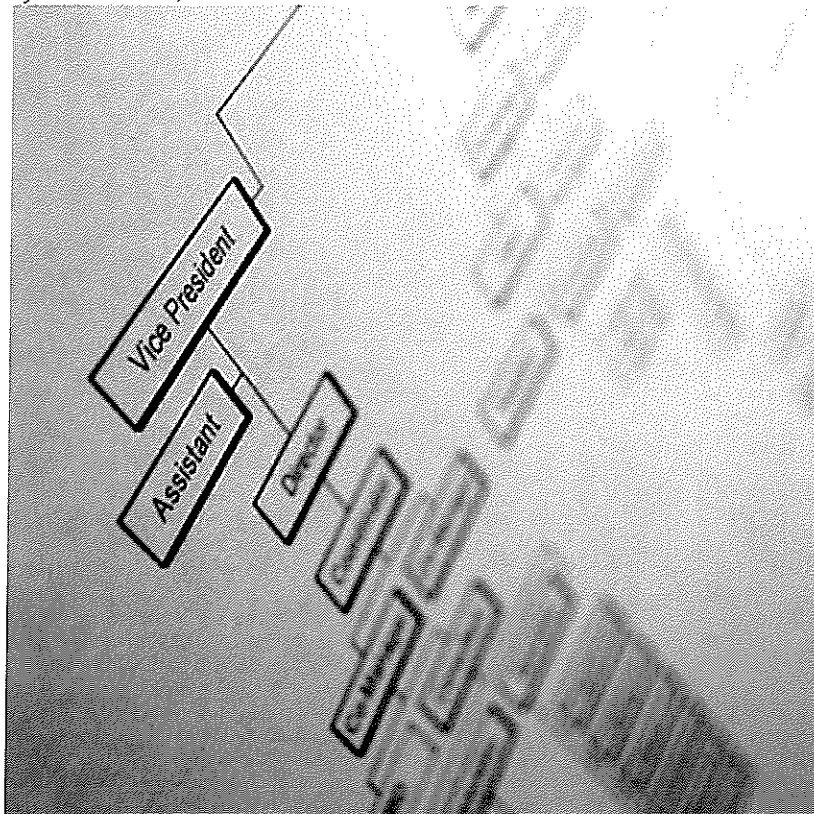


Genograms

A genogram is a three-dimensional family tree. It shows the linear relationships between a career counselor's client and his family members and the family dynamics associated with those relationships. A genogram may include family members' educational background, occupations, avocations and other interests. The ages when a client's relatives began working and the ages when they retired might also be depicted. A genogram typically spans three generations, including the client, his parents and his grandparents.

How to Create a Career Genogram

by Chris Daniels, Demand Media



A career genogram lays out information in an easy-to-understand format.

You inherit more than genes from your family. As you develop, you are influenced by your family members' ideas and actions. These ideas -- transmitted like genes -- are dubbed memes. A career genogram is your family tree traced back to your grandparents that examines the careers that each member pursued. Creating your career genogram can be personally rewarding and help you examine the competencies you obtained from your family to use in your own career search.

As we gather information about the family history, we look for patterns about career, expectations, values, beliefs about monetary reward, education, and training. A holistic approach allows the client to view his/her opportunities in light of their individual strengths, belief systems, motivations and personal expectations. Consequently, the Personal Vocational Evaluation stage delves deeper into an individual's capabilities than even the most thoroughly prepared resume. Sorting external pressures from internally motivated desires releases ambitions that can contribute to long-term success, thereby contributing to increased financial independence and self-determination.

Step 1

Divide the page into three horizontal sections: one for your generation, one for your parents' generation and a third for your grandparents' generation.

Step 2

Draw a box at the center of the bottom section of the sheet corresponding to you. You may highlight it in a different color or use a different shape, such as a hexagon, to make it stand out.

Step 3

Add boxes for your parents in the middle section. In a genogram, it is customary to represent men with boxes and women with circles, although this is not necessary. Label the boxes with your parents' names, university degrees and careers. Draw a line connecting you to your parents to demonstrate the relationship.

Step 4

Add each of your set of grandparents to the top section of the sheet, adding names, degrees and careers.

Step 5

Add your parents' siblings to the middle section of the genogram, along with their names, degrees and occupations. If you are limited in space, choose aunts and uncles that you have more interaction with, as they would have made a greater contribution to your knowledge and competencies.

Step 6

Add in your siblings and cousins to the bottom section of the sheet alongside you.

Step 7

Analyze the career genogram for commonalities, such as preferences for monetary reward, industries favored, creativity needed and belief systems. You should not see this as limiting your career choices, but helping reveal qualities you may wish to look for in a career.

Step 8

Write a one page report about what you have learned about yourself and your current career choice from this exercise and from examining your family's career history. How have your values, interests, career goals, educational objectives and career needs been shaped by your family?

EXAMPLE: Family of Origin Career Genogram

