

Career Counseling: A Holistic Approach

CHAPTER 8: ON BEING AN ETHICAL COUNSELOR

Being an Ethical Career Counselor

Ethical Issues

Ethical Principles were developed by the national Career Development Association (NCDA)

Ethical standards are designed to be very inclusive

Some Boundaries of Ethical Competence

1. Client welfare should be the counselor's ultimate concern
 - NCDA members seek only those positions in the delivery of professional services for which they are professionally qualified
 - NCDA members recognize their own limitations

Boundaries of Confidentiality

The client's right to privacy is a key element in a counseling relationship

- Private events will not be related to others
- “The counseling relationship and information resulting from it remains confidential, consistent with legal obligations of the NCDA member.”
- School Counselor Confidentiality--the professional counselor keeps information confidential unless disclosure is required to prevent clear and imminent danger

Boundaries of Informed Consent

Informed Consent involves disclosure by the counselor of important information the client needs in making the decision as to whether s/he is to start counseling

- Free Consent is when a client agrees to engage in counseling without coercion
- In Informed Consent, the counselor informs the client of the purpose, goals and procedures of engaging in a counseling relationship

Boundaries of Measurement and Evaluation

Frequently, standard assessments are used to measure traits such as interests, personality, and ability, among others

The NCDA has developed ethical codes that foster the use of assessment results

There are fifteen statements concerning topics such as selection, use, limitation and interpretation of assessment instruments

NCDA Guidelines for Using the Internet

Some distinctions are made between career planning and career counseling services when clients are using the internet

When clients are involved in specific planning needs such as identification of occupations based on interests, skills and experiences or support for job seeking, they are engaging in career planning

Even though these same services are a part of career counseling, this term implies a more in-depth procedure in a counseling relationship

Suggestions from NCDA

Counselors should evaluate websites and other services to make sure they have been prepared by professional career counselors

Counselors are to have knowledge of free public access points to ensure that all clients have the advantage of online career-related services

The appropriateness of the content on the website should be carefully scrutinized

Suggestions from NCDA

Counselors should screen each client's career counseling needs and determine if those needs can be addressed appropriately on the internet

Counselors are to monitor each client's progress periodically

The provider of internet services should present credentials to the user

The website should include information and services available through linkage with other websites

Suggestions from NCDA

The need to assure that psychometric properties of assessment instruments on the internet are the same as printed form

The ethical standards of administering and interpreting the printed form of a test must be maintained

Assessment results are to be confidential

Clients who do not fully understand the meaning of assessment results should be referred to a qualified counselor

All measurement instruments used that require interpretation by the user must be validated as self-help instruments

Ethical Implications of Using Peer Helpers

Welfel suggests that in career counseling programs that use peer counselors, clients are to be informed of issues of confidentiality

Clients should be informed that peer counselors have been thoroughly informed of ethical standards of confidentiality