



Encyclopedia of

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Jeffrey H.
GREENHAUS
Gerard A.
CALLANAN
EDITORS

2

VOLUME

Encyclopedia of
CAREER

DEVELOPMENT

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DEVELOPMENT

EDITORS

Jeffrey H.
GREENHAUS

Drexel University

Gerard A.
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West Chester University

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VOLUME

A SAGE Reference Publication

 **SAGE Publications**
Thousand Oaks ■ London ■ New Delhi

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For information:



SAGE Publications, Inc.
2455 Teller Road
Thousand Oaks, California 91320
E-mail: order@sagepub.com

SAGE Publications Ltd.
1 Oliver's Yard
55 City Road
London EC1Y 1SP
United Kingdom

SAGE Publications India Pvt. Ltd.
B-42, Panchsheel Enclave
Post Box 4109
New Delhi 110-017 India

Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Encyclopedia of career development/Editors Jeffrey H. Greenhaus and Gerard A. Callanan.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 1-4129-0537-0 (cloth: 2 vols.)

1. Career development—Encyclopedias. 2. Vocational qualifications—Encyclopedias.
3. Vocational guidance—Encyclopedias. I. Greenhaus, Jeffrey H. II. Callanan, Gerard A.
HF5381.E517 2006

331.70203—dc22

2005036633

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

06 07 08 09 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

<i>Publisher:</i>	Rolf Janke
<i>Acquiring Editor:</i>	Al Bruckner
<i>Development Editors:</i>	Yvette Pollastrini Paul Reis
<i>Editorial Assistant:</i>	MaryAnn Vail
<i>Project Editor:</i>	Beth A. Bernstein
<i>Copy Editors:</i>	Barbara Coster Carla Freeman
<i>Typesetter:</i>	C&M Digitals (P) Ltd.
<i>Indexer:</i>	Molly Hall
<i>Cover Designer:</i>	Janet Foulger

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Volume 2: M–W, *485–886*

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Reverse mentoring	Telecommuting	Workplace romance
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Sabbaticals	Tokenism	
School-to-work transition	Tolerance for ambiguity	

Reader's Guide

This guide is provided to help readers locate entries on related topics. It classifies entries into 10 themes: (1) theoretical perspectives on careers; (2) the social context of careers, including the contemporary workplace; cultural and international perspectives; ethnicity, gender, and diversity; organizational environment; social class and background; and work-life interface; (3) the evolution and development of careers; (4) decision making and career development; (5) variations in career patterns and career success; (6) career development initiatives; (7) legislative and regulatory mandates; (8) assessment areas and techniques; (9) job search and organizational recruiting; and (10) professional associations. Some entries appear in more than one category.

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Cognitive information processing in career counseling
Erikson's theory of development
History of career studies
Holland's theory of vocational choice
Metaphors for careers
Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment
Occupational choice
Person-environment fit (P-E fit)
Positive organizational scholarship
Reinforcement theory
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Spirituality and careers
Team-based work
Technology and careers
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Globalization and careers
International careers
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Virtual expatriates

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Elder care practices
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 Career motivation
 Career salience
 Career satisfaction
 Career success

Copreneurship
 Entrepreneurship
 Job involvement
 Job satisfaction
 Lockstep career progression
 Morale
 Motivation and career development
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 Organizational commitment
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 Workaholism

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PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Counseling Association
American Psychological Association
Center for Creative Leadership
National Career Development Association

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Jeffrey H. Greenhaus is Professor and William A. Mackie Chair in the Department of Management at Drexel University's LeBow College of Business. A Fellow of the American Psychological Society and the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP), he received his PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from New York University. Jeff's research, which focuses on career dynamics and work-family linkages, has appeared in journals such as the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Journal of Management*, *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, and *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*. Former Associate Editor of the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, Jeff is coeditor (with Saroj Parasuraman) of *Integrating Work and Family: Challenges and Choices for a Changing World* (1997); coauthor (with Stewart D. Friedman) of *Work and Family—Allies or Enemies? What Happens When Business Professionals Confront Life Choices* (2000); and coauthor (with Gerard A. Callanan and Veronica M. Godshalk) of *Career Management*, now in its third edition (2000).

Gerard A. Callanan is Associate Professor in the Management Department at West Chester University. He received a PhD in Organizational Behavior from Drexel University. Prior to his appointment at West Chester University in 2001, he was a Vice President with the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia. During his 22 years at the Federal Reserve, Gerry held a number of senior posts, including responsibility for areas such as strategic planning, credit and risk management, and national currency management. A member of the Academy of Management, the American Psychological Association, and the Society for the Advancement of Management, he has done research that has appeared (or will appear) in scholarly publications such as the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *Career Development International*, *Journal of Psychology*, *Journal of Education for Business*, *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship*, *Education + Training*, and *Team Performance Management Journal*. In 2000, Gerry coauthored (with Jeffrey H. Greenhaus and Veronica M. Godshalk) the textbook *Career Management*, now in its third edition.

About the Editorial Board

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Douglas T. (Tim) Hall is the Morton H. and Charlotte Friedman Professor of Management in the School of Management at Boston University. He is also the Director of the Executive Development Roundtable and Faculty Director of the MBA Program. He has previously held faculty positions at Yale, York, Michigan State, and Northwestern universities, and visiting positions at Columbia and the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Tim is the author of *Careers In and Out of Organizations* and numerous other books and articles on careers and management. He is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, and the Academy of Management, where he served as a member of the Board of Governors and as Chair of the Organizational Behavior Division and

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Kerr Inkson is Professor of Management at the University of Otago, New Zealand. He has a background in organizational psychology, organizational behavior, and management studies and has held positions at 10 universities in the United Kingdom, United States, and New Zealand. He has published over 60 refereed journal articles, 30 book chapters, and 10 books. In recent years, his research has focused on careers, including boundaryless careers and international careers, and his books include two Sage publications related to careers: *The New Careers* (1999), coauthored by Michael B. Arthur and Judith K. Pringle, and *Understanding Careers: The Metaphors of Working Lives* (2006). Other recent books are *Management: Perspectives for New Zealand* (2002), coauthored by Darl Kolb; and *Cultural Intelligence* (2004), coauthored by David C. Thomas. Kerr is a contributor to key professional and academic forums and was Chair of the Careers Division of the Academy of Management for 2005-2006.

Phyllis Moen holds the McKnight Presidential Chair in Sociology at the University of Minnesota. She also directs the Flexible Work and Well-Being Center, part of a larger NIH-funded research network initiative. Prior to coming to Minnesota in 2003, Dr. Moen spent many years as a faculty member in both sociology and human development at Cornell University, where she founded the Bronfenbrenner Life Course Center (an interdisciplinary cross-college initiative) and the Cornell Careers

Institute (supported by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation). She studies and has published numerous books and articles on occupational careers, retirement, health, gender, policy, and families, as they intersect and play out over the life course. Her two most recent books are *It's About Time: Couples and Careers* (2003) and *The Career Mystique: Cracks in the American Dream* (2005, with Pat Roehling). Dr. Moen has been elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Gerontological Society, and the National Council for Family Relations. She also is a member of the Conference Board's Work-Life Leadership Council, the Center on Aging & Work/Workplace Flexibility's Research Advisory Committee at Boston College, the National Academies of Science's Steering Committee for a Workshop on Decision Making Needs of Older People, and the National Institutes of Health study section on Social Psychology, Personality, and Interpersonal Processes.

Mark Savickas is Professor and Chair in the Behavioral Sciences Department at the Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine and Adjunct Professor of Counselor Education at Kent State University. His 80 articles, 25 book chapters, and 500 presentations to professional groups have dealt with vocational behavior and career counseling. He has served as Editor of the *Career Development Quarterly* (1991-1998) and is currently Editor of the *Journal of Vocational Behavior* (1999-present). He also serves on editorial boards for the *Australian Journal of Career Development*, *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, *L'Orientation Scolaire et Professionnelle* (France), and *Educational Research Journal* (Hong Kong). In 1994, he received the John L. Holland Award

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Rosalie L. Tung is the Ming and Stella Wong Professor of International Business at Simon Fraser University. She was formerly a Wisconsin Distinguished Professor, Business Administration, with the University of Wisconsin system. She has been elected as a Fellow of the following associations: the Royal Society of Canada, the Academy of Management, the Academy of International Business, the British Academy of Management, and the International Academy for Intercultural Research. Besides serving on the Board of Governors of the Academy of Management in the 1980s, she was elected to a five-year term as a member of the Executive Committee of the Academy of Management, including the position of President of that association in 2003-2004. She has also served on the Executive Board of the Academy of International Business. Rosalie has published widely on the subjects of international management in publications such as the *Journal of World Business*, *Organizational Dynamics*, *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Academy of Management Executive*, and *Academy of Management Journal*. She is the author or editor of 11 books, including the *IEBM Handbook of International Business* and *Learning from World Class Companies*. She serves as Editor of International Human Resource Management for the *Journal of World Business* and is a Consulting Editor for the *Journal of International Business Studies*.

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Acknowledgments

The publication of the *Encyclopedia of Career Development* represents the culmination of more than two years of work. Along the way, we were fortunate to be helped and guided by many people. To these individuals, we wish to express our deepest gratitude.

Our Editorial Advisory Board comprises six internationally renowned experts in career development, and we thank them for their willingness to share their expertise with us at every stage of the project and for their unswerving commitment to the highest level of excellence: Dr. Nancy Betz, Professor of Psychology at The Ohio State University; Dr. Douglas T. (Tim) Hall, Morton H. and Charlotte Friedman Professor of Management in the School of Management at Boston University; Dr. Kerr Inkson, Professor of Management at the University of Otago, New Zealand; Dr. Phyllis Moen, McKnight Presidential Chair in Sociology at the University of Minnesota; Dr. Mark Savickas, Professor and Chair in the Behavioral Sciences Department at the Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine; and Dr. Rosalie L. Tung, Ming and Stella Wong Professor of International Business at Simon Fraser University.

We also thank a number of colleagues at our respective institutions for their assistance, emotional support, and expert advice. At Drexel University, we thank Dr. George Tsetsekos, Dean of the LeBow College of Business; Dr. Dona DeCarolis, Head of the Department of Management; and Emily Missner Devaney, Information Services Librarian for the LeBow School of Business. At West Chester University, we thank Dr. Christopher Fiorentino, Dean of the College of Business and Public Affairs; Dr. Cynthia Benzing, Professor in the Economics and Finance Department; Dr. Charles McGee, Chair of the

Management Department; and Dr. Stephen Marvin, Associate Professor and Reference Librarian.

We also offer our thanks to Dr. Stephen A. Stumpf, Professor of Management and Fred J. Springer Chair in Business Leadership at Villanova University. Steve's widespread knowledge of career development and his extensive network of relationships were instrumental in the selection of topics and authors.

Many highly dedicated and talented professionals at Sage Publications deserve our special thanks and gratitude. Rolf Janke, Vice President and Publisher, and Al Bruckner, Acquisitions Editor, were extraordinarily supportive from the beginning of the project, providing enthusiasm, advice, and friendship. Yvette Pollastrini and Paul Reis, Development Editors, and Leticia Gutierrez, Systems Coordinator, were very helpful in facilitating the submission and review of the entries. Thanks also to Beth Bernstein, Production Editor, and Barbara Coster and Carla Freeman, Copy Editors, who took well-written entries and made them even better.

We also express our deep appreciation to the more than 300 authors who contributed entries to the *Encyclopedia of Career Development*. They are the heart and soul of the encyclopedia, and we are forever grateful for their willingness to share their extensive knowledge with legions of fortunate readers.

Finally, we thank our families for their love and patience. Were it not for our families' continuing support and encouragement, this encyclopedia would have remained a pipe dream. We therefore dedicate the *Encyclopedia of Career Development* to Adele, Marge, Joanne, Tim, Riley, Michele, Jeff, Hallie, and Carly (JHG), as well as to Laura, Michael, Tim, Ryan, and the fat kid (GAC). Thank you for everything!

Introduction

Sweeping changes in the nature of work, shifts in the meaning of career success, the rise of global business and international careers, heightened concerns over social influences on careers, and emerging labor laws and regulations influence the ways in which individuals, organizations, and the broader society view career development. It is therefore an opportune time to present the *Encyclopedia of Career Development*, which provides a thorough treatment of these recent and emerging trends.

Our goal was to make the *Encyclopedia of Career Development* the premier reference tool for students, scholars, practitioners, and others interested in gaining knowledge or conducting research on career development-related topics. We have kept the entries concise, easy to read, and jargon free, while ensuring that the content reflects the most current thinking and research on the particular topic. We have provided entries that are directly related to the field of career development and have expressly avoided tangential topics or biographical profiles that add pages but do not improve the content. Most important, we sought authors who are recognized experts on their topics and who have demonstrated a history of contributing high-quality writing to the field of career development.

It is our firm belief that the *Encyclopedia of Career Development* represents an indispensable reference resource for college and university libraries and public libraries located throughout the United States and around the world. In addition, the encyclopedia can be an invaluable reference tool for corporations and consultants for use in their libraries and career centers.

In collaboration with our expert and prestigious Editorial Board, we identified the significant terms, concepts, and practices that represent the field of

career development. This intensive process resulted in an encyclopedia that spans two volumes; contains over 400 entries, arranged in A-to-Z format; and totals over 600,000 words. The entries were written by renowned researchers, scholars, and practitioners, who provided the most current definitions, information, theories, and applications relevant to their topics. The provision of relevant, up-to-date material on each entry is especially important from a reference standpoint because career development is a dynamic field of study.

THEMES AND PERSPECTIVES

When a person hears the term *career development*, several different perspectives may come to mind. For example, some people might be inclined to view career development strictly in personal terms, being more concerned with their own achievement and success. Others might view career development in terms of organizational programs or practices that assist employees in managing their careers. Still others could see career development from a work-life integration perspective or from a legal or societal viewpoint. Of course, there are many other vantage points from which career development can be seen.

Because of this wide variation in lenses through which career development can be viewed, the *Encyclopedia of Career Development* has a multidisciplinary focus that represents psychological, sociological, educational, counseling, organizational behavior, and human resource management perspectives on career development issues. As shown in the Reader's Guide, the entries in the encyclopedia collectively capture 10 significant career-development

themes or perspectives, each of which is briefly described below:

1. The *theoretical perspectives on careers* theme represents a variety of major theories and conceptual frameworks relevant to career development. Providing an excellent foundation for understanding career development, entries that reflect this theme include Career Construction Theory, Holland's Theory of Vocational Choice, Metaphors for Careers, Social Cognitive Career Theory, and Super's Career Development Theory.
2. The *social context of careers* theme recognizes that career development takes place in the larger society. Many entries reflect the social context by considering the characteristics of the contemporary workplace (for example, the Customized Careers entry); culture and international perspectives (e.g., Culture and Careers); ethnicity, gender, and diversity (e.g., Multi-cultural Organization); the organizational environment (e.g., Toxic Leadership); social class and background (e.g., Family Background and Careers); and the work-life interface (e.g., Two-career Relationships).
3. The *evolution of careers* theme recognizes that careers unfold over time. In this sense, career development can be viewed as a series of stages, patterns, and transitions. Entries that reflect this theme include Career Interruptions, Career Plateau, Job Loss, Midlife Crisis, and the Obsolescence of Knowledge and Skills.
4. The *decision-making* theme emphasizes the decisions and choices that individuals make throughout their lifetimes. These decisions are often evaluated in terms of whether they produce a fit or consistency between the individual and the environment within which that person works. The encyclopedia includes entries that highlight decision-making tasks and issues from a variety of vantage points, such as Career Decision-making Styles, Career Indecision, Career Strategy, and Individual Career Management.
5. *Variations in career patterns and career success* are the norm rather than the exception in contemporary society. Individuals are more likely than ever to follow their own values rather than those prescribed by society, as the entries on the Boundaryless Career and the Protean Career richly illustrate. Other entries that reflect individual variations in the meaning and pursuit of a career include Career as a Calling, Career Success, Entrepreneurship, and Lockstep Career Progression.
6. *Career development initiatives* are programs and practices that employers, counselors, universities, and society provide to promote successful career decision making and the effective development of students' and employees' careers. Entries representative of this theme include Academic Advising, Career Centers, Computer-based Career Support Systems, Mentoring, Three-Hundred-Sixty-Degree (360°) Evaluation, and Wellness and Fitness Programs.
7. *Legislative and regulatory mandates* are various legislative, regulatory, judicial, and labor relations decrees and mandates that influence career development and decision making from both an individual and an organizational perspective. A number of entries reflect this theme, including Domestic-partner Benefits, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Hostile Working Environment, and Wrongful Dismissal.
8. *Assessment areas and techniques* include the personal characteristics that influence career development as well as the instruments that assess these characteristics. Representative entries that reflect this theme include Abilities, Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values, Career Anchors, Career Development Inventory, Emotional Intelligence, Multiple Intelligences, and Personality and Careers.
9. *Job search and organizational recruiting* represent, respectively, the processes by which individuals select organizations and organizations select individuals. The job-search process is the focus of entries such as Informational Interview, Internet Career Assessment, Job Search, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, and Networking. Handwriting Analysis in Hiring,

Organizational Staffing, Personnel Selection, and Recruitment are among the entries that center on organizational recruiting.

10. Information on *professional associations* can be useful to readers who want to explore educational or other developmental opportunities in different fields. Entries describing associations are the American Counseling Association, American Psychological Association, Center for Creative Leadership, and National Career Development Association.

IMPORTANT FEATURES

A number of features embodied within the *Encyclopedia of Career Development* make it a user-friendly reference tool. First, at the end of each entry, the “Further Readings and References” section

provides the reader with additional sources of information on the particular topic. These added references primarily represent either seminal works on the topic or the most current research.

Another important feature at the end of each entry are “See also” listings, which provide cross-references to other associated entries. This information is especially useful for students doing research because it provides linkages with other topics that they might wish to consult to broaden their research.

In addition to the A-to-Z listing of the entries, we have also included a Reader’s Guide, which presents the entries according to major themes or categories. The guide is a valuable tool that allows students and researchers to gain a broader understanding of a particular area of study based on how the entry is grouped with other entries representing a specific theme.

—Jeffrey H. Greenhaus and Gerard A. Callanan

A

ABILITIES

Abilities represent an individual's capacity to perform a wide range of tasks. They are believed to be somewhat stable traits or attributes but can be developed or refined over time. There are numerous types of abilities, which can be classified into four categories. Reasoning, judging, reading, writing, mathematical reasoning, and related capabilities reflect mental capacity or *cognitive ability*. Abilities related to muscular activities and bodily movement are labeled *psychomotor abilities*. Examples of psychomotor abilities are reaction time, reaction speed, precision, coordination, and dexterity. *Sensory* or *perceptual abilities*, such as visual and auditory abilities, relate to detecting and recognizing stimuli. *Physical abilities* refer to muscular strength, cardiovascular endurance, and movement quality. The abilities that are most useful in explaining career-related outcomes are cognitive abilities, which are thus the focus of this entry.

Interest in the human intellect and cognitive ability has existed since these concepts were first introduced by Alfred Binet and Charles Spearman around 1904. Some of the first applications of this knowledge took place in the U.S. Army, through tests that assessed cognitive ability. The Army Alpha and Army Beta tests of general cognitive ability were used during World War I to select army recruits. Cognitive ability tests evolved over the years to assess different dimensions of cognitive ability, such as verbal, spatial, and quantitative ability. These tests were used during World War II to select and classify aircrew. Subsequent years saw the application of cognitive ability

tests to civilian employment settings and guidance counseling in school settings.

One hundred years of interest in cognitive abilities have seen numerous issues arise related to the definition and measurement of cognitive ability. One issue that has received widespread attention is the way the different cognitive abilities are structured. There are competing viewpoints as to whether cognitive abilities are best represented by flat or hierarchical models. There is a general consensus that abilities have a hierarchical structure, although there is still some disagreement on the number of levels in the hierarchy. However, in all hierarchical models, general intelligence or general mental ability is the highest-order factor, often labeled the *general factor*. Different tests designed to assess cognitive ability share some common variance. The general factor forms the largest component of most tests of cognitive ability and explains the greatest common variance among these tests. Hence, most tests of cognitive ability assess general mental ability or the general factor. Second-order factors in the hierarchical structure of cognitive abilities have been labeled *quantitative* or *numerical abilities*, *spatial* or *mechanical abilities*, and *verbal* or *linguistic abilities*. A number of standardized tests used in educational settings assess these second-order ability factors. Third-order factors are defined by more specialized abilities. Examples of specialized abilities that reflect the verbal factor are oral and written comprehension and expression, deductive and inductive reasoning, and information gathering. Specialized abilities in the quantitative factor are mathematical reasoning and number facility. Specialized abilities of the spatial factor include spatial organization or visualization.

Given the hierarchical structure of cognitive ability, there has been an interest in understanding whether the more specialized abilities are more useful than general cognitive ability or the general factor in explaining important individual outcomes. Tests of specialized abilities have been used to determine whether these abilities are more effective than the general factor in predicting success in a given job. Although specialized abilities explain unique variation in an individual's performance in a job, the amount of unique variance explained by specialized abilities is minimal and rarely exceeds 3 percent over and above general mental ability. Thus, most tests of cognitive ability used for personnel selection are designed to assess general mental ability rather than specialized abilities.

Cognitive ability is an important and meaningful construct insofar as it satisfies criteria for scientific significance. One criterion is that the items in a test of cognitive ability demonstrate acceptable levels of internal consistency reliability. The second criterion is that cognitive ability be useful in explaining important individual outcomes. Numerous tests of cognitive ability demonstrate acceptable levels of internal consistency reliability, suggesting that the questions on these tests measure the same construct. Research overwhelmingly indicates that cognitive ability explains significant variation in numerous outcomes of life, including work. A full understanding of how cognitive ability influences life, work, and career outcomes first necessitates a discussion of its influence in skill acquisition and school settings.

Individuals' cognitive abilities impact their capacity to learn. Skill acquisition is an important first step in learning how to perform novel tasks. Skill acquisition involves three phases: cognitive, associative, and autonomous. Cognitive ability is most influential during the first phase (cognitive), which occurs when individuals are first confronted with the novel task. Other abilities are relevant during different phases of skill acquisition. The first phase places the greatest demands on the individual's cognitive resources. Performance on the task increases with practice and at a faster rate for individuals high in cognitive ability. However, the important role that cognitive ability plays in the process of skill acquisition depends on the type of task that an individual is trying to learn. Tasks can be either consistent or inconsistent. Consistent tasks can be learned and become automatic or routine with practice (e.g., fast and effortless). The correlation

between cognitive ability and performance decreases after practice on consistent tasks. In contrast, inconsistent tasks retain their novelty over time and do not become routine. The relationship between cognitive ability and performance remains positive and strong even after practice on inconsistent tasks. Thus, the degree of association between cognitive ability and performance depends on the consistency of the task and the phase of skill acquisition.

The school setting is one of the first settings in which individuals acquire basic skills and develop these skills to levels that permit them to function effectively in society. The early years of formal education are the most formative years, in which the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic are acquired and developed. Subsequent education in high school, college, and graduate studies provides for the development of more specialized skills and the acquisition of specialized knowledge. General mental ability influences an individual's achievement in each of these stages of academic development. More specifically, general mental ability has been shown to explain approximately 36 percent to 49 percent of the variation in course grades in elementary school, 25 percent to 36 percent in high school, and 16 percent to 25 percent in college. Furthermore, general mental ability has been shown to explain significant variation in numerous indicators of success in graduate studies. For example, an individual's score on tests of general mental ability predicts attainment of the graduate degree, the time required to complete the degree, research productivity, scores on comprehensive examinations, and general performance ratings by faculty members.

Success in the academic arena equips individuals with the required knowledge and skills to function in society at large. General mental ability continues to explain variation in life outcomes even after school. The world of work is another setting in which general mental ability has proven its utility. Numerous years of research have demonstrated that general mental ability predicts job performance in both civilian and military settings. A full understanding of the extent to which cognitive ability relates to job performance requires knowledge of the different components or categories of job performance on which employees are measured. One category represents the core functions or duties of a job and has been labeled *task performance*. A second category, labeled *organizational citizenship, contextual, or extra-role performance*,

represents nontask behaviors that contribute in a positive way to the organization. A third category, labeled *counterproductive work behavior*, represents negative behaviors that detract from the goals of the organization. Cognitive ability is a stronger predictor of task performance than of organizational citizenship behavior or of counterproductive work performance. However, it is a significant predictor of all three categories of job performance. Furthermore, cognitive ability is a stronger predictor of objective measures of performance (e.g., dollar sales) than subjective measures (e.g., supervisory ratings) but is a significant predictor of both.

The predictive power or utility of cognitive ability also depends on the complexity of the job. Jobs at the highest level of complexity include professional, scientific, and upper-management jobs, which account for approximately 14 percent of the jobs in the economy of the United States. Cognitive ability explains the greatest percentage of variation in performance in these jobs, approximately 34 percent. Cognitive ability explains the smallest percentage of variation in job performance, approximately 5 percent, in jobs at the lowest level of complexity, which account for approximately 2.5 percent of the jobs in the U.S. economy. Thus, the utility of cognitive ability is directly related to the information-processing requirements of the job. Cognitive ability is more useful in predicting job performance for cognitively complex jobs.

An important consideration for any construct that is used to make decisions about selection into educational programs or occupational settings is that the construct, in this case cognitive ability, is fair or is not inadvertently biased against members of different racial, ethnic, or gender groups. Concerns about racial bias have haunted cognitive ability tests for years. These concerns focus on the language and structure of cognitive ability tests. One popular model for assessing predictive bias in employment tests is called the *regression model*. An application of this model requires data on cognitive ability test scores for minority and majority group members and ratings of job performance for these members. Regressions predicting job performance from ability test scores are computed separately for majority and minority group members. These regression lines are then tested for significant differences in their slopes, intercepts, and error variances. Predictive bias is said to occur if the slope is significantly smaller for minority group members relative to majority group members. Research

in which this technique has been used reports that ability tests do not underpredict the performance of minority group members even when the rater and ratee are matched on race.

An important component of an individual's career development is job training. As individuals acquire credentials and advanced degrees, they gain access to high-status occupational training programs. Individuals acquire job knowledge from training programs and experience on the job. Questions about the usefulness of cognitive ability have also focused on whether an individual's cognitive ability predicts his or her performance in job-training programs. Research indicates that cognitive ability explains anywhere from 25 percent to 58 percent of the variation in overall performance in job-training programs. Although the bulk of the research has been conducted in military settings, substantial evidence also exists for this relationship in nonmilitary settings. Furthermore, cognitive ability predicts training performance for jobs at all levels of complexity.

Theories of career development focus on the process of matching the person to a job. These theories rely on the assumption that each individual possesses a unique combination of interests, aptitudes, and personal characteristics that are ideally suited to a specific set of jobs. Cognitive ability plays an important role in the process of matching individuals to jobs. The second-order cognitive factors of mathematical reasoning, verbal aptitude, and spatial aptitude have been shown to influence the undergraduate and graduate degrees that students pursue. More specifically, individuals high in verbal aptitude tend to pursue careers in law and humanities, whereas individuals high in quantitative aptitude pursue careers in medicine and biological and social sciences, and individuals high in both quantitative and spatial aptitude pursue careers in engineering and the hard sciences. Beyond the discipline that individuals choose to pursue, cognitive ability also impacts the broader job strategies they choose. Jobs that are bureaucratic in nature emphasize low risk, job security, employment stability, job training, and pensions. Jobs that are entrepreneurial emphasize self-sufficiency, control and discretion at work, ambition, and the trade-off of risk for income maximization. Individuals high in cognitive ability express a preference for entrepreneurial job properties.

Skill acquisition early in life, achievement in the school setting, effective job performance, and success

in occupational training programs are important steps in the development of successful careers. Evidence indicates that cognitive ability continues to play a role in important work-related outcomes after success in these early stages. Cognitive ability impacts an individual's career satisfaction and job satisfaction. *Career satisfaction* refers to career progress, career advancement, and future career prospects. *Job satisfaction* refers to satisfaction with pay, coworkers, benefits, the work itself, and the supervisor. A negative and significant relationship between cognitive ability and career satisfaction (job satisfaction) is reported for individuals employed in hourly nonmanagerial jobs, whereas a positive and significant relationship is reported between cognitive ability and career satisfaction for individuals employed in salaried managerial jobs. A level of cognitive ability that is above the level required to learn and perform the job does not result in greater success on the job. Rather, it leads to lower levels of job and career satisfaction. Research also indicates that cognitive ability is related to extrinsic career success as measured by income and occupational status. Individuals high in cognitive ability earn higher incomes and obtain higher-status jobs. Furthermore, cognitive ability is related to vocational maturity. *Vocational maturity* is defined as having an adequate understanding of oneself and the world of work and adequate decision-making skills. Individuals high in cognitive ability score significantly higher on measures of vocational maturity than do individuals low in cognitive ability.

