Tutorial Letter 201

Details of Oct / Nov 2014 examination paper are as follows:
Total marks: 75 ; Pass mark: 50% ; Time: 2 hours

The paper consists of *four questions which count 25 marks each*. Each of the four questions consists of short paragraph questions (ranging from 5 marks to 15 marks). **You may answer any three** of the four questions.

Please remember that the prescribed book (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011) should be the basis of your October/November 2014 examination preparation. Study ALL the content of the following chapters thoroughly and pay special attention to the indicated themes:

Chapter 1: The meaning of work (self-actualisation, competency and spirituality*)*

Chapter 2: Changes in organisations: Implications for careers *(career progress and success; protean career; composite career, entrepreneurial career*)

Chapter 3: Career concepts and career models (*objective and subjective career success; Twenty-first century and career invention models*)

Chapter 4: Career choice and counselling (*ethical considerations*)

Chapter 5: Life and career stages (Early career stage – tasks and challenges; career establishment and organisational support practices; importance of frequent feedback, supervisor support and mentoring for young adults; feedback strategies)

Chapter 6: Career issues (Carre plateauting, career anchors, lifestyle, managerial, entrepreneurial career anchors*)*

Chapter 7: Career well-being (*No specific examination questions will be asked on the themes discussed in this chapter. Read only as background information*)

Chapter 8: Organisational choice and career developmental support (*No specific examination questions will be asked on the themes discussed in this chapter. Read only as background information)*

Chapter 1 – The meaning of work

Self-actualisation

Self-actualisation is a process of inner-directedness through which the individuals give expression to their intrinsic nature

It involves the tendency to enrich oneself by psychological growth and by seeing meaning in being

It is a human drive to discover oneself and fulfil one's potential, emphasising the whole of human life

In the event where **self-concept is not in harmony** with the requirements of the job, the work loses meaning to the individual

It stops having an intrinsic value to the individual – you have to perform the job to earn money or get something from organisation

In the event where self-concepts are in harmony with the job activities, the individuals find intrinsic meaning or internal satisfaction in their work and feel a sense of being whole

Openness can be associated with work that can facilitate self-actualisation, i.e. intrinsic satisfaction (example: in the form of flexible organisational climate that provides autonomy, challenge, personal growth)

Intrinsic aspects of work and self-actualisation in work are becoming increasing NB

Characteristic associated with Self-actualised people:-

- Democratic orientation, autonomy, independence
- Feeling of connectedness with others
- Freshness of appreciation; feeling at ease with complexity and ambiguity
- All these characteristics condensed to single quality – openness to experience

Self-actualisation contributes to one's sense of identity. Identity centres around questions such as:-

- What do I want to make of myself?
- What do I have to work with?

It involves one's self-concept and these self-concepts can find expression through Self-actualisation in work. Through work, people identify themselves to themselves and to others. They also see themselves as different from others.

Self-concepts change over time as work structures change

Spirituality at work

The search for spiritual wholeness within the context of the workplace, involves the search to discover one's true self, a higher life purpose & meaning through one's work activities & life roles

Spirituality represents the quest to unite one's inner and outer world, to provide meaning and purpose to one's life (i.e. the community environment which provides constant connection to one's co-workers)

Workplace spirituality is the recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community

Spirituality is the feeling individuals have about the fundamental meaning of who they are, what they are doing and the contributions they are making

Spiritual journey is process of focusing within, gaining awareness of higher self & finding meaning & purpose in work & life

The community environment is viewed as a place in which people can experience personal growth by being involved in meaningful work that gives a purpose to their life where they feel valued for themselves as individuals and have a sense of working together with others for a common purpose

The search for meaning and purpose, and consequent realisation, provide an individual with a sense of alignment and order – a spiritual cohesiveness, which instils a sense of tightness & well-being

Spiritual cohesiveness is a sense of wholeness, a oneness with who we are and an awareness of how we fit with our external environment

Because work is a central part of peoples' existence, much of this search for spiritual wholeness occurs within the context of work

In the modern workplace many people are increasingly embarking upon a spiritual journey, seeking to discover their true selves through the search for a higher purpose that provides meaning to their lives

Spirituality also represents the emerging values, priorities, and skills related to the meaning that work represents in peoples' lives in the modern workplace

Spirituality in the workplace means creating an environment of trust, respect, and ethics where diverse groups of individuals can do their best work.

Spirituality at work will require the following from employees themselves, their co-workers and managers:-

- Acting with integrity and authenticity
- Treating people with respect
- Encouraging a work / life balance
- Connecting work to a larger sense of meaning & purpose
- Creating a culture that embodies core values and ethical principles
- Establishing decision making processes that include reflection on complex values at stake
- Doing business in a socially responsible manner

Competency

Finding meaning & identity in work = career competency (that characterises the individual)

Competencies of:

knowing why +

knowing whom (interpersonal relationships, organisational communication networks) +

knowing how (involve acquiring skills and knowledge)

= All contribute to the individual's cumulative competencies

These competencies serve purpose to equip a person to adapt to change & contribute to satisfy org. requirements

Because of downsizing workers hired according to existing capabilities & subsequently training not offered by org, workers are less committed to org – these workers supplement the core workers

Core workers are expected to be committed, but some who have the required skills are not committed to use it in org. and effective performance therefore fluctuates

Fluctuations in utilizing competencies have 3 modes of career growth and development which are recurrent and episodic throughout the person's career:

Performance mode → quest for success & mastery of a job or skills, finding a standard of excellence in work context to prove oneself worthy

Learning mode → quest for novelty & variety for self-improvement by acquiring new competencies beyond mere mastering of the job

Development mode → quest for meaning by seeking work or life events that will be conductive to finding a calling or purpose (involves holistic sense of self, integrating intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual aspects)

These 3 modes of career development are applicable when career is seen as lifelong development

Chapter 2: Changes in organisations: implications for careers

Protean careers

- Self-directed approach & driven by own values
- Managed by person, not organisation
- Consists of varied experience in education, training, work, occupational field

- Characterised by:
  - Psych success
  - Self-direction
  - Freedom & autonomy
  - Choices based on personal values
  - Managed by individual
  - Series of identity changes
  - Cont. learning
  - Chronological age unimportant
  - Employability & work challenged provided by Org
  - High level of self-awareness
  - Personal responsibility
  - Freedom & growth valued
  - High degree of mobility
  - Internal career thinking

- Positive potential:
  - Relationship still win-win
  - Org not blindly trusted by employee with career
  - Common ground not relationship, but explicit task
  - Task focused relationship better for individual & org
  - Facilitates diversity for future survival as emphasis is on task & not on person performing task (gender, race, other traits)

- Encourages workers to think differently about employer & employee relationship

- 3 forms of flexibility
  - New ways of career thinking – flexible career course characterised by moves between different lines of work
  - Flexibility ito career space – enlarging career space, allowing workers to integrate work & family issues
  - Workers can work from home – formal or informal

- Problems:
  - Not everybody adapts to protean career
  - Lack of external control & individual responsibility can overwhelm some people
  - Some individuals cannot operate independently in such an environment
  - New career management competencies often required

Protean careers	A career shaped and managed by the individual. It consists of all the person's varied experiences in education, training, and work in several organisations and changes in occupational field and is characterised by a high degree of mobility, self-reliance and internal career thinking. Career management is the individual's responsibility. Self-directed approach driven by one's own values. Implication: mixed approach, keeping some elements of traditional career, will emerge as more and more careerists become 'protean', anticipated that the protean group will become larger as more people adapt to demands of the environment.

