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Succeeding Generations: Inspiring Futures for All

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This paper represents the views and ideas of the authors and its publication has been supported by the Guidance Council. Readers are encouraged to provide responses including views on how best to stimulate debate and help shape future visions for career guidance. Send responses to: cegsenquiry@derby.ac.uk.

The authors also wish to kindly acknowledge the initial support provided in Spring 2002 by Dr Chris Brookes (Chief Executive), and Board members from the Lifelong Learning Foundation, Manchester. The Foundation commends this paper as a stimulus for further original and radical debate on a new vision for inspiring futures for all.



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This will involve:

New processes, tools and techniques

Creative, exciting and inter-active exercises, games, stories, and diagnostic tools which empower individuals to take greater responsibility and control in their lives.

New name, language and image

Breaking away from the traditional image and process language used of careers information, advice and guidance to a more outcome benefits language which can be easily understood and becomes attractive to everyday users.

New access and delivery modes

Easily recognisable physical and virtual outlets to stimulate and foster life development activities through one-to-one support, co-counselling, small group work, mass workshops and open supported learning.

New skills mix

Building a broader network of generic and specialist advisers, intermediaries and life coaches who inspire and motivate others.

New media

Pioneering life development work within the popular media, including television, internet, e-learning and the radio, harnessing role models to combine inspiration, education and entertainment.

New evidence-base

A coherent framework for gathering evidence, cost benefits, evaluating impact, and live labour market intelligence for all user groups.

New collaborative ventures

New ways of supporting the process, including ICT; workplace career discussions; community think tanks; personal development dimensions within new business start-ups; career brokerages for geographical clusters of small businesses; and membership of life development projects, clubs and unions.

Funding and resources

Research into the economic benefits of guidance shows net gains in retention, participation and achievement levels which could be further increased by greater investment in dynamic guidance services, however, the issue of level and cost of services is yet to be fully determined by policy-makers. On a positive note, recent investments in IAG partnerships⁶ and workforce development initiatives provide an ideal platform for future innovation and evidence-based research. A radical overhaul of current systems is not required but significant added-value from current partnerships could be achieved by:

⁶ In March 2001, the Government announced a £5 million investment in order to “pilot the delivery of free, in depth guidance services to help the most disadvantaged in our communities”. Twenty adult guidance pilots were established.

In today’s society individual lifestyles and the economy are so variable that it could seem foolish to try to predict accurately the future structure and focus of career guidance services in the UK. However, over the next decade, existing career guidance provision will have to be adapted to meet the ever changing needs of individuals, local communities and the UK/global economy. This paper sets out a *vision* for career guidance in the future and invites the reader to reflect on the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. As a starting point, try to answer the six key questions below.

Challenge

- 1. Do you know how many skills you actually have?**
- 2. Out of the five hundred skills you currently have, do you know which five you are most passionate about using?**
- 3. Are you maximising these skills in a place that really inspires you everyday?**
- 4. Are you combining these for a purpose that really motivates you?**
- 5. Are you creating an inspiring future for yourself?**
- 6. Are you able to access relevant information, advice and guidance which equips you with the skills and confidence to sustain your desired lifestyle?**

To be globally competitive nation, our main challenge is for each of us to answer YES to all six questions.

Vision

To create a UK commitment to investing in career guidance provision that inspires and enables individuals to take personal responsibility in finding their unique talents, passions and roles in life, from an early age, and continuously improving their impact on society, personal fulfilment and overall quality of life.

In essence, future generations should be able to answer ‘yes’ to the six questions above and thus achieve personal success for themselves and the UK economy. This individual-centred approach will focus on equipping *all* individuals with the personal capacity, confidence and support to overcome their unique challenges and circumstances. The main aim is to create positive effects and changes that provide (i) personal fulfilment and achievement, (ii) success in the work place and (iii) benefits for the individual and UK economy.

