CHAPTER 9

TECHNOLOGICAL Advance, Restructuring AND THE TRAINING OF A Profession

"Whenever we face international competition," the chairman of the Science Council of Canada said, "we have no choice but to be as productive as possible, including using all of the new technologies, even if this means putting people out on the street." He might have been offering a historical perspective on the management paradigm that swept through the world of big business in the 1980s, had he not been speaking on the eve of its appearance. Stuart Smith was simply speaking the practical truth, from a particular point of view. Suddenly, it seemed, pulling into focus like the image in a camera's lens, the reality of a global market had appeared. It had been gathering strength for a decade and more, in the expansion of the communications infrastructure, the proliferation of so-called "multi-national" corporations and the increasingly rapid movement of money around the world.

The other major workplace trend of the era was a rapidly growing small business sector. While large corporations downsized, disgorging people into the streets, small businesses were opening up in record numbers, many started by those orphaned by big business. Two distinct, interrelated trends emerged: a greater dependency on technology; and the rise of the small business sector.

Technology was becoming ever more sophisticated and, with each new generation of computers, workplaces throughout the entire world were changing, in service of greater efficiency and a sharper competitive edge. Throughout the global marketplace, capital was stretching its horizons. Japan was on the rise and, hard on its heels, were the "Four Tigers" of Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea and Hong Kong. The vanquished foe of the Second World War had emerged in a very different guise. The east-west contest had shifted to the cash register and the

competition was proving to be stiff.

It was a serious wakeup call throughout the west. Competition was no longer confined to corporate backyards. The global village was a marketplace and corporate competition happened everywhere, even continents away. Another round of "oil shock" late in the 1970s had sent inflation spiking upward again in the United States and, by the time the monetarist hammer had pounded it back down again, the economy was in deep recession.

"Lean and mean" became the management mantra of the day. "Restructuring" and "re-engineering" were the lead items on large corporate agendas everywhere. Threatened by the prowess of their new competitors and experiencing the spiraling costs of energy and labour in their domestic economies, western mega-corporations reinvented themselves. They introduced new, labour-saving technology or moved production offshore to locate in more cost-effective sites around the world where labour was abundant and cheap, taxes were lower and there were fewer environmental regulations. The cost in the wreckage they left behind would be measured in terms of jobs.

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Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, U.S. President Ronald Reagan, and Britain's Prime Minister Thatcher, at a meeting of the Heads of State of the G7 countries, in 1988.

Both Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher had an abiding faith in markets as self-correcting; they rejected pump priming as the way to keep unemployment from rising. Eventually, Reagan's "military Keynsianism" of vastly increasing military expenditures would serve much the same purpose. From 1981 to 1983, a new financial orthodoxy was emerging.

In Canada, it was only a matter of time. In 1981, interest rates hit a post-war high of 22.5 percent. Stung by the cost of credit, consumers stopped shopping. The combination was too much. The economy took a nosedive. Mass layoffs, shutdowns and bankruptcies followed. The country's gross national product fell by four full percentage points in 1982 alone, the first drop of such magnitude since the Dirty Thirties. The workplace was in turmoil.

Staggered by the growing dimensions of the need, the federal government was hard-pressed to keep up. Increased demands on programs such as unemployment insurance, social assistance and employment creation forced spending ever higher. And the deficit continued to grow.

It was by far the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, notwithstanding the fact that the decade had started out in a mood of relative prosperity. In the rarefied air around Parliament Hill, events had been even livelier than usual. Pierre Trudeau was back in the Prime Minister's Office, despite having lost the '79 election to Joe Clark and "resigned from political life" altogether—all in the space of less than a year.

Power had not worn well for Clark. Oil prices, interest rates and increasing concern over an impending referendum on sovereignty in Quebec had proved a thorny mix for the rookie prime minister. A tough budget that attempted to appease Alberta's oil patch at the expense of central Canada had sounded the death knell for his government.

Defeated in the Commons, the Tories had been forced to return to the polls. Even then, they might have had some hope of carrying the country, had it not been for Trudeau's unexpected resumption of the Liberal leadership. In February 1980, the enigmatic Trudeau had achieved his third majority government. "Welcome to the 1980s," he greeted his jubilant supporters. Welcome indeed to one of the most difficult, chaotic and adversarial times to govern in the history of the nation, he might well have said, had he known what the balance of the decade held in store.

Within a year the economy had begun its downward spiral, although it appeared to go all but unnoticed in Ottawa, where the prime minister remained preoccupied with issues of national unity, the constitution and Quebec.

A provincial referendum had failed to achieve a mandate for the Parti Quebecois' dream of "sovereignty association." "Non" had been the response of 60 percent of the electorate to the proposal for negotiations with Ottawa. It was a victory for federalism and Trudeau had moved quickly forward with his attempts at constitutional reform, turning patriation into a "personal crusade" and ultimately achieving it, although at the incalculable cost of fractured national unity.