Composite career

- More than 1 working role and hold more than 1 job – manage time between jobs & companies, teams, clients, locations
- Composite work life forces individual to manage own time & efforts the same way a self-employed person with several clients does
- Composite career is a way to express different / multiple aspects of a person which were previously excluded from the "one job for life" career

- Example: trained psychologist, but also painter / photographer
- Not all ventures provide significant financial value, perhaps need to keep "regular" job until the new venture is profitable
- Composite career is significant part of current work place, people create careers across wide range of possibilities
- People will be better off trying different career ventures according to their possibilities, skills & talents in various creative ways, whether it is for financial gain or social gain
- Will stop thinking of having a "job", but experimenting with work opportunities, discover more of themselves and discover a love for a meaningful life

Composite careers	Having more than one working role or holding more than one form of employment, can no longer afford to limit themselves to only taking or passing up jobs Implication: workers in the 21st century will stop thinking of themselves as 'having' a job but will increasingly think of themselves as 'experimenting' with job opportunities which allow them to discover more about themselves and live meaningful lives

Entrepreneurial career

- Self-employment can be regarded as Entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurship means managing own business & requires personal sacrifice, innovation
- Self-employment takes willingness to action, experiment, constantly innovate as markets constantly changing

- Skills and aptitudes of successful entrepreneurs
  - Persuasive powers, problem solvers & decision makers
  - Good time management and organisation skills
  - Can handle information effectively and can resolve conflict
  - Willing to take calculated & intelligent risks
  - Effective business management skills

- Traits & qualities
  - Need for autonomy & independence
  - Need for achievement – being successful
  - High initiative & self-leadership
  - Flexibility & creativity
  - Ability to cope with adversity & change
  - Self confidence
  - Committed to goals & life purpose
  - Optimistic mindset
  - High motivation levels with positive outlook on life

- Attitudes & values:
  - Internal locus of control (belief that can create own destiny)
  - High level of responsibility
  - High value on money, status, creativity and honesty

- Skills & qualities can be learned
- Entrepreneurial career = extensive personal commitment, multiple work roles, willing to accept risk, unpredictability of changing markets etc.
- Due to downsizing people forced to become entrepreneurs

- Women entering market – self-employment more attractive because work and family life can be more balanced
- Main reasons for entrepreneurship is to gain more autonomy, increased flexibility, generate own wealth, escape org. red tape
- Most entrepreneurs start small with a partner or while they are still employed elsewhere
- Can also incur financial losses if not properly planned
- Not all self-employed gain success, some income for survival

Entrepreneurial careers	Choosing self-employment as a career option which could include establishing and managing one's own business, requires sacrifice, innovation and taking to create something of value to society Implication: uncertain and uneven cash flow, proper career planning critical in contemplating the entrepreneurial career and achieving the success that one aspires to, effective career planning must take into account challenges that one will have to face when pursuing entrepreneurial career

Career progress & success redefined

- Career success characterized not only be vertical progress and mastering a job
- Self-management skills needed for future success
- Criteria for career success = psychological success i.e. achieving personal goals, general sense of well-being about career
- Career is more cyclical where re-skilling is required with lateral rather than upward moves

- Survival requires employees to base feelings of security on:
  - processes and not structures
  - skills and not job titles
  - satisfaction experienced from fulfilling a certain role rather than advancing the career ladder

- This can lead to career growth and becoming indispensable
- Upward move now being replaced with moving across functional boundaries
- Emphasizes NB of multiple skills
- Value of projects individuals work on is more NB than their level in the org
- Growth of profession is more NB than management levels

- Career success assessed by amount of learning that took place, outputs instead of inputs & marketable skill of individual
- Technical specialization, cross functional, international experience
- Career success can be increased if individuals are passionate about their work and if new career goals are achieved
- As more people become protean in their career views and achieve success, others will be encouraged to redefine their career progress and success

Career progress and Career success	Career progress refers to individuals' experiences of career growth - includes moving upward, increasing competence and expertise, gaining broader experience across multi-directional career movements Career success refers to the objective and subjective (psychological) sense of achievement and well-being individuals experience regarding their careers Implication: these are strange concepts for employees and not always accepted, as more individuals become 'protean' and achieve success, others will also be encouraged to redefine their career progress and success. Organisations can help employees to regard activities such as job rotation and lateral moves – characteristics of the protean career, not as failures but as signs of career success

Boundaryless careers

- Physical & psychological move away from current employer
- Individuals need self-ownership / self-management of careers
- Manage career autonomously between jobs, companies and professions increasing their employment value
- Mobility between jobs, companies, occupations, countries
- Boundaryless career mirrors aspects of globalization, as boundaries are erased between nations

- To succeed individual must become self-reliant
- Employability is determined by performance and flexibility
- Success is measured by meaningful work & milestones in career
- Careers cannot be constrained by org boundaries – can move btw org if they have transferable knowledge, skills & abilities
- Example: electronic engineer move btw several firms

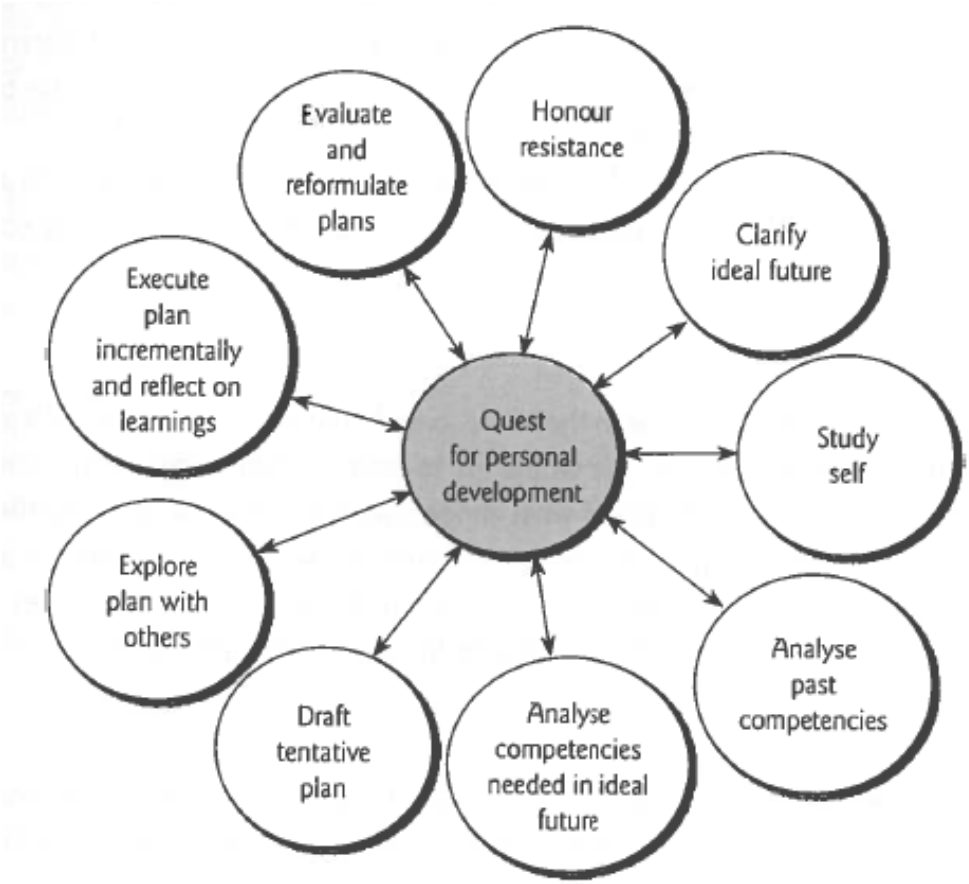
Boundaryless careers	A career characterised by flexibility, mobility and movement between different global-organisational contexts, individuals have self-ownership of careers, they manage careers in a relatively autonomous fashion between jobs, companies and professions. Thus, their employment value is increased. Implications: In practise the contrast between traditional and boundaryless careers may not be as clear as in theory. It cannot necessarily be applied to all occupations and work setting – it may be applicable to technical occupations, knowledge and professional occupations and work settings, but not necessarily to the boundaries that affect middle-managers in medium-sized organisations.

