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ABSTRACT

PLACEMENT COUNSELING
IN THE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
by
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The concept of a Placement Counselor in the Community College is a relatively new concept. Community Colleges, when designing total counseling services stress academic, vocational (or career) and personal counseling. The implication has been that if career planning is offered as a classroom subject, that ends the college's responsibility to the student. Job finding is then accomplished by some magical means.

Perhaps this would be true if all students started at the same level, took career guidance classes, graduated and used their newly acquired skills to secure a job. That, however, is not the case with the great majority of students at the Community College level.

What then, does the Placement Counselor offer that is
not included in the usual counseling services? Why is the Placement Counselor different from a Vocational Counselor?

Basically, the Placement Counselor functions in the here and now; not the future. The Placement Counselor must be concerned with the immediate placement problems of the students, whether they be struggling financially to remain in school, trying on new jobs or approaching an entry level position in a terminally planned program. The student's needs are immediate and pressing, and only a trained, professional Placement Counselor can be of benefit to these students.
INTRODUCTION

Placement Centers have been sorely lacking in the Community Colleges. They are usually an after-thought developed by an interested instructor who then assigns this task to a clerk. Needless to say, this can be a very haphazard operation, at best.

Since Community Colleges developed from the Junior College concept, they were looked upon as only post-high school institutions emphasizing only vocational courses. Indeed, this was a valid interpretation up to the mid-fifties and early sixties. The concept of the Community College has grown and developed into quite a sophisticated operation. However, the stigma (if it be that) of a vocational school became so abhorrent to instructionally oriented administrators, that the push was towards the academic and away from the vocational programs of the school. This swing was so great that the few vocational instructors on campus generally did their own placement of students, but not as a formal part of the school's interest.

Work experience programs were developed and funding became available, but this program focused only on placing students in jobs where the academic program and the jobs were in direct correlation. The part-time job seeker was offered no assistance from this program. In addition, the
job ceased when the schooling ceased. The position was an available slot to be used only for training and then re-opened to another student when the previous one had terminated his schooling.

The next logical step for Community Colleges was the development of Career Centers; a place where students could go to research their career objectives. These centers vary greatly in approach, but basically they provide the student with pertinent information pertaining to career choices, with or without the help of a professional counselor. As with most student services activities, the centers usually start small and with the sharing of ideas from other campuses, grow to encompass the use of trained counselors in career guidance, career technicians, advisors or para-professionals. Courses are sometimes offered to the student to develop a deeper understanding of himself and his needs, goals and values so that an academic program can be developed to meet a career need. I wish to point out that the emphasis in such courses is involved with future needs and very little time, if any, is devoted to the immediate needs of the students. As an afterthought, some career guidance classes have included some course work in resume and cover letter writing, job interviewing techniques, including the use of video-tapes for mock interviews. The above mentioned skills, however,
are stressed in a good Placement Center as a top priority item.
Chapter 1

HISTORY OF PLACEMENT COUNSELING

The growth of Placement Centers started also at an embryonic stage and grew through an understanding of the needs of the students. As previously mentioned, the placement of students was usually handled by each individual instructor with no coordination between any two instructors. At best, an interested non-instructor might take over the function of placing students. This at least had the advantage of having one person totally committed to the function of placing students, but said nothing about the qualifications to do so. This interested person was usually not qualified either academically or trained in the field of Placement.

These first small Placement Centers were little more than spaces allocated in a corner of some room (and sometimes only a closet) and with luck a shared desk with a telephone. The function of screening student applications was minimal, if at all. If an employer called the school, an attempt was made to post the information for the student to read, but no counseling or follow-through of these positions was attempted. Placement Centers were part of career centers, financial aid offices, work experience programs or student activities.
As the colleges grew and the populations became more diversified, the need for Placement Centers became quite evident. Trained personnel including, but not limited to, a counselor, a director, interviewers, a job developer and clerical support became a part of the total Placement picture.

With the formation of organizations such as the California Community College Placement Association and the College Placement Association, professional guidelines were formulated. The California Community College Placement Association is still in the process of investigating some standards of uniformity throughout California, and establishing professional requirement levels. One of the main concerns of the California Community College Placement Association and the College Placement Counsel, a national organization, is the establishment of not only a professional director, but the obligation and commitment by the colleges of a full time Placement Counselor. These two organizations are placing emphasis on Placement Counselors to not only have an academic background in counseling, but a familiarization with the real world of work.