"The British North America Act was dead," observed historian Desmond Morton. "On April 17, 1982, the Queen proclaimed the Constitution Act. At the cold, rainy Ottawa ceremony, Quebec was not represented."[1]

The struggle for a national policy

By the early 1980s, the former Canada Manpower had been replaced by the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC). It was a huge bureaucracy with a sweeping network of local centres managed actively by headquarters in Ottawa. Political and public service authorities were "so busy struggling to cope," according to employment service historian John Hunter, "that they didn't have time for long-term planning."

In the 1980 Speech from the Throne, the Liberal government had announced that new economic policies would be required "to provide jobs, promote growth, improve regional balance and offer a fair distribution of economic opportunity." Active labour market policies were critical to its national development strategy, the government proclaimed, and it was committed to using them to improve the employment picture across the country.[3]

> "Attempts to develop a new conceptual framework for employment policies and programs…had to be done 'on the fly.'" There was no overarching vision of government's objectives in the workplace, in other words, and "many of the labour market tools had been developed in response to ad hoc situations and were not part of any coherent, overall labour market strategy."[2]

The National Training Act and the need for labour market information

Following two task forces, which were commissioned to address employment and job creation, the federal government zeroed in on occupational training as important. The government's response to the challenge, at least in part, was found in the National Training Act of 1982, which called for greater cooperation between the provinces and the federal government regarding the training of Canadian workers. The act introduced the concept of "national demand occupations" and included greater support for the training of high level skills.

In addition to introducing a Skills Growth Fund to offer provinces support for the expansion and updating of training facilities, the act also opened the door to the country's not-for-profit, community-based training organizations, allowing them to submit proposals for funding.

At the same time, labour market forecasting became part of federal government policy. A labour market intelligence system, dubbed the Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS), was introduced to predict future occupational supply and demand nationwide, and to make that information available to workers, students, employers and to employment and career counsellors.

As Canada's industrial and natural resource sectors continued to restructure under the combined pressures of changing technology and heightened competition, the need for cooperative ventures to address Canada's workforce and training needs was growing. In 1983, the government attempted to institutionalize cooperation on labour market issues and established the Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre (CLMPC).

Charged with conducting analysis and making recommendations regarding some of the employment and skills issues confronting Canadian workers, the centre brought people together from business, labour and government to look for ways to improve Canada's competitiveness and economic growth. Forging cooperative, cross-sectoral partnerships was no easy undertaking, however. "As is common with new organizations," reports John Hunter, "the centre spent much of its first few years reconciling differing perceptions and expectations."

"Business, labour and government representatives each had their own ideas about the proper goals and functioning of the centre," he goes on. "A consensus eventually emerged however, and the Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre became part of Canada's labour market infrastructure."

The CLMPC established task forces to examine "key aspects of federal training programs." These task forces worked independently of government and studied the needs of older workers, of people receiving Unemployment Insurance Benefits, of apprentices and those in cooperative education programs as well as initiatives for people entering the field and those in human resource planning.

Counselling persons with special needs

The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) was established in 1918 and for decades has offered a variety of counselling services, including employment counselling, with an initial focus on veterans who were blinded during the war. They branched off into job placement as early as 1920.

Although realizing only limited success initially, by 1928 CNIB was regularly offering both employment counselling and job placement. Most of the services were offered by war-blinded individuals able to help others based on their own experience. There was some assistance in choosing a career, although the scope of occupations offered was fairly limited at first—musician, piano tuner, telephone operator, chair caner, radio technician and concession stand operator. Although we now think of these as stereotypical jobs for individuals who are blind, this was a huge step at the time. Society expected blind people to accept charity, but one of the key roles of the CNIB was to help them find ways to be independent, which often involved employment. The analysis of traditional skills and abilities, as well as creative talents, was a step towards that goal. One of Canada's first dictaphone transcribers (1932) was blind, as were some of the earliest computer programmers.

According to Alex Westgate, Manager, National Employment Services, the CNIB also became a major trainer and employer of persons who are blind, visually impaired or deaf-blind, through its manufacturing and packaging industries. These varied from fully competitive broom and brush manufacturing to smaller operations such as weaving and upholstery to sheltered warehouse packaging services. The jobs available spanned the entire business, from production to sales and marketing, accounting, clerical, purchasing, human resources, maintenance, etc.

In 1968, the first national vocational guidance centre for individuals who were blind or visually impaired was opened in Toronto. People came from all across Canada for vocational testing and assessment. Clerical and telephone operator training courses were also available, as were positions in the broom factory or packaging firm.

Surveys were taken each year of people registered with the CNIB to determine what kinds of education and employment people were finding. Successfully placed people were interviewed and occupational information was collated. Informal peer mentoring was encouraged. As global competition threatened the viability of the manufacturing and packaging operations created by the CNIB, so counsellors placed less emphasis on manual occupations.

