on ways they influence their behavior (i.e., crystallization) and rank order the importance of work values and work value types (i.e., prioritization). Either a formal (e.g., O*NET work values) or informal (i.e., descriptions of personal priorities) work-values system, or some combination, proves useful. Objective test scores for each work value and work value type or subjectively determined ordering provides appropriate contexts for prioritizing work values and types. Further, students can complete some activities independently (e.g., computerized work values inventory), but others, such as a values sorting activity (e.g., WIL card sort [McCloy et al., 1999b]; Sophie's Choice activity [Niles, 2000]), require advisor participation to assist students in reflecting upon the rank ordering of work values and clarifying the meaning of work values to them personally.

Advisors who prefer formal work-values systems or want students to obtain an objective score can refer students to complete computer-administered work-values inventories such as the O*NET WIP (McCloy et al., 1999a) and those found in comprehensive computer-assisted career guidance systems (e.g., Career Locker [University of Wisconsin–Madison, The Center on Education and Work, 2014]; SIGI$^3$ [Valpar International, 2014]; Kuder Navigator [Kuder, 2014]). In addition, advisors can access work-values card sorts (e.g., WIL [McCloy et al., 1999b]), checklists (e.g., Niles, 2000; Steele, Walters, & Lumsden, 2000), and inventories (e.g., *Work Values Inventory* [Super, 1970]; *Life Values Inventory* [Crace & Brown, 1995]). Although some of the activities involve formal work-values systems, provide objective scores, or do not

require advisor presence when completed, advisor guidance makes these exercises meaningful to students and remains critical to advisors' professional and ethical practice.

For example, with the O*NET WIL work-values card sort activity (McCloy et al., 1999b) students rank order short definitions in terms of the importance of each for their ideal job. After ranking the cards, they calculate scores for each of the basic work-value types, which helps them rank order the basic types. For example, a student may give high ranks, illustrating prioritization, to relationships, internal working conditions, and independence; moderate rankings to recognition and achievement; and low rankings for support and external working conditions. Such a description of the student's personal work-values system indicates those trade-offs that she or he may be willing to make in the work environment; in this case, the student would willingly give up some support to experience more independence. As students go through this exploration process, advisors can help them identify examples of the individual and basic work values and types (i.e., crystallization) from students' own experiences. In addition, they should suggest modifications in the prioritization of basic work-value types based on the scores obtained through the card sort, but they should remember that the scores serve as guides, not definitive directions. With advisor assistance, students can order basic work-value types to identify prioritization of the broad value types. The student in the example would see that self-transcendence and openness to change emerge as greater priorities than does conservation.

Examples of activities that require relatively high advisor participation typically do not provide an objective score and allow for a choice to use a formal work-values system that includes extensive exploratory exercises. Advisors can use career fantasies as described by Niles and Harris-Bowlsbey (2009) and sessions in which students describe and reflect upon daydreams, people they admire and dislike, preferred use of discretionary time and money, involvement in activities considered important, and situations in which students experience the greatest reward, satisfaction, and enjoyment (Brown, 1995; Brown & Crace, 1996; Gordon, 2007). Utilizing the *why?* technique as in Brown (1996), advisors challenge students by asking "why?" student-chosen outcomes and actions are deemed important and desirable. They continue to ask "why" as a means of determining the underlying motivational goal for student selections. Career autobiographies and life stories, reviewed later in the career advising process, also could help students develop greater clarity and stability of their personal work-values system (Patton, 2000).

Niles (2000) presented a values activity titled "Sophie's Choice: A Values Sorting Activity" with the accompanying statement, "Good decisions are values-based; however, few career options provide individuals with the opportunity to express all of their important values" (p. 82). For the activity, students review a list of 28 values and have the opportunity to list additional ones. Advisors could substitute the work values from a different formal work-values system, such as those from O*NET. Students select their top 10 individual values, and after discussing these with the advisor, identify their top 5 individual values. Students are then told they must give up one of the values they had chosen. Upon relinquishing 4 individual values, the students have identified and defined their top 5 values in order of preference. Advisors can extend the exercise by asking students to determine the basic or broad work-value types to which their top (and bottom) individual work values belong and initiate discussions on the level of potential complementariness and conflict in the student's personal work-values system.

Drawing from the work of Rokeach (1975), Brown and Crace (1996) discussed the use of contemplation and conflict to clarify and to help prioritize values (see also Kinnier, 2000; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2009). Students decide which work values or types are most important relative to the other ones rather than simply rating their importance or desirability. For example, an advisor asks a student who rated both autonomy and security as important to contemplate which ranks higher; that is, the student must decide between two basic work values as if confronted with a conflict.

A career planning course offered to undergraduates at Florida State University (2014), Introduction to Career Development, is divided into three units with one focused on career concepts and applications. During one day students focus on values as part of developing self-knowledge. The unit also includes creating a career autobiography, so the course activities relate to all of the work value SLOs.

