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# Assessing Career Development Curriculum Within a Business Capstone

Molly Wickam, Ph.D.

## About the Author

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## Abstract

This study sought to assess how career development curriculum embedded in business capstones provides learning experiences that bridge college to career. Experiential learning theory, andragogy, and Social Cognitive Career Theory were used to create and assess a class assignment named Business Capstone Bingo. Case study research design using qualitative descriptive methodology and thematic analysis was employed. Findings showed that participants preferred career development activities over non-career development activities, LinkedIn is a valuable career development tool, and professional resume assistance is helpful to adult undergraduates earning a bachelor's degree. Recommendations include using an assignment such as Business Capstone Bingo for nontraditional business students because it provides choices for students to explore careers and receive assistance with career development.

*Keywords:* business capstone; adult undergraduate; business education; career development; case study

## Introduction

Adult students are often referred to as nontraditional students (Berker & Horn, 2003; Kasworm, 2001). Criteria used to define nontraditional students, in addition to age, includes students who delayed enrollment in postsecondary education by one year or more after high school, have dependents such as a spouse or children, and work full time (National Center for Educational Statistics, n.d.).

Statisticians do not agree on current enrollment numbers of adult undergraduates pursuing postsecondary education (Smith-Barrow, 2018), but agree that adult students now make up a substantial population of college students in the United States (Quinn, 2018). From 2010-2015, nontraditional college students increased 35% and is projected to increase an additional 11% through 2026 (Smith-Barrow, 2018). In a recent survey of school administrators, 25% reported a trend towards increasing adult/nontraditional student enrollment while 20% reported a trend of increasing enrollment of traditional-aged students. The administrators also reported a trend in increased numbers of students returning to college after an absence (Venable, 2020).

Adults pursuing higher education have many goals including career advancement, increased income

potential, financial self-sufficiency, personal growth, self-worth, and transformation (O'Conner & Cordova, 2010; Rossiter, 2007). Adult students obtaining bachelor's degrees are often interested in using their updated education to transition into a new job or industry. They often have been held back in their jobs by a lack of education, or lack of the right education, and seek new opportunities and access to different roles (Plimmer & Schmidt, 2007). Often while seeking new education, adult students are engaged in life events and transitions such as job, family and health changes (Rossiter, 2007) and job insecurity (Ahn et al., 2017).

The case assessed in this study was embedded in a business capstone course. While capstones are widely used by traditional undergraduate business students (Bailey, van Acker & Fyffe, 2012; Wei et al., 2007), there is less research about business capstones that are modeled around adult learning theory and used in adult undergraduate business degrees. Capstones provide opportunities to synthesize learning and help students transition from college to career (Gorman, 2010), and are sometimes called a "bridge to business" (p. 432). Kuh (2008) identified capstones as one of several high-impact practices all undergraduate college students should consider during their college experience. Capstones have several purposes. A major goal of a capstone is to synthesize learning that

happened within the specific academic discipline (Cuseo, 1998). The second and third most frequently cited goals of capstones, according to Henscheid (2000), are related to career preparation and connecting learning from the academic discipline to the world of work. McGill (2012) found that students valued the capstone as a way to prepare them for the real world, as well as strong preparation for future job success and/or preparedness for graduate school.

### Statement of the Problem

Integrating career development activities into business curriculum designed for adult business students, specifically business capstones, has not been a research focus. Yet, research has supported the belief that a capstone's major purpose should be to help students transition from college to career and support students' efforts in making life choices about family, work and involvement in the community (Levine, 1998). The purpose of the study was to understand how career development activities in nontraditional (adult) business capstone curriculum provide authentic learning experiences that influence business students' abilities to bridge college to career. The two research questions were: 1) When given a variety of choices, which career development activities do adult undergraduate business students choose in their Business Capstone Bingo assignment? 2) What career development benefits, if any, do students reportedly gain from the Business Capstone Bingo tasks they choose?

The findings contribute to the literature of management education, business education, and career development education by identifying the top choices adult business students make when allowed to choose which career development tasks they want to explore. The findings could, therefore, be useful for business professors who integrate career exploration and career development activities into their coursework and academic career counselors who help business students explore and develop their careers. The remainder of this article is organized as follows. A review of the literature surrounding rationale for the 15 tasks on the Business Capstone Bingo Card is given. The theoretical framework underlying the research questions is described. The research methodology is explained, as well as findings, conclusions, and recommendations for additional research.