The Placement Counselor should have an academic background in various forms of therapeutic practices. He is then able to utilize this background when helping the heterogeneous groups found in a Community College. The
special groups that will be mentioned in this paper are only a sample and by no means exhaustive. The counselor must be charged with the responsibility of being sensitive to each individual seeking employment through the Placement Center. The problems encountered may range from the simple to the more complicated forms involved in student placement. If the Placement Counselor has the recommended qualifications of knowledge and experience, he is then able to offer the kind of professional skill necessary to deal with each individual student's need.
Chapter 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Since I could find very little recent literature dealing specifically with Placement Counseling, I have chosen to include the comments of those authors whose writings are similar to the subject of Placement Counseling but are, in fact, speaking of vocational counseling. The concept of a Placement Counselor or the function of a Placement Center is too new a concept to find in most of the libraries within the area.

However, even though the literature focused on vocational counseling, most authors were in agreement that administrative attitudes usually set the tone for the development of vocational and academic programs at the Community College. This singular privilege has both advantages and disadvantages. In the past, because most Community Colleges were basically extensions of post-high school development, the emphasis was on vocational training. With the growth of Community Colleges, needs assessments changed, swinging the pendulum of importance toward academic training for the four-year colleges and universities. This swing was personified in the attitude that Community Colleges were merely vocational training schools with fancy sounding names. (Adams, 1972) Therefore, more
stress was given to the academic curriculum and vocational training was played down. Certainly there is a meeting ground between these two extremes. If the Community College is to meet the needs of the total community, a balance must be struck between these two philosophies. Both academic and vocational training must be offered to the student. The cry of industry has awakened many administrators to the fact that there is now, more than ever, a need for well-trained vocationally oriented personnel. These skills can best be offered, economically, by the Community College. (Collins, 1967)

A report from Washington, D. C. maintains that many employers would prefer to hire a two-year graduate with a basic knowledge of a given area, than a four-year graduate. This preference is partly financial, partly practical. An industry can hire a two-year graduate in an 'entry-level trainee' position at a lower cost to them and in one year train that graduate so that he is on the same financial level as an entering four-year graduate. (Shingleton, 1977) What is more, the two-year graduate can be trained in a specific position that is unique to that company. The four-year graduate must also be trained as to specific policy when entering into an actual job site. The two-year graduate can therefore attain the same level of expertise and money in three years as the four-year
graduate can in four and a half years. The savings in time and training to industry is evident. Coupled with the fact that most industries encourage and even pay for the additional academic needs of their employees, the two-year graduate is obviously the preferred employee. It is therefore incumbent on the Community College administrators to look favorably on vocational programs and to take the responsibility for making these programs meaningful. (Miller, 1974)

It is also apparent that the unskilled job by definition requires no prolonged training, hence never was nor ever will be of central concern to the Community College. Nonetheless, the manpower function of the Community College remains to be performed, and when the position is made for a liberal education in preparation for adulthood, it in no way argues for or even implies exclusion of training for manpower. Work is a part of life; people find a large part of their identity in their jobs; work requires knowledge and wisdom, the application of which is as satisfying as the use of knowledge and wisdom is any other aspect of a person's being. Occupational training should be an integral part of the whole education. To date, the hard facts show that the Community Colleges have not responded to the phenomenal need for highly trained technicians nor have the colleges imbued the vocational student with a sense
of the dignity of work. (Collins, 1969)

The Community College is to the development of American education in the second half of the twentieth century what the high school was to the expansion of educational opportunity between 1900 and 1950. The Community College is in fact the most rapidly developing educational institution in the United States. Community Colleges, therefore, have assumed the enormously difficult task of educating highly diversified student bodies. It is obvious that these institutions must provide highly differentiated educational programs. It should be equally clear that if students are to choose wisely among many different courses and curricula leading to a great variety of future careers, they must be assisted in identifying their abilities and aptitudes, in assessing their deficiencies and their potentialities, and rationalizing their aspirations. (Anderson, 1969)

Here the student can revise his vocational and educational plans by bringing them more nearly in line with his reasonable expectations. Here he can establish his identity and at least begin to attain the independence that characterizes individualism and adulthood. The student is likely to do these things effectively only if the college recognizes the process of self-discovery as one of its principal purposes, and if the institution's personnel
services, with the help of the Placement Counselor, are adequate in scope and quality to give the student the necessary assistance he needs.

