

# Colorado Career Conversations

## Training Workbook



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Colorado Career Conversation training is an initiative of the Education Leadership Council, presented by the Colorado Education Initiative on behalf of the Colorado Department of Education. The training and framework were also built in partnership with the Colorado Workforce Development Council, Colorado Department of Higher Education, and Colorado Department of Labor and Employment.



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# Content Overview

## What is a Career Conversation?

A **career conversation** is the interactive and dynamic process of supporting individuals in pursuing a career path, pursuing the education and training necessary to achieve a career path.



## Possible areas of support

- ✓ Identifying skills, interests, and aptitudes
- ✓ Exploring career possibilities and analyzing economic opportunities
- ✓ Identifying solutions to challenges
- ✓ Preparing for the individualized steps required to enter a job or education program

## What is a Career Conversation Advisor?

A **career conversation advisor** is a person trained in and prepared to engage advisees in a Colorado Career Conversation, and help them learn *the skills* to identify, select, and achieve career goals now and in the future.

## Who Might Advisors Be?

- Counselor
- Educator (teachers, professors, administrators, etc.)
- Coach; Club Sponsor; Band Director...
- Other service provider (paraprofessionals, other personnel)
- Parent/guardian
- Colleague; Peer; Near-Peer
- Other, other, other...



## Understand Your Role

### Desired Outcomes:

- The advisor understands the process
- The advisor understands the role(s) they play (and don't play) in a career conversation
- The advisor is aware of assumptions, biases, and cultural disconnects that can influence career conversations

### What an Advisor Does

#### *My role as an advisor is to...*

- Actively listen
- Ask open-ended questions
- Empower
- Build confidence
- Guide
- Expand possibilities
- Help problem-solve around obstacles and navigate systems
- Build relationships
- Support, no matter how resistant
- Develop planning skills and promote long-term thinking
- Provide accountability
- Incorporate the advisee's reality into the decision process

#### *My role as an advisor is not to...*

- Be the expert
- Make decisions for the advisee
- Tell the advisee what to do
- Paint a negative or limiting picture based on personal beliefs
- Fix problems/take control
- Get the person a job/into a program
- Take responsibility for the advisee's actions
- Promote false hope

## Exploring Your Own Experience and Perspectives

*How did your own experience with career advisement benefit you? Where was it lacking?*

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*What would you want from a career advisor today?*

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*How do you feel about stepping into the role of a career advisor?*

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## Establish Trust and Introduce the Process

### Desired Outcomes:

- The advisor establishes/affirms a trusting relationship with the advisee
- The advisor leads career conversations designed to instill confidence and hope, and open the door to exploring many possibilities
- The advisor defines roles and relationship expectations with the advisee

### The Elements of Trust

**A** **Able** Demonstrates Competence

**B** **Believable** Acts with Integrity

**C** **Connected** Cares about Others

**D** **Dependable** Honors Commitments

Source: [www.kenblanchard.com/Products-Services/Building-Trust](http://www.kenblanchard.com/Products-Services/Building-Trust)

### Define Roles and Relationship Expectations

Empower advisee to take charge of their own destiny

#### Your role as an advisee is to...

- Ask lots of questions - get curious!
- Be open to possibilities and new ideas
- Take action - do your research, put in the time, make decisions
- Advocate for yourself
- Ask for help where needed
- Be honest and forthcoming
- Take responsibility for actions
- Keep your commitments

### Best Practices

*What are your best practices for building trust?*

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## Encourage Action

### Desired Outcomes

- The advisor is prepared to help the advisee create an action plan for themselves to turn the choice into reality
- The advisor is prepared to help the advisee stay motivated, providing the support/ accountability the advisee may need to continue to make progress



The advisee determines their current status relative to their chosen prospective career and determines the gap.

### Action Plan Elements:

1. Action steps: Break the goal down into manageable chunks.
2. Timeline: Let the advisee choose a date that feels reasonable, but challenging.
3. Resources: Help the advisee identify the resources needed to complete each step.
4. Agree on accountability measures: The advisee determines how they will stay on track.

## Action Planning Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

### What Do I Want?

What is my vision? What are dreams for my future?

What are my goals? What are my core values?

What are my needs? What are my constraints/realities?

### Champion Network Map

Social:

  
  



Personal:

  
  


Educational:

  
  


Professional:

  
  


Recreational:

  
  


### What Are My Assets?

What are my strengths? Aptitudes? Skills?

What are my interests? Hobbies? Passions?

What are my personality traits?









# 7 Steps for Career Conversations



**1 Understand Your Role**  
Engage in career conversations to instill confidence and hope by introducing opportunities; recognize your own assumptions and biases.



**2 Establish Trust & Introduce the Process**  
Promote self-efficacy, define relationship parameters and explain the purpose and direction.



**3 Focus on the Advisee**  
Explore their vision, values, and goals; understand constraints that will influence their choices.



**4 Explore Interests & Aptitudes**  
Identify and utilize tools and discuss results; uncover skills, strengths, and interests; recognize personality, work style, and work ethic.



**5 Envision the Future**  
Explore the relevant labor market, work environments, and activities to better understand pathways of interest; select a pathway.



**6 Celebrate Success!**  
A career brings new opportunities; repeat steps as needed to support lifelong learning & career development.



**7 Encourage Action**  
Define a course of action, help the advisee stay motivated; provide resources, support and accountability.