

## Exploring new horizons in career counselling: turning challenge into opportunities

Liz Whitaker

To cite this article: Liz Whitaker (2016) Exploring new horizons in career counselling: turning challenge into opportunities, British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 44:5, 615-616, DOI: [10.1080/03069885.2016.1217980](https://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2016.1217980)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2016.1217980>



Published online: 11 Oct 2016.



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Du Plock asserts that a literature review is 'research in its own right' (p. 57). His initial reflections will be similar to those experienced by many researchers; he encourages readers to adopt a reflexive stance. The next chapter (7) is a worthwhile investigation regarding ethics in research and there is an acknowledgement of the possible close relationship between researcher and research participants in practice-based research.

Personal responses to research are examined carefully in Chapter 8; it captures the more idiosyncratic elements for the researcher as an individual. It includes such topics as interviews, transference, voyeurism, validity and theory. In Chapter 9 Bager-Charleson discusses the important issue of epistemological positioning in research and addresses a number of important areas for practice-based researchers. Reflexivity is hard to define, however it is a given that it is a crucial component of research. It enables researchers to acknowledge personal and professional assumptions. The five variants of reflexivity as espoused by Finlay and Gough (2003) are examined in detail in Chapter 10. Reflexivity related to introspection, intersubjective reflection and as mutual collaboration are the focuses for the next three chapters. Du Plock writes about how to make an impact with our research in Chapter 14. He describes a number of ways that this can be accomplished, such as through doctoral research. The final chapter summarises the book and Bager-Charleson offers an overall reflection on its contents. The emphasis is on researchers' and research participants' personal and social preconceptions and how these are intertwined with theoretical frameworks, critical engagement with research, cultural values and beliefs. Bager-Charleson's final statements encourage us to venture forward and take up research and researcher opportunities that are offered.

## Reference

Finlay, L. & Gough, B. (2003). *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social care*. London: Wiley.

Jane Cronin-Davis  
York St John University, York, UK  
 j.cronin-davis@yorks.ac.uk

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2016.1217982>

**Exploring new horizons in career counselling: turning challenge into opportunities**, edited by Kobus Maree and Annamaria Di Fabio, Rotterdam, Sense, 2015, 360 pp., £27.99 (paperback), ISBN 9789463001526

This book is an invaluable resource for psychologists, counsellors and career professionals, academics and students and anyone who works in or is interested in the field of career counselling, whether as a researcher, practitioner or both.

Professor Wendy Patton perfectly encapsulates the purpose of this book in her foreword: 'This is a significant book in the career literature as it brings together authors from across the globe to pose new perspectives for career counselling in response to the significant, complex, and rapidly increasing challenges in the world of work.' The authors investigate and reflect on new directions in the field of career counselling giving descriptions of theoretical frameworks backed up by clear, practical examples. The 20 chapters in the book are divided into seven sections with Part 7 being the Epilogue written by Peter McIlveen, Associate Professor at the University of Southern Queensland. In Part 1 of the book, *Merging retrospect and prospect to move career counselling forward*, Di Fabio and

Rottinghaus discuss blending known, effective strategies with new approaches focussing on narrative and story, as long as the story is honest, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to career counselling. The notion of narrative is again developed in Part 6, *Using dialogues to foster awareness and self-direction in career counselling*. Maree too proposes an integrated 'Qualitative + Quantitative' framework with an emphasis on positivity and resilience.

The five chapters in Part 2 *Projecting into the future: Theoretical conjectures* look at how theoretical models can be applied to fundamental changes in the world of work and the impact these changes have on people's jobs and careers and lives in general. These frameworks include Watson's development of a personal career theory map, Chen's Career Human Agency Theory, McMahon's development of the Systems Theory Framework to include narrative in career counselling, Van Esbroeck's model of coaching in career counselling and finally Bright and Pryor's Chaos Theory perspective. Case studies, practical suggestions and guidance are offered in each chapter.

In the third section of the book, *Anticipating and managing career-related changes and challenges*, the five chapters facilitate an understanding of the skills necessary to deal with career-related transitions, and the challenges and barriers to acquiring transferable skills and career-readiness. Metz, Kelly and Gore focus on transferable non-cognitive factors in career transitions affecting college students. This is followed by Levin and Gati's discussion of imagined and unconscious barriers in career decision-making. Del Corso focusses on work traumas, Peila-Shuster on career development for children and Barclay provides an interesting chapter on applying Schlossberg's transition model to career transition. In Part 4 of the book, the three chapters by McIlveen and Midgley, Bimrose and Brown, and Stoltz look at career adaptability and transition and how people can develop this valuable competency.

Advancing social justice is the focus of the fifth section of the book with two chapters by Furbish and Pope. In Part 6, Lengelle and Meijers demonstrate how dialogue writing can enhance the dialogical work of the career counsellor and client.

Although written by different authors from around the world, there were synergies and connections between chapters; and the theories, frameworks, strategies and ideas could apply anywhere. As a career professional I was excited by the fact that at the end of each chapter I wanted to try out the theory, read more and do my own research. For example, I could see how dialogue writing might engage creative writing students with their future career plans. Should you want to look further into any of subjects, there is a plethora of further reading.

The following sentence in Maree's conclusion of his chapter on 'Blending retrospect and prospect' seemed to me a perfect summing up of the way the authors have blended 'retrospect and prospect in a concerted attempt to convert challenges in career counselling into opportunities, hurt into hope and hopelessness into inspiration' (p. 20).

Liz Whitaker  
York St John University, York, UK  
 l.whitaker@yorks.ac.uk

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2016.1217980>