



Career Development, Employment, and Disability in Employment: A comprehensive Resource for Rehabilitation Professionals

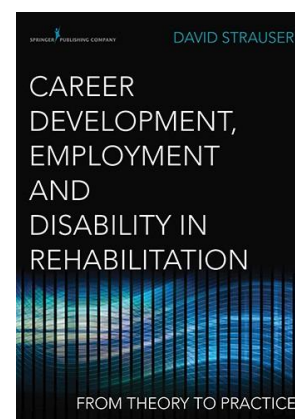
David Strauser

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Career development theory and employment are often treated as two separated entities, as if the two concepts did not share total interconnectedness. Hence, these concepts seldom appear in the same textbook together. This book edited by Strauser (2014) provides a marriage of the two concepts, as the chapters enlighten the reader with theory and principle surrounding career development, employment contextual information, and the role disability plays.

The preface begins by Strauser telling readers about his reinvigorated interest in the centrality of work for all individuals, particularly for people with disabilities. After years of repeatedly explaining that his research examines career development and employment of people with disabilities, he admitted to feeling insecure about his research because of others' lack of interest or understanding. His renewed interest was spurred by the far-reaching economic woes inflicted upon people of every socioeconomic status by the Great Recession, as unemployment and poverty rates climbed. He also shares about an individual he knows who was laid off in the midst of the Great Recession and provides specific examples of how this individual decompensated tremendously. These engaging personal accounts underscore the role of work in a way that is salient to readers and share how rewarding Strauser's work has been for him in hopes that other rehabilitation professionals

may experience the same satisfaction. The preface sets the tone for what follows: a comprehensive combination of both theoretical background and practical information for rehabilitation professionals.

Part I provides an overview of the major constructs connected to career development theory, including work centrality, disability prevalence, Ticket to Work, and chronic poverty and disability. Chapter 1 illuminates how work is central to all human interactions, and will continue to play such an important role across the lifespan into the foreseeable future because of the ways in work fulfills basic human needs for survival, power, social connection, self-determination, and well-being. How and why work is central work centrality explained through the lens of the psychology of work frame work. Chapter 2 delves into the diverse economic outcomes people with disabilities experience and the economic disparities between people with and without disabilities, providing several pages of tables of facts and figures about disability and employment. While other books briefly mention the economic outlook and poverty rate of people with disabilities, this book dedicates two chapters (Chapters 2 and 4) to exploring the socioeconomic experience of people with disabilities. These two chapters provide valuable insight and perspective that otherwise might be difficult for fledgling rehabilitation professionals to conceptualize. Chapter 3 reviews national legislation pertinent to employment of people with disabilities with particular emphasis on the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program of Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act (TWWIIA). This chapter gives insight on what this legislation intended and what it has looked like in practice, with some challenges commonly experienced in the field. A case example of how TWWIIA works in Kentucky is also provided. Chapter 4 explains the causal relationship between chronic poverty and disability and cites some of the

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negative effects poverty has on career development and health. Most importantly, readers are reminded that most career development theories assume individuals have equal access to careers without limitation.

Part II reviews the theoretical foundations that are the underpinning for career development theory. Chapter 5 takes a psychology-oriented approach to evaluating personality and its role in vocational choice and notes the value of assessing personality. While this approach may provide additional information relevant to vocational choice, it is a departure from the traditional approach taken by rehabilitation professionals that may not be warmly received by all rehabilitation professionals. The text continues with explaining career development and work development theories in Chapter 6. Some of the breadth of this text is at the expense of inclusion of other career development theories that would have added to the readers' wealth of knowledge, such as Social Learning Theories by Bandura (1977) and Krumboltz (1976). The role of self-efficacy and outcome expectations in vocational choice is discussed in chapter 7. Chapter 8 provides an effective case example that offers readers an opportunity to practice using the Career Thoughts Inventory. Chapter 9 concisely summarizes different measures of job satisfaction. Chapter 10 explicates the fundamentals of impression management, which provides useful considerations for rehabilitation professionals charged with teaching job preparation, wherein polishing soft skills is often neglected.

The text shifts from overview and theory to tools and techniques used by rehabilitation professionals. Part III provides methodological recommendations for providing employment services, such as how to utilize labor market information and transferrable skills analyses. Chapter 11 introduces vocational evaluation and revisits the Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment, which is also discussed in Chapter 6. The brief overview of the vocational evaluation process provided does not give readers enough information to perform vocational evaluation, but provides ample perspective of the diverse ways vocational evaluation is performed. The book continues in Chapter 12 with information on how rehabilitation professionals may understand and evaluate the constructs of work values and motivation. Chapter 13 introduces different types of vocational interest inventories to the reader, including commonly used tools like the Self-Directed Search and O*Net Interest Profiler Short Form. Readers are given a multitude of websites where they may turn for labor market information, along with recommendations on how to utilize such information. Chapter 15 offers information about different computer-based vocational exploration tools, which are invaluable for rehabilitation professionals and clients alike, as vocational guidance becomes increasingly technology driven. Like the chapter on vocational evaluation, chapter 16 provides a brief overview on the diverse methods used to conduct work analysis.

The book moves forward a forensic focus of tools and techniques to clinical interventions rehabilitation professionals

must apply when working with people with disabilities in Part IV. Chapter 17 outlines the theoretical foundations of career counseling with reference to the stages of change model. Chapter 18 does an excellent job of relaying trends impacting job development, providing suggestions on how readers can build employer relationships, advising readers how they may understand job seekers, and giving tips for job placement. Overall, this chapter provides an exceedingly helpful job development and job placement guide. A history and explanation of the evolution of supported employment is provided in chapter 19, which transitions well into the next section's emphasis on serving special populations in a variety of settings.

The final section, Part V, begins with an explanation of the state-federal rehabilitation program, including the population it serves, the service delivery process, and a description of the types of services provided, in Chapter 20. Some criticisms of the state-federal system are offered, with emphasis on concern around serving clients with psychiatric disabilities. These criticisms are brief and offer little explanation of the larger systemic issues faced by the state-federal program. Chapter 21 describes the private sector in vocational rehabilitation. Workers' compensation is the focus of this chapter, with some explanation of rehabilitation professionals' work as life care planners and vocational experts. However, ADA compliance, a burgeoning sector in the private practice, is not mentioned. Next, the book explains the school-to-work transition for young adults. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is briefly explained, along with the different activities rehabilitation professionals may perform during the transition process. The next four chapters focus on serving special populations: youth and adults with psychiatric disabilities (Chapter 23), people with physical disabilities (Chapter 24), women with disabilities (Chapter 25), and people of color with disabilities (Chapter 26). For each of these chapters, readers are provided with contextual information about the lived experience of these groups of people, challenges faced in career development, and recommendations for practice.

Overall this book provides a clear retrospective of theory and context of career development married with practice. Book in hand, readers find themselves with an excellent resource guide that offers much more than theoretical conversations about career development and employment. Rather, it offers valuable knowledge and firsthand experience from subject matter experts that prepares rehabilitation professionals for success in their future practice.

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