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Chapter 11

The Constructs and Practices of Job Placement

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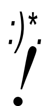

ob placement is central to the professional role of the rehabilitation counselor. Job placement ties counseling efforts to real-world outcomes for the client: rmding, getting, and keeping a job with financial, social, and psychological value. Without· job placement and related employment constructs, there is little legislative rationale or market demand for the existence of rehabilitation counseling as a unique and viable profession (Parent & Everson, 1986; Stensrud, Millington, & Gilbride, 1996).

The cultivation of a strong theoretical base for placement research and the development of counselor competencies in placement activities are arguably two of the most important pursuits of the rehabilitation counseling profession. The purpose of this chapter is to reconcile the practice of job placement with constructs of the employment selection process. In this chapter we provide an overview of the employment process in a rehabilitation context by explaining and discussing (a) a systems framework, (b) job search, (c) job acquisition, (d) job entry and Sta bilization, and (e) stakeholder defrnitions of success in job placement.

A Systems Framework

From a systems perspective (see Geist & Calzaretta, 1982;Vandergoot, 1987;Vandergoot & Swirsky, 1980), placement services may be de.fmed as any professional intervention that facilitates or supplements the naturally occurring employment selection process (see Millington, Szymanski, &Johnston-Rodriguez, 1995). The

employment selection process is a labor market transaction between the applicant and the employer motivated by a mutual need to change current employment status (see Figure 11.1). The applicant and the employer bring a unique set of intentions and expectations to the transaction-that is, what they plan to do and what outcomes they predict their actions will precipitate. Expectations are the medium of the transaction, perhaps best described for both parties as expectations of satisfaction and satisfactoriness (see Dawis, 1994; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). The arrow between the applicant and the business organization in Figure 11.1 indicates the communication of expectations between the stakeholders. The stages of employment selection identify three discrete objectives: (1) job search, (2) acquisition, and (3) entry and stabilization. This complex stage process is supported (or impeded) by the contextual influences of family, work organization, and labor market factors (Millington et al., 1995).

Placement services intervene in the employment selection process when either of the primary stakeholders-the applicant or the employer-is dissatisfied with the outcomes, or requests brokering services or other assistance from a third-party placement professionaL Placement interventions have traditionally focused on the applicant with a disability, helping the person to develop the skills and motivation to successfully search for, acquire, and keep a satisfactory job. However, placement interventions could just as easily focus on developing the skills and motivation of the employers to recruit, hire, and integrate workers with disabilities. From a systems perspective, the competencies of the placement professional are ultimately determined by his or her ability to effect positive change

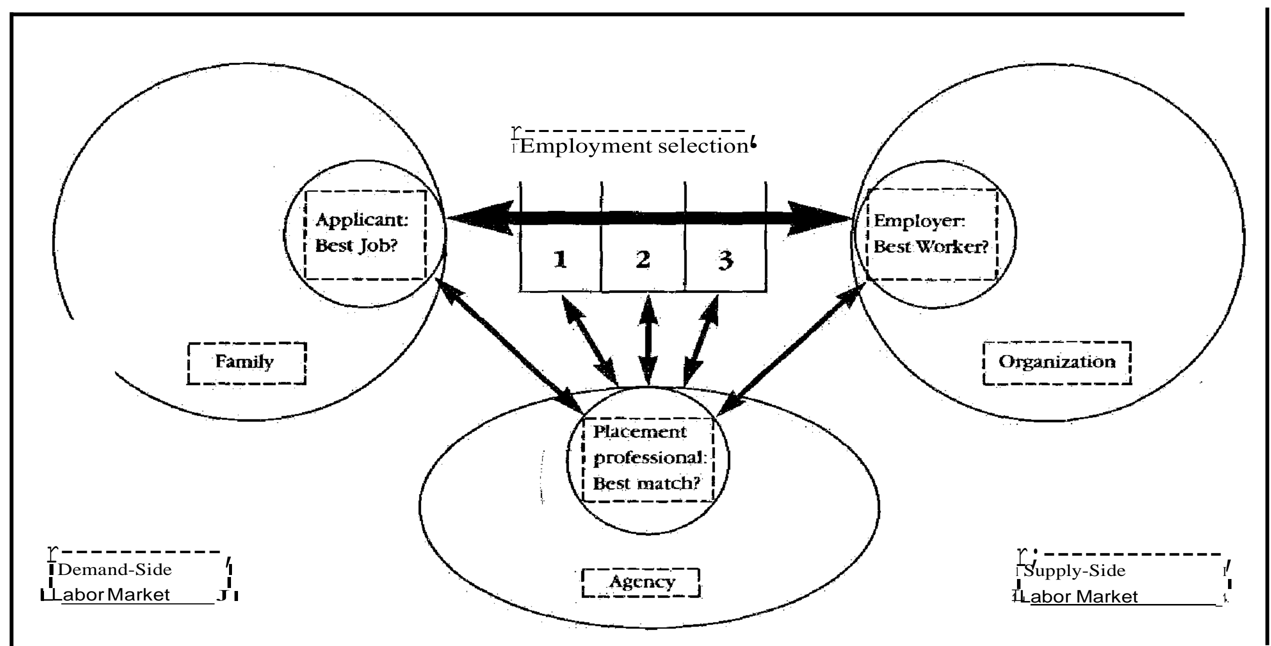

Figure 11.1. Placement as an accommodation of the employment selection process. See text for explanation.

in the applicant, the employer, or the process of selection that binds them. Each satisfactory placement outcome (i.e., "best match") is created rather than simply identified.

Job Search

The transactions between the applicant market and the employer market begin with an exchange of job-relevant information, for the purpose of generating options. Information flows between the stakeholder groups through formal and informal social structures. Applicants may refer to this as job search. Employers refer to this as recruitment. In the following sections we discuss (a) the job applicant's perspective and activities in this transactional process, (b) the employer's recruitment interests, and (c) job search roles for placement professionals.

The Job Applicant's Perspective and Activities

Applicants engage in job search activities designed to identify potential employment targets within their chosen markets. Activities may include perusing classified advertisements, circulating resumes, contaCting employers, attending job fairs, soliciting leads and support from family and other social contacts, and engaging placement agencies. Some job search activities are more effective than others. Findings have consistently shown that tapping informal social networks is the preferred and most effective means of generating job leads among employed blue collar, managerial, and even doctoral-level workers (Gottfredson & Swatko, 1979; Rosenfeld, 1975; Schwab, 1982; Schwab, Rynes, & Aldag, 1987).