### Literature Review

A review of the literature helped define the 15 tasks on the Business Capstone Bingo Card (Figure 1) that was used to answer the research questions.

### Figure 1 • The Case: Business Capstone Bingo Card

During the Business Capstone, you will complete four Business Capstone Bingo tasks on this bingo card. Each bingo task is worth 20 points.

Academic Resource Center Tutoring Session	Faith-based Capstone Bingo Task	Resume Assistance	Career Development Assessment	Professional Headshot
Take a Graduate School Admissions Test (i.e. LSAT, GRE, GMAT)	Scholastic Seminar	Attend a Campus Event	Coffee with a Business Professor	Create/Update LinkedIn
Volunteer	Get to Know the Alumni Office	Apply to Graduate School	Academic Advisor Meeting	Networking Event

#### The Business Capstone Bingo Card

The first bingo task choice was to *Create/Update LinkedIn*. This task asked students to create or update their LinkedIn, a social media application, and write one paragraph describing the changes they made to their LinkedIn. The professor knew it was likely many of the working adult business students already had a LinkedIn but was unsure how many had one and how many needed to create one. One study found that about 29% of business students used LinkedIn (Lewis et al., 2014). As of March 2019, LinkedIn reported having over 575,000,000 registered members, with over 260,000,000 monthly active users worldwide, including more than 150,000,000 in the United States. LinkedIn reports that 90 percent of recruiters use it, and that there are 14,000,000 job openings (Osman, 2019), making it a valuable career development tool.

The second bingo task choice was a *Networking Event*. The task asked students to attend a networking event and write a three-four paragraph reflection describing what they did and learned at the event. Business networking is where business professionals form relationships with others in order to gather information about their industries, exchange information about job prospects, and make friendships. Networking can occur in a variety of ways, including meeting people at work-related events, industry events, conferences, trade shows, or casual social settings (Meyer, 2014).

The third bingo task choice was *Resume Assistance*. The task asked students to work with the university's career development office to obtain resume assistance.

Further, students had to submit the before and after resumes and write two paragraphs explaining the changes they made to their resume. While the professor believed it was likely these students had a resume, it is typical for professionals wanting to make career changes to have a need to add skills to their resumes (Bohonos, 2014).

The fourth bingo task choice was a *Faith-based Capstone Bingo Task*. The purpose of this task was to provide opportunities for students to integrate their faith with the course content, a stated goal of the university. This task gave students several options for attending some kind of faith-based event either at the university or in their community. Students then wrote two paragraphs describing when, where, who and why they went, and what they learned.

The fifth bingo task choice was *Attend a Campus Event*. This task asked students to attend a university sports, music or theatre event and write two paragraphs describing the experience. Academic learning takes place both inside and outside of the classroom and includes the cultural and recreational parts of the university. O'Connor and Cordova (2010) found that full-time working adults attending school part-time were on a quest for community and wished they would have taken more time to interact with the larger university community while they were in graduate school.

The sixth bingo task choice was *Career Development Assessment*. This task asked students to take one of three career assessments offered by the university's career development office. While there are a wide range of career assessments available, the assignment

focused on three: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (The Myers and Briggs Foundation, 2022), Strong Interest Inventory (Donnay et al., 2005), and CliftonStrengths (Buckingham & Clifton, 2001), because they were the three inventories the university's career development office had expertise in administering and interpreting. It was important to the professor that the assessments were interpreted with a trained career counselor, so the director of the university's career development office worked with students to help interpret the results of the assessments. Wood (2009) stressed that the effectiveness of career assessments depends, in part, on the skill and knowledge of the career practitioner helping interpret them as well as specific training with the assessment that is being administered. After taking the assessment and meeting with the university's career development office, students wrote a one-page reflection describing the process of taking the assessment, what they learned, and how they would apply it to their professional and personal life. Wood (2009) recommended that students who take career assessments journal about how their values are related to their career choices and their career decision-making process.

The seventh bingo task choice was *Volunteer*. This task asked students to spend four hours volunteering at the non-profit organization of their choice. Students then wrote three-four paragraphs reflecting on that volunteer experience. Internal rewards are primary motivators for adult students, and volunteering has been shown to assist people in making gradual career changes. In addition, for many adult students with significant life experience, external rewards such as making money are not the driving force for career changes; instead, internal rewards such as fulfillment, service to others, and work as enjoyment are primary motivators (Ahn et al., 2017).

