

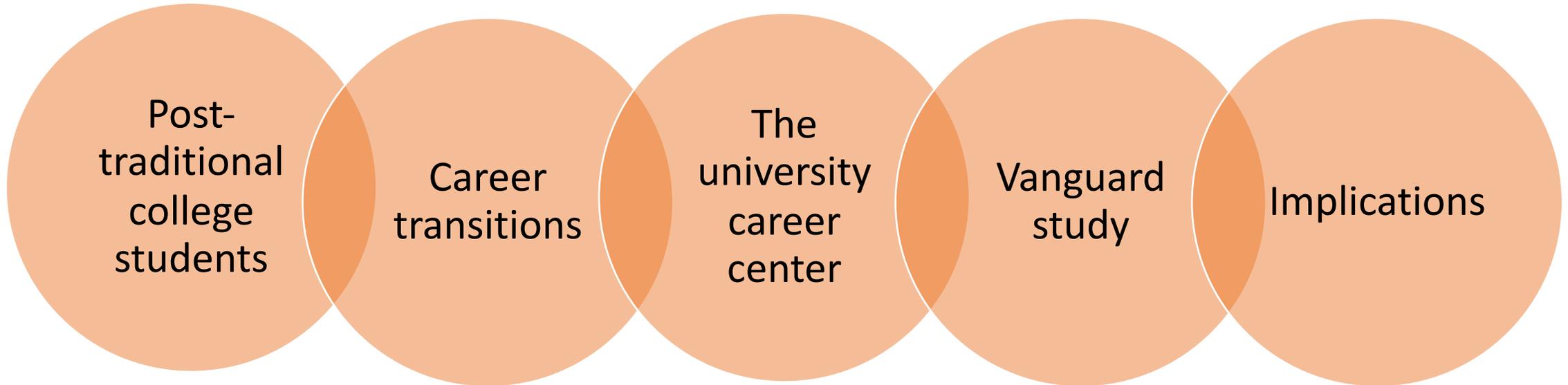


Transitioning Adults

Meeting the Unique Needs of the Mid-Career College Student

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What's so **unique** about
them?

Traditional undergraduate (18-22 year-old, full-time, resident students) make up less than 30% of college students.

Adult Learners

(Post-Traditional Students)

They're getting younger

Median age of post-traditional college students is 29
(19% are 20 or under).

“27 is the new 18”

The Chronicle of Higher Education

Blumenstyk, G., 2018

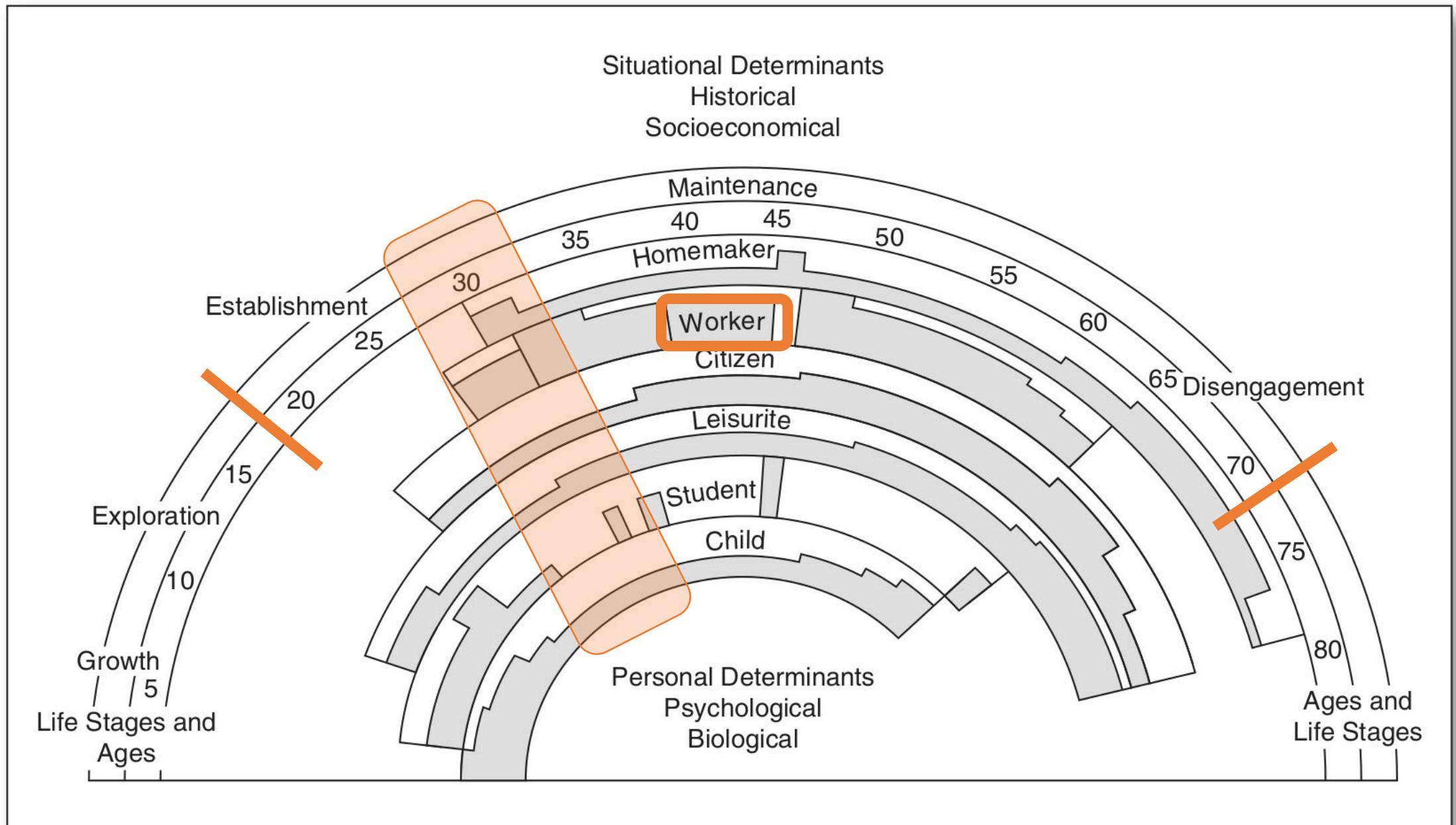
Post-traditional students often make decisions based on a complicated set of priorities that involve **work** and **family**, and shaped by **unique adult-life experiences and responsibilities**.