Motivation is an important factor in the relative success of job search activities. Financial need is the primary situational motivator linked to intensity of search (Schwab et al., 1987). Research suggests that the intensity of search behaviors also increases with the expected probability of success (Harrel & Stahl, 1986; Rynes & Lawler, 1983) and increased levels of self-esteem (Ellis & Taylor, 1983). Indicators of motivation include level of procrastination, number of employment contacts (Sheppard & Belitsky, 1966), time spent in search activities (Barron & Mellow, 1981), and ntmiber of placement professionals involved (Kanfer & Hulin, 1985). Motivation and effective use of social networks in the job market maximize the efficacy of search efforts.

The Employer's Recruitment Interests

Employers engage in recruitment strategies devised to attract an applicant pool of likely candidates from employer-recognized labor markets (Bedeian, 1989; Millington et al., 1995). Strategies may include the use of advertising and public

events (e.g., job fairs, career days), orientation sessions that present realistic job previews (Premack & Wanous, 1985), internal and external postings, contracting professional recruiters, and informal word-of-mouth networking (Arthur, 1991). A good recruitment process helps potential applicants to self-select by aligning their work expectations with the realities of the job (Wanous, 1980). The salient outcome goals of recruitment are linked to the objectives of the employment selection process, which are (a) to maximize job performance and satisfaction and (b) to minimize turnover (Premack & Wanous, 1985).

Employer motivation is an important factor in the recruitment of applicants with disabilities. The fundamental employer motivator is profit. Employers wish to attract the highest qualified applicants for the lowest possible cost. When unemployment is low and traditional labor markets are shrinking, employers are more likely to recruit and hire nontraditional workers (see Millington, Asner, Der-Stepanian, & Linkowski, 1996). Conversely, when unemployment is high and traditional markets are plentiful, employers tend to rely on the traditional, economically conservative recruitment strategies. Profit is not the only motivator, however. Other motivational factors affecting employer recruitment of workers with disabilities include ancillary business objectives, community relations, compliance with federal and state mandates, and organizational values (Pitt Catsouphes & Butterworth, 1995).

Changing demographics in the workforce present a challenge to employer recruitment strategies. Current trends indicate that the workforce is becoming older, more ethnically diverse, and more balanced in terms of gender (Kiernan & Lynch, 1992). Some authors believe that employers will have to surpass minimal standards set by Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines and aff'rrmative action programs simply to maintain their workforce. The nontraditional labor markets of today will be the target of future recruitment efforts (Arthur, 1991).

Job Search Roles for Placement Professionals

Job search skills may be more problematic than satisfactory job performance for applicants with disabilities. Poor job seeking skills limit access to job markets (Rubin & Roessler, 1995) and exacerbate the .economic hardships experienced by applicants with disabilities (Levitan & Taggert, 1982). Proper assessment and planning are important precursors to' job search. While planning job search strategies with a client, placement professionals may engage in person-centered planning approaches that focus on the needs of the client first and also solicit input from tamily and friends in planning and implementation of the job search (O'Brien & LOvett, 1993). Placement professionals may also assess the applicant's employability competencies (Bolton, 1982; Rubin & Roessler, 1995), including knowledge of the job market, ability to develop job leads (Gilbride & Burr, 1993), and ability to self-promote and identify reasonable accommodations (Roessler & Gottcent, 1994).

Job seeking-skills training has been an effective intervention with a range of populations (Walker, 1987). It usually includes the development of applied skills, such as writing a resume, filling out applications, and obtaining interviews. Self-instructional training packages are available (Seitker, 1989; Wesolowski, 1981), but the most effective and most replicated format (Hagner, Fesko, Cadigan, Kiernan, & Butterworth, 1996) is that of the "job club" (Azrin & Besalel, 1980; Azrin, Flores, & Kaplan, 1975). Job dubs use a behaviorally based, group-oriented approach to train, support, and motivate job seekers in their search efforts. Participants in job clubs meet daily *ot* weekly to develop and pursue job leads, practice search techniques, and receive encouragement and feedback on their performance from group members. Both individualized (Zadny & James, 1979) and group (Azrin & Philip, 1979; Matkin, 1989; Wesolowski, Zawlocki, & Dowdy, 1986) approaches have been shown to be successful in achieving applicant employment goals. When properly trained in job seeking skills, many people with disabilities .fmd their own jobs.

When applicants cannot negotiate a job search without support, placement professionals engage in job development services. In job development, the professional assumes partial or total responsibility for contacting and negotiating with the employer. Traditional services identify an existing job opening, and then seek a match among available client applicants. This job-centered model (Hagner & Daning, 1993) has a tendency to usurp client choice unnecessarily, limiting the variety and quality of jobs (Mank, 1994; West & Parent, 1992). More recently, there has been increased emphasis on job creation and job restructuring, methods that rely on a cornpany-centered approach to job development. A company-centered approach looks broadly at the needs of a company rather than at existing job openings and emphasizes altemative ways of meeting those needs.

By examining how vocational rehabilitation is. practiced, a wide range of strategies can be identified that reveal the scope of potential roles of placement professionals in the job search. Hagner et al. (1996) identified 31 different activities that relate to the job search (see Table 11.1). These str-ategies represent distinct approaches to the job search process that may be combined in a number of ways to respond to individual support needs and preferences.

Fesko and Temelini (in press) surveyed 370 placement professionals who worked for community rehabilitation providers or independent living centers that use the practices identified in Table 11.1. A principal components analysis of their data yielded five clusters of practices that represent alternative approaches to the job development process. The approaches are distinguished primatily·by whether employer contacts are targeted for the benefit of a specific individual, for several job seekers, or simply as a generic network-building exercise. The generic approach emphasizes traditional job search. Activities may include reviewing classified advertisements, developing contact lists through the yellow pages and business directory, making "cold calls," walk-in solicitation, researching business and labor market trends, and hosting a job fair. The agency-marketing approach emphasizes raising awareness and generating support withfu the business community for

Table 11.1
Job Search Activities

Planning and Preparation

1. Implement a formal vocational assessment of applicant knowledge, skills, abilities, artd interests.
2. Involve family in informal assessment of interests and. abilities.
3. Teach job seeking skills
4. Provide counseling support.
5. Facilitate *job* dub.

Employer Contact

6. Host an agency or program business advisory committee.
7. Sponsor public relations events with employers.
8. Develop list of employer contact information.
9. Join and present in business-oriented community groups.
10. Research business and/or labor trends.
11. "Cold call" employers to solicit job leads.
12. Use placement professional network to identify job leads.
13. Use job-seekers' social network to develop job leads.
14. Employer account: Develop relationship with local employers.
15. Participate in local job bank.
16. Host or attend a career fair or job fair.
17. Give informational seminars and workshops for local business.
18. Review traditional job listings.
19. Provide brochure or written proposal to employer.