Chapter 3 – Career concepts and career models

Test-and-learn models

The Test-and-Learn Career Models emphasize the changing nature of individuals' careers and the quest for personal development, finding a purpose in life, and finding personal meaning in work.

The 21st century career planning model



The model of Otto and Kahnweiler is based on the quest for personal development and is facilitated by interaction with factors that are relevant to career planning for the 21st century.

The various steps of the model include:

- **Quest for personal development**
  - In planning a career, the focus should be on becoming aware of one's inner depth - the spiritual and emotional aspects that let us know who we really are and how to seek vitality & joy in life
  - NB to be in touch with inner feelings
  - This leads to self-analysis and contributes to career planning where one finds answers in oneself rather than outside world.
  - Career plans can change and this does not mean that jobs will change, but one can see present job in a new way and create new ways for development

- **Honour resistance**
  - At times individuals tend to get 'stuck' rather than focus on the quest for personal development
  - Rather than lack willpower, they should try to discover reason why they are resistant to personal growth
  - Example: incompatibility btw needs & desires, or not listening to inner voice if plans inappropriate to external circumstances
  - Means of gaining understanding of the reasons for not growing include: talking to a friend or counsellor, revising one's career plan or accepting the fact that one can become confused and doubt one's self-worth

- **Clarify ideal future**
  - In dreaming of what one wants to be in the future, one should not think in terms of a job title, but rather in terms of an ideal role one would like to be in, in two to three years' time
  - Thus providing deeper knowledge of oneself, knowing aspirations, fears and desires

- **Study self**
  - A deeper self-understanding may be sought by not seeing oneself merely objectively as a configuration of traits, but as a being capable of creating meaning
  - Techniques include:
    - Psych assessment for recommendation on career issues (taking into account personality traits, personal situations, willingness to take risks)
    - Analyse positive & negative past experiences (looking for common factors, drawing a list, asking for feedback)
    - Early childhood memories analysed to find basis for career dreams & source of pleasure in work
    - Symbolic exercises to discover more profound unconscious motivations, imagination to reveal emotions

- **Analyse past competencies**
  - All capabilities involved in each previous phase of the individual's life should be examined
  - Such soul-searching may result in some surprises, as people often find that they have developed more skills than they realised, for example, leadership skills

- **Analyse competencies needed in ideal future**
  - Necessary to analyse skills required for individual's ideal career as some of these skills are still to be learnt or acquired

- **Draft tentative plan**
  - Plan learning by writing down a goal, compiling a list of the steps necessary to reach that goal and deciding what resources and how much time are required

- **Explore plan with others**
  - Share the results of the above steps with trusted others who are committed to helping, who can provide some feedback on one's goals and who will understand one's fears and aspirations

- **Execute plan incrementally and reflect on learning**
  - As individuals realise that their future vision will change with experience, the next step to be taken in their careers involves three guidelines:
    - working on the skills required to achieve goals, choosing most urgent first (or those that are the most fun)
    - making career choices that are on the whole consistent with the future vision
    - taking time to become aware of feelings towards the activities the individual wants to undertake

- **Evaluate and reformulate plans**
  - All the factors in the plan should be revised at least annually by writing down reflections and discussing the results with trusted friends
  - This will lead to flexibility, awareness of feelings of what was learned thus counteracting drifting

The career invention model

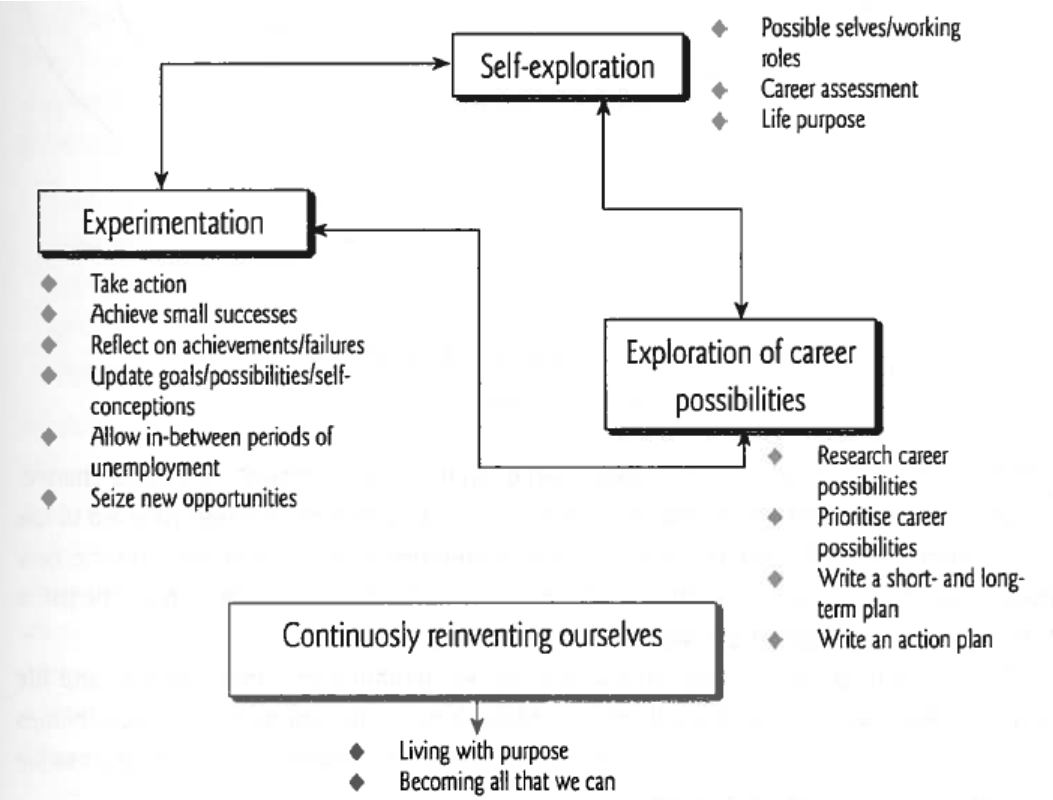


Figure 3.4 *Career invention model*

The career invention model is based on the principle that the 21st century career is circular and that individuals have the power to change the nature of their career paths.