National Career Development Association

The NCDA policy on career development has six life stages:

1. Preschool
2. Elementary
3. Grades 7-9
4. Grades 10-12
5. Adults
6. Retired individuals

*Adult Ages
18-65?*



Donald Super's Life Stage Model in Swanson and Fouad, 2015, p. 139

Career Adaptability (Savickas)

Self Construction

Career adaptability consists of

1. **Concern**: future focus, planning for tomorrow
2. **Control**: control over one's own choices
3. **Curiosity**: interest in occupational choices
4. **Confidence**: self-efficacy

The 21st century view is of boundaryless, protean careers, which require subjective construction by the individual and adaptation to changing conditions.

Some individuals are **truly devastated** by the job loss and may never fully recover from the event.

Other individuals conceptualize the job loss as providing the **motivation** they needed to move to better, **more satisfying options** for their lives.

Top Motivations for College Enrollment

1. Transition to a new career (29%)
2. Next step after graduation (24%)
3. Seeking promotion or new position (16%)
4. Unemployed and need more education to get a job (13%)
5. Returning to job market after several years (8%)

Top Motivations for Grad School Enrollment

1. Raise my salary (25%)
2. Seeking promotion or new position (21%)
3. Transition to new career field (19%)
4. Graduate degree required to enter my field (14%)
5. Returning to job market after several years (8%)

83% of graduate students are employed
(71% FT; 12% PT)

“Nearly all post-traditional students enroll in graduate education for **career related reasons.**”

Top Services for Graduate Students

1. Library resources (40%)
2. Tech support (30%)
3. Research assistance (28%)
4. Academic advising (27%)
5. Career planning (24%)

Online College Students

- 75% said their school offered career services. Of that group, 78% accessed the career services.
- Of the 12% who said their school did not offer career services, 66% said they wished their school would offer them.

Top Career Services Used for **Online** Students

1. **Career advisor meetings (50%)**
2. Self-assessments (48%)
3. Resume creation (47%)
4. Job search assistance (40%)
5. Schools job website (38%)

Career Transitions

Presenting Problem / Differential Diagnosis

Z63.0
Problems
related to
spouse/partner



Z56.9
Problems
related to
employment

DSM V (ICD10) Z56.9

Problems Related to Employment

Used when an occupational problem is the focus of clinical attention or has an impact on the individual's treatment or prognosis. Areas to be considered include problems with employment or **in the work environment**, including:

1. unemployment
2. recent change of job
3. threat of job loss
4. job dissatisfaction
5. stressful work schedule
6. uncertainty about career choices
7. sexual harassment on the job
8. discord with boss, supervisor, co-workers, or others in the work environment
9. uncongenial or hostile work environments
10. other psychosocial stressors related to work
11. other problems related to employment and/or occupation

Career Transitions Inventory

A PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

Now, just imagine...