Much of this was recorded on tape or braille, as the majority of career counsellors were themselves blind or visually impaired. It was only in the 1980s that the CNIB's guidance centre first sought counsellors with formal training in assessment and counselling. The in-house training systems also expanded to more computer and business applications, as well as ESL (English as a Second Language) for blind newcomers to Canada. Technology made it possible for a myriad of job

accommodations to be developed, opening options that had never been considered by the majority of blind or visually impaired people.

Joan Westland, the Executive Director of The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, describes the evolution of society's treatment of persons with disabilities, as it applies to work: "Employment or vocational counselling really grew out of the sheltered workshop and special training programs of the 1950s and 1960s and were designed around the disability rather than the individual's interests or abilities. Today, we have a bit of a mixed bag. Some counsellors are comfortable providing information and support to people with disabilities, others are not. There are still segregated services (for example, Canadian Hearing Society for the Deaf or CNIB for those who blind). But it would depend on the type of counselling that the person is seeking to determine which service is most appropriate. Years ago, it did not matter what the individual's needs were, they were simply sent to the institution or centre that dealt with disabilities.

Assessment sessions, dexterity and logic tests that could be done manually without the use of text were developed for visually impaired persons. (c. 1985)

"The 'warehouse' period reflects the time up until the 50's and 60's where people with disabilities (known then as cripples and invalids) were kept in large institutions, outside of city centres. They were kept away from the rest of the population. There was little attention paid to individual needs...basic human needs of food, water, air and shelter were provided in various degrees, depending on who was in charge.

"The 'greenhouse' period follows the 'warehouse' period as the institutions started to refine their approach to dealing with people with disabilities. Diagnostic processes are improved so that the classification of people is more complex. In the earlier days, for example, people with Cerebral Palsy, people who were Deaf, had Muscular Dystrophy etc., were all diagnosed as mentally retarded. During the greenhouse period, professionals began to understand that disability was more complex than simply determining that you were different from everyone else. Individual skills, abilities and interests were encouraged to some extent. People were brought out of the institutions to enjoy the sunlight, the open spaces and the caring nurturing environment that was now provided in the various centres. Sheltered workshops grew out of this period as the first shift/transition from institution to community.

In the mid 1970s through the 1980s and on, we find the 'open house' period. Largely influenced by the independent living movement, this is the time that we see the shift from classification systems and labeling to the enabling and empowerment of individuals. People with disabilities start to take charge of their own destiny and demand to be recognized as citizens with the same rights and privileges as everyone else. Of course, today we find the warehouse, greenhouse and open-house approaches are all alive and well, although the movement toward the open house continues!"

Recession creates a new breed: the outplacement specialist

The deep recession of the early 1980s created a new category of career counsellors focusing on outplacement. The first Canadian employer to provide departing employees with outplacement services was the International Nickel Company (Inco). In the United States, services of this kind had been available to corporations since the early 1960s, ever since Humble Oil had asked New York retail career practitioner Saul Gruner to work with some employees who had become "redundant" and help them find other work. Several years later, Gruner partnered with Tom Hubbard to create a firm called Thinc, which became the first consulting firm devoted exclusively to a new human resources specialty that became known as outplacement consulting.

In the early 1970s, Inco had contacted Woods Gordon, a Toronto-based management consulting firm, and asked it to bring a service of this kind to Canada. Outplacement materials and programs were virtually non-existent but David Saunders and Robert Evans, the two consultants at Woods Gordon charged with the task, called Tom Hubbard for advice, which Tom readily gave, Evans recalls. They hammered together a program, ultimately providing more than one hundred Inco managers and professionals across the country with outplacement consulting, the first contract of its kind in Canada.

By June of 1975, Murray Axmith, a Toronto social worker turned management consultant, had changed his career path again and established Murray Axmith & Associates, the first Canadian company devoted exclusively to outplacement consulting. The following spring, the management consulting firm of Stevenson Kellogg, under the leadership of Eric Barton, established a specialized unit within its general consulting practice to focus on outplacement services.

In its early days in Canada, outplacement consulting services were provided only to senior executives and included the provision of office space and secretarial support. Outplacement consultants advised management on how to prepare for and handle termination meetings. They were on site to meet with employees after they had been fired to arrange for the career counselling services to begin. Conducted in one-on-one sessions, the counselling process was intensely personal and the service continued until the individual had found another position.

This rather exclusive service limited to senior executives began to change as the recession of the early 1980s deepened. Front line managers began firing staff. Few were familiar with the nuances of current legislation and they often handled these terminations poorly. Messy lawsuits for wrongful dismissal soon followed.

Stinging from bad press and expensive settlements, and driven by an overriding desire to stay out of court, corporations began to centralize human resources functions such as terminations, screening, recruitment, manpower planning and training. They also began looking for outside help before firing anyone.

"Corporations would come to us and say that they were going to have to release a lot of people, fifty people, one hundred people, in some

cases, one thousand or more people," recalls Murray Axmith. "And they were very, very concerned about the impact of a large-scale termination and the news associated with that on the public perception of the company, and also on the people who remained in the company.

