JULIA YATES

SECOND EDITION

THE CAREER COACHING HANDBOOK

ROUTLEDGE

‘Here is a comprehensive book on all aspects of careers, that Talent Managers, HRD professionals and Career Coaches should have on their shelves. Useful summaries of the research and theories, short case studies and a wealth of career coaching tools.’

Peter Hawkins, *Author and Professor of Leadership, Henley Business School*

‘This book is essential reading for the new practitioner of career coaching. In an engaging style, it links a rigorous grounding in advanced career coaching theory and the latest careers information to many practical examples of applying this information to your coaching practice. No other publication put it all together for me as did this. Ongoing it will be a key resource to my achieving coaching excellence.’

Mara Gardner, *Career Coach*

‘Julia Yates has produced an accessibly written resource that offers real appeal to an audience far wider than the intended Career Coaching practitioner. It fills a large gap in the literature and is widely supported by references to classic and contemporary research and practical approaches to supporting people through major job changes I thoroughly commend Julia Yates’s treatise in this new academic discipline as a ‘must have’ resource for successful career coaching.’

Declan Woods, *Accredited Master Coach, Global Head of Standards & Accreditation, Association for Coaching. Founder, ZPD Consulting and Coaching*


Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

The Career Coaching Handbook

Uniquely combining the latest research into careers with the most up-to-date coaching approaches, Julia Yates shows how to effectively apply coaching techniques to the world of career support. Demonstrating how coaching research explains practice and how practice benefits from research, *The Career Coaching Handbook* is accessibly written with a solid evidence-based foundation.

Presented in three parts, this new edition covers developments in theory and research and applies this knowledge to the real world, as well as introducing a few new practical approaches. Part 1, *Theories of Career*, looks at twenty-first century career paths, job satisfaction and career changes – both planned and unplanned. Part 2, *Career Coaching Approaches*, looks at coaching strategies that are applicable to career coaching in particular. Part 3, *Coaching into the World of Work*, covers specific real-world situations in which coaching is beneficial, from job search strategies to CV and interview coaching. Evidence and research is used throughout to demonstrate the most effective strategies for coaching.

The Career Coaching Handbook provides an essential introduction for students or practitioners who are interested in developing their own practice, finding new and improved ways to do things and understanding the theories that underpin effective career coaching practice.

Julia Yates has worked in the field of career coaching for over twenty years, as a career coach, trainer and writer. She is currently a senior lecturer at City, University of London, where she runs the MSc programme in Organisational Psychology and conducts research on career decision making and career coaching.


Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

The Career Coaching Handbook

Second edition

Julia Yates

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

Cover image: © Getty Images

Second edition published 2022
by Routledge
4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

First edition published by Routledge 2014

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Yates, Julia, author.
Title: The career coaching handbook / Julia Yates.
Description: 2nd edition. | Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY : Routledge, 2022. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2021060882 | ISBN 9780367612443 (paperback) | ISBN 9780367612436 (hardback) | ISBN 9781003104827 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Career development. | Personal coaching. | Executive coaching. | Vocational guidance.
Classification: LCC HF5381 .Y3745 2022 | DDC 650.14—dc23/eng/20220105
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021060882

ISBN: 978-0-367-61243-6 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-0-367-61244-3 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-1-003-10482-7 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003104827

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Apex CoVantage, LLC

Contents

Preface

There is an impressive history of research on career development and career decision making, and a wealth of literature that can tell us about the approaches, tools and techniques that are widely used in coaching. Plenty of self-help books on career coaching are also available, many full of helpful and practical advice if you yourself are looking for a career change. But this book is different. This book is for you if you are a professional, or a trainee career coaching practitioner. It combines the latest evidence from the careers world with up-to-date research from the coaching literature. It's intended to help you to be the best career coach that you can be, but also to understand what goes on behind your interactions. It's a book about theory and practice, and how the two interact.

This second edition contains a number of changes, based both on the research that has been published since the first edition came out, and on the things that I myself have learnt more about since then. I have introduced a few new practical approaches such as Acceptance and commitment therapy (Chapter 13), and Ibarra's model of Provisional Selves (Chapter 6), some more detail on what leads to a successful career (Chapter 4) and the experiences of older workers (Chapter 6). I have also added some suggestions for your own professional development in the last few pages.