Individuals are not dependent on environment or organisation to make jobs available to them, as they can create new forms of employment through creativity and talent.

The times when individuals find themselves unemployed are periods for deep self-reflection on past experiences, review of their development and competencies. This period of "in-between" is used to link their needs and dreams to overall life purpose.

As individuals become more skilled in creating their own career paths, they will become competency traders, where they will

negotiate the conditions for their own careers, based on their self-belief - skills, knowledge, expertise and what they can add to the org

According to the Career-Invention Model, we need to continually reinvent ourselves and our careers. The reinvention process implies that we continually engage in the three career-planning steps

The cycle of career invention constitutes three steps:

Step 1: Self-exploration

- Identifying one's possible selves or working roles (becoming fully aware of oneself to gain insight into our career values/orientation)
- Assessing one's career interests, career orientation, career values, skills, knowledge, talents and abilities, career personality preferences, career assessment
- Figuring out what one really wants, one's dreams, desires and life purpose

Step 2: Exploration of possibilities

- Researching career possibilities and alternatives that match one's career-assessment and general self-exploration, activity outcomes
- Prioritising the identified career possibilities
- Writing a short- and long-term career plan
- Writing a plan of action to explore and experiment with the identified career options

A greater awareness of oneself and the possibilities within the work environment will determine order of priority to set specific goals

Step 3: Experimentation

- Take action – finding the job or form of work/employment by experimenting with these identified possibilities
- Testing career possibilities, achieving small successes
- Reflecting on achievements and failures and learning from them
- Updating goals, possibilities and self-conceptions about one's skills, abilities and possible selves
- Allowing 'in-between' periods of unemployment
- Seizing new opportunities by taking action *(repeating steps 1 to 3)*

The career-invention model is also developmental in nature and emphasises career self-management and the notion of subjective career success.

In order for individuals to be successful (within 21st century careers) they must develop a set of key characteristics:

- 21st century world of work is characterised by turbulence, uncertainty & rapid change
- Flatter org structures lead to loss of traditional jobs
- Individual's career orientations & values guide career decisions

- Drivers (Career motivation, commitment, life purpose)
  = energise a drive to experiment with career possibilities
- Enablers (transferable skills, talents, knowledge, intentions)
  = are characteristics that help person to succeed in career
- Harmonisers (Resilience, Emotional intelligence, competence & coping resources)
  = act as controls & keep drivers in balance

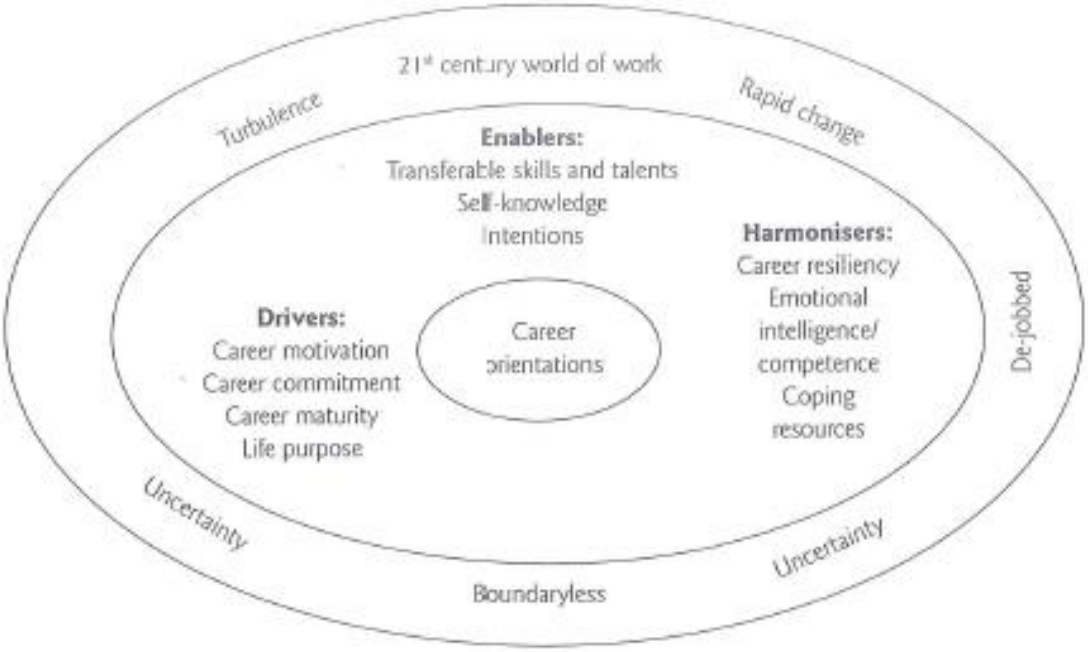


Figure 3.5 *Characteristics underlying a successful career*

Adapted from Coetzee, M 2007

Career success (objective and subjective)

Career success can be defined as the real or perceived achievements individuals have accumulated as a result of their work experiences

Career success has different meanings for different people -

- success means promotion
- becoming an expert in their occupational field
- person has developed many different skills and abilities
- moving frequently from one challenge to another

The way in which individuals define career success influences their career decisions

Success can also mean the extent to which there is a match between individuals' career anchors (self-perceived talents/abilities, motives and needs, attitudes and values) and the perception of their jobs

Objective or extrinsic success (how well the person has done in terms of rewards, promotions, recognition and other visible indicators)

Intrinsic or subjective success (subjective evaluation and feelings of job, career and life satisfaction, sense of accomplishment and sense of self-worth)

Gender criteria for career success:

- Woman = personal needs, employability and career satisfaction
- Men = promotions, organisational level attained and salary

People's sense of job satisfaction and career satisfaction, have been found to be related to their sense of career well—being

Peoples' career well-being is affected by their career experiences which lead to positive and/or negative evaluations (thoughts) and feelings about their jobs or careers

Positive experiences: career transitions / interpersonal relations (recognition and positive feedback) / autonomy / power / work performance / sense of purpose / learning and development opportunities / work-life balance

Negative career experiences: interpersonal conflict / lack of feedback or recognition of others / organisational change / inequitable treatment / dislike of ethics or morals displayed by the company / career transitions (redundancy, redeployment) / work adjustment / lack of promotional opportunities / lack of learning and development opportunities / no future progression

Career success is linked to individuals' goal orientation which is centred in a particular cultural value system.

