

Parsons, F. (1909). *Choosing a Vocation*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. A description of the book's content with extensive quotations

Choosing a Vocation is one of the seminal books in careers guidance, but is currently out of print. For this reason I think worth copying here some of its content (I photocopied the book at the Chicago public library in July 2004).

According to Giddens (*Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* 1991:20-21) a feature of modern times is the revision of many aspects of personal and social behaviour in the light of 'scientific thinking'. Careers guidance development is part of this general trend: rules for best professional insertion are studied, a new group of professionals is created for advising people according with the rules discovered, a corpus of techniques for advising people is developed. Parsons draws from the discoveries of differential and industrial psychologies, that were developing the same years, and applies them to vocational choices. In this book we find all the steps of the process. Parsons delimits the new field and advocates the importance of scientific method (chapter 1), defines the principles of the new discipline (chapter 2), describes optimum skills and training of advisers (chapter 13), develops a corpus of strategies and techniques for advising people (chapter 15 where seventeen 'sample cases' are featured, and most of the remaining chapters)¹.

Secondo Giddens (*Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* 1991:20-21) uno dei tratti distintivi della società moderna è il ricondurre interi ambiti di esperienza umana all'interno del dominio della razionalità (Giddens parla di 'institutional reflexivity'). Si tratta di un progetto avviato con l'Illuminismo che mira a sostituire credenze e comportamenti basati sulla tradizione e superstizione con credenze e comportamenti aventi base 'scientifica', basati cioè sul continuo accumulo ed elaborazione di conoscenze su base razionale. Inizialmente questo processo è stato applicato ai campi della medicina e delle scienze della natura (fisica, chimica, etc.), ma in tempi moderni possiamo individuare un processo di questo tipo ad esempio nell'alimentazione, nella pratica sportiva, nella produzione di beni e servizi, nell'area degli affetti e delle relazioni. Anche lo sviluppo dell'orientamento è avvenuto in quest'ottica: invece di affidarsi a casualità o senso comune dall'inizio del '900 si è cercato di individuare le leggi che regolano il buon inserimento professionale e i percorsi professionali e su questa base individuare le strategie di carriera ottimali. Oltre all'accumulo ed elaborazione di conoscenze, un processo di questo tipo vede anche la formazione di operatori specializzati in un determinato dominio (medici, psicologi, economisti, dietologi, etc.). In *Choosing a Vocation* troviamo tutto questo: la delimitazione del settore e l'enfasi sull'approccio scientifico (capitolo 1), la definizione di una teoria delle scelte professionali (capitolo 2), la messa a punto di un corpo di tecniche di intervento (capitolo 15 dove sono presentati diciassette casi, e la maggior parte dei capitoli rimanenti).

Parsons was born in Mount Holly, New Jersey on 1854. He graduated in engineering and went to work in the railroad industry, but after the depression of 1873 he was forced to work as a laborer. Then started teaching art, maths, history and French in Southbridge, Massachusetts and in 1881 passed the Massachusetts bar examination and practiced law for many years. In the late 1890's he started teaching again at Boston University and run (unsuccessfully) for mayor of Boston. At the beginning of 1900's he started working in what is nowadays known as careers guidance at a continuing education centre that he renamed 'Vocational Bureau of the Civic Service House'. He died in 1908.

¹ Parsons was not alone in his efforts. For example in 1881 L. Richards in his book *Vocophy* tried to base vocational behavior on phrenology, a discipline developed by F. J. Gall around 1800, that relates mental attributes with the shape of the head (Watkins C. E. Jr. & Savickas M. L. (1990). *Psychodynamic Career Counseling*. In Walsh W.B., Osipow S.H. (Ed.) *Career Counseling: Contemporary Topics in Vocational Psychology* (pp.79-116)). The influence of phrenology can be clearly detected in Parsons's work.

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Some quotations from the book (my comments are in red).

Original Introductory note (by Ralph Albertson, 1909, pp.XIII-XIV)

From p.XIII. The manuscript of this book was practically ready for publication when Professor Parsons died. (...) Some of the material here used appeared in articles in The Arena, and a number of the 'cases' in Part III have been published in the daily papers of Boston and New York. The appearance of these articles brought hundreds of letters of inquiry from all parts of the United States, expressing interest in the effort to give scientific vocational counsel to the young.