This book is divided into three parts. The first section concentrates on the evidence and theories about careers. Chapter 1 asks what exactly is career coaching, and identifies the particular features that set career coaching apart from other professional career support. Chapter 2 looks at career paths in the twenty-first century and highlights how things have changed over the last fifty years. Chapter 3 covers the complex issue of how we make career decisions, focusing on both the factors and processes involved. In Chapter 4 I examine the factors that make us successful at work and in Chapter 5 I summarise the wealth of literature that identifies what makes us happy at work. Chapters 6 and 7 both focus on interrupted career paths: in Chapter 6, we look at career changes, what prompts them and how they happen; in Chapter 7, we look at career changes which are in some way forced on an individual.

The second part of the book looks more specifically at career coaching interventions and covers some of the key approaches, tools and techniques that you

can use with your clients. The section starts with Chapter 8, which highlights the kinds of issues that clients bring to career coaching, and the next two chapters cover two very widely applicable career coaching models: humanistic coaching (Chapter 9) and the GROW framework (Chapter 10). Chapters 11 to 14 introduce coaching models: motivational interviewing (Chapter 11), positive approaches (Chapter 12), cognitive behavioural approaches (Chapter 13) and transactional analysis (Chapter 14). The final chapter in this section, Chapter 15, highlights some specific career coaching tools that can help to identify career goals, tools for reflection and tools that can help to identify next steps.

The third part of the book looks at the nuts and bolts of actually getting a job, and how coaching can help clients into the world of work. Chapter 16 explains how coaches can help clients to generate job ideas and find out about the labour market, Chapter 17 examines the evidence for advice on how to make a job search effective, and Chapters 18 and 19 discuss the evidence that can help a client improve their CV and interview technique. The book ends with a few ideas for continuing your own professional development.

The book is intended to be a resource for you rather than a narrative. Each chapter stands alone and you can read the book in whichever order appeals to you most.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all those who have helped me along the way. Every year I have the great privilege of working with a new cohort of bright, motivated, hardworking students. Every year I try out the new theories, approaches, ideas and examples with them and every year they give me feedback, and show me what works and what is useful, and their stories make the theories come alive for me. I wouldn't understand my subject the way I do without them and I can only hope that they learn from me as I learn from them. My colleagues at NICEC and at City are a great source of ideas and have introduced me to many new approaches and helped me to understand the field in more depth, and I sincerely appreciate their wisdom and intellectual generosity. I had the pleasure of working with a brilliant intern this summer, and I would like to thank him very much for the amazing job he did with the references for this book. But above all, my thanks go to my family, my husband Hugh, and our boys Jack and Ted. You have supported me, listened to me and made me laugh, and I can't begin to tell you how much I love you.

Table 6.1, originally published in *The Career Development Quarterly*, 'Voluntary midlife career change: Integrating the transtheoretical model and the life-span, life-space approach' by Susan R. Barclay, Kevin B. Stoltz and Barry Y. Chung (59:5, 386–399, 2011), is reproduced by kind permission of the National Career Development Association.

Table 7.1, originally published in *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 'Partially testing a process model for understanding victim responses to an anticipated worksite closure' by Gary Blau (71(3): 401–428, 2007), is reproduced by kind permission of Elsevier.


Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

Chapter 1

What is career coaching and how can it help?

What is career coaching?

There are many different sources of professional support you can call on if you are struggling to make a career choice or work out what to do next. You might find a careers adviser, a career guidance practitioner, a career counsellor, career consultant, an employability adviser, a job coach or a career coach, and when you look more closely you might see that they all claim to be qualified, knowledgeable and experienced. So what are the differences (if any) between the roles and where exactly can career coaching fit in?

The most traditional type of career support is that given by a 'careers adviser'. Many of us have had experience of careers advice at school or college. Sometimes the careers advice at school might be given by a teacher who has no formal training but who might know the young people well and understand the processes needed to apply for university, or to find an apprenticeship. Alternatively, the careers adviser might be an independent professional, trained at post-graduate level in career guidance to offer impartial, client-centred career support.