The impact of cognitive ability on individual outcomes is pervasive even in life outside of work. An individual's capacity to self-manage and to function effectively in society on a daily basis is largely influenced by their cognitive abilities. Numerous tasks that individuals must perform in daily life have high information-processing requirements. As with work, the more complex the task, the more important is cognitive ability in determining success. Our ability to comprehend our surroundings, read, and write influences our effectiveness in adapting and adjusting to life. The extent to which we can handle money, participate socially, and understand bank documents, medical information, and political issues is influenced by our cognitive abilities. The importance of cognitive ability at each stage in life and career development cumulates to produce greater odds of success for individuals high in cognitive ability and limited opportunities and less success for individuals low in cognitive ability.

However, it is also important to consider the mediating influence that individual-difference characteristics other than cognitive ability have on work and life outcomes. Characteristics such as personality, family background, and socioeconomic status are also known to influence success in educational and work settings and in daily life. It is important to consider how these variables interact with cognitive ability to impact individuals' work and life outcomes.

—*Maria Rotundo*

See also Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB); General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB); Intelligence, schooling, and occupational success; Knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs); Multiple intelligences

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ACADEMIC ADVISING

Academic advising has been important to the success of undergraduates in colleges and universities since the beginning of American higher education. Developmental advising, which addresses the social and cultural acclimation of a student as well as academic success, is the most effective type of advising. Developmental advising makes it possible for advisor and student to develop and maintain a relationship based on mutual respect and inquiry, which allows students to explore and develop academic and career direction.

Academic advising has its origins in the close teaching and learning relationship between students and professors. The Greek Sophists developed close relationships with their students, shaping their development politically, culturally, and intellectually. This model for teaching and learning was imitated as colleges developed in colonial America. After the American Revolution, a university education broadened its scope beyond religious and classical studies to include more practical knowledge that benefited the personal and work-related goals of students.

As the American system of higher education evolved, there was great concern that faculty were losing their close relationships with students. As related by Susan Frost, as early as 1832, a Harvard student claimed that educators did not show enough regard and interest for students. Nearly 200 years later, this concern remains and influences how colleges and universities provide academic advising.

Most institutions rely on faculty in academic departments to provide academic advising; however, as student populations have grown and there has been

an increased emphasis in providing holistic support for students, many institutions have supplemented faculty advisors with "professional" advisors. Professional advisors have varied backgrounds, many being faculty members who continue to teach. Other professional advisors have expertise in counseling and related student service areas. Regardless of the configuration of faculty and professional advisors established by an institution, the most effective type of academic advising is developmental.

Developmental advising is a practice derived from theoretical positions about student growth and responsibility and the role of the advisor in facilitating this growth and responsibility. Developmental advising contrasts with *prescriptive advising*, in which the assumed role of the advisor is little more than to inform students about requirements, school policies, and course selection. In prescriptive advising, advisors do not emphasize issues of responsibility in the advising relationship. In developmental advising, advisors take into account the current level of maturity and experience of the student in deciding how to approach the issue of responsibility, with responsibility for the student's academic success being negotiated and shared. One goal in this practice is to assist the student in moving toward full responsibility. The developmental advisor is a teacher, mentor, informed authority, and competent referral agent in the advising relationship.

With developmental advising, the advisor is concerned with the intellectual and social growth of the student and is also involved in discussion about curriculum and its relationship to the individual student's strengths and career interests. The advisor interprets information, helps the student move toward integration and synthesis of ideas, and has a goal of assisting the student in becoming an independent learner. The advisor challenges the advisee but is also available for support and encouragement. The advisor does not coddle, but serves as a mentor. Developmental advising is consistent with a humane and caring learning environment and promotes the development of independent and responsible students.

Developmental advising is a process that students enter in different ways and at various times in their lives, but the process does have certain commonalities. While advisors need to be knowledgeable about various academic programs, the common human processes are what drive the advising situation, not the content discussed and studied. Burns Crookston and

Terry O'Banion, working independently of each other in 1972, based their concepts of developmental advising on the psychosocial theory developed by Arthur Chickering. Outcomes of developmental advising for the student are extracted from Chickering's theory: developing competence, or increasing the intellectual, physical, and social skills to master a range of tasks; developing autonomy, or confronting a series of issues leading ultimately to the recognition of independence; and developing purpose, or assessing and clarifying interests, educational goals, and career options.

Many students begin the college experience with uncertainty about the academic major they will select. The developmental advising process encourages students to play an active role in understanding the goals of a university education. For many, this is a process of understanding the difference between selecting an academic major and establishing a viable career path. The selection of the academic major is the critical building block for a lifetime of growth and continuous learning. Academic advisors must be able to articulate the competencies and skills developed in the pursuit of any college degree as well as the specific competencies and skills developed in specific academic majors.

For many students, a particular career interest is often the starting point for exploring a number of academic majors. The academic advisor plays a critical role in referring students to career counseling professionals and experts in various fields, so students can actively research and synthesize their ideas about careers. This exploration requires students to be independent learners; however, students are often overwhelmed by the responsibility involved in this process. Academic advisors need to coach and support students as they move through this process. Like the experience in the classroom, advisors and students need to remain actively engaged in the learning process to be successful at reaching academic and career goals.

—Nancy Allen

See also Career counseling, Career education, College student career development, Occupational choice, School-to-work transition

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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Affirmative action (AA) is a public policy designed to eliminate systemic bias against members of under-represented groups in employment and education. Although the use of AA is not limited to the United States, it can be argued that it is in the United States that AA has its greatest influence on business, education, and the employment practices of federal contractors. As a result, AA is the subject of considerable debate in the U.S. media. AA requires an organization to take proactive steps toward ensuring that the demographic characteristics of its workforce are consistent with the demographic characteristics of the labor markets in which it recruits. The extent of the controversy surrounding AA in employment and education is a direct function of the deeply felt differences of opinions about the policy's usefulness and fairness. The controversial nature of AA raises doubts about its future in the United States and in other countries as well.

In discussing its origins in the United States, many are unaware that AA did not originate through federal legislation approved by congressional vote. Rather, the roots of AA lie primarily in the executive branch of government. AA has evolved through a series of Executive Orders (EO) originating during Franklin Roosevelt's administration in the early 1940s. EOs are documents issued by the president of the United States to manage the federal government and are listed in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Discrimination-related EOs initially targeted racial discrimination in the armed services and in organizations doing business with the federal government.

Perhaps the EO most influential in shaping today's AA is EO 11246. Issued in 1965 by President Lyndon Johnson, EO 11246 requires that federal contractors with 50 or more employees and contracts with the government of \$50,000 or more have written AA plans and track progress toward their employment goals throughout the year. It is important to note that while many U.S. business organizations develop voluntary AA plans, only organizations that conduct business with the federal government are required to have a formal AA plan and, as such, are regulated by EO 11246 (which has been amended since 1965).

ENFORCEMENT OF EO 11246 BY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

The administration's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) investigates discrimination claims filed against employers and also conducts random compliance reviews of organizations under its jurisdiction. Another discrimination-related enforcement agency in the United States, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), is charged with enforcing the various civil rights laws (most notably, Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and the Civil Rights Act of 1991) and is usually not involved in AA enforcement.

An AA plan must be completed annually by a federal contractor and is based on data collected from within and outside the organization. The first component of a plan is an *organizational profile* or *workforce analysis*. In this component, the organization's jobs are listed, and an inventory is created showing the composition (by gender and race) of the incumbents in these jobs. The workforce analysis lists the incumbents in each job according to gender and the five racial categories that are used for reporting purposes in AA: White (not of Hispanic origin), Black (not of Hispanic origin), Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native.

The second component of a plan is *job group analysis*. In this analysis, jobs are classified into categories in accordance with their level of responsibility, duties, and required skills and knowledge. The categories used may be the same listed on EEO-1 forms (documents for reporting purposes): officials and managers, professionals, technicians, sales workers, office and clerical, crafts workers (skilled), operatives (semiskilled), laborers (unskilled), and service workers. The job group

analysis lists the incumbents in each job according to gender and the five racial categories.

After completing the job group analysis, an availability analysis is then completed that identifies the percentage of women and minority group members in the organization's local labor market in each of the nine job groups, as well as the percentage of women and minorities in the organization who are promotable into each of the job categories. A comparison is then made between the race and gender composition of the organization's current workforce and the availability in the labor market for each job group. If this comparison indicates that significantly more women and/or minority group members are available in the labor market in any of the job groups, relative to the organization's incumbents in these groups, the organization is then required to develop an action plan to reduce this disparity. This plan must include specific steps the organization agrees to take, the goals and timetables that will be used to assess the firm's progress, and, finally, the assignment of responsibility for its implementation.

AA, then, does not require the establishment of hiring or promotion quotas by employers. Rather, it requires a federal contractor, based on current labor market and workforce data, to take proactive steps to ensure progress is made toward reaching a consistency between the demographic composition of its workforce and the composition of the labor markets from which it recruits. In its reviews and investigations, the OFCCP assesses the organization's good-faith efforts toward meeting its employment goals, not in imposing employment quotas.

Arguments against the need for AA in employment and education are often based on the notion that establishing goals and timetables forces employers or university admission officers to give preferential treatment on the basis of race or gender and that this practice is contrary to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VII made it illegal for employers to discriminate on the basis of race or sex (along with color, religion, and national origin). Opponents of AA also argue that preferential treatment based on race or gender violates the Equal Protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which guarantees all citizens equal protection under the law. Finally, opponents also claim that AA is contrary to the meritocratic individualism on which the United States is based, as opportunities are allotted based not on merit, but on demographic characteristics.

Conversely, proponents of AA argue that such proactive steps are necessary to compensate for past discrimination and minimize the risk of its continuation in the future. At the extreme, proponents often claim that anti-AA attitudes are a manifestation of the continued presence of racism in the United States (thus proving the need for AA). Less extreme but equally passionate views in favor of AA claim that AA is needed to provide the same opportunities for members of protected classes as those that are available to majority group members. These opportunities may simply mean becoming aware of professional networks to which many minority group members have not had access in the past. In addition, those who favor AA also assert that illegal discrimination against women and minority group members still exists today but that it is not openly expressed. As such, a systematic, data-driven approach like AA is still needed to guard against the more prevalent, but equally insidious, covert forms of today's discrimination.

Since public opinion of AA in the United States is so clearly divided, it is not surprising that a significant body of research investigating AA has evolved since its inception. This research has focused on areas such as individual attitudes toward AA, the study of AA's effects on its targeted beneficiaries and nonbeneficiaries, and its influence on workforce diversity. Not surprisingly, research has generally found that members of minority groups (the intended beneficiaries of AA) express more favorable attitudes toward AA than do members of majority groups. Some researchers have speculated that majority group members are likely to hold negative attitudes toward AA since they are less likely than minority group members to believe that discrimination exists and, as such, do not see the need for practices that are intended to minimize discrimination. Interestingly, however, the research has also reported that some of the negative attitudes expressed by majority group members toward AA are attributable to misinformation about these programs. In fact, when questioned about their attitudes toward specific proactive employment practices that are consistent with an AA plan, majority group members are likely to express positive attitudes toward these practices. For example, while there is a strong consensus of public opinion against the use of preferential treatment of minorities and women in either employment or education, equally strong opinions are often expressed in favor of offering training programs to help disadvantaged individuals get ahead or be given equal access to

opportunities readily available to members of the majority.

In addition to studying attitudes toward AA, research has also explored AA's effects on its intended beneficiaries and nonbeneficiaries. Perhaps the most interesting studies of the effects of AA have focused on the change in the workforce participation of AA's intended beneficiaries. Studies have found, for example, that the employment share of Black males and females increased faster in federal contractor establishments than in noncontractor firms in the late 1970s, a trend that may be attributable to the stricter enforcement of AA policies by the OFCCP. However, perhaps indicative of AA's limitation as a public policy, during this same period of time, similar increases were not found in the employment share of Black males and females in skilled occupations.

Studies have also raised awareness of the potential for AA to negatively influence its targeted beneficiaries. For example, some evidence has shown a drop in a woman's self-esteem and/or self-confidence that is associated with her belief that she was chosen for a position due solely to a policy of preferential selection based on gender and not her qualifications for the job. Nonbeneficiaries of AA may also hold negative attitudes toward those who they feel benefit from AA. The stigma of believing an individual was hired or promoted due solely to meeting AA goals implies that the woman or minority group member is less qualified for the position than a man or member of a majority group. As such, AA beneficiaries are often thought of by majority group members as being incompetent. It is also likely, under these conditions, that stigmatization may become a self-fulfilling prophecy in the organization, resulting in the ultimate failure of many women or minority group members and a reinforcement of the majority's belief that AA forces contractors to hire unqualified employees, based solely on their race or gender.

For nonbeneficiaries, AA is also associated with claims of reverse discrimination from majority group members. However, it has been reported that these claims occur more frequently by Whites employed by companies that do not use AA in their employment practices than by Whites employed by companies that do. This phenomenon may be minimized by emphasizing the qualifications of the individuals who are hired or promoted, along with communicating the fairness of the selection procedures used by the organization.

Studies of AA programs have also focused on their relation to the degree of diversity in an organization's workforce. Evidence has been found that human resource practices that consciously focus on the demographic characteristics (gender and race) of employees, known as *identity-conscious practices*, are positively associated with the level of the highest-ranking woman in an organization and the percentage of minority employees in the management group. Conversely, human resource practices that do not focus on demographic characteristics of employees, *identity-blind practices*, are not related to the presence of women and minorities in these companies. Equally important, the number of the identity-conscious practices (not identity-blind) used by organizations was related to whether the company was regulated by the OFCCP, that is, whether it was an AA employer.

Other studies have distinguished having a formal AA plan from using AA in both recruitment and selection. These studies have shown that the use of AA in recruitment is positively associated with reaching a wider, more diverse range of job applicants and, probably as a result of this, the employment of more women and minorities compared with firms that do not use AA in their recruitment practices. Firms that use AA in staffing procedures also tend to use more recruitment practices and tend to examine their applicants more intensely than those that do not use AA in their hiring practices. These same studies showed that using AA in staffing is related to hiring more employees who do not meet the academic qualifications established for the positions but that members of minority groups and women hired who are educationally underqualified for their positions are just as likely to receive promotions and are paid comparatively more than employees who are academically qualified.

Although considered a U.S. policy, AA-type policies also exist outside the United States, but with one substantial difference. Governmental reservationist policies exist in India that are designed to protect the majority indigenous populations in some areas against more educated and more successful minority group members. Like India with its "sons of the soil" policies, the Malaysian government has mandated policies that impose quotas on admission to government educational institutions, qualification for public scholarships, positions in government, and business ownership for the *bumiputras*, the indigenous majority in Malaysia. Contrary to the U.S. experience, then, AA (or preferential selection) in both India and

Malaysia has been implemented to help members of the majority population. The future of these policies, particularly in Malaysia, is very uncertain.

The future of AA in the United States is also very uncertain. In 1996, 54 percent of the voters in the state of California approved Proposition 209, which made it illegal to discriminate against or grant preferential treatment to anyone based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin. One of the proposition's intentions was to prohibit the use of race as a criterion of admission by the University of California. Although the state of Washington passed a similar initiative (I-200) in 1998 and Florida has banned the use of race as a factor in college admission, the expected rush by other states to implement laws similar to California's has not materialized.

In addition to adverse public opinion leading to an election mandate, another threat to the continuation of AA lies in the judicial system, in particular with the U.S. Supreme Court. In many of its recent cases, the Court has often used a "strict scrutiny" standard in its decisions involving the legality of preferential treatment based on race or gender. In these cases, strict scrutiny implies that preferential treatment may be used only if there is clear evidence of past discrimination and preferential treatment is necessary to remedy the past injustice. However, it has often been claimed that the strict scrutiny standard is "strict in theory, but fatal in fact," which would imply that the continuation of AA and its use of preferential treatment based on race and/or gender may be problematic under these standards.

As a public policy, AA is often misunderstood and engenders deep-seated opinions, both for and against its continued use in education and employment. Its future in the United States depends on a number of individual-, organizational-, and societal-level factors. For individuals, it is important to ensure that their opinions toward AA are based on factual information about the policy's intent and requirements. For organizations and public policy makers, it is important that they continue to develop and implement practices that meet the objectives of AA, namely, that women and minority group members be given the same educational opportunities as those in the majority and be employed by organizations consistent with their presence in what is increasingly becoming a globally oriented and diverse workforce.

—Frank Linnehan

See also Age discrimination, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Civil Rights Act of 1991, Diversity in organizations, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Racial discrimination, Reverse discrimination, Sex discrimination

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AGE DISCRIMINATION

Along with race and gender, people commonly use age to categorize and form stereotypes about others. Ageism consists of a negative bias or stereotypical attitudes toward aging and the aged. It is maintained by persistent, mostly negative stereotypes and myths concerning older individuals. *Age discrimination* itself is an action; however, it is a consequence of and is motivated by ageist attitudes, beliefs, and prejudices.

Age discrimination in the workplace occurs when an employer differentially treats employees on the basis of their age rather than on their individual merit. It affects various workplace functions, including hiring, training, promoting, and termination of employees. Underlying age discrimination at work are ageist attitudes and stereotypes about the abilities of older workers. These ageist stereotypes hold that age is a primary factor in determining individuals' abilities and that older workers are less mentally and physically able to perform their jobs than are younger workers. Based on these stereotypes, older workers are assumed to be less productive, less creative, less innovative, less willing or unable to learn, and more prone to sickness and accidents than are younger workers.

Stereotypes encourage age discrimination because they mask individuals' capabilities and therefore limit workers' opportunities and potential. Attitudes about appropriate social roles for older people and the assumption that all older workers would prefer and are able to afford to stop working also encourage age discrimination. Deeming some jobs unsuitable to workers over a certain age may disqualify entire groups of workers considered to be too old. Beliefs about the costs of employing older workers also further workplace discrimination. After longer employment tenures, older workers generally have higher earnings and are also assumed to have more health problems. Since employers are always searching for ways to reduce costs, older workers may be considered less desirable.

Age is only one criterion on which employers may discriminate among workers. Indeed, age discrimination can be intertwined with other types of discrimination, including race and gender. Some older workers may experience "double jeopardy" in the workplace due to their race, gender, or disability.

Nonetheless, age discrimination in employment is different from other types of discrimination because it is the one type of discrimination that all workers have the potential to experience during their lifetimes. Unlike other groups that are legally protected from discrimination, such as women, racial and ethnic minorities, and disabled workers, if they live out the normal life span, all employees will eventually be part of the legally protected group of workers over the age of 40. In addition, age discrimination is a unique form of bias, since it is likely that younger workers who benefit from ageist employment practices in their

youth will be negatively impacted by the same policies as they grow older.

SHIFTING TRENDS FOR OLDER WORKERS

Labor force participation rates of older workers have been on the rise since the mid-1980s. In 2002, workers over age 55 comprised approximately 14 percent of the labor force. Among people 55 and older, 35.7 percent were employed in 2003, and that number is expected to increase to 39.3 percent in 2014. Although men have higher labor force participation rates than women overall, rates for both women and men workers in all age categories over 55 are projected to increase by 2014 as well.

A central focus of discussions about age discrimination in employment is the impending impact of the “baby boom generation” (individuals born between 1946 and 1964). This large group of workers is expected to radically alter individual and societal expectations about aging and work. Future labor force participation and retirement patterns among baby boomers are important factors in determining the future age composition of the U.S. workforce. Because they constitute such a large and visible cohort, employment patterns of baby boomers will impact norms and assumptions about older workers. Furthermore, baby boomers are expected to retire at older ages (in part due to changes in the Social Security retirement age from 65 to 67) than previous cohorts of workers, and these trends are likely to impact the age structure of the labor force.

Researchers predict that due to slow growth and the aging of the workforce, older workers will become increasingly attractive to employers needing to fill jobs. In theory, this means that once the baby boomers retire, the number of open jobs will increase dramatically without enough younger workers to fill them. Thus, some researchers predict that the job market may become more accessible to older workers seeking employment. Others are not as optimistic about the shifting demand for older workers and caution that they will still experience disadvantages in the labor market.

Why do older people continue to work past the typical age of retirement? A primary reason for many is economic need. Many individuals must work past the typical retirement age to be better financially prepared to live out their later years. Also, many older workers continue working because they enjoy their jobs, take

pleasure in work relationships, and derive part of their self-identities from work. Furthermore, older workers also have the desire to remain independent, active, and involved in the world and to continue contributing to society.

DISPELLING STEREOTYPES ABOUT OLDER WORKERS

Older workers are an extremely heterogeneous group, which makes it difficult to formulate broad generalizations about them as a whole. Nonetheless, research on psychological and physical functioning and aging demonstrate that ageist stereotypes that inspire age discrimination are without merit. Indeed, most older workers are physically and intellectually able to perform their work roles far beyond the typical age of retirement and well into later years in life. Substantial empirical research finds no support for the assumption that age changes necessarily precipitate unavoidable declines in work performance. Nor does age lead to an increase in workplace accidents or absenteeism. In fact, according to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), many employers report that older workers are more loyal, have lower rates of absenteeism, and are generally more reliable than younger workers.

Studies also show that older workers are, in fact, willing and capable of changing with the times and learning new work methods and technologies. Some researchers argue that the type of work is an important determinant of older workers’ motivation and adaptability. They suggest that intellectually challenging and stimulating jobs have a positive impact on all workers’ morale, commitment, and ambitions on the job.

Although some older workers have higher earnings than younger workers due to longer job tenure, in terms of health care costs to employers, older workers are not more expensive than younger workers. Rather, employers report that younger workers with dependents are actually more expensive to employ. While the costs of some health benefits increase with age, the AARP reports that older workers use fewer medical benefits than do younger workers. Furthermore, since disability is one of the primary reasons for retirement, those who remain employed beyond the typical retirement age are likely to be a self-selected group of healthier, older workers. Presumably, these workers require less, rather than more, medical care.

PROTECTION AGAINST AGE DISCRIMINATION

Age discrimination has consequences for individuals, employers, and society at large. It can hurt individual workers and their retirement security, and it is costly to employers charged with discrimination. Finally, ageist attitudes potentially exclude a valuable pool of workers, which will become even more important as the younger workforce gets smaller with the aging of the baby boomers.

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) was first enacted in 1967 and was later expanded in 1978. Growing from the sentiments and momentum of the civil rights movement, the purpose of the ADEA was to challenge ageist assumptions about older workers' abilities and prohibit employers from discriminating against workers on the basis of age alone. As part of the 1964 act, Congress directed the U.S. Secretary of Labor to investigate the prevalence of age discrimination in the workplace. The report cited rampant age discrimination, finding that 50 percent of all job openings in the public market in 1965 were closed to applicants over age 65 and that 25 percent made the age 45 the cutoff. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is the government agency charged with enforcing the ADEA through investigating and litigating charges of age discrimination against employers. According to the EEOC, 12.8 percent of all discrimination charges filed in 2002 were based on age.

The ADEA prohibits discrimination against a person over 40 on the basis of age in every aspect of the employment relationship, including job advertisements, recruitment, interviewing, hiring, firing, compensation, assignments, classifications of employees, transfers, promotions, layoffs or recalls, testing, training and apprenticeship programs, medical examinations, fringe benefits, or other terms of employment. The ADEA also prohibits retaliation against an individual for asserting his or her right to file an age discrimination charge against an employer, participating in an investigation of the employer, or otherwise opposing discriminatory practices.

In addition, the ADEA prohibits discriminating between two individuals solely on the basis of age, even if both individuals are 40 or older. For example, in choosing between two potential employees for the same position, it is illegal to choose a younger worker instead of an older worker solely on the basis of their

ages. Also, if choosing between two potential employees both over 40, the employer may not turn down either on the basis of age, but must use some other criteria to decide. The ADEA applies to private employers with 20 or more employees employed for 20 consecutive weeks, as well as federal, state, and local governments. Labor organizations with 20 or more members and employment agencies must also comply with the act.

There remain a number of exceptions to the ADEA. The first one is the bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ), which has been used to justify excluding older workers from certain public safety jobs. The BFOQ specifies that employers must prove that an age limit is necessary for performance of the job. Other exceptions to the ADEA include the Equal Benefit Rule, specifying that individuals cannot be denied the opportunity to participate in an employer benefit plan. Furthermore, age-based reductions in benefits are illegal unless the costs increase with age and the cost to the employer is the same for younger and older workers. Bona fide seniority systems are permissible as long as they do not attempt to subvert the purposes of the ADEA and the retirement decision is not coerced and voluntary. When employees receive severance benefits or accept early-retirement incentives, some employers use waivers and releases of ADEA rights and claims. For these to be valid, employees must agree to them both knowingly and voluntarily. The Older Workers Benefit Protection Act of 1990 amended the ADEA and sets strict guidelines for establishing the validity of these waivers.

INSTITUTIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL DISCRIMINATION: EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ADEA

The ADEA was intended to eliminate age discrimination at both individual and institutional levels. Many analysts argue that it has been more effective in reducing the latter than the former type of discrimination. At the institutional level, mandatory retirement laws are the most evident historical example of age discrimination. Historically and currently, social norms and the system of retirement either explicitly or implicitly limit the number of people holding or looking for jobs. Although mandatory retirement is illegal, several weaknesses in the ADEA allow employers to discriminate against older workers regarding retirement. Some economists argue that although mandatory

retirement was outlawed, it has essentially been replaced by lucrative financial incentives for retirement that are concurrent with the time mandatory retirement would occur. Early voluntary retirement programs, even if they are offered to reduce a firm's costs, do not violate the ADEA. Others have shown that the benefit calculation rules of Social Security as well as most defined-benefit employer pensions encourage retirement and discourage working beyond the typical retirement age because they reduce the value of workers' retirement income for those who stay on the job after age 65.

Outlawing mandatory retirement programs based on age has been effective at the institutional level. However, evidence of age discrimination in employment persists, including the length of time it takes older workers to become reemployed, the accompanying wage loss that many older workers experience upon reemployment, and the size of the compensations granted to victims of age discrimination. Some research shows that during economic downturns and episodes of downsizing, employers may subvert the ADEA by terminating workers across the age spectrum but rehiring only younger workers.

With economic changes and the decline in lifetime employment in recent decades, older workers are no longer as secure in their jobs as they once were. Although older workers are still less likely to lose their jobs than are younger workers, the consequences of unemployment for older workers can be severe. Once unemployed, older workers have greater difficulty finding jobs after spells of unemployment. In fact, being laid off and the ensuing job hunt can be particularly discouraging for older workers and can encourage them to retire even though they may prefer not to do so.

At the individual level, age discrimination is difficult to prove. Employers charged with hiring and firing make individual decisions about the capacities of older versus younger workers. These types of decisions may be influenced by blatant and overtly ageist attitudes or subtle and covert attitudes about aging. In legal terms, there are two discourses used to claim individual age discrimination: disparate treatment and disparate impact.

The majority of age discrimination cases use the *disparate-treatment* theory. Under this argument, the plaintiff must prove that the discrimination was intentional, providing evidence to prove that there was motivation to discriminate. Motivation is difficult to

establish, and courts often rely on a three-stage model of proof. The plaintiff must verify that he or she is part of the protected group, suffered adverse reactions due to the employer's behavior or policies, was successfully performing the work to the legitimate expectations of the employer prior to the discriminatory acts, and was subsequently replaced. The employer must then present nondiscriminatory reasons justifying the action taken against the employee. Finally, the plaintiff must establish that the reasons given by the employer were actually a pretext for discrimination.

Under a *disparate-impact* claim of age discrimination, the plaintiff must show that seemingly age-neutral employment practices or policies had a disproportionately negative effect on older workers. To refute the claim, the employer must demonstrate that the organization required the action or policy for "business reasons" or show that the negative effect was due to non-age-related factors.

In summary, although blatant age discrimination is no longer legal, age biases continue to operate in the workplace. Age discrimination remains an important concern for all workers. The aging of the baby boomers and their changing work and retirement patterns will certainly challenge cultural norms and expectations about aging and work. It remains to be seen what kinds of impact this cohort will have on stereotypes about older workers as well as employment practices.

—Jennifer Keene

See also Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA), Stereotyping of workers

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AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1967 (ADEA)

Age discrimination is one of the fastest-growing areas of employment law. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency charged with administering the law, has received upward of 19,000 claims of age discrimination per year over the past several years. This growth is most attributable to the increasing number of aging employees in the workplace, the overall economic conditions of the country, and resulting employment layoffs and plant closures, which many times disproportionately affect older Americans.

The *Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967* (ADEA), 29 U.S.C. § 623(a)(1)-(d), protects employees from discrimination in the workplace because of their age. The policy behind the ADEA is to protect older workers from stereotypes that they are inefficient or that because of their age, they can no longer perform at the same level as younger workers. The ADEA prohibits discrimination against employees in hiring, firing, or other terms and conditions of employment if they are 40 years of age or older. Individuals under 40 years old do not have a claim under the federal law.

However, many state laws allow for claims of age discrimination regardless of the individual’s age.

