BLUEPRINT FOR LIFE/WORK DESIGNS

INTRODUCTION
January, 2000
Revised from DEMONSTRATION EDITION, Spring 1998

The Blueprint is an international partnership project of the:
• National Life/Work Centre
• National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (US)
• Canada Career Information Partnership
• Human Resources Development Canada

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Adapted from:
National Career Development Guidelines
K-Adult Handbook, 1996
National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (US), Washington, DC

Aussi disponible en français sous le titre:
LE PLAN DIRECTEUR POUR LE DESIGN EN DÉVELOPPEMENT DE VIE-TRAVAIL
Dave Redekopp, PhD, MEd, BA (Honours), BEd
LIFE-ROLE DEVELOPMENT GROUP INC.

Dave has devoted over a decade to the promotion of career development and the development of better career development concepts and practices. Dave manages the Life-Role Development Group's research and product development initiatives, and he trains career development practitioners across Canada. Dave is also the Director of Program Development with Concordia University College of Alberta. Dave is a Canadian Career Development Foundation Governor, and an active member of the Alberta Career Development Action Group.

Dave has written a number of training manuals and client guides in career development on topics ranging from work alternatives to curriculum development.

Dave was awarded Alberta's Career Development Award of Excellence (1996) and the national Stu Conger Award for Leadership in Career Counselling and Career Development (1997).
Lorraine Haché, BEd, MA  
OPTIMUM HUMAN RESOURCES INC.

Lorraine worked as a teacher and guidance counsellor in the New Brunswick public school system for seven years, and as a fulltime professor in the guidance counseling program at the Université de Moncton for nine years before moving into her present life/work scenario. Lorraine is now a full partner, consultant and trainer with OPTIMUM Human Resources Inc., a bilingual life/work development agency in Eastern Canada offering programs and services designed to help individuals, communities and workplaces acquire the knowledge and develop the skills and attitudes needed to meet today's life/work challenges.

Because of her passion and expertise in interpersonal communication, educational relationships and life/work development, Lorraine is often sought to consult with federal and provincial agencies on the development, translation/adaptation and evaluation of various life/work related programs and services.

Phil S. Jarvis, BCom  
VICE PRESIDENT, NATIONAL LIFE/WORK CENTRE

Phil is Vice-President of Partnership Development for the National Life/Work Centre (NLWC). He coordinates partnership development for The Real Game Series of career development programs and the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs. Phil also represents the National Life/Work Centre on the National Governing Board of Canada WorkInfoNET as President of the Board, and was founding National Coordinator of the Canada Career Information Partnership. Over the past 25 years, he has authored numerous career guides, career exploration software (including Choices), journal and newsletter articles, has keynoted many regional, national and international conferences, and has trained several thousand career practitioners and teachers in Canada and abroad.

On the international front, Phil has completed over 60 missions to developing countries in providing technical assistance to CIDA and World Bank funded Career Information and Counselling projects, most recently in Romania and Turkey.

Phil received the 1987 Ontario Colleges Award of Excellence in Career Development, the 1988 National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee NOICC Contributor’s Award, and the 1999 Stu Conger Award for Leadership in Career Development in Canada.
It is increasingly critical to our nation’s social and economic prosperity that Canadians are able to manage their own work lives. The National Life/Work Centre is committed to creating, promoting, and distributing career development materials that make a difference in people's lives. We have an approach that works, one that resonates with the new realities. Our objectives, our mission and our methodology can be characterized by three key elements—partnerships, product evaluation and evolution, and consultation with experts, professionals and end-users.

The Blueprint for Life/Work Designs will help Canadians acquire the career development skills they need. With the international success of our flagship programs—The Real Game Series, and now the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs, we can talk about harvesting the fruits of our labours—about the consequences, the winners, the beneficiaries of our endeavours.

Who are the winners?

**Individuals** are winners, because as they master more Blueprint competencies they become more self-reliant and confident with new work and career management skills.

**Communities** are winners because citizens become more independent, stronger within themselves, and better able and willing to extend a hand to others.

