

Career Counseling and Services: A Cognitive Information Processing Approach

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Chapter Five

Assessing Readiness for Career Choice and Selecting Appropriate Assistance

Chapter Organization

- Two-Dimensional Model of Readiness for Career Choice
- Using Readiness Assessment to Make Preliminary Decisions About Career Interventions
- Relating Readiness for Career Choice to Decision Status Taxonomies
- Counseling Strategies for Enhancing Client Readiness for Career Choice

Two-Dimensional Readiness Model

- Readiness is the **capability** of an individual to make appropriate career choices taking into account the **complexity** of family, social, economic, and organizational factors that influence career development

Capability

Capability

(low)

(high)

Capability

- The cognitive and affective capacity to engage in effective career choice behaviors
- How are my career choices influenced by the way I **think** and **feel**?

Capability

- **Honest** exploration of values, interests, and skills
- **Motivated** to learn about options
- Able to **think clearly** about career problems
- **Confident** of their decision-making ability
- Willing to **assume responsibility** for problem solving
- Aware of **how** thoughts and feelings influence behavior
- Able to **monitor and regulate** problem solving

Complexity

Complexity (high)



(low)

Complexity

- Contextual factors, originating in the family, society, the economy, or employing organizations, that make it more (or less) difficult to solve career problems and make career decisions
- How does the **world around me** influence my career choices?

Complexity

- Family factors
- Social factors
- Economic factors
- Organizational factors

Family Factors

- Few responsibilities and family support is positive
- **Deferral**, e.g. compromise career development to meet needs of spouse or children or parents is negative
- **Role overload**, e.g. roles of worker, parent, son/daughter, homemaker, student is negative
- **Dysfunctional family input**, e.g., over-functioning parents is negative

Social Factors

- **Social support**, e.g. modeling, networking, and caring is positive
- **Discrimination**, e.g. age, disability, ethnicity, gender, immigration status, nationality, occupation, physical characteristics, poverty level, race, religion, sexual orientation, and social class
- **Stereotyping, lack of role models, bias in education, and harassment in education and employment** is negative

Economic Factors

- **General** factors, e.g. rate of change in the labor market influences stability of occupational knowledge – stable knowledge is positive, unstable knowledge is negative
- **Personal** factors, e.g. influence of poverty on housing, health care, and childcare – adequate resources is positive, inadequate resources is negative

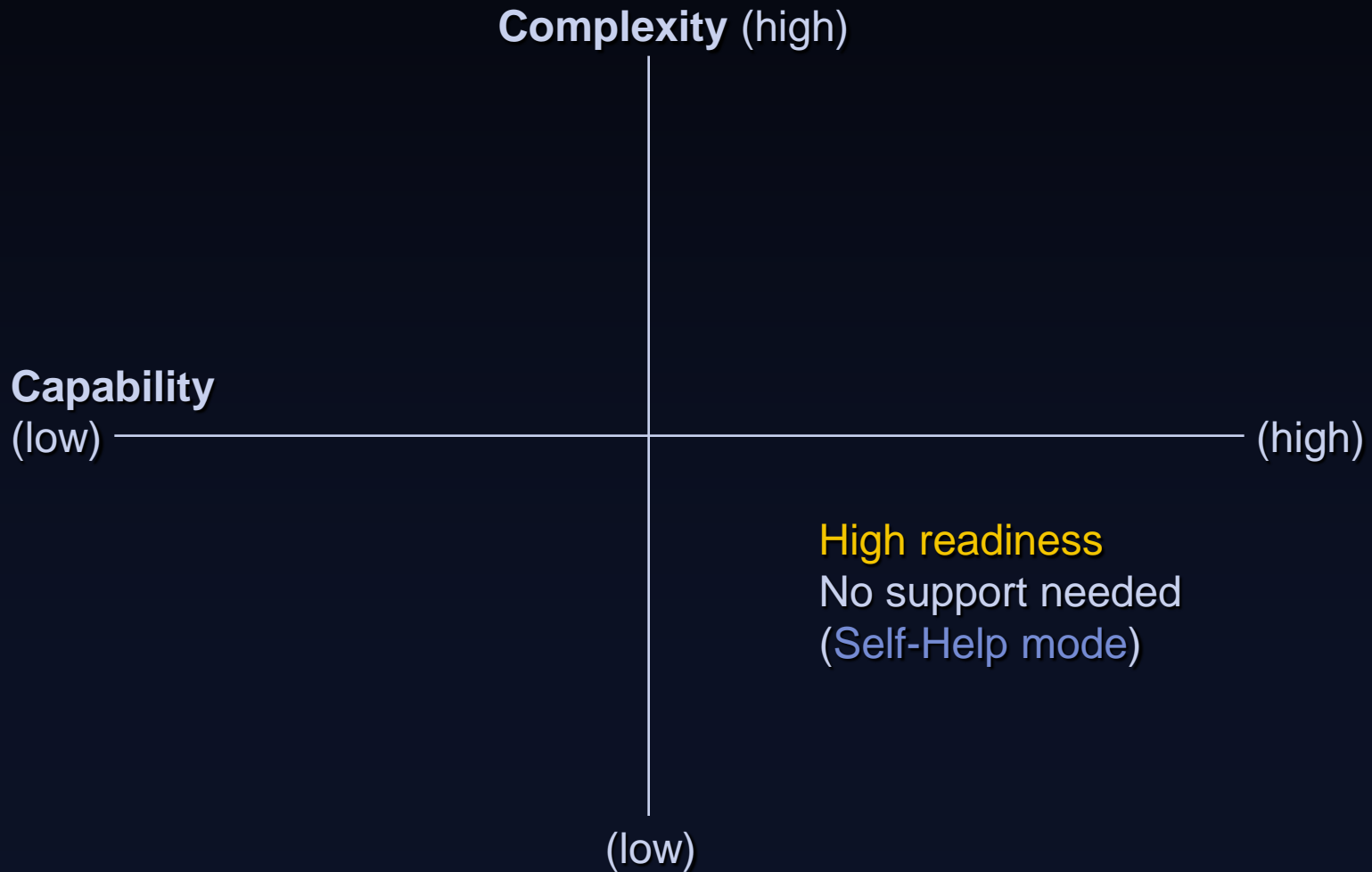
Organizational Factors

- **Size**, e.g., size of internal employment market – small internal job market is less complicated and has a positive impact, large internal job market is more complicated and has a negative impact
- **Organizational culture**, e.g., amount of support provided for career development – more support is positive, less support is negative
- **Stability**, e.g., employment opportunities – more stability is positive, less stability is negative