The context in which students grew up, currently live, and anticipate integrating in the future influences the development and expression

of a personal work-values system. Students' cultural background (e.g., collectivism–individualism orientation), personal life situations (e.g., access to quality schools), and the life experiences of important people in their lives (e.g., an aunt facing gender discrimination) constitute important factors that advisors must consider when helping students explore work values (see Carlstrom, 2011 for discussion and references). Students also learn that future life experiences likely influence their prioritization of work values and types. For example, job security may become a higher priority if students intend to raise children in the future or if they foresee personal difficulties during potential challenges, such as an economic recession. Therefore, these activities not only help students crystallize and prioritize their work values and types in the present, they learn career self-management skills that will prove useful throughout their life.

**Connecting Work Values to Occupations and Evaluating Fit**

Through matching exercises students understand ways work values and types correspond to the rewards and reinforcers offered in different occupations (i.e., SLO 3) and evaluation processes for selecting the extent to which potential occupations fit personal work-values system (i.e., SLO 4). Both SLOs 3 and 4 depend upon occupational information that relates to work values. Advisors who introduce informal work-values systems to help students crystallize and prioritize work value types will experience more difficulty in linking occupational information to values than will those using a formal system.

Advisors may wish to access any number of online career assessment programs to identify occupational options, but the WIL and WIP incorporate the work values system used by the U.S. Department of Labor (n.d.) to describe occupations, which McCloy et al. (1999a, 1999b) pointed out comprises a strength of the O*NET work-values system as based on the six basic work-value types organization used to describe occupations. The seven basic O*NET work-value types organization (Carlstrom, 2011) also allows one to compare personal work-value types to occupations for all of the basic work-value types, but the intrinsic or extrinsic working conditions will not be as clear as with the basic six organization. However, the basic seven organization allows for discussions about work-value type complementariness and conflicts. Further, advisors who use it can discuss Schwartz's (1992) broad work-value types, thus it may prove more beneficial for students needing to focus on the four broad work-value types, and the potential value conflicts that may arise, as this version may offer a better reflection of world-of-work paradigms (Smith & Campbell, 2006) than the six basic work-value types organization. However, occupational information is not reported on the broad work-value types.

Although SLOs 6 and 7 are distinct, the activities that address each overlap. To help students learn about how work values and types correspond to occupations (i.e., SLO 6), students could select three to five occupations that they would like to explore and then review the degree to which each occupation corresponds with the basic work-value types. For example, by reviewing the work values section of the detailed report of interior designers on O*Net Online (http://www.onetonline.org/link/details/27-1025.00), a student sees that interior design is most congruent with the basic work-value types of achievement and independence, followed (in descending order of correlation) by relationships, working conditions and recognition, and support. To address SLO 7, students could then compare their personal work-values system to the information gathered about each of the occupations they researched.

In one approach to SLO 7, the student must use his or her personal work-values system to identify occupations that may be a good fit. For example, an individual who enters *work values* into the *advanced search* function of O*NET (http://www.onetonline.org/) and then selects a top basic work-value type such as *recognition* will bring up a list of occupations congruent with *recognition*, such as *financial analyst* and *epidemiologist*. In an alternative, by entering up to three basic work-value types (e.g., *recognition*, *achievement*, and *independence*), the student will receive a list of occupations, such as *chef, archivist*, and *geneticist,* congruent with the top basic work-value types entered. However, this approach works on the assumption that a student has properly identified a clear and stable set of work value priorities for the purpose of choosing an occupation. Traditional-aged college students may experience difficulty articulating such a clear and stable personal work-values system.

Traditional-aged college students may use their interests and skills, rather than personal work-values systems, to identify a potential occupation to pursue. They benefit from using one of two

variations to achieve SLO 4. In one approach students first identify occupational options, and then, as part of further exploration, examine the degree to which their personal work-values system appears consistent with different occupations. For example, based on longstanding interests, confirmed by an interest inventory, and appropriate academic achievement, a student has identified dentistry as an occupational option. Through use of the WIL card sort (McCloy et al., 1999b), the student prioritizes *recognition* and *support* as the top two basic work-value types; however, according to the O*Net description of *dentist* (http://www.onetonline.org/link/details/29-1021.00#WorkValues), the student's prioritized basic work-value types are least satisfied in the field of dentistry. This information should not necessarily obligate the student to abandon dentistry as an option, but does provide information that should be considered.

Some students must learn about the job search, interviewing, and negotiation processes to evaluate the specific job fit with their personal work-values system. For example, a student prioritized *independence* in the personal work-value system and has secured interviews with three different companies for a position as a *sales manager*, which is congruent with O*Net *independence* (http://www.onetonline.org/link/details/11-2022.00#WorkValues). This student may find that despite the congruence with independence, not all sales managers secure positions with companies that provide for independence to the same extent. Therefore, the advisor talks with the student about the qualities of independence the advisee considers most important and ways to determine during the interview and negotiation processes the degree to which a prospective company allows for the desired level of independence.

Students exhibiting multipotentiality pose a challenge to advisors proffering career advice. The traditional approach to career advising in which conversations focus on generating occupational options based interests and skills may fall short for students exhibiting multipotentiality because they struggle to eliminate academic and career options. Having multiple skills and interests can lead to students making unproductive career decisions (Rysiew, Shore, & Leeb, 1999). For example, these students may declare multiple majors and make numerous major changes. Multipotentialed students often "need help in 'giving away' some of their alternatives rather than generating new ones" (Gordon, 2007, p. 103). The well-intentioned feedback of "you can be anything you want to be" is particularly unhelpful for multipotentialed students (Kerr & Erb, 1991).