Private employers of 20 or more persons, state and local governments, employment agencies that serve covered employers, and labor unions with 25 or more members are required to comply with the terms of the ADEA. There are, however, several exemptions to the law, including some high-level managers and bona fide executive or high-policy-making positions; uniformed military personnel; public safety personnel (police, firefighters, and prison guards); and individuals appointed by elected officials who serve in a policy-making capacity. In those cases, depending on the circumstances, an employer may be permitted to base employment decisions on an employee’s age.

Generally, however, employers are prohibited from taking any adverse employment action against an individual “because of” his or her age. Adverse actions come in many forms and may include the following: firing, refusing to hire, pay cuts, demotions, transfer, discipline or reprimand, and undesirable reassignment. Employers are also prohibited from the following: limiting, segregating, or classifying employees in a way that would deprive the employee of job opportunities or adversely affect employee status; reducing the wage rate of an employee in order to comply with the ADEA; indicating any preference, limitation, specification, or discrimination based on age in a notice or advertisement for employment; or operating a seniority system or employee benefit plan that requires or permits involuntary retirement. A person who is unlawfully discriminated against because of his or her age is entitled to damages, including loss of income, emotional distress, and, potentially, attorneys’ fees. In addition, depending on the egregiousness of the violation, the court may double the damage award or even award triple damages.

In cases of alleged age discrimination, employees can meet a prima facie burden by using direct evidence of differential treatment based on age. This could be in the form of an admission on the part of a representative of the employer that the individual is “too old” to perform the job, though this kind of statement is rarely made. Sometimes individuals do make statements or deliver messages that suggest that the company would prefer a younger “face” to its workforce or a particular job or that the company needs a “fresh outlook” on a particular project. Many times, the court will look at these facts not as direct proof, but as circumstantial evidence of animus because of an individual’s age.

In the absence of direct evidence, an employee who files a suit claiming age discrimination may depend largely on statistics showing disparate treatment directed at older employees. However, merely replacing an older employee with a younger person does not establish age discrimination. Similarly, it is not necessarily illegal to replace an older employee with a high salary with a younger person earning a lower salary. However, these two factors weigh heavily in whether an employee is able to prove a claim of age discrimination under the act.

Employers have several defenses to age discrimination claims. An employer may be able to justify an adverse employment action because of some legitimate, nondiscriminatory reason. Many times, good cause, legitimate business decisions, and reasonable factors other than age are mentioned as reasons for an adverse employment action. Under the ADEA, if an employer is able to show that although age may have been a motivating factor in an employment decision, the employer would have made the same decision anyway, the employer can escape liability.

Much of the recent litigation in connection with age discrimination claims involves an amendment to the ADEA called the Older Workers Benefits Protection Act (OWBPA), 29 U.S.C. § 626(f). The OWBPA sets forth certain rules regarding the waiver of an employee's rights under ADEA. Under OWBPA, waivers of the right to sue for age discrimination must be knowing and voluntary and therefore must (a) be a part of a written, clearly understood agreement between the individual and the employer; (b) refer specifically to rights or claims arising under the ADEA; (c) exclude waiver of any rights and claims arising after the date of the waiver; (d) include the exchange for consideration, something of value to which the individual is not already entitled; (e) advise the individual to consult with an attorney; (f) provide 21 days for the individual to consider the waiver and allow 7 days for the individual to revoke the waiver. (If it is offered to a group or class as a part of a termination program or acts as an incentive, a waiver must allow 45 days for consideration and provide additional statistical information to the employee for a waiver of his or her ADEA rights to be affected.)

The purpose behind the OWBPA is to ensure that older workers are not taken advantage of when being laid off and/or terminated from employment by being rushed into severance agreements that require them to waive their rights to pursue age discrimination claims.

To meet this end, an employer must, among other things, allow for a sufficient amount of time for the individual to review the agreement and obtain advice from an attorney in connection with the terms of the agreement. Employers must be very careful in drafting releases so that they effectively waive claims under the ADEA, because under certain circumstances, employees may be permitted to execute such releases and ultimately sue and recover not only money entitled to them under the agreement, but any amount of damages rewarded in the age discrimination claim.

Age discrimination is often hard to prove unless there is some incontrovertible evidence that the employer acted "because of" age. No employer would admit that an employment decision was based on an individual's age. Laws prohibiting age discrimination are very effective as a deterrent to ensure that an employer does not use age as a factor in making employment decisions unless it is justified by a legitimate business reason recognized by the law.

—Lisa Scidurlo

See also Age discrimination

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ALLPORT-VERNON-LINDZEY STUDY OF VALUES

For decades after its initial development in 1931, the *Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values* (SOV) had a substantial impact on psychological practice and research. In terms of the metric of citation count, by 1970, the SOV was the third most popular nonprojective personality measure, after the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Instrument (MMPI) and the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS). Designed primarily for use with upper-level high school students, college students, and adults, it became

popular because it reflected a number of positive features, the most important being its multiplicity of applications. First, the SOV provided a vivid classroom demonstration pertinent to courses in psychology, social psychology, personality, organizational behavior, and education. In this regard, the 1970 test manual noted that students are always interested in their own scores and enjoy a discussion of the results. Second, the SOV was widely used in vocational and educational guidance (and even in marriage counseling). Third, it was integral to hundreds of research projects, such as those concerning group differences, changes in individual values over time (e.g., before and after divinity school training), and ascertaining patterns of value agreement among friends and family members.

By the late 1980s, though, the SOV was no longer in print. The reasons for the extraordinary 50-year popularity of the SOV and its subsequent fall into psychological oblivion are discussed below, after a brief description of the instrument itself, two illustrations of its practical utility, and past reviewers' evaluations.

Based on the seminal work of Eduard Spranger, the SOV identifies six value orientations, which, briefly, are as follows:

- Theoretical (the discovery of truth: empiricism, intellectualism)
- Economic (that which is useful: resourceful, practical affairs)
- Aesthetic (form and harmony: grace, artistry in life)
- Social (love of people: altruism, sympathy, caring)
- Political (power in all realms: influence, leadership)
- Religious (unity of life: comprehension of life's meaning, holiness)

Each individual receives a total score of 240 points, based on answers to questions describing a number of familiar situations, for instance, "If you had some time to spend in a waiting room and there were only two magazines to choose from, would you prefer (a) *Scientific Age* or (b) *Arts and Decorations*?" Consequently, the SOV measures the relative strength of each value orientation. The theoretical average for each value is 40 (240 points apportioned among six values), but individual profiles often demonstrate unique value patterns. Note that the SOV ascertains values indirectly through realistic behavioral scenarios; in contrast, two currently used values measures (Milton Rokeach's Value Survey and Shalom Schwartz's Value Scale) require respondents to directly rank and rate values, respectively—assuming that individuals can access and consciously process

this information and report it accurately. More specifically, the Rokeach scale requires respondents to rank order two sets of 18 relatively abstract values (e.g., freedom, loyalty, courage), and the Schwartz instrument requires the rating of 52 broad values (e.g., wisdom, inner harmony, unity with nature).

Pertinent to the psychometric adequacy of the SOV, internal consistency estimates for each value have ranged from .84 to .95, and averaged .90 (after Spearman-Brown prophecy adjustment). Indicative of the SOV's substantive validity, early normative data collected from more than 8,000 students were very consistent with a priori expectations. For 500 engineering students, the mean Theoretical value was 48; for 7,100 medical students, the mean Theoretical value was 50; among 800 business students, the mean Economic value was 46; among 400 art and design students, the mean Aesthetic value was 57; and among 100 divinity students, the mean Religious value was 55. The popularity of the SOV can be attributed in part to its solid psychometric properties. Further reflecting its demonstrated construct validity, scores on the SOV have been reliably related to types of professional education, occupational choice, and such vocationally relevant outcomes as job satisfaction and, to a lesser extent, job performance.

An interesting book-length study by Abraham Zaleznik, Gene Dalton, and Louis Barnes examined the careers of 174 scientists/engineers and engineering managers in a high-technology company. The organization employed a dual-track system of advancement, such that individuals could choose to stay on the technical (scientist/engineer) track or elect for a managerial progression. Scientists with higher Theoretical than Economic scores on the SOV and managers with higher Economic than Theoretical scores were deemed "oriented." In contrast, scientists with higher Economic than Theoretical scores and managers with higher Theoretical than Economic scores were deemed "conflicted." As hypothesized, job satisfaction, organizational satisfaction, career satisfaction, and (to a lesser extent) rated job performance levels were higher among the "oriented" than the "conflicted" employees. In addition, conflicted employees reported a greater incidence of fatigue at work.

Vocational and counseling psychologists have also used the SOV to assist in educational guidance. The utility of the SOV in assisting college students in selecting a field of graduate education was demonstrated in a recent study by Richard Kopelman, David Prottas, and Lawrence Tatum. Value profiles derived from four

measures of values were compared: the two Rokeach Value Surveys (Terminal and Instrumental), the Schwartz Value Scale, and the Study of Values. As predicted, the value categories of the SOV yielded distinct “ideal” profiles, as reported by deans and directors of graduate programs, in five of six different disciplines (business administration, fine arts, social work, divinity, and chemistry and physics). Deans of MBA programs saw the economic need as most salient; deans of MFA, MSW, M. Div., and M. Chem./M. Phys. viewed the aesthetic, social, religious, and theoretical needs as most salient, respectively. In contrast, the other three value measures yielded generic profiles with respect to fields of graduate study; that is, the same values were seen as important across disciplines (e.g., wisdom, self-respect, achievement). It might be noted that the provision of counseling in connection with graduate education is not a trivial matter. Ten years ago (1995-1996), there were 2.8 million individuals enrolled in postbaccalaureate programs, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

Over the years, several highly favorable reviews of the SOV have appeared in various editions of the *Mental Measurements Yearbook*. For example, Paul Meehl described the SOV as a remarkably good test; Harrison Gough concluded that the SOV possesses considerable merit and utility; and N. L. Gage opined that the SOV is a very good instrument for classroom demonstration, for counseling and vocational guidance, and for research on a wide variety of psychological questions. Robert Hogan noted that the SOV scale scores predict a variety of criteria in the theoretically expected manner and, furthermore, that when used with cooperative subjects, the SOV provides dependable and pertinent information concerning individual cases. Writing in 1951, the year of the SOV’s second and only substantive revision (prior to the 4th edition in 2003), Laurance Shaffer’s comments in the *Journal of Consulting Psychology* were prescient: He predicted that the Study of Values (in its “excellent” new format) seemed destined for several more decades of service as a tool for guidance and for research.

So why did the SOV go out of print and fall into psychological oblivion? It is likely that the SOV fell into disuse due to its increasingly archaic content (e.g., users did not know who Amundsen and Byrd were); a lack of religious inclusiveness (only churches were mentioned, no temples or mosques); dated cultural assumptions (especially concerning love and marriage); and obsolete linguistic terminology.

According to anecdotal reports of several experienced educators, whereas in the 1970s, students found the SOV “ quaint,” by the 1980s, they found it “ sexist” and “ outdated.” When one “ veteran” educator used the SOV with executive MBAs in the 1990s, he reported that “ the women students wanted to lynch me!”

In response to these complaints and to resuscitate, if not resurrect, the SOV, a new 4th edition of the SOV was recently constructed, and it was published in the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. In large measure, the new edition of the SOV brought the instrument into the twenty-first century merely by “ tweaking” 15 of 45 items (e.g., substituting Bill Gates for Henry Ford). The psychometric properties of the new and earlier versions were found to be virtually identical. The 4th edition of the SOV is no longer characterized by sexist language or dated content.

In recent years, a number of researchers have lamented that existing values measures (not including the SOV) have demonstrated only limited evidence of validity, a phenomenon attributed to attempting to assess values directly. Furthermore, Kaipeng Peng, Richard Nisbett, and Nancy Wong have suggested that the low validities of commonly used value survey measures might be avoided by using a behavioral scenario methodology. Ironically, such a measurement method has long existed in the venerable SOV. Importantly, the SOV can again be successfully employed for research and practice in vocational psychology and to aid career development.

—Richard E. Kopelman and Janet L. Rovenpor

See also Rokeach Values Survey, Values, Work values, Work Values Inventory

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AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

The *American Counseling Association* (ACA) is the world's largest association exclusively representing professional counselors in all their various practice settings. Founded in 1952 as the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA), ACA changed its name to the American Association of Counseling and Development in 1983 and then to its current name, the American Counseling Association, in 1992. Each name change resulted from a further refinement of the mission and purpose of the association.

Headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C., the ACA promotes public confidence and trust in the counseling profession so that professional counselors can further assist their clients and students in dealing with the challenges that life presents. The over 50,000 members of the ACA include professional counselors in the United States and in 50 other countries, including the Philippines and the Virgin Islands and in Europe and Latin America. In addition, the ACA is associated with a comprehensive network of 19 divisions representing the various specialties within professional counseling and 56 state, district, and international branches consisting of an additional 40,000 members. The mission of the ACA is to enhance the quality of life in society by promoting the development of professional counselors, advancing the counseling profession, and using the profession and practice of counseling to promote respect for human dignity and diversity.

The ACA has been instrumental in establishing professional and ethical standards for the counseling profession, and it has made considerable strides in accreditation, licensure, and national certification. The association established the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) to provide a national certification body, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) to provide a national accreditation body for counselor training programs, the American Counseling Association Foundation (ACAF) to provide

for support for the profession, the American Counseling Association Insurance Trust (ACAIT) to provide high-quality, low-cost professional liability insurance for members, and other organizations to support the profession. Professional counselors (mental health counselors or clinical counselors) are licensed in 48 states and the District of Columbia. ACA also represents the interests of the profession before Congress and federal agencies and strives to promote recognition of professional counselors to the public and in the media.

IMPACT OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN THE ACA

Vocational guidance and career counseling played a preeminent role in the founding of ACA, a role that continues to this day. The professional association representing vocational guidance, originally known as the National Vocational Guidance Association (NVGA) and now known as the National Career Development Association (NCDA), was one of the founding groups of ACA. Leaders of NVGA were the first leaders of ACA and even today continue to play a prominent role in the leadership of ACA. The journal of NVGA became the journal of ACA. The staff of NVGA became the first staff of ACA. The influence of NVGA/NCDA permeated and continues to play an important programmatic and leadership role in the affairs of professional counseling in the United States.

In the late 1940s, following World War II, counseling was experiencing a time of growth, and several professional associations represented the different aspects of this developing profession. In 1949, a study was presented at the Council of Guidance and Personnel Associations conference in Chicago that called for a unified voice in the personnel profession. A Unification Committee was formed and began meeting in 1950. The four main groups behind the unification movement were the NVGA, the National Association of Guidance and Counselor Trainers (now the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision), the Student Personnel Association for Teacher Education (now the Counseling Association for Humanistic Education and Development), and the American College Personnel Association. These four professional associations became the first four divisions of ACA, followed by the American School Counselor Association in 1953.

The Unification Committee made its report at the 1951 NVGA convention, and a new professional association with a new name was born, the Personnel and Guidance Association (PGA). In 1952, that name was changed to the American Personnel and Guidance Association, and the first officers of APGA included President Robert Shaffer, President-Elect Donald Super, and Treasurer Frank Fletcher, who were also leaders in NVGA. Throughout the history of ACA, more than 25 percent of the ACA Presidents were also presidents of NVGA/NCDA.

At the time of the founding of APGA, the challenge for the United States was how to reintegrate the returning veterans from World War II back into the workforce. President Harry Truman's Fair Deal program was a response to the problems encountered by these returning armed services veterans. The lack of jobs and the subsequent displacement of current workers by these returning veterans were important societal problems that the Truman program attempted to address. The first annual conventions reflected these societal vocational needs. The theme for the 1952 Council of Guidance and Personnel Associations and American Personnel and Guidance Association joint conference was "Improving Human Relations," and the 1953 American Personnel and Guidance Association conference theme was "Human Resources and Manpower Utilization."

The NVGA journal, *Occupations: The Vocational Guidance Journal*, became the journal of APGA in 1952 and was renamed the *Personnel and Guidance Journal* (now *Journal of Counseling and Development*) in 1958.

—Mark Pope

See also Career counseling, Career counseling competencies, National Career Development Association

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AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

The *American Psychological Association* (APA), the world's largest psychology organization, has worked for more than 100 years to advance psychology as a science, as a profession, and as a way to promote health, education, and human welfare. Psychology is a dynamic and diverse field. Psychologists follow dozens of career paths and pursue their craft in a variety of work settings. Career development resources available through the APA are as varied as the discipline itself: programs and products for every psychologist, from the bench scientist to the clinician and from the psychology graduate student to the mid-career professional.

APA works to foster innovative and high-quality psychology teaching at all levels, from high school to postgraduate, including research and applied training. APA is the accrediting body for doctoral programs, internships, and postdoctoral residency programs in professional psychology. Accreditation is important, especially for students interested in a career in professional practice, because most state licensing boards in psychology require that licensure applicants possess a doctoral degree from an accredited program.

Preparation for a career in psychology should start early, at the undergraduate level if possible. Psychology students at the high school and undergraduate levels can be affiliate members of the APA. Graduate students can join as APA student affiliates and automatically also belong to the American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS).

After graduation and internship, early and mid-career psychologists can find important career development resources available from APA, from continuing professional education to midcareer seminars specifically designed for research psychologists, on issues such as analyzing large databases and using MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) technology in brain research (visit <http://www.apa.org/ce>). APA also offers programs and workshops at regional and national conferences for psychologists interested in exploring academic careers.

APA publishes a variety of psychology books, journals, and electronic information products, all useful to students of psychology at any level. Two APA electronic databases, PsycINFO (article abstracts) and PsycARTICLES (full text), cover the psychological literature published from 1887 to the present.

A number of APA books are of particular interest to students. These titles include *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*; *Mastering APA Style Student Workbook*; *Is Psychology the Major for You?*; *Getting In: A Step-by-Step Guide to Gaining Admission to Graduate School in Psychology*; and *Graduate Study in Psychology*. For more information or to purchase APA books, visit <http://www.apa.org/books>.

Also published by APA are 46 peer-reviewed psychology journals, including the *Journal of Social and Personality Psychology* and *Health Psychology*, and two newsmagazines, the *Monitor on Psychology* (monthly) and *gradPSYCH*, a quarterly magazine for psychology graduate students. Preview an issue of each of these at <http://www.apa.org/monitor/> or <http://www.gradpsych.apags.org/>. APA members subscribe to the organization's journals and buy books at member discounts.

The APA annual convention includes opportunities for psychologists to hear presentations by distinguished scholars and leaders in the field. The convention includes hundreds of symposia, panel presentations, poster and paper sessions, and workshops on cutting-edge research, education trends, and practice experience. For more information, visit <http://www.apa.org/convention>.

"Psyccareers" is an online resource for psychology employment, used by both job seekers and organizations with jobs to fill. APA members can post their résumés and search both nationally and internationally for available positions in psychology. For more information, visit <http://www.psyccareers.com/index.cfm>.

—Rhea Farberman

See also American Counseling Association, National Career Development Association

ANTICIPATORY SOCIALIZATION

Anticipatory socialization is a term used to describe a variety of programs and initiatives offered by organizations that allow prospective employees to gain work experience prior to full-time employment. These programs include internships, apprenticeships, cooperative education assignments, and informational interviews. Each program is designed to help individuals, usually high school or college students, develop

an accurate self-concept, gain a realistic understanding of various career fields and organizational environments, and allow a check for fit between individual characteristics and the demands of different jobs.

Through these programs, prospective employees can become acclimated to an organization's formal mission, goals, structure, policies, and culture prior to fully joining the organization as a regular employee. Anticipatory socialization initiatives also allow prospective employees to become accustomed to the informal side of an organization through exposure to the less structured employee networks and norms that exist within the hiring company. Anticipatory socialization initiatives have become increasingly popular as a way to bridge the transition from the classroom to the work world. Indeed, it is estimated that three-quarters of all college students complete some form of an internship or cooperative education assignment during their academic careers.

Research assessment of anticipatory socialization programs has also expanded recently, reflecting greater interest both in the design of these programs as well as the consequences for individuals and organizations. In general, prior research has viewed anticipatory socialization programs as positive developmental experiences for high school and college students, having found linkages with a number of favorable outcomes. For example, anticipatory socialization assignments have been found to improve individual career decision-making self-efficacy, strengthen the crystallization of vocational self-concept, allow for the acquisition of job-relevant skills, and provide a comparative advantage in gaining full-time employment at graduation. In terms of postassignment effects, prior research has identified subsequent outcomes such as improved perceptions of job fit in the early career, greater objective success in the early career, greater job stability in the early career, and reduced feelings of entry or reality shock upon full-time employment.

In addition, anticipatory socialization assignments provide job experiences that are valued by hiring organizations and give the student greater self-confidence in securing full-time employment. Beyond these instrumental aspects, it is also believed that these assignments provide students with a greater degree of confidence over their job and career selections, since it is believed that the experience gives them the opportunity to develop a more accurate self-concept and test for a fit between their own individual characteristics and the demands of the real-world work environment.

Hiring organizations also benefit from anticipatory socialization programs. First, these programs provide a risk-free method to companies for evaluating prospective hires, and they provide a steady stream of motivated human resources who are comparatively less expensive than regular full-time staff. Furthermore, anticipatory socialization practices can help organizations gain a positive recruiting image and ensure an available pool of talented newcomers. They can also play a secondary recruiting role, since students returning to school can spread the word to other students that a particular organization is a favorable place at which to work.

The wide acceptance of anticipatory socialization programs by students, educational institutions, and employing organizations shows how these programs have become a popular and useful method for ensuring a fit between a prospective employee and the company doing the hiring. For the future, it is expected that anticipatory socialization activities will become more prevalent, given that they lead to improved career decision making and development for individuals and a better prepared and more committed workforce for employing organizations.

—Gerard A. Callanan

See also Apprenticeships, Cooperative education, Internships, Informational interview

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ANTISOCIAL WORK BEHAVIORS

Antisocial work behaviors are typically broadly defined as physical and verbal assaults, threats, coercion, intimidation, and various forms of harassment that occur in the workplace. Although the media and popular press often highlight lethal forms of antisocial work behaviors, research evidence clearly demonstrates that non-lethal forms such as those listed above are the most prevalent, problematic, and costly to individuals, organizations, and society. This entry outlines the theory, research, and evidence concerning the causes and consequences of antisocial work behaviors. Because nearly all of these behaviors are nonlethal and the evidence concerning causes and consequences is more firmly grounded in this domain, this review is limited to non-lethal forms of antisocial behavior.

Four perspectives can be used to explain why individuals engage in antisocial work behaviors and to describe the causes of antisocial work behaviors. First, the *organizational frustration approach*, based on the frustration-aggression model from psychology, suggests that certain environmental frustrators prevent or intrude on an individual's ability to achieve personal goals. Research demonstrates that any number of factors, such as job-related information, tools and equipment, materials and supplies, budgetary support, required services and help from others, time availability, role conflict, and work overload, can act as frustrators and trigger antisocial work behavior. A second perspective that can help explain antisocial work behavior is the *social learning model*. In this view, individuals can learn aggressive work behavior through direct experience or through observational learning. A supervisor, for example, may learn that work is completed quickly by subordinates if he or she threatens them. This direct experience may encourage the supervisor to engage in this behavior more frequently. Individuals also may learn from observing others. Using the preceding example, another supervisor may observe the threat or be told by the perpetrator that it is effective. If models of the behavior are rewarded, the observers may add that behavior to their repertoires. A third view is the *cognitive appraisal model*, which suggests that environmental factors (e.g., certain demands on the job) heighten emotions and lead to a search for the causes of the emotions. Because individuals tend not to believe that negative outcomes are self-caused, they

are likely to ascribe blame to other individuals and may lash out in return. A fourth perspective is the *justice view*, which suggests that distributive injustice (unfairness of outcomes), procedural injustice (unfairness of procedures), interactional injustice (unfairness in interpersonal treatment), and supportive cognitions prompt negative emotional reactions (e.g., anger, frustration) and may trigger a desire to “even the score” by engaging in antisocial work behaviors.

Research also suggests that several characteristics of individuals are related to antisocial work behaviors. People who are higher in terms of negative emotionality (a tendency to experience negative emotional states) or emotional susceptibility (a tendency to experience vulnerability, helplessness, and discomfort in response to even mild frustration) tend to engage in antisocial work behaviors more frequently. Higher levels of competitiveness, time urgency, and irritability, a constellation often referred to as the *Type A behavior pattern*, also relate positively to antisocial work behaviors. The personality dimension referred to as *locus of control* may also play a role depending on the situation. *Internals* (individuals who believe they are in control of their own destinies) are hypothesized to be more likely to engage in aggressive behavior in situations in which such behavior is seen as instrumental to obtaining a desired outcome, whereas *externals* (individuals who believe that fate, chance, or luck determines what happens to them) are proposed to engage in aggression in response to instructions from others or because they are provoked to anger and do not think of the effects of their actions.

In terms of the consequences of antisocial work behaviors, research shows that targets, witnesses, and survivors of workplace violence often report feelings of guilt, depression, vulnerability, suicidal thoughts, and increased levels of substance use. The impact of nonviolent or milder forms of antisocial work behaviors is also strong. Research clearly demonstrates that reactions to sexual and other forms of harassment, undermining, abuse, bullying, incivility, and petty tyranny include psychological distress, such as depression, high levels of somatic or minor health complaints, poor or negative job attitudes, low levels of commitment to jobs and organizations, low levels of job performance, and high levels of withdrawal behaviors. In addition, the negative effects of antisocial work behaviors on the attitudes, behaviors, and health of employees are much stronger or more potent than the positive effects on the outcomes of behaviors such as social support. Perhaps because they are much

rarer than positive interactions and events, the effects of antisocial work behaviors are much stronger than the effects of positive behaviors.

In addition to costs associated with being the target of antisocial work behaviors, the costs to organizations and society are also very high. One estimate places the cost of a single act of workplace violence at about \$250,000 per violent incident, in terms of lost work time and legal fees. Estimates regarding the costs of serious but nonphysical forms of antisocial behavior range from \$17,000 to \$24,000. Another estimate places the cost of antisocial work behavior on a broader scale (i.e., to the United States as a whole). This study suggests that the total cost of antisocial work behaviors to the United States is at least 1.75 million lost days of work and \$55 million in lost wages (in 1994 dollars).

Due to the implications of antisocial work behaviors for individuals and organizations, researchers are placing increasing attention on identifying the causes of such behaviors, as well as finding ways for individuals to effectively cope with being the targets, witnesses, or survivors of such behaviors in workplace contexts. This research not only continues to refine the definitions of the types of antisocial work behaviors but also continues to explore the magnitude and intensity of the outcomes of these behaviors.

—Michelle K. Duffy

See also Sexual harassment, Stress at work, Type A behavior pattern

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APPRENTICESHIPS

An *apprenticeship* is defined as the service or condition of an apprentice, the state in which a person is gaining instruction in a trade or art, typically under legal agreement. The core definitional attribute of being an

apprentice is learning as a beginner, normally for a trade or an occupation. Formalized apprenticeships are viewed as a developmental sequence of supervised competency-based, work-based training of increasing independence for young adults seeking entry into the trades. Apprenticeships are widely available in many European and other countries but are used more narrowly in the United States. Within the context of career development, the concept of apprenticeship has become more widely applied to a variety of hands-on, work-based learning experiences for young adults and for high school youth as well. In recent years, the term apprenticeship has been applied to structured forms of mentoring and as a learning modality termed *cognitive apprenticeship*. Formal apprenticeships have been widely studied for their educational and economic benefits.

COGNITIVE APPRENTICESHIP

The concept of cognitive apprenticeship characterizes teaching and learning cognitive skills in various subject areas, by designing learning environments that incorporate content, pedagogy, learning sequence, and the sociology of learning. A cognitive apprenticeship is viewed as a prototype for effective education because it simulates how learning more naturally occurs through coaching and practice, with a focus on valued work and an integration of academic and vocational instruction. Many educational researchers have looked at the learning benefits of the cognitive apprenticeship method, with particular interest in its embedded learning, the scaffolding of instruction, the modeling and use of social and physical contexts, and the promotion of higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills. In recent years, the apprenticeship concept has also been applied to hands-on learning in academic and research programs for youth and adults.

APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEMS IN THE UNITED STATES

Apprenticeship systems have long existed in several occupational sectors in the United States, specifically, metalworking, construction, and the trades. Typically, apprenticeship sponsors, including employers, associations, unions, and governmental agencies, pay most of the training costs, including apprentices' wages. Sponsors provide on-the-job learning and academic instruction using recognized industry standards and licensing requirements. In 2003, there were 480,000 apprentices enrolled in 29,326 apprenticeship programs

across the nation. Further expansion of the adult apprenticeship system in the United States is hindered by difficulty in finding firms to sponsor apprentices and an inadequate infrastructure to support apprenticeships outside unionized trades. Over the past 20 years, several federal initiatives have attempted to expand apprenticeship opportunities nationwide in traditional partner industries such as construction and manufacturing, in new industries in health care and information technology, and in partnerships with U.S. military branches.