Threats

- lack of leadership, future vision, creativity and energy among the key stakeholders;
- lack of public understanding of career guidance due to poor image and/or lack of evidence to show real benefits and impact;
- fragmented and short-term funding with silo delivery - dealing with individuals in a 'chopped up way' means that their needs are seldom fully met;
- bureaucracy and target overload leading to stifling of innovation and 'risk taking';
- employer apathy towards investing in harnessing and maximising their human assets, particularly in small businesses;
- government policy developments in youth and adult guidance currently separated;
- multiplicity of professional associations and lack of clear leadership and responsibility for a future vision and strategy.

Underpinning this landscape is a general failure, and reluctance by many people and institutions, to fully reflect on career development and maximising opportunities. Greater attention needs to be given to improving each individual's level of understanding on the pace and nature of change, and how they can become better equipped to respond. In too many cases, initial education has failed to prepare and equip the majority of people to evaluate critically their current and future goals. Moreover, government policy-makers responsible for financing and developing career guidance policy are often those least touched by these factors and have least understanding of their impact on others' needs as well as being better placed than most to find support for themselves if they do need it.

Our analysis highlights a fragmentation of existing structures, policies, funding, delivery, and lack of vision for the future. While there are many positive examples of good and innovative practice to be found throughout the UK, there is no guarantee that every individual can have access to a pro-active career development service that fosters personal well-being, creativity, self-sufficiency and inspiration. With health, factors related to diet, fitness, and well-person checks are promoted for all. Similarly, the real challenge becomes a transformation of existing adult information, advice and guidance services in the UK so that individuals can begin to experience 'career development checks' as an essential part of everyday life, thus ensuring success for themselves and future generations. This process should be wholly inclusive and branded in such a way to excite, energise and engage every individual and employer.

A new agenda

This new approach would be both groundbreaking in developing the country's human assets and positioning the UK at the forefront of the global market economy. It moves away from a 'deficit' model for some to a 'developmental' model for all, where both individuals and organisations recognise and realise bottom-line benefits, thus ensuring economic success and social inclusiveness.

The real solution is enabling both individuals and organisations jointly to find new ways of investing in their future, creating positive outcomes for all (*see diagram1*).

New provision will be:

Inspiring

- By energising individuals, organisations, and communities to maximise their potential.

Integral

- By becoming central within the design, development and delivery of all learning frameworks and workforce development plans.

Inclusive

- By supporting all individuals at every stage of their life and career experience (through both discrete and integrated provision) to harness and maximise their potential.

Innovative

- By developing fresh, exciting and pioneering approaches to learning, work and personal development.

Involving

- By providing responsive solutions anytime, any place, anywhere.

Intelligent

- By reviewing and analysing career trends and their personal, social, cultural and economic implications.

Impacting

- By providing rigorous evidence of the benefits of career guidance to individuals, organisations and policy-makers.

In the next five years the development of these new services will result in:

- Companies becoming more globally competitive through enhanced utilisation and retention of their most important asset – *their people*.
- Public service organisations improving their effectiveness and efficiency through their most important asset – *their people*.
- Learning institutions becoming anticipatory and accountable to – *their people*.
- Individuals being more self-sufficient, resilient to change and enterprising, thus transforming and creating vibrant communities - *our people*.

Foreword

You wouldn't be reading this paper unless you were coming to debate the future of career guidance with an open and enquiring mind. Welcome! The advancement of career guidance in the 21st century depends entirely on the willingness of practitioners, academics and policy-makers to question long-held views and to consider new paradigms. We may not find all the answers ourselves but our readiness to push the boundaries will stimulate others' creativity and lead to the development of fresh ideas and concepts. The Guidance Council, on behalf of career guidance clients, exhorts you to engage this challenge. This paper is a credit to its writers; they may have started a transformation in the career guidance world and we can't let that opportunity slip away.