Employer Negotiation

20. Identify appropriate jobs and/orrestructuring options.
21. Explain job-applicant match to the employer.
22. Guarantee applicant production rates.

(Continues)

Table 11.1 *Continued.*

23. l'rovide consultation to employer on disability-related issues.
24. Assist employer to obtain financial remuneration.
25. Facilitate employer subminimum wage certification.
26. Facilitate alternate work agreements (i.e., work under contract).
27. Address job seeker's disability and job accommodation needs.
28. Restmcture job station, work schedule, or assistive devices.
29. Train applicant as volunteer or on subsidized wage basis.
30. Consult with employer on generic vocational issues.
31. Arrange applicant interviews with employer.

Note. Adapted from "Securing Employment: Job Search and Employer Negotiation Strategies in Rehabilitation," by D. Hagner, S. L. Fesko, M. Cadigan, W. Kieman, and J. Butterworth, 1996, in *Work and Disability: Issues and Strategies for Career Counselors and Job Placement,* by E. M. Szymanski and R. M. Parker (Eds.), Austin, TX: PRO-ED..

the placement agency. This approach may involve establishing an employer advisory board, participating in business-oriented community groups, organizing public relations events, and sponsoring a job club. The networking approach is similar to the agency-marketing approach, emphasizing the development of placement service relationships in the business community; Activities may include canvassing personal networks to establish job leads, identifying advocates within the business community (Nietupski, Vetstegen, Hamre-Nietupski, & Tanty, 1993), and maintainingan intra-agency job bank for sharing job leads. Individually focused placement emphasizes the creation of a good match between a specific individual and employer. Among the ways that this approach is implemented are assessing the job match, restructuring the job as needed, and strategizing job accommodation with the employer. Finally, the traditional job placement approach emphasizes the needs of the employer by guaranteeing the satisfactoriness of the worker. Activities include offering contract or subminimum wage options and providing technical assistance to the employer.

Although all employer-contact activities tended to be relatively effective at helping people become employed, the networking approach demonstrated better quality of outcomes in terms of salary and hours (Fesko & Temelini, in press). As noted previously, networking is the most frequently used approach to access jobs in the labor market (Silliker, 1993), However, the effectiveness of job search is largely a function of the intensity of the search rather than adherence to a particular model. When it comes to employer contact, more is usually better (Bortnick & Ports, 1992).

Job Acquisition

The second objective of employment selection is job acquisition. The employer gathers applicant information and makes screening and hiring decisions accordingly. The applicant is in competition for the job with other applicants, who are all trying to make the most positive impression on the employer. Acquisition concludes with the negotiation of the terms of employment. The role of the placement professional is to support the process such that the needs of both parties are met. We discuss the following features of job acquisition: (a) differences between screening and hiring, (b) issues in employers' use of applicant information, (c) applicants' impression management and disclosure of disability, and (d) negotiating employment.

Differences Between Screening and Hiring

Millington et al. (1995) described how the employer decision-making process consists of two contingent and convergent subprocesses: screening and hiring. Screening is a negatively weighted, criterion-referenced removal of undesirable applicants from the applicant pool (Bills, 1990). The purpose of screening is to minimize the cost of employment selection, which is a particularly important objective when the applicant pool is large. Individuals with severe disabilities in particular may have difficulty surviving a negatively weighted screening process, and the role of the placement professional is to seek opportunities to bypass or inform the screening process. Hiring is the rmal narrowing of the employer options to a single choice, in which the applicants are ranked according to the employer's perception of "best fit," generally based on positively weighted criteria (Kiernan & Rowland, 1989). The objective of hiring is to achieve the best match between applicant and employer.

Screening and hiring may or may not appear as discrete activities in the employment selection process, depending on the employer's information gathering strategy. Both may take place in the course of a simple interview, or be formally identified in a complex, multistaged selection process that may include the use of biographical review, tests, and interviews. The underlying assumptions of employment selection are that, in the decision-making process, employers are looking for reasons to reject an applicant as well as reasons to hire, and that screening tends to occur early ,_ the process.

Implied in the screening and hiring components of the employment selection process is a schema against which applicants are to be compared. Typically, employers believe they define positions generically and create job descriptions without regard to an individual, and then attempt to find prospects in the labor market who match the job description (Cole & Br.agman, 1985). Accordingly, they tend to rely on labor markets with which they are familiar, in order to f"ill job vacan-

des. Such ratiortality and routine, however, encourage them (rather unaware) to form a singular and stereotypical schema for the "ideal worker" (Hagner & Dileo, 1993). This can be problematic for applicants with disabilities because they have been significantly underrepresented in the workforce and, therefore, underrepresented among the images and information contributing to the ideal worker schema.

Issues in Employers' Use of Applicant Information

The decision-making outcomes of screening and hiring are based on employer assessment of applicant information. A fair outcome requires that the information be job related and appropriately used. Different issues emerge with respect to the use of applicant information derived from (a) biographical data review, (b) employment tests, and (c) interviews.

Biographical Data Review

Application forms, letters of reference, and resumes provide a great deal of information about the applicant that may be used to make screening and hiring decisions. The intentional use of this information is called biographical data review. TI1e quality of a biographical data review depends upon (a) job relatedness of the criteria, (b) method by which the criteria are measured (direct vs. inferred), and (c) method by which the criteria are evaluated (rational vs. statistical). Biographical data reviews that have demonstrated good reliability and validity (Shackleton & Anderson, 1987), such as training and experience (T&E) review, focus on documented past work performance (Hunter & Hunter, 1984), achievement, and educational history (Ash, Levine, & McDaniel, 1989).

T&E evaluation is perhaps the most popular method of review. T&E review uses a functional profile of the target job based on job analysis (Levine.1983) and standardized collection and rating protocols (Ash et al., 1989) to establish a statistically defensible minimal standard for work competencies. Information obtained from a written application tends to be a more accurate indicator of competency than information remembered and reported by the applicant during the dynamics of a job interview where the applicant is under stress and driven to maximize a favorable impression (Cascio, 1987). .t\.sh etal. (1989) cautioned that T&E evaluations are not the best predictors of knowledge, skills, and abilities, but are effective as screening tools for estimating an applicant's general education development and specific vocational preparation. In addition to estimating skill level, employers frequently use T&E review for inferring work motivation of an applicant by noting the consistency and length of the applicant's involvement in a specific line of training or experience (Ash et al., 1989). To the extent that the listed work history information captures the complete picture of the applicant's situation, such inferences are less subject to misinterpretation.