Hundreds of academic partnerships for apprenticeships exist with colleges that offer associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, and certifications. By the 1990s, 25 percent to 35 percent of two-year colleges provided the academic or general education portion of traditional apprenticeship programs, with a sponsor providing job-specific training at the work site, usually on a cyclical schedule. Most were in the established trades (e.g., machining, sheet metal working) and automotive, with some incorporating the unions in a three-way partnership. Students completing an apprenticeship program are certified and advance to journeyman status, as determined by the sponsoring agency and state.

YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP IN THE UNITED STATES

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the creation of apprenticeship programs at the public educational secondary and postsecondary levels was viewed as key to addressing youth employment and educational difficulties in the United States. The goals of these programs were to reduce the increasingly lengthy and uneven transition of youth into gainful employment after high school and to create formal career development pathways. Such school-to-work transitions were becoming more difficult for poor and minority youth, who were experiencing prolonged unemployment and difficulty gaining access to potential jobs in a labor market that was increasingly demanding more skilled workers.

Various national and state proposals were made to revamp the existing secondary and postsecondary educational pathways to incorporate more general availability of apprenticeship options and progressions of occupational competence assessments. Many educators and policymakers studied youth apprenticeship systems of Germany, Japan, and other countries for replication, focusing on the benefits of fostering an equilibrium between labor market demands and

interests across a range of sectors in the economy and structured career preparation and skill development. The federal Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce proposed the creation of a system of standards and certifications for various occupations and a restructured secondary and postsecondary educational system that incorporated career internships and apprenticeships for non-college-bound youth as a means of more rigorously integrating career development into academic programs.

Even in the early stages of its revival, however, the feasibility and utility of youth apprenticeship were debated hotly. There was widespread concern that these programs would lead to unequal educational opportunities, particularly for low-income and educationally disadvantaged youth; that quality could not be monitored effectively; and that employers would be reluctant to participate.

Although a national youth apprenticeship policy failed in the early 1990s, some states revamped their systems to broaden apprenticeship options and workforce assessments in selected trades and industries. By the mid-1990s, several states had extensive youth apprenticeship programs in many occupational and technical areas. By 1994, an estimated 11 percent of all high schools had tech-prep (spanning secondary and postsecondary education) or other youth apprenticeship programs, primarily in technician-level occupations in industries with labor shortages, such as printing, hospitals, and manufacturing.

Aspects of a youth apprenticeship system became incorporated into secondary education by the fostering of more school-to-work career pathways locally and nationally and better articulation with postsecondary education for technical courses of study. Other improvements included more internship opportunities in secondary and postsecondary systems; career-focused programs of study, including career academics; revamped vocational studies; and tech-prep programs. Presently, youth apprenticeship continues to be promoted as one of a number of strategies to improve adolescents' contact with employers and colleges and promote the development of work-based readiness skills and achievement.

APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEMS IN EUROPE

Apprenticeship systems have been used widely in European and Asian countries, although they operate in a somewhat different manner than in the United States.

Germany created a dual system in which employers and the educational system share training and education responsibilities. In France, 50 percent of youth leave school with a certificate of professional aptitude that can lead to employment. Great Britain offers those leaving school one- and two-year paid apprenticeship training opportunities, while in Sweden, most adolescents select a general, vocational, or technical pathway in upper-secondary school. Currently, the apprenticeship system remains strong in Germany, especially in banking, because it reduces recruitment costs, enhances workplace flexibility, and fosters worker loyalty. Similarly, in Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, apprenticeships continue to be the primary means of training for skilled manual trades.

CURRENT RESEARCH ON APPRENTICESHIPS

Economists and labor development experts continue to examine the benefits of apprenticeship systems from several vantage points for workers, industries, and governments. Such studies have focused on the social rate of return of apprenticeship training to the employer, the apprentice, and the public sector and have considered the policy implications of shifting more of the costs of general training to the apprentices and the potential for increasing specialized training. Others have looked at employment transitions within various European countries and found apprentices have a better transition to their first jobs than do vocational school graduates.

Some educational researchers have examined apprenticeships for the nature of learning they reflect and for their utility as a means of vocational development. A primary research question is whether apprentice training is simply the acquisition of competency-defined skills or reflects vocational development that requires learning within a culture of practice. Others have found that workplace training such as an apprenticeship is more effective than classroom instruction in training employees. Finally, some researchers have shown that when apprenticeship programs are managed as jointly sponsored union-management programs rather than as unilateral employer-sponsored programs, it improves the retention of women as skilled-craft apprentices.

—Margaret Terry Orr

See also Anticipatory socialization, Cooperative education, Internships, Vocational education

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ARMED SERVICES VOCATIONAL APTITUDE BATTERY (ASVAB)

The *Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery* (ASVAB) is the most widely used multiple-aptitude test battery in the United States. CAT-ASVAB, the computer-adapted version of the ASVAB, is administered to all applicants to the U.S. armed services. Over one-quarter of all high school students eventually take the paper-and-pencil ASVAB through participation in the ASVAB Career Exploration Program.

The ASVAB consists of eight subtests (General Science, Arithmetic Reasoning [AR], Word Knowledge [WK], Paragraph Comprehension [PC], Auto & Shop Information, Mathematics Knowledge [MK], Mechanical Comprehension, and Electronics Information), which provide a broad and comprehensive view of the aptitude domain. The Armed Forces Qualification Test, a measure of intelligence (*g*), consists of the combination of AR, MK, WK, and PC. Norms are based on a nationally representative sample of individuals who participated in the 1997 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY97), sponsored by the U.S. Departments of Labor and Defense. The paper-and-pencil and CAT versions of the ASVAB are psychometrically equivalent to each other.

The ASVAB is one of the most well-respected and well-researched tests in modern history. Literally hundreds of studies have demonstrated its substantial psychometric and statistical characteristics, its ability to predict success both in military and in civilian

occupations, and its strong relationships with other aptitude and achievement tests and measures. Extensive research demonstrates that the ASVAB is a valid predictor of success in military training, first-term attrition, and job performance in military occupations. Similarly, extensive national studies have also demonstrated the test's ability to predict success in a wide array of civilian occupations. Virtually all published reviews of the ASVAB agree that it represents the state of the art for aptitude and achievement testing. Psychometrically speaking, the ASVAB is probably the most technically advanced and sophisticated test battery in the world.

ASVAB CAREER EXPLORATION PROGRAM

Started in 1968, the ASVAB program provides a comprehensive vocational assessment package at no cost to participating schools or to their students. Funded entirely by the Department of Defense, this comprehensive program contains the Interest-Finder, a measure of career interests, the ASVAB, and a number of exercises that help students identify and investigate occupations for which they show both interest and ability. The ASVAB program fulfills two major purposes. First, it provides age and developmentally appropriate materials to support high school and postsecondary educational and career counseling. Second, the program is useful to the military services by helping to identify interested students who meet the qualifications for entrance into the U.S. armed forces.

The ASVAB program was designed to meet the career development needs of twenty-first-century high school students in two ways. First, relevant occupational information from the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Information Network (O*NET) was incorporated into the ASVAB program. Second, three broad skill areas, verbal skills, math skills, and science and technical skills, are used in the occupational search process. Because of its skill-based occupational linkage, the ASVAB program presents a full spectrum of career opportunities to all students, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or ability level.

Relying on the ASVAB's well-established capacity to assess the ability to learn new skills and predict success in a wide variety of jobs, the program views students' ASVAB scores as snapshots of their knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) in the verbal, math, and science and technical skills domains. ASVAB-based KSAs have been linked to equivalent O*NET

importance-based KSAs through expert judgment. Based on this linkage, students can compare their current skills profiles (i.e., verbal skills, math skills, and science and technical skills) with the corresponding skill-importance profiles for more than 400 occupations in the O*NET database. This approach is particularly helpful for students with differing levels of skills in these three areas, and it provides a flexible approach to career exploration.

—Harley Baker

See also Abilities, Differential aptitude testing, General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB)

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ASPIRATIONS IN CAREER DECISIONS

The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines *aspiration* as a strong desire for high achievement, or an object of this desire. According to this definition, an aspiration is either the desire to achieve an end state or the end state itself (goal). Theoretical interpretations of aspirations encompass both elements of the above definition. Researchers have defined the concept of aspiration as an expectation or goal comprising intentions and attitudes. An intention is a plan of action undertaken to achieve a particular goal, whereas an attitude represents one's personal orientation toward a goal. Thus, the intention to pursue the goal and the attitude toward the goal comprise an individual's aspirations. Career aspirations are the desire and intention to pursue an occupation or a particular position within an occupation. Aspirations play an important role in career decisions because they reflect the goals and intentions that influence individuals toward a particular course of action.

Aspirations develop over time. Throughout childhood and adulthood, individuals dream of places they

would like to go, things they would like to experience, and ideas they would like to test. Adults often ask children, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" The younger the child, the less realistic the answer usually is (e.g., "I want to be a princess"). As young people grow, their vocational preferences begin to take on more realistic shapes. Individual characteristics such as sex, race, and social class may influence these vocational preferences.

The hopes and dreams of young adulthood often crystallize as career aspirations through experiences in the workplace. At work, individuals gain a sense of their own interests and abilities and begin to gravitate toward tasks, jobs, and occupations that most closely match their preferences and talents. Cognitive factors that are salient at work, such as valuing rewards associated with particular positions and feeling comfortable performing certain types of tasks, influence career aspirations and, ultimately, career decisions.

Career decisions are internal processes that allow individuals to analyze various alternatives and, finally, to accept or reject them. Career decisions may be broad, such as what type of occupation to enter, or narrow, such as whether to accept a promotion that will require relocation. Aspirations are a component of many career decision models because they represent the commitment an individual makes toward a particular course of action, and they also serve as the basis for feelings of success, a facilitator of career decisions. An individual's experiences and the degree of success and failure associated with those experiences depend on whether the achievement is above or below an expectation or level of aspiration. The level of aspiration is fundamental for the experience of success and failure, and, ultimately, changes by success and failure.

An individual is more likely to feel successful when he or she sets a challenging goal (high level of aspiration) and is able to determine his or her own means of attaining the goal, the goal is important to the individual's self-concept, and the goal is actually attained. Thus, experiencing feelings of success is a fundamental component of an individual's career aspirations.

Career decision-making models that describe how individuals actually make decisions encompass aspirations and the related feelings of success. These descriptive models conceptualize the process of decision making as a sequence of cognitive events. The sequence begins with collecting information, assessing the information, and predicting outcomes of various courses of action in terms of probability and

desirability, identifying alternatives, evaluating and selecting, and implementing the decision. The essential cognitive components involved in the career decision-making process include the outcome (goal or aspiration), the value of the outcome (importance of the goal or aspiration to the individual), and the likelihood of achieving the outcome (success or failure).

Descriptive career decision-making models assume that individuals choose careers believed to result in the greatest personal benefit, provided they believe that there is a good probability they can actually obtain positions in those careers. More specifically, an individual is likely to decide on a career if the career choice holds valuable outcomes, the individual feels that entering into that career can attain the outcomes, and the individual believes that there is a high probability he or she will be able to enter into that occupation. Therefore, aspirations form the component of the career decision-making process that inspires individuals to engage in career-related behaviors as long as they are positively reinforcing.

A prevalent theme in career decision-making theories is that optimal career outcomes arise from the fit between individual characteristics and the rewards and demands of the job. For example, major determinants of job success are an individual's abilities and skills, whereas predictors of job satisfaction include an individual's needs, values, and interests. Career aspirations operate internally to encourage individuals to develop skills that they value, seek out environments in which they can successfully apply these skills, and receive rewards in ways that are meaningful to them.

An understanding of the developmental nature of aspirations and its effect on career decisions is important to individuals and organizations. Individuals must first be able to envision the outcomes associated with a career choice before they engage in activities that will lead to a decision. The experiences of success and failure associated with various job tasks will help to steer individuals toward or away from particular goals. Individual support mechanisms, such as a supervisor's support of an individual's career aspirations and encouragement to accept appropriate developmental assignments, can help individuals further crystallize their career aspirations. A clear understanding of one's aspirations will lead to more successful career decisions.

Organizational mechanisms such as performance management, training, and career development systems designed to foster the exploration of aspirations will support staffing, knowledge management, and

succession-planning initiatives. Furthermore, recruiting costs (both implicit and explicit) decrease when promotion takes place from within the ranks of an organization. Fitting the right individuals with the right jobs can increase career satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational commitment.

—Barrie E. Litzky

See also Career decision-making styles, Career exploration, Career goal, Occupational choice

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ASSESSMENT CENTERS

Although a center is typically a place where something occurs, an *assessment center* is not so much a place as it is a method. A key principle of this method is *multiple-attribute assessment*. That is, assessment focuses on multiple attributes or dimensions relevant to an individual's overall performance. Another key principle is that assessment is not based on any single method. Rather, evaluations are derived from assessment across multiple methods. In an assessment center procedure, an individual's performance is observed in multiple situations or exercises. Performance across these exercises serves as the basis for an assessment of several performance-related dimensions. A unique characteristic of this approach is that small groups of people are evaluated simultaneously, as opposed to one person at a time. Another important characteristic of the assessment center approach is that final assessments are usually made by a group of assessors observing performance and working together to reach a consensus.

ASSESSMENT CENTER BACKGROUND

The history of assessment centers as a formal approach to assessment begins with the work of the World War II era Office of Strategic Services (OSS). A wartime intelligence agency, the OSS was concerned with the selection of officers for intelligence positions. Candidates for these positions were evaluated in a week of interviews, tests, and exercises intended to ascertain whether they had the necessary capabilities (e.g., mental ability, motivation, physical stamina, emotional stability, stress resistance). Following the war, AT&T modified and adapted this approach for use in managerial selection. AT&T's managerial assessment centers demonstrated considerable value in predicting advancement through the organizational hierarchy. As a result, the assessment center has traditionally been viewed as a tool for selection into managerial jobs. However, given that multiple individuals are evaluated simultaneously, assessment centers are particularly advantageous for direct evaluation of interpersonal variables. Consequently, assessment centers are a potentially valuable selection tool for any jobs in which social skills are of particular importance and thus are being used more frequently for purposes other than managerial assessment. Today, assessment centers are used in numerous private and public organizations to evaluate thousands of people each year. For example, assessment centers have been used to evaluate salespeople, teachers and principals, engineers, rehabilitation counselors, police officers and firefighters, and various customer service positions, as well as for managerial selection. They have also been used to assist high school and college students with career planning. In addition, while predominately used as a selection tool, the use of assessment centers for training and development purposes has increased dramatically. Specifically, assessment centers are often used as a tool for identifying individuals' relative strengths and weaknesses with respect to key performance domains.

ASSESSMENT CENTER DIMENSIONS

Most assessment centers are designed specifically for the jobs and/or organizations in which they are used. Assessment center "dimensions" are typically developed around organizationally specific values and practices derived from a systematic analysis of the job and/or organization. Thus, specific assessment centers are

relatively idiosyncratic with respect to the performance dimensions being assessed. The dimensions might represent personal traits, job-specific competencies, or general knowledge or skill constructs. A recent review of the assessment center literature, for example, compiled a list of more than 168 different labels for performance dimensions assessed across different assessment centers. However, examination of these labels indicated that the vast majority of these dimensions could be assigned to one of seven general categories. These categories are communication skills, problem-solving skills, consideration and awareness of others, ability to influence others, organizing and planning ability, drive, and tolerance for stress or uncertainty.

Assessment related to *communication skills* focuses on the extent to which an individual conveys oral and written information and responds to questions and challenges. *Problem solving* focuses on the extent to which an individual gathers information; understands relevant technical and professional information; effectively analyzes data and information; generates viable options, ideas, and solutions; selects supportable courses of action for problems and situations; uses available resources in new ways; and generates and recognizes imaginative solutions. *Consideration and awareness of others* focuses on the extent to which an individual's actions reflect a consideration for the feelings and needs of others as well as an awareness of the impact and implications of decisions relevant to other components both inside and outside the organization. *Influencing others* focuses on the extent to which an individual persuades others to do something or adopt a point of view in order to produce desired results, and takes action in which the dominant influence is the individual's own convictions rather than the influence of others' opinions. *Organizing and planning* focuses on (a) the extent to which an individual systematically arranges his or her own work and resources as well as that of others for efficient task accomplishment and (b) the extent to which an individual anticipates and prepares for the future. *Drive* focuses on the extent to which an individual generates and maintains a high activity level, sets high performance standards and persists in their achievement, and expresses the desire to advance to higher job levels. And finally, *tolerance for stress or uncertainty* focuses on the extent to which an individual maintains effectiveness in diverse situations under varying degrees of pressure, opposition, and disappointment.

ASSESSMENT CENTER EXERCISES

Assessment center exercises are performance tests designed as samples or abstractions of the jobs for which individuals are being assessed. While assessment centers typically do not include high-fidelity work samples or simulations, the exercises are designed to reflect major job components. Although there is a great deal of variability across assessment centers with respect to the exact content of exercises, the form of these exercises is relatively consistent. Almost all assessment center exercises may be classified with respect to six different types: leaderless group discussions, in-basket exercises, case analyses, interviews, presentations, and one-on-one role play.

Leaderless group discussions are probably the most commonly used and well-known assessment center exercises. There are many variations of this type of exercise. Typically, a group of four to eight participants is given a problem to solve, a time limit in which to do so, and a requirement to develop a written solution agreed to by all members of the group. Specific roles may be assigned to the various group members. However, no one is assigned the role of leader or chair. Rather, leadership behaviors must emerge during the discussion. A common variant of these exercises is the competitive leadership group discussion, which adds the requirement of persuading others to adopt a particular solution or outcome while still maintaining the requirement of a consensus decision.

In-basket exercises are another commonly used exercise. These exercises are not group exercises. Rather, they are designed to simulate administrative work and are performed individually. They usually include a simulated set of memos, messages, e-mails, letters, and reports, such as might accumulate in a manager's "in-basket," as well as other reference material (e.g., organizational charts, personal calendars). The materials are usually interrelated and vary with respect to complexity and urgency. Participants are typically asked to play the role of a person new to the job, working alone with the goal of trying to clear the in-basket. Scoring protocols differ across in-basket exercises but often include a follow-up interview in which participants are asked to explain their approaches to the exercise and reasons for actions taken.

Although leaderless group discussions and in-baskets are the most commonly used exercises, many assessment centers include other exercises, such as one-on-one role play, case analyses, and presentations.

In addition, assessment centers often include interviews. Unlike more typical employment interviews, however, interviews used in assessment centers are usually highly structured and may incorporate role play or other simulated components.

Typical assessment centers include three to five exercises to assess anywhere from 3 to 25 performance dimensions. Exercises may be of different types or variations of a common type (e.g., a competitive and a non-competitive leaderless group discussion). Similarly, dimensions may represent different major categories (as presented above) or subcomponents of the major categories (e.g., oral communication and written communication). The general strategy is for exercises and dimensions to be crossed such that each exercise allows for an assessment of each performance dimension. Often, however, particular dimensions are not assessed in a particular exercise (e.g., written communication may not be assessed in an interview).

Participants in an assessment center are observed by one or more "assessors" in each of the exercises. Assessors observe and record participant behaviors relevant to each performance dimension to be assessed. An assessor may also directly interact with participants either as a role player or as an interviewer. After all of the exercises have been completed, assessors typically meet as a group to review and discuss each participant's performance across exercises. The goal of this discussion is to generate a consensus rating representing each participant's standing on each performance dimension. In addition, an overall performance rating may be generated.

ASSESSMENT CENTER DESIGN

Although there is a great deal of variability with respect to the design and implementation of assessment centers, several design issues are important for the ultimate success of the assessment process. These issues are the number of performance dimensions assessed, the number of assessors needed, assessor qualifications, and assessor training.

As noted above, the number of performance dimensions evaluated in a given assessment center ranges from 3 to 25, but the average number of dimensions included is approximately 9. However, research suggests that assessors may have difficulty differentiating among a large number of performance dimensions. In one study, assessors were responsible for rating 3, 6, or 9 dimensions. Those assessors who

were asked to evaluate 3 or 6 dimensions provided more accurate assessments than those asked to rate 9 dimensions. This suggests that when asked to evaluate a large number of dimensions, the demands placed on assessors may make it difficult for them to process information at the dimension level, resulting in less accurate assessments. It appears that 5 to 7 may be an optimal number of dimensions to include in a given assessment center.

A similar concern exists with respect to the number of assessors needed to effectively evaluate participants. That is, as the number of assessment center participants any given assessor is required to observe and evaluate in any given exercise increases, the demands placed on assessors make it more difficult to evaluate each participant. Although some assessment centers have required each assessor to simultaneously observe and evaluate as many as four participants, the typical ratio of participants to assessors is 2:1. Exceeding this ratio should be considered very carefully.

Another potentially important design factor focuses on the assessors. What qualifications should assessors have? Assessors may be psychologists, human resource specialists, job incumbents, or managers. Assessor teams may also be some combination of these. In general, assessors should be good observers, objective, and articulate. Some authors posit that as a result of their education and training, psychologists and similarly trained human resource professionals are better equipped to observe, record, and evaluate behavior. Alternately, managers and other job incumbents or experts may have more practical knowledge with respect to the job as well as the organization and its policies. There are both costs and benefits associated with different types of assessors. These costs and benefits must be weighed carefully in the assessment center design process.

Regardless of assessor qualifications, assessment center ratings are obviously inherently judgmental in nature. Consequently, training assessors is a crucial element in the development and design of assessment centers. A recent review of assessment center practices indicates that assessors may receive anywhere from one day to two weeks of training. In addition, the type of training is also an important consideration. For instance, there is a consensus in the literature that frame-of-reference training is a highly effective approach to assessor training. *Frame-of-reference training* typically involves emphasizing the multidimensionality of performance, defining performance dimensions, providing a sample of behavioral incidents representing each dimension (along with the

level of performance represented by each incident), and practice and feedback using these standards to evaluate performance. The goal of frame-of-reference training is to train assessors to share and use common conceptualizations of performance when making evaluations. However, irrespective of the training approach used, more extensive assessor training is generally associated with more effective assessment.

ASSESSMENT CENTER VALIDITY

In general, assessment centers demonstrate positive utility as a tool for selection as well as training and development. A great deal of research has examined the validity of assessment center ratings with respect to job performance. Content-related methods of validation are regularly used in assessment center development in an effort to meet professional and legal requirements. In essence, both dimensions and exercises are derived from a content sampling of the job. An important component of a manager's job, for example, may be participating in meetings with peers. Leaderless group exercises serve as a representation of this aspect of the job. Evidence supporting the criterion-related validity of assessment center ratings is also consistently documented. Research suggests that assessment center ratings of specific performance dimensions as well as overall assessment center ratings can predict job-related criteria such as supervisory performance ratings, sales performance, promotion rate, and salary progression. Evidence for the construct-related validity of assessment center dimensions, however, has been less promising. Specifically, assessment centers are designed to evaluate individuals on specific dimensions of job performance across situations or exercises. Research, however, has indicated that exercise rather than dimension factors emerge in the evaluation of participants. Thus, a lack of evidence of convergent validity, as well as a partial lack of evidence of discriminant validity, has been extensively reported in the literature. These findings have led to a prevailing view that assessment center ratings demonstrate criterion-related validity, while at the same time lacking construct-related validity. Research continues to examine this issue, since it is inherently inconsistent with the current unitarian view of validity.

Over the past several decades, assessment centers have enjoyed increasing popularity. The validity of assessment centers is undoubtedly partially responsible for their popularity. In addition, assessment centers tend to be well accepted by both organizational

decision makers and participants. This approach to assessment can be quite labor-intensive and thus quite costly. In addition to the time required of the participants, assessment centers require a considerable investment of time on the part of assessors. Despite these costs, assessment centers present a unique tool for the assessment of individual differences.

—David J. Woehr

See also Career centers, Career counseling, Individual career management, Career planning workshops, Computer-based career support systems

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ASSIMILATION AND MUTUAL ACCEPTANCE

Organizational *assimilation* is a necessary process that benefits both organizations and newcomers. Some perceive assimilation to be a negative necessity in

organizational life. This unenthusiastic view stems from a conceptualization of assimilation as newcomers conforming to existing organizational norms and rules, thereby stripping neophytes of their individuality. Essentially, newcomers are coerced into conformance by more powerful organizations. However, as will be discussed, assimilation involves not just newcomers' adjustment but also involvement from others within the organization, especially the immediate work group, a recursivity entailing *mutual acceptance*.

Assimilation is the process by which individuals become integrated into the culture, social network, and role system of an organization. Fredric Jablin has argued that assimilation is largely a mutual communicative exchange whereby individuals accept the rules and norms of organizations and begin to identify themselves as being a part of their organizations. Karen Myers and John Oetzel's model of organizational assimilation depicts six processes associated with transitioning from outsiders to insiders. *Becoming familiar with others* enables the development of productive working relationships. *Acculturating and adapting* refers to learning about the culture and normative behaviors and adapting to them. *Becoming involved* causes newcomers to feel like contributing members. *Feeling recognized by others* confirms the new members' value to the organization. *Learning job skills* enables members to feel productive in their new roles. Finally, *role negotiating* involves attempts by the newcomer to revise the role and its associated performance expectations.

Jablin's definition and the Myers and Oetzel model suggest that while assimilation may require newcomers' adaptation, others in the organization must be involved in socializing newcomers and accepting them into the organizational social system. Although newcomer adaptation is central, others in the social system also are dynamically involved in training and introducing newcomers to the culture and normative behaviors. Most important, incumbents are involved in accepting newcomers into the organizational system. Without such acceptance, established members are unlikely to make extra efforts to enable newcomer integration, such as introducing recruits to crucial social knowledge and involving them in group interactions, helping newcomers to feel that they belong. Stated differently, new members cannot "integrate" without acceptance from others in the group and organization, who also must adapt to newcomers to enable their assimilation.

Others in the organization, and in particular in the immediate work group, have the ability to either

accept or reject the newcomer, thereby enabling or disabling the process. For example, imagine a new employee who has just joined an organization and wants to fit into existing organizational social circles. He may sincerely want to assimilate, attempting to adopt normative work habits and generally behave like the others in his immediate work group, but until he is accepted by fellow workers, he cannot assimilate. The newcomer's opinions might not be solicited, and he might not be included in work group conversations. Until the new recruit receives accepting communication from his peers welcoming him into the social circle, he will not be integrated into the social network. Therefore, newcomers do not assimilate in a vacuum; rather, assimilation requires mutual acceptance on behalf of the newcomer and incumbents in the organization or group.

In this sense, there is a "duality" to organizational assimilation. The significant practices bound up in assimilation (newcomers' uncertainty and cultural alignment with the organization coupled with group/organizational members' acceptance and adaptation) are accomplished through underlying structural principles (conformance; socialization turning points, such as intern reviews; organizational knowledge and routines, etc.), which do not merely enable the assimilation practices we observe but also recursively reproduce the structures involved to produce and transform them.

As new employees assimilate, shaping their behaviors to "the way things are done" within the organizations serves a larger, essential function. Recruits bring with them behaviors and assumptions acquired from previous work and life experiences and thus can bring about positive changes to the organization. They can be sources of novel ideas that bring about change in perspectives, behaviors, and goals within their work groups, even throughout the organization. Of course, novel perspectives and behaviors can also impede effective coordination. To ensure the organization's long-term success, organizations must train and mold recruits into valuable assets that will benefit the organization and also blend into the existing culture. Therefore, organizations introduce newcomers to "the way things are done" with the dual purpose of shaping newcomers into loyal members and easing coordination of activities between new and existing workers.

Integrating into an organization involves learning how to perform necessary job duties, but equally important are recruits' needs to reduce uncertainties they feel during entry and to determine how they can assume desired organizational roles. These uncertainties often surround more subjective aspects of getting along in the workplace, such as behaving in accordance with existing standards of behavior, customs, politics, and generally accepted ways of thinking and feeling. Grasping and accepting what is considered "normal" inside the organizational culture is a significant part of assuming new organizational roles. In fact, in some cases, recruits seek out and desire more structure and guidance to help them resolve ambiguity and learn how to behave and communicate.

In conclusion, organizational assimilation is a necessary process that involves acquiring shared member understandings in order to perform in ways that will contribute to organizational practices. Acquiring this knowledge enables new members to reduce the uneasiness of transitioning into organizations. At the same time, incumbents permit assimilation by accepting newcomers as fellow organizational members. Thus, assimilation is more complex than newcomers' abandoning individuality and succumbing to organizational requirements to be accepted. Instead, organizational assimilation is a recursive process involving newcomers and others in the organization. Mutual acceptance enables newcomers to become integrated into the organizational system and assume full membership.

—Karen Kroman Myers

See also Organizational socialization, Orientation

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B

BENNETT MECHANICAL COMPREHENSION TEST

The Bennett Mechanical Comprehension Test (BMCT) measures aptitude to comprehend mechanical applications in realistic situations. The original form was published in 1940 by the Psychological Corporation and was developed to aid in training and employee selection as well as job performance predictions.

