

## Employability: Conceptualization, Measurement, and Applications

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### ACCELL

Australian Collaboratory for Career Employability & Learning for Living

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### Key Messages

1. Employability is dependent on lifelong career development.
  - Employability is dynamic capacity
  - Employment is static outcome
2. Change—Learning—Growth
  - Focus on what can be changed by learning.
  - Know the difference between what can be changed in the short- medium-term and long-term.
3. Evidence-based models
  - Embed strategy in well-tested theory
  - Embed practices in sound models

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### Why Employability? Unemployment Costs Too Much

- Poorer physical health**  
Drydakis (2014); De Witte, Pienaar, De Cuyper (2016); Griep et al. (2015)
- Poorer mental health**  
Wanberg (2012); Butterworth, Leach, McManus, Stansfeld (2013); Frazzuello, Matos, Salonna, Guerreiro, Storti, Gaspar, & Caldas-de-Almeida (2016); Sargent-Cox, Butterworth, & Anstey (2011) Howard, Galambos & Krahn (2013)
- Suicidal behaviour**  
Breuer (2014); Compton, Gfroerer, Conway, & Finger (2014); Drydakis (2014); Fountoulakis, Gonda, Dome, Theodorakis, & Rihmer (2014); Madianos, Alexiou, Patelakis, & Economou (2014); Milner, Morrell, & LaMontagne (2014); Milner, Page, & LaMontagne (2013, 2014).
- Disrupted cognitive development in children**  
Dickerson & Popli (2016); Heberle & Carter (2015) Kalil, Duncan, & Ziol-Guest (2016).
- change in personality**  
Boyce, Wood, Daly & Sedikides, (2015).

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## ACCELL www.accell-research.com

### Vision:

- Adaptive Capacity in work and learning

### Program of research:

- Vital Infrastructure Work
- Employability: Measurement and Pedagogy
- Narrative Identity and Career

### Impact:

- Relevant to practice, policy, and industry (e.g., education and training, regional development)
- Translational research for product development

### Research training:

- PhD, EdD, and Master degrees

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## AUSTRALIAN GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY SCALE

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### AUSTRALIAN GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY SCALE (AGRADES)



The “core measures” of AGRADES include a selection of subscales from the

- **Dispositional Measure of Employability (DME)**; Fugate & Kinicki, 2008)
- **Career Futures Inventory Revised (CFI-R)**; Rottinghaus, Buelow, Matyja, & Schneider, 2011)
- **Job Search Self-Efficacy Scale (JSSE)**; Saks, Zikic, & Koen, 2015)

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**PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF AGRADES**

- AGRADES in counseling**
- Fast to administer (10-15 mins)
  - Report provides client's scores on each subscale (and reference to high and low scores)
  - Use data to open up discussion about career adaptive behaviors
  - Re-take AGRADES after counselling intervention to reflect on progress / changes



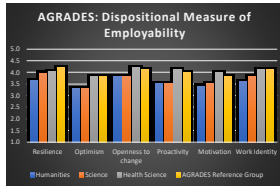
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**PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF AGRADES**

- AGRADES in Education**
- Class activity for students to complete AGRADES
  - Provide group feedback to students and discuss how AGRADES can be used to identify opportunities to enhance employability
  - Group level results inform decisions about learning activities appropriate to needs of the class



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**CDLF**

CDLF Dimension	CDLF Indicator	CDLF Indicator Description	CDLF Indicator Measurement	CDLF Indicator Measurement	CDLF Indicator Measurement	CDLF Indicator Measurement	CDLF Indicator Measurement	CDLF Indicator Measurement	CDLF Indicator Measurement
Career Self-management	1.1	Identify and set personal goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
	1.2	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
	1.3	Identify and set academic goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
	1.4	Identify and set personal development goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
Professional Identity	2.1	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
	2.2	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
	2.3	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
	2.4	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
Connectiveness & Social Capital	3.1	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
	3.2	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
	3.3	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
	3.4	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
Mindsets for Innovation & Enterprise	4.1	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
	4.2	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
	4.3	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report
	4.4	Identify and set professional goals	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report	Self-report

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**PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF AGRADES**

- Evaluating interventions**
- AGRADES includes psychometrically validated scales (e.g., DME, CFI-R, JSSE)
  - Use in pre- post- tests of career interventions to test the impact on JSSE or changes to DME or CFI-R dimensions (e.g., optimism, proactivity, negative career outlook)

[acell-research.com/agrades](http://acell-research.com/agrades)

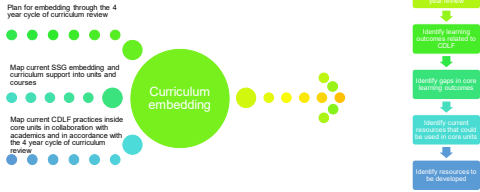
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**Employ Your Ability Using the framework**



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HOW WE CAN USE THE FRAMEWORK?



