



Career Transition, Career Assessment and Storytelling: The Experience of an Older Australian Adult

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Career transition features in the lives of most adults. In an era of lifelong learning, an increasingly common form of transition is that of older adults entering university to obtain the qualifications needed to enter a new field of employment. Assisting individuals with their career transitions has always been a role of career development practitioners.

The present qualitative research investigated the use of the Self-Directed Search (SDS) career assessment instrument to assist older adults to consider their career transitions through a storytelling process facilitated through an Integrative Structured Interview (ISI; McMahon & Watson, 2012). In particular, the aims of the research were to investigate a) why adults who have been in the workforce engage in university studies, b) their experience of university, c) how they prepare to transition from university, and d) the ISI process as a form of transition support. This presentation reports on one ISI interview with a 35 year old Australian male who was in his final year of university study in order to transition from semi-skilled work to a profession. Prior to participating in the ISI process, the participant completed the SDS. The ISI contains thirteen questions structured in six parts. Results provide insight into the nature of transition to university and suggest that individuals may benefit from participating in an ISI process.

In its focus on career assessment and storytelling, the presentation addresses the core competencies of career development theory and advanced communication skills. The learning objectives of this presentation will enable participants to appreciate the complementarity of quantitative career assessment and storytelling, understand how to use the ISI to assist career clients, and know the steps involved in developing their own ISI processes.