Therefore, the matching approach using the personal work-values system to identify occupations that fit may prove particularly useful for advisors of multipotentialed students; however, the advisor may need to augment the approach with meaning-making activities. Although these undergraduates likely could find success and satisfaction in a number of occupations, the work values may help them become more focused on opportunities. For example, Colangelo and Zaffrann (1979) and Miller (1981) recommended focusing on work values in career counseling of academically talented students. Further, Kerr and Erb (1991), in a study of university honors students, found that those who participated in a values-based career counseling intervention changed significantly in terms of identity.

**Meaning Making: Developing a Personal Career Story**

The eighth and ninth SLOs serve as keys to the development of a sense of meaning and mattering. They manifest in articulation of "stories of the self. . .that integrate the reconstructed past, perceived present, and anticipated future" (McAdams, 1996, p. 301) and that address how the self connects with society and life roles (Patton, 2000). Value priorities "may provide the basic architecture of. . .the 'narrative mode' of human understanding" (Rohan, 2000, p. 257). Although their work-value priorities and career life stories are likely to change after they graduate from college (McAdams, 1996), students learn both the significance of and skills for developing a story about the process they use to "make choices that express their self-concepts and substantiate their goals in the social reality of work roles" (Savickas, 2005, p. 43). Savickas's constructivist, Cochran's narrative, and Young, Valach, and Collin's contextual theories of career counseling (as discussed in Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2009) address the importance of personal career narratives in career development and offer ideas about ways to incorporate their stories into the career planning process.

To help students use personal work-values systems to develop life stories, advisors utilize activities that range from discussions about the meaning and manifestation of a personal work-

values system in a student's life, to developing shorter stories that address very specific aspects of work value priorities in school and work life, to writing a full career autobiography. Lifelines also offer tools for reflection. Beginning with birth and ending with death, students list significant life events and roles, both positive and negative, as well as those previous, current, and anticipated. The advisor and advisee discuss the roles of each major event, especially as current behaviors apply to future plans. Advisors must remain mindful that, just as with the crystallization and prioritization of work values and types, students' experiences and context for them will influence their expression of a personal career narrative. In addition, many variations of the story will help students find meaning and mattering, but advisors must recognize that these outcomes may clash with the advisor's personal work-values system.

Many topics for discussion emerge through conversations, short stories, lifelines, and career autobiographies. For example, advisors can work on identifying which work value priorities the advisee wants to fulfill in specific life roles. For example, to what degree does a student want to fulfill the relationship value with family, friendship, and worker roles? Does this differ from the degree he or she wants to fulfill the recognition value priority among these three roles? Advisors can broach the potential conflicts in fulfilling value priorities because of conflicts between life roles. For example, the advisor may ask the student to consider how the amount of time needed to fulfill the recognition value at work may affect the ability to fulfill the relationship value in the family (Super et al., 1996).

Specifically, advisees need to consider ways the worker role relates to other life roles (i.e., role salience) because "other life role values also influence many aspects of the career development process" (Brown, 2002, p. 49). For example, the worker role may be more important to a student's sense of self than her or his role in the community, but not more important than the one in the family. Values help people discriminate the level of commitment to different life roles (Lokan, 1995). Work value priorities, socialization processes, work experiences, and the perceptions of meeting work-value priorities in available work opportunities influence the importance of the worker role (Sverko & Vizek-Vidovic, 1995). Thus, addressing work value priorities helps to contextualize a student's career development by providing the opportunity to address other factors that influence career development including gender, race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, discrimination experiences, aptitudes, and self-efficacy (Brown, 1995, 2002).

## Summary

Advisors need to determine when to refer students to career counseling. A number of issues can trigger a referral, and Kuhn, Gordon, and Webber (2006) presented an informative listing of those issues that can indicate that students might benefit from the services of a career counselor. Further, some institutions establish guidelines, policies, or informal understandings about which professionals—advisors or counselors—should address particular concerns or types of issues.

Career readiness constructs may also offer guidance in determining whether career advising or counseling would be appropriate for students as well as the relevance of addressing work values in career advising. Sampson, Reardon, Peterson, and Lenz (2004) defined career readiness "as the capability of an individual to make appropriate career choices while taking into account the complexity of family, social, economic, and organizational factors that influence an individual's career development" (p. 68). *Capability* refers to internal factors (e.g., motivation, commitment) that influence one's capacity "to engage in effective career problem solving and decision making" (p. 68); *complexity* refers to external factors (e.g., family or economic situations) "that make it more difficult (or less difficult) to process information necessary to solve career problems and make career decisions" (p. 68). Low capability and high complexity lead to low readiness to make career decisions and can trigger a referral to career counseling. Other combinations of capability and complexity may be addressed by either career advising or career counseling, depending on the circumstances, although high levels of capability may prove an important prerequisite for addressing work values with a student.

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