The eighth bingo task choice was *Professional Headshot*. This task asked students to have a professional photo taken of themselves for their LinkedIn and/or other social networks. Albrecht (2011) recommended using a professional photograph on LinkedIn. This was one of the only tasks where a written reflection was not required.

The ninth bingo task choice was *Academic Resource Center Tutoring*. The university's Academic Resource Center offers free writing and math support for all enrolled adult undergraduate students. Students were asked to submit a paper they needed help with to the Academic Resource Center and ask the Writing Specialist to email the professor saying the student received help with this paper. Because the purpose of the task was for students to learn about

and use the Academic Resource Center's services, no reflection was required.

The tenth bingo task choice was *Apply to Graduate School*. This task asked students to apply to any graduate school and submit proof of doing so. A reflection was not required with this task. The eleventh bingo task choice was *Academic Advisor Meeting*. This task asked students to meet or have a phone call with their academic advisor and write two paragraphs saying when they met and what they learned. Adult-focused academic advisors have expertise in helping adult students balance their academic loads with their work schedules, which can help students with degree attainment (Bohonos, 2014).

The twelfth bingo task choice was *Coffee with a Business Professor*. This task asked students to meet one of their professors for coffee at a public location and write four paragraphs describing who they met with, what they discussed, and what they learned. Teachers can become helpful sounding boards for adult students navigating through the process of career transition. In a qualitative study of adult students, Rossiter (2007) found that "sometimes a comment or suggestion from a teacher planted the seed for an entirely new possibility that the student had not previously considered" (p. 10).

The thirteenth bingo task choice was *Get to Know the Alumni Office*. This task asked students to meet with a representative from the university's alumni office in order to find out more about the office, share experiences with the office, and find out how to stay connected with the university after graduation. Students then wrote a two-paragraph reflection describing what they found interesting and/or helpful about this meeting. Lack of time is often a barrier to adult students being able to interact with their university, and adult students are less likely to become involved in student activities or spend time interacting with peers and faculty (Venable, 2020). For example, in one study of 10,000 adult undergraduates, 60 percent spent zero hours per week in college clubs and organizations, and 80 percent spent zero hours per week attending college-sponsored events (Graham & Donaldson, 1999).

The fourteenth bingo task choice was *Scholastic Seminar*. Scholastic Seminars are free, optional academic seminars offered on topics such as using APA documentation and time management. This task asked students to attend one of the workshops and write two paragraphs describing what they learned at the seminar. The fifteenth bingo task choice was *Take a Graduate School Admissions Test*. This task

asked students who were interested in graduate school to find out which admissions test was required and take it. Since the task was to take the test, students were not required to write a reflection about it. Some evidence exists that MBA students perceive that a graduate degree will lead to career advancement (Mihail & Elefterie, 2006), and it has been said that “the business students’ desire for professional advancement is more influential than a desire for additional knowledge” (Buchanan et al., 2007, p. 288). For these reasons, the professor wanted students to have the option to see how they would do on a graduate admissions test.

## Conceptual Framework

There were three primary theories used to build the conceptual framework for this study: experiential learning theory, andragogy, and Social Cognitive Career Theory.

### Experiential Learning

Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle is a conceptual model, based on the writings of Dewey (1938), that describes the process of experiential learning. The cycle consists of four stages: concrete experience, reflection on the experience, synthesis and abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Kolb held several propositions that underlie the theoretical basis for the learning cycle that he created. First, learning is a process and it never ends. Ideas are continually reformed through experience. Second, learning is holistic in that it involves thinking, feeling, perceiving and behaving. Third, learning involves both the person and their environment. The environment is needed for the learning to occur. Last, learning is the process of creating knowledge. This process happens through life and cultural experiences (Kolb, 1984). Participants in this study engaged in experiential learning.

### Andragogy

Andragogy is an important theoretical framework because this study’s participants were adults, and andragogy is the art and science of helping adults learn (Knowles, 1984). Andragogy is based on six premises. First, adults have a need to know why they need to learn something, and facilitators of learning must help students find their need to know. Second, adults do not like when others impose their own wills on them but instead want to think they are responsible for their own decisions. Adult learners are engaged participants in their learning, constructing what they learn as they learn it (Dirkx, 1998).