Career Transitions Inventory

The CTI is designed to assess
psychological resources,
or conversely barriers,
that adults may experience
during a career transition.

Readiness

How willing you are at this time to actually do the things you need to do to achieve your career goals.

Confidence

Your belief in your ability to successfully perform career planning activities necessary to make a career transition.

Personal Control

The extent to which you feel you have personal control over this career planning process rather than feeling that external forces will determine the outcome of your career transition.

Perceived Support

How much support you feel you are receiving from people in your life as you contemplate a career transition.

Decision Independence

The level at which you view a career choice as being an independent decision as opposed to a choice that is made as part of a larger relational context.

This relational context may be family, friends, partners, or other significant others who may enter into your career planning process.



What might be your psychological resources/barriers?

Adult clients who were being seen at a university based **career counseling center** for 3 – 12 sessions demonstrated **significant improvement** on the CTI in the areas of:

1. *readiness* (sufficient motivation)
2. *confidence* (self-efficacious about their ability)
3. *control* (in charge of their career transition)
4. *support* (level of support they needed)

University Career Services

95% of university admissions directors say that
“higher education needs to do a better job at
explaining the value of a college degree.”

Hanover, 2018, p. 4

“Simply handing a graduate a diploma and an alumni card was really never good enough, but with the rising cost of college and increasing expectations for the usefulness of a degree, higher education must embrace its role as a gateway to the workforce.”

Carlson, 2017, p. 6

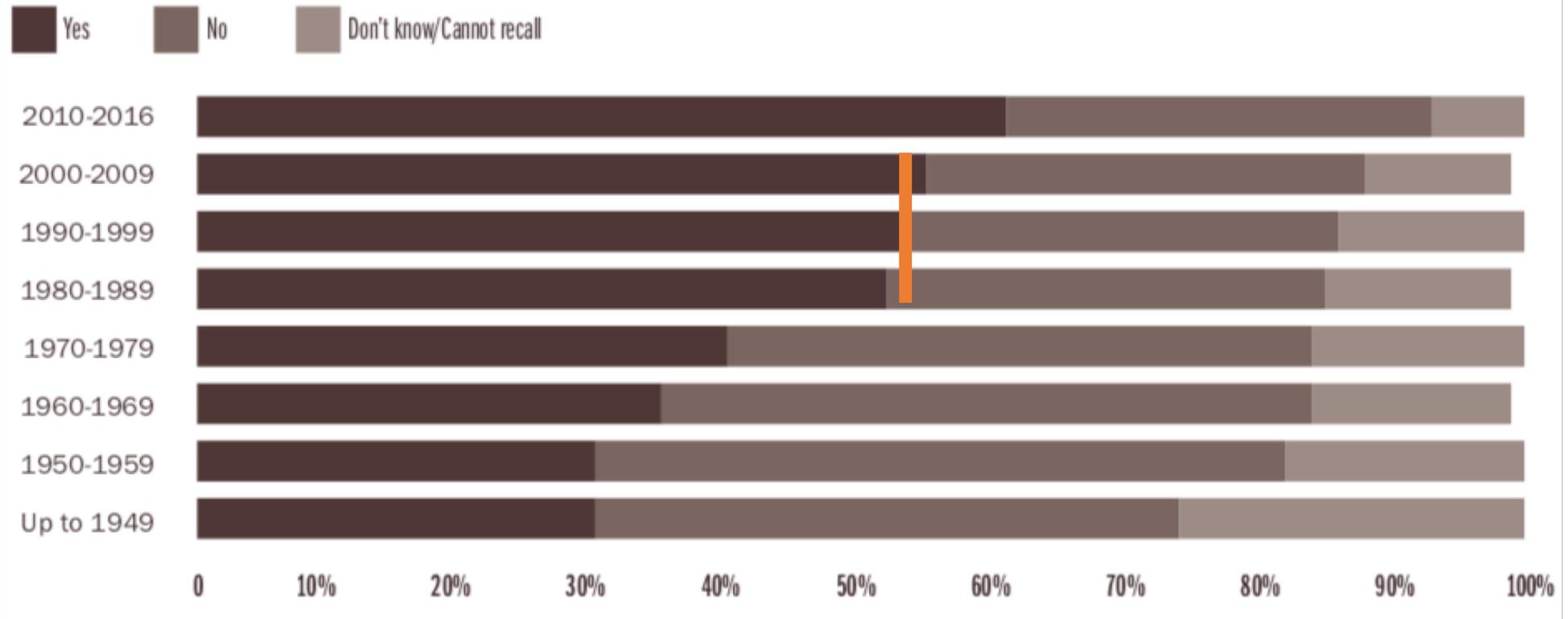
The focus on traditional students has made it difficult for colleges to continue to close gaps between traditional students and today's older, more racially and socioeconomically diverse students. In fact, recent evidence shows that **since 2012 the largest drops in degree attainment were among adult learners.**