'Career counselling' is a term that we often find in the literature about career practice. This is the standard term used in the United States and since so much of the research is published there, it is the term that is most widely used. We also find it in the UK, indicating a particular style of career support that might help clients to resolve internal conflicts or understand patterns of behaviour. Career 'consultants' by contrast have a slightly more commercial brand, and this title might be chosen by practitioners working as private practitioners although is now also widely used within university career services.

So where does career coaching fit in, and how does it distinguish itself from the myriad alternatives? These is no widely accepted definition of career coaching. Career coaches come in many shapes and forms and have different approaches, standards and philosophies. Erik de Haan (2008) describes a playing field of coaching approaches, with quadrants defined on the basis of two continuums: suggesting to exploring and confronting to supporting. Career coaches can be found in any of the four quadrants, although in general, coaching practitioners would tend to resist the suggesting/confronting quadrant. You will need to work

DOI: 10.4324/9781003104827-1

out where you want your practice to sit. This might depend on your client group, your personal style, the organisation you work for and your experience of what actually works in practice. I hope that this book will contribute to your understanding of the evidence for which types of approaches lead to the most positive results for clients.

My professional approach, and the one I will advocate in this book, is firmly in the supporting and exploring quadrant, but with the proviso that challenging – if done from a position of unconditional positive regard – is an important component of effective and ethical career coaching.

In order to crystallise my position, here is the definition that I am working to in this book:

> Career coaching is one or a series of collaborative conversations with a trained professional who operates within an ethical code. The process is grounded in evidence-based coaching approaches and career theory and aims to lead to a positive outcome for the client regarding their career decision, work and/or personal fulfilment.
>
> (Yates, 2011)

Let me move on now to focus on three elements which, while they are not exclusive to career coaching, are perhaps more likely to be seen in career coaching conversations than in other types of career support

The first is the evidence in career coaching practice of a wide range of theoretical approaches. Perhaps because coaching is a relatively new discipline, the coaching scholars have taken an eclectic approach to theories, identifying the most relevant approaches from other disciplines. In this book I will cover cognitive behavioural coaching, adopted from cognitive behavioural therapy; motivational interviewing, developed from health therapy; appreciative inquiry, adapted from organisational development; and solution-focused coaching, whose origins are in family therapy. I will also discuss the more traditional humanistic practice that is widely seen in career guidance, careers advice and career counselling. In addition to the approaches represented in this book, there are career coaches who might adopt an existential, a psychodynamic or a transpersonal approach to their coaching practice. Of course, not all coaches will use every single one of these methods, but it is not uncommon for career coaches to have two or three preferred approaches that they can deploy when most appropriate. To my mind, it is this versatility which makes our practice much more tailored to our clients' specific needs, and this makes us stand out from other groups of career professionals.

The second element that tends to be more widely seen in career coaching than in some of the other career professions is the use of tools. In Chapter 15, we will explore some of the more common techniques used in career coaching, such as drawing, collage, visualisations and storyboarding, but there are books and websites that can introduce you to many more, and I would also encourage you to

develop or adapt your own, based on what seems to work for you and your client groups.

Finally, career coaching has a positive and solution-focused orientation. Coaching strives to inspire growth and change by focusing on the positive aspects of human nature. The starting point for coaching is that people want to develop and thrive, and it focuses on finding solutions, and what is called 'optimal functioning' (Grant & Cavanagh, 2007). Coaching is seen as a practice that can benefit all, not just those who are struggling, and is a mechanism to help people who are already doing well to do even better.

This positive approach in part determines the clients who choose career coaching over career counselling or other brands, and sets their expectations for their sessions. Even though the practice might not be so different, clients will to some degree self-select based on the brand: clients wanting a positive, action-orientated, future-focused interaction are more likely to choose a career coach than a career counsellor (Yates, 2011).

Definitions are useful but it is more important to know whether career coaching works. The experiences of hundreds of practitioners and thousands of clients gives us a resounding 'yes!', but if it is hard evidence you want, there are plenty of relevant empirical studies.