The third premise of andragogy is the role of the learners’ experiences. Adults have their own experiences,

and learning should be individualized so that these many experiences can be used. Fourth, adult learners are self-directed and need to have input into their own learning (Knowles, 1973). Fifth, adults learn new knowledge most effectively when it is presented in the context of real-life situations. Curricula should emphasize solving real-life problems (Huang, 2002). Sixth, adults are internally motivated by motivators such as self-esteem and quality of life (Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2011).

### Social Cognitive Career Theory

Social Cognitive Career Theory seeks to create a framework for understanding how “people: (a) develop vocational interests, (b) make occupational choices, (c) achieve varying levels of career success and stability, and (d) experience satisfaction or well-being in the work environment” (Lent, 2013, p. 115). It is rooted in Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory, which looks at how peoples’ behavior and environments influence each other. Social Cognitive Career Theory consists of four overlapping models: an interest model, choice model, performance model, and satisfaction model. Interests are developed in childhood and adolescence in home, community and educational environments (Lent, 2013). Interests continue to develop, and the work of Strong Jr. (1943) found that by age 20, interests are quite stable, and by age 25, interests are very stable (Swanson & Hansen, 1988).

## Research Methodology

The research design was a case study and the methodology was qualitative descriptive research using thematic analysis.

### The Case

The case was an assignment in an online Business Capstone called Business Capstone Bingo. The learning objectives of the course were to synthesize business content learned during the degree program, deliver a client-focused business solution to an organizational need by engaging in experiential learning, and participate in career exploration and development. The Business Capstone Bingo assignment was worth 20% of the overall course grade, while 75% of the course grade was the completion of a client-based project for an organization. In aligning with the theory of andragogy, which says adult learners are self-directed, want input into their own learning, and should have individualized learning experiences (Knowles, 1973, 1994), the Business Capstone Bingo Card allowed students to choose four of 15 tasks to complete throughout the semester.

The Business Capstone Bingo assignment was aligned to this course objective: *I am able to explore career tools and opportunities that enhance career exploration*. In keep with the university's faith-based mission, it was required that one of the bingo tasks was faith-based. The faith-based capstone bingo task was not analyzed for this article. In addition to completing the capstone bingo tasks, most tasks involved reflection. Reflection is a critical part of experiential learning, and learning from experience cannot take place unless there is reflection (Brookfield, 1987; Kolb, 1984). In addition, a stated goal of capstones is for students to reflect on their learning (Lang & McNaught, 2013).

### Sample

The sample was adult undergraduate students enrolled in a Business Capstone that was a required course in either a B.S. Business Management or B.S. Accounting degree at one Midwest, Christian faith-based university. They were seniors, having completed at least 90 credits out of a 122 credit degree. Of 37 students, 18 students gave consent for their reflections to be analyzed, for a response rate of 49%. Ten (56%) participants were women and eight (44%) were men. Participants were not contacted with the request for informed consent until after final grades were submitted for their Business Capstone. No inducements were given to students for participating in the study. Institutional Review Board approval was obtained from the university where the study took place.

### Data Analysis

The data sources were Capstone Bingo assignments completed by each participant. The Business Capstone Bingo assignments were downloaded

from the university's learning management system for those participants who gave informed consent. Since 18 students gave consent, and each submitted four Business Capstone Bingo assignments, there were 72 written assignments to analyze.

The assignments were analyzed using thematic analysis, which is a method of identifying patterns or themes in qualitative research and using the themes to answer the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Gibbs, 2007). Data were open-coded by reading through the Business Capstone Bingo assignments numerous times. Then, inductive, line-by-line coding was performed, by hand, producing 185 initial codes. Codes were then examined for patterns and grouped into tentative themes. All of the codes fit into one or more themes. The themes were defined and named. The themes related to each other, to the data, and to the research questions (Whittemore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001). Qualitative data provide an opportunity to enhance the inclusion of participants' voices, which can enrich and help explain the quantitative results (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007), so quotations were chosen from the participants' reflections.

### Results

The first research question asked, *When given a variety of choices, which career development activities do adult undergraduate business students choose in their Business Capstone Bingo assignment?* All participants chose four Capstone Bingo Tasks from a card containing 15 possible choices. Results showed the top three choices were: Create/Update LinkedIn (83.3%), Networking Event (55.6%), and Resume Assistance (44.4%). Table 1 shows the results for all 15 Business Capstone Bingo Choices.

