The authors do as well as can be expected with the written word, but one might expect the reader's motivation to drag sometimes. Effective counsellors facilitate trust and safety in an interpersonal climate which encourages risk taking, exploration, and self-discovery. Since sustained effort at self-exploration is a process which is enhanced by the support and feedback of others, this book ideally should be used in conjunction with individual or group counselling. The authors devote one chapter to assets and liabilities in education and work. How the client has experienced school and job related tasks is often a major focus when employment and retraining decisions are to be made. Sharing with a counsellor facilitates memory and focus on self-exploration.

The book maximizes exploration through written exercises but what about the integration that counselling promotes? In addition to the emotional arousal and distress which usually accompanies important decisions, decision making may involve evaluation and redecision following the implementation of a plan. Here, too, a counsellor may be helpful.

Another argument for using the book in conjunction with counselling concerns the examples used in the book. The examples are inspiring, but what about the woman who encounters lack of support and anger from her family? Surely the support and skill of a trained professional would enhance the book for a woman encountering difficulty or lack of support in making choices. Counsellors sensitive to the special needs of women understand that many women who have found their self-definition in home and family may be fearful of their ability to enlarge their sphere of influence outside the home. Some women may find the paper and pencil exercises difficult to do on their own and their experience of failing to learn and utilize decision making skills might prove detrimental to self-esteem and future hopes without the support of others. Experience with consciousness-raising suggests the value of a group in promoting readiness to change. The chapter on assertiveness might be particularly enhanced through group counselling, modeling, behavior rehearsal with feedback, and support.

Changes in how one uses time, particularly changes in household routines, may involve feelings about one's sense of self and femaleness. Chapter Six entitled "What Do I Consider in Changing" is excellent. Here the reader is helped to understand how husbands, children, and friends may respond to changes in addition to how the individual woman may feel during change. The chapter discusses questions of self-worth, confidence, time management, finances, personal satisfaction, ideas and feelings about wife and mother roles.

In exploring plans for the future, the authors cover many alternatives including taking courses; accepting part-time, low paying work; and acquiring a full-time career. The advantages and disadvantages of several life styles are discussed including a fair and full coverage of voluntarism, homemaking, and part and full-time employment. While the authors acknowledge the economic realities of divorce and widowhood, they appear to value all options available to women including the homemaker role. Also, they recognize the dead end trap of a low paying job and present alternatives as steps to independence not as goals in themselves.

The authors use many examples of women who have gone through the decision making process while the example of one woman's experience is used throughout and given in detail. The illustrations show women in a number of lifestyles including home and family. Women are depicted in clear visual images of strength and variety. The impact is one of the vitality and promise of women. At the end of every chapter an annotated list of books is given for suggested further reading. Overall, the book accomplishes its goal of providing decision making skills in an interesting way and contributes to the image of strong women as active problem solvers capable of personal and social change.


Reviewed by:
Dennis Lucas
Consultant in Guidance and Counselling
Manitoba Department of Education
Winnipeg, Manitoba

There are two main questions which I want to deal with in this review. The first is: "Is On the Job a good book?" and the second is: "Should school counsellors run out and buy it?" The answer to the first question is an unequivocal "Yes!" The answer to the second question is a slightly more cautious "Yes, but . . ."

On the Job is a thoroughly attractive and useful student textbook which focuses on the question: "What do people need to know as they enter the labour market?" In a momentary and uncharacteristic lapse the first line of Chapter I says, "This book is about work.", but this is not really true. It is about jobs, as the title itself indicates. This distinction is worth making, for counsellors especially, since work is a much broader and more encompassing term and On the
job is about quite specific information: the basics needed by job-holders, job-losers and job-finders. Topics include: the social insurance number, responsibilities on the job (absenteism, plant rules, working hours, etc.), wage rates, unions, fringe benefits, budgeting and banking, losing and finding jobs and job training opportunities.

The intention of the book (although its objectives are not explicitly stated) is not only to present the student with information pertinent to jobs, but to provide her or him with suggested activities designed to help in gaining a mastery of that information. Each chapter presents several topics in concise, simple and straightforward units and after each of these units a section titled “Think About It” poses three or four suggestions for activities. These suggestions include questions for discussion, field trips, ideas for research or activity projects, role-playing and the like. The suggestions seem to me to be sensible, interesting and practical.

One of the most attractive features of the book is its appealing use of colour graphics. The book is profusely illustrated with charming cartoons which make it a pleasure to flip through. Also, the charts, graphs and forms which are included in the text are clear, large and easy to understand. The book has a soft cover, but one which seems pretty tough and will likely stand up to rough handling.

On the Job will likely be of most interest to teachers in vocational education and co-operative work experience programs at the high school and junior high levels. I can, however, certainly see school counsellors making use of it as a reference book for group information sessions. It would, for example, be a fine resource for mini-courses or presentations on the theme of “What People Need to Know About Entering the job World.”

In short, On the Job is, I think, an attractive and useful tool and one which I unreservedly recommend in terms of its own purpose. But, I do think that it is necessary to point out that this purpose is a relatively narrow one seen from the perspective of the counsellor’s true role in career development. On the Job is about the accumulation and mastery of very specific, job-oriented information. It is a tool for training and is primarily meant to assist in the effective socialization of people into job situations. While counsellors can make use of this book they will also, hopefully, go far beyond it to matters of choosing, decision-making, self-knowledge, planning and valuing. The counsellor’s role in assisting the career development of human beings involves much more than ensuring that they experience (or cause) a minimum of friction as they fit (or are fitted) into that old round (or square) hole.

Reviewed by:
Dennis Lucas
Consultant in Guidance and Counselling
Manitoba Department of Education
Winnipeg, Manitoba

One of the things that makes career development such a rich conceptual ground upon which to base one’s counselling work is the way in which a person’s career is so interwoven with the very stuff of his or her life. Counselling from a career development perspective need not be limited to occupational choice or post-secondary educational options. Career development involves the whole question of how people create meaning for themselves either through their work or in spite of it. Robert Schrank’s book Ten Thousand Working Days presents an example of this.

The book is essentially Schrank’s autobiography using his career — the succession of all the jobs he has held during the course of his life — as the device by which the book is given thematic unity. Schrank, a sociologist most recently, uses the book to make both sociological and personal comments on work, drawing upon his own career for examples.

As Schrank reveals, each occupation has its particular character which affects the life and personality of the worker, including areas of his most intimate relations with other human beings. Different jobs carry with them different anxieties and different motivators. The blue collar worker, for example, looks for good pay, job security, favorable working hours and good working conditions. The manager, on the other hand, is more likely to be motivated by the product itself and by getting ahead. He or she, says Schrank, is competitive, individualistic and compulsive. Schrank clearly prefers the blue collar values. The blue collar worker leaves his concerns at the factory door at the end of the day. It would make little sense to suggest to him or to her that he/she should give a very high priority in life to the job. As one worker quoted by Schrank says, blue collar workers “... get their kicks outside this dump” (i.e., the work place). Schrank shares his impressions that blue collar workers have less anxiety, and less alienation (because they have each other). They are more sensuous, contends Schrank, have less hang-ups as far as sexuality goes, have better senses of humor and are less concerned with “making it,” i.e., with power and responsibility.

Schrank was born the son of an old-time German union man. His father immigrated to the


Reviewed by:
Dennis Lucas
Consultant in Guidance and Counselling
Manitoba Department of Education
Winnipeg, Manitoba