Does career coaching work, and what makes it effective?

Career coaching is a relatively new discipline. While career guidance has been producing research since 1909 and coaching since the 1960s, career coaching as an academic discipline in its own right is only just emerging. There aren't yet all that many good quality studies or large amounts of data that relate specifically to career coaching, but there are plenty of overlaps with other disciplines, and if we piece all the evidence together, the picture is quite compelling.

Coaching leads to behavioural change

There is a substantial body of research that relates specifically to coaching which shows that it works and that it has a significant positive impact on behavioural change. Some of the most convincing evidence comes from meta-analyses, which are studies that combine the data from a wider range of smaller existing studies. Meta-analyses within coaching offer some impressive evidence that coaching has a positive impact on clients' skills, well-being, resilience, attitudes and performance at work (e.g. Burt & Talati, 2017; Jones et al., 2016). Other large-scale studies have identified what exactly it is about coaching that makes the difference – the magic ingredients, and the theme that comes up time and again is the importance of what they call the 'working alliance'. This is the combination of a good relationship between the coach and client, a clear and agreed goal for the sessions, and a shared understanding of the process (de Haan et al., 2016;

Graßmann et al., 2020) and the evidence seems to suggest that if we can get this working alliance right, the coaching is very likely to succeed. We will revisit this in Chapter 9 when we explore humanistic coaching.

Career coaching tools work

On top of the evidence that coaching works, there is also plenty of evidence that specific approaches help with career development. I have included more examples in the chapters that follow, but just to give a flavour, there is evidence that Acceptance and commitment therapy (discussed in Chapter 13) enhances career security and career self-efficacy (Kiuru et al., 2021), that motivational interviewing (Chapter 11) increases career motivation (Klonek et al., 2016), and that solution-focused coaching (Chapter 12) decreases career indecision (Akyol & Bacanli, 2019). One interesting finding from de Haan et al.'s study (2016) is that although there isn't very much evidence that one particular approach or tool is better than another, there is clear evidence that having a range of tools and techniques at your disposal definitely helps. It makes sense that being able to pick and choose from a variety of approaches means that you are more able to tailor your coaching to the particular needs of your client, and can switch from one to another if one style doesn't seem to be working.

Career interventions work

There are numerous studies that demonstrate career interventions are effective. Whiston et al.'s major meta-analysis (2017) explored the impact of both one-to-one and group career interventions and gives some strong evidence that they do work. Overall Whiston and her colleagues found that career interventions result in increased career decidedness, better vocational identity (i.e. a stronger sense of who you are within the workplace), higher outcome expectations, and above all, increased confidence in your ability to make good choices. The study also showed that one-to-one support from a career practitioner is the most effective type of intervention, although noted that certain kinds of group sessions (for example those focused on identifying values and increasing career-related self-awareness) were highly effective too. Another meta-analysis (Liu et al., 2014) demonstrates that career interventions substantially raise people's chances of getting a job.

Career coaching works

Finally, there is a small but growing body of evidence that looks specifically at career coaching. Career coaching has been shown to enhance clients' levels of career optimism and career security through clarifying their career goals (Ebner, 2021), there is evidence career coaching has a positive impact on women's confidence (Archer & Yates, 2017), on women's work life balance (Brown & Yates,

2018) and on the job-search behaviours of older workers (Lim et al., 2019; Walker, 2019); and that it can reduce dysfunctional career myths (Otu & Omeje, 2021). Some studies have also looked at career coaching within organisations, finding that the career coaching itself improves staff retention (Dugas, 2018) and job satisfaction (Fassiotto et al., 2018) and also that even having a policy that includes an offer of career coaching is linked to improved institutional satisfaction (Ling et al., 2018).

More research would be better. For our profession to grow and gain credibility, there needs to be a solid corpus of empirical research that can tell us exactly how we need to practise in order to get the best results within our own professional context. But we are getting there. Career coaching practitioners still need to read between the lines and extrapolate from research undertaken in a different setting, but the foundations are in place. In the chapters ahead we will explore a range of evidence-based approaches that have a solid foundation of research underpinning them, and you will be able to judge for yourself which you feel will be most applicable to your own situation.