Two-Dimensional Readiness Model



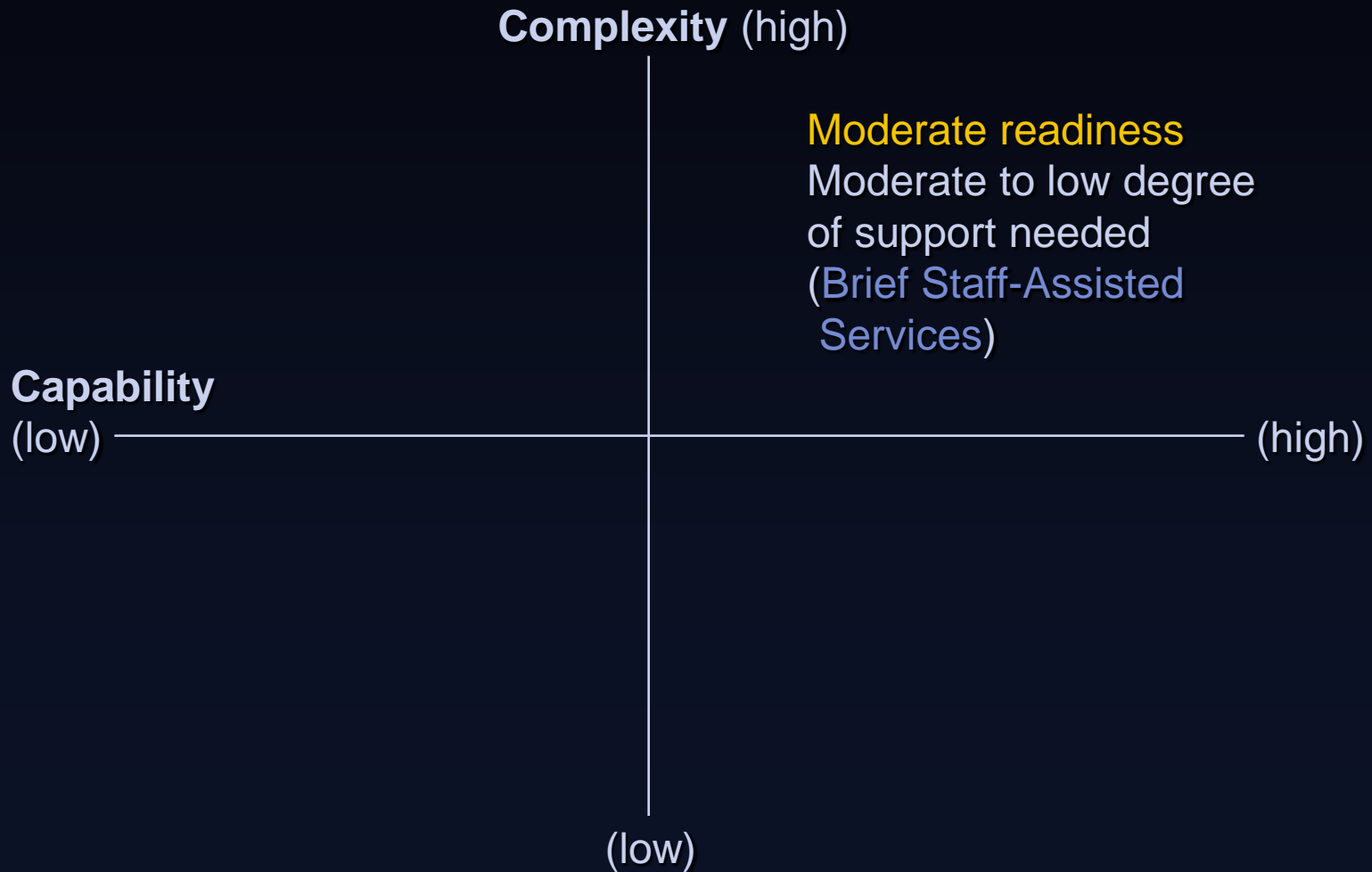
Two-Dimensional Readiness Model



Two-Dimensional Readiness Model



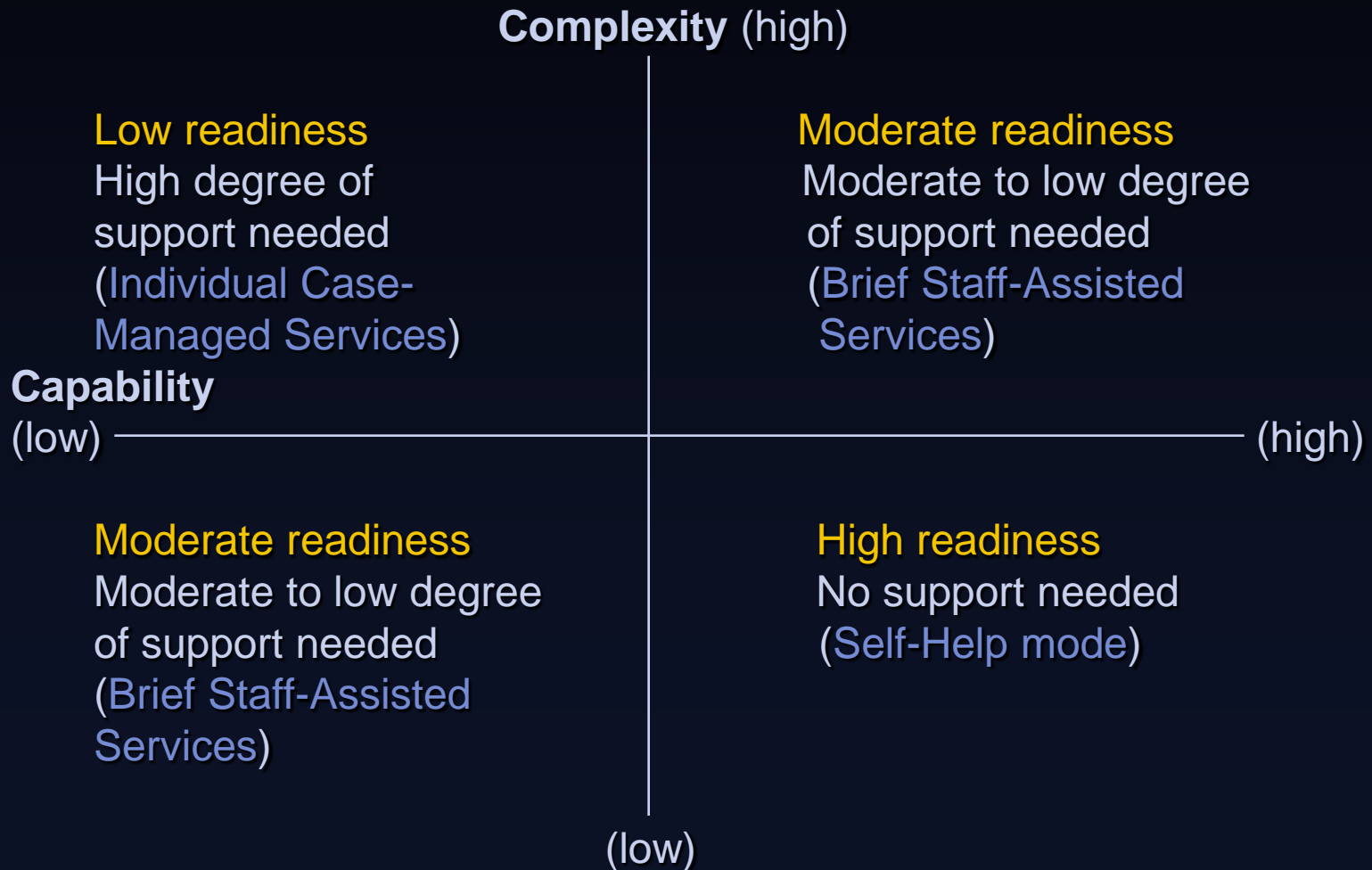
Two-Dimensional Readiness Model



Two-Dimensional Readiness Model



Two-Dimensional Readiness Model



Screening & Selecting Options

Individual Choice

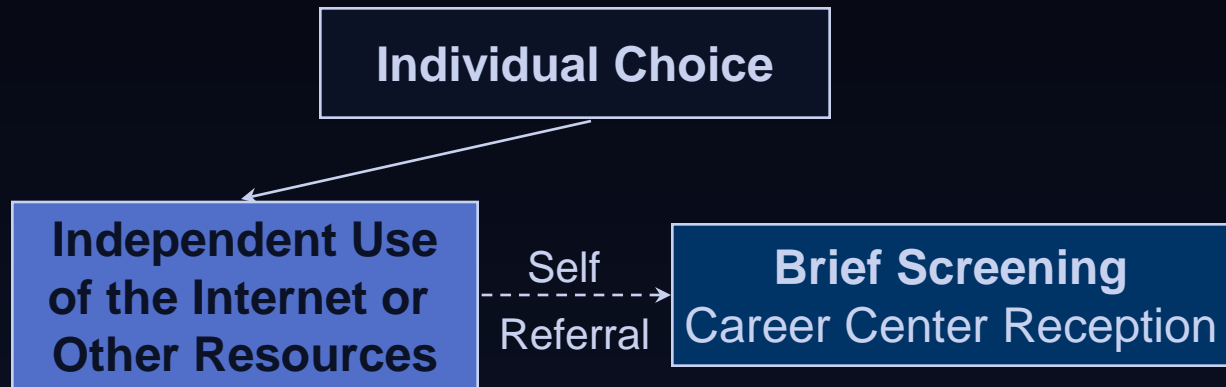
Screening & Selecting Options

Individual Choice

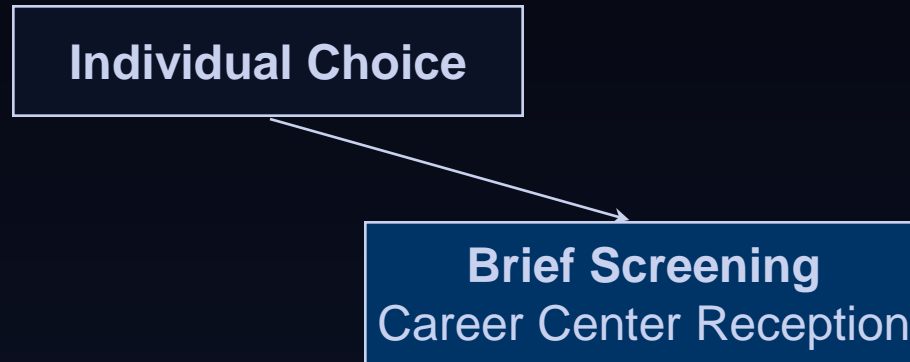
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graph TD; A[Individual Choice] --> B[Independent Use of the Internet or Other Resources];
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**Independent Use
of the Internet or
Other Resources**

