

**EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHING  
CAREER COUNSELING CLASSES  
AND FOR FACILITATING CAREER GROUPS**

**Volume One**

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## PREFACE

This book had its genesis over a ten-year period of attempting to find the right combination of content and process in teaching effective career development courses. Both of us, as teachers and practitioners of career counseling, know how exciting our field is, but transferring that excitement to our students and to our clients has not always been easy. Our goal in writing this book was to help counselor educators, community college instructors, and those who facilitates career counseling groups to present career development concepts and activities in exciting and interesting ways.

At the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Conference in Portland, Oregon, USA in 1997, Carole Minor along with one of her colleagues, Fran Giordano, presented experiential activities for teaching career counseling. Mark Pope was in attendance and had been struggling with this important professional issue in his own classes. The idea of this book grew out of that presentation and subsequent discussions. Both of us were excited about the need for such a book, and decided to take the idea to the National Career Development Association (NCDA) as a service to NCDA members and others who teach career development classes or facilitate career development groups. We presented the idea to the members of the NCDA Board of Directors, who became just as enthusiastic as we were.

The call for contributions was distributed through the newsletters and listserves of NCDA, the Society for Vocational Psychology (a section of Division 17, Counseling Psychology, of the American Psychological Association), the Guidance Division of the American Career and Technical Education Association, the California Community College Counselors Association, and the California Career Development Association. The response was immediate and overwhelming as activities flooded in from all of these sources. We had many more excellent activities than we could use in this volume, which we hope is only the first. From the responses that we have received at conferences and from individual requests, we realize that this effort represents a genuine need in the profession.

As you can see from the biographies that are included in Appendix A, the contributors to this first volume are many of the important scientists and practitioners of our profession. We have taken their best tried-and-true activities for both the classroom and the career group, organized them, and presented them for your use. We are grateful to each of them for their contributions to this volume, for the time it took to prepare and present each activity, and, particularly, for their willingness to share their best activities with the rest of us.

This was a true labor of love for us both. The writing of the book was not without its problems. We experienced some delays because Carole was not in the best of health and Mark was in his first year of transition from private practice in San Francisco to a faculty position at the University of Missouri in St. Louis. We thank the contributors for their patience and hope you find that using the activities in this book enhances your work. As you use the activities, we would appreciate any feedback that you might have for us or our contributing authors. Please send all of your comments to us in care of NCDA, 10820 E. 45th Street, Suite 210, Tulsa, OK 74146 or email: [dpennington@ncda.org](mailto:dpennington@ncda.org).

*Mark Pope and Carole Minor*

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## 2. Career Services I Needed

- Authors:** Carole W. Minor, PhD, Northern Illinois University.  
Beverly Celotta, PhD, private practitioner, Gaithersburg, MD.
- Topic:** Career issues over the lifespan.
- Purpose:** To make students aware of their own career decisions, what help with those decisions they would have liked along the way (what career services they could have used), and the importance of availability of career services to people of all ages and career stages. This activity was developed in 1980 by the two authors while they were on the faculty at the University of Maryland, College Park, in the Department of Counseling and Personnel Services. It is adapted from the “career lifeline” activity that has been used with clients for decades.
- Learning Objectives:** As a result of this activity, students should be able to (a) recognize the types of career services that would have been helpful in their own decision-making, (b) recognize the importance of career services to others, and (c) fully engage in learning how to provide them.
- Group Size:** 10-30 students.
- Time Required:** 30-40 min, depending on the number of students.
- Setting:** Classroom or workshop room with tables and chairs. It is most useful during the first class session of a career counseling class.
- Materials Needed:** An 8½ x11” sheet of paper and a writing implement for each student and a chalkboard and chalk or marker board and marker.
- Instructions for Conducting the Activity:**
1. Ask the students to draw a line to represent their lives up until now.
  2. Ask them to mark the points of career decisions and write some identification for each decision.
  3. Ask them to think about each decision and, knowing what they know now, to jot down any types of help they would have liked with the decisions.
  4. After about two-thirds have finished, draw a long line on the chalk board or marker board. Mark decades to age 60, leaving more space for lower ages.
  5. In a large group, ask the students to state the kinds of help they would have liked and the age at which they needed particular help. Write their comments under the appropriate ages. Include comments they make about help they needed “between decisions.”
- Discussion:** Usually, the needs can be categorized as information and support, such as counseling, encouragement, expanding options, and knowledge of options. Point out patterns in ages and note that these needs continue through adulthood. Discuss how this class will help them meet the career needs of others that they have identified as important to themselves.
- Reference:** None.
- Suggested Background Readings:** None.