**Table 1 • Frequency of Chosen Capstone Bingo Tasks**

Business Capstone Bingo Task	Frequency	Percentage
Create/Update LinkedIn	15	83.3%
Networking Event	10	55.6%
Resume Assistance	8	44.4%
Faith-based Capstone Bingo Task	7	38.9%
Attend a Campus Event	6	33.3%
Career Development Assessment	6	33.3%
Volunteer	5	27.8%
Professional Headshot	4	22.2%
Academic Resource Center Tutoring Session	3	16.7%
Apply to Graduate School	3	16.7%
Academic Advisor Meeting	2	11.1%
Coffee With a Business Professor	1	5.6%
Get to Know the Alumni Office	1	5.6%
Scholastic Seminar	1	5.6%
Take a Graduate School Admissions Test	0	0%

The second research question asked, *What career development benefits, if any, do students reportedly gain from the Business Capstone Bingo tasks they choose?* Results of the thematic analysis revealed five themes about the benefits students reportedly gained from their chosen Capstone Bingo tasks. The themes were: 1) LinkedIn is a valuable networking tool; 2) Professional resume assistance is valuable; 3) Career assessments are aligned with professional and personal values; and, 4) Volunteerism uses business skills.

### **Theme 1: LinkedIn is a Valuable Networking Tool**

Most participants knew that LinkedIn was a valuable business networking tool, as demonstrated by one who wrote, "I believe that LinkedIn is not only an effective networking tool, but a great job seeking tool as well." Another common thought from participants was that they had a LinkedIn, but had not had time to keep it updated, so the Business Capstone Bingo assignment was a good time for them to update their LinkedIn. One participant articulated this by writing, "I have been on LinkedIn for a while but my profile has been weak to moderate, so now I have stepped up my game." Participants seemed to appreciate having the opportunity to work on their LinkedIn, with one writing, "Having completed this task, I have to admit that I am more excited to use LinkedIn on a regular basis".

### **Theme 2: Professional Resume Assistance is Valuable**

Participants acknowledged needing professional help updating their resumes, and 44% chose Resume Assistance as one of their four required capstone bingo tasks. This was surprising, because all of these students most likely used a resume to get their current job, and a resume is an admissions requirement for enrollment into the university. Some participants had recently made a career transition, such as a military veteran who wrote:

I chose this task as the last time I had professional assistance with my resume was two years ago when I left the military. Since then I have had a couple of different jobs that were all blue collar focused. I knew the length was too long and I wanted my updated resume to reflect my current business education as well as my leadership experience. I am very happy with my new resume as the length is more reasonable and it now effectively highlights the skills that I want to convey to potential employers.

One participant had been working at the same job for 13 years and knew his resume needed professional assistance. Changes participants reported

making as a result of the professional resume assistance included rewriting professional experience descriptions, moving education from the top to the bottom, or the bottom to the top; formatting; grammar and punctuation; adding new skills and deleting obsolete skills; using numeral facts when possible; using past tense for past roles, and spelling out acronyms.

### **Theme 3: Career Assessments are Aligned with Professional and Personal Values**

The results of the career assessment tool chosen by participants affirmed alignment with their professional and personal values, which they reported was important to them. One-third of participants chose to take either the Strong Interest Inventory, Myers-Briggs or CliftonStrengths as one of their four required bingo tasks. Those who took the Strong Interest Inventory believed it guided them to the kinds of jobs they should be looking for and confirmed they were in the right degree program. One student wrote, "I also got some good confirmation from this assessment that I went to school for the right degree. My scores for management were very high, so it affirmed that I am on the right track with both my career and my education." Some participants also stated that the assessment showed that their career interests aligned with their personal values, as described by one who wrote, "For me, this assessment showed that my direction in my personal and professional life are well aligned with my capabilities."

### **Theme 4: Volunteerism Used Business Skills**

Participants chose to use their business skills to volunteer to help others, and the volunteering was rewarding. This is impactful because all the participants were working at least part-time and attending college at least part-time, so for them to choose to volunteer for at least four hours showed that it interested them and they wanted to prioritize it. The roles participants chose to volunteer in included serving on a board of directors, serving as treasurer for a small non-profit organization, working in customer service for a resale store, and using organizational skills and Spanish-translation skills to help low-income students go back-to-school shopping.

For two of the participants, this was the first time they had volunteered for anything, which gave them an opportunity to do something different, such as this student who wrote, "I have a desire to help others and volunteer but would probably not pursue it as a career path." Many participants reported fulfillment from volunteering, such as this student who wrote,



I felt happy and needed. I also got involved because I've recently been feeling a sense of emptiness and wanted to do something that mattered. This event internally woke me up and made me feel proud. I am going to continue volunteering for (name of non-profit organization).