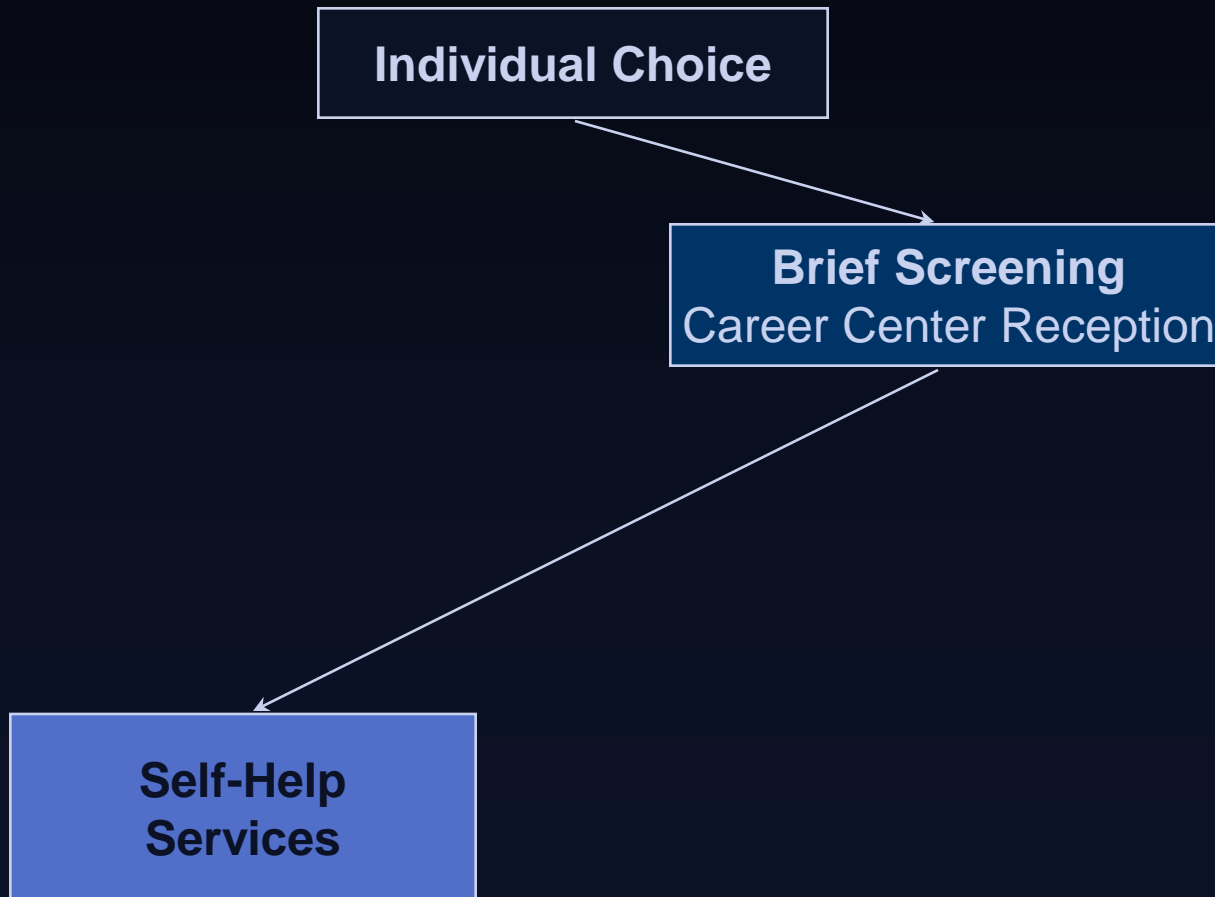
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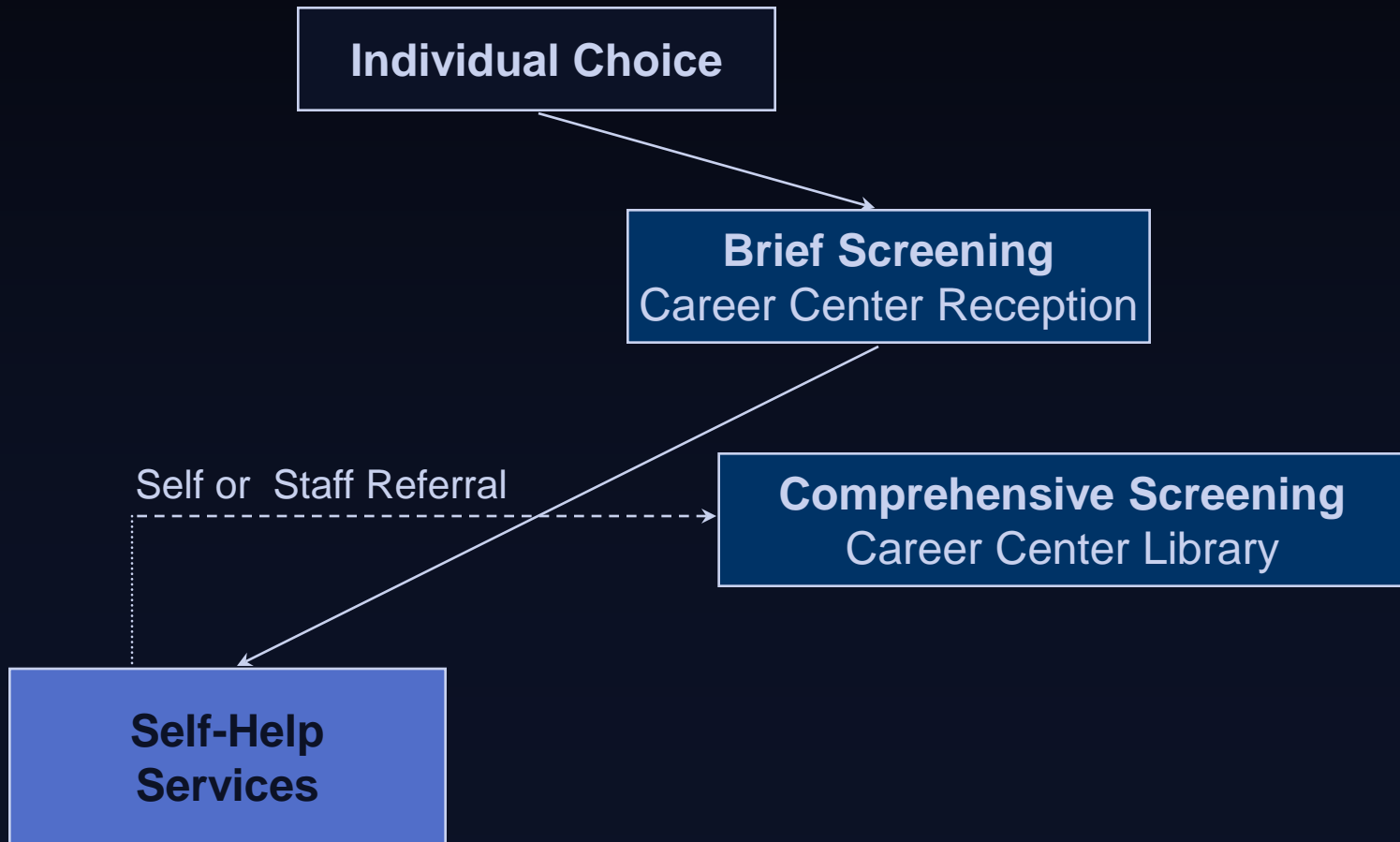
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