"They started to offer the service at levels beyond the executive level right down to the blue collar level. And we had to quickly revamp our programs so that we could accommodate that."

Revamping programs meant condensing the counselling process, no longer leaving it open-ended, until the individual found work. It also meant greater use of group counselling. "It was the only way of responding to the needs of a lot of people at the same time," Axmith says.

As well, it meant hiring and training outplacement consultants. Many of the people attracted to this new human resources specialty were not educated as counselling professionals but instead had backgrounds in diverse fields such as adult education, social work or sociology. Some had been members of the clergy. Others had backgrounds in recruitment, placement or training.

"At first we looked for people with applied behavioural science experience who also had business experience, which was an unusual animal to find," Axmith says. "After a time, we expanded our criteria and began to hire people who had a lot of empathy and sensitivity and who had superior interpersonal skills and business experience. Business experience was very, very important. If people didn't have it, they didn't understand the roles that people had in business."

The career and employment counselling services provided by the outplacement industry were similar in content to services being offered in the public domain, although they were made more challenging by the presence of two clients: the job seeker and their former employer.

"Strong ethics and standards for professional delivery were key to the success of the outplacement counselling process," said Axmith.

Labour responds to the post-industrial workplace

During the 1980s, many thousands of union members across the country lost well-paying jobs. Many did not possess the skills needed to take on the work being created in the industrial sector and had little hope of finding another job like the one they had lost.

With government programs strained to capacity and workforce development strategies still in gestation, the permanent displacement of so many union members and the impact on their families compelled the Canadian Labour Congress and its affiliated unions into action. Lobby efforts were mounted and unemployment committees began to look into the needs of unemployed members—in particular those considered redundant because of low skill levels.

Industrial labour adjustment programs were set up to provide information and guidance. Early access to such programs generally meant that individuals had greater confidence and made better choices. Displaced workers who took advantage of labour adjustment services also tended to find their way back into the workplace sooner.

New skills were often what reopened the door. Skills were the power

of the craft unions early in the century, says labour educator D'Arcy Martin. "Skilled workers banded together and negotiated with skills as their main lever." With the advent of industrial unionism and its growth among unskilled workers, skills became "a management right, under a 'Taylorist' kind of production, under a system whereby you would check your brain at the door and implement instructions."

The pendulum had swung back, Martin observes. "If you're going to have anything that is responsive, that is fluid, that is knowledge-intensive, you're going to have to have workers who are capable of making decisions."

This meant training.

"You can't expect a worker, suddenly out of nowhere, to develop a self-concept and an autonomy and a capacity to judge. That has to be part of their lived work experience."

Pushed by new realities such as these, from some corners of Canada's labour movement, a training policy emerged. BEST (Basic Education and Skills Training) was designed to help union members deal with change and prepare for a more complex workplace.

Basic skills were defined as the "foundation skills" one needed to pursue further education and training. In labour's view, at least, reading, writing, numeracy and critical thinking were the skills people needed if they hoped to function successfully in their lives, communities and society at large.

Labour's approach was founded, in part, on the notion of "literacy for empowerment." By strengthening members' language skills, it was felt, unions would be responding to their real human needs. Such training was also seen as a way to make unions more relevant and to build their influence through the use of union instructors, materials and course content.

Oil rigs, outrage and "jobs, jobs, jobs"

Pierre Elliot Trudeau, as prime minister, was the kind of great and legendary figure people either loved or hated. By the time the signal year 1984 had made its debut, he had become the politician a majority of Canadians loved to hate, criticize and blame.

In the west they blamed him for the collapse of oil prices. Things had been going great in Alberta. Canada's Texas, sparse in population but gigantic in resources, had been growing like there was no tomorrow. The National Energy Program (NEP) placed restrictions on Canada's oil and gas industry. South of the border, the world's largest free market imposed no such restrictions and the oilrigs pulled up stakes and headed south.

After about a year of sparring, the Alberta and federal governments came to a compromise. By the close of 1981, multi-billion dollar mega-projects were promised for the Alberta tar sands. Petroleum prices were at record levels and were projected to rise continuously and indefinitely. As the recession took hold in early 1982 however, oil prices began to plummet and, by the spring of 1982, the mega-projects collapsed as markets disappeared for the province's heavy oil, which was expensive to extract from the tar sands.

The oil boom was bust. Western alienation was such that the cancellations of the mega-projects, which had reverberations throughout the economy, were blamed on the NEP rather than on international market forces.

Canadian oil companies, supposedly the prime beneficiaries of the ill-timed and luckless Liberal policy, "sank in the undertow of a collapsing Canadian oil industry. Floods of workers, drawn from the east by reports of Alberta riches," recalls historian Desmond Morton, "turned around and went home. Others stayed to join local hordes of unemployed."