Employment Tests

Many employers use standardized or criterion-referenced instruments to screen applicants from the applicant pool or to place applicants into specific job categories (Aiken, 1994). These instruments tend to be special aptitude tests, such as tests of clerical skill or mechanical aptitude, that measure job-specific skills and ability. Measures ofpersonality and interest may be used in some situations, as in screening for sales or management positions (Bittel, 1989). To be safely and effectively used in personnel selection, the test must be reliable, valid, fair (free from bias), and cost-effective (Muchinsky, 1986). For these reasons, formal testing approaches to selection have been relatively job specific (see Cesare, Blankenship, Giannetto, & Mandel, 1993) and conservatively applied.

Interoiews

Despite being labor intensive and weak on reliability, interviews remain the most widely used employment selection procedure. This paradox, given employers' penchant for otherwise favoring the most economiC path to a goal, suggests that reliance on human interface surf.lces in even the most formal and pragmatic of work organizations. Dipboye (1989) pointed out that interviews may serve other organizational functions, such as counseling, increasing worker involvement in the process, and improving public relations. Herriot (1989) indicated that employers believe that they can gauge the cultural fit of the applicant best through a face-to-face encounter, and that they rmd the format useful in "selling" the organization to particularly desirable applicants. We suggest that, work being a human endeavor, it is not unreasonable to assume that the most natural closure on the selection process would be person centered, regardless of the statistical or logical arguments to the contrary.

The two basic approaches to interviewing maybe described as unstructured and formally structured. The unstructured interview is a free-flowing, two.way exchange of information;"the interviewer may have an overall agenda of areas he or she wishes to cover, but the order in which they are covered and the questions which are framed depend upon the responses of the interviewee" (Herriot, 1989, p. 433). The formally structured process does not deviate from apreestablished set of job-related questions. The structured format is often based on a job analysis and focused on surfaCing biographical information thought to be directly job :relevant.

The outcomes of these two approaches may be further differentiated in terms of reliability, validity, and fairness. Unstructured interviews are historically lacking in all three indices (see Arvey, 1979; Hunter & Hunter, 1984; Reilly & Chao, 1982; Sclunitt, Gooding, Noe, & Kirsch, 1984). Unstructured interviews are guided by the social encounter, and thus are open to the influence of stereotypes and the intrusion of interpersonal judgments. Structured interviews have exhibited more acceptable outcomes. The common reliance on job analysis data for

designing most structured interviews has demonstrated a strong improvement in validity CArvey & Campion, 1982).

Dipboye (1989, pp. 48-49) outlined a three-stage information-processing interview model: the preinterview phase, when the interviewer has an opportunity to form impressions of the applicant based on paper credentials such as test scores and the completed application form; the face-to-face interview; and the postinterview phase, when the interviewer synthesizes a conclusion about the applicant's qualifications and renders a decision to hire, not hire, or to seek more information. Although this sequence of events does not describe all interviews, it does seem descriptive of the typical or modal interview. Using this model, Dipboye has called the incremental validity of the interview into question. If interviewing does not add to the specificity of the selection process, then it is at best unnecessary and perhaps susceptible to confirmatory bias (Dipboye, 1989).

Confirmatory bias refers to a primacy effect of early information, either positively or negatively charged, mediating the way in which subsequent information is gathered or interpreted. Macan and Dipboye (1988) identified conditions that may encourage the development of confirmatory bias: (a) interviewers are very sure of their early impressions, (b) applicants are unsure of their ability to perform in interview situations, (c) interviewers have made their initial (bia..c.;ed) impressions explicitly known to significant others, (d) the interview format is unstructured, and (e) the interviewer has not been trained in interviewing techniques. Confirmatory bias may change the nature of the interviewer's information gathering interactions with the applicant. If the interviewer harbors a negative bias against an applicant, the interviewer may exhibit verbal behavior (e.g., closed,nded questions, focusing on applicant weaknesses) and nonverbal cues (e.g., increased physical distance, lack of congeniality) that discourage positive interaction. In response, the applicant may withdraw or react negatively to what is perceived as a hostile transaction, particularly when he or she is characterized by low self,steem (Liden, Martin, & Parsons, 1993). This behavioral confirmation of expectations becomes a self-fulftlling prophecy acted out in the interview{Dipboye, 1982). Confmnatory bias may affect recall and interpretation of information in the postinterview phase (Dipboye, Steamler, & Fontenelle, 1984; Macan & Dipboye, 1988). Interviewers may remember or attach more significance to information that reinforces their initial impressions, even in the presence of information that refutes those impressions.

The process of evaluating job applicants who have a disability is considered to be especially vulnerable to confirmatory bias. For example, Farina and Feiner's 0973) study suggested that application information indicating an episode of mental illness resulted in less congenial interaction with the interviewer and lowered interviewer expectations for employment. Type of disability and causal attribution of disability have been suggested as potential biasing agents in job acquisition (Bordieri, 1988; Bordieri & Drehmer, 1986, 1987; Drehmer & Bordieri, 1985). These information-processing biases may effectively negate the validity and fairness of the most well-designed interview.

Applicants' Impression Management and Disclosure of Disability

Applicant verbal and nonverbal behaviors in the employment selection process are generally directed toward malting the most favorable impression on the employer (Schlenker, 1980). The degree of desirability of the job drives the intentional behaviors of impression management (Schlenker & Weigold, 1992; Stevens & Kristof, 1995). Applicants can move toward or withdraw from an organization and its selection process by consciously (or unconsciously) manipulating the image of them that the employer is developing. Employers are attracted to applicants who accentuate and promote their potential fit within the organization (Rynes & Gerhart, 1990) by stressing similarities, motivation, and competence, and by exhibiting an interpersonal warmth in the interviewResearch suggests that verbal (D. C. Gilmore & Ferris, 1989; Kacmar, Delery, & Ferris, 1992; Stevens & Kristof, 1995) and nonverbal (Imada & Hakel, 1977; Parsons & Iiden, 1984; Washbum & Hakel, 1973) communication congruent with employer predilections may positively influence the selection process and outcomes.