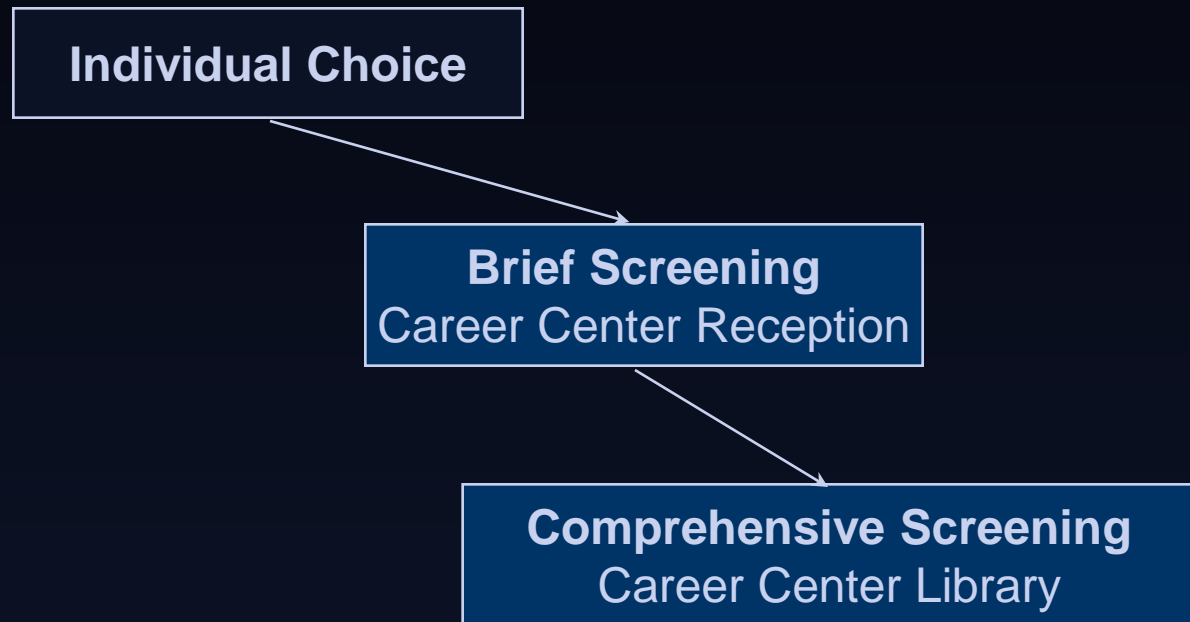
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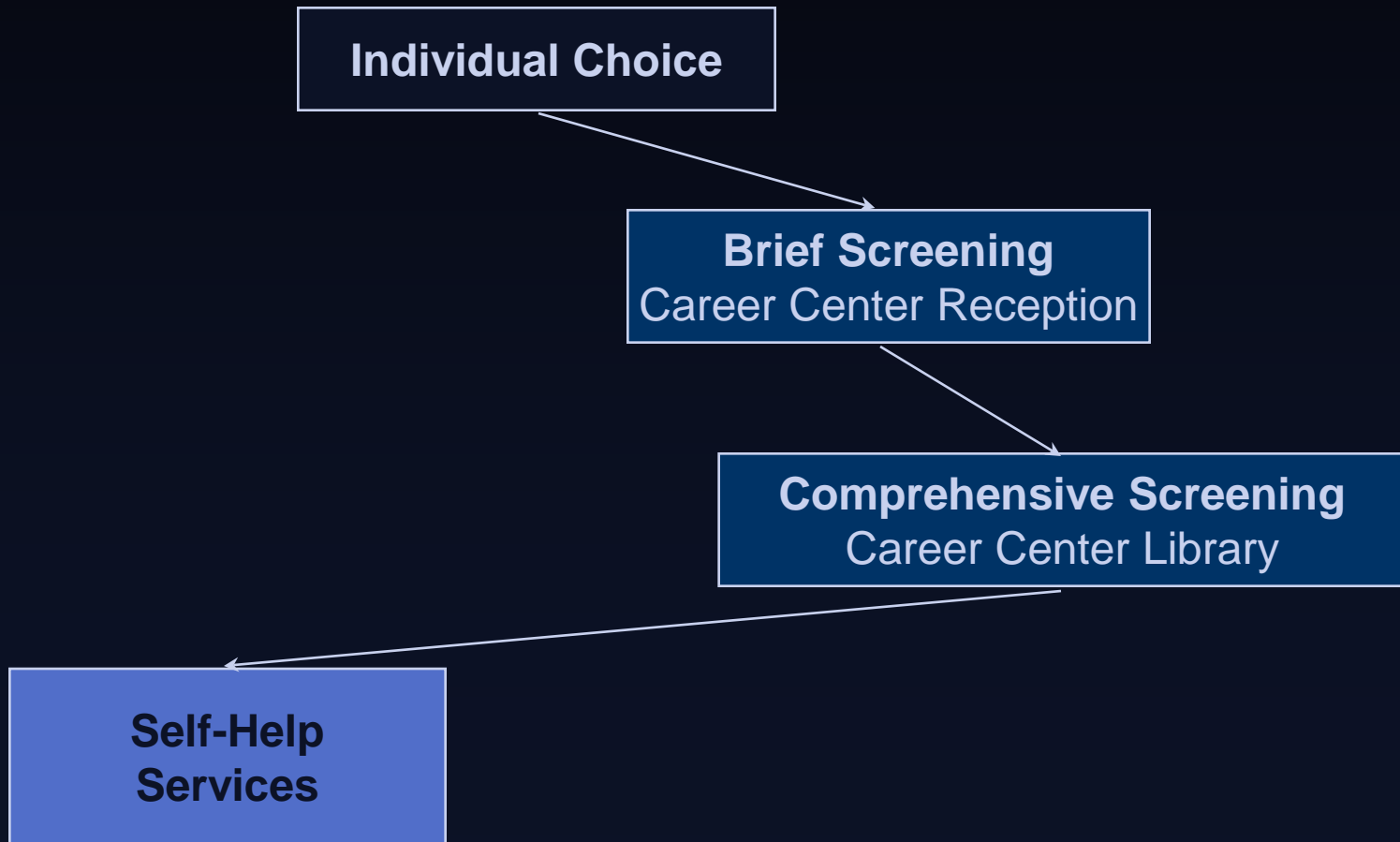
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