References

Akyol, E. Y., & Bacanlı, F. (2019). Building a solution-focused career counselling strategy for career indecision. *Australian Journal of Career Development*, *28*(1), 73–79.

Archer, S., & Yates, J. (2017). Understanding potential career changers' experience of career confidence following a positive psychology based coaching programme. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, *10*(2), 157–175.

Brown, C., & Yates, J. (2018). Understanding the experience of midlife women taking part in a work-life balance career coaching programme: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, *16*(1), 110–125.

Burt, D., & Talati, Z. (2017). The unsolved value of executive coaching: A meta-analysis of outcomes using randomised control trial studies. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, *15*(2), 17–24.

de Haan, E. (2008). *Relational Coaching: Journeys Towards Mastering One-to-One Learning*. Chichester: Wiley.

de Haan, E., Grant, A. M., Burger, Y., & Eriksson, P. O. (2016). A large-scale study of executive and workplace coaching: The relative contributions of relationship, personality match, and self-efficacy. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, *68*(3), 189–207.

Dugas, J. (2018). Career coaching: A study of veterans health administration (VHA) leaders. Dissertations, p. 210. https://digitalcommons.brandman.edu/edd_dissertations/210

Ebner, K. (2021). Promoting career optimism and career security during career coaching: Development and test of a model. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, *14*(1), 20–38.

Fassiotto, M., Simard, C., Sandborg, C., Valantine, H., & Raymond, J. (2018). An integrated career coaching and time-banking system promoting flexibility, wellness, and success: A pilot program at Stanford university school of medicine. *Academic Medicine (Ovid)*, *93*(6), 881–887.

Graßmann, C., Schölmerich, F., & Schermuly, C. C. (2020). The relationship between working alliance and client outcomes in coaching: A meta-analysis. *Human Relations*, *73*(1), 35–58.

Grant, A. M., & Cavanagh, E. M. (2007). Doing good, doing harm, being well and burning out: The interactions of perceived pro-social and antisocial impact in service work. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *80*, 665–691.

Jones, R. J., Woods, S. A., & Guillaume, Y. R. (2016). The effectiveness of workplace coaching: A meta-analysis of learning and performance outcomes from coaching. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *89*(2), 249–277.

Kiuru, N., Puolakanaho, A., Lappalainen, P., Keinonen, K., Mauno, S., Muotka, J., & Lappalainen, R. (2021). Effectiveness of a web-based acceptance and commitment therapy program for adolescent career preparation: A randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 103578.

Klonek, F. E., Wunderlich, E., Spurk, D., & Kauffeld, S. (2016). Career counseling meets motivational interviewing: A sequential analysis of dynamic counselor – client interactions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *94*, 28–38.

Lim, D. H., Oh, E., Ju, B., & Kim, H. N. (2019). Mediating role of career coaching on job-search behavior of older generations. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, *88*(1), 82–104.

Ling, F. Y. Y., Ning, Y., Chang, Y. H., & Zhang, Z. (2018). Human resource management practices to improve project managers' job satisfaction. *Engineering Construction & Architectural Management*, *25*(5), 654–669.

Liu, S., Huang, J. L., & Wang, M. (2014). Effectiveness of job search interventions: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin*, *140*, 1009–1041.

Otu, M. S., & Omeje, J. C. (2021). The effect of rational emotive career coaching on dysfunctional career beliefs in recent university graduates. *Journal of Rational-Emotive & Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*, 1–23.

Walker, L. (2019). Coaching during late career reinvention: The discovering model. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching & Mentoring*, *17*, 63–75.

Whiston, S. C., Li, Y., Mitts, N. G., & Wright, L. (2017). Effectiveness of career choice interventions: A meta-analytic replication and extension. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *100*, 175–184.

Yates, J. (2011). *Career Coaching: New Direction for the Profession? Constructing the Future*, *VI*. Stourbridge: Institute of Career Guidance, pp. 147–157.

Part I

Theories of career


Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

Chapter 2

Contemporary notions of 'career'

The word 'career' will come up hundreds of times in this book. It can mean a variety of things to different people and given the range of interpretations, implications and inferences that can be associated with the word, it is useful to begin by unpicking some of the key concepts.

