

Read the latest career development news from the Asia Pacific region.

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Asia Pacific Career Dev Assoc - September 2013

Asia Pacific Career Developments

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Submit Your Proposal by Nov 15!

by Marilyn Maze



Have you considered presenting at the 2014 Asia Pacific Career Development Association Conference in Hawaii? The theme is "Celebrating Innovative Career Services in the Asia Pacific Region." The conference serves as a forum where career counselors and advisors share their successes and ideas about how to meet the career planning needs of clients in the Asia Pacific region. Practical information about techniques and practices for working with various ages and populations are encouraged. If you work in the Asia Pacific region, please share what you do that works. If you work elsewhere, please share ideas for what you think would work in this region. This is your conference – please participate!

The conference will be held from Monday, May 19 through Wednesday, May 21 in Waikiki, Hawaii. John Krumboltz, well know author of the Happenstance theory of career planning. will set the stage by discussing ways to make space in life plans for happenstance and prepare to take advantage of opportunities that arrive unexpectedly. On Tuesday, well-known author and NCDA Past President Ed Colozzi will discuss ways to find meaning and purpose in your life and will host workshops to discuss applications for his ideas in your setting. Well-known author and NCDA Past President JoAnn Harris-Bowsley will review important insights brought to us from theorists, from Super to Savickas. By examining what we have learned from famous career theorists, we will be able to create a coherent theory of career development throughout the lifespan. Then we will adjourn to tour the fascinating Polynesian Cultural Center.

If this conference sounds intriguing, why not share your expertise? [Click here for more information about the conference.](#) [Click here for instructions on submitting a proposal.](#) We are eager to hear from you. Please let us know what you can contribute to this important sharing opportunity.

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News from Korea

by Sungsik Ahn

Korean participants at 2013 NCDA Conference



Celebrating the 100th anniversary of National Career Development Association, many Korean practitioners, researchers, students and professors participated in 2013 NCDA Conference in Boston in July. It might have been the largest group among international guests in the conference. Korean participants lunched together during the conference, networking and giving warm congratulation to Dr. Yoon, Hyung Joon who was elected as the Trustee At Large board member of NCDA. Korean members all enjoyed the conference and a short trip in Boston before and

after the conference.



Korean participants: Dr. Yoon, Hyung Joon, Ms. Hwang, Eunmee, Dr. Hwang, Mae Hyang, Mr. Ahn, Sungsik, Dr. Kang, Hey Young, Ms. In, Hyo Yoen, Ms. Kang, Zi Young (on the left photo, from left to clockwise)

A new CDF course launched by Dr. Yoon

In South Korea, a new CDF course was launched by Dr. Yoon, Hyung Joon, Ph.D, CDFI, Master Trainer as a main instructor and with Sungsik Ahn, CDFI as an assistant instructor. Six participants have joined this CDF training for 10 weeks in Seoul. The participants come from various backgrounds. During the training they learned the twelve competencies as career development facilitators. They shared their own experiences, enriching the class. The CDF course ended on 3rd August 2013 and the next class will be held this December. Monthly supervision meetings will be held as well as more advanced training to enrich their practices.

In South Korea, there are many associations or organizations related to career counseling.

KCA (Korean Counseling Association) is one of the largest associations for the counseling field. You can see the detailed introduction on the KCA website - http://www.counselors.or.kr/sub_11_01.php. On August 7th – 9th the KCA annual conference was held in Busan. There were many presentations on various subjects on counseling like school, addiction, career counseling, etc. One of the sessions focusing on career issues was "Trends and Issues of career counseling: a Debriefing on 2013 NCDA Conference". On the 2nd day of KCA conference Dr. Hwang, Mae Hyang, Dr. Kang, Hey Young, and Mr. Ahn, Sungsik reported on their experiences at international conferences including NCDA, APA, and APCDA. Their goal is to provide practitioners in Korea broader perspectives for their practice and research.

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Singapore Country Report

by Sing Chee Wong



Career Guidance or career advisory is a relatively new technique in Singapore, and not yet well-established. But as Singapore's demography, population profile, economy and socio-economic values change the employment scene in Singapore, these changes have given impetus for the interest and development of its career services. This is particularly notable in a small country like Singapore where human capital is its only resource. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the Singapore workers are well-trained and developed, so that their talents are optimally utilized, and potential contributions maximized working in suitable careers.

Since gaining political independence in 1964, Singapore's economy has changed from trading to manufacturing. The current focus is on high-end, knowledge-based industries like Research and Development and Biotechnology. Other established industries include the finance, manufacturing, and service industries like health care. Like many other developed countries, Singapore's population has not grown in proportion to its economic growth which has an unemployment rate of less than 2%. Demographically, Singapore's shrinking population size necessitates workers to postpone retirement where possible, and to work beyond the retirement age of 62 years old. Singapore also advocates an "inclusive society" policy, and people from different sectors of the population are encouraged to participate in the labor force so that they can be gainfully employed and self-financing. Among them are retirees, housewives, people with disabilities, ex-offenders etc. They are given heavily-subsidized training programs to equip them for work in the different industries.