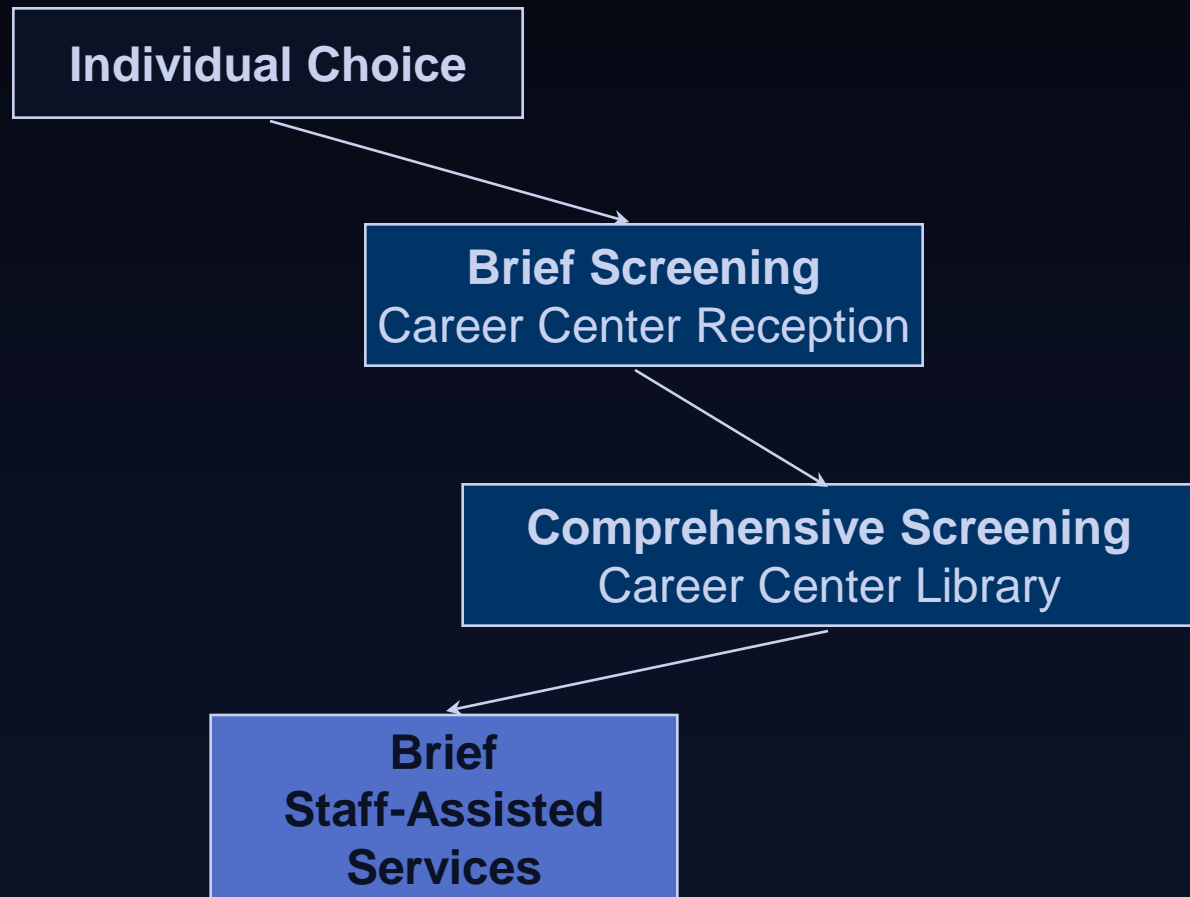
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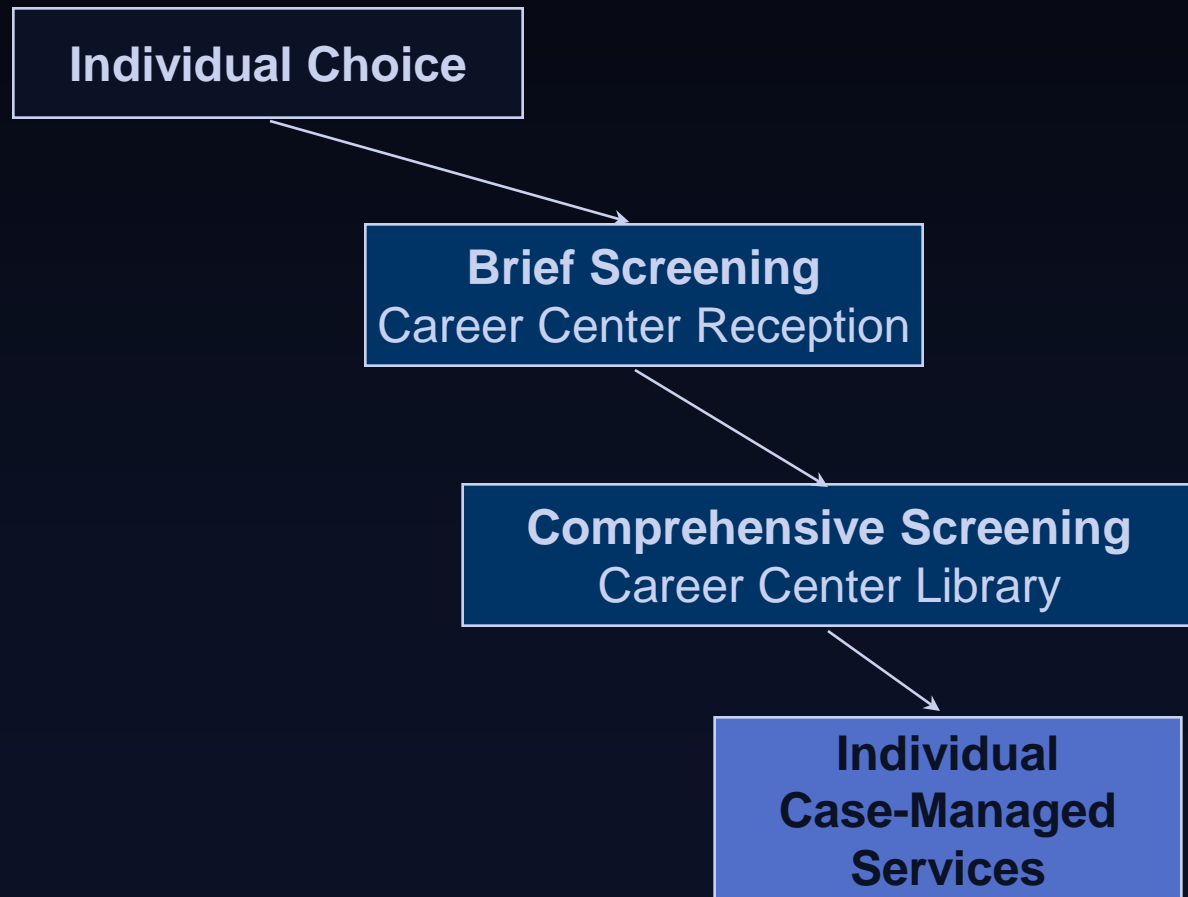
Screening & Selecting Options