Parsons theory is outlined this way:

1. It is better to choose a vocation than merely to 'hunt a job'
 2. No one should choose a vocation without careful self analysis, thorough, honest, and under guidance
 3. The youth should have a large survey of the field of vocations, and not simply drop into the convenient or accidental position
 4. Expert advice, or the advice of men who have made a careful study of men and of vocations and of the conditions of success, must be better and safer for a young man than the absence of it
- From p.XIV. 5. *Putting it down on paper* seems to be a simple matter, but is one of supreme importance in this study. No young man can make the self analysis which Professor Parsons calls for *on paper* without gaining a distinct benefit, a guide, a rudder, a plan which will reduce very greatly his liability to become a mere piece of driftwood upon the industrial sea.

Part.1. The personal investigation

Chapter 1. The importance of scientific method (pp.3-4)

From p.3. No step in life, unless it maybe the choice of a husband or wife, is more important than the choice of a vocation. (...)

These vital problems should be solved in a careful, scientific way, with due regard to each person's aptitudes, abilities, ambitions, resources, and limitations, and the relations of these elements to the condition of success in different industries. If a boy takes up a line of work to which he is adapted, he will achieve far greater success than if he drifts into an industry for which he is not fitted. An

occupation out of harmony with the worker's aptitudes and capacities means inefficiency, unenthusiastic and perhaps distasteful labor, and low pay; while an occupation in harmony with the nature of the man means enthusiasm, love of work, and high economic value – superior product, efficient service and good pay. (..)

Efficiency and success

From p.4. are largely dependent on adaptation. (with 'adaptation' Parsons means the good matching between personal features and 'condition of success in different industries'). (..)

We guide our boys and girls to some extent through school, then drop them in this complex world to sink or swim as the case may be. Yet there is no part of life where the need for guidance is more emphatic than in the transition from school to work (..).

The building of a career is quite as difficult a problem as the building of a house, yet few ever sit down with a pencil and paper, with expert information and counsel, to plan a working career and deal with the problem of building a house, taking the advice of an architect to help them. Boys generally drift into some line of work by chance, proximity, or uniformed selection² (..).

The aim of this book is to point out practical steps that can be taken to remedy these conditions through expert counsel and guidance, in the selection of a vocation, the preparation for it, and the transition from school to work. No person may decide for another what occupation he should choose, but it is possible to help him so to approach the problem that he shall come to wise conclusion for himself.

Chapter 2. The principles and the methods involved (pp. 5-13)

From p.5. In the wise choice of a vocation there are three broad factors: (1) a clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, limitations, and their causes; (2) a knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work; (3) true reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts. Every young person needs help on all three of these points. He needs counsel. He needs a vocational counsellor. (..) The more light he can bring to bear in the problem from his own observation, reading and experience, the better it will be for the clearness and strength of the conclusions arrived at, and the permanent value of results attained. The first step, therefore, is self study. To win the best success of which one is capable, his best abilities and enthusiasm must be united with his daily work. He needs, therefore, to investigate himself in order to determine his capacities, interest, resources, and limitations, and their causes, so that he may compare his aptitudes, abilities, ambitions, etc. with the conditions of success in different industries. The schedule of personal data outlined here in these pages may be used as part of the process of self investigation and self revelation. The answers the young man or

From p.6. women makes to these questions afford much light on the problem under consideration, not only by their direct relations to it, but indirectly also; for a careful counselor can read between the lines³ a great deal about the accuracy, clearness, directness, and definiteness of thought, care, thoroughness, modesty or conceit, mental make up, and special characteristics of the young man's character and ability. In addition to the schedule study, the counsellor puts whatever questions and makes whatever tests the case may call for, on the general principles already stated. When I hand this schedule to a young man I talk to him somewhat as follows: '(..) Consider every question carefully (..). A thorough study of yourself is the foundation of a true plan of life. Deal with the matter as though correct conclusions would mean ten thousand dollars to you. (..) Stand off and look at yourself as though you were another individual. Look yourself in the eye. Compare yourself with others. (..) Watch people that you admire (..) and how they differ from people you do not

² Il sistema buono per costruire (cioè un metodo applicato a un problema pratico, in cui la buona soluzione è essenziale, sennò la casa casca) è applicato a un problema di altra natura.

