Challenging False Perceptions: Boosting Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy

Presentation Objectives

I. Understand the factors that influence student’s career decision making self-efficacy
II. Identify theoretical approaches that may be applied to conceptualize the career decision making process
III. Acquire advising strategies that may be applied to enhance student’s career decision making self-efficacy

Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE): (a) the ability to recognize potential careers and (b) the belief that you are competent enough to make career decisions (Bullock-Yowell, McConnell, & Schedin, 2014).

SOAR Model of Career Development

1. Recognize strengths
2. Identify opportunities
3. Establish academic and career outcomes
4. Identify measurable results that will signify achievement of outcomes

(Kumar, 2007)

Career Development Activities

The “I am” Exercise:
Have students list out true statements about themselves, and explore these statements (Kumar, 2007).

Example:

1. Socio-economic
   a. I am the first in my family to go to college.
   b. I am a transfer scholarship recipient.
2. Personal abilities
   a. I am good at listening and understanding people.
   b. I am bad at mathematics.
3. Personality descriptions
   a. I am bad with deadlines.
   b. I am outgoing.
4. Interests
   a. I am interested in psychology.
   b. I am interested in becoming a forensic investigator.

Major Decision Balancing Sheet:
Provide students with a list of major options, and have students choose their top three majors of interest. After students have narrowed down their choices explore possible barriers with choices and identify strategies to prevent those barriers (Hughey, Nelson, Damminger, & McCalla-Wriggins, 2009).
Elevator Pitch:
Ask your student to imagine they are riding on an elevator in an employer's office after an interview. There is one person riding in the elevator who is a senior manager in the organization and as the elevator descended he turns to you and states “I noticed you in the interview with Susan today - What's your background?” Now you have 30-60 seconds to make a first impression. What do you say? (Kumar, 2007)

**Career Decision Making Action Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future goal:</th>
<th>Realized by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present goals:</td>
<td>Realized by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action steps: How am I going to attain my goals?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Resources or Personal Support (family, friends, mentors,...etc.)</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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(Kumar, 2007)

**Cognitive Restructuring Technique**

Determine anxiety producing situation

Identify beliefs the student has about the situation → Discuss how it is making the student feel → Consider evidence that supports their belief

Identify evidence that does not support their belief → Identify an alternative perspective together → Acknowledge how the new perspective makes them feel

**Example:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>“I will never find the right major. There are so many things I am interested in doing. I'm not sure where to start.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Thoughts  | - I will never graduate.  
- I will choose the wrong major. |
| Feelings  | - Anxious  
- Overwhelmed |
| Evidence that supports the thought | - My friends all declared their major. They all seem to know what they are doing. |
| Evidence that doesn’t support the thought | - My parents told me they changed their major a few times when they started college. |
| Alternative to consider | - Choosing a major is a process that requires exploration and evaluation, I need to develop a plan to narrow down my choices. |
| Outcome   | I feel less overwhelmed and stressed with the process. |

(Concordia University, 2019)
Rate yourself for each statement, along a scale from 0 to 4: 0 = not considered, 1 = poorly, 2 = partially, 3 = adequately, 4 = optimally

1. I am able to express the full value of my personal, academic and extracurricular experiences (part-time jobs, internships, voluntary work...etc.)
2. I am able to explain how my interests and values relate to possible major choices and career ideas
3. I am aware of the strengths and limitations associated with my personality
4. I have an accurate, complete picture of my career profile - my unique mix of skills, experience, interests, knowledge and personal attributes - that makes me stand out in the employment marketplace
5. I maintain comprehensive evidence which convincingly demonstrates my strengths and interests (resume, portfolio, list of achievements...etc.)
6. I am able to maintain a positive self-image and realize how this influences my life and work
7. I have a high-level of self-management skills (meet deadlines, stay organized, achieve goals...etc.)
8. I am able to accept and learn from both success and failure in a positive manner

(Adapted from Kumar, 2007, p. 37)

Case Study 1
Susan, age 20, entered the university as an undecided undergraduate, but she was considering both animal science and communications as two possible areas of study. In her first semester, she completed a Student Success Skills course, which was designed to help students explore major and career options. Although Susan completed the academic and career exploration assignments that were required for the course, she did not invest much into the experience. The assignments involved several parts: taking interest inventories, reviewing academic majors and curricular requirements, exploring career-related information, and interviewing a senior student in a major of interest.

Susan stated that her high school teachers and school counselors had encouraged her to pursue a science career because she had received good grades in math. Susan indicated that she thought animal science would be a good choice because she likes animals. She also talked about becoming a veterinarian, but she had not been exposed to that career field nor could she describe in any depth the elements that attracted her to the occupation. She also considered communications as a major because her father had told her that she would be good in public relations (Adapted from Steele, 2003).

Thoughts:
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_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Case Study 2
Natalie, age 35, has just started taking courses at the community college. She is the first in her family to go to college. When she meets with you for the first time, she states she is confused on the differences between an Associate of Science and Associate of Art degree. She shares that she would like to pursue a Business degree in the future at the university, but she does not believe she will be able to afford attending the university and is unsure of her chances for admission.
She states that she dropped out of high school at a young age to have her son, and completed the GED exam. She shares that she is interested in Business as a major based on her family’s recommendation. She would like a career that provides a stable job income and opportunities. However, she also shares she is uncertain about her choice and was also considering Nursing. She is struggling to make a career/major decision for herself and asks you to recommend the best major for her since she is new to college.

**Thoughts:**

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**Case Study 3**

Kim is a 35-year-old senior graduating at the end of semester with a major in English literature. She has not placed a lot of time or thought into preparing for a career after college. She is torn between moving away to find a good job or staying close to her children. She has been looking locally for a job, but has found that most jobs require a business degree or another specific degree. She expresses that she love's literature and expected it all to work out when she declared the major. However, as graduation draws near she is feeling the pressure to obtain employment. She has a considerable amount of student loans and shares with you that her oldest will be in college in a few years. She does not know where to begin in the process and feels lost (Adapted from Kansas State University, 2019).

**Thoughts:**

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**References**