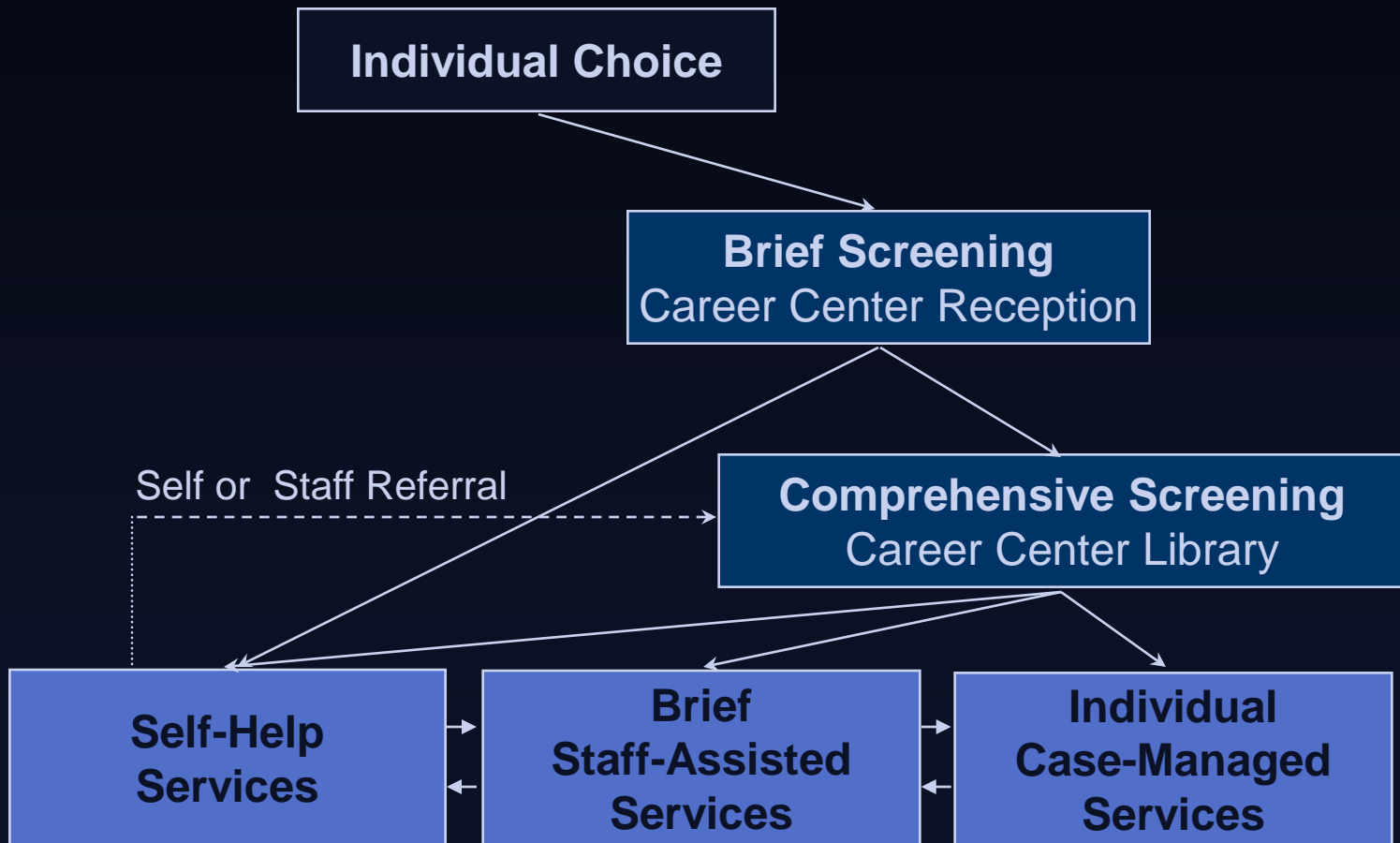
Screening & Selecting Options



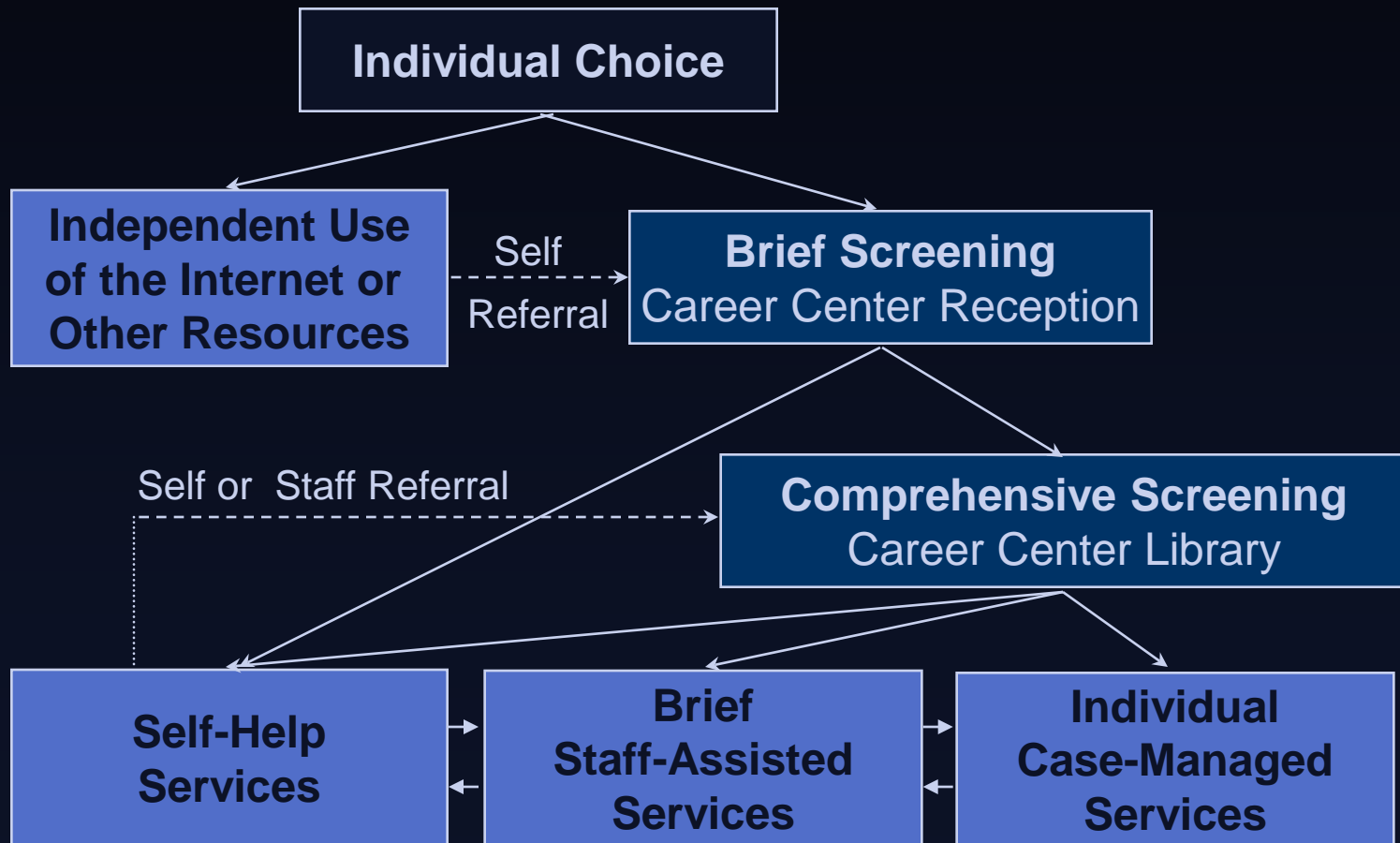
Screening & Selecting Options



Screening & Selecting Options



Screening & Selecting Options



Assumptions

- 1) Services are offered in a counseling or career center
- 2) Individuals can seek assistance from self-help resources
- 3) If problems occur with self-help, readiness assessments and interviews can be used to make a judgment about services needed
- 4) Readiness assessment can occur in brief screening or brief and comprehensive screening
- 5) Clients or practitioners may collaboratively decide to move among levels of service delivery

Screening Process

- **Brief screening** occurs upon entry to a counseling or career center
- If the individual presents a concrete request for information and no problem is apparent, self-help services are recommended
- If the request for information is vague or problems are apparent, **comprehensive screening** using a readiness assessment measure and an interview is conducted
- A practitioner recommendation is then made followed by a collaborative decision about an appropriate level of service delivery (brief staff-assisted, etc.)