Afrocentric value system = psychological feelings of career success based on preference for quality of life and rewarding common vision for communal effort, related to the values of a feminine culture that emphasises nurturance, commonality of all people, vision, values and efforts, a concern for relationships and the living environment

Eurocentric value system = achieving material success, position and rewarding individual merit, related to the values of a masculine culture characterised by assertiveness, being ambitious, competitive

In the light of current business trends (downsizing and restructuring), it is essential that the meaning of success should no longer be dependent on the traditional Eurocentric characteristics of success — namely promotion, salary increases and perks (objective success) — but should rather be reflected by individuals' perception of their internal career (psychological or subjective success).

Objective careers

- Career advancement views career as a course of professional life or employment, allowing opportunity for progress
- Evaluated by number of promotions during persons career life
- A linear pattern characterized by quick upward movements in the hierarchy of the organisation
- Sequence of employment related experiences with traditional career success viewed in the form of salary and promotions

Subjective careers

- Aspects of subjective career are included in the protean career
- Schein describes the internal career as including attitudes, needs, values, perceptions that individual has about a career
- Held together by self-concept that consists of perceived talents & abilities; basic values; career motives & needs
- The contract is with individuals themselves and with their work, with an increase in job satisfaction and involvement

- A new career form has emerged, consisting of a series of learning cycles across multi-directional career pathways
- Careers are seen as a life journey where individuals will experience a number of job and organizational transitions
- Careers are rather to be viewed in terms of lifelong learning than upward movements

Primary implication for employees:

- careers have to become more protean (with a move away from the traditional career)
- protean career performance is defined by the person's own criteria of good performance (psychological success)

Chapter 4 – Career choice and counselling

Ethical considerations

- Practices of psychologists controlled by legislation and controlling bodies like Health Professions Council of SA (HPCSA)
- All practicing career counselors and psychologists must be registered with HPCSA
- Prof board for psychology (PsySSA) controls & applies the laws re psych training & professional actions
- Promote the interests of clients & psychologists – conferences, training, publications, newsletters & marketing actions
- PsySSA manages a publication (Ethical Codes for Psychologists)

- Ethical codes stipulate the values and norms attached to actions towards colleagues and clients (testing, therapy, research etc.)
- Basic ideals & assumptions are based on recognition of the worth & dignity of individual irrespective of race, creed, sex, status, language and other personal factors
- Include understanding that every individual is unique
- Counselors & psychologists responsibility to use research methods & skills objectively & unbiasedly to understand human behaviour better & improve welfare of people
- Must maintain high standards & reflect qualifications & experience accurately
- Keep up to date on methods & practice & perform tasks professionally in a planned & responsible way
- Moral & legal standards compel psychologists/career counselors to be aware of sensitive issues & to act in interest of clients
- Psych tests involving people must be fair & undiscriminating

- Confidentiality & informed consent must be honoured –
  - confidentiality means that no info may be divulged except with client's consent

  - Informed consent is the clients autonomy & freedom of choice in anything that will take place & his right to be informed about any overt or covert procedures
  - Clients privacy may not be invaded

- Welfare of individuals & groups paramount
- No action, procedure or type of relationship must harm the integrity of the professional contract btw psychologist & client
- Be open with clients about fees and termination of services
- Professional relationships must be upheld at all times
- Conflicts over ethical principles may arise when decisions are made that might seem contradictory

Ethical Dilemmas

- Ethical principles that apply to organisational career development support practices are the following:
  - ✓ Guarding against invasion of employee privacy
  - ✓ Guaranteeing confidentiality
  - ✓ Obtaining informed consent from employees before assessing them
  - ✓ Respecting employee's rights to know
  - ✓ Imposing time limits on data
  - ✓ Using the most valid procedures available
  - ✓ Treating employees with respect and consideration
  - ✓ Not maintaining secret files on individuals
  - ✓ Avoiding fraudulent, secretive or unfair means of collecting data

- Employees can demonstrate ethical behavior by considering the following practices in their personal conduct at work:
  - ✓ Knowing and following the company's written policies
  - ✓ Fulfilling contractual and job description responsibilities
  - ✓ Following organisational and job goals and objectives
  - ✓ Performing procedural rules
  - ✓ Offering competence equal with work and job to which one is assigned
  - ✓ Performing productively according to required job tasks

Chapter 5: Early life/career stage

In early adulthood (ages 25 to 45) *physical and cognitive development* is at its peak. *Physically* – it is a time of energy, health, biological vigour, with instinctive drives high. *Cognitive functioning* - characterised by good memory, abstract thinking ability, problem-solving ability and learning new skills.

Life tasks and challenges of early adulthood:

Table 5.2 *Life tasks and challenges of the early, middle and late life/career stages*

Life/career stage	Key life tasks/challenges
Early life/career stage	◆ Achieving independence and responsibility ◆ Developing self-reliance or autonomy ◆ Establishing one's identity ◆ Finding a place in and contributing to society ◆ Making an impact on one's environment ◆ Becoming established in an occupation and in family life ◆ Developing intimacy, becoming committed and involved ◆ Developing stable affiliations ◆ Becoming employable and career resilient (dealing with job transitions and sustaining employability) ◆ Dealing constructively with quarter-life crisis

3 phases of early adulthood:

Novice phase – 17 to 33 years

- A novice lover, spouse and worker
- In all these aspects of life, new relationship have to be found, including relationships with family, mentors, bosses at work
- Primarily the task of this phase is *finding a place for oneself in the adult world*
- This involves 2 tasks: *exploring the adult world* and *creating a stable adult life structure*
- In *exploring the adult world* options are kept open, commitments are avoided, alternatives are maximised with a sense of adventure where aspirations can be aided by fantasies

- *Creating a stable adult life structure* involves becoming responsible for establishing family relations and a stable work structure
- Men are less motivated to marry and are more concerned about their future careers
- Women are concerned about both career and marriage & try to balance work and home life but work life tends to dominate

Transitional phase – age 30

- Age thirty transition – lasts 3 to 5 years
- Individual experiences life as becoming more serious and has a sense of having to change before it is too late
- May occur between ages of 20 – 35, due to changing features of 21st century workplace and career
- This phase is generally being referred to as the *quarter-life quandary* and can be overwhelming for the young adult
- Transition can be smooth or rocky

Individuals experiencing quarter-life crisis face these life questions:

- Δ What career should I focus on? (Careers in modern workplace offer many possibilities and young adults have many interests)
- Δ Where should I live? (my family or friends, or follow my heart?)
- Δ Shouldn't I be more settled by this stage of my life?
- Δ Is it okay to still be experimenting with my life's options?
- Δ Where do I belong?
- Δ Am I useless just because I can't define what my life's dream is?
- Δ Don't people expect better things from me at this stage?
- Δ What if I try something new and I fail?
- Δ Why is it that everyone seems surer of themselves than me?