In almost every part of the country, Pierre Trudeau was blamed for the numbers of unemployed, the shrinking dollar and a government that continued to spend while household incomes dwindled. Whatever the merits of the complaints, Trudeau's actions were restrained by the international recession of 1982 to 1984. It was February 29, 1984, Leap Year Day, when the beleaguered Trudeau took his famous walk in the snow and returned with a decision to retire, this time for good.

He left a vacuum.

Bay Street darling John Turner, who had been waiting in the wings, was anointed Liberal leader and then prime minister, only to become, within less than six months' time, a historical footnote.

Defining roles, providing options, and improving competency

While the demand for outplacement counselling grew, not-for-profit agencies and organizations rallied resources to battle unprecedented youth unemployment and colleges in eastern and western Canada introduced diploma programs for career counsellors and career practitioners.

CHOICES

Best known among Canadian career products is CHOICES, the first career information tool in the country to blend occupational information with personal data in an interactive computer program.

Information technology was still in its infancy when Phillip Jarvis, an ex-military personnel officer, began working as a researcher/writer in Ottawa's Occupational and Analysis branch. Stuart Conger was his boss.

"Early on in the game, I suggested to Stu that we put everything into a computer in a standardized format," Jarvis remembers. "We were targeting nearly seven hundred monographs of four pages each. And that was times ten provinces or territories, times two languages. It was boxcar loads worth of publications." Once the data was in the computer the magic of the combined power became obvious. "We managed to complete in three years what we had projected would take twelve years to do across the country," Jarvis says.

A tantalizing by-product of the Careers Canada and Careers Provinces series was an extensive database of Canadian occupational information, in both French and English. Jarvis and Conger began to look for ways to use it.

While their political masters endured the woes of power, government staff responsible for carrying out government policy in the workplace continued their attempts to make sense of a complex work world.

The national placement service envisaged by people like Etta St. John Wileman and Bryce Stewart, with its published information about employment opportunities and vocational counselling for young people, had long since become a reality. Stewart's yearned-for unemployment insurance had been around for over forty years.

The precise thrust and intent of Ottawa's role in the Canadian labour force continued to puzzle and confound. Some in the federal employment service still viewed it primarily as a placement operation, while others saw it as responsible for the labour market as a whole, with placement merely one of many interrelated functions.

Among these latter, the definition of the service's role in providing vocational guidance and career assistance was often as confused. Was its function to disseminate information about the labour market to help people make intelligent decisions? Or was it intended to assist individuals directly, by providing counselling and guidance?

In 1983, a series of internal studies, meetings and experimental "user trials" coalesced into a program that became known as the "revitalization" of the Employment Service. Increasingly, it was being recognized that there would never be enough resources to offer one-on-one services to all the unemployed. Interactive technology, it was felt, could facilitate a greater degree of self-service by allowing clients to find answers to questions without involving CEIC staff. Further, services would not be provided "that were already provided, or could be provided, in a competent way by private employment agencies, the personnel services of businesses or by other organizations." Counselling, for example, could only be offered where it "would not occur" in the absence of the employment service.

Elsewhere in Canada and the United States, computer-based information systems were in various stages of development. Jarvis visited some of them, hoping to find a system that would meet the government's needs. Instead, he discovered the computer information systems currently in use or in development were not at all interactive. "I knew we could go farther in interactivity," he says. "That we could have people talking directly on-line with computer systems, putting in their own information about their interests, temperaments and educational attainment."

Charged with the project of developing a system of this kind, Jarvis created CHOICES. "It is an information tool," he says, "designed to help counsellors do their jobs better." And interactive it is. CHOICES users sit at a terminal, put their own personal information into the system and explore and examine hundreds of occupations in search of those to which they are suited.

Early in the 1980s, the program added an educational and training file to allow users find training and educational information relevant to their occupational choices. A few years later, the government licensed CHOICES to a private concern. Within a month or so, Jarvis recalls, that same private concern came knocking on his door and he had to make his own career choice. He decided to move into the private sector to further develop the CHOICES program.

Instead of trying to be all things to all people, the EIC would "seek out niches in the labour market where it could make a difference."[4] Within this rather broad blueprint, it was decreed that federal government employment services would be divided into three categories. First, the government would continue to produce and distribute labour market information, improving the relevance and quality of the data offered and increasing the capacity of local offices to deliver it "to workers, employers, students, teachers and other groups."[5] Second, it would continue to operate and attempt to "streamline" the national Labour Exchange, which matched workers and jobs, using automation and a variety of self-service techniques. Third, and finally, it would provide "adjustment services," including counselling and training, to those Canadians most in need of them.

Increasingly, the services provided to individual clients coming through the doors of Canada Employment Centres were based on the needs of the individual. Under the broad rubric of "adjustment services," extensive funds were devoted to the development of new job search technologies, job creation programs, training initiatives and the provision of career counselling.

Interactive computer programs like CHOICES were valuable tools in an environment of widespread need and fiscal restraint. At the same time, one-on-one counselling sessions were increasingly replaced by group work.

