



Maryland Career Development Association

August 2020 Newsletter

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President's Message

Greetings MCDA members and fellow career practitioners,

Last month, the new Board and I hosted two virtual town halls and surveyed our contacts to help us rebuild and reimagine the future of MCDA. I want to thank everyone who participated and shared their views to help inform our strategic planning. If you have not completed the survey and would like to do so, you can still access it [here](#).

Three words kept recurring with regard to what members valued most about MCDA: **Community, Connections & Collaboration**. In the past, our conference and in-person events provided the opportunity to connect and collaborate, but of course, given the current situation, we must look to new digital avenues.

Therefore, **one of the new initiatives we are excited to launch is Tribe - MCDA's new online knowledge sharing community**. This is a virtual place where we can share best practices, post questions, start discussions and form groups based upon our specific interests. *All current MCDA members will be receiving an invitation to join Tribe shortly.*

We also recognize the critical importance of providing innovative and responsive programming for our members to stay up to date and equipped to provide the most effective career development services possible, especially in such a dynamic and rapidly changing climate. Our focus this year will be on timely topics including the future of work and the future of career development.

We have a great lineup of events this month and hope to see you online at one of them. Registration and more details can be found on www.mdcareers.org.

- [Future-Proof Your Career: Strategies to Succeed in a VUCA Economy](#)

August 14, 2020, 1:00 PM~ Webinar

- [Transform Your Virtual Workshops & Design Engaging Learning Experiences](#)

August 20, 2020, 9:30 AM- 11:00 AM ~ Virtual workshop

- [Is Now the Right Time to Start a Private Practice?](#)

August 21, 2020, 4:00 PM- 5:00 PM ~ Zoom

- [Motivation and Career Engagement during the Time of COVID-19](#)

August 28th, 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

If there is a specific topic you'd like to suggest for a future webinar or virtual workshop, or better yet, if you are interested in facilitating a webinar or virtual workshop for MCDA, please reach out directly to either myself or to another Board member. You can find our contact details [here](#).

For those of you who are not currently MCDA members, we hope you will consider joining. At \$40 for a regular membership, I'm confident you'd be hard pressed to find a more reasonable or affordable cost for a professional association. We also make every effort to ensure all our programs and events are made accessible at reasonable rates. As a division of a nonprofit organization, all our proceeds go right back to strengthening our association. And while our namesake is the Maryland Career Development Association, we welcome with open arms all fellow career practitioners both locally and beyond, especially our colleagues in DC.

Warm regards,

Julie Neill

MCDA President

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Transitioning Our Way Through a Pandemic

Karol Taylor, GCDFI, CSP, CCMC, JCTC, CCC, CBBSC

Federal Career Counselor

Our world turned upside down in March 2020. Change happened and as is typical, happened suddenly. One day our lives were going along as expected, and the next day we were not able to report to work. The pandemic left us reeling. We knew we had to adjust to this new way of being, but most of us weren't quite sure how to go about doing it.

Adjusting to change can be tough. Things aren't the way they were, and they certainly are not the way they are going to be. And us? We are caught somewhere in the middle. While change happens quickly, transitioning takes time and effort. We have feelings about the how quickly our lives became different, and those feelings need to be processed.



In his book, *Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes*, organizational consultant William Bridges explains the stages and emotions we go through after such a shift. He also shares what it takes to transition and catch up with the change that has just taken place.

As you can see from the diagram above, Bridges says this process has three phases: the Ending, Neutral or Transition Zone, and New Beginnings. The ending has already happened, the new beginning is not yet determined, and the transition process takes place in what Bridges calls the Neutral Zone. According to Bridges, “**C**hange happensto people. Transition, on the other hand, is internal: it's what happens inside people's minds when they are presented with **c**hange.”

The Neutral Zone is where we take the time to experience our sense of loss. We need to recognize and honor our feelings about it, then gently move on. Understanding that we are going through the stages of grief: denial, anger, grief, sadness, and acceptance is an important process. If we can acknowledge and honor our feelings, we will have a much better time transitioning to a new beginning.