**Training institutes and institutes of higher education** at all levels are winners as the Blueprint provides a nationally recognized guide to curriculum design.
Career resource developers are winners because they have a nationally accepted framework, for all age groups, of people's needs to design, develop, test and promote their products.

Career practitioners are winners because the Blueprint provides a common framework of client needs and criteria for assessing the effectiveness of interventions and recording client progress.

Corporations and the private sector are winners because they can hire and train more employable and self-directed personnel.

Governments are winners because of decreased reliance on welfare and social assistance programs, decreased pressure on correctional facilities, and more people contributing through taxes.

The benefits of the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs include:
- Infusion of career development into school programs.
- National transferability across curricula.
- Clarification of career development products.
- Improved human resource practices within organizations.
- Increased rationalization of programs.
- Effective evaluation of programs.

The Blueprint project is part of a new and unprecedented partnership between a coalition of Canadian agencies lead by the National Life/Work Centre, Human Resources Development Canada, the Canadian Career Information Partnership, and the NOICC/SOICC network in the United States. The same international partnership is also co-developing The Real Game Series from Canada, and will include other exemplary programs from both countries.

ROBERT GO GUEN
PRESIDENT
NATIONAL LIFE/WORK CENTRE
Since it has its roots in our National Career Development Guidelines, NOICC and its US partners are following the evolution of Canada’s Blueprint for Life/Work Designs with great interest. We admire the way the National Life/Work Centre and its partners Human Resources Development Canada and Canada Career Information Partnership have mobilized interest in and support for the Blueprint from coast-to-coast across your great country in such a short period of time. We are also impressed with several enhancements Canadian partners have made, including the development of a Quick Reference Guide, the sorting of competencies and indicators by four Learning Stages, and the addition of appendices on Verb Usage, Links to other Skills Frameworks, Portfolios, and Sample Career Resources Sorted by Blueprint Competencies and Levels. These are features we look forward to bringing to future editions of our Guidelines.

The Blueprint/Guidelines partnership between our countries is the latest example of how, by working together and sharing best practices across the world’s longest undefended border, we can benefit the citizens of both of our countries. The Real Game Series, Career Tabloids/Canada Prospects and Choices are all precedents of which career development professionals in both countries can be equally proud. On behalf of NOICC and its extensive network of partners throughout the United States, I salute the exceptional work done to date on the Blueprint in Canada, and look forward to the extension of this exemplary partnership for years to come.

JULIETTE NOONE LESTER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
A community’s prosperity is the sum of the prosperity of each and every citizen. When a person can’t find or loses a job, the negative effects ripple through the community, as when a stone is thrown into a pond. The corollary also holds. When one person gains employment, the positive effects ripple through the entire community. When many people secure good jobs, increased prosperity is shared by all.

That’s why it makes sense to pull together to help those who need assistance in connecting with good work. In helping others we are helping ourselves, our families and our communities. The Blueprint for Life/Work Designs will improve prosperity in communities across the country by increasing the quality and effectiveness of products, programs and services to help people of all ages connect with good work and fulfilling lifestyles.

This project has been underway for eighteen months. Its impact on public and private sector organizations across Canada has gone beyond the partners’ expectations. The model we started with from our American partners was clearly sound and comprehensive. We are grateful for their painstaking and ground-breaking work over the past ten years, and honoured to be their partners. We were bold enough to believe we could raise this publication to a new plateau by engaging committed partners across Canada. Therein lies the key to the success of the Blueprint—the outstanding Canadian career development leaders on the National Advisory Board and in the network of Provincial and Territorial Blueprint Coordinators who have offered their ideas and rallied their networks to make such an impact. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work and learn with all of them, and to co-author the Blueprint with Dave Redekopp and Lorraine Haché.
The Blueprint has gone through major revisions as a result of feedback from pilots and demos across Canada to date, with especially rich feedback from Alberta, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan. While this January 2000 Edition replaces the earlier Demonstration Edition, the Blueprint will never be "finished." The beginning of 2000 marks a new phase of intensified Blueprint usage across Canada. Please forward your suggestions for further improvements to the address below. Future revised editions of the Blueprint will be published periodically.