Clients considered "job ready" were not even formally registered, but directed instead to take advantage of some of the government's new self-service features such as Job Boards and the National Job Bank. Individuals deemed not ready to look for work for one reason or another were passed along to a government employment counsellor. And anyone who was seen to need in-depth counselling was referred to appropriate community agencies and services.

Job-finding clubs had been introduced for Canadians receiving unemployment insurance benefits. Originally an American employment services project that had been developed to help ex-psychiatric patients find their way into the workplace, the idea had been adapted by CEIC and incorporated into a three-week training course in job search techniques.

Counselling from competent counsellors

In-house training had not always been available to government employees who provided counselling to the unemployed. Indeed, specific training in counselling techniques had not even been required until an internal directive issued in the mid-1970s reversed that.

The increasingly complex demands of the workplace, "and the effects of these demands on clients to adjust and adapt to issues such as changing expectations, redundant skills and sudden job loss have presented counsellors with constant and novel challenges," according to a government information paper published at the time.[6] In such an environment, there were concerns regarding the competency of counsellors.

There was a growing recognition that the people showing up in Canada Employment Centres were no longer just the hard-core unem-

ployed. Firms began to flatten and fire swaths of middle managers; farms, fisheries and primary industries cut back operations or shut down; and long-term employees, industry specialists and professionals were also unemployed. Expertise to deal with clients as diverse as these was simply not readily available. It had to be developed. In spite of all the attention being given to labour market information, there was relatively little emphasis on the skills of the people providing that information on the front lines.

"What about counselling skills and counsellors?" asked Conger. "We had a policy that said that every unemployed worker who wants counselling and needs it will get it from a competent counsellor. So we instituted a staff training program, a competency-based staff training program. Counsellors had to take these courses, write exams and pass them."

Lyn Bezanson, a teacher and guidance counsellor who had found her way into the federal government, was one of the people responsible for developing the various modules that made up the training program. "We were extremely fortunate to be able to bring together some of the country's best theorists," says Bezanson, now Executive Director of the Canadian Career Development Foundation. "We worked with Phil Patsula from the University of Ottawa, Norm Amundson and Bill Borgen from the University of British Columbia and Vance Peavy, from the University of Victoria." Ultimately, hundreds of government employees took part in competency-based training programs throughout the 1980s.

By late in the decade, training of government employment counsellors slowed considerably. "We had trained almost everybody and we weren't getting in any new counsellors," explains Gayle Takahasi, a Toronto region employment counsellor and trainer with the CEIC, which was eventually to be renamed Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC).

In the shifts and changes that characterized government employment services in the 1990s, there would be even less demand for counsellor training amongst federal employees as the responsibility for counselling clients was passed to the provinces or contracted out to community-based agencies.

Nonetheless, the government's Competency-Based Training program developed a life of its own. Some of the training modules would eventually be incorporated into counsellor training programs at community colleges. The program would ultimately be translated into several languages and become one of the training programs that Canadian government officials marketed to other governments around the world.

Career education — an emerging specialty

In the volatile economic climate of the 1980s, as youth unemployment soared and the school-to-work transition became a hot political potato, the process of counselling young people about their potential working lives began to command greater attention from both federal and provincial governments.

Ever so slowly in Canada's educational system, career education had begun to move beyond its roots in vocational and technical educa-

tion. Responding to growing needs by working to build the acceptance of career education, was a small group of dedicated career educators who began to make their presence felt in the country's high-school guidance community.

Some guidance teachers found their way into government and began to influence the growth of career education from behind the scenes. Others moved out of education into the business community. Still others stayed within the educational system and began to develop career guidance programs.

Innovations in career development in a university-based setting

Career counselling and placement services were established at Memorial University in St. John's Newfoundland in the 1960s, made possible by early funding from the Counselling Foundation of Canada. In the 1990s, the university entered into a partnership with the federal government to assist the centre in broadening its focus from primarily placement to offering a wider rage of employment services. Building upon its original concept of a student-based model of service provision, and having merged with the Cooperative Education Services Centre, the centre has evolved to become the Department of Career Development and Experiential Learning. The department both delivers services and undertakes research and is strengthened by partnerships with the community and industry.

Canada's educational policies differed from province to province, reflecting the unique economies and labour markets overseen by provincial governments. The country's more than sixteen thousand elementary and secondary schools were governed by elected school boards, largely independent agencies within each province and territory. Although directives came from provincial ministries of education, only a few school boards had mandatory career guidance courses and the vast majority viewed guidance services as optional. Only a few provincial educational ministries provided funds for guidance services, virtually all of it for teachers' salaries.

Quebec was the only province in Canada with a specific, clearly defined career guidance program, articulated during the Quiet Revolution of the early 1960s. In every school in Quebec, there was a licensed vocational guidance counsellor, often supported by other staff.