Currently, Form S and Form T of the BMCT are available. These forms were developed from previous forms and updated by editing the wording of earlier versions and increasing the range of item difficulty of questions. The two versions of the forms, S and T, are comparable. Both forms contain 68 items, each covering 18 categories of mechanical comprehension.

The BMCT is a paper-and-pencil test that contains items composed of pictures of simple mechanical concepts and questions regarding the pictures. Results can be used to discriminate aptitude in a range of mechanical applications as well as the level of comprehension of each application. The test also has been formatted into a videotape version for those with reading skills below the test's sixth-grade reading level. A paper-and-pencil version in Spanish to be used with non-English-speaking test takers is also available.

Reliability evidence is provided in the 1994 *Manual for the Bennett Mechanical Comprehension Test*, by George K. Bennett. The split-half reliability for both forms on samples of skilled-trade job applicants and technical and academic high school students ranges from .81 to .93. In addition, research found no practice effects after taking either Form S or Form T

in close succession with an older version (BB) of the BMCT that included some items identical with those on the later forms.

Evidence of the validity of the BMCT includes scores on the BMCT Form S and Form T that correlated .63 with a job knowledge test for operators at a chemical plant. In addition, Michael Mount and his colleagues found, for two samples of college students in a laboratory work study, that scores on the BMCT correlated .58 and .51 with a simple mechanical task and .55 and .62 with a complex mechanical task. Research by Paul Muchinsky also found that compared with the Flanagan Aptitude Classification Test-Mechanics and the Thurstone Test of Mental Alertness (Form A), the BMCT was the best predictor of job performance for an electromechanical-manufacturing employee sample.

In addition, evidence of convergent and discriminate validity has been shown for the BMCT. For example, BMCT scores correlate .74 with the U.S. Army's Mechanical Aptitude Test scores and .66 with scores on the College Board Spatial Relations test. On the other hand, scores on the Cooperative Reading Test correlate .14 with scores on the BMCT. The BMCT was developed for use in employee selection for jobs demanding mechanical comprehension. In addition, it has been used to predict performance in jobs requiring mastery of mechanical principles. The 1994 test manual also suggests that the BMCT can be used as a measure of training program effectiveness and for employee career services.

—Melanie E. Leuty and Jo-Ida C. Hansen

See also Abilities, Multiple intelligences

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BICULTURALISM

Biculturalism refers to an individual's ability to interact competently in two different or disparate cultural systems. Cultural systems are based on ideas, values, beliefs, and knowledge learned and shared by individuals within the same culture and can include those based on national origin and ethnic background. The meaning derived from cultural systems represents shared perspectives and expectations that serve as interpretative frames to influence individuals' affects, cognitions, and behaviors. Research on biculturalism seeks to understand the processes and outcomes associated with individuals who have membership in two distinct cultures and engage in interactions in both cultures. To a lesser extent, the research also considers monocultural individuals participating in cross-cultural exchanges.

Research has determined that besides having other characteristics, culturally competent individuals (a) possess strong self-identities, (b) are knowledgeable of and have facility with the beliefs and values of their cultures, (c) display sensitivity to the affective processes of their cultures, (d) communicate effectively in the language of the target cultural group, (e) perform culturally and socially sanctioned behavior, (f) maintain active social relationships within the cultural group, and (g) effectively negotiate the institutional structures of the target culture. Cultural competence is not a categorical construct such that one is either completely or not at all competent. Indeed, the literature on biculturalism has found significant variance in the manner in which individuals experience and manage multiple cultural systems. However, it is generally suggested that the more levels in which an individual is competent within two cultures, the fewer problems he or she will encounter in operating effectively within those cultures.

Biculturalism scholars assert that individuals who live within and move between two cultural systems can possess dual cultural identities and engage in real-time cultural frame switching, whereby they move between different cultural perspectives in response to environmental cues. For example, research has shown that when primed with either Western or Asian cultural cues, Hong Kong and Chinese American bicultural people exhibit behavior characteristic of Western or East Asian people, respectively. In other words, bicultural people can access and switch between multiple cultural meaning systems and appropriate sets of behavior depending on the context. Recent research has determined that while some bicultural individuals perceive their cultural identities as compatible and perhaps even complementary, others perceive these identities as being in conflict with one another. The extent to which bicultural identities are integrated within an individual's self-concept is referred to as *bicultural identity integration*, and the degree of this integration has been linked to cognition, attributions, and behavior.

Biculturalism research has emerged from the theorizing of scholars such as W. E. B. DuBois and the consideration of *double consciousness*, based on the experience of secondary cultural immersion experienced by various immigrant groups in the United States (e.g., African slaves, Chinese laborers). As of the writing of this entry, research on the impact of biculturalism on career and organizational outcomes is at an early stage and draws on research examining effects associated with biculturalism in the disciplines of anthropology, education, clinical and social psychology, and sociology. Research across these disciplines has tended to find positive associations between biculturalism and psychological well-being, and educational and professional motivation and achievement. Recent research has established that bicultural experiences can exert significant influence on career identity development among Black and White women in the United States, with implications for these women's expectations and management of majority colleagues and their own career progression. Other career development research among bicultural women has found that Black professional women have complex life structures and that some include a high degree of compartmentalization to manage bicultural demands. In other words, to manage the stress of disparate expectations between their professional or mainstream cultures and their initial cultures, some

women maintain clear barriers between their professional identities and interactions and their personal lives and nonprofessional identities.

Biculturalism may also be understood in contrast to other primary models of second-culture acquisition, including assimilation and acculturation. *Assimilation and acculturation* comprise processes whereby a new cultural identity based on the beliefs, values, and norms of the dominant or high-status culture supplants an individual's initial cultural identity. These models assert that marginalization is a result of bicultural contact and identification until the individual is successful in achieving full assimilation or acculturation within the dominant or mainstream culture. Outcomes associated with these models of cross-cultural contact and cultural competence ideally include integration into the mainstream culture and society; however, social marginalization and generally negative economic and psychological effects on individuals have often been found.

Accordingly, at least two sources of conflict may arise for individuals attempting to assimilate or become acculturated in new or secondary cultures. First, they face the psychological and cognitive stress of monitoring and switching between cultures. Second, they face the likelihood of rejection from the dominant or majority cultures. These individuals may also be rejected by members of their initial cultures for exhibiting dominant-culture values, such as education and career aspirations, or because of other perceived violations of the initial cultures' norms, which may include disparagement or suspicion of dominant cultures. The resulting marginalization, or awareness of partial membership in two cultural systems and a lack of full acceptance in either culture, is theorized to lead to psychological conflict and a divided self. Biculturalism scholars, however, assert that people who live at the juncture of two cultures do not inevitably suffer.

Of note to human resource professionals and others with an interest in organizational and career effectiveness are research findings indicating that in contexts in which different cultures are in intimate contact (i.e., multicultural contexts), biculturalism has been associated with favorable outcomes. Individuals with greater levels of bicultural competence have been found to exhibit less stress than those with less bicultural competence in cross-cultural and culturally ambiguous contexts. For example, biculturally competent and identified Asian American and Latin American students

(including university students) have demonstrated motivation and achievement advantages, in addition to less psychological stress, relative to bicultural Asian and Latin American students who are nonidentified or choose to identify exclusively with either their initial/ethnic or the mainstream (U.S.) culture.

Other research examining outcomes associated with bicultural education and training initiatives has found greater improvement in cross-cultural skill level and efficacy among mainstream society members (e.g., Whites in the United States) than among societal minority members. These results are consistent with research in human resources that recommends bicultural training for expatriates and other individuals who cross cultural boundaries as a part of fulfilling their organizational roles. This includes host country language and cultural training related to social values and norms. Similar training has also been called for to develop skills associated with minority subcultures for mainstream students and rank-and-file organization members (e.g., White students and employees in U.S., Canadian, and Australian schools and organizations) who must work with, manage, and be managed by individuals belonging to societal subcultures. Increasingly diverse consumer and labor pools and the increasingly global nature of work may render bicultural competence a valuable asset for career development and progress.

—Marcus M. Stewart

See also Culture and careers, Diversity in organizations, Gender and careers, Globalization and careers, Multicultural organization

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BIG FIVE FACTORS OF PERSONALITY

People differ in many respects, some important, some trivial. Personality traits are among the individual-difference characteristics that are important and powerful in explaining human behavior in the world of work. Myriad psychological characteristics can be used to describe people and distinguish them from one another. For example, in the English language, in excess of 12,000 words can be used to describe psychological characteristics of individuals and their tendencies to think, feel, and behave in certain ways. Many of these words are adjectives that refer to individuals' personality characteristics. For example, we can describe individuals as introverted versus extraverted, hardworking versus lazy, friendly versus hostile, anxious versus relaxed, or curious versus un-inquisitive.

Research examining how various personality characteristics relate to one another has led to the widely accepted conclusion that they can all be clustered under the umbrella of five broad personality dimensions. These five broad categories of personality attributes have become known as the *Big Five personality dimensions*. Adjectival descriptors of these five dimensions are referred to as the *Big Five factor markers*. Each dimension of the Big Five encompasses a group of traits that are more closely related to one another than to traits from the other dimensions.

The Big Five dimensions of personality are (1) Emotional Stability, (2) Extraversion, (3) Openness, (4) Agreeableness, and (5) Conscientiousness. The names of these dimensions sometimes vary by preferences of the researcher and author. For example, some authors prefer to refer to the third dimension as Intellect or Intellectance, rather than Openness. Others prefer to refer to Emotional Stability by its opposite, Neuroticism. Nonetheless, for the most part, the contents of the five dimensions overlap across the many different conceptualizations of personality.

The Big Five dimensions of personality have been useful in providing a framework for organizing

personality attributes used in industrial, work, and organizational psychology research and practice. They have been investigated in relation to many areas of interest, including occupational attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes. For example, studies have linked characteristics from the Big Five framework to occupational interests, finding employment, career success, job performance, and job satisfaction. The first part of this entry presents a brief history of the Big Five dimensions of personality. Then, each Big Five dimension is described. The entry concludes with a review of the relevance and usefulness of the Big Five in work and career contexts.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BIG FIVE

Personality characteristics existed long before human beings made their entry into this world and have probably existed for as long as most animals. In fact, personality characteristics have been documented in chimpanzees, gorillas, monkeys, hyenas, dogs, cats, donkeys, pigs, rats, guppies, and even octopuses. *Personality* can be viewed as a relatively stable, enduring psychological characteristic of any moderately complex being, be it human or nonhuman.

Personality descriptions have existed in human language since the very beginning of verbal communication. However, the questions of how these characteristics relate to one another and whether there is an organizational scheme that can be used to reduce the vast number of personality attributes to a parsimonious set have been scientifically considered only in the last 100 years or so. In examinations of personality structure, it is necessary to make a distinction between the development of theoretical models representing underlying individual differences in personality and the development of taxonomies of how trait-descriptive terms of personality characteristics are encoded in language. A *theoretical model* describes how personality traits manifest themselves in observable behaviors and outcomes, whereas a *taxonomy* merely provides a framework for clustering similar traits. The origin of the Big Five can be found in the latter: a taxonomy provided by the natural language of personality description.

Sir Francis Galton was the first to propose the idea that the most important characteristics of individuals are captured in the words that people use to describe each other and thus become embedded in languages around the world. This is referred to as the *lexical hypothesis*. Using *Roget's Thesaurus*, Galton identified

and cataloged personality descriptors. The lexical hypothesis was utilized in the 1930s by psychologists Gordon W. Allport and Henry S. Odbert, who used the second edition of *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* to identify and catalog over 17,000 words that distinguished one person from another. They sorted these words into groups: personal traits, evaluative and metaphorical words, temporary states, and moods. More than 4,500 words were found to be descriptive of personality traits. In the 1940s, Raymond B. Cattell examined these trait-descriptive words and reduced them to 35 traits, each of which was described by clusters of adjectives and phrases. In the 1960s, Warren T. Norman studied the personal-trait words from Allport and Odbert's effort and judged about 3,500 of these words to be related to stable personality characteristics. However, such lengthy lists were simply too long and cumbersome to be useful for applied and scientific purposes. Thus, the task was to discover whether these words could be organized into a scientific taxonomy of smaller, more meaningful groups.

A descriptive model or taxonomy is vital if personality psychology is to advance as a science. Over the years, personality has been conceptualized from various taxonomic viewpoints. In fact, there have been so many conceptualizations of personality and so many tests and scales used to measure them that the less enthusiastic (some say more pessimistic) researchers have compared conducting research in personality psychology to building the Tower of Babel. Approaches to integrating seemingly diverging models that aim to make sense of varying postulated factor structures should be commended, as they will enhance knowledge of the personality domain and increase our ability to hypothesize important relationships. Without a generally accepted taxonomy, personality research cannot properly communicate empirical findings, let alone systematically cumulate them.

In science, taxonomies provide the foundation that helps characterize how different categories of studied phenomena (e.g., species or chemicals) relate to one another. How can thousands of words describing individuals be clustered into meaningful groups? Statistical data reduction techniques broadly referred to as *factor analysis* can be used for this purpose. Factor-analytic procedures are used to reduce and organize many personality descriptors into a few dimensions or factors. Variables that more closely relate to one another are grouped together. When adjectives describing

people are used to characterize individuals, the resulting data can be factor-analyzed to decipher the structure of the underlying traits. In the 1940s and 1950s, a number of psychologists (among them Louis L. Thurstone, Raymond B. Cattell, and Donald W. Fiske) applied factor-analytic techniques to personality trait descriptors. Thurstone and Fiske found that five broad personality factors could explain their respective data. However, they did not follow up on their findings and moved on to other research endeavors. Cattell claimed to have found over 12 factors, but reanalyses of his data replicated only five. In fact, the "fathers" of the Big Five were probably Ernest C. Tupes and Raymond E. Christal, who, in a series of studies between 1954 and 1961, found five replicable personality dimensions in ratings of human personality. Unfortunately, their findings were buried in a U.S. Air Force technical report and were not generally available to the scientific community (their landmark technical report was reprinted in a scientific journal only in 1992). In the 1960s, Norman confirmed the five-factor structure of personality descriptors; however, he continued to believe that there were likely to be many more personality factors than those he had found.

In the past 30 years, psychologists John M. Digman and Lewis R. Goldberg, who started out as critics of the Big Five, along with their colleagues have produced many studies using a variety of approaches showing that five dimensions are reasonably sufficient to explain observed personality differences among people. Incidentally, Goldberg can be credited with coining the term "Big Five" for what had previously been referred to as "Norman's Five."

In addition to studies researching the lexical hypothesis, personality measures were developed asking individuals to rate themselves (or others) on statement-based (rather than adjective-based) stimuli. Some current examples of these include the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI-R), Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI), International Personality Item Pool (IPIP), Personal Characteristics Survey, and the higher-order factors from the Sixteen Personality Inventory (16PF). It should be noted that even the factors of the 16PF are easily reduced to the Big Five personality dimensions. The developers of the NEO PI-R, Paul T. Costa and Robert R. McCrae, have been successful in demonstrating that the same Big Five personality dimensions are assessed in a multitude of different personality measures (e.g., the California Psychological Inventory,

the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory) that were developed outside the five-factor framework.

To date, hundreds of studies have provided evidence indicating that the Big Five are generalizable. A large body of literature and factor-analytic evidence has accumulated in the last decade providing compelling evidence for the robustness of the Big Five dimensions of personality across different theoretical frameworks (both abstract personality models and concrete natural language trait descriptors), using different tests and measures and in a variety of samples (including those defined by different ages, sexes, cultures, and ethnic origins). The five factors have also been shown to hold across different types of assessments and rating sources (self and peer). Cross-culturally, evidence supporting the Big Five or its variants has been found in many languages, including English, German, Polish, Turkish, Italian, and Tagalog-Filipino. Such cross-cultural and cross-linguistic generalizability is crucial if personality psychology and its applications in organizations are to transcend parochial sociocultural settings. Because of its broad generalizability and replicability, Big Five has become the term that stands for the most widely accepted framework of personality attributes.

DISSENT AND DISAGREEMENT OVER THE BIG FIVE

Despite the volume of research supporting Big Five factor models of personality, there is still some dissent on the structure and organization of personality traits among personality psychologists. However, it is now clear that one cannot take seriously taxonomies of personality that postulate an inordinate number of factors, given that consistent replicable empirical support for these is lacking. The empirical evidence marshaled in support of the Big Five is impossible to overlook. Most important, the Big Five is an organizational scheme that helps one locate a given personality characteristic in relation to other personality traits. Perhaps the five dimensions of personality can be conceptualized as analogous to longitude and latitude in cartography. They help establish coordinates on maps of personality traits. From a utilitarian perspective, the Big Five personality dimensions have been pivotal in organizing and summarizing research findings. However, the Big Five have met with several criticisms. These criticisms center on comprehensiveness, breadth, theoretical basis, and

social importance, as well as the predictive and explanatory value of postulated traits. Some of these criticisms are considered below.

First, it should be noted that although critics have argued that the Big Five is at best a taxonomy of adjectival descriptors and that there is no theory associated with it, recent publications have articulated comprehensive personality theories based on the Big Five model. These theories suggest that the five factors of personality are enduring traits that manifest themselves in behavioral patterns that are deeply rooted in the biology of human behavior. In five-factor theory, little room is given for learning and experience to influence personality.

Second, there are substantive disagreements about the precise subdimensions that make up each Big Five factor and its meaning. There are also questions about whether broader traits may encompass the Big Five. For example, proponents of fewer than five dimensions, such as Hans J. Eysenck, have argued that Conscientiousness and Agreeableness should be combined into a broader dimension referred to as Psychoticism (i.e., a lack of these two traits). There are also more than a dozen studies providing evidence that the Big Five can be further clustered into two even broader factors: one dealing with ascendancy and dynamic qualities, hallmarks of “getting ahead” (a combination of Extraversion and Openness), the other dealing with socialization, or “getting along” (a combination of Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Emotional Stability).

Third, the Big Five have been criticized as being too broad to be useful in the explanation and prediction of valued behaviors and outcomes, including those at work. The argument is that differences exist within each of the Big Five and that these differences cause inconsistencies when trying to predict and understand work behavior and effectiveness using information at the factor level. Proponents counter that the breadth of predictor variables should be matched to the criteria and outcomes being predicted. That is, when the goal is to predict complex real-world behaviors, broad factors such as the Big Five may be useful.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE BIG FIVE PERSONALITY DIMENSIONS

Personality characteristics can be organized hierarchically. The lowest level at which we can examine personality is at the single, individual behavior level (e.g., telling a joke). Similar behaviors form habits

that constitute the next level of the hierarchy (e.g., tendency to make others laugh). Clusters of interrelated habitual behaviors constitute levels further up the hierarchy (e.g., sociability, gregariousness). At an even higher level, one finds broad factors of personality (e.g., Extraversion). It is important to think of each Big Five factor not as a single entity, but as a collection of clusters consisting of interrelated habitual behaviors that have a common core and carry little specific meaning. Many proponents of the Big Five place the five factors of personality at the highest level of the hierarchy. The clusters of interrelated habitual behaviors that are aspects of each of the Big Five are typically referred to as *facets* or *subdimensions*.

Emotional Stability

The first factor, which refers to an individual's tendency to become emotionally upset, is most frequently called Emotional Stability, or by the name of its negative pole, Neuroticism. This dimension characterizes individuals in terms of their proneness to experience emotional distress and maladaptive coping strategies. Common traits associated with the neurotic end of this dimension include anxiety, depression, anger, embarrassment, emotion, worry, fearfulness, instability, and insecurity. Emotionally stable individuals are well-adjusted, relaxed, self-assured, hardy, even-tempered, and calm. Individuals scoring low on Emotional Stability are described as moody, anxious, worrying, insecure, hypochondriacal, and tense. Some hypothesized facets of neuroticism include anxiety, hostility, depression, self-consciousness, vulnerability, low self-esteem, negative affect, and lability.

Extraversion

Extraversion encompasses traits relating to sociability, dominance, energy, and positive affect. It has also been referred to as "surgency." It includes a person's tendency to seek interpersonal stimulation and capacity for joy. Individuals scoring high on this dimension are described as energetic, active, vigorous, talkative, assertive, fun-loving, gregarious, persuasive, and positive. They seek social situations in which they can interact with others and be socially dominant. Individuals scoring low on this dimension are described as introverted, silent, submissive, passive, unenergetic, retiring, reserved, or "loners." Main facets of Extraversion are dominance/assertiveness, sociability/gregariousness, energy level/activity, and positive

emotions. Excitement seeking and warmth have also been suggested as facets.

Openness

This factor has been interpreted frequently as openness to experience, intellect, or culture. Traits commonly associated with this dimension include imagination, curiosity, originality, broadmindedness, and intelligence. Openness results in tolerance for ambiguity, and artistic sensitivity. This dimension describes individual differences in tolerance for and attraction to the unfamiliar. It has been described as a trait influencing an individual's breadth and complexity of mental experiences. High scorers are described as having wide interests, being imaginative, curious, creative, and insightful. They prefer complexity and change over familiar and stable situations. Low scorers are described as shallow, conventional, unanalytical, down-to-earth, and lacking in imagination. Openness is the most controversial of the Big Five, as there are many issues relating to its definition and measurement about which personality experts disagree. For example, measures of Openness are moderately associated with cognitive ability (i.e., intelligence) and particularly with divergent thinking. One conceptualization of this dimension includes facets such as openness to ideas, actions, values, feelings, aesthetics, and fantasy. Other conceptualizations suggest facets of complexity, culture, creativity/innovativeness, curiosity, intellect, and having a preference for change and variety.

Agreeableness

Agreeableness includes characteristics such as likability, kindness, courteousness, and nurturance. Individuals scoring high on Agreeableness are described as amicable, cooperative, popular, easy to live with, affectionate, sensitive, caring, altruistic, kind, tender-minded, and softhearted. They are interested in helping others and behaving in prosocial ways. Individuals scoring low on this dimension can be described as uncooperative, disagreeable, unfriendly, selfish, hostile, and egocentric. Facets of Agreeableness have received little attention in the literature. Depending on the conceptualization, they include nurturance, trust, modesty, tolerance, likability, straightforwardness, and tender-mindedness. Some conceptions of the Big Five include warmth as a part of Agreeableness, and others place warmth with

Extraversion. Similarly, some measures of the Big Five suggest that hostility is a marker for the negative pole of Agreeableness, and others include it as part of Neuroticism.

Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness refers to the cluster of traits relating to prudence, achievement, dependability, persistence, order, and impulse control. Although this dimension has most frequently been called Conscientiousness, it is sometimes referred to as “conformity” or “dependability” (carefulness, thoroughness, responsibility, organization, efficiency, planfulness). Because of its relationship to a variety of educational achievement measures and its association with volition (hard work, achievement orientation, perseverance), it has also been called “will to achieve.” Typical behaviors characterizing individuals high on this personality trait include careful planning, delaying gratification, following rules and norms, organizing, working hard, and persisting in goal-directed behavior. Individuals scoring high on Conscientiousness are also described as organized, thorough, competent, work oriented, perfectionistic, and driven. Individuals scoring low on Conscientiousness are often disorganized, quitting, irresponsible, careless, negligent, weak-willed, undependable, and sometimes hedonistic and impulsive. According to various conceptualizations, facets of Conscientiousness include reliability (dependability), orderliness, impulse control (cautiousness), decisiveness, deliberation, punctuality, formalness, conventionality (having traditional values), achievement orientation, and industriousness (hard work).

It should be noted that the Big Five personality dimensions can be combined to create composite or compound personality characteristics. This can be viewed as analogous to combining primary colors to create a multitude of shades in the color spectrum. For example, integrity is a trait made up of high Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Emotional Stability. Studies indicate that there may be greater predictive value for such compound personality traits than for each of the Big Five factors or their facets alone.

THE BIG FIVE AND CAREERS

The last decade and a half has witnessed the utilization of the Big Five framework in multiple occupational domains. Many studies have examined how the Big

Five relate to organizational behavior and outcomes. In addition, researchers have also taken advantage of the organizing scheme offered by the Big Five to quantitatively summarize a number of existing studies.

Career Attraction, Choice, and Job Search

The Big Five have been linked to occupational interests and career decisions. Individuals with investigative interests tend to score high on Openness, whereas individuals who express interest in artistic jobs score high on Openness and somewhat low on Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability. Social interests are related to Extraversion, prosocial ones to Agreeableness. Interest in enterprising jobs is associated with high Extraversion, low Agreeableness, and low Openness. Individuals with interests in conventional jobs score high on Conscientiousness and low on Openness. Students who score high on Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Emotional Stability tend to be more decided about their career choices. Interestingly, these three dimensions are often aggregated into a compound trait called “integrity.”

Extraversion and Conscientiousness are useful predictors of college students seeking and obtaining employment upon graduation. This finding can be explained in terms of particularly effective job-seeking behaviors and patterns among the extraverted and conscientious. Individuals high on Extraversion and Conscientiousness network more intensely and use multiple job search methods.

Career Preparation: Educational Success and Job Training

Conscientious individuals tend to do well in settings in which knowledge acquisition is a central activity. Conscientiousness is a consistent, positive predictor of educational success in high school, college, and graduate school. Other dimensions of the Big Five have also demonstrated predictive value for academic success, but their utility has not been as strong, as consistent, or as generalizable across educational settings. Openness, because of its relationship with cognitive ability, does not incrementally enhance the acquisition of declarative knowledge.

Job-training performance is also predicted well by Conscientiousness. That is, individuals who score high on Conscientiousness scales tend to be more

successful in job training. Furthermore, both Extraversion and Openness are also associated with performing well in training and provide about the same level of predictive power as Conscientiousness.

Job Performance and Its Components

Task Performance and Overall Job Performance. Hundreds of studies have examined how the personality attributes clustered under the umbrella of the Big Five relate to job performance. These studies have been summarized using a quantitative-data-pooling technique called *meta-analysis*. The conclusions from meta-analyses indicate that Conscientiousness is the Big Five dimension that is most consistently related to task performance, overall job performance, and effectiveness across diverse jobs, settings, and cultures. For jobs that require interpersonal interactions, such as management and sales, Extraversion is also related to job performance. For both these job categories, the assertiveness/dominance facet of Extraversion is responsible for the lion's share of prediction of job performance. At times, some factors (e.g., Agreeableness) can be used to predict lower performance in some domains (e.g., negotiation) and higher performance in others (e.g., teamwork). It is noteworthy that studies suggest that the validity and usefulness of personality measures are not destroyed or even markedly degraded by motivated response distortion of test takers in high-stakes assessments (e.g., personnel selection).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior. Performance behaviors that are not part of the formally prescribed tasks comprising a given job have been termed *citizenship behaviors* (OCBs) or *contextual performance*. Aspects of citizenship behaviors include helping and cooperating with others as well as promoting the employing organization in general by going beyond the call of duty. Meta-analytic reviews of studies linking the Big Five and OCBs indicate that Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Emotional Stability are useful for predicting the interpersonal facilitation dimension of OCBs. Also, Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability have nonnegligible, positive relationships with job dedication. Conscientiousness is also linked to altruism and generalized compliance. It is, overall, the most consistent predictor of OCBs.

Counterproductive Work Behaviors. Workplace deviance (encompassing behaviors such as theft, misuse of

resources, excessive absenteeism, workplace aggression, and violence) is strongly related to three of the Big Five dimensions: Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Emotional Stability. Individuals who score low on these three Big Five factors engage in counterproductive behaviors to a greater extent than do others. Integrity tests that are typically used to predict counterproductive work behaviors and workplace deviance usually assess these three dimensions of the Big Five.

Work Attitudes and Organizational Behaviors

Job Satisfaction. Understanding and explaining satisfaction among workers has also benefited from the Big Five personality framework. Emotional Stability and Extraversion have been shown to predict job satisfaction across jobs and settings. Although some substantial relations have been reported for Conscientiousness and Agreeableness, these are not as pervasive and generalizable. Openness appears unrelated to job satisfaction.

Motivation. There are multiple motivational theories and accompanying frameworks. Across three of these, specifically, goal setting, expectancy, and self-efficacy motivation theories, Emotional Stability and Conscientiousness have been found to relate to performance motivation. It seems that not only cognitive appraisal of external incentives and personal goals influence the strength of performance motivation; Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability also seem to relate to motivation through their influence on self-regulatory processes.

Leadership. All dimensions of the Big Five except Agreeableness have been linked to leadership emergence as well as leadership performance in groups. However, across settings, the strongest and most consistent predictor of both emergence and performance is Extraversion. Transformational leaders, who are charismatic, elicit cooperation and loyalty, and inspire and motivate their followers to reach common goals, tend to score high on Extraversion and low on Neuroticism.

Career Success

Career success can be conceptualized in many ways, including being successful in terms of salary

and occupational status or being satisfied with one's choice of occupation and position. Longitudinal studies indicate that Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability predict occupational status and income. That is, individuals who are conscientious and emotionally stable attain higher-status occupations and earn higher salaries. Conscientiousness alone has been found to predict long-term career satisfaction. For people-oriented jobs, Agreeableness also relates to salary level.