There is reason to believe that many administrators of Community Colleges do not understand the essential nature, scope, and functioning of Student Placement Services. Without administrative insight and support, these services will always be starved financially and they will fail to attain legitimacy. (Collins, 1967)

Many of the advantages of Community Colleges are at the same time their limitations. Local governance may put a heavy hand on freedom of teaching and discussion. As an extension of the community, the Community College may be especially vulnerable to all sorts of pressures, some constructive and some detrimental. The commendable desire of the Community College to serve the economy of its immediate area, for example, to provide trained technicians for local industries, may restrict the students vocational horizons, and while preparing them for immediate employment, fail to educate them for the occupational adaptability that the changing technology and economy make essential. Living at home may make it difficult for the young student to establish his identity and to attain independence without disruption of family ties. Such problems as these place unusual responsibilities on Community Colleges and
challenge them to provide student personnel services, including Placement services of the highest quality. (McConnell, 1969)

The white-collar workers numbers will increase in the next ten to fifteen years. Therefore, education at the post-high school level is becoming more important for those wishing to enter white-collar occupations. Because of rapid changes in technology, one can no longer expect to remain in a single occupation all of his life unless he is in a professional area - and maybe not even then. A twenty-year-old man can expect to change jobs six or seven times before retirement. This pattern applies to women as well as men, although in the case of women, the pattern of entry into the labor market differs in that a single woman will spend about forty years working continuously while married women are employed twenty-five to thirty years. Education is essential because it allows a person to switch from one specific job to another, provided he has a broad enough background to enable him to absorb training and retraining that will go with the changes in occupations. (Anderson, 1969)

It is interesting to note that only twenty to twenty-five percent of Community College students actually transfer to baccalaureate programs. There must be enough challenging, rewarding, even glamorous, occupations to absorb
the seventy-five to eighty percent who terminate their formal education at the Community College level. The imbalance between supply of and demand for professional service is creating a whole substratum of semi-professional occupations for which training can be obtained at Community Colleges.

Insight is to be gained from even brief focus on each of the occupations offered in the Community College. It will be obvious how truncated, incomplete and inadequate the preparation of each would be if the specialized training were not matched with general education. A final implication to be drawn from the array of service occupations pertain to enrollment patterns. Most of these jobs are as open to women as to men, do not have rigid age barriers, and lend themselves to part-time employment. The inclusion of a broad spectrum of vocational classes in the Community College open up the horizons for all the community. (Collins, 1967)

The term 'Community College' now in popular usage grew from the recognition of the changing function of the junior colleges. As recent as twenty years ago, a California study shows that the function of this post-high school environment was viewed quite differently from today's concept. This study states that the primary responsibility of public junior colleges in California was only
to prepare the individual for occupational competence. (State Steering Committee, 1957) With this goal rigidly stated, California proceeded to undertake a state-wide attack on the problem of the development of more effective programs of vocational educations.

This educational thrust remained intact for almost a decade. However, as the four-year institution's enrollment fees grew more costly, the search for economically feasible education was again researched. The result of this exploration found that most young people were not prepared financially or emotionally to go away to college. The public demand was that junior colleges fulfill an obligation to the community which supported it, and as a result, prompted the local administrators to re-evaluate the academic level of the junior college. The populations in junior colleges began to change; veterans began returning to the classroom, women who had previously been home-bound sought higher education, both vocational and academic. Senior citizens with more leisure time investigated ways of adding to their already vast storehouse of knowledge, and they gravitated toward the junior college for fulfillment. (Angel, 1964)

As populations in the junior colleges changed, so too, did the curriculums offered there. Today the public junior college is likely to be a Community College. This
implies a two-fold philosophy of education. First, it must meet the demands of higher education. Its academic standards must match those of the universities so that Community College credits may be transferable to the accredited 'senior' college, to which some of the college graduates will go to complete their undergraduate work. At least a portion of the classes and their grade standards will be dominated by the universities throughout the country.

