Formal and informal training programs for career practitioners have increased in both quantity and quality over the past decade. For example, career development facilitator training opportunities have increased substantially during this time period. With an increase in credentialing (e.g., the Global Career Development Facilitator, the Master Career Counselor option via the National Career Development Association) and universities offering training in career development interventions, a growing number of people engage in the delivery of career services.

It is no coincidence that the increasing attention being given to career services comes at a time when the nature of work is changing dramatically (Rifkin, 1995). Increases in corporate downsizing, technological advances, various countries increasingly relying upon outsourcing of numerous occupations, growing numbers of dual-career couples, and a burgeoning contingent workforce all represent changes in the work experience. Those involved in training career practitioners must keep abreast of such changes because they provide indicators as to the challenges confronting workers as they attempt to manage their careers effectively. Knowing the challenges confronting workers enables practitioners to construct interventions that are relevant to the current context. Thus, training experiences for career practitioners must constantly be updated and adjusted so that trainees have relevant knowledge, awareness, and skills to assist people as they attempt to cope with contemporary career concerns.

Developing a Common Language in Training Career Practitioners

There is even a more basic challenge, however, that confronts the career development field. Specifically, the field of career guidance has, for most of its existence, been linguistically challenged. That is, many consumers of career services (and,
unfortunately, practitioners) have misused many of the key terms within the field. For example, career services providers occasionally talk about “doing career development” as if “career development” were an intervention rather than the object of an intervention (Herr, Cramer, & Niles, 2004). Similarly, practitioners often confuse the terms “career guidance” and “career counselling.” This lack of precision confuses practitioners, students, and clients and, therefore, is a barrier to advancing the efficacy of career development theory and practice globally. When language lacks precision, the implication is that terminology does not matter. However, words have power in that career development practitioners are “engaged in a verbal profession in which words and symbols frequently become the content of the interactions they have with clients” (Herr, 1997, p. 241). Thus, the need exists for greater clarity and specificity with regard to the key terms related to career development interventions. Such specificity enhances the credibility of our profession and provides a common ground for training career guidance practitioners. Developing a common language for the profession enhances the globalisation of training practices and enhances the internationalization of training opportunities.

In this chapter, key terms are defined as follows:

**Career development.** This concept refers to the lifelong psychological and behavioural processes as well as contextual influences shaping one’s career over the life span. As such, career development involves the person’s creation of a career pattern, decision-making style, integration of life roles, values expression, and life-role self-concepts (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002).

**Career development intervention.** If defined broadly it involves any activities that empower people to cope effectively with career development tasks (Spokane, 1991). For example, activities that help people develop self-awareness, develop occupational awareness, learn decision-making skills, acquire job search skills, adjust to occupational choices after they have been implemented, and cope with job stress can each be labelled as career development interventions. Specifically, these activities include individual and group career counselling, career development programs, career education, computer-assisted career development programs, and computer information delivery systems, as well as other forms of delivering career information to clients.

**Career counselling.** This involves a formal relationship in which a professional counsellor assists a client, or group of clients, to cope more effectively with career concerns (e.g., making a career choice, coping with career transitions, coping with job-related stress, or job searching). Typically, career counsellors seek to establish rapport with their clients, assess their clients’ career concerns, establish goals for the career counselling relationship, intervene in ways that help a client cope more effectively with his or her career concerns, evaluate a client’s progress, and, depending on a client’s progress, either offer additional interventions or terminate career counselling. Career counsellors often must have advanced training in counselling, psychology, and career development.

**Career coaching.** It also involves a formal relationship in which a career coach serves as a personal consultant to an individual seeking to deal with work-related