In other provinces, even though there were guidance counsellors in most schools, all of whom were licensed teachers, only a few had a special interest in career education. Guidance came into schools in English Canada as a staff position, but without an organizational structure to support it. As a result, the services provided students tended to vary from location to location; for the most part they focused on personal guidance rather than career guidance and often were based on the interests and proclivities of the teachers assigned guidance duties.

In certain pockets of the Canadian educational system, however, the influence of a few teachers and guidance counsellors with a strong interest in career education was felt. At times, the innovation originated with the provincial government, as it had in Alberta, which had created a specific government department charged with preparing the province's labour force for the world of work. As part of its mandate, this department published career and employment information and developed programs and courses that were made available to the province's educators.

Nova Scotia's government took an early and keen interest in career guidance according to ex-guidance teacher turned provincial employee Kathie Swenson, who worked for Nova Scotia's ministry of education. "The Minister of Education didn't believe in school counsellors," she recalls. "[The Minister] thought they were masquerading as shrinks and

was prepared to strike them off with the stroke of a pen. The only way we were able to maintain any status for counsellors in the schools was to say they were career counsellors and that meant a tremendous change in direction. It was a hard sell, not only to the minister but we then had to go out and convince guidance counsellors who very much enjoyed the personal counselling and who now were going to have to put a different slant on things. We also had to provide training programs and professional development and develop new curriculum guidelines on career counselling."

In Ontario, innovation and program development often happened through the efforts of individual teachers with a strong interest in the field. Career education, as defined in the 1980s by Ontario's Ministry of Education, was a regional cross-curriculum approach, which encouraged links with the community. This was significantly impeded by the insistence of the teachers' union that career counselling could only be conducted by certified teachers (without any particular knowledge of the career development field).

The Toronto Board of Education approached Toronto's Youth Employment Services (YES) and asked to share its expertise in working with young people. A Pre-Employment Training Program with manuals and teachers' training guide was produced and made available to some of the teachers in the Toronto area.

By the middle of the 1980s, the number of Canadians with university degrees had multiplied by ten since 1951. And most universities had diversified their curricula to meet the diversity of demand.

Quebec offered specific graduate studies in career guidance in a couple of its universities. In the rest of the country, the faculties of education were the primary source of training for counselling professionals. Most of the programs were designed for guidance counsellors within the school system, and personal and social counselling was the main focus. Only a course or two in career or vocational counselling was available, as a rule.

Academic research in the career counselling field in English Canada was almost unheard of. The Canada NewStart program had generated research activity in the 1960s and '70s, but little of consequence had been undertaken since.

Professor Norm Amundson from the University of British Columbia (UBC) recalls that he approached the field of career counselling somewhat reluctantly. "I ran the other way," he says, with a chuckle. "In the field of psychology, there's a hierarchy and career and vocational psy-

Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers (CACEE)

The first professional association dedicated to the career planning needs of post-secondary students in Canada was established in 1945 as the University Advisory Services. Today known as the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers (CACEE), it was founded through the initiative and support of representatives from the Universities of British Columbia, Toronto, Western Ontario, and Sir George Williams (now Concordia), and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Initially an effort to re-integrate veterans onto Canadian university campuses and subsequently into the world of work, CACEE's strength over the years has resulted from the breadth of its membership base. CACEE includes both career educators who work in colleges and universities across the country and employers who recruit students and graduates from campuses across Canada. It has been instrumental in the enhancement of the profession, by providing professional development opportunities in the field, developing career planning and job search publications and services to meet the needs of students, providing resources to its membership to help facilitate the link between employers and students and in contributing to the establishment of standards for the profession.

chology was the lowest form. So at first I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole. There was very little creativity attached to the field in the 1970s," he explains. "It had this bureaucratic image, of people in brown suits and worn-out shoes, with ties askew, sitting in an office all day, giving people reams of tests and making pronouncements. There wasn't much energy, creativity or imagination. And for most people who were in psychology, it didn't have much appeal."

Amundson's interest was piqued by Jean Claude Coté, who worked in Ottawa at the federal employment service. He asked Amundson and Bill Borgen, both of UBC, to turn their academic gaze on the ways and means of working with groups of unemployed people. Their report, "The Dynamics of Unemployment," funded by the Social Science Research Council and published in 1984, had an impact on the field as well as establishing Amundson and Borgen as leading thinkers in it. It was the first documentation in Canada of the emotional roller coaster that people ride after losing their jobs and the grieving that often accompanies such a loss.

The pragmatic, rational approach taken in job finding clubs prior to Amundson and Borgen's work was relevant in many instances, Amundson says. "A lot of people need information and some practical assistance to learn how to look for work. But for others there's more to it than that, there's a lot of emotion. And the practical, rational models that existed couldn't handle it."[7]

The Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) was established in 1979 as a charitable Foundation to advance the understanding and practice of career development. Each year, CCDF awards up to $7,500 to a project/projects which demonstrate potential advancement of career development.