Second, the junior college must provide terminal courses of a business and technical nature adequate for the needs of the community. This may, however, be a limited function of those junior colleges which are not adjacent to metropolitan areas, as well as those located in rural communities. For others, it will mean offering degree curricula encompassing almost everything from the preparation of nurses to business education. Higher education as a mark of the idle rich is a thing of the past; the curriculum of the junior college is more than ever almost entirely functional. (Thoroman, 1968)

Most Community College courses should be educational-vocational planned and should be made available to all students each semester. The courses should be intended to aid the student in planning his life and educating him for a vocation. The Community College should, therefore,
prepare its academic student for continuing college education, and it must provide its terminal student with suitable tools of a trade. (Miller, 1974)

With the change of populations and functions, the Community Colleges established extensive counseling services that tried to meet the needs of this growing and changing population. Programs were established that dealt with academic advisement and every effort was made to see that the transfer student was enrolled in the right courses for smooth transition from the two-year to the four-year institution. Personal guidance, as part of the counseling services, was added to aid these new student populations to adjust not only to an academic situation, but to help them realize new life roles. The public Community College opened the door to education to a vast cross section of people that here-to-fore would never have dreamed of going to college. For some it was easy to enter this world - for others, extremely difficult. The indications are that some parents fail to teach their children maturity or independence before they enter into college. For the returning woman the problem of satisfying her urge for educational improvement and the conflicts of her home and family may be partially solved by working with a personal counselor. Veteran's felt the pangs of re-adjustment to a changed world when they returned and
many sought the help of a counselor to help them make this adjustment. (Wrenn, 1951)

The third function of the counseling services involved vocational guidance. Since the primary force of the Community College was vocational training, it followed that the Community College would concern itself with vocational guidance. The guidance programs have changed from concerning themselves with only terminal students and have expanded to include vocational preparation for the transfer student as well.

Guidance or career centers have become an integral part of the Community College counseling scene. The counseling function in this regard remains at the futuristic level in most colleges today. A few colleges have begun to incorporate in their career guidance programs, classes that endeavor to teach the student the ability to look into personal values as related to future careers. Some classwork is devoted to resume and cover letter writing as well as job interviewing techniques. However, many career guidance programs are still lacking in providing needed information to the student. (Mitchell, 1951)
Chapter 3

THE PLACEMENT COUNSELOR

In two of the previously mentioned areas; academic and personal, counseling is stressed. In career-related needs only guidance is stressed. I maintain that with the inclusion of Placement counseling, the counseling services at Community Colleges will be complete.

The Placement Counselor is equipped to meet the employment needs of the diverse populations found in the Community College. The background which the Placement Counselor brings to the Placement Center is extensive. Special groups with unique employment needs should feel confident of the credentials of the Placement Counselor. There will be many different kinds of students coming into the Placement office, including advanced placement young students, senior citizens, handicapped, returning women, minorities, as well as all the age ranges from sixteen to eighty.

A look at some of the needs of particular populations will give the reader an indication of the kinds of skills Placement Counselors need to function well. The advanced-placement students are in college because they are academically accelerated. They are, of course, younger than the other students and therefore their employment
needs will be quite different from the mainstream college student. While it is true that these students have access to other employment agencies such as Youth Employment Services, they prefer to use the resources of the College Placement Center. These students will need to get work permits and the counselor must be sensitive to these student's special needs and the laws concerning students under the age of eighteen.

The handicapped student is another very special group of people who are fast becoming a part of the Community College population. The counselor must be fully aware of what limitations, if any, any one of these students might have. The Placement Counselor is particularly trained to encourage and advise these students, if necessary, as to what might be expected of employees in a work site situation. The counselor also acts as liason between employers and the handicapped student. It is assumed that the Placement Counselor will make every effort to contact employers and encourage them to hire the handicapped. The handicapped student may have some personal fears concerning employment, especially if applying for a first job. It is the Placement Counselor's job to allay these fears as much as possible. (Lofquist, 1957)

As mentioned earlier, the population of Community Colleges has not only grown, but changed. The average
The age of the Community College student is now twenty-seven years. This means that the student body is no longer comprised of eighteen and nineteen year olds, coming straight out of high school. The new student body is partly this young age group in addition to the middle-aged and senior citizens who are returning to school. While some of the students in their middle years are returning for purely academic reasons, some are in fact re-training for new careers. Our changing technology has forced many workers to return to the classroom for more training and academic background. The Placement Counselor must be able to relate to all age groups comfortably and must be able to refer them to employment positions that are realistic. (Hiestand, 1971)