Settling down phase:

- During this phase the self becomes engaged in the world
- Individuals have to fulfil goals and aspirations previously set
- They have to find a niche in society
- 'Becoming one's own man' and advancement in the sense of 'making it' become NB
- Promotion is key concern at this time
- Psychological stress resulting from high performance increases work involvement

- The major tasks of the early career include:

- *A need to develop occupational identity*
- *A need for competence is strong in young adults*
- *A need to have an impact on one's environment*

- Self-reliance is a characteristic regarded as typifying maturity
- The development task of early adulthood as developing intimacy, which refers to commitment and involvement
- The task is realised through relationship with co-worker or boss through involvement in a commitment to organisation
- Sense of ego-identity of young adult revolves around intimacy (results from role-testing in adolescence to stable affiliations in early adulthood)
- Some young adults encounter problems - newly found sense of ego identity is still fragile and they fear they may lose it

Task orientation is reality bound and facilitates balancing subjective aims and objective responsibilities

Subjective priorities that young adults seek in their first jobs:

- Opportunities for advancement
- High salary, freedom from supervision
- Social status, prestige, recognition
- Responsibility, challenge and adventure

Experiencing the following life/career challenges:

- Earning a living
- Gaining more experience
- Finding a job matching one's qualifications
- Continuing to further qualifications, upskilling oneself
- Being more assertive, living one's dream

Objective responsibilities are the expectations the organisation has of new employees (not characteristics of new employees):

- Competence to get a job done
- Ability to accept organisational realities
- Ability to generate and implement ideas
- Patience & perseverance in desire acceptance for new ideas
- Ability to translate technical solutions into practical terms
- Ability to handle interpersonal relations
- Loyalty and commitment to goals and values of organisation
- High personal integrity and ability to compromise
- Capacity to grow and learn from experience

Establishment and achievement are 2 overriding career issues:

Career establishment

Establishment involves learning, testing competence, fitting in, seeking approval, coping with dependance and insecurity

- Early career is period of establishment (stabilization)

Establishment (stabilization)

- Org must assist employees to fit in with their jobs & provide necessary training
- Employees must be willing to learn about self & job in order to evaluate job match
- Psychological contract must be formed that increases mutual acceptance & minimize uncertainties in employer & employee

Socialisation is integral part of establishment

Organisational support practices

- Actions org can take to make this successful & less traumatic include: recruitment orientation (socialisation), challenge, feedback, supervisor support (mentoring)
- Successful adjustment of new employee to org may vary due to differences between expectations and realities of job

Recruitment orientation

- Realistic recruitment programme essential for facilitating adjustment & make period less traumatic
- First days and weeks are the most difficult for new employee
- Initiate them to company services, benefits, policies
- Individual must learn more about the organisation with regards company policies, procedures, expectations, culture, job role, tasks, reporting lines

Challenge

- New employees expect high levels of challenge & responsibility
- Few companies are prepared to meet them because of the fact that they need to gain experience & trust & therefore exercise strict supervision & control over new employees
- Early job challenge can be positive – research shown employees who are challenged perform better than those who are not
- Advantage of faster promotion, tends to motivate employees to further their education

Feedback

- Frequent feedback on performance essential
  - will make new employees feel accepted
  - help to develop competence & adjust behaviours
  - accelerating the learning process
- Positive feedback
  - reinforces the learning experience (not being punished for mistakes)
  - performance feedback is a way of specifying the details of psychological contract

Feedback strategies:

- Sink or swim approach
  - involves substantial responsibility with little support, which can succeed:
  - if person is not punished for failure or mistakes
  - is given clear feedback on degree of success or failure
  - if employee shown how to rectify mistakes
- Give a task which employee is certain to fail (difficult to fulfill)
  - this may have a tempering effect and make the new employee susceptible to feedback from a supervisor

Supervisor support and mentoring for young adults

- Satisfaction of needs for competence & acceptance enables new employee to develop feelings of success
- Supervisor has NB and direct role in developing employees career (role model, mentor, trainer, coach, provides feedback)
- Org should encourage employee-mentor relationships
- Mentoring related to early career promotions, work satisfaction
- Mentoring facilitates career development, but employee is ultimately responsible for their own career management
- Org responsible for career management support practices and exposure to new skills through training to ensure future employability of new employee

Other issues

- Tenure plays a role in establishment wrt performance
- Positive relationship btw length of job experience & performance of early career managers – those with longer tenure achieve higher sales & larger profits
- Flexible work hrs can facilitate retention of employees (those with major roles beyond work)
- Job transitions more frequent because org can no longer promise long term employment
- Movement across organizational boundaries is common occurrence

Responsibility of employee

- New employees must learn about own development needs & determine if matched in org
- Must obtain info about self & org by carrying out tasks assigned, studying performance reviews, making observations, forming internal informal relationships
- This can provide understanding of themselves in order to adjust their career goals

Career achievement

Achievement involves contributing, increasing competence, moving up, seeking authority, finding independence and self-confidence

- Once security and acceptance has been established, individual strives for achievement
- Established in advanced stage – because of desire for promotion & advancement in org
- Early job challenge to test abilities of new employee and allow them to contribute to success of org
- Seek achievement by expanding their sphere of responsibility, becoming more independent
- Supervisor provide challenges to transfer responsibility (without over burdening employee) thus allowing growth in job
- Goals formed, new employees take part & feedback given (feedback on performance is vital)
- Career path consists of series of positions which worker passes
- Construction of realistic and flexible career paths
- Self-assessment promotions provide information on job opportunities (workshops, seminars, discussion groups)

- Organisation can help employees develop career development plan consisting of:
  - statement describing employee's ideal work environment
  - specified target job linked to timetable
  - list of employee's strong points and special talents
  - list of skills and experience individual must acquire to obtain specified target job
  - an idea of the strategy or plan of action required to obtain the target job (time schedule and purpose of each action)
- Career plan developed via performance appraisal / feedback
- Employees who fail to set their own development goals, may find that org sets the goals on their behalf

Chapter 6 – Career anchors

Definition of career anchor - *3 components:*

- ✓ Self-perceived talents and abilities based on actual success in work settings
- ✓ Self-perceived motives and needs based on opportunities for self-testing, self-diagnoses, experiences and feedback of others
- ✓ Self-perceived attitudes and values based on actual encounters between self and norms and values of organisation

Career anchor is the pattern of self-perceived talents and abilities, basic values and the evolved sense of motives and needs that influences a person's career-related decisions and self-concept.