CONCLUSION

A leading personality psychologist has noted that a scientific taxonomy assists researchers in organizing and integrating research results by offering a standard scientific nomenclature. This is exactly what the Big Five model has helped to accomplish. The purpose of a model such as the Big Five is not to reduce the complexity of individuals to just five easily manageable traits. Rather, the Big Five personality dimensions have provided a framework in which to organize and describe personality characteristics in order to further our knowledge via scientific research. They are the building blocks in the hierarchical structure of personality. Furthermore, they can be used to conceptualize and describe personality traits in a hypothetical multidimensional space and thus further our understanding of human behavior.

Evidence supporting the validity of the Big Five factors of personality is compelling. The Big Five have facilitated communication of results among work psychologists who use personality variables in their research and organizational practice. The Big Five taxonomy has been instrumental in allowing for the cumulation of empirical findings across individual studies and has thus promoted a science of organizational behavior and industrial psychology that includes crucial individual differences. Personality traits from the Big Five framework have been linked to career choice, preparation, job performance, work attitudes, organizational behaviors, and career success. The impact of the Big Five in the world of work is pervasive. The applied uses span career guidance, personnel selection and placement, staffing, and many other human resource interventions. Any personnel decision would benefit from taking information on individual differences in personality into account.

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See also Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Instrument-2 (MMPI-2), Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Person-environment fit (P-E fit), Personality and careers, Sixteen Personality Questionnaire (16PF)

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BLUE-COLLAR WORKERS

Blue-collar workers, or the working class, comprise a segmented and stratified population in which economic location influences potential career mobility. Defined as manual or services laborers, this working class can be divided into five categories, based on skills and type of industry: self-employed, skilled or craft employees, semiskilled or unskilled employees in core sectors, semiskilled or unskilled employees in periphery sectors, and the marginally employed working less than 27 weeks per year, according to William Form and George Putman. Mobility is often influenced not only by individual skills but also by the structure and economic strength of the organization in which the worker is employed. The direct context of occupational mobility resides in the firm or organization.

Organizations may be divided into the categories of *core* and *periphery*. Core organizations are capital-intensive, profitable, and labor-intensive, employing low-skilled workers with high-paying and relatively secure jobs. Blue-collar workers represent a dependable workforce as well as an investment for core organizations; thus, the chances for movement within the organization are greater than for workers in periphery organizations. Large organizations use a vacancy mechanism and channel mobility through internal routes, with experienced workers having more favorable opportunities. Periphery organizations tend to be small, less profitable, and labor-intensive, consisting of a less stable workforce. Thomas DiPrete has characterized the periphery workforce as temporary workers, part-time workers, and workers on contract. Additional structural factors affecting worker mobility may be defined by industry growth patterns and hierarchy mechanisms.

Josef Bruderl has defined *vacancy mechanism* as positions created either by individuals exiting the organization or organizational growth offering individuals a chance for upward mobility. Opportunity is dependent on hierarchy structures and the individual's location within the hierarchy, and as the individual proceeds upward, chances for advancement decrease. Organizational expansion or contraction is an important factor in worker opportunity. Expanding organizations represent a positive opportunity, while contracting organizations have a negative impact, especially on blue-collar workers. Contracting organizations will dismiss blue-collar workers in order to protect white-collar

workers. These actions have a cultural basis as well as an economic consideration.

Given these organizational factors, several mobility characteristics can be observed. Among the skilled-worker category, sons are more likely to assume their fathers' occupations, but skilled workers tend to experience more upward mobility and less downward mobility than those in other categories. Although children of skilled workers are more likely to assume their fathers' occupations, two to three times the percentage of children of skilled workers are likely to pursue higher education. Changing characteristics of blue-collar work and lack of opportunity must be considered when discussing blue-collar mobility.

Recent restructuring by employers has created a number of low-wage occupations in which workers are unable to provide basic family needs. The percentage of working families who earn less than the basic family budget for their communities increased to 29 percent in the late 1990s. Factors such as globalization, deregulation, changing financial markets, and changing institutions have forced a change in how employers do business and in attitudes concerning the workforce. Cost-cutting efforts have most often focused on the wages of employees. Approaches such as wage freezes, increased production requirements, benefit loss, temporary employment, outsourcing, and relocation to low-wage environments have created low-wage occupations that offer little or no chance for mobility. Survival has become the norm, with little chance for advancement. Outsourcing and offshoring, secular declines in wages and job stability for blue-collar workers, and increased competition with immigrant workers have produced increased prospects for displacement, downward income and status mobility, and geographic mobility.

Self-investment is an important factor in this environment, and chances for mobility decrease with age and tenure on the job. Education often leads to occupational upgrading and is viewed as an important channel for mobility. The lack of opportunity for education and training constitutes a main cause for individuals remaining in low-wage jobs or failing to obtain employment. Schooling, ability, and job experience function as a means and resource for mobility, and although the children of professionals and managers have increased access to educational resources, educational opportunities have remained stable in the twentieth century and uniform across industrial nations. Labor and management have recognized the important role of

education and adopted a number of programs to increase worker opportunity.

As corporate restructuring has weakened job ladders, education and training have been viewed as a conventional response for worker mobility. Six out of 10 workers in today's economy can be considered skilled, with basic computer literacy required by 75 percent of all workers. Education and training must be considered a lifelong requirement. Bill Fletcher and Richard Hurd have indicated that labor has responded to the need for education with extended apprenticeship programs and programs designed to educate workers in the areas of union leadership, public speaking, literacy, algebra, and computers. The National Joint Apprenticeship Training Program of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers & National Electrical Contractors Association has a \$150 million annual training budget. Programs using formalized mentoring, such as the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP), have helped workers adapt to technological and work process changes while increasing wages and producing a 70 percent employment retention rate. Despite these efforts, many workers point to barriers such as lack of time, lack of financial resources, and distance to learning facilities as barriers to mobility chances. Combined with blue-collar values, these barriers impede career mobility among the working class.

Blue-collar workers face a number of obstacles in career mobility. Cultural values impede the desire for advancement and substitute the value of "good money" and "doing a good job" for mobility. The belief of not fitting into the white-collar culture increases resistance to seeking upward mobility. Cultural attitudes combined with organizational factors and changes in the corporate environment leave little chance for moving beyond the working class. Individuals who achieve upward mobility often experience a sense of being an outsider or misplaced.

Difficulties abound for the blue-collar worker seeking upward mobility. Blue-collar culture and class consciousness supply two of the primary obstacles to career advancement. Alfred Lubrano has described a "duality of consciousness" that exists among blue-collar workers who have become upwardly mobile, and he coins the descriptive term "straddlers" to reinforce their existence in both a blue-collar world and a white-collar one. Individuals from blue-collar backgrounds are governed by the cultural capital created by family and social setting. Conformity, obedience, and intolerance of other social classes are the characteristics

possessed by a "good blue-collar worker" and are present in the home. Patricia Gurin and others suggest that this class consciousness is the basis of a blue-collar identity and helps establish the perception of a "place in society" and a sense of collectivism. Blue-collar workers who obtain upward mobility often find themselves in awkward social and work situations as the result of "cultural ignorance." The identification with blue-collar values combined with economic difficulties and reduced opportunity impairs the mobility of most blue-collar workers. Mobility experts suggest that downward mobility has increased 7 percent in the last three decades and that upward mobility has had no significant increase. Blue-collar workers have less than a 30 percent chance of moving into white-collar jobs.

—Randall Adams and William Canak

See also Career mobility, White-collar work

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BOUNDARYLESS CAREER

The *boundaryless-career* concept widens our perspective toward a range of possible career forms both within and across organizations, but it is not primarily determined and driven by the career system of a single organization. The formulation of the boundaryless-career concept responds to the observation that stable

employment and careers within organizations account for the career experiences of some people, but not necessarily all. Boundaryless careers can unfold in a variety of ways. The use of the boundaryless-career concept commonly describes careers that involve moves across the physical boundaries of separate employers, such as stereotypical Silicon Valley careers. Boundaryless careers also occur when individuals are either involuntarily forced or voluntarily choose to leave their employers and thereby put an end to career advancement within the organization.

The boundaryless-career concept is not only relevant to any physical change of employers. It also applies to careers that draw validation and marketability from outside the present employer, as in the case of certain highly skilled professionals or academics; careers that are sustained by external networks; or careers that rely on information from outside, as in the case of a real estate agent or financial broker. Likewise, careers can be described as boundaryless when individuals base career choices on internal standards, such as personal or family reasons, rather than external career opportunities. Moreover, the boundaryless-career perspective acknowledges people's subjective construction of their career situations despite or regardless of structural constraints.

UNDERSTANDING THE BOUNDARYLESS-CAREER CONTEXT: A FOCUS ON EMPLOYABILITY

The boundaryless-career perspective challenges the overriding influence of large, bureaucratic organizations on people's careers. Observing the consequences of large-scale corporate restructuring, scholars have argued that the promise of long-term employment has been replaced by employment relationships that are increasingly transactional and insecure. Even if full-time employment with a single organization may continue to be a prevailing experience for many individuals, the psychological contract has changed significantly. Under this new contract, employment is less a result of loyalty to one's employer than of "employability" in terms of the marketability of one's skills and knowledge in the external labor market.

The boundaryless-career perspective is particularly relevant to industries with unpredictable and opportunistic markets. Here, employees are exposed to a high degree of employment uncertainty because firms seek to pass on the uncertainty from external markets

by using temporal, project-based forms of organizing. For example, in cultural industries such as publishing, film, and the arts, where funding is typically limited, organizations seek to maintain flexibility by providing freelancers only short-term employment on discrete projects. In the information technology (IT) sector, firms need to manage the risk that results from rapid technological changes. By employing contingent IT staff, firms avoid being stuck with obsolete technical competencies and shift responsibility for skill development to IT professionals themselves. In other industries, the use of temporary contractual workers or interim managers may not be the dominant organizing principle but simply provides firms with flexibility at the fringes of leaner hierarchically organized core businesses.

Not So Flexible After All

Despite the apparent reorientation of labor markets toward flexibility and marketability of skills, the reality of boundaryless careers is neither unconstrained by social structure nor exclusively regulated by market principles. Studies from a diverse range of industries suggest that boundaryless careers are embedded within social networks, institutional environments, and communities. The ways in which social networks facilitate and constrain mobility differ across industries. In cultural industries, access to social networks is important because they provide continuity and access to skills in environments in which production is characterized by short-term funding of project-based organizations. Since the quality of specific social relations, as opposed to individuals' competencies alone, shapes how people produce creative products and services, individuals need to rely strongly on informal networks of friends, family, agencies, and unions to develop a reputation and mitigate the insecurity of freelance employment. Individuals who lack this type of social capital may find it difficult to acquire, because collaborative relationships tend to be deeply rooted in their particular locality, for example, London's advertising community in Soho or the Los Angeles film industry.

In other occupations, collaborative relationships may be less specific. For example, careers for IT professionals or MBA graduates are more strongly influenced by the codification of a clearly defined set of skills and knowledge. In these settings, people benefit from access to diverse networks that help to update

their skills and knowledge. As studies of IT professionals and entrepreneurs suggest, informal social networks can become platforms for the exchange of socially embedded knowledge and competencies.

Previous research suggests a range of other contextual factors that constrain career mobility. Among these are a country's institutional frameworks and macroeconomic environment. Moreover, individuals' enactments of careers are often guided by the socially shared meaning, values, and preferences of ethnic groups, nations, and career communities. Cultural values can have a pervasive influence on careers because obligations to family and local community determine aspirations and values and thereby constrain how people think about their careers.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN A BOUNDARYLESS-CAREER CONTEXT

From a boundaryless-career perspective, career development needs to strengthen individuals' self-direction and adaptability within a more transactional employment context. Rational approaches of career development see self-direction and adaptability as primarily determined by a person's ability to engage in beneficial exchanges. Drawing on institutional economics, rational approaches seek to improve career mobility and employability through the development of relevant competencies and social networks.

A Competency-based View of Career Development

A competency-based view of careers suggests that career actors' accumulation and understanding of their own unique bundle of competencies in "knowing why," "knowing how," and "knowing whom" can provide individual-centered guideposts in a turbulent and ambiguous career landscape. "Knowing why" competencies provide individuals with answers about their career motives, personal meaning, and identification, based on which they can commit to firms, projects, or personal enterprises in a less certain world of work. "Knowing how" competencies represent individuals' understanding of job-related skills and career-related knowledge and provide the confidence to master current and prospective jobs. "Knowing whom" competencies reflect individuals' understanding of career-relevant networks, based on which they can generate knowledge, learn, and develop a reputation. Based on

their understanding of career competencies, people can evaluate which of their skills, knowledge, networks, or identities may facilitate mobility in the future and which competencies may become obsolete over time.

This competency-based view has become a widely accepted framework for positioning scholarly work in the area of career development. For example, studies of entrepreneurs and investors suggest that the combination of different competencies acquired during earlier corporate career stages contributes later on to career success in entrepreneurial settings. Career competencies such as a proactive personality, openness to experience, career insight, an ability to access mentors and internal and external networks, relevant skills, and a sense of career identity have been associated with indicators of career success, including perceived career satisfaction, perceived internal marketability, and perceived external marketability.

A Socially Embedded View of Career Development

Based on the argument that boundaryless careers are both facilitated and constrained by social networks, career scholars have argued that a critical determinant of career success in a boundaryless-career environment is access to social support. As individuals' commitments to their employers are increasingly turning transactional, relationships to a wider career community of mentors, current and previous work associates, and alumni are often becoming sources of longer-term commitments. The general conclusion in this area is that relationships with people from different social systems allow individuals to gain access to a wider range of sources of support. Yet diversity alone is not sufficient, since psychologically close relationships with one or a few mentors may provide greater learning and job satisfaction than diverse networks alone.

SHAPING PERSONALLY MEANINGFUL CAREER JOURNEYS

Confidence in one's ability to cope with changes in the external employment market results not only from one's ability to maintain physical career mobility. The shift of responsibility for career development from the organization to the individual has stimulated increasing attention among career scholars to the duality between

individuals' objective and subjective experiences of careers. Traditional criteria of career success such as salary, benefits, or advancement seem no longer appropriate, as individuals view their careers as "personal projects" and seek to define themselves through work. Career scholars who have drawn on the humanistic notion of work as a terrain where individuals can develop and express their potential have examined how individuals can proactively transform their careers to develop personally meaningful identities.

From a boundaryless-career perspective, developing a clear sense of identity is important for several reasons. First, in an increasingly individualized and transient society, an adaptive identity gains in importance because individuals need to cope with the social and emotional costs that may arise from career changes and the loss of attachment to families, local communities, and traditional organizations. Second, since traditional criteria of career success may be difficult to attain and may not necessarily be desirable to career actors, viewing oneself as able to adapt to changes is crucial to developing and maintaining a sense of psychological success. Third, exploring one's deeper motives with regard to work is also instrumental in steering one's career trajectory through a context in which organizational career systems can no longer serve as a point of reference.

Attention to the subjective experience of boundaryless careers provides a more comprehensive understanding of boundaryless-career experiences that do not deliver advancement in terms of traditional criteria of career success. For example, research on career mobility, international careers, and women's careers suggests that these experiences may be more adequately understood when accounting for individuals' personal reasons.

Women's Career Experiences

For women, who are more likely than men to pursue boundaryless careers, career moves often represent adaptive, and in some instances identity-transforming, responses to other events in their lives, rather than advancement of their careers. Boundaryless careers may be the last available resort when alternative forms of long-term employment or advancement within a firm seem blocked. Women are also more likely to switch to another employer if they wish to "follow" the career move of a partner who is also the primary financial provider, perceive limited opportunities for

intraorganizational advancement as a result of having children, or experience marital breakdown. Although such change, triggered by external events, does not always bring about improvements in terms of traditional criteria of career success, it may nevertheless improve perceptions of intrinsic job characteristics such as challenge, variety, freedom, quality of work life, and learning potential.

International Career Experiences

Intrinsic rather than extrinsic motives also seem to characterize individuals' decisions to initiate international assignments. Studies of expatriate careers suggest that individuals engage in foreign assignments not so much because of career progress or economic benefits. Instead, the motives for international moves are often the perceived opportunities for personal development, enriching one's life, and learning new skills. Thus, having used organizational opportunities to achieve personal career objectives, the expatriate experience may become an entry point to a boundaryless career upon repatriation, since opportunities for career advancement within the same firm can often seem limited.

Identity-based Approaches to Career Development

There are many ways in which individuals can gain clarity about their career identities. Often, this process may commence introspectively, supported by self-assessment tests, self-help books, participation in professional networks, and coaching. However, to be actionable and successful, such self-reflective exploration needs to be embedded in a person's real experiences. In other instances, changing one's career may follow a "first-act-and-then-think" sequence.

Among the many assessment tests, the exploration of *career anchors* and the Intelligent Career Card Sort (ICCS) represent career development activities that help ground introspective self-exploration in a person's career reality. Focusing on a boundaryless-career context, the ICCS draws on the "knowing why," "knowing how," and "knowing whom" framework described earlier. In this activity, individuals are called to select seven items from each of three larger card sets that represent the three ways of knowing. Individuals are then asked to explain the personal meaning that each selected item has in their own

careers. In contrast to traditional career development approaches that focus on identifying relevant competences and career strategies, the ICCS seeks to elicit subjective knowledge based on which individuals can create personal career narratives that are relevant to their particular career contexts.

Implications for Organizations

The changing employment context characterized by the boundaryless-career perspective also has implications for how organizations think about the development of their employees. As a consequence of individuals assuming more personal responsibility for the development of their careers in response to increasingly transactional employment relationships, organizations must manage employees who have become less loyal.

For the human resource function, the boundaryless-career perspective implies a shift of priorities away from managing “human capital” and toward managing relationships in ways that enable organizations to respond flexibly to market changes. This changing agenda must coexist with the provision of sufficient stability in the processes of recruiting, developing, and retaining people’s talent and knowledge. For example, in a more transactional career context, organizations need to resource knowledge and talent increasingly from a pool of people with diverse, possibly idiosyncratic, career paths. As a result, it becomes difficult for organizations to base their resource allocation decisions on organization-specific career structures and competence systems. Organizations may respond to this changing context in two ways. Either they can develop processes that allow them to evaluate and assimilate the diverse experiences and competencies that people gained prior to joining the organization, or they can reduce the risk of incompatibility by using contingent work contracts.

The implications of the changing terms of the psychological contract characterized by the boundaryless-career perspective go beyond recruitment and resourcing. For organizations, new challenges arise from the need to manage for flexibility while continuing to motivate employees, despite weaker bureaucratic and cultural mechanisms of control and coordination. Practicing community values is one approach through which organizations may be able to balance the harshness resulting from a stricter

market orientation. By encouraging employee participation in project and occupational communities beyond the boundaries of the firm, organizations enable learning and knowledge sharing; foster individuals’ capacity to respond with resilience to job, career, and life changes; and maintain the safety nets and supports that make people less vulnerable to dynamic market changes.

From a boundaryless-career perspective, it becomes increasingly difficult for leaders to instill motivation through commitment to an elusive organizational vision. Moreover, in settings in which teams are composed of members from different organizations, individuals’ motivation may be difficult to manage, because people with similar experiences and competencies may work under different contractual arrangements. An organizational context that is characterized by ambiguous boundaries and a membership that finds itself in constant “flux” requires the ability of leaders to mobilize members through the creation of metaphors, symbols, and cultural interpretations that build coherence, meaning, and anchors for group identification.

THE ROAD AHEAD

There are several priorities for advancing our understanding of career development in an increasingly boundaryless-career context. First, to develop the theoretical and practical relevance of this perspective, further research needs to examine the determinants and outcomes of particular boundaryless-career trajectories, thereby strengthening the generalizability of findings. This may be achieved with research that identifies determinants of career outcomes, such as mobility, career success, and satisfaction, through systematic comparison of boundaryless-career trajectories within and across different settings.

Second, further research needs to explore how people’s understanding of their competencies, networks, and the meaning of their careers influence each other and shape their career behaviors. For example, studies may explore how particular learning needs determine particular network structures. Likewise, systematic preferences for particular types of competencies and network configurations may influence individuals’ evaluation of experiences and formation of career identities.

Third, the further development of the boundaryless-career perspective requires attention to the dynamics

between individuals' search for self-determination and structural constraints to career mobility. Attention to both the objective and subjective experience of careers promises to enrich our understanding of how career actors' behaviors and attitudes may help them respond to structural constraints and a perceived lack of mobility.

Finally, the application of the boundaryless-career perspective to more traditional areas of research in organizational behavior and human resource management would be particularly beneficial. The boundaryless-career perspective reminds us that individuals will respond to their contexts not only from the viewpoint of their current jobs but also from the longer-term perspective of their careers. Once we accept that both individuals and organizations are participants in the same, increasingly boundaryless career context, there are new possibilities. From this perspective, individuals would be concerned about accumulating career capital in terms of knowledge, skills, social networks, and identity investments. Accordingly, organizations would be concerned about building intellectual capital in terms of their capacities for adaptation, innovation, and knowledge retention. Traditional ideas about permanent jobs or lifetime employment fail to recognize these changing concerns of both parties.

In conclusion, a decade of research exploring boundaryless-career phenomena provides individuals, organizational practitioners, and career scholars with a more balanced view of the internal and external dynamics that influence individuals' abilities to enact boundaryless careers. Internally, boundaryless careers promise adaptability, the development of career identities that are aligned with personal values, and the attainment of subjective criteria of career success. Externally, boundaryless careers require attention to the marketability of competencies, social networks, and institutional environments that constrain and facilitate mobility and to the economic, social, and emotional costs of boundaryless-career moves. The relevance of the boundaryless-career perspective for career development and human resource practices will depend on our ability to give consideration to these dynamics.

—Svenja Tams and Michael B. Arthur

See also Contingent employment, Part-time employment, Psychological contract, Social capital

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BRIDGE EMPLOYMENT

As the workforce ages, career counselors will increasingly be working with older workers, especially adults who work during retirement. Career counseling can now extend to a client's retirement. Some individuals do take the traditional retirement route (i.e., move from full-time work to full-time leisure), but a substantial number of older Americans remain in the labor force after they leave their career jobs. Labor and employment economists have found that by age 60, more than half of all persons have left their career jobs, but only one in nine is fully retired. These individuals who have retired but have not left the workforce take jobs, known as *bridge employment*, that act as a transition between long-term career positions and total retirement. Bridge employment often involves a

combination of fewer hours, less stress or responsibility, greater flexibility, self-employment, and fewer physical demands.

According to the U.S. Administration on Aging recent statistics, Americans are living longer and healthier lives. People who live to age 65 can expect to survive beyond this average (19.4 years of age for a female and 16.4 years for a male). Will these adults have sufficient resources to live comfortably these many more years? Bridge employment contributes to older adults' economic security by providing additional income. In addition, bridge employment contributes to an adult's emotional well-being. Adults who work in bridge jobs report they feel better about themselves both physically and emotionally, have more balanced lives, and enjoy the work they are doing. They view their bridge jobs as the opportunity to do something meaningful in their lives and to assert control of their work (i.e., task assignment, time, and flexibility), which they may not have experienced in their long-term careers. Older workers are more likely to retire into bridge jobs that are similar to their long-term careers (i.e., within same environment or using similar skills), because they like being connected with the work they had done previously. Some adults like the fact that their bridge jobs allow them to focus on what they love doing and not worry about the promotion career ladder.

When older adults switch to their bridge jobs, even to jobs within their career fields, they may experience different levels of difficulty. Possible barriers include watching their jobs disappear due to technology advances, experiencing age discrimination, questioning their ability to learn, or not knowing how to do a job search. Many adults who have mapped out long-term career paths and planned their financial futures fail to plan their next career step in retirement. They do not anticipate certain consequences of the transition, such as changing their work roles (e.g., from supervisor to worker), adjusting to new environments, going back to school, or dealing with the expectations of family and friends.

Regardless of the many challenges, most older workers are able to successfully move into bridge jobs without any career assistance. They rely on their past life experiences and skills to handle the transition. However, a significant number of retirees struggle to find a niche in retirement. They are overwhelmed with the job search process, which is new to them; discouraged with their unmet expectations; and frustrated

with the limited opportunities that offer both flexibility and challenging work. Those who persevere through two or three different bridge jobs often eventually find satisfaction in their new career efforts.

Career counselors can play an instrumental role in helping individuals make this transition more easily. Unfortunately, older adults are less likely to take advantage of career counseling services, such as seeking out help from a career counselor, attending a career development workshop, joining a support group, or reviewing career/job resources (i.e., publications and Internet). Many older adults see themselves as their own transition resources. Therefore, the career counseling community must reach out to this demographic group and promote the benefits of career counseling for adults who plan to work in retirement. Possible promotion strategies include connecting with financial planners, human resource managers who are responsible for employee retirement benefits, and the aging network (e.g., Area Offices on Aging, Title V Programs).

In making the decision to work in retirement, most older adults want to work, but only on their terms, which encompass two factors: (a) asserting control (e.g., how they work, whom they work with, what they work on, where they work) and (b) doing something meaningful (e.g., impact on their own development, family, community, or society). As these two factors have different meanings for individuals, counselors need to help their clients identify and clarify these conditions. Counselors must consider their older clients as individuals and avoid grouping them indiscriminately into one category, and they must also be aware of the unique issues faced by older workers, especially age discrimination. In this regard, counselors should become familiar with the different forms of age discrimination; understand the Age Discrimination Employment Act (ADEA), including the law's scope and older workers' legal rights; and refer clients who feel they have experienced age discrimination to the appropriate resource. Older adults have lengthy work histories, which have given them opportunities to acquire an extensive array of skills and experiences, and career counselors must help clients sort out and assess their preferred activities, especially their functional skills and interests. As there is a good likelihood that older workers have not done recent job searches, counselors must coach their clients on the entire process, including networking, using the Internet, developing résumés, and preparing for interviews.

Work has redefined retirement. More and more older adults are recognizing that bridge employment is a viable choice for their retirement. Eighty percent of baby boomers plan to work in retirement, which means the trend of older workers retiring to bridge jobs will not be going away. Career counselors can be an integral part of this trend by recognizing that their role does not end at a client's retirement but extends for many more years.

—Lorene B. Ulrich

See also Career transition, Late career stage, Phased retirement

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BURNOUT

Many individuals feel "burned out" from their jobs. Indeed, *job burnout* can be a substantial obstacle to employee and organizational well-being. Christina Maslach, a pioneer in the study of the burnout process, has defined job burnout as a prolonged response to chronic (that is, long-lasting) stressors in the workplace. Maslach has also developed several versions of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), the most popular instrument used to measure employee burnout.

It is generally believed that there are three aspects or dimensions of job burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and cynicism, and a lack of personal accomplishment. That is, employees who are burned out from their jobs are emotionally exhausted, feel cynical about their work and detached from others in the workplace, and feel ineffective at work. Although burnout was initially studied among employees in the human services and health care fields, who have emotionally intense contact with clients or patients, it is now recognized that burnout can be experienced by employees in a wide range of occupations and industries.

FACTORS THAT PRODUCE BURNOUT

Although several different theories have been proposed to explain why employees experience burnout, one common theme is the belief that burnout is caused by a lack of fit between the job situation and the person. For example, a variety of work stressors, such as an ambiguous work environment, a heavy workload, extensive work pressure, and stressful events at work, are associated with emotional exhaustion and, to a lesser extent, depersonalization. Presumably, these stressors produce burnout because they represent obstacles to achieving a fit between the employee and the job. Factors such as a lack of resources at work, the absence of social support, and a diminished feeling of group cohesion and community can also produce emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, although they don't seem to have quite as strong an effect on burnout as do the work stressors related to lack of fit.

Maslach and her colleagues have recently identified six areas of work life that can produce job burnout: excessive workload, lack of control, insufficient rewards, lack of community, feelings of unfairness, and conflict in values between the individual and the organization. Problems in each of these six areas make it difficult for an employee to achieve congruence or fit between his or her goals or values and the work environment.

Although the job situation has a powerful effect on employee burnout, the individual's personality may also play a role in job burnout. It is possible that some personality characteristics (such as neuroticism and an external locus of control) make employees more susceptible to stress and burnout, whereas others (such as high self-esteem, hardiness, openness to new experiences, and agreeableness) protect employees from

burnout. Nevertheless, Maslach and other scholars believe that the job situation has a stronger and more consistent effect on job burnout than do personality characteristics.

CONSEQUENCES OF BURNOUT

Job burnout has been linked to such work-related outcomes as diminished performance on the job, a lack of commitment to the organization, a low level of job satisfaction, and a desire to quit the job. Beyond these consequences, burned-out employees can experience negative emotions, apathy, and physical health problems. Job burnout can also affect an employee's family life. For example, research has shown that burned-out police officers tend to be moody and withdrawn at home and dissatisfied with their marriages. Moreover, an employee's job burnout can "cross over" to his or her spouse, producing a high level of burnout in the spouse. Clearly, burnout has a wide range of negative consequences to the employee and, ultimately, the organization.

