

National Career Development Association

Minimum Competencies for Multicultural Career Counseling and Development

(This document replaces the 1997 Career Counseling Competencies)

Approved by the NCDA Board – August 2009

Introduction

The purpose of the multicultural career counseling and development competencies is to ensure that all individuals practicing in, or training for practice in, the career counseling and development field are aware of the expectation that we, as professionals, will practice in ways that promote the career development and functioning of individuals of all backgrounds. Promotion and advocacy of career development for individuals is ensured regardless of age, culture, mental/physical ability, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion/spirituality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/partnership status, military or civilian status, language preference, socioeconomic status, any other characteristics not specifically relevant to job performance, in accordance with NCDA and ACA policy. Further, they will provide guidance to those in the career counseling and development field regarding appropriate practice with regard to clients of a different background than their own. Finally, implementation of these competencies for the field should provide the public with the assurance that they can expect career counseling and development professionals to function in a manner that facilitates their career development, regardless of the client's/student's background.

If you believe that you need assistance with performing at these minimum levels, or would like to further develop your skills in these areas, please visit the NCDA website www.ncda.org for contact information regarding sources for increasing your competence in dealing with individuals with different cultural backgrounds than yourself.

For those seeking a designation of competency, NCDA offers the Master Career Counselor and Master Career Development Professional Special Memberships. Visit www.ncda.org for more information.

The multicultural career professional:

CAREER DEVELOPMENT THEORY:

- understands the strengths and limitations of career theory and utilizes theories that are appropriate for the population being served.

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP COUNSELING SKILLS:

- is aware of his/her own cultural beliefs and assumptions and incorporates that awareness into his/her decision-making about interactions with clients/students and other career professionals.

- continues to develop his/her individual and group counseling skills in order to enhance his/her ability to respond appropriately to individuals from diverse populations.
- is cognizant when working with groups of the group demographics and monitors these to ensure appropriate respect and confidentiality is maintained.

INDIVIDUAL/GROUP ASSESSMENT:

- understands the psychometric properties of the assessments he/she is using in order to effectively select and administer assessments, and interpret and use results with the appropriate limitations and cautions.

INFORMATION, RESOURCES, & TECHNOLOGY:

- regularly evaluates the information, resources, and use of technology to determine that these tools are sensitive to the needs of diverse populations amending and/or individualizing for each client as required.
- provides resources in multiple formats to ensure that clients/students are able to benefit from needed information.
- provides targeted and sensitive support for clients/students in using the information, resources, and technology.

PROGRAM PROMOTION, MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION:

- incorporates appropriate guidelines, research, and experience in developing, implementing, and managing programs and services for diverse populations.
- utilizes the principles of program evaluation to design and obtain feedback from relevant stakeholders in the continuous improvement of programs and services, paying special attention to feedback regarding specific needs of the population being served.
- applies his/her knowledge of multicultural issues in dealings with other professionals and trainees to ensure the creation of a culturally-sensitive environment for all clients.

COACHING, CONSULTATION, AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT:

- engages in coaching, consultation, and performance improvement activities with appropriate training and incorporates knowledge of multicultural attitudes, beliefs, skills and values.
- seeks awareness and understanding about how to best match diverse clients/students with suitably culturally sensitive employers.

SUPERVISION:

- gains knowledge of and engages in evidence-based supervision, pursues educational and training activities on a regular and ongoing basis inclusive of both counseling and supervision topics. Further, is aware of his/her limitations, cultural biases and personal values and seeks professional consultative assistance as necessary.
- infuses multicultural/diversity contexts into his/her training and supervision practices, makes supervisees aware of the ethical standards and responsibilities of the profession, and trains supervisees to develop relevant multicultural knowledge and skills.

ETHICAL/LEGAL ISSUES:

- continuously updates his/her knowledge of multicultural and diversity issues and research and applies new knowledge as required.
- employs his/her knowledge and experience of multicultural ethical and legal issues within a professional framework to enhance the functioning of his/her organization and the image of the profession.
- uses supervision and professional consultations effectively when faced with an ethical or legal issue related to diversity, to ensure he/she provides high-quality services for every client/student.

RESEARCH/EVALUATION:

- designs and implements culturally appropriate research studies with regards to research design, instrument selection, and other pertinent population-specific issues.

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