Many women are returning to the Community College for a variety of reasons. Some wish to continue an education that was interrupted or never begun as a result of rearing a family. Other women are finding that employers are looking for both education and experience. To be a marketable employee, these women are coming back to school to document or improve previously acquired skills. (Guidepost, 1977) The break-up of a home usually results in the woman having to supplement the support of her family. Many of these women have never worked before and have no notion of job-getting skills. Separation, for whatever
reason, is not an easy life transition to make and many women find themselves in a state of limbo that needs direction. Rather than just finding this person a job, the counselor must direct them to pursuing a career as well. In addition, the separation sometimes causes a temporary loss of self-esteem and much psychological stress. Since they feel free to talk with the person who is trying to guide them in their job seeking abilities, it is only natural that they speak to the counselor about personal matters surrounding the circumstances of having to find a job. These students need the special qualifications that only professional Placement Counselors should have.

The question of equal opportunity for minority groups is being largely solved by legislative action. However, a minority entering into new fields of job opportunities is still faced with some old adjustment problems. The Placement Counselor can prepare such students in accepted job seeking skills that will enhance these students' chances of being hired and fully accepted by fellow-workers. The minority worker must learn to deal with 'white backlash'—the notion that the minority was hired only because of his ethnic background. Many minorities are still fearful to try for some positions because of this and they must be encouraged to persevere. A Placement Counselor can be of vital assistance to these workers entering the
job market. Although the law is clear, the actuality of the job search is another matter. Minority students must be taught to recognize and deal with subtle forms of prejudice. (Thoroman, 1968)
Chapter 4
STUDENT EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

A look at Community College populations and student employment needs will give an overall view of the kinds of employment inquiries that normally pass through a Placement Office as well as the information that must be readily available to the Placement Counselor. Since this population is very diverse, it is necessary to break these peoples into groups. The various groups will, of necessity, overlap.

The most popular need for student employment is the part-time, unskilled labor. Many students are coming to college for the very first time, have no marketable skills and yet they must find some kind of employment to take care of their minimal needs; gas, clothing, books and supplies. Most students in this category are still living at home and usually not burdened with the responsibility of having to pay rent or fend for themselves. This need provides an excellent opportunity for young people to explore various kinds of employment and 'try on' jobs. By working at a gas station or as a counter clerk, the student soon becomes aware of assets and limitations within himself. These jobs offer the student the opportunity to assess such qualities as reliability, perseverance and dependability. It is in conjunction with these unskilled jobs that the Placement
Counselor can help and advise the student in acquiring the needed skills that make for a good employee. The student soon learns whether or not he enjoys working with people, data or things. Working in such a job does not lock the student into a life role, but rather opens his horizons for further exploration. It is probably one of the best learning experiences the student will have in college.

Part-time skilled labor allows a student to pursue a known ability or to temporarily use an acquired one. There are many students who return to school to advance academically and who are quite skilled in a job. This student usually does not want to work full time, as the demands of full time schooling and full time work can be too great a burden. However, the needs that face the part-time unskilled worker are many times the same as face the skilled worker. Veterans are still a viable number at most Community Colleges and while the other partner can help the student financially to some degree, if married, it is often still necessary for this student to work part-time while in school. Very often, students with skills, working in a part-time position, stay with the job when graduating. This is again, an important work experience situation.

Summer employment offers the student opportunities not found in regular school term jobs. The student may wish to find out how he functions in other kinds of work.
The summer job provides this experience on a short term basis. Many students have fulfilled their commitment for a life career by working as a summer employee. Others have discovered that they were in the wrong career choice simply by working for one summer at a job they felt they would like to do. The Placement Counselor can be of invaluable assistance to the student seeking summer employment. The counselor will have access to all kinds of summer jobs available, the commitments needed, the salaries offered, and the general nature of the job. By counseling with the student, the Placement Counselor can direct the student into a position of his choice.

The night student population at Community Colleges sometimes number half the entire student body. This means that nearly half the students are involved during the day working in some capacity. As more and more people return to the campus, the need for full time employment grows. Many of these students opt to work full time and take some classes at night. Some are already employed, and for reasons that are innumerable, many students find themselves in the position of having to work full time during the day. With proper counseling, these students can find the world of work a pleasurable experience, rather than jumping into the first job offered.