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Dialogical careers and employability learning (DCEL)

The ways that people explore and navigate their careers, both within themselves and with others:

- reflect on their careers
- make decisions and set goals
- adopt proactive attitudes and behaviours
- work through challenges
- explore, establish, evolve professional identities
- learn from others
- connect with their professional communities

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Geographical positioning



Relationship Creation



Embracing expertise



Regular promotion



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Dialogical careers and employability learning (DCEL)

Theoretical foundations:

Practical implementations:

Dialogical Self Theory

Hubert Hermans and colleagues

Career Learning

Bill Law

Systems Theory Framework

Mary McMahon and Wendy Patton

Career Writing

Frans Meijers and Reineke Lengelle

My Career Chapter

Peter McIveen

Narrative-based methods

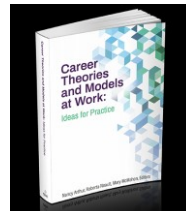
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Dialogical approaches to careers and employability learning

Michael Healy

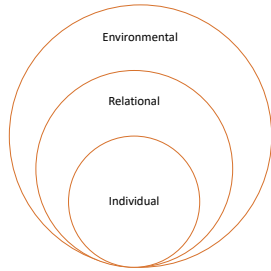
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Three levels of DCEL

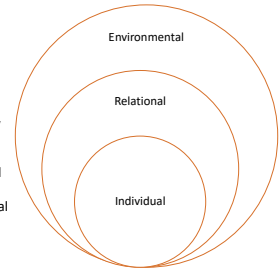


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Three levels of DCEL

*Environmental:*

- institutional conditions and cultures that allow careers and employability conversations to be normal and ubiquitous
- careers and employability inside and alongside the curriculum
- a culture of collaborative professional learning oriented toward student careers and employability

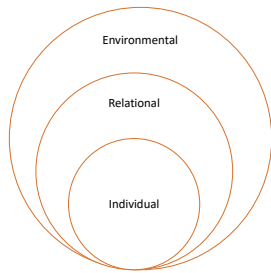


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Three levels of DCEL

*Individual:*

- internal learning processes of reflection, decision-making, identity exploration, positioning, boundary-crossing, self-conflict
- facilitating and scaffolding reflective learning experiences to promote evaluative judgement, proactive behaviours, optimism, and adaptability.



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[www.linkedin.com/pulse/dialogical-approaches-careers-employability-learning-michael-healy/](http://www.linkedin.com/pulse/dialogical-approaches-careers-employability-learning-michael-healy/)

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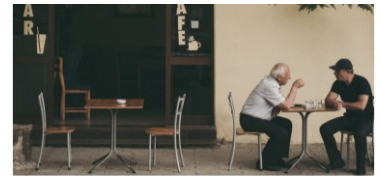


Photo by Neil Gifford/Unsplash

**Dialogical approaches to careers and employability learning**

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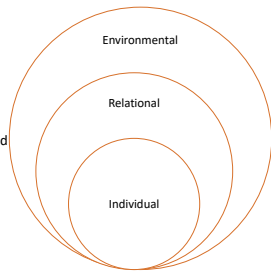
**Michael Healy**  
 Careers & Employability Educator | PhD candidate  
 3 articles  
 Like Comment Share 101 · 20 Comments · 4 Shares · All Views

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Three levels of DCEL

*Relational:*

- conversations with peers, educators, and mentors in which the individual perspectives can be tested against and refined by those of others
- help students learn *how* to engage in and make sense of career conversations
- dialogical approaches to assessment and feedback



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**career adaptive older workers**

Motivation to re-engage with work, build employability and become meaningful mentors.

**Jennifer Luke**

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## CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL AGES

Career guidance refers to services and activities intended to assist individuals, of **any age and at any point throughout their lives**, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers (OECD, 2004).

OECD (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap*. OECD Publishing, Paris. <https://doi.org/10.1787/8792264110569-en>.

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## RESULTS MOTIVATION

- **Keeping Busy** – both mind & body
- Wanting to experience a **feeling of self-worth**
- Chance to **contribute to society**
- **Financial** (minimal % of participants)

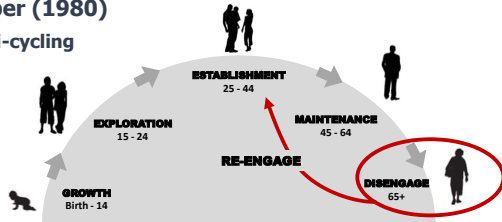
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## Life Span – Life Space Super (1980)

Mini-cycling



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## Being ADAPTIVE



**Career adaptability** refers to your willingness and ability to adapt to changing work (or study) environments.

It's about having **self-knowledge** and **self-management** to operate effectively and prepare for the unknown.

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## Initial MEd Research

### What motivates a person in retirement to re-enter career?

Semi-structured interviews with **22** post-retirement age.

