

# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction to Career Development in the Global Economy and Its Role in Social Justice

### THINGS TO REMEMBER

- The reality of the global economy and its implications for employment in the United States
- Why the need for career development services may be at its highest level in half a century
- The language of career development
- The reasons that careers and career development are important in the fight for social justice
- The major events in the history of career development

### HISTORY OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

As will be discussed later in this chapter, there are currently calls for the adoption of a new paradigm for the theory and practice of career counseling and career development services that focuses on both individuals and the social contexts in which they function. These ideas are not new, but throughout much of the twentieth century they were neglected. The call for understanding the individual and how he or she is influenced by his or her context is a century-old echo of the voices of the social reformers who founded the vocational guidance movement in education, business, industry, and elsewhere. Reformers in Boston, Massachusetts; San Francisco, California; and Grand Rapids, Michigan, focused on immigrants from Europe who came to the United States by the tens of thousands; high school dropouts who were unprepared for the changing workplace; oppression in the workplace; substandard public schools; and the need to apply scientific principles to career planning and vocational education. It is the latter idea, the focus on scientific principles that has received the most criticism, along with the failure to adequately address multicultural issues. **Currently, some career development specialists are urging practitioners to abandon theories and strategies rooted in modern philosophies in favor of those rooted in postmodernism.**

Looking backward to 1913 and earlier, it is worth noting that social reformers formed the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education (NSPIE) in 1906, which became the