Perhaps surprisingly, the world of career practitioners has thus far failed to reach an agreed definition of the term. 'Career', 'occupation' and 'vocation' are sometimes used as synonyms and at other times as quite distinct concepts. A career could cover just the time from first job to final job, or could incorporate the pre-occupation and post-occupation eras. It might also refer only to paid work, or may also encompass unpaid or voluntary employment or even work experience. Some feel that a career incorporates a notion of progress and advancement, or perhaps confers a degree of prestige. It has been argued that the term has an innate middle-class bias, since it implies that there has been an active choice, as opposed to an almost predetermined destiny which is more often associated with less-privileged career trajectories. More recently, there has been an acceptance that a career is a subjective construct, rather than an objective reality – the idea being that if *you* think it is a career, then it is a career. Definitions have also become broader. Arthur et al. (1989) suggested a straightforward definition, suggesting that 'career' is the 'evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time'. I like the all-encompassing and non-judgemental ethos of this definition, and their simple explanation that 'everyone who works has a career' (1989, p. 9).

Delving deeper, we are now going to explore some of the different ways that we conceptualise the notion of 'career', using a series of metaphors that are commonly used to account for careers, and will touch on some of the career theories that relate to each metaphor. In the second part of the chapter we will move on to look at the labour market, highlighting some of the key drivers for change and examining some career theories that were developed to describe contemporary career paths.

How we understand 'career'

Career theories are developed by academics to help us make sense of people's experiences and dozens have been developed over the last few decades.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003104827-3

The theories come from a wide range of academic disciplines and are sparked off by different stimuli. Some theories focus on the content of careers and career decisions, and others look at processes; some are heavily influenced by psychological theories of the individual while the philosophical origins of others are more sociological. The theories do not try to explain every element of the career process, and aren't intended to be applied to every person in every context. In one way, this piecemeal approach is quite helpful to us as learners in that the theories do not contradict each other: we don't need to choose which one we want to believe. On the other hand it makes our jobs much more difficult in that it is quite a challenge to keep all the different theoretical approaches in our heads at once, and to know how and when to use them to help us understand our clients better.

One helpful framework is that devised by Inkson (2004) who looked at the range of metaphors that the theories use to explain how they conceptualise the notion of career. The categories below are for the most part Inkson's, but I have updated the examples to include more recent career theories and concepts and added a final metaphor to incorporate a wave of theories that acknowledge the role of chance.

1. Legacy metaphor: career as inheritance

These approaches are grounded in sociological thinking and hold that our career paths are (at least to some degree) inevitable, being a product of our family and upbringing, our genes, our geographical location or demographic factors such as our gender or ethnicity. Ken Roberts's work on 'opportunity structures' highlights the way that our aspirations are limited by the opportunities we see around us (2009), and Bill Law's early theory on community interaction explores the way that our understanding of the world of work is determined by the communities we grow up in (Law, 1981). Even some of the more psychological theories which appreciate the role of self-determinism, such as Gottfredson's (2002) theory of circumscription and compromise, acknowledge the career inheritances with which we are born. One recent strand of research has explored the idea of work as a calling or a vocation (Duffy et al., 2018), highlighting the sense of an external pull that some people feel towards a particular role or industry.

2. Craft metaphor: career as construction

This metaphor incorporates many of the key psychological theories that emphasise the agency of individuals and the role that they can play in determining their career paths. This metaphor encompasses the self-creation of career and the idea of career as part of an identity that helps to create a sense of self. The notion of 'craft' marries the ideas of functionality and creativity. Career models that apply this construction metaphor include Super's life-span, life-space model (1996), Savickas's (2002) notion of career construction and the social constructivist theories such as the socio-cognitive career choice theory of Lent et al. (2002).

Savickas et al. (2009) have taken the idea of construction further in recent years and introduce what they term as a new 'paradigm', or way of understanding career paths, describing career choice as a process of 'Life Design', in which boundaries between life and work are blurred, and people make decisions based on a more holistic view of themselves and their futures.