By the end of the 1980s, across the country, a growing number of academic researchers had begun to turn their attention to the field. Amundsen and Borgen would go on to research and write about the career field. In addition to the NATCON papers published each year after the National Conference, Canadian educators scholars who have added to the body of Canadian career literature includes Norm Atkinson, Lyn Bezanson, Bill Borgen, Colin Campbell, Gerald Cosgrave, Bryan Hiebert, Chris Magnussen, Bill O'Byrne, Phillip Patsula, Vance Peavy, Dave Redicopp, and Marilyn Van Norman.

Stuart Conger had retired from government life and was thinking about going back to university, he says, when Andre Pacquin, who had become the Director of the Employment Counselling Directorate in its Ottawa headquarters, approached him with a request. The department's Associate Deputy Minister wanted a proposal outlining ways in which the government's employment counselling training program could be extended nationwide for counsellors in other agencies. "It was Andre's idea that research and development be added."[8]

The idea of promoting career-focused research and development in the academic community held considerable appeal for Conger, who believed that with the right collaborative approach and enough money, Canada's university researchers could be galvanized to action. Once they had turned their fine minds to the task, new career programs, curricula and products would be created to address some of the complex issues that confronted Canadian workers at the end of the industrial era.

Conger brought together three academics from different parts of the

country to work with him to develop a working paper: Vance Peavy, from the University of Victoria; Conrad LeCompte from the University of Montreal; and from the University of British Columbia, Bill Borgen. At a two-day think tank hosted by Employment and Immigration Canada and chaired by Peavy, the working paper was presented to scholars from both the anglophone and francophone communities, to practitioners in the field, government representatives and a range of people from different disciplines.

The resultant project—Creation and Mobilization of Career Resources for Youth (CAMCRY)—funneled $7.4 million from the federal coffers to the Canadian academic community, earmarked for research and development projects designed specifically to examine the needs of the country's youth for improved career counselling.

By the early 1990s, some forty-one projects were under development at fifteen Canadian colleges or universities. As with any major project with millions of federal dollars, from the beginning controversy swirled around CAMCRY. Nonetheless, says Vance Peavy, CAMCRY was a "valuable initiative. It provided funding to a large number of projects. Not all those projects turned out to be good or worthwhile, but many of them did. And it elevated the status of the field in Canada and gave career counselling and guidance a higher profile."

Community colleges begin to train career and employment counsellors

As the 1980s continued their turbulent course, more people began to move from one counselling-related sector to another and from one area of the country to another, cross-fertilizing the field as they did. Some found their way into career counselling through adult education or social work or workers' rehabilitation services. Others, like Bill O'Byrne, entered the field through community-based, not-for-profit agencies such as the YMCA, which offered employment and career services.

O'Byrne's career path took him out of community-based agencies into private practice and from there into the post-secondary education system as a community college professor. In 1986, the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Council of Regents approved that province's first diploma program for career and employment counselling practitioners at Sir Sanford Fleming College in Peterborough, Ontario. The curriculum was written by an advisory group brought together by O'Byrne and the first thirty students accepted into the program began their studies in September 1987.

About the same time, in Alberta, a similar program was put forward by Barry Day, who had become the Director of Training Services for Alberta Career Development and Employment. About five thousand people in the province had something to do with career development,

Interestingly it was often out of these community-based programs that resources would be developed to enhance the profession of career counsellors in Canada. For instance, in the mid-1990s, the Ontario Association of Youth Employment Counselling Centres published a handbook entitled Community Career and Employment Counselling for Youth: Principles and Practice. Grounded in a community-based model, the OAYECC document provided a standardized approach to service delivery, plus all sorts of strategies and ideas that counsellors serving other parts of Canada or other communities could adapt.

Day recalls, and outside of a course or two in the graduate programs in the educational psychology departments of Alberta's universities, there was little training available to them.[9]

At his boss' suggestion, Day decided to take a leave of absence. He brought together a team of keen young psychologists to consider the situation. Within a year, a curriculum had been developed and the Centre for Career Development was established at Edmonton's Concordia University College.

In the years since, community colleges in various parts of the country have added career development and counselling diplomas and certificate programs to their academic offerings through part-time, full-time and, in some instances, distance education. In Regina, the Federated Indian College offers a certificate program for native and community counselling. Today in 2002, career practitioners are choosing from over seventeen college certificate/diploma programs and over thirty-one courses/programs of study at Canadian Universities.

Through the efforts of people like Frank Lawson, Gerald Cosgrave, Vance Peavy and Myrne Nevison, a new breed of career practitioners had emerged. Some had training in counselling and educational psychology and were beginning to find their way into the workplace, into community college and university counselling centres, into private training schools and not-for-profit agencies and even, in a few cases, into organized labour's "help centres."

[1] Desmond Morton, *A Short History of Canada* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992).
[2] John Hunter, *The Employment Challenge* (Ottawa: Government of Canada).
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.
[6] "Information Paper on the Competency-Based Training Program in Employment Counselling for Employment Counsellors" cited in Canivet research paper, "History of Career Counselling.