In a summary of impression management strategies, Stevens and Kristof (1995) suggested that verbal behaviors may be classified as assertive (accentuating the positive) or defensive (diminishing the effect of negative information). Assertive tactics can be either ingratiating or self-promoting. Ingratiating behaviors are designed to build liking and congruence with the interviewer. The applicant may praise the interviewer or express opinions and attitudes that conform with those of the interviewer (or the organization) to create greater interpersonal attraction. Ingratiating behavior may become grating, if overdone (Jones, Stires, Shaver, & Harris, 1968; Stevens & Kristof, 1995). Self promoting behaviors that emphasiZe positive personal qualities, past achievements, and future goals engender favorable attributions by the interviewer concerning salient applicant work characteristics (Godfrey, }ones, & Lord, 1986; Stevens & Kristof, 1995). Defensive tactics can be either excusing or justifying (Schlenker & Weigold, 1992; Stevens & Kristof, 1995). They are designed to defuse negative information about the applicant during the course of the interview. Applicants may explain why they should not be linked to the negative in.formation, or why the information should not be interpreted in a negative fashion.

An applicant with a disability may encounter problems with impression management when deciding whether, when, and how to disclose the presence of a "hidden" disability that may affect job performance. The manner in which an individual's disability is discussed affects both the chances of being offered a job and the eventual inclusion into the workplace. Disclosure allows for open negotiation of accommodation needs, but may make impression management more difficult. Findings from a survey of human resource managers suggested that an individual should disclose a disability at or after the interview (Rutherford, Merrier & Parry 1993). Although there was not consensus on this issue, the majority said that they prefer the individual to be direct about the nature of a disability rather than refer

to it indirectly. Hagher and Daning (1993) found that mention of disability gradually, indirectly, or in a specific planned context was the preferred strategy of most job developers.

Negotiating Employment

The central objective for the placement professional in this stage of placement is to help the employer correctly match the worker and the job. This requires that the placement professional be well versed in the nature of the job and the culture of the workplace (Vandergoot, 1984). Once the demands of the job are known, a fit can be made by referring an appropriate, work-ready applicant or by creating accommodations for an otherwise work-ready applicant. Negotiation is the art of convincing the employer that the accommodated worker is a desirable (profitable) addition to the workplace. Much depends on the quality of the information gleaned from the workplace and the communication skills of the placement professional (Culver, Spencer, & Gliner, 1990). One approach that emphasizes the relationship and communication between the placement professional and the employer is the "employer accounts" arrangement (Hagner et al., 1996; Research Utilization Laboratory, 1976). In this approach, placement professionals are assigned to particular employers. Over time, they develop a thorough knowledge of the business, establish trust, and nurture a working relationship with the employer.

Job matching, job accommodation, and job creation all require developing a clear understanding of both the work tasks and company culture in a business. Job analysis is a process of systematically identifying the essential job functions, which then serve as the basis for establishing an applicant's competence for the job, with or without potential accommodations (see Roberts, Zimbrick, Butterworth, & Hart, 1993). On the basis of a completed job analysis, the rehabilitation counselor may explain the appropriateness of a job match to an employer and address any misgivings. Furthermore, job analysis is a fruitful avenue for learning a lot of specifics about working in a particular business organization (Hagner & Darting, 1993).

Job accommodation is a term that describes a wide range of interventions that may be used during job negotiation or after job entry. Job accommodation may include changes in work schedule, task sequences, or work area organization; provision of assistive technology; or modifications to the nature of the work performed. This latter option, known as job restructuring, involves modifying a job by eliminating nonessential tasks or reassigning tasks to others who have the relevant skills and interests. Job restructuring falls within the range of accommodations that a business is expected to consider under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), which requires that businesses provide reasonable accommodation (Witt, 1992). Although there is no specific definition of reasonable, employers are not required to suffer "undue hardship" in providing an

accommodation. The definition of undue hardship varies according to individual company circumstances. In general, an applicant or worker with a disability is expected, under the guidelines of the ADA, to perform the essential job functions, either with or without accommodation, but employers may elect to negotiate reassignment or restructuring of essential job tasks.

One altemative to job negotiation is job creation, which involves using a marketing approach to customize a job to an individual worker. Through this approach, a position is created by identifying unmet or poorly met needs in a company and combining them to create a new position (Bissonette, 1994; Jackson, 1991). This is a proactive approach to negotiation in which the placement professional works with employers to create an opening where one did not previously exist. The placement professional analyzes the potential for match between applicant and workplace based on an analysis of matket and workplace factors, seeking a "win-win" business solution. This entrepreneurial approach requires a great many skills (communication, business knowledge, problem solving, etc.) on the part of the placement professional (Bissonnette, 1994). Both job creation and job restructuring are strategies that demand a skillful, synthesizing approach to job development. Sometimes, however, they may provide the best opportunity to establish jobs for workers who have specific interests or needs that are not well matched to jobs typically available in the labor market.

Several ancillary benefits can be used to sway the decision in favor of the placement client. Tax credits, on-the-job training funds, or other monetary incentives have been used, though they are not as important to employers as one might think (Sitlington & Easterday, 1992). Employers are more concerned about productivity than cheap labor; thus, agency guarantees of applicant productivity can be an effective bargaining chip. If a working relationship exists between the rehabilitation professional and the employer, other services that benefit employers may be offered, such as inservice training or counseling services or disability management, depending upon the expertise of the placement professioiY.al.

An offer of employment signals a shift to the applicant as the locus of decision making (see Schwab et al., 1987). The employer approaches the applicant with a proposal, and the applicant decides whether to accept, decline, or counteroffer. Specific job attributes are important considerations in negotiating the acceptance of a job offer. Considerations include security, type of work, benefits, coworker and supervisor characteristics, pay, and working conditions Ourgensen, 1978). The job market also exerts a powerful influence on the applicant negotiations (Uden & Parsons, 1986). It is not surprising that applicants are more likely to accept a job, even an undesirable one, when the job market is tight (Herriot, 1989).

Job Entry and Stabilization

Negotiation brings closure to the acquisition stage of the employment selection process. Ideally, the expectations of the applicant and employer have been com-

municated, and the terms of the transaction are amenable to both. Expectations fonn the implicit contract between them, and are now tested on the job. The employment selection process extends into that of job entry and stabilization, as the new worker and the work organization decide whether the job match measures up to expectations. We discuss the following issues related to job entry and stabilization: (a) integration into the work setting, (b) evaluating the worker-environment fit, and (c) postemployment roles for the placement professional.

Integration into the Work Setting

Once the new worker is hired, the employment selection process continues via organizational socialization (Louis, 1980; Schein, 1987). As Schein noted, organizational socialization is the "price of membership" the new worker must be willing to pay in order to stay employed. New employees begin to form an identity within the organization upon arrival, as they attempt to meet normative criteria of the work culture as well as work demands of the job. Acclimation and adaptation into the work culture are critical to the worker's inclusion in the work group (Louis, 1980). To make an effective transition into the organization, the newcomer must be able to recognize and interpret cultural values and norms that surface through group interaction. Increasing integration through socialization is evidenced by positive changes in the new worker's position in the workplace network of informal information and influence (Louis, 1980). Unsuccessful socialization often has sanctions attached, primarily in the form of withdrawal of support by the group (Rothman, 1989) and isolation of the deviant worker. The purpose of these sanctions may be to discourage socially unacceptable behavior through punishment or to protect the work culture from an "outsider" through rejection and eventual expulsion from the job.