3. Seasons metaphor: career as cycle

This series of theories assumes that the processes of career planning and development are different at different stages in your life. It includes traditional theories such as Super's (1957) developmental theory and Levinson et al.'s (1978) age and stage theories. More recent theories, such as Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) kaleidoscope model, focus on the idea of gender and the varied motivators that drive men and women at specific stages of their careers. Boyatzis and Kolb (2000) conceptualise the cycle as a series of cycles, each building on the last. These theories have, however, been widely criticised for being too inflexible and invoking unhelpful stereotypes (e.g. Paul & Townsend, 1993).

4. Matching metaphor: career as 'fit'

This has been the dominant paradigm in careers for the last fifty years, since Holland came up with his RIASEC inventory of career interests (see Holland, 1997 for a more recent exploration of the theory). The metaphor can be explained by the idea of matching square pegs with square holes – finding people whose skills and interests match the needs and content of a job. It has also been promoted by Dawis and Loftquist's (1984) theory of work adjustment and Dawis's (2002) concept of person–environment fit. This theory has great intuitive appeal, and in addition is popular with those controlling the budgets for careers services because it appears to lend itself to a quick fix. Matching theories such as Holland's have spawned myriad computer programs that link people's interests, skills and values to appropriate job titles and (in theory) identify suitable occupations. But there are significant problems with this approach (developed in more detail in Chapter 3) in that it is hard to know what individual and job characteristics we should be measuring. In addition, it is a static theory applied to a dynamic and fast-moving workplace, and in any case, our best estimate is that a good person–environment fit accounts for only around 5% of job satisfaction (Spokane et al., 2000).

5. Path metaphor: career as journey

This is perhaps the most common of the career metaphors, and it incorporates the twin notions of movement between place and time. A range of different theories conceptualise the movement in different ways. The traditional notion of a 'career ladder' implies a journey upwards, climbing promotion by promotion to a more senior, better-paid role with more responsibility. Driver (1984) describes career

journeys as being either 'linear' or 'spiral', and implicit in the boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996, examined in more detail later) is the notion of a journey that is no longer limited to a particular route.

This metaphor, perhaps more than any other, has crept into common usage whenever we talk about careers: think about the notion of a career *path*, reaching a *crossroads* in your career, taking a *step* backwards, or finding yourself in a *dead-end* job.

6. Network metaphor: career as encounters and relationships

Careers are not pursued in isolation. The network metaphor explores ideas of career as a social or political institution. The prevalence of networking as a way to get and keep a job, or to generate business highlights the importance of relationships, and a relatively recent wave of relational career decision-making theories (Amundson et al., 2010; Blustein, 2001) are acknowledging the pivotal and inevitable role that others have in our career choices. There has been an enormous volume of work on work–family conflict, and theories (such as Hakim, 2006) demonstrate the importance of family life in career decisions.

7. Theatre metaphor: career as role

The organisation can be viewed as your stage with you as the central character of a play, taking on different roles as you move through the story. Notions of role models (e.g. Gibson, 2004) help us to better understand how to play the part, and psychological contracts as they are negotiated and re-negotiated (e.g. Rousseau, 1995) allow the nature of the role to be clarified and to evolve. Role theory leads us to understand concepts of role conflict and role congruity (Eagly & Karau, 2002), and Gioia and Poole's (1984) idea of career scripts is based on the notion of a developing and deepening understanding of a role. There has been a focus in the recent literature on the idea of identities, highlighting that each of us has different versions of ourselves which come to the fore in different contexts. We might have a career identity which incorporates all aspects of our whole working lives, an occupational identity which has the job itself at its heart, and an organisational identity which defines us in terms of the company we work for. Other research on possible and provisional selves (Ibarra, 2005; Strauss et al., 2012) shows us how we play with the idea of different future roles, and 'try them out' to see how they feel, as a way to make our career decisions. Identity can be a very useful thing to discuss with clients and we will explore this in a little more depth in the next chapter.

8. Economic metaphor: career as resource

Originally a metaphor conceptualised from the perspective of the employer, this metaphor is best known in the term 'human resources'. Within the career development