The Blueprint is available for viewing and can be printed or downloaded from the NLWC website. Additional copies of the full three-ring binder Blueprint for Life/Work Designs, the Quick Reference Guide, and all supporting materials can be ordered from:

The National Life/Work Centre
National Training and Support Centre
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Email: lifework@nbnet.nb.ca
Website: http://www.lifework.ca (See Blueprint Project)
Given the dramatic changes and new demands of the workplace, widespread attention is rightly focussed on the need for high quality career development programs for youth and adults. The Blueprint for Life/Work Designs addresses this need by providing specific guidelines that can help strengthen career development and transition programs in a wide variety of settings. These include elementary schools, middle/junior high schools, high schools, post-secondary education institutions, workforce development organizations, and business organizations, to name a few.

This Blueprint provides a list of competencies considered important to develop throughout one’s life/work building process. These competencies were organized in main areas (personal management, learning and work exploration, life/work building) and provide a four level developmental process. Indicators, which describe more specific outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes, are also provided for each competency level. The Blueprint also provides guidelines for the establishment of local program standards against which the adequacy and effectiveness of programs can be evaluated.

This Blueprint is also intended to assist those who wish to use the competencies and indicators in the implementation of local career development programs for youth or adults. Chapters 1 and 2 provide an introduction to the Blueprint and to career development in general. They describe the need for guidelines and standards in career development and discuss national, provincial/territorial and local roles. An organizational capabilities section provides statements of commitments, structure, and support required for effective career development programs. The personnel requirements section describes the roles of various staff members and refers to the National Career Development Guidelines and Standards initiative, which complements the Blueprint in regard to staff competencies.
Chapters 3, 4 and 5 present a implementation process that uses the competencies and indicators to establish career development standards for new programs or to enhance existing programs. The process begins with needs analysis, encourages flexibility, includes methods for involving all stakeholders, builds upon existing program strengths, and stimulates coordination with other organizations. Further, evaluation is discussed as an essential element in the ongoing refinement and revitalization of career development programs.

Chapter 6 addresses the vital role that marketing plays both in the initial and long term acceptance and sustainability of career development and transition programs. To assure buy-in by target audiences, public relations issues such as communicating the program’s vision, mission, and goals are covered.

Chapter 7 speaks to implementing career development programs through the Blueprint in K-12 school settings. General tips for getting started, examples of lesson plans and activities, as well as contact information for successful programs are included.

Chapter 8 discusses implementing career development programs for adults in several different settings. There are sections devoted to program implementation considerations for post-secondary institutions, workforce development organizations, and business and industry.

The Appendices include:

- **Appendix A**
  Blueprint for Life/Work Designs Competencies and Indicators By Level and Learning Stage

- **Appendix B**
Appendix C
Sample Needs Assessment and Program Forms

Appendix D
Links Between Blueprint Competencies and Other Skills Frameworks
(Employability Skills, Essential Skills, etc.)

Appendix E
Career Portfolios: Telling Your Life/Work Story

Appendix F
Sample Career Resources Sorted by Blueprint Levels and Competencies

Appendix G
The Canadian Guidelines and Standards for Career Development Initiative
(Competencies for Practitioners)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Blueprint for Life/Work Designs is a product of the National Life/Work Centre (NLWC), the Canada Career Information Partnership (CCIP) and Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC). The Blueprint has been adapted from the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) National Career Development Guidelines K-Adult Handbook. The NOICC Guidelines have been under development, implementation, evaluation and enhancement for over ten years. Virtually all U.S. states have now adopted and implemented the Guidelines. In return for Canada sharing The Real Game Series with its U.S. network, NOICC graciously offered the results of its ten-year National Guidelines Project, and is providing consulting assistance in the Blueprint development. For this, NLWC, CCIP and HRDC, on behalf of all Canadian partners, are particularly grateful.

