According to the authors, this book was developed “to provide instructors and students with knowledge drawn from cognitive psychology that can be used to solve career problems and make career decisions.”

The content of this book is divided into three major sections. Section 1 focuses on cognitive information processing and its components of self-knowledge, options and decision making. Section 2 deals with the world-of-work including workforce and economic trends, organizations and organizational culture, and special conditions and challenges such as dual career couples, job sharing, telecommuting, self-employment, child care, the sandwich generation, factors affecting women’s and men’s career, job stress, managing work and family life, and the like.

Section 3 has the most familiar, and perhaps the most important, content to a student who is keen on finishing his or her education and getting on with a job and a career. This section focuses on those steps necessary to find a job, such as setting forth job goals and objectives, finding and targeting potential employers, the importance of references in securing a job, drafting resumes and cover letters, preparing for and participating in job interviews, and considering job offers.

The content offers significant information on the various types of resumes, the use of action words on resumes, and the importance of listing accomplishments. Attention is given to the use of technology in the job search process, including social media and how it can help in networking.

Also included are tips on preparing for and executing an informational interview and a job interview. A listing of questions that a person might ask during an informational interview are provided. There is a chart that summarizes the types of interview questions that a person can anticipate. These are organized into categories such as questions related to career goals, self-knowledge, experience, knowledge of the career field, decision-making abilities, behavior-based questions, etc. There is also a chart that suggests the various facts an interviewee should know about the organization he or she is interviewing with. These include items such as the product line, the organization’s reputation, anticipated economic growth, its mission, types and quality of its training programs, and the like.

In additional chapters there are tips for evaluating job offers, negotiating a salary, maximizing bargaining power, and understanding what kinds of things can be negotiated. The last chapter features information on getting a good start in the new job. It offers advice on helping students understand the difference between college and work in terms of schedule, expectations, dealing with a boss, dealing with people, and how one is evaluated. There are sections in this chapter on image and dress, managing your boss, coworker relationships, financial management, communications skills, getting promoted, getting fired, and quitting.
Although this book is designed primarily for college students, the information is also useful to counselors and advisors who may not be well grounded in the content and components of career development, career planning, and career management. It could be helpful as a resource for student success specialists as a basis for helping students succeed not only in content classes, but in how to leverage their skills and experience on the job.

There is an instructor’s manual which was requested but not received at the time of this writing which might be useful. For career advisors and counselors who hold a career development certification, this book may not offer as much new information.

According to the authors, this book is designed as a resource and textbook for a three-semester course. In that regard, the book has a great deal of information that is academically appropriate with solid references and research. This is not surprising because the authors are university career development leaders who are university student focused with an unmatched record as researchers. The book may not be as appropriate for community college students or technical school students, although some sections could apply.

What might enhance this book for the intended audience, university students, is to provide more hands-on exercises for the student to complete. Exercises such as finding information on potential employers, analyzing a job description, identifying key words in jobs descriptions, writing a good resume draft and cover letter, practicing answers to typical interview questions, identifying a salary range for a particular job, researching how a major might be valuable in a variety of industries, how to determine the culture of an organization, could be good additions. The appendices do have some activities to include in an individual action plan and instructions for a culminating academic paper.

The section on Internet resources should be expanded to include more, and more detailed information on various occupational groups or families so that more targeted information can be found by students in different academic majors. Advice on how to use the content in three, one credit courses would expand the book’s utility.

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