Outcomes of Screening

- Screening avoids
 - **Overserving** high readiness individuals with costly individualized interventions and
 - **Underserving** low readiness clients with inadequate interventions from staff who are unaware of a substantial need for help
- Provides a better chance to meet client needs
- By better allocating staff resources
 - staff will be able to serve more clients or
 - spend more time with clients with substantial needs

Intervention Options

- Self-Help Services
- Brief Staff-Assisted Services
- Individual Case-Managed Services

How Interventions Vary

- Readiness of the user
- Assistance provided
- Who guides resource use
- Where services are provided
- Selection and sequencing of resources and services
- Record keeping

Self-Help Services

- For high decision-making readiness
- Little or no assistance provided
- Guided by the user
- Served in library-like or remote setting
- Selection and sequencing by resource guides
- Records kept - Aggregate data for program evaluation and accountability

Self-Help Services

- Self-help career services

Self-Help Services

- Little staff assistance is provided, although staff are available to respond to questions
- Resource guides suggest selected assessment, information, and instructional options for common career concerns
- Signage and indexes help individuals to select, locate, and use self-help resources
- Instructions for using resources are contained within the resources

Brief Staff-Assisted Services

- For moderate decision-making readiness
- Minimal assistance provided
- Guided by a practitioner
- Served in library-like, classroom, or group setting
- Selection and sequencing by ILP
- Records kept - Aggregate data for program evaluation and accountability

Brief Staff-Assisted Services

- Self-directed career decision making
- Career course
(with **large** group interaction)
- Group counseling (**short** term)
- Workshop

Self-Directed Career Decision Making

- Practitioner-guided use of self-assessment, information, and instructional resources in a career resource room
- Practitioners complete scheduled periods of service delivery in the resource room with clients served on a first-come, first-served basis
- Continuity in service delivery results from teamwork and collaboratively-developed written individual learning plans (ILPs)

Self-Directed Career Decision Making

- Clients are not restricted to the available appointment times of any one practitioner
 - A client can decide to see the same staff member by returning the next time the staff member is on duty
 - Or, a client can return any time the center is open and see a staff member on duty
- Clients (with staff input) decide how much time is needed to use resources and to seek staff assistance

Self-Directed Career Decision Making

- Accommodates clients working together
- Responsive to periods of high and low demand by “staffing up” or “staffing down”
- Eliminates delays in appointment-based systems in times of peak demand
- High volume of clients can be served
- Lowers service delivery costs

Self-Directed Career Decision Making

- Requires staff to
 - Establish relationships quickly
 - Clarify client progress in completing their ILP
 - Revise the ILP if new needs become apparent
 - Serve multiple clients during one period of time
 - Participate in common staff training
- Provides clients with relatively immediate follow-up of resource use during the learning event

Individual Case-Managed Services

- For low decision making readiness
- Substantial assistance provided
- Guided by a practitioner
- Served in an individual office, classroom, or group setting
- Selection and sequencing by ILP
- Individual records kept

Individual Case-Managed Services

- Individual counseling
- Career course
(with **small** group interaction)
- Group counseling (**long** term)

Taxonomy of Decision States

- Decided
- Undecided
- Indecisive

Decided Individuals

- Can specify a choice
- But may need help to clarify or implement

Decided-Confirmation

- Able to specify a choice,
- But wish to **confirm** or **clarify** appropriateness

Decided-Implementation

- Able to specify a choice
- But need help with **implementation**

Decided-Conflict Avoidance

- Present as decided to **reduce conflict** and **stress**, when undecided or indecisive

Undecided Individuals

- Cannot specify a choice
- Need self, occupational, and decision-making information

Undecided - Deferred Choice

- Unable to choose
- But have no need to make a choice

Undecided - Developmental

- Need to choose
- Are unable to commit
- Lack self, occupational, and/or decision-making knowledge
- Rather than dysfunctional, these individuals do not have the knowledge or experience to make a choice

Undecided - Multipotential

- Characteristics of undecided
- Along with an overabundance of talents, interests, and opportunities
- Often overwhelmed with available options
- May experience pressure from significant others for high levels of achievement

Indecisive Individuals

- Cannot specify a choice
- Typically need information
- Also have a maladaptive approach to decision making in general
- Similar to undecided individuals with knowledge gaps
- Differ with more negative self-talk, attentional deficits, or confused thoughts

Indecisive Individuals

- Executive processing (negative self-talk) limits the development of decision-making skills, occupational knowledge, and self-knowledge

Taxonomy of Decision States

Decided Individuals

- 1) Confirmation
- 2) Implementation
- 3) Conflict Avoidance

Undecided Individuals

- 1) Deferred Choice
- 2) Developmental
- 3) Multipotential

Indecisive Individuals

Determining Decision-Making Status

- If the individual can identify a choice, they are likely decided
- If they cannot specify a choice, they are likely either undecided or indecisive
- A readiness screening measure and an interview is often needed to decide if a client is undecided or indecisive

Matching Services to Decision Status

Decided and undecided clients are best served by **self-help** and **brief staff-assisted** services

Indecisive clients are best served by **individual case-managed** services

Counseling Strategies for Readiness

- Readiness for career choice is not static and can change over time
- Capability can be improved by helping clients to identify, challenge, and alter past negative career thoughts, increasing their motivation for career exploration
- Coping with complexity can be improved by helping clients acquire more adaptive coping strategies related to family, social, economic, and organizational factors
- Counseling skills described previously are essential

Summary

- A Two-Dimensional Model of Readiness for Career Choice
- Using Readiness Assessment to Make Preliminary Decisions About Career Interventions
- Relating Readiness for Career Choice to Decision Status Taxonomies
- Counseling Strategies for Enhancing Client Readiness for Career Choice

Getting the Most Benefit from Reading

- Describe the factors associated with capability and complexity
- Identify how capability and complexity influenced your own readiness for career choice
- Draw and label Figures 5-1 and 5-2
- Describe the three levels of service delivery, noting your own experience with career services
- Compare and contrast, decided, undecided, and indecisive individuals

For Additional Information

www.career.fsu.edu/techcenter/

Thank You