³ Validazione / assessment

admire. (...) And then bring the study to the counsellor. He will help you revise it, make further tests, suggest the means of judging questions not yet satisfactorily answered (...).’

From p.7. Besides this study by the applicant on its own account, the counsellor usually questions him at some length in a private interview. Ancestry, family, education, reading, experience, interests, aptitudes, abilities, limitations, resources, etc. are inquired into with a vigour and directness that are not possible in a written research. The memory is tested and the general intelligent so far as possible, the senses also and delicacy of touch, nerve, sight, and hearing reactions, association-time, etc. where these facts appear to be important elements in the problem. For example, an artist needs, amongst other things, good visual memory and delicacy of touch; a dentist should have keen sight, delicate touch, correlation of hand and eye, and plenty of nerve (...).

From p.8. Nevertheless it must not be forgotten that all such indicators are only straws, hints to be taken in the account with all the other facts of the case. The handicap of slow decision or imperfect memory may be more than overcome⁴ by superiority in industry, earnestness, vitality, endurance, common sense, sound judgement, etc. For the purpose of aiding to get a comprehensive view of the field of opportunity, we have a classified list of more than two hundreds ways in which women are earning money, and similar classified lists of industries for men. Another study (...) is published herewith in regard to the conditions of success in different industries: first, the fundamentals, applicable in large measure to all industries; and second, the special conditions, applicable to particular industries or group of industries. For example (...) power of expression with the voice is From p.9. peculiarly related to success in the ministry, law, and public life. (...) Opportunities, specific and general, in different lines of work should be classified with reference to each of the leading industries, and also with regard to the location of industrial centres of various sorts and the geographical distribution of the demand. A tables has been prepared showing all the leading industries in Massachusetts, with their relative development and geographical centres. (...) Attention is also given to the relative growth of industries and the movement of the demand. For instance census figures show that the per cent of progress in the printing trade in Massachusetts is four time the per cent of progress for the whole group of manufacturing and mechanical industries. (...) As data develop on these lines, more and more complete and perfect information relating to immediate and specific openings and opportunities for employment, and to the general and permanent demand in different occupations, will be made available. Data in regard to pay, conditions of labor, chances of advancement, etc. should also be collected and systematized. We have in tabular forms the courses given in the

From p.10. leading vocational schools (...) and all the day and evening course in or near city (...). Special effort is made to develop analytic power. The power to see essential facts and principles in a book or in a mass of business data (...). I find it best to have at least fifteen minutes’ private talk with the applicant before he begins his personal study (and half an hour or one hour is better still, if it can be had) (...).

From p.11. Sometimes the case is pretty clear at the first interview; sometimes a good deal of study is needed to get the right clue. If the boy is underdeveloped and experienced and shows no special aptitudes, he is advised ton read about various industries (...) in vocational books, and visit farms, factories, carpenter shops, machine shops, laboratories, electric works, railroad depots, building in course of construction, newspaper offices, photograph studies, courts, banks, stores, etc. talk with the workers and superintendents, too, if he can, try his hand at different sorts of work on the farm, in the care of animals, in the factory, office, and store, so to get an experience sufficient to bring out his aptitudes and abilities, if he has any, and to

From p.12. form a basis for an intelligent judgement as to what he shall try to do in the world. Breadth is important as well a s specialisation. A man cannot be fully successful, nor secure against change constantly occurring in the industry, unless he knows a good deal besides the special knowledge immediately applicable to his business. There is no way in many cases to bring true

⁴ ottimista

interests and aptitude into clear relief, except through variety of experience (..) Many boys will be equally successful either in business, or farming, or some mechanical line, or one of the professions (..). In such cases the choice of an occupation is largely the question of opportunity and industrial demand. If the father, or uncle, or any relative or friend has a good business into which the boy can grow with a prospect of adaptation and efficiency, the burden of proof is on the proposition that this foundation should be abandoned and another building started on a new site. The questions of resources ability to take expensive courses of instruction and wait From p.13. long years for remunerative practice or position, is also very important.⁵ But the fundamental question that outranks all the other is the question of adaptation, -the question of uniting, so far as may be possible, the best abilities and enthusiasm of the developed man with the daily work he has to do.

