



Hope-filled career engagement

for Veterans, Residents, Asylum Seekers, and Rehabilitation

Leveraging strengths to increase hope and action to overcome barriers

In 2015 a review of vocational programs offered to prisoners in Victoria identified that a new approach was required to engage them in their vocational counselling sessions. It was essential a new approach could make the connection between education and industry training opportunities to support prisoners after their release.

Corrections Victoria engaged the Australian Centre for Career Education (ACCE) to develop a new approach that would foster a high level of engagement with prison education and training services and reduce recidivism. Through its international partnerships with leading career associations and researchers overseas, ACCE's investigation of career models determined that Gray Poehnell and Norman Amundson's theory of Hope-filled Engagement was the best model for cohorts facing issues and strong barriers to success.

Hope-filled Engagement is a person-centred, solution-focused, and hope-focused approach. It engages people where they currently are in their life and supports them to focus away from the problems that may overwhelm them. It ensures people can reflect on their strengths, the future, and leverages their imagination to increase hope



and engagement. The model helps clients become active collaborators in their career planning and encourages flexibility and innovation to build resilience and increase problem-solving.

A new model evolved from the hope-filled engagement approach, the **Action-oriented, Hope-centred Career Development Model**, developed by Dr S Niles, Dr N Amundson, and Dr R Neault. It had strong evidence having been tested in research with long term unemployed and resulted in positive impacts on resilience, outlook, and action.

*The results clearly illustrate how the interventions helped to create a significant shift towards greater **hope**. This attitudinal change creates a situation where clients are in a better place to develop action plans and start their job search activity. Seventy percent of the people who were interviewed reported that their involvement in the project helped them to develop new perspectives on job search, to develop better career plans, and to be more confident in the decisions they were making. This builds on research that links the importance and impact of hope as a tenant to increase an individual's ability to consider and engage in career development activities. (Clarke, Amundson, Niles & Yoon, in press).*

The new career approach developed by ACCE to be provided in prison by Vocational Counsellors included practical strategies and tools appropriate for the prison system. This included a redeveloped learning plan and specific tools. ACCE tested the new model in a focus group of prison Vocational Counsellors and trialled it with prisoners. Following the trial's success, its implementation was ratified by Corrections Victoria. The new model was published for Victorian prisons in *A Guide to Vocational Counselling in Victorian Prisons*, (2018) endorsed by the Deputy Commissioner.



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ACCE also tested the model with other cohorts including migrants, graduates, and Syrian refugees. All trial groups demonstrated positive outcomes and provided positive feedback about the approach.

ACCE recommends Hope-filled Engagement and Action-oriented, Hope-centred Career Development approaches for a wide range of people seeking career support and guidance. It is especially useful for cohorts facing significant barriers to success such a refugees and asylum seekers, veterans, and those who require career support through rehabilitation from injury.

About Us

The **Australian Centre for Career Education (ACCE)** was initially established by the Victorian Government in 1974. We are a national subject and membership association and thought leader supporting career education and positive employment outcomes in Australia. We advocate and support advancements in career development, career education, and career guidance counselling for all Australians.

ACCE remains at the forefront of international research and experience to embed the best quality standards, validated tools, and innovative practices within our profession. We are a founding member association of the national peak industry body, The Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA), and a CICA endorsed provider of specialist career development training through our RTO Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning. We promote the highest standards in career development, career education and career counselling.

Contact

To find out how the model can be used with your clients, or for staff training to support your clients, contact:

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