Bridges says the neutral zone is where life feels unstructured, unwieldy, confusing, and anxiety-producing. We are not quite sure what to make of our current situation; sometimes we feel stuck and unable to move on. It's also important to realize that things in the neutral zone can be creative, inventive, and full of wonder and curiosity. We are traversing unknown territory – we find ourselves in a position to take advantage of the innovation now available to us.

It's important to remember that no one has ever navigated a pandemic before, and no one quite knows what to do. Our situation is new, different, and untried. If we seize it, we have the opportunity to construct our future in ways not previously imagined. We can find a trajectory that is not exactly like the previous one, but meets the needs of the organization – and ourselves – maybe in a way not before considered, but in ways that are productive.

Yes, you may feel disoriented. Yes you may feel uncertain. Yes you may feel frustrated. It's important to stay confident that this is a part of the transition process, and eventually it will go away. Based on Bridges' theory, you can believe that our future holds high energy, new ways of accomplishing our work, and a renewed commitment to our role in the workplace.

You are in good company because we are all in the Neutral Zone. Don't worry, you've got this.

“The essence of life takes place in the neutral zone phase of transition. It is in that interim spaciousness that all possibilities, creativity and innovative ideas can come to life and flourish.” — Susan Bridges (Mrs. William Bridges)



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Continuing MCDA's Formal Advocacy Structure for 2020-2021

Natalie Kauffman, M.S., NCDA Certified Career Counselor™, FCD-I, NCC, NCCC, GCDF-I

**Private Career Practitioner | Transition Consultant | Federal Job Coach & Trainer, MCDA
Legislative Chair**

The Maryland Career Development Association (MCDA) will continue its national and state advocacy efforts throughout the 2020-2021 year. Google's online dictionary defines *advocacy* as public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy. MCDA's national and state advocacy direction (or its particular cause or policy) has been and will continue to be linked to its affiliations. MCDA is one of 10 organizational divisions of the Maryland Counseling Association (MCA), which in turn is one of 56 chartered branches of the American Counseling Association (ACA). MCDA is also one of 50 state divisions within the National Career Development Association (NCDA). NCDA, in turn, is one of nineteen chartered divisional branches of ACA. As a MCDA member, you also may enjoy membership in any or all three affiliate groups MCA, ACA and NCDA. However, your MCDA membership dues link you to the advocacy efforts of all three groups.

Whether you are only an MCDA member or both an MCDA and NCDA member, I invite you to connect to NCDA's online advocacy section for additional information, <https://www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sp/govrelations>. Consider reviewing ACA's online Advocacy section, too, <https://www.counseling.org/government-affairs/staff>.

Since taking on the MCDA Legislative Chair reigns 2 years ago, I have met virtually with MCA's changing Advocacy Chairs. I also invite you to connect to their online advocacy section, <https://mdcounseling.org/Advocacy>. Some of the information may be a bit out of date, but most of the information provided is still correct.

Currently, I am a MCDA committee of one, but am very dedicated and committed to and passionate about advocacy for career development. Working with MCDA's affiliates, NCDA, ACA & MCA, exponentially strengthens the comprehensive career & transition solutions I can provide the global community I serve in my private practice and consulting work. Please join me and MCDA in supporting the career development service you provide to your clients, customers, students, and alumni!



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Newsletter Article Submissions

MCDA welcomes article submissions on topics of interest to the career practitioner community. We are seeking articles that address emerging trends, best practices (especially as we navigate these uncertain times) and training opportunities.

For best consideration, please submit articles (maximum length 600 words) by the 15th of the month prior to the desired month of publication. The newsletter will be published monthly, on the 1st of the month. The article deadline for the September issue is August 15th. For article submissions or questions, please email:

Rachel Loock, Editor

MCDA.Newsletter@MDCareers.org

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