An employer usually looks favorably upon a employee
who has the initiative to both work and go to school. Indeed, many employers encourage their employees to do just that by helping pay for books and supplies at the Community College level and by helping pay tuition at the four-year schools. Since the full time job demands more of the student's time and energy, these students are usually only part-time students. Some of the more energetic accomplish both. It is important therefore, that the full time job must be one in which the student is fulfilled both financially and psychologically. Working in a job that is hateful can be a drain emotionally and intellectually. The Placement Counselor can direct students who must work full time while in college, to jobs that will be valuable to them and hopefully allow for growth fulfillment. Most full time jobs call for skills that the student can obtain in college or they have the opportunity to upgrade some previously acquired skill. (Bennett, 1952)

Community Colleges are attracting many older students as more and more retired people return to the classroom. The inclusion of an older population on the campus gives the Community College an unique look. The classroom is filled with people from the age of sixteen to seventy-five or more. Many of these older people also look for part-time employment to supplement their social security or retirement benefits. They usually choose not to work full
time and confine their employment seeking to part-time or temporary positions. Many, of course, are highly skilled, but do not wish to work within their skill limitations. Many like to tutor other students and because they may have extensive backgrounds, are perfect for this kind of position. The Placement Counselor must search with these older people for good jobs that will be of benefit both for them and the employer. Employers are realizing the added benefits to them of using this untapped resource. (Angel, 1964)

Some older students wish to re-train for jobs that they did not have time to become involved with when they were younger. Now they have the freedom of time and money to pursue this activity. A job for most of these students is not a necessity, but rather a challenge and a joy. It is important for the Placement Counselor to be aware of any limitations on time and physical ability of these students, so that they can be successfully integrated into the working community. (Hiestand, 1971)

The 're-entry woman' is the subject of recent articles when discussing the changing populations at Community Colleges. Now, however, the re-entry person is not exclusively female. Many students in their middle years are returning to the classroom for training and a job at the end of that training is their goal. From an occupational
point of view, the tendency was to see the middle years as a plateau, on the supposition that most people have attained their ambitions or have settled for less success than they had anticipated. But we live in a dynamic and rapidly changing society and economy. Within a period as short as a decade, substantial changes have occurred in the attractiveness of particular fields or work, both to those already in them and to those who might choose to enter them. Particular companies and public organizations wax and wane, and with them the attractiveness of particular jobs. Moreover, rapid changes take place in the content and working methods in the professions and management. This raises the specter of technological obsolescence. When this happens in an economy, people return to school. (Hiestand, 1971)

It should be noted that significant numbers of persons are making substantial changes in the natures of their careers during the middle years. Full time study nearly always represents a significant break with one's past work. It also presumably leads to the acquisition of major skills permitting one or more of several different significant changes in the nature of a person's career. First, education may enable the student to enter a professional field for the first time. Second, full time study may enable a person to make a substantial upward movement within a particular professional or career field. Third, full time
study may enable a person to enter a different, perhaps newly emerging area of specialization within the general field in which the student was previously engaged. Finally, full time study at middle age may enable a person who is in one profession to enter into a different profession. These four possibilities are four ways of changing the nature of career choices through education. (Hiestand, 1971)

There has been a rapid growth in the demand for more formal means to acquire skills in middle age and the Community College is answering that demand. Middle-aged people increasingly have options which were not formerly available to middle-aged people as a group and sometimes not available to them as individuals when they were young. Most night classes at the Community College are filled with people in their middle years, seeking, learning and exploring career options. The Placement Counselor is charged with providing job counseling and information for the fulfillment of these students. (Angel, 1964)

As most Community Colleges are commuter colleges, the difficulties facing the handicapped student are numerous. Administrators are responding to these difficulties and with the help of special funding, providing these students with access to the colleges. Physical barriers are being removed so the handicapped can function independently
within the college framework. The handicapped are seeking higher education at the Community College as a result of this. Since these students are not simply in school to idle away their time, but to learn skills and gain some education that will hopefully allow them to become more financially independent as well, the Placement Counselor is charged with establishing communication with employers in the areas surrounding the college.