ACTIONS TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF BURNOUT

Because both job characteristics and personal characteristics can produce burnout, interventions can focus on either changing the organization or changing the employee, although these two approaches are not mutually exclusive. Interventions that target the organization for change attempt to reduce the organizational stressors that produce burnout. Interventions that target the employee try to enhance the individual's ability to recognize and cope effectively with the stressors that are producing the burnout.

A number of scholars have observed that the research conducted to evaluate burnout reduction interventions is quite limited. Nevertheless, some studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of such interventions, and Maslach and her colleagues have recently developed a comprehensive, research-based program to prevent burnout in organizations. Research should continue to find ways to help organizations become less stressful and more supportive of their employees so that both parties—organizations and employees—can thrive and function effectively.

—Jeffrey H. Greenhaus

See also Careers and health, Stress at work

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BUSINESS SIMULATIONS

The term *business simulations* refers to exercises that represent processes involved in the production and delivery of goods and services. These exercises may be used to study the processes themselves, to enhance their teaching, or to assess proficiency in their management. When the exercises are scored, they often are called "business games."

Business simulations may represent processes phenotypically or genotypically. In a *phenotypical representation*, the process is modeled mathematically; in a *genotypical representation*, it is played out in a form constrained by the setting of the exercise. The marketing process, for example, is represented phenotypically when participants of the simulation sell goods to fictitious customers. The same process is represented genotypically when participants sell goods to each other. Both types of representation may be included in a single exercise.

Many business simulations are computerized, but the computer's role in the exercise can vary substantially. The simulation can be computer directed, computer based, computer controlled, or computer assisted, depending on the relationship among participants and between the computer and the participants. The nature of these relationships determines the resources required to develop the simulation and the settings to which it may be applied.

A simulation is *computer directed* if the participants interact primarily with the computer, which controls the flow of events. In these simulations, a participant's actions are limited to deciding the pace, starting point, and ending point of the simulation. Often, the simulation animates a sequence of events. It may show, for example, how goods are delivered and payment received in international transactions.

A simulation is *computer based* if the participants, interacting primarily with the computer, control the flow of events. These simulations are often called *discrete-event simulations*. They may be implemented using either a general-purpose spreadsheet program or a specialized software package that supports animation. Typically, the participant launches the software repeatedly, to see how changes in values and algorithms affect the outcome.

A simulation is *computer controlled* if the participants, interacting primarily with each other rather than with the computer, must conform to a mandated flow of events that strictly constrains the number of decisions they can make and the time they have for making their decisions. These simulations are often designed to enable teams, each representing the management of a firm, to compete against each other. Accordingly, the results of the decisions made by each firm depend on the decisions made by the other competing firms. This type of simulation was introduced in the late 1950s, when mainframe computers became widely available. They are used extensively in schools of business administration, especially in the disciplines of management and marketing.

A simulation is *computer assisted* if the participants, interacting primarily with each other, control the flow of events. In these simulations, the computer program presents a scenario, tracks accounts, processes transactions, and facilitates interactions, generally performing the kinds of supportive tasks that computers perform in the everyday world, without strictly constraining the number or timing of participants' decisions. Thus, decisions may be entered whenever participants choose to enter them, and each decision is executed whenever the necessary conditions for its execution have been met. When this kind of simulation is played competitively, the advantage generally goes to the player who acts first, so participants tend to be more keenly aware of the pressure of time than they would be with the formal deadlines of computer-controlled simulations.

With respect to scope, business simulations may be functional, total enterprise, or total economy in scope, depending on the scenario they present and the roles they make available. *Functional simulations* limit themselves to the concepts of a particular business discipline, such as marketing or operations management. They put participants into discipline-specific managerial roles. *Total-enterprise simulations* encompass all the functional areas of business. These put

participants into top-management roles. *Total-economy simulations* give participants multiple roles, such as consumer, investor, and company manager, which jointly support a sustainable economy.

With respect to technological sophistication, business simulations range from simple board games to software packages that track every participant and coordinate activities remotely through the Internet. The *simple board games* are useful for occasional events in variable settings. They are usually amenable to shorter or longer play, depending on the circumstances. *Internet-remoting software* packages are ideal for distance education, as they allow participants to interact with each other even when they are not physically present at the same place and time. Between the two extremes are *batch-processed setups*, whereby participants enter decisions on paper or electronic forms that are sent to an administrator for processing, after which the administrator returns the results. Batch-processed setups generally are run for 4 to 12 rounds. Transmission between participants and administrator may be physical or by fax, telephone, electronic file transfer, or electronic mail.

Free riding, endgaming, and chance factors are issues that must be managed when business games are used in a context in which scores have serious consequences for participants. *Free riding* occurs when some participants receive credit for work that is not theirs, a situation that arises when teamwork is required. It is attenuated when the simulation supplies individual scores in addition to team scores, when teams are limited to three members, and when teams have the authority to remove recalcitrant members. *Endgaming* occurs when participants take account of the impending termination of the exercise in the decisions they make. It can be reduced by not announcing the termination period of the exercise in advance, by requiring a narrative justification of each participant's or each team's final state, and by running the exercise for a longer interval. Chance factors arise from stochastic elements in the simulation's algorithms and from the circumstances of the exercise. These factors are mitigated by running the exercise for a longer interval and by a tournament approach, whereby each participant associates with a different collection of other participants in each phase of a multiphase exercise.

The learning benefits of business simulations have been studied extensively. Simulations supply experiences, the value of which depends on the participants, setting, design, and execution of the exercise. How the

benefits are affected by differences in these factors is a subject of continuing research.

—*Precha Thavikulwat*

See also On-the-job training, Training and development, Vocational education

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BUTCHER TREATMENT PLANNING INVENTORY (BTPI)

The *Butcher Treatment Planning Inventory* (BTPI) is a behaviorally oriented, 210-item, true-or-false measure of factors relevant to psychological treatment planning. It is intended to be atheoretical, though it was informed by behavioral and cognitive-behavioral treatment orientations. It requires roughly a sixth-grade reading level and, under standard conditions, can be completed in 30 minutes. It can be scored by hand, using templates, or using computer programs. Computer-based interpretations of the results are available. In addition to norms based on a general sample, norms also exist specifically for college students (which can be used in both research and clinical practice) as well as for psychotherapy patients (which are intended for research purposes).

SCALE DESCRIPTIONS

The BTPI items provide individual scores on 14 scales that fall into three clusters. The Validity Indicators assess contradictory response patterns (Inconsistent Responding, INC); unrealistically positive

self-presentation (Overly Virtuous Self-Views, VIR); symptom exaggeration (Exaggerated Problem Presentation, EXA); and resistance to new behaviors and ideas (Closed-Mindedness, CLM). The Treatment Issues scales assess difficulties in allying with others (Problems in Relationship Formation, REL); tendency to somaticize distress (Somatization of Conflict, SOM); negative attitudes about psychotherapy (Low Expectation of Therapeutic Benefit, EXP); self-centeredness (Self-Oriented/Narcissism, NAR); and experience of a negative psychosocial environment (Perceived Lack of Environmental Support, ENV). The Current Symptoms scales assess low mood (Depression, DEP); tension and nervousness (Anxiety, ANX); hostile attitudes (Anger-Out, A-O); self-blame (Anger-In, A-I); and potentially delusional beliefs (Unusual Thinking, PSY). A General Pathology Composite combines scores on DEP, ANX, A-O, and A-I. A Treatment Difficulty Composite combines scores on PSY, REL, SOM, EXP, NAR, and ENV.

USES OF THE BTPI

The BTPI scales provide extensive information regarding numerous patient characteristics that could affect the psychotherapy process, particularly those that could prevent or delay therapy-related change. The BTPI can be administered at several different points over a course of psychotherapy. In the early stages of psychotherapy, it can highlight initial treatment foci, whether psychological symptoms, process factors, or interpersonal variables. For example, an elevated score on Problems in Relationship Formation might suggest a need to make special efforts to engage a patient in a therapeutic alliance, over and above whatever steps typically might be taken early on in psychotherapy. Initial scores can also serve as baseline data for subsequent evaluation of psychotherapy-related change, providing an empirical basis for decisions about issues such as extending or terminating psychotherapy. Either the full measure or one of three briefer forms (the 80-item Symptom Monitoring Form, the 171-item Treatment Process/Symptom Form, or the 174-item Treatment Issues Form) can be readministered to gauge psychotherapy progress and outcome.

Early research on the BTPI highlights its potential usefulness in guiding the treatment-planning process. Given that it bridges the traditions of objective personality assessment and psychotherapeutic intervention, it enables clinicians to make thoughtful,

data-based decisions about how to proceed with the care of their patients, increasing the likelihood that psychotherapy resources will be allocated sensibly and in a manner that promotes psychological growth.

—James N. Butcher and Julia N. Perry

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CALIFORNIA PSYCHOLOGICAL INVENTORY

The *California Psychological Inventory* (CPI) was first published in 1956. It has a historical relationship to the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and shares many items with the older, well-known MMPI. The CPI has been studied extensively and has been widely used in both research and applied contexts. As a general-purpose personality assessment tool, it is widely respected and arguably the most effective instrument available for use with normal populations.

An important source of the utility of the CPI is found in its structural complexity. Use of the CPI involves application and interpretation of the instrument at three different levels. The CPI consists of 20 dimensions of personality with a strong interpersonal orientation. The most recent version of the CPI employs 434 items. Three of the 20 scales are validity scales that assess attitudes related to test taking. Harrison Gough has referred to the dimensions measured by the basic scales as “folk concepts,” that is, concepts that are used in routine daily life by people to describe patterns of behavior in themselves and others. Empirical methods of construction involving contrasted groups were used in developing 13 scales. Four scales were developed using internal consistency as the primary construction strategy, and 3 were constructed using a combination of empirical methods with the internal consistency criterion. In almost 50 years since its first publication, considerable validity evidence has collectively accumulated for these scales.

The structural characteristics of the 20 scales have been studied extensively. In general, five factors appear to underlie the 20 basic scales of the CPI. Although factor analysis was not a method employed in developing the CPI scales, a relatively stable factor structure has been reported that generally resembles the one reported in the CPI manual.

One of the guiding principles in the development of the CPI was that it was to be an *open system*, a system of constructs to which others might be added if they proved to be useful or necessary for some particular purpose. Indeed, a number of special-purpose scales have been developed, such as Managerial Potential, Work Orientation, and Leadership. The scoring keys for 13 scales designed for special purposes are provided in the CPI manual.

A major feature emerging from the 1987 revision of the CPI was the addition of three vector scales. The specific procedures by which these vector scales were actually developed have been a source of some criticism of the CPI. Nonetheless, these vectors are recommended as a source of information in profile interpretation. Vectors 1 (External vs. Internal) and 2 (Norm Favoring vs. Norm Questioning) are placed in perpendicular relationship to one another to create four types: Alphas, Betas, Gammas, and Deltas. The four types represent types of lifestyles into which individuals may be classified as the first level of profile interpretation. The third vector, Level of Realization, forms the third dimension of a cuboid model of personality structure and is represented on a seven-point scale. Individuals' ratings on this scale reflect the degree of ego integration and realization of the positive potential of their type. The 20 basic scales

may be used for more specific exploration after the vector scores have been interpreted.

The CPI has several strong features to recommend its usage. An extensive manual with over 400 pages, including appendices and references, is a significant resource. The standardized reports for results on individuals are well designed and organized. These reports include reliability data, graphical and narrative description of lifestyle type and level for the individual (based on the three vector scores), a graphical profile for the individual on the 20 folk scales with same-sex norms and mixed-sex norms, and helpful interpretive information for use by professionals. The standardized report also includes results for seven of the special-purpose scales that would often be relevant in the context of career assessment or exploration. The use of nonpathological constructs in common usage is a noteworthy advantage of the CPI in use with normal populations. The folk constructs were selected to maximize cross-cultural applications. Its emphasis on constructs with significant social relevance is also a useful characteristic in practice. The related-applications guide serves as a resource for those working in career development areas.

Strengths and weaknesses of the CPI have been thoroughly addressed in the literature over the last four decades. Certain theoretical criticisms of the CPI have persisted over the years but do not distract from the applied uses of the instrument. Since the 1987 revision, one controversy over the CPI has involved the development of the vector scores and their use in forming the types and levels of the cuboid model of personality. Anne Anastasi and Susana Urbina discussed the implications of converting continuous-scale scores to dichotomous groupings and further pointed out issues related to measuring personality types or categories instead of continuously distributed constructs. In recent years, psychometricians have argued for and against such practices, depending on their theoretical views of the nature of personality and demands of its assessment. There seem to be reasonable arguments on both sides of this issue. Since the 1987 revision, the CPI has included serious efforts to define and validate the four types based on lifestyle or personality characteristics. Alternatively, the availability, validity, and usefulness of the folk scales of the CPI remain intact, so that one need not rely on the typologies provided. In fact, continued research on the relationship of the typologies to the folk scales seems important.

The relevance of the CPI to career development in general is highly notable. Gough provided a thorough review of several applications of the CPI to the world of career and work. Jody Newman, Elizabeth Gray, and Dale Fuqua reported substantial relationships between factors and scales of the CPI and career indecision status, while other researchers found relationships between career maturity and both personality type and social adjustment as measured by the CPI. Growing interest in the relationships among personality constructs and vocational interests may also support career-related uses of the CPI. There is little doubt that the CPI will continue to be a major resource for career development professionals and the clients they serve.

—Dale R. Fuqua and Jody L. Newman

See also Big Five factors of personality, Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Instrument-2 (MMPI-2), Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Personality and careers, Sixteen Personality Test (16PF)

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CAMPBELL INTEREST AND SKILL SURVEY

The *Campbell Interest and Skill Survey* (CISS), developed by David P. Campbell, measures self-reported interests and skills. Used primarily in career exploration, it was designed for individuals who plan to pursue careers requiring a college education. It is helpful for adults considering career changes, trying to understand job dissatisfaction, or thinking about retirement. Written for individuals with a sixth-grade reading level or above, the CISS can be given to adults and adolescents age 15 years and older. It is appropriate

for use in high schools, colleges/universities, human resource departments, and outplacement firms.

The CISS reports interest and skill standard scores on 7 Orientation scales (Influencing, Organizing, Helping, Creating, Analyzing, Producing, Adventuring); 29 Basic Interest and Skill scales (e.g., Leadership, Supervision, Counseling, Art/Design, Science, Animal Care, Athletics/Physical Fitness); 60 Occupational scales (e.g., Attorney, Accountant, Teacher K-12, Fashion Designer, Physician, Architect, Police Officer); and 3 Special scales (Academic Focus, Extraversion, Variety). Three procedural checks (Response Percent Check, Inconsistency Check, Omitted Items Check) detect problems with answer sheet completion or scoring.

The seven orientations are similar to John Holland's six RIASEC types (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional), although there are some differences: Influencing measures leadership, while Enterprising focuses on sales; Organizing relates to management and financial services, while Conventional deals with clerical and office work; and the two CISS scales of Producing (mechanical, construction, and farming activities) and Adventuring (military, police, and athletic activities) are represented by Holland's Realistic scale. The CISS orientations provide the organization for the Basic Interest and Skill scales and the Occupational scales.

Published in 1992, the CISS has one form, available in two languages, English and Spanish, and two formats, pencil-and-paper and online administration. Most people complete the CISS in 30 to 45 minutes. It is scored by machine with several options: MICROTTEST Q Assessment System software for local scoring, optical scan scoring, mail-in scoring service, and the Internet.

The CISS items and response choices are integrated into one booklet. The 320 items are current, and each occupational title includes a brief description. Respondents indicate their attraction toward or liking of 200 academic and occupational items, alphabetically arranged in three sections: 85 occupations (e.g., architect, designing new homes and buildings; nurse, caring for patients in a hospital); 43 school subjects (e.g., music, algebra, psychology); 72 activities (e.g., manage the work of others, operate scientific equipment, plan an advertising campaign); and the respondent's self-evaluated skills in 120 occupational activities (e.g., developing computer programs, writing a newspaper story, selling a product or concept).

Each item has a six-choice response format, ranging from *very positive* to *very negative*, with no neutral or

middle alternative. Responses for interest items are *strongly like* to *strongly dislike*. Choices for skill items are *expert* to *none* and measure self-efficacy or confidence to perform the activities, not actual ability.

In a comprehensive, 11-page individual profile, CISS standard scores are presented numerically and graphically on unisex or combined-gender scales. For each Interest scale, there is a corresponding Skill scale. An individual's responses are compared with the responses of employed people who enjoy their work. Narrative descriptions provide interpretations. Four defined patterns of interest and skill scores are reported: *Pursue*: seriously consider, high interest, high confidence; *Develop*: seek training, high interest; low confidence; *Explore*: apply abilities in another field, low interest, high confidence; *Avoid*: not consider, no interest, no confidence. Patterns in which interests and skills fall in a midrange are not labeled.

The Interest/Skill Planning Worksheet and the CISS Career Planner assist respondents to organize results, consider themes, and examine career directions. The CISS manual includes development procedures; technical information (norms, reliability, validity); interpretation guides with case studies; and transparency masters for group interpretations.

The Orientation scales and the Basic scales were normed on a general reference sample of 5,225 employed people (3,435 men and 1,790 women), including 248 ethnic minorities, in 65 occupations. The 60 Occupational scales were normed on men and women employed in each occupation. Sample sizes ranged from 35 to 199, with a median of 76. The Orientation scales and the Basic Interest and Skill scales are homogeneous. Each scale consists of similar items that are highly related.

The Occupational scales have heterogeneous item content, as they were developed by contrasting the responses of occupational samples with those of the general reference group. The Occupational scales allow respondents to compare their interests and skills with those of people employed in different fields.

Using modern technology, development of the CISS was based on knowledge and experience gained from statistically designed career assessments, originating with E. K. Strong Jr. in 1927. The CISS is psychometrically sound; it was well constructed and technically tested. Using a standard score of 50 to represent the mean of the general reference sample on all sets of scales makes results easy to interpret. The scales function as they were intended. People in

different occupations report different patterns of interests and skills.

—Kathleen R. Boggs

See also Career exploration, Holland's theory of vocational choice, Interests, Person-environment fit (P-E fit), Strong Interest Inventory

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CAREER

Derived from Latin and French, the term *career* originally denoted a pathway or racecourse; the course or rapid motion of people, horses, hawks, heavenly bodies; or a course of action. By the early nineteenth century, it had taken on some of today's meanings and since then has come to refer to some key features of Western society. It is now called into use in a variety of ways in several domains, for different purposes, from different perspectives, and with different underlying assumptions. These diverse uses create many contextualized meanings so that career is not a universally definable concept, but a range of constructs, often with some elements in common. These many meanings endow career with a multilayered richness, although this can make the term ambiguous and even ambivalent and necessitates care in interpreting any specific use of the word. Today's greater international

interchange on career matters also hinders translation of the term into other languages.

CONSTRUCTS OF CAREER

A few examples can be used to show how meanings of career vary both between and within different domains. However, the word *career* is often not clearly defined, even in academic usage, and is frequently interchanged with the term *vocational*; and when it is used to modify other terms, such as *development* or *guidance*, the meaning of the term is generally taken for granted.

Career is a familiar term in lay language, in which it is used to denote, among other things, individual work histories, sequences of and patterns in occupations and work positions, and upward progress in an occupation or in life generally. Characteristically, it is differentiated from "just a job" and applied particularly to the work history and progress of professionals, managers, and other elites. However, it may also be used more generally to refer to a biography or life history or as an overarching construct to make sense of life.

Constructs of career are used in several academic disciplines, such as sociology, labor economics, vocational and career psychology, and work psychology. For example, career is used in a range of sociological explanations. From the perspective of those interested in the role of occupations in social stratification and mobility, career choice is construed in terms of influences and constraints on the individual, such as family of origin, education, race, ethnicity, and gender. Other sociologists who use the construct of career in studying organizations see it in terms of, for example, career patterns, trajectories, contingencies, turning points, the accumulation of cultural capital, and issues of power and control in and over employees. A different perspective on career was taken by the early-twentieth-century Chicago sociologists, whose work has become classic in career literature. They saw it as the transitions made by individuals in a wide range of contexts, not just in occupations or organizations, and their ethnographic research suggested that individuals develop both their identities and their roles as they move through a series of status passages. Hence, their construct of career fuses objective and subjective and plays a recursive role in linking individuals to institutions and structure.

Very different constructs are to be found in vocational and career psychology. Here, the emphasis is on

the individual, and there is limited concern for wider contextual factors and their constraints and opportunities for the individual. However, the effects of race, ethnicity, class, and gender are now receiving greater acknowledgment. Career has particular significance in this domain, and only a few of the most commonly found constructs can be noted here. One focuses on the congruence of person and occupation, using the differentialist, trait-and-factor approach that matches individual traits, abilities, and dispositions to the demands of occupations. Another frames career in terms of the implementation of the individual's self-concept and development through life, recognizing the stages, tasks, context of development, and career maturity. Other constructs view career in terms of individual agency, social learning, information processing, planning, and decision making. Others focus on how people make sense of their experiences and construct meaning through actions, narrative, and metaphor. Further constructs of career are used in work (industrial, occupational, organizational) psychology, where career is construed in terms of the relationship between (a) the individual and the organization and (b) the influence of the structure and dynamics of the organization, the design of jobs, the reward system, performance management, managerial style, and control.

Career is also a key construct in several areas of practice. In career guidance and counseling, career choice and development are construed in terms of how people can both fit into society and fulfill themselves by entering appropriate jobs and developing themselves further through their work. Constructs focus on the need, formerly of young people and now increasingly of adults as well, to gain appropriate information about occupational opportunities and constraints, be aware of their own strengths and weaknesses, make realistic decisions in the light of these, and become empowered in their work lives. More recent national priorities have introduced another construct of career that is concerned less with clients' fulfillment than with their employability, achieved by developing themselves and managing their careers.

In education, constructs of career have traditionally been used in addressing the transition from school to work, but now increasing concern about the relevance of all levels of education for the world of work highlights the significance of educational and career choices. Constructs focusing on informed, realistic decision making are used directly by career guidance

specialists and indirectly in the school and higher-education curriculum material designed to increase awareness of work-life issues.

In human resource management, which aims to achieve the effective performance of an organization through its employees, the construct of career represents the engagement of the individual with the organization. From this perspective, career plays a part in organizational reward and control systems, and career management is more than people managing their own careers. It refers to how managers attempt to influence their employees' careers in the interest of both individuals and organizations by planning, facilitating, and monitoring employees' progress through the organization and by specific interventions. Here, constructs of career development concern what organizational experiences and sequence of jobs will best develop, motivate, and retain employees and what personal investment in skills they will need to make.

In the domain of public policy, career is used primarily to modify terms such as *education* and *guidance*. Faced with the need for new skills, adaptability, and redeployment in their workforces and with the problems caused by unemployment and social exclusion, governments in the industrialized world today are concerned with developing human capital. Government perspective on career guidance is that it has a key role in helping labor markets work effectively in the interests of national competitiveness and in helping education systems meet their goals, promoting equity, combating the negative effects of social exclusion, and supporting lifelong learning. It is needed not only by young people entering the labor market but also by adults throughout their working lives, so that people need to develop the skills not just of initial decision making but also of managing their careers.

The many meanings of career are evident in the different ways in which the same terminology, such as *career development* and *management*, is used in various domains. Nevertheless, there have been some attempts to develop a more comprehensive understanding of career by, for example, integrating sociological and psychological interpretations.

INFLUENCES SHAPING THE CONSTRUCTS OF CAREER

Career has taken on new significance and meanings as its social and economic context has changed over time. In the midtwentieth century, as large-scale

bureaucracies were burgeoning in increasingly complex Western industrial societies, career started to receive attention in theory and practice. Representing individual mobility and meritocracy, it captured something of the relationship between the individual and society or organization at a time when the ethos of individualism was growing even as, it was being argued, a mass society was emerging. In this particular context, emphasis on the effective matching of person and occupation, advancement, continuity and future planning, and the separation of home and work became characteristic of twentieth-century constructs of career.

Toward the end of the twentieth century, this context changed considerably, and new forms of career emerged, such as the boundaryless, portfolio, and protean forms, with the emphasis on networks rather than hierarchy. Concern with discontinuities, endings and beginnings, flexibility, instrumentality, self-management and self-direction, employability, lifelong learning, and work-life balance have now become characteristic of constructs of career. As the context continues to change, new constructs of career are likely to develop.

The assumptions underpinning constructs of career have also changed over time. Midtwentieth-century conditions and social norms ensured that opportunities for upward social mobility and occupational advancement were greatest for White, male, middle-class workers, so that career was then a construct used largely of the experiences of White, male professionals and managers or those who aspired to such elite status. Indeed, when some terms are translated into French and Spanish, career is rendered as “profession.” The frequent use of college students for the large-scale samples in much career research built those norms into the career theories of the time as largely unquestioned assumptions. However, those norms are now being challenged as multicultural diversity is recognized and accepted; the construct of career is no longer regarded as being of relevance only to elites.

Constructs of career are also underpinned by even more basic assumptions. Science, which has shaped thinking in modern times, informed the interpretation of the individual, the environment, and the relationship between them and generated the methodological approaches to studying them that have been adopted in much highly respected career research. Toward the end of the twentieth century, however, new views that critique those assumptions have gained some currency.

Constructivism, social constructionism, contextualism, and postmodernism offer different ways of understanding and argue that knowledge is constructed in historical and cultural context through social processes and actions. Such approaches propose that what have traditionally been regarded as facts, such as the structure of an organization or individual traits, are interpretations constructed in a particular context for a particular purpose. These views also highlight the way career is constructed through social interaction, throw into question some key notions such as rational decision making, and underpin the interpretations of career in terms of personal constructs, narrative, metaphor, and contextual action theory that are now becoming more common.

These new views also suggest that different communities have their own discourses that construct and configure meanings that are central to their identities, interests, and power relations and use rhetoric to promulgate and sustain them. Hence, the various approaches to career seen in the several domains above can be taken as discourses of career. In other words, there are several types of stakeholders in career, and they all view the construct from their own perspectives and use it for their own purposes. In addition to individuals, stakeholders include government, employers, academics, counselors, and society itself. They use the construct rhetorically to convey their own viewpoints and values and to shape others’ interpretations. Vocational psychologists use career to empower clients; employers use career to motivate and retain staff; and policymakers use career to develop human capital and strengthen social inclusion. By regarding career as tying people to labor markets and employment in ways that are both personally meaningful and beneficial to work organizations and society, the rhetorical use of the construct supports the ideologies of society and thereby contributes to its stability.

COMMON ELEMENTS IN CONSTRUCTS OF CAREER

Across the range of constructs used to understand career, some common elements can be inferred. Career refers to movement (of an object or person) through time and (social) space. Most commonly, this is through occupational or organizational space, but it could be through a series of identity-bestowing roles or situations, as in the career of the TB patient or marijuana user. This movement is contextualized,

anchored in a specific space (setting in motion the process of constructing a range of meanings).

Movement through space is gauged in relation to some known point, which for career is located within social space, whether construed as social structure or a network of relationships. This means that the understanding of an individual's career is achieved by reference to others, whether individual or collective, and hence according to the norms, such as status, worth, or rates of progress, which give differential values to roles and relationships and the moves between them. Hence, evaluative judgments and normative expectations inform some constructs of career, whether explicitly or implicitly.

The movement of career was traditionally seen as continuous, with discontinuity or a break in career calling for explanation. The single actions or steps that constitute this continuous movement are not considered piecemeal or haphazard; between them is implied a connective tissue that transforms the whole into a course or trajectory. Different constructs of career make their own interpretation of this tissue; for example, the objective pathways individuals follow, the agency of individuals whose decisions and actions shape their career movement, or the story line individuals weave of their hopes, decisions, and actions. Despite discontinuity in the objective pathways of many of today's careers, this connective tissue can still be inferred in subjective experiences.

Career is also movement through time and relates a person's past, present and, importantly, future. Some constructs of career approach time in linear fashion, with the present flowing from a known past toward an expected future. Others, Janus-like, look backward from the present to interrogate the past and forward to construct the future, or address how the future motivates action and the construction of meaning in the present. Thus, career has been used to construct actions and events, and in some instances, the self, across time. This has informed the interpretation that career attributes coherence, continuity, and social meaning to individual lives.

Many constructs of career reflect some of its original meanings, frequently, the dual meaning of pathway and movement along it. This view points to the most distinctive characteristic of career. Career represents the coexistence of the objective and the subjective, both the social reality and the individual's experience of it; even when the focus is on the former, the latter, though submerged, is still present. Career also represents other dualities: individual and

collective, and rhetoric and praxis. Its two faces make career inherently ambivalent. It is not "either/or" but "both/and," making career a very powerful and fascinating construct that can continue to offer meaning for the twenty-first century.