Cathy Bereznicki
Chief Executive, the Guidance Council

The Centre for Guidance Studies (CeGS) was created in 1998 by the University of Derby and five careers service companies (the Careers Consortium (East Midlands) Ltd.). The Centre aims to bridge the gap between guidance theory and practice. It supports and connects guidance practitioners, policy-makers and researchers through research activities and learning opportunities; and by providing access to resources related to guidance and lifelong learning.

Further copies of this paper are available from the Centre for Guidance Studies or can be downloaded from the CeGS website at www.derby.ac.uk/cegs

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ISBN 0 9014 3781 6
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- improved branding and marketing of the bottom-line benefits;
- improved product development to meet business as well as individual needs;
- enhanced capacity-building to ensure employers, learning providers and the wider community are equipped with enhanced life-development skills.

The next step

In consultation and partnership with policy makers, practitioners, managers and the research community we are committed to:

- Establishing a common vision and agenda for action to galvanise a fragmented profession and sector.
- Fostering a culture of personal continuous development which is recognised and valued by all individuals, employers and policy-makers and integrated within the design and delivery of learning and workforce initiatives.
- New models and ways of thinking about career guidance provision in the UK and associated skills and training requirements.
- New language and name!

We need others to work towards creating a new vision. Those who are committed to:

- Exploring the concept of every individual in the UK having ready access, at any stage in their life, to career provision which enables them to create their own life investment plan and update this on a regular basis.
- Creating a leading edge 'careers factory' to invent world class pioneering processes to inspire individuals to take control of their lives using new and exciting media.
- Generating fresh and exciting tools and techniques that enable individuals to create personalised Career Investment Plans at every stage in their life.
- Developing flagship demonstration centres to pilot and cascade new models of delivery.
- Designing an evidence-based framework, with more rigorous impact measurement of guidance interventions.
- We all have a part to play in shaping and delivering a new vision and thus creating a 'can-do' and 'must-do' culture. **The next step is to agree our own priorities for action.**

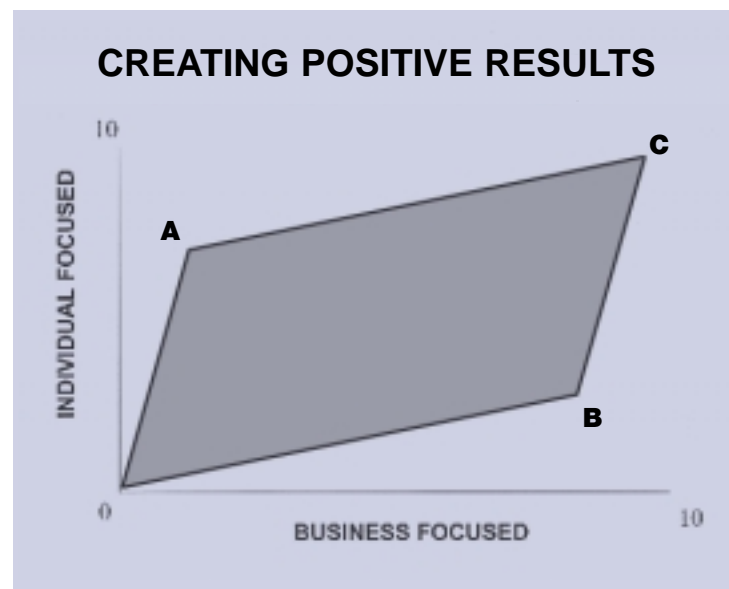


Diagram 1

At present, information, advice and guidance services in the UK score higher on targeting individual needs and lower on targeting business needs (*refer to position A*). From a UK business perspective most companies score higher on business growth but lower on individual achievement and personal success (*refer to position B*). The key aim is to drive new and exciting initiatives that will achieve positive results for all parties (*refer to position C*).

Process

A new framework is proposed which is underpinned by three key elements:

- linking career and personal development with community, business and economic growth to enhance individual’s quality of life and impact on society;
- moving from a ‘deficit model’ of guidance for some to a ‘development process’ for all, integrated within learning and work;
- delivering on-going information and support services which inspire individuals and organisations to invest in their futures.