Career anchor development

- Career anchors start to develop in early adulthood during the *establishment* and *achievement stage* (some only aware of it during midcareer stage)
- When people tried jobs that felt unsuitable to them they refer to being "pulled back" to something that fitted better
- Until employee appointed to the career of their choice, individuals will not know whether their capabilities meet the demands of their potential career
- The early career can be seen as a period of mutual exploration between the newly appointed employee and organisation
- New employees achieve more self-knowledge and develop a clearer concept about their career
- As individuals are required to make choices related to their self-development, family or career, they may become more aware of the values and motives that frame the choices they make
- Without knowledge of his career anchor, the employee could land up in a work situation that is not satisfactory and might feel that 'this is not really me'

- A career anchor therefore provides the *basis for career choices*, since people are likely to make job selections that are consistent with their own self-image
- Career anchor develops as person's self-knowledge and a clearer concept about his career and his capabilities meet the demands of his chosen career
- The career self-concept of an individual is cultivated and developed through the life experience acquired by the individual
- During times when the individual is required to make vital career or life decisions, their career self-concept will function as a steadying influence, as there are specific needs, values or interests that the individual will not compromise
- Anchors are also receptive to change, based on the exposure of new work experiences
- The career anchor holds the *internal career* together as dramatic changes are experienced in the external career and is especially important in today's turbulent economy

- Career anchors denote non-financial or psychosomatic features during the course of making career choices and are thus a vital aspect of a person's core career
- Schein argued that an individual can sustain one central career anchor. However, experimental findings from his research indicated that more than one career anchor may be present within an individual. However, the majority of people tend to cling to the central anchor already formed.

- Org and managers can:
  - ✓ Create flexible career paths, incentive and reward systems to accommodate various needs
  - ✓ Create and nurture culture that encourages self-insight and self-management
  - ✓ Analyse specific characteristics of different jobs and communicate them clearly

Types of career anchors

Managerial competence

- ✓ Described as – "linear career pattern"
- ✓ These employees will try to use any opportunity to be in a position to integrate efforts of others for maximum output
- ✓ Need to see their contribution to the success of the company
- ✓ Employee is responsible & accountable for total results

- ✓ Need to have competence in 3 basic fields:
  - ❖ Analytical competence – ability to analyse business problems
  - ❖ Interpersonal competence – ability to influence people towards a goal
  - ❖ Emotional competence – stimulated by emotional crises and like to exercise power

Motives and needs (motivated by):

- High level of responsibility at work
- Challenging, varied and integrative work
- Opportunities for leadership
- Opportunities to contribute to success of company

Values and attitudes:

- High income & bonuses for achieving org targets
- Power and influence
- Promotion and recognition
- Advancing corporate ladder (to positions of increasing responsibility and authority)

Entrepreneurial creativity

- ✓ Employees who regard *entrepreneurial creativity* as a career anchor will consider possibility of creating their own business
- ✓ These individuals may work hard in a company, considering this as a way to gain the necessary experience and leave when they feel that they can manage on their own
- ✓ They don't mind working long hours as for them it is what is required to "get the job done" and to be able to achieve
- ✓ Today's economy favors individuals with an entrepreneurial anchor as people are encouraged to develop own business
- ✓ Training should focus more on entrepreneurial skills and to prepare people for autonomous careers

Motives and needs:

- Prefer work that is described as original and innovative
- That demands risk and creates a fresh challenge
- Desire opportunity to establish their own organisation
- Desire opportunity to develop new products and services
- Needs visibility and public recognition in terms of sizeable enterprises, building fortunes

Values and attitudes:

- *Power and freedom* in key roles, where their creativity can be exercised and where opportunities exist to generate wealth
- In terms of payments and benefits, ownership is the most important issue
- High personal visibility and public recognition is highly regarded

Lifestyle

- ✓ Employees who regard *lifestyle* as a career anchor will always want to harmonise personal life with career requirements
- ✓ Employees are unlikely to aim for any promotion that would involve a geographical move
- ✓ They enjoy *general growth* and see their jobs and career as part of their personal development progress
- ✓ Employee feels identity is tied up with how he lives his life as a whole (trying to integrate their lives)
- ✓ Success is defined in broader terms than career success

Motives and needs:

- Entrenched in a need to maintain equilibrium between work and home life
- A need for a career that provides flexibility
- A need for integration of their personal, family & career needs
- Psychological work contract is re-negotiated with sincerity, as organisation shows consideration for employee & family needs

Values and attitudes:

- Freedom and flexibility are highly regarded to ensure balance within their family and work life
- Working flexible hours are highly valued
- Attending family functions and travel at times which suit family commitments (sabbaticals, paternity and maternity leave NB)

Figure 6: 1 – An integrated career anchor model

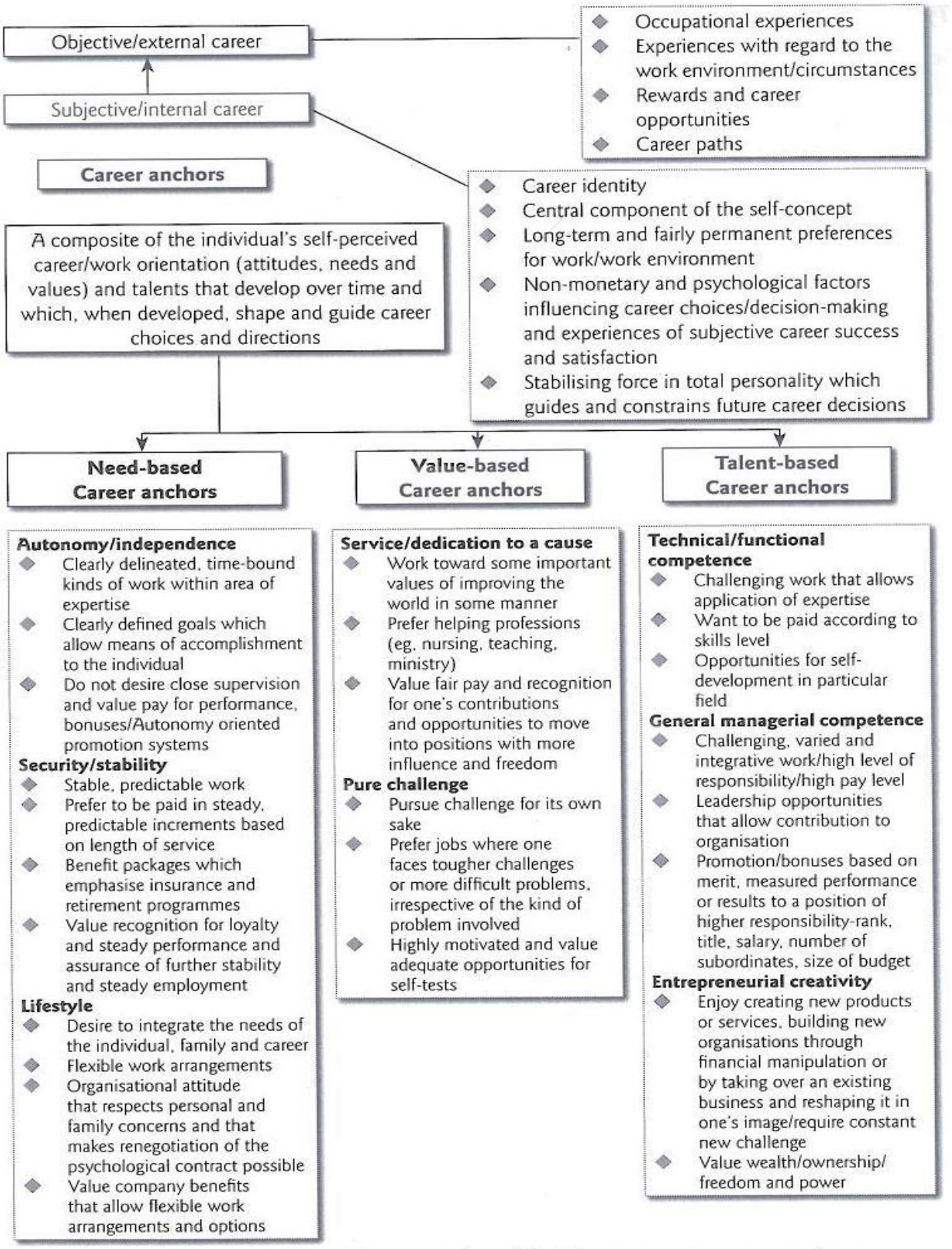


Figure 6.1 *Integrated theoretical model of the construct career anchors (Coetzee and Schreuder, 2008)*

