

Cegnet briefing – Career adaptability

Career adaptability is a key part of Mark Savickas's career construction theory. He argues that individuals construct their careers by:

1. understanding their vocational personality
2. interpreting their life themes
3. demonstrating career adaptability.

Career adaptability refers to a person's readiness, skills and resources to:

- manage important career development tasks (such as making career choices)
- make transitions (such as the transition from school to an apprenticeship or higher education)
- cope with any of the traumas that could happen to any person in the course of their career (such as losing their job)

The four 'C's of adaptability are:

- **Concern** People who show concern:
 - think about what their future will be like and prepare for it
 - realise that the choices they make today will shape their future to a large extent
 - are becoming aware of the educational and vocational choices they need to make
 - plan how to achieve their goals
 - are committed to their careers
- **Control** People who are in control:
 - keep upbeat
 - make decisions by themselves
 - take responsibility for their actions
 - stick up for their beliefs
 - count on themselves
 - do what's right for themselves
- **Curiosity** People who are curious:
 - explore their surroundings
 - look for opportunities to grow
 - investigate options before making a choice
 - observe different ways of doing things
 - probe deeply into questions that they have
 - take an interest in new opportunities
- **Confidence** People who are confident:
 - perform tasks efficiently
 - take care to do things well
 - learn new skills
 - work up to the level of their ability
 - solve problems and overcome obstacles

You can explore career adaptability further in:

- Savickas, M.L. & Porfeli, E.J. (2012) Career Adapt-Abilities Scale: Construction, reliability and measurement equivalence across 13 countries, *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 80, pp.661 -673. Download the free Career Adapt-abilities questionnaire at www.vocopher.com (registration required)
- Savickas, M.L. (2012) Life Design: A Paradigm for Career Intervention in the 21st Century *Journal of Counseling & Development* 90 (1) 13-19
- Wright, T. & Frigerio, G. (2015) The Career Adapt-Abilities Pilot Project https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Career%20Adapt-ability%20Pilots%20Project_0.pdf. Has information about the development of the career adapt-ability inventory for the UK higher education context.