Although employment opportunities are plentiful, many of them would satisfy the career aspiration needs of job seekers and workers in career transition. Yet many of these opportunities are not rigorously pursued. This is because job seekers often lack self-knowledge necessary for making career decisions. They are uncertain of their career interests, strengths, skills/competencies and work values, and may lack the confidence to select and pursue suitable careers. They are not familiar with Singapore's Labor Market Information, and the range of occupations available in various industries. Hence, they tend to limit themselves to a narrow range of job openings, even though many more other choices are available to them. Some job seekers are reluctant to come out of their "comfort zone". They prefer to stick to familiar jobs and not venture to unfamiliar ones even though the latter may be better options for them. Job seekers frequently lack job search/employability skills. This is especially true of older workers who were not required to have these skills when they started work many years ago. Consequently, the older workers may not have developed the skills.

As a result there is a great need for career professionals who can help job seekers achieve better self awareness and understanding of themselves in order to make good career decisions. Job seekers need to develop the ability to manage work expectations realistically, as well as have the confidence to venture out of their comfort zone to transit to other careers if necessary. Job seekers require reliable labor market information, knowledge of suitable career options, employment opportunities, resources, and other information that could facilitate a more effective job search. Coaching on job search skills would be helpful for job seekers who lack the skills. Since there are many training programs available for workers to upgrade and widen their range of skills, career professionals' guidance and referrals to suitable training programs would greatly benefit job seekers and workers in career transitions.

Career guidance is gaining importance in educational institutions, and career guidance personnel are required in schools as well as post-secondary school institutions like the universities and polytechnics.

Currently, training of career professionals is rather limited in Singapore. Most of the time, interested personnel only receive on-the-job training, and attend ad-hoc courses on job search skills like how to critique resumes, conduct interviews, etc. Some may learn administration of some psychometric tests like MBTI, DISC, etc. Several Institutions of Higher Learning offer career counseling as an elective in their counseling programs. The Career Development Facilitators (CDF) course developed by the National Career Development Association was recently introduced in Singapore. This is a more comprehensive course to develop career professionals, and is gaining popularity. Some companies offer career coaching courses.

Generally, career guidance and career counseling as a profession is new in Singapore, and has yet to achieve the recognition and status that this profession has in other countries where it is better established. Nevertheless, the techniques have been introduced, and recipients of the techniques have benefitted. Career professionals in Singapore are now challenged to develop this profession to a higher level of professionalism, through demonstrations of knowledge and skills pertaining to career guidance and development, and the assistance they give to job seekers. Its impact will be recognized when Singapore workers' talents are better managed; workers themselves are happier and better adapted to their work, and contribute more significantly to Singapore's economy.

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Career Counseling/Advising in Japan

by *Yoshiji Ishikawa*



As a result of the pension eligibility age being raised, the government has mandated that every employee can work until age 65. This law ensures that many employees will work about 40 years for the same company because there is lifetime employment in Japan. Career counselors or advisors are needed to support employees who want to build their career autonomously not dependent on the company.

Many employees who graduated from college or university are employed as the stem candidates in Japanese companies. They may have experienced some personal relocation and job rotation and could be promoted to manager and executive. They need to be supported at 20's or 30's or 40's to develop their career without depending on their employer.

In addition, there is the now the opportunity to retire around mid 50's. It is feared that the worker's motivation will decline. It is difficult for people in their 50's to change their career to another company. The employees of this age are concerned about ways to prove they are still valuable to their employer. Career counselors are needed to assist these employees at this stage of their careers.

The rate of working women between 25 and 39 years old has decreased from 70% to 66% this year. This decline is a result of the population that is aging and the lack of government support of women in the workforce. The government is now considering measures to support working women by raising the wage compensation during childcare holidays, extending the childcare holiday period and increasing the percentage of female managers. There is a lack of support for men to participate in raising a family. Very few employers offer childcare leave for men. Hopefully this will change. Career counselors and advisors should support work-life balance for male clients, not just female clients.

As a result of the economic recovery trend, the employment rate of new graduates has improved. However, the non-employment rate after graduation still is 15.4%. Many students still think the jobs are with larger companies. As a result, employment with small and medium-sized enterprises is quite low. There is still lifetime employment in Japan and many companies hire new recruits after graduation immediately in April. If students are not employed after graduation, it is difficult for them to be hired as a regular employee.

Many students think "If joining a large company, the company will provide good benefits to me." There is a need to educate the students so that they will embrace the need to change their awareness to pursuing their career for themselves. All universities have career education but there is a tendency to treat career education and vocational education as being the same. Therefore, career counselors and advisors need to show the students the distinction between career support and vocational support.

There are private career development groups that provide some training programs for their members. At this time the Government has not initiated standard training programs for career counselors.

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