Brett (1984) conceptualized occupational socialization as a process of personal development. The new worker takes on new knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and expectations that approximate the ideal worker conceived by supervisors and coworkers. In Brett's model, intervening and exogenous variables interact in complex ways to mediate the socialization process.

Intervening variables describe internal characteristics of the new worker that mediate socializing behavior. Brett suggested three types of intervening variables: (a) behavior-outcome uncertainty, (b) effort-behavior uncertainty, and (c) learning expectations. Behavior-outcome uncertainty refers to knowledge and skill deficits. It occurs when the new worker either does not know what to do or does not see the connection between job performance and desired outcomes. Lack of information concerning appropriate work behavior and the contingent outcomes interferes with adjustment of the new worker, creating task uncertainty (Mansfield, 1972). Effort-behavior uncertainty refers to the level of "conviction that one can successfully execute the behaviors required to produce contingent outcomes" (Brett, 1984, p. 168). Poor perceptions of self-efficacy interfere with motivation to adapt to new surroundings. Learning expectations are beliefs concerning future

access to job-related training. Lowered learning expectations may have a negative effect upon self-efficacy as well.

Exogenous variables describe extemal "causes of expectations, uncertainty, and development" (Brett, 1984, p. 169) in the employment selection process. Skill-based social support tefers to an extemal validation of competence. Knowledge of incumbent performance provides the new worker with a schema for approximating the ideal worker. Formal socialization refers to the procedure for disseminating general information to a number of new workers. Informal socialization refers to information concerning required tasks, contingencies, and feedback from the perspective of other employees or customers. Goal setting refers to the "explicit discussion between supervisor and subordinate concerning tasks, behaviors which may be used to accomplish those tasks, and expected levels of task performance" (p. 176). These extemal forces delineate the context for decision-making transactions.

Evaluating Worker-Environment Fit

The new worker evaluates worker-environment fit in terms of role satisfaction. The satisfaction of the new work role depends on five factors (Vroom, 1964): (a) financial remuneration, (b) effort required to remain a satisfactory employee, (c) value of productivity, (d) characteristics of social interaction, and (e) the social status of the position. Muchinsky and Morrow (1980) described three classes of variables that affect job motivation and tenure: individual, work related, and economic. Individual variables include "age, length of service, family size, vocational interests, aptitude, personality, and biographical indices" (p. 270). The authors found a consistent though modest relationship between individual variables and voluntary tumover. Work-related variables include recognition and feedback, autonomy and responsibility, nature of supervision, organizational commitment, salary, role clarity, provisions for seniority, integration into the organization, size of the organization, repetitiveness of tasks, and size of the work unit. Economic variables include labor market characteristics and the geographic location of the organization. According to Muchinsky and Morrow, economic variables are the strongest determinants for voluntary tumover.

The employer evaluates worker-environment fit in terms of worker performance. Performance evaluation is a formal, periodic organizational process for making future employment decisions conceming the worker (DeNisi, Cafferty, & Meglino, 1984). The satisfactoriness of the new worker depends on employer perception of worker performance with respect to such work-related criteria as productivity, safety, reliability, social competence, and adaptability. This model emphasizes that what is remembered and how it is interpreted may be mediated by personality variables of the rater, attitudes in particular. 1.nat such a schema may be resistant to change in the face of contradictory evidence (DeNisi et al., 1984) provides a logical rationale for investigating the effect of disability status on performance appraisals (see Smith, Edwards, Heinemann, & Geist, 1984). Other potential contextual effects on performance evaluations include purpose

of the appraisal (e.g., support, tenure, advancement, or deployment of worker within the organization), rater time constraints, nature of the rating instrument (DeNisi et al., 1984), and potential bias within the rater (Bemardin & Pence, 1980; Bemardin &Walter, 1977) or the instrument (Landy & Farr, 1980).

Postemployment Roles for the Placement Professional

Although some traditional approaches to placement end with the acquisition of employment, experience has shown that, for many people with disabilities, further support is necessary for them to keep their new positions (Housman & Smith, 1975). Interverttions focus on helping the worker adapt to the workplace or helping the workplace adapt to the worker.

As the worker begins the transition from the role of new hire to member of the workforce, the rehabilitation counselor may assess progress and intervene as necessary. In a *client-centered* approach, the counselor uses indirect means by talking to the employee, assessing satisfaction with job and agency services (Schwartz, 1985), and providing peripheral counseling or training off-site. The rehabilitation counselor may coordinate ancillary support services in a case management fashion, such as transportation to and from work, or personal and medical care. A *selective* approach will use direct means by involving the supervisor in assessment artd training strategies (Anderson, 1990) or having the counselor serve as a surrogate supervisor for a time and provide training on-site.

Hanley-Maxwell and Millington (1992) identified three important workplace interventions: self-management, maximizing generalizability and maintenance skills, and developing extemal adaptations. Self-management interventions include problem solving (Mithaug, Martin, Rusch, Agran, & Rusch, 1988), self-monitoring, and reinforcement (Berg, Wacker, & Flynn, 1990). These may be taught in job clubs or in transitional employment programs (MacDonald-Wtlson, Mancuso, Danley, & Anthony, 1989). The goal of maximizing the generalizability and maintenance of skills is to facilitate long-term independence. Some of the strategies employed involve training clients how to recognize and use hatural cues, providing numerous examples during training, and teaching individuals to generalize experience across settings. External adaptations include picture cues, to-do lists, check sheets, audio cues, and peer assistance (Wacker & Berg, 1986). Support services typically offered are training in job, community, and social skills; advocacy; crisis intervention; and job modification (Hanley-Maxwell & Millington, 1992).

Selected interventions should be based on the needs of both the worker and the employer and utilize the employer's current resources, including natural su ports (Hagner, Butterworth, & Keith, 1995). Available natural supports vary widely among businesses, some formal, others more informal in nature. Supports may be encouraged by targeting supervisor and coworker interventions, such as disability awareness training; teaching techniques for training, evaluation, and support (Fabian, Edelman, & Leedy, 1993; Gardner, Chapman, Donaldson, & Jacobson, 1988); or simply reinforcing positive coworker interaction with the new employee.