New services¹ will equip individuals with the skills, confidence and motivation to create and continually grow their own unique career development plans for improved ‘quality of life’ combining; financial management, work/life balance, employability, relationships, role in the community and self-sufficiency. New frameworks will need to be designed to incorporate multi-generational provision for young, middle and older age groups, with the added benefits of addressing low-motivation, low-skill, low-wage, low-self confidence and low-aspiration issues. These approaches should enable individuals to reflect on their contribution to community, business and economic growth and create new opportunities to maximise their potential.

¹ Within the framework, services describe both ‘discrete’ and ‘integrated’ provision for young, middle and older age groups i.e. it is not a ‘one-size fits all’ model.

Future possibilities

Building on current best practice, our challenge as a nation is to create all-age multi-generational services that provide generalist and specialist coaching, role models, creative ways of thinking, career and personal development checks, life and financial management, risk-taking, self-reliance, and self esteem. A model designed to motivate and encourage personal and economic growth is illustrated below:

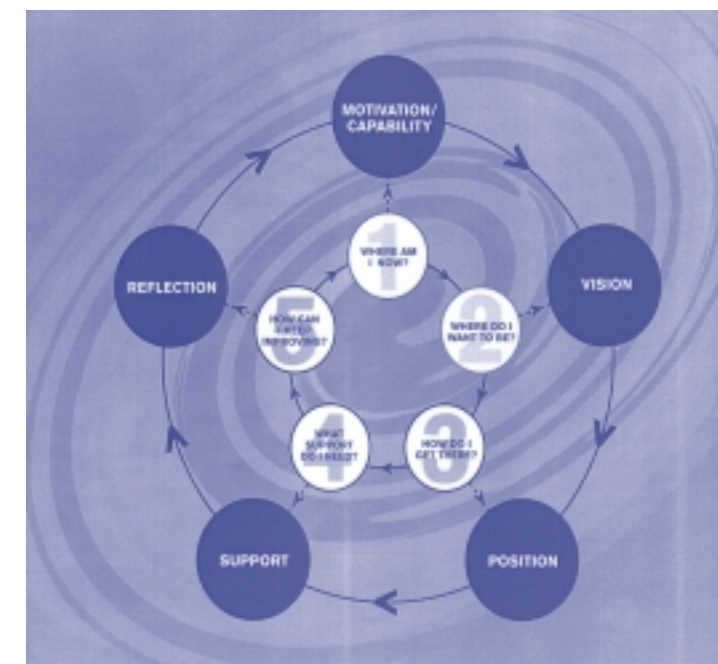


Diagram 2

1. **Motivation and capability:** services designed to stimulate awareness of the bottom-line benefits of life development.
2. **Vision:** services designed to equip individuals and businesses to identify and critically assess their future plans.
3. **Position:** services designed to empower both parties and help create a win:win:win situation.
4. **Support:** services designed to work in closer partnership with employer and learning providers to create new opportunities and support.
5. **Reflection:** services designed to continually evaluate, sustain and measure the impact of guidance interventions.

This personalised process will be facilitated by a new professional cadre of career development specialists; knowledge agents; labour market specialists; personal coaches; and mentors working within formal and informal networks.

Delivering Career Provision for All

Snapshot of current information, advice and guidance arrangements in the UK

So why is high quality career guidance provision essential?

Evidence from the Treasury² states that UK productivity, however measured, lags behind that of other major industrialised countries. The labour productivity gap with the US was 45 per cent in 1999, that with France was 18 per cent and that with Germany 11 per cent. The challenge for the Government is to achieve its long-term economic ambition to have a faster rise in productivity than its main competitors. Further evidence highlights a persistent under-performance of the UK economy relative to others, in terms of productivity; and the persistent failure of UK society to raise aspirations (economic, social, educational and cultural) among all its members. Within the UK there are broad disparities between individuals' potential and income as evidenced by the most prosperous region being 30% better than national average household income compared with the least prosperous being 25% worse than that average. Education and social policy objectives focus on extending opportunities and raising aspirations³. Ministers and policy-makers recognise that too many people have been turned off by their experience in education. 'This not only affects their personal health, prosperity and well-being; it also damages the nations competitiveness'. (DfES, 2003, p.6).

