Ethical Considerations of ICT Integration in Careers Practice

James P. Sampson, Jr.
Quebec City, Canada
June 4, 2014

Presentation at the Symposium entitled, “Integration of ICT within Career Development & Guidance Practice” at the IAEVG International Conference in Guidance and Career Development
Organization of the Presentation

- Introduction
- Social Equity Issues
- Resource Issues
- Service Issues
- Professional Standards
Introduction

• Evolution of ICT in guidance
  – Batch processing of career assessments by mainframe computers and minicomputers
  – Local delivery of career assessments, information, and instruction on personal computers
  – Distance delivery of career assessments, information, and instruction on the Internet, along with distance service delivery and social media via the Internet

• Evolution of ethical issues – stability & change
Social Equity Issues

- The Internet allows counseling and guidance to transcend geographic and physical barriers
- Increased Internet access from cheaper computers and mobile devices (smart phones & tablets)
Social Equity Issues

• However, access is still not universal
  – With a global population in 2011 of almost 7 billion, this still means that 4,620,000,000 people in the world do not have ready access to the Internet

• Even in the most economically advanced countries there are still individuals with little to no access to the Internet – Public access points are inadequate
Social Equity Issues

- Equity of access to career interventions is a social justice issue.
- Equity of access to the Internet is also a social justice issue.
- The costs of computer hardware and access fees puts the Internet further out of reach of persons with limited financial resources.
Resource Issues

- Quality of Assessments and Information Delivered on the Internet
- Availability of User Support when Needed
Quality of Assessments & Information

- Highly variable quality of assessments online with little evidence of validity
- Variable quality of test interpretations
- Career information has similar problems of variability and validity evidence
  - Some data inaccurate, biased, out-of-date
  - Some good data is poorly presented
- Individuals may be getting better access to inferior guidance resources
Quality of Assessments & Information

- Economics of publishing a factor
  - High costs of developing and distributing paper products created a disincentive for producing low quality resources
  - Lower costs for electronic publishing make it more economically viable to produce and distribute poor quality information
  - (Many responsible publishers remain who produce high quality resources)
Availability of User Support

• Successful use of resources dependent on readiness for career decision making
• Individuals with lower readiness need more assistance to make effective use of career resources
• Individuals with higher readiness need little or no support from a practitioner to use career resources
Availability of User Support

• Resources in the past were provided by a practitioner
• Resources now widely available on the Internet
• Many users unprepared for independent use of resources
• Web sites do not generally indicate circumstances where help is needed
Service Issues

• Confidentiality and User Privacy
• Distance Service Delivery
• Social Media
Confidentiality and User Privacy

• The expanded access to information increases the chances for inappropriate access
• Data security measures not uniformly followed
• A Lack of auditory and visual privacy is also a problem, especially at public sites
Distance Service Delivery

• The Internet improves access due to problems of disability or geography
• Potential problems:
  – Inappropriate clients (mental health/literacy)
  – Unavailability of local emergency contacts
  – Limited awareness of local conditions
  – Limited awareness of culture
  – Confusion regarding practitioner credentials
Social Media

- Used to deliver and market services
- Potential problems:
  - Maintaining professional boundaries between practitioners and the individuals they serve
  - Reaching a mutual understanding with the client of the purpose and use of social media in service delivery
Professional Standards

- Ethical Standards
- Credentialing Standards
- Accreditation Standards
Ethical Standards

- Ethical codes created to educate professionals, as well as protecting the public
- Three approaches in developing ethical codes
  1. Incorporating elements of ICT use into relevant sections of a general code
  2. Creating specialized codes
  3. Including ethical issues related to guidance as one component of standards for the design and delivery of computer-based career resources
Ethical Standards

• Codes are keeping up-to-date, such as distance services and social media
• Changes in the way that individuals gain access to resources and services have not made issues that were originally identified thirty years ago any less relevant today
Credentialing Standards

- Credentialing standards were created, in part, as a conceptual basis for voluntary professional certification.

- Function similar to ethical codes with ICT elements added to general credentialing standards or creation of specialized standards.
Accreditation Standards

• Accreditation standards are intended to ensure that students graduating from preparation programs have the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively practice.

• Accreditation standards are more general than ethical or credentialing standards regarding ICT in service delivery.
Conclusion

• Professional associations are working to keep standards up-to-date
• However, research is needed to guide the development of future standards and training resources
• The success of ICT in guidance depends on our ability to shape fast changing technology in organizations and professions that change more slowly
Reference

For more information

www.career.fsu.edu/techcenter