Some participants also put their new volunteer experience on their LinkedIn, such as this participant who wrote, "I created a LinkedIn Account and added job experience, education and volunteer experience to the account."

## Discussion

The purpose of the study was to understand how career development activities in nontraditional business capstone curriculum provide authentic learning experiences that influence business students' abilities to bridge college to career. There are three findings from the results of the two research questions. First, when given 15 choices of a combination of career development and other college experiences to complete, students chose career development activities over non-career development activities. This aligns with Hsu, Wang and Hamilton (2011), who found that adult students seek learning that is relevant to their career goals, so providing curricula that helps them with their career goals may help improve motivation and interest in their coursework.

The second finding was that creating or updating LinkedIn is a valuable career development task to weave into business curriculum. LinkedIn, a social media website founded in 2002, is the most used social media app for business professionals. While it offers paid products geared towards personnel such as human resource managers and recruiters, the free services offered are adequate for a majority of users (Albrecht, 2011). In this study, 83.3% of participants chose to create or update their LinkedIn. This aligns with current thinking about the benefit of social networks to business students. "Competency in social media is becoming as important to your career as mastery of debits and credits" (Albrecht, 2011, p. 39).

The third finding was that professional resume assistance is helpful to working adults earning a bachelor's degree. Even though students had likely created resumes for their current and former employers, an updated resume was a career development tool they considered essential to revise before they graduated from college.

## Conclusion

A framework of experiential learning, andragogy, and Social Cognitive Career Theory was used to create a Business Capstone Bingo assignment for adult business students enrolled in a Business Capstone course required for their bachelor's degree in business management or accounting. Little research has been done on adult business students where career development activities are integrated into curricula. Career development is a process throughout the life span that is broken into three distinct phases: childhood experiences that help create talents, interests, values and knowledge; adulthood which consists of entry into and adjustment to work, and retirement (Lent & Brown, 2013). The findings from this study provide evidence that adult business students benefit from career development activities that are integrated into capstone curricula.

One recommendation is for business faculty and career development specialists to work together to enhance curricular offerings that help students explore career directions, and this curricula should, as evidenced by the findings of this study, have students create or update a LinkedIn, provide ways for students to network, and provide professional resume assistance. A second recommendation is to have students take career assessments because they have the ability to affirm alignment with students' professional and personal values. As faculty and career counselors work together to incorporate career assessments into curricula, it is recommended that a trained counselor help the students interpret the results. The counselor's job is to help students understand the results within a safe and supportive environment, remind students that interests do not measure abilities, and help students develop next steps in their career exploration (Hansen, 2013).

A third recommendation is that business professors should consider an assignment such as Business Capstone Bingo that provides numerous choices for students to explore careers and receive assistance with career development. Goals related to capstones include career preparation and connecting learning from the academic discipline to the world of work (Henscheid, 2000). The role of learners' experiences, their ability to individualize their experiences, their ability to be self-directed, and their ability to make decisions about their learning are important concepts of adult learning (Knowles, 1973, 1994). Business Capstone Bingo aligned with adult learning theory and Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, 2013) by

providing students with choice, individualization, and the ability to be self-directed in making decisions about their career paths. While there may be other ways for adult students to gain business-specific career development help, for those who choose college, integrating career exploration into their business degree program can be efficient and effective for the student.

### **Limitations and Recommendations for Additional Research**

Case study research limits the generalizability of this study to an entire population. The sample of business students used were from one, private, Midwestern university. While the findings provide rich data using thick description of 18 participants enrolled in an adult undergraduate Business Capstone course, the results cannot be generalized to the entire population of adult business students. It also cannot be generalized to traditional-aged business students, as the curriculum was written specifically for adult business students using principles of adult learning theory. Further research could expand this study to include traditional-aged business students to see how results might be similar or different.

Additionally, it would be interesting to conduct longitudinal research on these same participants at various times post-graduation, such as one year and three years, to learn whether the Business Capstone had longitudinal influences on their career exploration, career development and goal attainment. Little is known about what positive factors predict career transitions (Ahn, Dik & Hornback, 2017). Further research could help ascertain whether participants made career changes and attained goals after graduation and if so, whether these changes could be attributed to Business Capstone

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