Chapter 3. Counselors and applicants (pp.14-25)

Explains how to address a class or a club, with a practical example of a speech.

From p.16. (..) Some of the cases that have come before the Bureau are then described, in order to show how the system works, and an invitation is given to any who desire a consultation to make an appointment with the counsellor. Sometimes a considerable part of the audience responds to this invitation. After a talk to a class of thirty or forty boys, for example, the teacher and all the larger boys made appointments which kept the counsellor busy for over two weeks. Many applicant also come individually in response to circulars that have been distributed, or press notices that have appeared from time to time. The first interview with the applicant usually requires from fifteen minutes to an hour. I question him (...) noting the answers myself directly in my Vocational Register, a notebook of convenient size which I can easily carry about with me. I begin getting the name and address of the applicant, and ask him to state his problem as briefly and concisely as possible (..). This free his mind at the burning point, and makes him feel that you have got at the kernel of his difficulty at the start (..). The sole condition of this interview is that we shall be From p.17. perfectly frank with each other. (..). Sometimes the family bent toward a given line of work (..) is so marked as to furnish one indication of the probable direction in which a young man's aptitudes may be fond to lie. Sometimes, also, the opportunity for entering upon the business in which the father or brother or uncle is engaged is so excellent as to furnish a strong reason for carefully considering that course. These consideration, as a rule, I do not mention at the time, but reserve them until the end of the examination, or such time as I may choose to make suggestions to the applicant in regard to his choice of occupation.

A list of questions is then described.

From p.19. The applicants fall in two main classes: First, those having well-developed aptitudes and interests and a practical basis for reasonable conclusion in respect to the choice of a vocation. Second, boys and girls with so little experience or manifestation of special aptitudes or interests that there is no basis yet for a wise decision. (...)

Parsons suggests people in the second class to deepen their knowledge of occupations, than

After some weeks or months of such reading, investigation, and practical self-development, the applicant

From p.20. may come back to have another interview, when it may be possible to arrive at some definite conclusion (..). In dealing with the first class is often possible to make quite definite suggestions even at the first interview (..). With such applicants I generally ask (..): if all the boys in

⁵ impiegabilità

Boston were gathered here together and a naturalist were classifying them as he would classify plants and animals, in what division would you belong? In what respects, if any, would you excel the mass of young men, and in what respect, if any, would you be inferior to most? Would the classifying scientist put you in the mechanical group or the professional group, the executive group or the labouring group? Would he class you as artistic, as intellectual, or physical, quick or slow, careful or careless, enthusiastic or unenthusiastic, effective or ineffective, etc.? (..)
Then we take the tables that show the conditions of success in different lines of industry, and go over them together (..)⁶.

From p.21. With both classes of applicants it is a common thing for the counsellor, after a little questioning, to give the youth one of the Bureau's sheets of instructions and a leaflet on personal investigation together with a standard blank book (..) and ask the applicant to make a careful study of himself with the help of his friends (..). The case may be so clear that this is not necessary (..).

One page follows saying that the counsellor should observe carefully the young person trying to figure out which his mental development level is. Special tests may also be applied. Once the test have been accomplished,

From p.23. (..) the counsellor should use the utmost frankness and kindness in a friendly effort to enable the applicant to see himself exactly as others see him, and correct whatever defects may stand in the way of his advancement. If the young man has not developed a proper interest in civic affair, the counsellor may try to quicken its development as a citizen (..) **suggesting books to read or organisations to join.**

If the young man has any bad habits (..) is the counsellor's duty, in a mild and kindly but firm and energetic way, to make suggestions that will show the young man clearly the disadvantages of such habits (..).

From p.24. The counsellor should also make a special effort to master and use the concrete form of suggestion, **using metaphors to better explain his point of view.**

The counsellor should gather for himself all possible information in regard to the conditions of success in different lines of work and the distribution of demand in different industries, supplementing our tables by original research. He should also have full information in regard to courses of study (..). The counsellor will (..) also gather biographic data relating to the characteristics of leadin men in their youth, and the relation between these youthful traits and the development of later life. (..)