Defining Success in Job Placement from Stakeholders' Perspectives

How successful is job placement as a professional endeavor? As the above systems framework suggests, the answer depends on whom you ask. Job placement services are evaluated differently by each stakeholder group, based on the particular and sometimes conflicting expectations of each. In this section we address current placement evaluation issues and outcomes from the perspective of (a) workers with a disability, (b) employers, and (c) rehabilitation agency personnel.

Perspective of the Worker with a Disability

Defming successful placement of workers with disabilities need not be restricted to the quantitative measures of hours worked, wages, and length of job retention (Moseley, 1988). Beyond satisfaction and satisfactoriness on tlte job, placement has implications for career development and quality of life.

Career Development

For a variety of reasons covered elsewhere in this text, disability is identified as a risk factor that may (or may not) have an impact on career development (see Syzmanski & Hershenson, Chapter 10, this text; Szymanski, Hershenson, Ettinger, & Enright, 1996). The systems framework for placement provides a clear understanding of the relationship between career development and job placement:

- Employment status over time is the functional outcome of career development. Changing jobs is the essence of a dynamic career path.
- Employment selection govems employment status.
- Placement services attempt to surmount or circumvent barriers to the employment selection process.
- To the degree that past employment experience has not remediated barriers to employment selection, placement services will be useful in future changes in employment status.

From a developmental perspective, job placement can be seen as the achievement of a single step in the career path of the worker: entry into the job market. Once employed, the worker influences the workplace, and the workplace changes the worker. Work experience allows for the ref"mement of interests, which may increase satisfaction or draw the worker toward other employment options. Work·experience allows for the development of skills, increasing worker satisfactoriness and adding labor market value to the worker. In this way, satiS-

faction and satisfactoriness are fluid constructs: Successful placement is a temporary condition from the perspective of career development.

Quality of Life

A broader view of placement outcomes addresses the relationship between employment and individual quality of life, a difficult concept to determine because of its inherently personal meaning (Taylor & Bogdan, 1995). Quality of life has been described as a multidimensional construct that includes factors such as life conditions, personal satisfactions (e.g., quality of social network, friendships), and personal values (Felce & Perry, 1995; Hughes & Hwang, 1995).It involves the interaction of multiple domains in an individual's life, including work, living environment, family, health care, relationships, and leisure (Stark & Faulkner, 1995). Test, Hinson, Solow, and Keul (1993) found that consumers with experience in both sheltered and community employment preferred the latter, and that friendships were an important part of that preference.Yet, there is evidence that workers with severe disabilities often have fewer non-work-related social interactions in the workplace, initiate fewer interactions, and form fewer friendships that extend beyond the workplace (Chadsey-Rusch, Gonzalez, Tines, & Johnson, 1989; Ferguson, McDonnell, & Drew, 1993; Rusch, Wilson, Hughes, & Heal, 1994; Storey & Homer, 1991).

To enhance quality-of-life outcomes in placement may be a daunting task for rehabilitation counselors. They have to be able to identify the intangible and highly personal motivations for work, as well as the concrete and practical. They have to be adept at identifying stressors and facilitating social support (House, 1981; Kiernan, Schalock, Butterworth, & Sailor, 1993) both on andoffthe job. In short, they must bring counseling activities into a more holistic model of placement and career planning.

Perspective of the Employer

Data suggest that, overall, employers have been very satisfied with the performance and potential of workers with disabilities (Kregel & Unger, 1993; Levy,}essop,Rimmerman, Francis, & Levy, 1993). The National Organization on Disability/ Harris survey of employers found that 82% of managers feel there were no differences between employees with disabilities and those without, and 75% of respondents indicated that they will likely increase their efforts to hire individuals with disabilities (Louis Harris and Associates, 1995). Coworkers and supervisors may have positive attitudes toward employees with disabilities (Butterworth & Strauch, 1994), even when the employee is characterized by severe developmental disabilities and behavior problems (Belcher & Datlow-Smith, 1994).

Whereas some astute employers may fmd economic motivation to recruit and hire workers with disabilities, others are more reluctant. Employers may expect more problems with employees with disabilities than with their nondisabled

counterparts (Rubin & Roessler, 1995), including higher insurance premiums (Greenwood & Johnson, 1985), higher absenteeism, and lower productivity (Ellner & Bender, 1980). Employers may doubt their own capacity to train and supervise employees with disabilities, because of actual or anticipated barriers to comfortable communication. Employers are also concerned about the impact of the ADA (Gilbride, Stensrud, & Connolly, 1992) and many are doubtful of its wonh (Satcher & Hendren, 1992).

In their efforts to accommodate the employment selection process, rehabilitation personnel may affect employers' willingness to hire in positive or negative ways. Several studies suggest that employers view services provided by rehabilitation staff as a positive influence, including the availability of on-the-job training (job coaching), follow-along support services, and consultant resources (Kregel & Unger, 1993; Shafer, Hill, Seyfarth, & Wehman, 1987; Sitlington & EaSterday, 1992). Greenwood, Johnson, and Schriner (1988) found that employers valued training and technical assistance from rehabilitation staff, including.referrals, consultation on job modification and affirmative action, disability awareness training, and advice on architectural barrier removal.

Research also has raised concerns, however, about the negative perceptions employers may harbor concerning the consonance between the work environment and the way some rehabilitation personnel deliver their services (Gilbride & Stensrud, 1992). Pitt-catsouphes and Butterworth (1995) found that managers viewed rehabilitation personnel's advocacy efforts during hiring to be intrusive. Similarly, Bullis et al. {1994) found that some employers identified on-the-job sup. port to be too obtrusive, and Kregel and Unger (1993) found some concern about the reliability and quality of supported employment services. It is clear that employers and rehabilitation personnel may have different assumptions and priorities in the placement process, and the ensuing conflict can sour a working relationship between the two. 1bis was clearly illustrated by Arthur (1991), who noted,

> While government agencies can be helpful, they are frequently known to refer unqualified job applicants in spite of the requirements stipulated. In addition, they often challenge the reasons given for rejecting the candidate. Therefore, it is important that recruiters learn appropriate rejection language. (p. 62)

That employers should learn "appropriate rejection language" to deflect a counselor's "challenge"is a revealing comment on Arthur's perception of the tenuous relationship between the placement professional and the employer.

Greater attention needs to be paid to understanding the structure and priorities of the workplace, as well as dealing with counterproductive employer attitudes. For example, many of the supports that workers with disabilities receive in the workplace are provided informally by coworkers. It is important that supports provided by rehabilitation personnel enhance and encourage those supports, rather than impede or replace them (Fabian et al., 1993; Pitt-Catsouphes & Butterworth, 1995).