Career Plateauing

- Point in an individual's life where he does not get any more opportunities for promotion
- Individual is not unhappy in his job, but due to changing circumstances e.g. restructuring, downsizing, it may happen that there are no further possibilities for them to move upward in his current career or workplace
- Happens to almost everyone at some stage in their career

Main sources:

- During the years 1960 – 2000, organisations expanded and promotional opportunities were readily available
- Over the last recent years, there has been an increase in companies restructuring, downsizing, changes in the business environment and employment equity, all of which have an adverse impact on promotions within the organisations

Other sources:

- lack of employee skills and inappropriate abilities
- low need for career mobility
- baby boomers holding positions for longer years
- mergers and takeovers resulting in lay-offs
- competition (candidate seen as less qualified)
- age (older employees affected)
- organisational needs (employee valuable in current role)
- managers identified employees who are capable and willing to move up hierarchy (and those who are not)
- organizational structure becomes narrower towards the top
- flatter organizational structures (in general)
- choice to be plateaued because of personal or health risks
- stress and burnout
- slow company growth decisions
- lack of intrinsic motivation and extrinsic rewards

Types:

Structural

- The organisational hierarchy is usually the cause of structural plateauing
- Means individuals have reached the end of the road with no further chances for promotion

Content

- *Content plateauing* refers to when employee knows the work so well that he perceives it as unchallenging, boring and routine
- Content plateauing can be more easily avoided than structural plateauing, as individuals who become structural plateaued do not necessarily experience content plateauing
- An individual might be structural and content plateaued, with no opportunities to progress in the hierarchy of organisation and with no opportunities to grow in his current job

Life

- *Life plateauing* refers to when committed individuals begin to feel unsuccessful in their work and this spreads to feeling plateaued and trapped in life

Leibowitz identified 4 kinds of plateaued performers:

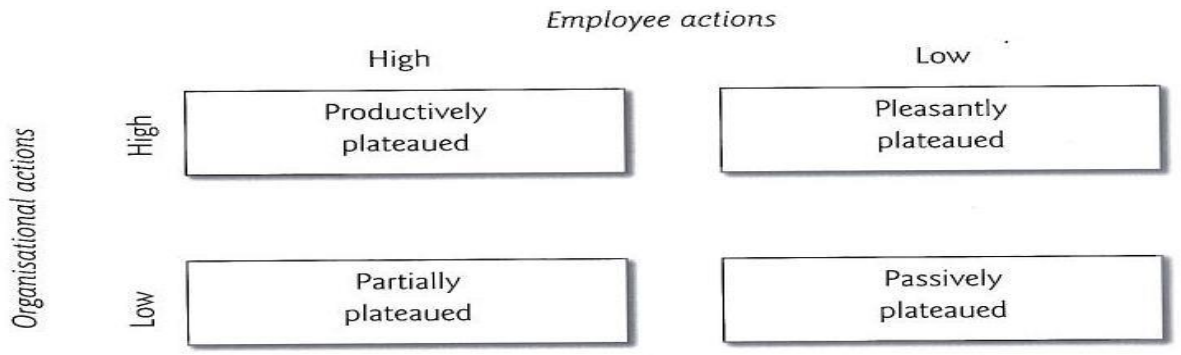


Figure 6.2 *Four kinds of plateaued performer employee actions*

Productively plateaued

- Employees and organisations try hard to encourage stimulation and challenges
- Achieved their ambitions and experience job satisfaction
- Proactive and willing to take risks and the organisations support them in these ventures
- Loyal and regarded as indispensable and their efforts are recognised by colleagues & supervisors
- They are productive and perform but need to be motivated

Partially plateaued

- The employee maintains interest and involvement in the job although they feel that the organisation doesn't do anything for them
- Usually subject matter experts and are valued by the organisation but the job seems routine to them
- They appreciate new jobs to learn as it maintains the excitement

Pleasantly plateaued

- Not interested in training courses and opportunities for advancement
- They are happy where they are and don't welcome change
- Like routine and a well-defined place in the organisation
- Stay with the organisation for a long time and are not innovators

Passively plateaued

- Employees feel they are in a rut and are unable to alter the fact
- Been in the same job for more than five years and know it thoroughly and there is little opportunity for learning
- Are not curious or creative and are not interested in the training courses on offer
- Don't initiate change and have a narrow definition of their own jobs

Outcomes of career plateauing

Negative outcomes

- Low levels of job involvement and work motivation
- Low self-image
- Lower productivity and work performance
- Low levels of job and career satisfaction
- Employees are less committed
- Loss of employee morale
- Work related stress and strain

Positive outcomes:

- Less embarrassing and stressful in current times than in previous years (more people are experiencing this)
- Individuals investigate ways of moving beyond the career plateauing by looking for other opportunities to achieve goals (allow time for reflection, time to plan for personal growth and to gain new knowledge)
- Plateaued workers have the opportunity to invest more in non-work activities (for example families and community activities)
- Successful career plateauing is the challenge where individuals still perform effectively and experience job satisfaction despite the fact that their chances of promotion are limited

Organisationsal actions

Organisational actions to address the plateauing problem:

Organisational

- Change the structure of the organisation
- Change the climate through education
- Create an equitable personnel policy
- Re-assess the selection system
- Re-assess the performance appraisal systems

- Provide career info systems
- Provide individual career planning opportunities (career planning workshops, self-assessment of skills)

Manager / supervisor

- Give candid feedback
- Make promotion expectations more realistic
- Reduce importance of promotion and increase value of challenge
- Provide exposure to all personnel (not just the stars)
- Use managers experience & knowledge (going beyond their jobs)
- Train supervisors about their role in reducing employee perceptions of career plateauing

New structures / tasks

- Encourage new ways of doing tasks
- Create more project-type jobs
- Re-design jobs to create more flexibility
- Offer job enrichment
- Encourage plateaued workers to identify their own challenges
- Set up communication channels to ask plateaued employees what would motivate them
- Set up job rotation programmes to create lateral movement and broaden skills
- Introduce mutual job switches (temporary or permanent)
- Introduce policies facilitating lateral cross-functional moves

Employee

- Encourage further education
- Establish a career plan and goals
- Encourage career exploration
- Encourage skill-based (not position-based) career paths
- Encourage involvement in decisions and activities
- Shift linear-career-pattern employees to other patterns