It is sometimes a big step for a handicapped person to start a college education and an even bigger step, psychologically to start working. Some handicapped students never dreamed that they would have that opportunity. The thought of working with non-handicapped people causes many trained handicapped people to never look for a job. This fear must be dealt with by the Placement Counselor and the handicapped person as early as possible when returning to or starting college. Employers must be educated about and encouraged to hire the handicapped. The Placement Counselor can be the best liaison for these students. Many handicapped students are highly trained, but are no longer able to work in their previous occupations. These people must be guided into new jobs that are satisfying as well as rewarding. (Lofquist, 1957)

Since under twenty percent of Community College students transfer directly from the two-year college to the
four-year colleges, the other eighty percent need to be placed into jobs. The task of placing students who have a designated major is easier for the Placement Counselor. It is also helpful if the student's major is in a technical area such as computer science, business, marketing, or electronics. These students usually have some idea as to where they want to work and contacts can be made to these employers well in advance of graduation.

The non-majors present a more difficult picture. These students can be loosely called the 'liberal arts major'. Convincing employers that this student is sometimes more adaptable than a locked-in major is difficult. The chore of the Placement Counselor becomes mainly the task of doing job development. Communication with the employers throughout the year makes this task easier. It is important to be familiar with many of the personnel directors at various companies, so that the lines of communication are always open.

Placement files, including grades, letters of recommendations, and personal data facilitate the task of the Placement Counselor. Students will need to spend a great deal of time with the Placement Counselor, so that he can truly be of assistance to that student. Special sessions should be arranged well in advance of graduation for his guidance and direction. The Placement Counselor has a
world of information at his fingertips and the graduating student should take advantage of this information.
Chapter 5

PLACEMENT CENTERS - PHILOSOPHY AND FACILITY

Most Community College educators are in agreement that the college owes more to its clientele, both students and the lay community, than strictly classroom preparation for life. Most educators agree that guidance and counseling services are indispensable if the school is concerned with the vocational and academic future of the student. Placement is the capstone of all the advisory services provided the student through his school life and is the culminating and final service within the province of the college.

There is very little opposition among educators to the idea of placement. This philosophy should, however, come from the top - the Board of Trustees and the District Administration. The word 'placement' has about it the sound of finality, as though a spot had been discovered and a fence erected around it for the individual, the feeling of a static rather than a dynamic process. While placement may be considered one of the culminating activities of personnel services in the Community College, it is so tied with and related to other aspects of education, curricular as well as guidance services, that job placement can be regarded as only one, and by no means the most
important, function of this office.

Placement is not merely the uniting of job and worker, the finding of square pegs for square holes. The result of such an over-simplification of the role of college placement would be to ignore the fact that placement is an integral part of a comprehensive pattern of guidance. (Mohs, Unpublished)

If the function of a placement center is limited merely to that of job-getting and job-referral activities, such a service should more properly be labeled an employment office. Placement is many things, but above all the hard core of the service is vocational guidance, even though its satellite activities may at times tend to eclipse this fundamental reason for existence.

Instructors are usually grateful that the function of placement is run from one centralized place. Since there usually exists a close relationship between student and instructor, the instructor sometimes finds himself in the embarrassing position of having to recommend one student over another. It is fruitful, therefore, to have an objective person, such as the Placement Counselor, assume this responsibility. Surely, the instructor can and does recommend many students for positions and the working relationship between instructors and the Placement Counselor should be a close one. Most instructors welcome the assis-
tance of the Placement Counselor in finding positions for their students.

Students should be encouraged to use the Placement Office on a drop-in basis. A warm, friendly concerned atmosphere is the best environment to induce students to use the facility. Certainly appointments for special problems can and should be made, but by and large, the majority of students welcome the opportunity to look for work in their free time and not under the pressure of having an appointment. A facility designed to help, not hassle, a student is recommended. Keeping the paperwork that must be done to a minimum is a time saver for both the student and the Placement Counselor.

Ideally, the Placement Office should be designed into the initial plans for a Community College. Since that is usually not the case, however, when the college chooses to incorporate the services of a Placement Office, space should be allotted adequately. The closet form of Placement Office simply will not work. Room should be allowed for the student to browse freely at the many materials available. A job board should be clearly posted and access to that board available to all students. Chairs or couches should be available for the perusal of material and for waiting to speak with the Placement Counselor or an interviewer. A separate room for private interviews
is imperative. Many problems are discussed when applying for a job and privacy is essential. This private room is also used by the Placement Counselor when visiting employers come to discuss their employment needs.