Perspective of Rehabilitation Agency Personnel

Placement services are available through public and private service providers, for-profit and nonprofit organizations, and disability-specific or generic services. Placement services are funded by state-federal vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs, state mental retardation/developmental disability (MR/DD) agencies, state mental health (MH) agencies, private insurers, state departments of employment and training, regional employment boards, or private industry councils via the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982. Placement services may be received directly from a government agency or upon referral to a contracting rehabilitation service provider. The particulars of successful placement from an agency perspective are a function of who pays and who delivers services, but the fundamental measure of success common to all is conswner employment.

There has been increasing attention in the profession to providing access to employment for all individuals with disabilities. However, successful placement outcomes vary significantly according to type of disability. In fiscal year 1991 (FY91), the percentage of closures designated as rehabilitated mnged from 33% for individuals with psychiatric disabilities to 59% for individuals with hearing disabilities. These data also indicate differences in the quality of the outcome. For example, although 50% of the cases involving individuals with mental retardation were successful closures, 29% of these individuals were closed into sheltered employment. Between FY85 and FY91, closures into sheltered employment decreased from 18.8% to 13.5% for individuals with mild mental retardation and from 66.5% to 48.6% for individuals with severe mental retardation (D. S. Gilmore, Butterworth, Schalock, & Kieman, 1995). Much of the reduction in sheltered workshop closures is due directly to a professional ideological shift to supported employment models. The introduction of supported employment in the mid-1980s has had an impact on the structure of employment supports by emphasizing job training and support at the job site after job entry and continuing for the life of the job, if necessary. This approach, sometimes referred to as "place-train-support," implies that a worker can enter employment without meeting the prerequisites assumed by a more traditional "train-place-support" approach (Rusch & Hughes, 1990). Since FY85, there has been an increase in the use of supported work as training for persons with moderate and severe mental retardation, with a concurrent decrease in the use of Work adjustment training across disability groups (D. S. Gilmore et al., 1995).

Despite these initiatives, the effectiveness of state ahd federal rehabilitation and human service systems in supporting access to employment remains a professional concem (Mank, 1994; United States General Accounting Office, 1993). There was little change in the national employment rate of people with disabilities between 1986 and 1994, despite passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990 (Louis Harris and Associates, 1995). Fully 68% of the work-age population of people with disabilities remained unemployed in 1994. According to the IIams poll, two thirds of the unemployed are actively interested in rmding a job. Also, the percentage of conswners who achieved a successful placement outcome

(status 26) remained fairly stable from FY85 through FY91 at between 38% and 42% of referrals (D. S. Gilmore et al., 1995).

Limited access to employment has also been an issue with community.,.based rehabilitation service providers. Nationally, over 6,000 community-based agencies provide day treatment and employment services to people with severe disabilities. These are primarily people With developmental disabilities such as mental retardation. Of the projected 1 million consumers served in 1991, 70% were placed in facility-based work and nonwork programs, 21% in individual competitive or supported jobs, and 10% in group supported employment options (McGaughey, Kiernan, McNally, Gilmore, & Keith, 1994),

Conclusion

Given the complex transactional nature of employment selection, it is easy to understand why integrating the spectruin of possible placement practices into a unified model has been such a challenge for the profession. We conclude this chapter by briefly explaining a few of the dimensions of this persistent challenge to the field of placement, dimensions that are likely to shape theory development, research, and practice in the next decade.

Just as the ideology and implementation of *increasing consumer control* are changing the shape of rehabilitation services in general, so too are they affecting the delivery ofjob placement services. Consider the accepted role of the stakeholders indefmingpractice. Traditional models first conceptualized a continuum of involvement and control over the process with the individual with a disability and the placement professional at opposite poles. The selective placement model designates an intensive role for the rehabilitation counselor in assessing relevant applicant characteristics, matching them to jobs, developing employer contacts and job leads, and even intervening in the interview (Geist & Calzaretta, 1982). Client-centered placement represents the other end of the spectrum, in which the client assumes responsibility for nearly all placement-related activities and the counselor assumes a supportive role (Vandergoot, 1984). Recent introduction of demand-side placement models suggests that employers may also dictate service delivery in some respects (Gilbride & Stensrud, 1992).

Another aspect of the complexity that both enriches and complicates placement practice is the *expanding scope of services*. Vandergoot (1984) identified the following service categoris for placement practice: counseling; work readiness assessment; development of labor market information; job seeking sk:ills training; placement and career planning; job development; job analysis; referral of prescreened, job-ready applicants to employers; job modification and accommodation; follow-up; and coordination with other resources. In a more recent revieW of the placement literature by Hagner et al. (1996), 31 unique practice options were identified. Services continue to expand over the life span as well. Specifically, the supported employment movement has argued for normalizing the

notion of providing follow-along and support services for life if necessary, rather than dictated by a time limit set by a bureaucratic calendar. The influences of career development and career education theories have resulted in heightened concern for preparing even early elementary schoolchildren for the world of work by emphasizing computer literacy, group cooperation through teamwork assignments, and problem-solving skills in the curriculum.

One of the major changes in the employment sector that has been occurring over the past three decades is the *diversification of the labor force and placement clientele*. Workers with disabilities are among the previously underrepresented groups that are entering the labor market in increasing numbers with increased expectations and legal protections for equal opportunity to employment. Even within the disabled community, there is a diversification in the subgroups who have obtained or desire employment. Whereas in the past the preponderance of rehabilitants who secured mainstream employment had orthopedic or sensory impairments, the job candidates of today are as often represented by people with a variety of cognitive and chronic health impairments. It is very important that service programs demonstrate, in their design and implementation, appropriate sensitivity to and adequate representation of the scope of cultural and disability subgroups. This issue should be examined not merely as a response to the current consciousness about multiculturalism, but because the basic, implicit foundations of vocational rehabilitation counseling were developed on a clientele that in terms of demographic characteristics, work-related experience, and service needs is quite different from many of today's placement candidates. Given the cognitively compromised or socially disadvantaged status of many of today's clients, counselors need to seriously scrutinize the appropriateness and adequacy of the strategies and tools for vocational rehabilitation assessment, counseling, and training.

Although placement has often been deemphasized in rehabilitation counseling, it is central to achieving the fundamental objectives of the rehabilitation system. All rehabilitation counselors will practice placement at some level, whether as direct providers of training and support or simply as purchasers of placement services for their clients. Achieving skills and experience in the art and science of placement should be a requirement for all qualified rehabilitation counselors.

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