Chapter 4. Extended discussion of personal data (pp.26-44)

A form for collecting information by the applicant is described in detail. The form is filled by the applicant at home, and then handed back and discussed with the counsellor. Nearly 200 questions are made, about personal data, family of origin, health, habits to smoking and exercise, education and training, knowledge, skills, experience in jobs, attitudes toward work, interests, ambitions, resources, and others.

Chapter 5. The method in outline (pp.45-46)

From p.45. In brief outline the *Method* of the Vocation Counselor is as follows:--

⁶ gli fa applicare il metodo e il ragionamento che il consulente usa nella sua testa (i due americani nel libro di osipow dicono che questa è una delle caratteristiche del metodo)

I. Personal Data.

A careful statement, *on paper*, of the principal facts about the person, bringing out particularly every fact that has a bearing on the vocational problem

II. Self-Analysis

A self examination, *on paper*, done in private, under instructions of the counsellor, developing specially every tendency and interest that should affect the choice of a life work

III. The Person's own Choice and Decision

In a great majority of cases this will show itself in a marked degree before the work under I and II is finished. It must always be borne in mind that the choice of a vocation should be made by each person for himself rather than by any one else for him. The counsellor can only guide. Correct, advise, assist the candidate in making its own final choice.

IV. Counselor's Analysis

On the basis of the information obtained under I and II, so far as possible the counsellor should test III by making an analysis under each of the following heads, seeking in every line for significance in the line of the main quest: 1. heredity and circumstance. 2 Temperament and natural equipment. 3. Face and character. 4 Education and experience. 5 Dominant interests.

V. Outlook on the Vocational Field

One who would be a vocational counselor should

From p.46. familiarize himself in a high degree with industrial knowledge, and he will need some knowledge, as we have indicated in Part III of this book, that is not at present easily obtained. Investigations to be undertaken at once are: 1. Lists and classifications of industries and vocations. 2. The conditions of success in the various vocations. 3. General information about industries, up-to-date, the kind that is found in current magazines and papers rather than in books. 4 Apprenticeship systems now in practice. Vocational schools and courses available in your city and state. 6. Employment agencies and opportunities.

VI. Induction and Advice

This calls for clear thinking, logical reasoning, a careful, painstaking viewing of all the evidence, a broad minded attitude toward the whole problem, tact, sympathy, wisdom.

VII. General Helpfulness in Fitting into the Chosen Work

Part 2. The industrial investigation

Chapter VI. The conditions of efficiency and success in different industries (pp.49-64)

From p.49. (...). I Fundamentals, applicable in large measure to all industries: health, interest, endurance, (...)

From p.50 II. The following particular conditions applicable to special industries or group of industries are given, not as being comprehensive or necessary accurate, but as illustrating the method to any particular case (...).

From p.51. (1) Agriculture, Horticulture, Floriculture, etc.

Knowledge of soil, crops, processes etc., best obtained by experience, linked with scientific study of the principles of the subject in a good school of agriculture, etc.

Knowledge of the market and adaptation to it.

Possession of a good area.

A good degree of business capacity. (...)

Lists of this kind follows for several industries. An example of a table used to evaluate employees used by 'a certain large department stores' us reproduced.

Chapter VII. Classification of industries (p.65)

From p. 65. Each vocational counsellor should make a thorough and detail classification of the vocations. As no such list of vocations can be permanent, and as any list will probably be incomplete, I shall not attempt to present one here. On broad lines I would group the different industrial pursuit as follows:

1. Agencies and Office Work
2. Agricultural
3. Artistic
4. Commercial
5. Domestic and Personal Service
6. Fishing
7. Manufacturing
8. Mechanical, Building, and Construction
9. Professional and Semi-professional
10. Miscellaneous Industries

One of the first task for a vocational counselor is the making of as a complete a list under each one of these headings as possible. One of the most serious limitation under which young people unconsciously live is their lack of an outlook upon the industrial world. It is of first importance that the applicant should know as much about the various fields of industrial pursuit as possible, and the first step is that he be given a comprehensive view of the field itself.