The pattern of individual working lives has changed. Individuals now have to relate their experiences to a series of jobs/careers rather than the traditional-linear 'job for life'; this is already well documented, as is the move towards portfolio working. *The advent of longer life expectancy*, coupled with the reality of funding increased life expectancy through pensions and benefits, has recently emerged in the UK as a significant issue for present and future generations⁴. It is now likely that many will need income derived from employment beyond the current main retirement ages of mid-50s to mid 60s. Decisions on, and preparation for, third age careers will become an even higher priority for individuals and the UK economy. *The role of information communication technologies (ICT)* in shaping and providing information and support services will assume growing importance throughout the next decade. *Changes in higher education funding and student top-up fees* will focus individuals' attention on rewards, financial investments and expected returns upon entry to the labour market⁵.

Over the next decade at the heart of government policies lies the need for individual:

- self-sufficiency;
- community capacity building; and
- increased economic success.

Central to this is a process that balances personal fulfilment with contribution to society, ensuring individuals utilise their talents and passions to add-value and make maximum impact on the economy.

² DTI (2001) Productivity in the UK: The Evidence and the Government's Approach, London:HMSO.

³ DfES (2003) 14-19: Opportunities and Excellence. DfES White Paper, London:HMSO.

⁴ Ford.G. (2003) Challenging Age: Information, Advice & Guidance for Older Age Groups, DfES: Sheffield.

⁵ Laurer, C. (2002) Enrolments in Higher Education: Do economic incentives matter? *Education & Training*. Vol.44, no.41. pp.179-185.

Is the current model of information, advice and guidance service fit to support this process in the 21st century?

A review of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the sector suggests:

Key strengths

- enhanced quality standards in guidance at the leading-edge on a national and global basis;
- professional skills and expertise readily available;
- established structures and local partnerships;
- willingness to deliver better services and increase the impact of guidance;
- services highly rated by many adults who have engaged in the process, although there is insufficient evidence of real impact and returns on investment.

Key weaknesses

- deficit model whereby individuals use services mostly when they have a problem or are perceived by others as having a problem;
- a potentially outdated model of guidance which has lost its distinctive features;
- services offered are often constrained by funding structures and differing client target groups, resulting in an inconsistent approach to delivering services;
- a lack of integration within learning and workforce development leading to a dysfunctional 'silo' approach;
- one-off interventions rather than part of a continuous cycle of planning life development;
- low public awareness of the benefits of using high quality guidance services and how best to access existing provision;
- limited sharing of good and interesting practice with clear visions for the future delivery of services;
- lack of rigorous research and evidence to show cause and effect;
- absence of, or limited evidence of, guidance provision in the workplace.

Opportunities

- supporting increased participation and achievement in learning for all;
- linking in with the government's and employers' workforce development agendas;
- finding more effective and efficient ways of measuring the 'hard' and 'soft' outcomes of guidance;
- integrating community developments and initiatives with common local, regional and national frameworks;
- building on inspiring practice and partnerships, and finding new ways of working together;
- constructing new frameworks and systems to support the development and delivery of guidance services for all;
- developing a positive and high impact life development service for all.

² DTI (2001) Productivity in the UK: The Evidence and the Government's Approach, London:HMSO.

³ DfES (2003) 14-19: Opportunities and Excellence. DfES White Paper, London:HMSO.

⁴ Ford.G. (2003) Challenging Age: Information, Advice & Guidance for Older Age Groups, DfES: Sheffield.

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