Colleges and universities are still catering to the needs of traditional students... **Most institutions are currently failing to support nontraditional students.**

[Administrators] must make nontraditional students a priority. This includes understanding the unique needs of nontraditional students and making institutional adjustments accordingly.

Career services in higher education are ostensibly designed to facilitate the transition from education to work... Today's undergraduate population includes **many adults** who already have a lot of **work experience** and, therefore, **require a different approach** to career guidance and assistance.

3.1: PERCENTAGE OF COLLEGE GRADUATES WHO SAY THEY VISITED CAREER SERVICES OFFICE, BY TIME PERIOD



Students that found career services 'very helpful' were three times as likely to view their college education as worth the cost and more than three times as likely to recommend their alma mater.

Carlson, 2017, p. 30

As career services adapt to new demands they “will feature people who may have been **corporate recruiters**, or faculty members with a specialty in an industry.”

Carlson, 2017, p. 30

“Career centers are shifting from a focus that’s primarily counseling-oriented to one that’s really more actively engaged in helping students to make connections, to leverage their networks, to engage with employers, and to **create more opportunities for students and employers to connect.**”

Carlson, 2017, p. 30

Bentley University's career center refers to its staff members, "not as counselors, but as **strategic advisors**... The office embraces the **employer**, not the student, as its **primary customer**."

Carlson, 2017, p. 31

Vanguard Study

Post-Traditional Students

(Graduate and Non-Traditional Undergraduates)

Vanguard University Study

Post-Traditional Graduate and Undergraduate

1998

(n=76)

97% Employed

Mean age 37

Mean annual income \$64,000

2018

(n=127)

87% Employed

Mean age 29

Mean annual income \$65,301

The Survey

<i>Need Areas Of Professional Career Assistance</i>	Do you currently have a need for professional career assistance in the following areas?	Is VU currently providing you professional career assistance in the following areas?	If available at VU, would you use professional career assistance in the following areas?
1. Locating current job opportunities	1. YES NO	1. YES NO	1. YES NO
2. Coping with unemployment	2. YES NO	2. YES NO	2. YES NO
3. Preparing for job interviews	3. YES NO	3. YES NO	3. YES NO
4. Writing effective resumes and letters	4. YES NO	4. YES NO	4. YES NO
5. Exploring possible new career alternatives / industries	5. YES NO	5. YES NO	5. YES NO
6. Securing a stable career path	6. YES NO	6. YES NO	6. YES NO
7. Dealing with reassignment / transfer	7. YES NO	7. YES NO	7. YES NO
8. Negotiating salary and competitive compensation	8. YES NO	8. YES NO	8. YES NO
9. Improving relations with present co-workers	9. YES NO	9. YES NO	9. YES NO
10. Dealing with difficult supervisors	10. YES NO	10. YES NO	10. YES NO
11. Resolving conflict at the workplace	11. YES NO	11. YES NO	11. YES NO
12. Gaining respect from coworkers	12. YES NO	12. YES NO	12. YES NO
13. Overcoming current job dissatisfaction	13. YES NO	13. YES NO	13. YES NO
14. Developing more professional confidence	14. YES NO	14. YES NO	14. YES NO
15. Assessing current career effectiveness	15. YES NO	15. YES NO	15. YES NO
16. Developing a strong sense of personal achievement	16. YES NO	16. YES NO	16. YES NO
17. Working at a maximum level of creativity	17. YES NO	17. YES NO	17. YES NO
18. Enhancing personal fulfillment on the job	18. YES NO	18. YES NO	18. YES NO
19. Enhancing my identity through the work I perform	19. YES NO	19. YES NO	19. YES NO
20. Aligning career with personal purpose	20. YES NO	20. YES NO	20. YES NO

$\alpha = .977$

Sufficiency Needs

1. Locating current job opportunities
2. Coping with unemployment
3. Preparing for job interviews
4. Writing effective resumes and letters