The Blueprint Project involves extensive networks of public and private sector contributors in every province and territory. A Blueprint Advisory Group has been established to oversee and steer all aspects of the project. A membership list as of January, 2000 follows on page 13. Note that National, Provincial and Territorial Coordinators are identified. Please direct questions and feedback through the appropriate Coordinator(s).

The Blueprint Advisory Group is working in concert with the Steering Committee for the National Career Development Guidelines and Standards. NCDGS is in Phase 2 of a parallel and complementary project: delineating the competencies required of Canadian career development professionals. In effect, each project is mapping different sides of the same career development coin.
Special thanks to the following people who provided leadership in testing, reviewing and providing insightful feedback on 1998 Blueprint for Life/Work Designs Demonstration Edition in the four provinces that organized provincial pilots/demos, to those who wrote the new appendices and to Dave Redekopp who took the lead in writing the Quick Reference Guide with support from the Co-Authors.

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What is in the Blueprint?

The Blueprint for Life/Work Designs consists of four main components:

1. **The competencies** Canadians require, from childhood to adulthood, to effectively manage their life/work development.

2. **A comprehensive process** for developing and redesigning programs and products that will help Canadians acquire the above competencies in schools, post-secondary institutions, training programs, career centres and other settings in which career development and transitions interventions occur.

3. **Appendices** full of information that supports effective career development programming (needs assessments, other skills classification systems, portfolios, practitioner standards and guidelines, and sample career resources).

4. **A Quick Reference Guide** to help users quickly and efficiently find and use what they need within the Blueprint.

What is the aim of the Blueprint?

The Blueprint has multiple goals, but the primary aim is to have users work with a national framework of competencies to create comprehensive, effective and measurable life/work development programming and products to help Canadians better manage their lives and work.
Who will use the Blueprint?

The Blueprint is designed for anyone responsible for programs or products related to life/work development. Below are typical users and environments in which the Blueprint is used.

### Typical Blueprint Users
- adult educators
- career and employment counsellors
- career educators and researchers
- career resource developers/publishers
- career resource specialists
- community based trainers
- cooperative education coordinators
- curriculum developers
- curriculum policy analysts
- education and training administrators
- human resource professionals
- labour market information centre specialists
- life skills coaches/facilitators
- peer facilitators and mentors
- primary and secondary school teachers
- school counsellors
- staff training officers
- staffing officers
- program developers
- transitions educators
- work experience coordinators

### Typical Blueprint Environments
- adult training programs/centres
- career and one-stop centres
- career development programs
- cooperative education programs
- correctional institutions
- curriculum development units
- elementary/early education schools
- employability programs
- employment programs
- human resource departments
- middle years/junior high schools
- military second-career programs
- post-secondary institutions
- secondary/senior years schools
- vocational rehabilitation and workers’ compensation settings
- work experience programs

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**SUMMARY**
Why are life/work competencies important?

Having a national list of life/work competencies and indicators helps Canadian service providers with a number of aims:

- **Clarity of outcomes**: The Blueprint framework enables practitioners and their funding sources to be clear about, and measure, the outcomes they are achieving.

- **Service consistency**: A common language within and between services and products helps Canadians know what they need, and get what they need, as they move from one service or product, agency or organization, or geographic region, to another.

- **Efficiency**: A common language for life/work competencies helps clients and practitioners more efficiently review, compare and select programs and products.

- **Reduced ambiguity**: Assumptions abound regarding the meanings of terms such as career planning or self-awareness. Spelling out these assumptions for all to review enhances clarity and effectiveness of communication significantly.

- **Career development culture**: Having a common structure by which to discuss career development issues and aims helps all Canadians become more conscious of career development and life/work issues.
Who is taking the lead in implementing the Blueprint?

All thirteen provinces and territories are involved in the Blueprint initiative. Agencies include Provincial/Territorial Ministries of Education, Training, Human Resources, Labour and Employment; professional groups/associations; and post-secondary institutions and corporations.

Major national public and non-government organizations are playing lead roles as well, including the National Life/Work Centre, Human Resources Development Canada, Canada Career Information Partnership, Canadian Career Development Foundation, Canada Career Consortium and the WorkinfoNET Partnership.