Dawn Harris CEP 864 June 25, 2012 Paper #4

Based on information provided in an interview detailed in *Gig, Americans Talk About Their Jobs* (2001),Mike Jackson, a presently employed Ford Auto Worker is seeking career counseling. He is unhappy and bored with his current work situation and is seeking ways to change and improve his work life. The purpose of this paper is to describe the counseling process for career development I would follow with Mike Jackson to help, encourage, and support him in this endeavor. (McDaniels & Gysbers, 1992) Specifically, this paper will outline the steps I would undertake with this client in order to assist him in his career transition.

McDaniels & Gysbers, (1992) identify the framework for the process of counseling for career development as having two main phases which consist of client goal or problem identification, clarification, and specification and client goal or problem resolution. Similarly, Kosciulek (1999) identifies stages of the process as: awareness of the need to make career decisions, learning about and/or reevaluating self, identifying occupational alternatives, obtaining information about identified alternatives, making tentative choices from among available occupations, making educational choices, and finally implementing a vocational choice. In Mr. Jackson’s case, the information he’s provided in his case study interview is an informal assessment tool (Kosciulek, 1999) which provides a great deal of information with which to begin the career counseling process. He has become keenly aware of the need to make career decisions based on his extreme dissatisfaction with his current job. Mike Jackson states that he is happy with the wages, benefits, and hours that his job as a “factory rat” provides, but says the negative aspects of his job (boredom, uncomfortable working conditions, and lack of autonomy) outweigh the positives so much that he would be willing to take a pay cut if necessary in order to change his line of work. Likewise, he has done some self-reflection on why he is not satisfied with his current situation expressing that even though he only spent a short time in college, the experience made him aware of other job opportunities that he thinks would make him happier. In his interview, he also identified relocating to the Green Bay area with his girlfriend as a goal stating that, “it’s about two hours away from where his mother lives” and that the area is “booming.” He’s also mentioned two alternative careers in the interview, namely oceeanograhy and computers. (Bowe et al., 2001) Mr. Jackson provides insight regarding his attraction to the field of oceanography but he does not explain the “computers” remark. I would mention to Mr. Jackson that these are two quite different career fields and would ask him for further clarification, explanation, and elaboration about his interest in the computer field. (Harrington, 1997) Based on this information, I would also conclude that this client would benefit from further assistance in identifying occupational alternatives.

In addition to continuing the individual career counseling begun with the interview process, I would also incorporate computer and Internet-assisted career guidance systems as an intervention strategy to help this client. (Lapan 2004) A natural next step would be to discuss formal assessment tools like inventories designed to measure interests, abilities, skills, work values, and personality types that he could take which would result in suggested occupations. Major benefits of using a computer or Internet-based system for these types of measurements are that the results are immediate, can be easily saved for future reference and shared with others, and offer choice and variety as to assessment instruments. (Kosciulek, 1999) Once the results from the assessments are obtained, I would assist my client with understanding and interpreting the results. Then I would have Mr. Jackson research the identified career alternatives with the goal of narrowing the results. To conduct his research, I would again direct him to quality Internet-based resources, which provide up-to-date job descriptions, educational requirements, salary information, and even job growth projections for specific areas like Green Bay, Wisconsin. Results from the assessments and his subsequent research, considered in combination with self-knowledge gained from the counseling process should lead him to narrowing his list of occupational choices.

Mr. Jackson mentioned in his initial interview that his employer would give him “like thirty-eight hundred a year” toward education. After narrowing his list of occupational choices, I would then help him investigate educational options he could pursue that correspond with this shortened list of occupations. I would also encourage him to find out what procedures he would need to go through at work to take advantage of the educational benefit his employer offers.

The goal of this career counseling process would be to lead Mike Jackson to implementing a vocational choice. (Kosciulek, 1999) Discovering an occupation that suits his personality, interests, and abilities and that matches his willingness to pursue and complete any specific educational requirements needed to get hired in that career field would improve his quality of life. It should also educate him on how to see his career and work-life as a process that he needs be an active participant in throughout his life. When my evaluation showed that these results had been achieved, I would close the relationship with this client. (Kosciulek, 2002) I would tell Mr. Jackson that no one should have to suffer with feeling like reporting to work is analogous to the *Shawshank Redemption* and that if he had any friends that were feeling the same way, perhaps he could share his career development process experience with them!

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