Security Needs

5. Exploring possible new career alternatives / industries
6. Securing a stable career path
7. Dealing with reassignment / transfer
8. Negotiating salary and competitive compensation

Community Needs

9. Improving relations with present co-workers
10. Dealing with difficult supervisors
11. Resolving conflict at the workplace
12. Gaining respect from coworkers

Esteem Needs

- 13. Overcoming current job dissatisfaction
- 14. Developing more professional confidence
- 15. Assessing current career effectiveness
- 16. Developing a strong sense of personal achievement

Fulfillment Needs

- 17. Working at a maximum level of creativity
- 18. Enhancing personal fulfillment on the job
- 19. Enhancing my identity through the work I perform
- 20. Aligning career with personal purpose

The Results

1. Current Needs (>.50)

Do you currently have a need for professional career assistance in the following areas?

1. Exploring Alternative Career Opportunity^b (.64)
2. Securing Stable Career Path^b (.60)
3. Negotiate Salary^b (.54)
4. Aligning Career with personal purpose^e (.51)

^aSufficiency

^bSecurity

^cCommunity

^dEsteem

^eFulfillment

2. Needs Being Met (<.50 [none])

Is VU currently providing you professional career assistance in the following areas?

1. Developing sense of achievement^d (.37)
2. Working at maximum level of creativity^e (.35)
2. Developing more professional confidence^d (.35)
3. Aligning Career with personal purpose^e (.34)

^aSufficiency

^bSecurity

^cCommunity

^dEsteem

^eFulfillment

NOTE: In both groups (1998 and 2018), respondents received assistance with higher level needs , presumably from educational and relational experiences.

3. Would Use (<.50 [all])

If available at VU, would you use professional career assistance in the following areas?

1. Locating current job opportunities (.79)
2. Coping with unemployment (.53)
3. Preparing for job interviews (.73)
4. Writing effective resumes and letters (.78)
5. Exploring possible new career alternatives (.82)
6. Securing a stable career path (.78)
7. Dealing with reassignment / transfer(.52)
8. Negotiating salary / compensation (.66)
9. Improving relations with present co-workers (.53)
10. Dealing with difficult supervisors (.55)
11. Resolving conflict at the workplace (.55)
12. Gaining respect from coworkers (.53)
13. Overcoming current job dissatisfaction (.57)
14. Developing more professional confidence (.61)
15. Assessing current career effectiveness (.59)
16. Strong sense of personal achievement (.58)
17. Working as a maximum level of creativity (.63)
18. Enhancing personal fulfillment on the job. (.60)
19. Enhancing identity through work (.61)
20. Aligning career with personal purpose (.64)

1998

1. Negotiate Compensation^b (.79) 
2. Explore Career Alternatives^b (.77)
3. Current Job Opportunities^a (.72)
3. Resume Help^a (.72)

2018

1. Explore Career Alternatives^b (.82)
2. Current Job Opportunities^a (.79)
3. Secure Stable Career Path^b (.78) 
3. Resume Help^a (.78)

^aSufficiency

^bSecurity

^cCommunity

^dEsteem

^eFulfillment

NOTE: In both groups, seeking assistance for lower level needs was most pronounced.

No significant difference between employed and unemployed.

Implications

Still the same...

Implication 1. Desired career change

Even though most post-traditional students are employed, they are still considering change in employment, and must have knowledgeable guidance as to possible career choices at their income level. It must not be assumed that if post-traditional students are working, they are satisfied and disinterested in another career opportunity.

Implication 2. Mid-career job leads

Career counselors should have access to current job opportunities and management employment opportunity information with significantly higher salary ranges. The typical job posting in most career counseling centers is entry level and at a considerably lower wage than post-traditional students require. Active involvement in the local business community is critical in order to provide this level of career opportunities.

Implication 3. Counselor experience

Career counselors should have expertise in mid-career transition and adult developmental issues pertaining to their employment. Preferably, this expertise comes from first hand experience. The anxiety, apprehension, and stress already consumes the adult student who is trying to balance career, family, and now school. The experienced counselor should be able to empathize with the post-traditional student and provide empathic guidance during the turmoil of career transition.

Implication 4. Counselor expert connections

Career counselors should have an extensive understanding of various industries in order to adequately guide post-traditional students from one job or industry to another. Local contacts within the community, as well as a general understanding of the various industries and their cultures, will help career counselors provide practical assistance with details such as the types, styles, and formats of resumes that various industries prefer.



They can do this. We can help them.

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**VANGUARD
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