A convenient work room is also necessary. Material duplication is an integral part of the placement process and work space for this should be provided. Flyers may need to be reproduced or designed to be distributed to the students. I would recommend one xerox machine, one ditto machine and one stencil duplicating machine. The storage of all paper necessary to the Placement Office would, of course, be stored in this room.

Minimally then, a Placement Center should have a large open room for the students to look at materials and to wait, at least one private room for interviewing, one office and one work room. Depending upon the size of the staff, the number of rooms would increase proportionally.

Adequate file and storage space for materials to be accessible to students is also necessary. Bookshelves for books and pamphlets of interest should be neatly displayed and easy for the student to use. The Placement Center should be a warm and attractive place, free from the cold impersonality found in so many school offices.
Chapter 6

PLACEMENT CENTER STAFF

The ideal Placement Center staff would consist of the following: A Placement Director, a Placement Counselor, a Job Developer, an Interviewer and a Receptionist who would be assisted by Student Help.

The Placement Director would be responsible for the entire functioning of the placement services on the campus. It is essential that this person have direct communication with administration, sit on advisory committees involving curriculum and it would be helpful if the Placement Director had an academic background in Counseling. It is the responsibility of the Placement Director to educate the administration to the needs of the Placement Center so that financing will not become a problem.

The Placement Counselor must have a background in counseling. In addition, the Placement Counselor should be familiar with job interviewing techniques, resume and cover letter writing, assertive training and able to communicate well with the complex populations of a Community College. The Placement Counselor must be able to coordinate with the Placement Director, the Job Developer, the instructors and the students, all the placement programs on campus. The Placement Counselor must be able to
deal with the problems in the real world of work.

The Job Developer's main task is to communicate with all local employers to discuss job openings. It is quite essential that this person understand the complete nature of the community College population, including the handicapped, the re-entry person, the senior citizen, the advanced placement student as well as the full and part-time needs of the vast majority of students. The Job Developer works closely with the community at large and should develop job opportunities for the students. The Job Developer also recommends curriculum changes to the Placement Director from the feed-back given him by the employers.

The Placement Interviewer is responsible for interviewing students and capable of referring those students who do not need counseling. This person would ideally have some background in personnel work and a good working knowledge of local employment needs in the community.

The Receptionist is responsible for scheduling the students for counseling interviews, responding to the employer's needs made available by phone or in person, as well as all the normal office functions. Since this person is the first contact that employers and students may have with the Placement Center, it is essential that the Receptionist be warm and personable.
Student Helpers can not only assist in practical aspects of peer counseling duties, but routine filing, errand running and message delivery as well as some typing and cataloging of routine materials. Students working in a Placement Center are often exposed to the real picture of getting and holding a job. This exposure is a tremendous learning experience for these students. Students who are considering a career in management, counseling, or business are ideal people to hire into these positions.
SUMMARY

The indications are that, with a rapidly expanding population and changing technology, the demands for Placement Counseling services in the Community College will continue to increase. If these ever-increasing needs are to be met, several apparent changes must take place.

First, counselor education institutions must be expanded and continued training provided to meet the special demands of the counselees. Second, the inclusion and expansion of Placement Counseling services in all institutions of higher learning, particularly the Community Colleges, will be necessary. Third, it is important that Placement Counseling be extended beyond the usual educational and vocational counseling previously given to a narrow age range. Fourth, Placement Counseling services must be well coordinated with other student personnel services. And fifth, the services of the Placement Center must be interpreted fully to the faculty, the parents, and the community.

In the final analysis, the indications are that a transition to expanded adult Placement Counseling will be accomplished — but with some time lag. The critical period is the present, since there are a limited number of adequately trained Placement Counselors. The past two
decades have made the adult population aware of both the need and the facilities for Placement Counseling. They demand it more and more.

The availability of such services must be expanded as rapidly as possible. Any war on poverty must be largely dependent on the short and long-range usefulness of the vocational choice. Training can be undertaken only after that choice has been made and tested. Only by a concerted effort to meet the increasing need will the problems of Placement Counseling services be adequately solved.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