Chapter VIII. Industries open to women (pp.66-70)

Chapter IX. The use of statistics (pp.71-73)

From p.71. The vocational counsellor should be a careful student of industrial history and industrial geography. He should not merely to get the statistics, but how to use them. We have prepared and found useful a number of schedules throwing light on our problems in Massachusetts.

1. A list of the workers in the different industries per thousand population (...), in the chief cities of Massachusetts (...)
2. Capital invested in the various industries in Massachusetts showing the number of establishments, number of workers, capital per employee, salaries paid managers and high officials, etc. (...)
3. Table on earnings (...) shows for each industry the total amount of wages paid, the average number of workers, and the average paid by the day
4. Table showing the sex, color, and nativity of persons engaged in various occupations in the ten largest cities of Massachusetts
5. Table showing the movement of demand from 1860 to 1900 in each of the 199 vocations
6. Table showing the movement of demand for females, giving the number of females engaged in different industries in 1870, 1880, and 1900
7. Table showing the death rate per thousand workers in 150 occupations in Massachusetts.

From p.73. A few of the facts brought out in these tables may be of interest. For instance, the increase in number of persons engaged in agencies and office work has been fifty per cent since 1860, while the population has only a little more than doubled itself (...). In agriculture the figures of 1900 show a decrease of over one thousand persons since 1860. (...) In domestic and personal service there were three times as many people employed in 1900 as in 1870 (...). The proportion of persons engaged in fishing remains the same (...).

Chapter X. The movement of demand for workers in the different industries (pp.74-82)

From p.74. In considering the movement of demand, two things are of importance. First, by finding the increase and decrease in number of persons gainfully employed during the past ten, twenty, thirty, or fifty years, to discover the increase or decrease in the demand for workers in the different occupations during the time. Second, by reckoning the increase in the proportion to population, to find whether this demand has grown with the population or fallen behind it. To illustrate, the following table has been prepared. This shows that though the number of people employed in agriculture has almost doubled since 1870, the number in proportion of population (..) is now less now than the; while the other classes have grown, not only in actual numbers, but also in proportion to the total population. General figures such as these, however, are of less value to one choosing a vocation than figures relating to specific occupations. (..)

From p.76. (..) between 1870 and 1900 the number of dentists increased almost fourfold (..).

From p.77. Two tables are appended to this chapter; one (..) giving the twenty occupations which in 1900 employed the greatest number of persons of both sexes (..). The other table (..) gives the occupations in which the total number of persons has increased most (..).

Several tables follow.

Chapter XI. The geographical distribution of workers in the different industries amongst the states, territories, and chief cities of the United States, 1900 (pp.83-88)

From p.83. (..) two sets of figures will be useful. First, figures showing the actual numbers employed in the different occupations in the various sections of the country. These will be useful chiefly in such industries as manufacturing, where the demand for workers in a particular section is not necessarily in proportion to the population, and where the chances of the perspective worker are perhaps greater in a section in which already large number of workers are employed. (...) Another set of figures would be more directly useful in the case of occupations where the demand for workers is more or less in proportion to population, e.g. in the case of doctors, lawyers, servants (..).

Several tables follow.

Part III. The organisation and the work

Chapter XII. The vocation bureau (pp.91-92)

From p.91. The Vocation Bureau of Boston was founded in January, 1908, by Mrs Quincy A. Shaw, on plans drawn up by the writer. More than a dozen years ago I stated the essence of the matter in a lecture on 'The Ideal City'. That lecture was repeated in Boston before the Economic Club a few years ago and soon after Mr. Meyer Bloomfield and Mr Philip Davies, on behalf of the Civic Service House, invited me to speak to the graduating class of one of the evening high schools on the choice of a vocation. After the talk a number of young men asked for personal interviews, and the result proved to be so helpful that Mr Bloomfield requested me to draw plans for the permanent organisation of the work. These plans were submitted to Mrs Shaw, who heartily approved the idea, and immediately established the new institution with sufficient resources to enable the work begun as a new department of the Civic Service House in the North End of Boston. (..) a large number of men and women from fifteen to seventy-two years age have come to us for consultation (..) some even declaring that the interview (..) was the most important hour of their lives.