Age range: **56 to 78 years**. Male & Female in SE QLD.

All participants **either working or volunteering**.

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## Current PhD Research

Extend on MEd investigation into **motivation** and **career adaptabilities** of retirees seeking an **encore career**.


Now focus on how to assist in transferring their valuable skills to the younger generation through **mentorship**.

Semi-structured interviews with **30** post-retirement age.

Male & Female in SE QLD.

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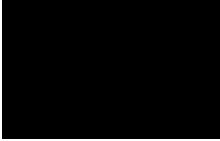
“The notion of meaning in relation to working includes **one's sense of purpose in working** and the way in which **one understands his/her work life.**” (Blustein, 2011)

Blustein, D.L. (2011). A relational theory of working. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 79, 1–17.

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## Impacts on career at all life stages



David Blustein (2006) in his **psychology-of-working perspective** also adds that **the impact of institutional and social barriers such as age, gender, race and social class must be also considered at each life stage.**

Blustein, D. (2006). *The psychology of working: A new perspective for career development, counseling, and public policy*. Psychology Press.

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## feeling Insignificant

Over half of participants genuinely felt unsure that their career history and experience would be interesting & significant enough to others.



Not feeling their worth.

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All participants in both research projects **have** included an explanation of their work ethic with terms such as :


“self-worth”, “staying focused”, “responsible”, “you adapt” and “good communication”.

All these competencies build upon their **employability.**

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## Social Inclusion



Majority of the participants spoke of the social aspect of their work and acknowledged it as something they missed initially at retirement and became a strong motivator for them to stay active.

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## Career Adaptabilities

Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 2005)

<b>Concern</b> a future orientation to working	<b>Curiosity</b> interest in learning & developing new knowledge
<b>Control</b> sense of autonomy over work tasks & vocational future	<b>Confidence</b> feeling positive about ability to contribute to workplace

Savickas, M.L. (2005). The theory and practice of career construction. In R.W. Lent, & S.D. Brown (Eds.), *Career development and counseling: Putting theory and research to work* (pp. 42-70). Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

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## IMPLICATIONS FOR WORKPLACE & POLICY

Harnessing older workers' career adaptability and how they wish to express it may be just the thing to refresh motivation and restore dignity in the workplace.



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Measure (Indonesia)	df	$\chi^2$	p	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
CAAS Concern	9	17.414	.043	.960	.976	.054
CAAS Control	9	154.339	.000	.509	.705	.223
CAAS Curiosity	9	27.772	.001	.936	.961	.080
CAAS Confidence	9	56.154	.000	.839	.905	.127
Career Agency	35	163.876	.000	.825	.864	.107
Negative Career Outlook	2	2.960	.228	.990	.997	.009
Support	2	3.664	.160	.985	.995	.051
Work Life Balance	2	1.866	.393	1.001	1.000	.000
Occupational Awareness	9	15.414	.08	.963	.978	.051
Employability University Status	2	.823	.663	1.00	1.00	.000
Employability Degree Status	2	22.640	.000	.802	.934	.193
Employability Self	9	71.811	.000	.738	.843	.159

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## Employability Measured in Indonesia and Vietnam

Peter McIlveen

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Measure (Vietnam)	df	$\chi^2$	p	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
CAAS Concern	9	30.361	.000	.933	.960	.096
CAAS Control	9	34.722	.000	.913	.948	.105
CAAS Curiosity	9	88.883	.000	.746	.848	.185
CAAS Confidence	9	35.126	.000	.942	.965	.106
Career Agency	35	85.764	.000	.900	.922	.075
Negative Career Outlook	2	2.226	.289	1.054	1.000	.000
Support	2	1.349	.509	1.011	1.00	.000
Work Life Balance	2	.733	.693	1.005	1.017	.000
Occupational Awareness	9	15.030	.09	.966	.980	.051
Employability University Status	2	12.768	.002	.931	.977	.144
Employability Degree Status	2	6.582	.037	.943	.981	.094
Employability Self	9	51.190	.000	.853	.912	.135

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### Method

#### Measures

- Career Adap-Abilities Scale (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012)
- Career Futures Inventory-Revised (Rottinghaus, Buelow, Matyja, & Schneider, 2011)
- Self Perceived Employability Scale (Rothwell, Herbert & Rothwell, 2008)

#### Indonesia Participants

- $N = 277$  Students enrolled in Bachelor degree, Jakarta

#### Vietnam Participants

- $N = 260$
- Bachelor degree, Ho Chi Minh City

### Now What? A Research Agenda:

- Conceptualize, operationalize, and assess employability as:
  - multidimensional
  - Multidisciplinary
- Contextualize, personalize, and depersonalize
  - Where is employability in the mix of labour market dynamics?
  - Where is the beginning and end of responsibility
    - Personal
    - Industry
    - Government
- How can the field of career development balance the tensions?

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