From p.92. The majority of applicants, however, have been boys and girls from the high schools of working boys and girls of high school age. (..) The Bureau does not attempt to decide for any boy

what occupation he should choose, but aims to help him in investigate the subject and come to a conclusion on his own account, that is much more likely to be valid and useful than if no effort were made to apply scientific methods to the problem.

Chapter XIII. The school for vocational counselors (pp.93-95)

From p.93. The Vocation Department of the Boston Young Men's Christina Association has established a school for vocational counselors. (...) The demand for vocational counselors (..) is growing very rapidly (..) the widespread practical interest in the new institution justifies the belief that the movement will soon become a national one. The prospects are that vocational guidance will be made part of the service of the Y.M.C.A.'s and other educational institutions in all our principal cities (..). The work **of the school** consists of lectures, research, practice by the laboratory model, reports of results, conferences, discussions and special tests subject to the criticism of the instructor and the member of the class. (..)

From p.94. To enter the vocational course a man must have excellent character and ability, good manners and address, at least a high school education or its equivalent, and a satisfactory experience of two years or more in teaching, or business or social work, or a satisfactory equivalent for such experience. And he must have attained the age of twenty-five years, unless very mature at an earlier age. In addition to mature judgement, a character and a personality that invite respect and confidence, and a good general education, including some knowledge of history, civics, and economics, a vocational counselor should possess: (1) A practical working knowledge of the fundamental and methods of modern psychology. (2) An experience involving sufficient human contact to give him an intimate acquaintance with human nature in a considerable

From p.95. number of its different types and phases; he must understand the dominant motives, interests, and ambitions that control the lives of men, and be able to recognize the symptoms that indicate the presence or absence of important element of character. (3) Ability to deal with young people (..) (4) A knowledge of requirements and conditions of success, compensation, prospects, advantages, and disadvantages, etc., in the different lines of industry. (5) Information relating to courses of study and means of preparing for various callings and developing efficiency therein. (6) Scientific method – analysis and the principles of investigation by which laws and causes are ascertained, facts are classified, and correct conclusions drawn. The counsellor must be able to recognize the essential facts and principles involved in each case, group them according their true relations, and draw the conclusions they justify.

Chapter XIV. Supplementary helps (pp.96-110)

From p.96. **Describes leaflets that are distributed to employers, workers, young people, including some for developing**

From p.97. **civic interest. and reproduces them.**

From p.98. To Employers: The percentage of inefficiency and change you may experience in your working force, and the cost it entails in employment expense, waste of training, and low-grade service, are largely due to the haphazard way which young men and women drift into this or that employment, with little or no regard to adaptability, and without adequate preparation or any definite aim or well considered plan to insure efficiency, devotion, and development.

From p.99. The Bureau will actively cooperate with the applicant in his efforts to secure the training he may need, and to find employment for which he is fitted or shall fit himself. (...) The Bureau specially asks the cooperation of employers in securing as full and definite information as possible regarding the opportunities offered by different industries and the conditions of success therein, and in affording opportunities for the Secretary or other representatives of the Bureau to speak to groups of employees and make appointments with them for individual conference and consultation.

From p.100. **To workers:** (..) If you find that you are not adapted to the work in which you are engaged, the Bureau will aid you in determining what occupation may be better suited to your capacities and powers, and in selecting the best available means of preparing for it and building up a successful career.

Chapter XV. Sample cases (pp.111-159)

From p.111. (...) The following selected cases illustrate the wide variety of method and treatment:

Several cases are illustrated:

ID and Title	Situation	Assessment results	Counselor's Action / Advice
3. A Cartoonist in the bud	Wants to start a occupation he has never done	Has interest and skills for the occupation	Validates his desire. Suggests steps to improve his skills in that occupation.
6. A would-be Doctor	Wants to start a occupation he has never done	Has no skills for it and no information about it	Informs the person on the skills needed and makes him verify he lacks them. Suggests other occupations where his skills can be used and to get information and direct experience about them.
12. From bootblacking to sign painting	Working in a occupation he is not interested and looking for another one in which he is not interested	Has skills and interests in other fields of activity.	Makes the person realize which its interests and skills are. Verifies directly one of them. Suggests to start a certain profession and steps to improve the skills needed for that.
13. A gift for languages	Looking for a job he is not interested in and that doesn't requires his skills	Has skills for other fields of activities	Makes the person realize which his skills are and identify some occupations that interest him where this skills are necessary. Suggests steps to improve his skills in that field and to give up a bad habit (smoking)
14. A Lawyer in the making	Working in a occupation he is not interested and looking for another one in which he is interested	Has skills for the occupation in which he is interested	Suggests steps to improve his skills in that occupation.
18. The secret of effective preaching	Wants to start a occupation he has never done	Has interest and skills for the occupation	Suggests steps to improve his skills in that occupation.
19. An embryo Forester	Wants to change a occupation he is not interested in	Has interest and skills for another occupation	Suggests steps to improve his skills in that occupation.
22. A Mechanic off the track	Quite successful in a occupation he quite like. Not satisfied	Has skills and a strong interest for another occupation	Suggests steps to improve his skills in that occupation.
23. Architect or Physical director	Has skills and started working in two different occupations. Wants choose one	Has more skills and interest for one of the two	Makes the person compare and clarify the two options, so to choose one.

33. Business or law; a house half built	Has interest and skills for current occupation, but is studying for a new one on suggestion of a friend	Doesn't know and has not skills for the new one	Makes the person realise he doesn't know and he is not fitted for the new occupation. Suggests steps to improve his skills in current occupation.
57. More study and experience needed to reach definite conclusion	Worked and working in several heterogeneous occupations. Studied and studying heterogeneous topics.	Has interest for a certain field	Suggests to get information and direct experience about that field and then to come back. When back suggests steps to improve his skills in that field.
64. Mining Engineer or Teacher and Accountant	Successful and interested in two occupations he likes, but want to start a new one	Probably has skills also for new occupation, but he doesn't know it and it takes a long training	Suggests to compare advantaged and disadvantages of the three occupations.
70. Barred by prejudice against age	Successfully worked for many years in an occupation. Currently unemployed and rejected for his age.	No health problems, but very discouraged	Suggests to continue looking for his old occupation, but to change his discouraged attitude while looking for a job.
72. To be or not to be a Stenographer	Wants to change his current occupation for two different one	Poor skills for one of the desired new occupations	Says the person has poor skills for one of the desired occupation, but suggests to be assessed on it by a specialist of that field. Suggests other occupations.
84. Congenial work with due care for the health	A woman, doesn't like housework and wants to choose a different occupation. Has had quite serious 'nerve problems' in the past.	Has not yet regained all her mental capabilities.	Makes the person realize which occupations interests her most. For each of the selected occupations evidence which the implication for he health are. Suggests steps to improve her skills in each of the selected occupations.
88. A Farmer's boy in the city	No interest in his current occupation. Attending a course to improve his skills in it.	Not skilled for the current occupation. Very limited knowledge of the world.	Suggests to activate for his career and to improve his knowledge of the occupations in his father's filed, where he has already got some experience.
90. I don't see any future in my work	A man working successfully in an occupation, but without possibilities of career and pay increase.	Likes his occupation, but is underpaid.	Suggests steps to get a formal qualification in the field in which is working and steps to change company.

(...)

Chapter XVI. Conclusions (pp.160-165)

From p.160. (...) Society is very short sighted as yet towards the development of its human resources. It trains its horses, as a rule, better than its men. Less than one sixteenth of the children in Boston primaries go through a high-school course. (...)

From p.161. The mass of children go to work to earn their living as soon as they are old enough to meet the law, and often before that. Science declares that specialisation in early years in place of all-round culture is disastrous both to the individual and to society. (...) A knowledge of each of the great classes of industry by practical contact is the right of every boy. This varied experience should be obtained under a thoroughgoing scientific plan of education development, and not by wasteful and imperfect method of drifting from one employment to another in the effort of making a living (...).

From p.164. Youth is the period of plasticity and rapid development, in which the foundation should be laid both for an all-round culture and for special vocational power. (..)

Not till society wakes up to its responsibilities and its privileges in this relation shall we be able to harvest more than a fraction of our human resources, or develop and utilize the genius and ability that are latent in each new generation. When that time does come, education will become the leading industry, and a vocational bureau in effect will be a part of the public-school system in every community (..) with experts trained as carefully for the work as men are trained to-day for medicine and for the law.