—Audrey Collin

See also Boundaryless career, Career as a calling, Career construction theory, Protean career

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CAREER ANCHORS

The concept of *career anchors* evolved from research on adult development. Most of career theory focuses

on selection of an occupation or on a classification of types of careers embedded in the occupational structure. Career anchor theory deals with the choices adults make when they are well into their careers and classifies adult careers in terms of the major motivational forces that drive them. Career anchor theory focuses on the “internal” career, the career as experienced by the career occupant.

Within any given occupational group, there will be people with different career anchors; hence, this is not a theory of occupational type. In fact, what is striking is that in any given occupation, one will find many different career anchor types pursuing that career. Career anchor theory focuses on how motivation, competence, and values gradually combine into a career self-concept that constrains and determines career choices throughout adult life. People with different career anchors desire different kinds of work settings, are motivated by different kinds of incentives and rewards, and are vulnerable to different kinds of career mismanagement.

ORIGIN OF THE CONCEPT

The basic research leading to the concept of career anchors was begun for an entirely different purpose. In the mid-1950s, there was considerable concern over corporate indoctrination of new employees, best articulated by William H. Whyte’s 1956 book *The Organization Man*. In the aftermath of the Korean conflict, the concept of “brainwashing” entered the English vocabulary, and a concern developed that corporate socialization practices were uncomfortably close to the “coercive persuasion” that had been observed in Korean POW camps and in Chinese Communist prisons on the mainland.

General Electric’s (GE) management development center at Crotonville, New York, was boldly identified as the GE “Indoctrination Center.” IBM was not only engaging in coercive “culture-building” activities, such as requiring all sales trainees to sing songs together glorifying IBM, but explicitly indoctrinated management trainees by first asking trainees to analyze cases and then give the “correct” IBM solution, grading each trainee on how closely he or she came to that solution, then sending the grades back to the boss who had sponsored the trainee.

Career research at that time was primarily concerned with selection and the prediction of occupational success from aptitude and personnel tests of

various sorts. Major research projects undertaken within Exxon, the Bell Telephone System, and GE attempted to locate the personal factors that would predict career success, usually measured by rank and salary achieved within a corporate structure. Because the research was primarily done by a few large corporations, much was learned about careers in those corporations, but little was learned about the variety of careers that people were pursuing outside of large organizations. To that end, one had to start with alumni samples and follow people longitudinally.

The research that led to career anchors was originally designed to study the process of corporate socialization and indoctrination. To this end, three panels of Sloan School master’s degree students (15 in 1961, 15 in 1962, and 14 in 1963) were formed. Students were randomly selected, to ensure that a broad range of careers would be tapped, and invited into the study conducted by Edgar H. Schein. Students were interviewed about their past educational and vocational histories and were given a battery of self-concept, attitude, and values questionnaires. Prior research had shown that faculty attitudes and values differed from managerial attitudes on a number of important dimensions. Students started out closer to the faculty attitudes. It seemed reasonable to assume, therefore, that student attitudes would shift away from business attitudes while they were in school but would show evidence of indoctrination during the early years of corporate life.

To test this assumption, each alumnus (all were men in the early 1960s) was reinterviewed and tested 12 months later. Each was asked to identify his boss and peers, permitting the researchers to send him the same attitude survey to determine whether the alumnus had moved toward the attitudes of his boss and peers during that first year. The survey results failed to reveal any consistent pattern. Some people did become more business oriented, but others either showed no change or, in a few cases, showed movement away from business attitudes.

On the other hand, the interview results revealed that the transition from school to industry was difficult, often disappointing, and fraught with “reality shock.” Alumni were not only learning what life in industry was really like but also, more important, were discovering some things about themselves that they did not realize while at school. Whereas every single person had indicated in his first-year interview that he wanted to be a “captain of industry” and “climb the

corporate ladder,” many alumni said they realized within a year or two that such a traditional managerial career was not what they wanted at all.

The important career process that was going on in this early stage of the career was not indoctrination, but learning—the organization was learning about its new employee, and the new employee was not only learning about the organization but also, more important, about himself. This learning was still going on when the alumni were resurveyed 5 years out, but a new pattern of results showed up when the sample was reinterviewed 10 years out. The interviews were structured to get each person to review the major steps of his education and work life. For each event mentioned, the question of “Why did that happen?” was asked. What emerged from these interview accounts was that the “external-career” events might be all over the map but the reasons for them happening were highly patterned. It became clear that while a person was making many different kinds of career moves, there was a growing logic in what the person was looking for and a growing self-concept based on initial motivation and actual early job experiences. In other words, in the “internal career,” one could see patterns that could not be inferred from educational and job decisions. The focus of the research then became the dynamics of the internal career as it evolves in adults during the first decade or so of their external careers.

These dynamics revolve around the kinds of questions that each alumnus faced: (a) What are my talents, skills, and areas of competence? (b) What are my main motives, needs, drives, and goals in life? What do I want or not want, either because I have never wanted it or because I have realized after some work experience that I no longer want it? (c) What are my values—the main criteria by which I judge what I am doing? Am I in an organization or job that is congruent with my values? How good or bad do I feel about what I am doing in my work life? How proud or ashamed am I of my work and career? (d) If I am offered a promotion, a job move to another department or another city, should I take the offer or not? (e) If I am laid off or decide to resign, what should I do next?

THE CONCEPT OF CAREER ANCHORS

The patterns of answers to the above questions had the character of becoming a kind of guidance system

that informed career choices. Career occupants found themselves seeking or avoiding certain kinds of job situations, and if the current job context did not fulfill the desired expectations, the guidance system functioned to “pull the person back to something that felt more congruent.” Job choices that did not work were followed by feelings of “being pulled back into a safe harbor.” These and other images reported by the alumni led to the concept of the career anchor.

Formally defined, a career anchor is the pattern of self-perceived areas of competence, motives, and values that guide and constrain career choices. The emphasis is on self-perception, though such self-perception is built on the 10 years or more of job experiences that the person has up to that point. Younger people who have not had much work experience will, by definition, have no career anchor. They will not have obtained enough feedback to know what their competences, motives, and values really are.

TYPES OF CAREER ANCHORS

The interviews revealed a surprising diversity in what people really wanted out of their careers, but within this diversity, some clear patterns emerged that were sorted into the eight types that will be described below. In extensive further research reported by Schein in 1985 and in 1993, the eight types have been observed in all kinds of occupations, are equally applicable to men and women, and have been found in other cultures.

Anchor 1: Technical/Functional Competence

Some people discover as their careers unfold that they have both a strong talent and high motivation for a particular kind of work. What really “turns them on” is the exercise of their talents and the satisfaction of knowing that they are experts. These are the people we think of as “craftsmen,” “professionals,” and “experts.”

This anchor occurs in all kinds of work. For example, an engineer may discover that he or she is very good at design; a salesperson may find real selling talent and desire; a manufacturing manager may encounter greater and greater pleasure in running complex plants; a financial analyst may uncover talent and enjoyment in solving complex capital investment problems; a teacher may enjoy his or her growing expertise in the field; a police officer may find that he

or she loves the technical side of gathering evidence, and so on.

These people build a sense of identity around the content of their work and the technical or functional areas in which they are succeeding, and they develop increasing skills in those areas. Although others might be more concerned about the context of the work, this type of person is more concerned about the intrinsic content of the work.

Technical/functional people want to be paid for their skill levels, often defined by education and work experience. A person with a doctorate wants a higher salary than someone with a master's degree, regardless of actual accomplishments. These people are oriented toward external equity, meaning that they will compare their salaries with what others of the same skill level earn in other organizations. Even if they are the highest-paid people in their own organizations, they will feel that they are not being treated fairly if they are underpaid compared with those in similar positions in other organizations.

The specialist values the recognition of his or her professional peers more than uninformed rewards from members of management. In other words, a pat on the back from a supervisor who really does not understand what was accomplished is worth less than acknowledgment from a professional peer or even from a subordinate who knows exactly what was accomplished and how difficult it might have been. The most important form of recognition is to be given more challenging assignments in their specialties and to be given educational opportunities to become even more competent.

Anchor 2: General Managerial Competence

Some people discover as their careers progress that they really want to become general managers, that management per se interests them, that they have the range of competencies required to be a general manager, and that they have the ambition to rise to organizational levels in which they will be responsible for major policy decisions and in which their own efforts will make the difference between success and failure of the organization.

When they first enter organizations, most people have aspirations to get ahead in some general sense. Many of them talk explicitly of ambitions to rise to the top, but few have a realistic picture of what is actually

required in the way of talents, motives, and values to do so. With experience, it becomes clearer that they need not only a high level of motivation to reach the top, and succeed as a general manager, but also a mixture of talents and skills in the following three basic areas.

Analytical Competence. An individual must have the ability to identify, analyze, synthesize, and solve problems under conditions of incomplete information and uncertainty. General managers constantly point out the importance of being able to decipher what is going on, to cut through a mass of possibly irrelevant detail to get to the heart of a matter, to judge the reliability and validity of information in the absence of clear verification opportunities, and to pose the problem or question in such a way that it can be worked on.

Interpersonal and Intergroup Competence. An individual must have the ability to influence, supervise, lead, handle, and control people and groups at all levels of the organization toward organizational goal achievement. General managers point out that this skill involves eliciting valid information from others, getting others to collaborate to achieve synergistic outcomes, motivating people to contribute what they know to the problem-solving process, clearly communicating the goals to be achieved, facilitating the decision-making process and decision implementation, monitoring progress, and instituting corrective action if necessary.

Emotional Competence. An individual must have (a) the capacity to be stimulated by emotional and interpersonal issues and crises rather than be exhausted or debilitated by them, (b) the capacity to bear high levels of responsibility without becoming paralyzed, and (c) the ability to exercise power and make difficult decisions without guilt or shame. These competencies must be exercised 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The essence of the general manager's job is to absorb the emotional strains of uncertainty, interpersonal conflict, and high levels of responsibility. People with this anchor will measure the attractiveness of a work assignment in terms of its importance to the success of the organization, and they will identify strongly with the organization and its success or failure as a measure of how well they have done. In a sense, then, they are real "organization people," whose identity rests managing an effective organization.

Managerially anchored people measure themselves by their income levels and expect to be very highly paid. They are oriented toward internal equity in that they want to be paid substantially more than people at the level below them and will be satisfied if that condition is met, even if someone at their own level in another company is earning more. They also want short-term rewards, such as bonuses for achieving organizational targets, and because they are identified with the organization, they are very responsive to benefits such as stock options that give them a sense of ownership and shared fate. Managerially anchored people prefer frequent promotions, based on merit, measured performance, and results, to positions of higher responsibility.

Anchor 3: Autonomy/Independence

Some people discover early in their working lives that their need to be on their own is more important than the actual content of what they do. They cannot stand to be bound by other people's rules, procedures, working hours, dress codes, and other norms that almost invariably arise in any kind of organization. Regardless of what they work on, such people have an overriding need to do things in their own way, at their own pace, and according to their own standards. They find organizational life to be restrictive, irrational, and intrusive into their private lives; therefore, they often prefer to pursue more independent careers on their own terms or organizational jobs that provide maximum freedom, such as being a salesperson out in the field. If forced to make a choice between a present job that permits autonomy and a much better job that requires giving it up, the autonomy/independence-anchored person would stay in his or her present job.

Everyone has needs for certain levels of autonomy, and these needs vary during the course of life. For some people, however, such needs come to be overriding; they feel that they must be masters of their own ships at all times. Sometimes extreme autonomy needs result from high levels of education and professionalism, in which the educational process itself teaches the person to be totally self-reliant and responsible, as is the case for many doctors and professors. Sometimes such feelings are developed in childhood by child-rearing methods that put great emphasis on self-reliance and independent judgment.

People who begin to organize their careers around such needs gravitate toward autonomous professions,

but every occupation has autonomous job possibilities within it. A lawyer or doctor can work for a big firm or open his or her own office; a police officer can become a private detective; a manager can open his or her own store or become an independent consultant. If interested in business or management, a person may go into consulting or teaching or end up in areas of work in which autonomy is relatively possible even in large organizations: research and development, field sales offices, data processing, market research, financial analysis, or the management of geographically remote units. If this kind of person does end up employed within an organization, he or she prefers clearly delineated, time-bounded kinds of work within his or her area of expertise. Contract or project work, whether part-time, full-time, or even temporary, is acceptable and often desirable.

Anchor 4: Security/Stability

Some people have an overriding need to organize their careers so that they feel safe and secure, so that future events are predictable, and so that they can relax in the knowledge that they have "made it." Everyone needs some degree of security and stability throughout life. At certain life stages, financial security can become the overriding issue, such as when one is raising and educating a family or approaching retirement. However, for some people, security and stability are predominant throughout their careers, and these concerns guide and constrain all major career decisions. Security and stability come to be more important than the content of what they do.

Such people often seek jobs in organizations that provide job tenure, that have the reputation of avoiding layoffs, that have good retirement plans and benefit programs, that have the image of being strong and reliable, and that have a reward system based on seniority and loyalty. For this reason, government and civil service jobs are often attractive to these people, and they obtain some of their satisfaction from identifying with their organizations even if they do not have high-ranking or important jobs. Every occupation has security/stability-anchored members, who are often the stable element in that occupation.

Anchor 5: Entrepreneurial Creativity

Some people discover early in life that they have an overriding need to create new ventures of their own by

developing new products or services, building new organizations through financial manipulation, or taking over existing businesses and reshaping them to their own specifications. Creativity in some form or other exists in all career anchor groups, but what distinguishes the entrepreneur is that creating a new venture of some sort is viewed as essential to the career and to self-fulfillment. Inventors or artists or researchers also depend heavily on creativity, but they usually do not become committed to building new ventures around their creations. The creative urge in this anchor group is specifically toward creating new organizations, products, or services that can be identified closely with the entrepreneur's own efforts, that will survive on their own, and that will be economically successful. Making money is, then, one key measure of success.

Many people dream about forming their own businesses and express those dreams at various stages of their careers. In some cases, these dreams express needs for autonomy—to get out on one's own. The difference is that entrepreneurially anchored people typically begin to pursue such dreams relentlessly and early in life, often starting small moneymaking enterprises even during their school years. They find they have both the talent and an extraordinarily high level of motivation to prove to the world that they can succeed. Entrepreneurially anchored people often fail in their early efforts but keep searching for opportunities to try again and again. They are restless and continually require new creative challenges.

For this group of people, ownership is ultimately the most important issue. Often they do not pay themselves very well, but they retain control of their organizations' stock. If they develop new products, they want to own the patents. Entrepreneurs want to accumulate wealth, not so much for its own sake, but as a way of showing the world what they have accomplished. Entrepreneurs are rather self-centered, seeking high personal visibility and public recognition. Often they display this quality by putting their own names on products or companies.

Anchor 6: Sense of Service, Dedication to a Cause

Some people enter occupations because of central values that they want to embody in their work and careers. They are oriented more toward these values than toward the actual talents or areas of competence involved. Their career decisions are based on the desire to improve the world in some fashion. People

with this anchor are attracted to the helping professions, such as medicine, nursing, social work, teaching, and the ministry. However, dedication to a cause clearly also characterizes some people in business management and in organizational careers. Some examples include the human resource specialist who works on affirmative action programs, the labor lawyer intent on improving labor-management relations, the research scientist working on a new drug, the scientist working for environmental protection, and the manager who chooses to go into public service to improve some aspect of society in general. Values such as working with people, serving humanity, saving the environment, and helping one's nation can be powerful anchors in one's career.

Service-anchored people clearly want work that permits them to influence their employing organizations in the direction of their values. They want fair pay for their contributions and portable benefits, because they have no a priori organizational loyalty. More important than monetary rewards is a promotional system that recognizes the contribution of the service-anchored person and moves him or her into positions with more influence and the freedom to operate autonomously. Service-anchored people want recognition and support both from their professional peers and from their superiors; they want to feel as though their values are shared by higher levels of management. Like the technically/functionally anchored, they would appreciate opportunities for more education, support for attendance at professional meetings, awards and prizes, and public acclaim for their accomplishments.

Anchor 7: Pure Challenge

Some people anchor their careers in the perception that they can conquer anything or anybody. They define success as overcoming impossible obstacles, solving unsolvable problems, and winning out over formidable opponents. As they progress, they seek ever-tougher challenges. For some, this takes the form of seeking jobs in which they face more and more difficult problems or competitive challenges. Above all else, they want to "win."

Many salespeople, professional athletes, and even some general managers and entrepreneurs define their careers essentially as daily combat or competition in which winning is everything. The type of pay, promotion system, and forms of recognition are all subordinate to whether or not the job provides constant opportunities for self-tests.

Anchor 8: Lifestyle

At first glance, this concept seems like a contradiction in terms. People who organize their existences around lifestyle are, in one sense, saying that their careers are less important to them and therefore that they do not have a career anchor. These people belong in a discussion of career anchors, however, because a growing number of people who are highly motivated toward meaningful careers are, at the same time, finding themselves in situations in which their careers must be integrated with their total lifestyles.

This kind of situation has arisen for more and more people because of changing social values around independence; the growing number of women in full careers, which has led to many more dual-career families; the changing attitudes of employers toward giving less job security and more portability in benefits; and the growing number of families who cannot survive economically unless both spouses work. If people must manage their own careers and they have spouses with careers, it is inevitable that more and more people will think about designing their total life situations, not just their work.

An integration of career and lifestyle issues is itself evolving, and people with this kind of orientation want flexibility more than anything else. Unlike the autonomy-anchored person, who also wants flexibility, those with lifestyle anchors are quite willing to work for organizations, do a variety of kinds of work, and accept organizational rules and restrictions provided that the right options are available at the right time. Such options might include traveling or moving only at times when family situations permit, part-time work if life concerns require it, sabbaticals, paternity and maternity leaves, day care options (which are becoming especially relevant for the growing population of dual-career couples and single parents), flexible working hours, work at home during normal working hours, and so on. Lifestyle-anchored people look more for an organizational attitude than a specific program, an attitude that reflects respect for personal and family concerns and makes genuine renegotiation of the psychological contract possible.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

All career occupants should recognize their career anchors in order to make better choices about career moves. If individuals do not know their anchors, they are very vulnerable to being given assignments or promotions that do not fit their self-images at all, leading

to unproductive and stressful work situations. By analyzing their own career histories and the reasons for the choices they have made in the past, they can identify what is important to them and use that knowledge in making better career choices.

Most people will find that if they reflect carefully on the decisions they have made that they fit into one of the anchor categories. If more than one anchor seems to fit, the person should examine possible situations that might require a choice and think about what he or she would do if forced to make a choice.

In summary, career anchors are a way of understanding the dynamics of the internal career in adulthood. Career anchors form from experience, and once an individual has developed a self-image around his or her competencies, motives, and values, the anchor then guides and constrains the rest of that person's adult career and life. Career anchors can change if a person encounters dramatically new experiences, but for most people, once they have formed a clear self-image, the tendency is to hold on that image.

—Edgar H. Schein

See also Career as a calling, Career satisfaction, Career success, Work values

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CAREER APPRAISAL

The increasing specialization of today's more diverse and technologically advanced labor market challenges employees and job seekers alike to continually evaluate their career choices and engage in *career appraisal*.

The development of a comprehensive career plan is essential in understanding one's interests, attributes, abilities, and values necessary to fit into this ever-changing vocational environment. Moreover, adults find themselves reconsidering previous career choices as they develop new interests or as the job market shifts. Of all these domains, vocational interests serve as the cornerstone of any career plan. John Holland's theory provides an avenue for classifying vocational interests into six categories (RIASEC): Realistic (working outdoors, building, repairing); Investigative (researching, analyzing, inquiring); Artistic (creating or enjoying art, drama, music, writing); Social (helping, instructing), Enterprising (persuading, selling, managing); and Conventional (accounting, organizing, processing data). Interest inventories such as the Strong Interest Inventory (SII) and the Campbell Interests and Skills Survey (CISS) can help users learn which combination of the RIASEC categories describes their vocational interests. Choosing work environments that align with areas of interest is more likely to increase job satisfaction.

In the last decade, researchers have established that career appraisal for the individual is more useful when it goes beyond the six general categories of interests to specific interests. For example, although it is useful to know someone has Realistic interests, knowing concretely whether he or she enjoys military activities or mechanical activities allows for better discrimination. In addition, increased specificity translates to increased ability to determine career fields and educational majors that more closely align with one's interests as well as those that prove to be less desirable. The SII and CISS mentioned above provide measures of specific vocational interests as well as general interests. Although occupational scales on the SII or the CIS implicitly provide greater specificity, scales such as the Basic Interest Scales on the SII make the process explicit and directly interpretable based on the transparency of those scales.

Traditionally, vocational interest assessment has been the primary tool used to assist clients in making important career choices. However, two additional constructs that have emerged in the past decade are also important contributors. The construct of personality has been shown to be an important variable in helping us understand the unique individual from a more holistic outlook. To date, three empirical reviews have examined the overlap of personality and interests. This evidence shows that both have at least

three clear general links: (1) People who are more open to new experiences tend to have more artistic and investigative interests, (2) extraverts tend to have more social and enterprising interests, and (3) people who are more agreeable tend to have more social interests. Vocational counselors who incorporate this knowledge will be in a better position to view their clients more broadly than simply through their vocational interests. For example, clients who are more open to novel and new experiences may be more satisfied with intellectual or creative work environments. Interestingly, personality and interests may be genetically linked; studies show that about 50 percent of their stable variance is genetic.

Just as more rather than less information is better with vocational interests, it seems that more specific information about personality beyond general traits is useful in helping better differentiate vocational interests within a particular general interest. For example, people who are entranced with evocative sights and sounds are more likely to be engaged in artistic interests. In short, researchers are beginning to quilt a fabric of particular areas that more aptly define a unique individual with particular tendencies. The more a vocational professional can assist the client to integrate both aspects of his or her personality and interests, the more equipped that individual will be to make an informed vocational choice.

Unfortunately, it is not enough to consider only the unique aspects of clients' personalities and interests. Rather, understanding these overlapping areas serves as the springboard for placement in engaging careers, but alone, this may not ensure retention. The development of new skills and the refinement of current skills are critical to career persistence. With the advance of social cognitive career theory, vocational self-efficacy has emerged as the third construct in the three-legged stool of career appraisal. Knowledge about personality and interests is helpful in choosing a career or pursuing an area of specialization that is a good fit. However, it may be a person's self-efficacy that will help ensure that a person will follow through on his or her choices and ultimately succeed at the endeavor.

Understanding the triangular structure of the "P," or person, in person-environment (P-E) fit can help vocational counselors directly address which of the three legs of career appraisal is causing the stool to waiver. If a client demonstrates high interest in a career that seems to match his or her personality type but lacks the confidence to enter that career, a counselor can work

directly to increase the individual's self-efficacy within that specific domain. Specifically, counselors can work with clients to increase self-efficacy by ensuring mastery experiences, providing successful models, reducing anxiety, and providing support and encouragement. Likewise, if a client's personality seems particularly well suited to certain interests and those interests are not apparent, the counselor may want to ascertain whether there have been environmental limitations, such as racism, sexism, or poverty, that have limited exposure to potential interests. Moreover, high-ability clients who have the confidence to pursue a range of career options may need reassurance to follow their interests/personality fit with careers rather than choosing careers that are prestigious or would please their parents. Finally, the understanding of these three constructs will be useful for adult clients who may be underemployed or unemployed or seeking to change jobs within their organizations.

The dynamic use of P-E fit is essential in successfully transitioning from one career to the next. In America's mobile society, it is not uncommon for an adult to shift careers based on the needs of the individual as well as demands of the environment. A person may develop additional interests or choose to emphasize different interests based on consideration of salary, family-friendliness of an occupation, or needs of the family. Older adults may seek out fresh new challenges, greater flexibility, or more independence. Adults may leave careers after a few years despite feeling confident, because they may find the tasks associated with the career a poor fit for their personality and interests. Vocational counselors need to provide P-E fit information to adults at these critical junctures when career appraisal is necessary.

Research is accumulating on the intersection of critical person factors in P-E fit. Though interests provide the foundation, building a successful career demands more than the identification of preferred activities. Future vocational researchers and counselors alike may want to adopt an integrationist perspective. This will allow for the expansion of the field's knowledge of how interests, personality, and self-efficacy interrelate in both experimental and applied settings. It is imperative that vocational professionals in both arenas work to inform each other of their accumulated knowledge. This will allow research to inform practice and practice to inform research.

—Lisa M. Larson and Donna C. Bailey

See also Career exploration, Holland's theory of vocational choice, Person-environment fit (P-E fit), Social cognitive career theory

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CAREER AS A CALLING

The new era of organizational life has ushered in critical changes in how people conceive of their careers and how organizations think about the work trajectories of their employees. Trends toward shorter relationships between individuals and the organizations in which they work have forced revised ways of thinking about the structure of careers. While the bells that toll to mark the end of the traditional career may be premature, it is impossible to ignore the need to envision different ways to define what constitutes meaningful narratives of work lives as individuals navigate a changed terrain of careers. Because individuals, rather than the organizations they work for, are responsible for their own career directions, the role of personal

values has received more attention as a way to understand what guides individually directed careers.

The concept of a *career as a calling* speaks to the potential for congruence between individual values and the meaning derived from the various components of work that constitute a career path. Individuals who view their work as a calling see the work they do as an end in and of itself and thus are more committed to their work and less reliant on traditional career markers such as advancement and financial rewards as measures of success. Seeing one's career as a calling offers a different model for how individuals interact with structures of work to create meaning and craft work trajectories that are based on the actual work they do, rather than on the markers of success that are traditionally associated with careers and career progress. This suggests that calling-oriented employees are more motivated and better equipped to craft their own career paths despite the complexities evident in the changing employment climate.

THE CHANGING SHAPE OF CAREERS

Changes in organizations have made linear, intra-organizational careers less common, leading organizational researchers to study the ways individuals in a range of occupations might adapt to the accompanying changes in career structures. Sociologists, psychologists, and organizational theorists have proposed that organizational changes foretell the end of the traditional career. In its place, scholars have offered models of the protean career, the boundaryless career, careers of achievement and the "new" career. Most revised models of careers suggest that employees must now improvise, enact, and construct their careers across and outside organizational boundaries. In the popular press on careers, the free agent reigns; job hopping is more common; and taking time out for reeducation and training is essential. There has been appreciably less written about how employees' own values and goals for working operate within this context of careers and how much, if at all, employees have adapted to the changing times.

Traditionally, organizational careers have been represented by models that assume movement up a hierarchy within a single organization, with increasing responsibility and financial gain. While these linear careers may never have been as common as was believed, their decline over the past few decades has left employees in a position to create their own work

trajectories to fulfill superordinate career and developmental goals. Many career scholars have argued that employees have become more entrepreneurial as a result, piecing together work experiences that focus on increased skill and a sense of control over their work experiences, while focusing less on promotions, advancement, and increasing status. Employees in this environment may seek career guidance from a wide network of relationships that are not dictated by organizational boundaries.

These changes in careers are believed to be caused by changes in organizational structures and in the psychological contracts between organizations and employees that result. Just as corporations are continually reorganizing in response to economic demands and global competition, the nature of work in organizations has become flexible to the point of becoming fragmented. Although research has suggested that individual action can affect the arrangements between employees and institutions, less is known about what guides individuals' actions as they carry out their careers. There are primarily two schools of thought: first, that the individual can adapt to changing career structures because they match the individual's preexisting career goals or, second, that the individual must work to adapt to career models offered by the organization. A third option, in which individuals shape their own work lives through the ways in which they make meaning of work, is relatively unexplored but is gaining attention. In effect, this view suggests that in the wake of the weak situations created by organizations, with few guides for individual action, individuals are freer to enact their careers as their own creations because there are no longer strong models with clear structures to direct their career trajectories. Under such conditions, individuals are more likely to use their values, experience, knowledge, and networks to guide their work lives over time. Specifically, the values that individuals bring to their work and the subsequent meaning they make of their work is an important source of influence on how individuals think about their careers.

Individuals have been found to vary greatly in the kinds of meaning they derive from their work. Even within the same occupation, the personal meaning that different individuals attach to their work has been found to vary in ways that are systematically related to changes (even minor changes) in how they define the jobs they do. Importance is thus placed on the individual's narrative of the work, imbued with meaning

and representing a personal orientation toward work that helps to make sense of a complex career environment. One such narrative grows from the meaning individuals glean from their work when they view what they do as a calling.

CAREER AS A CALLING

The idea of viewing one's work as a calling came into common usage with Max Weber's concept of the Protestant work ethic. While a calling originally had religious connotations and meant doing work that God had "called" one to do, a calling in the modern sense has lost this religious connotation and is defined here as consisting of enjoyable work that is seen as making the world a better place in some way. Thus, the concept of a calling has taken on a new form in the modern era and is one of several kinds of meanings that people attach to their work. These meanings, which may be considered more broadly as *work orientations*, guide the process by which individuals select work, as well as how they perform the tasks included in their jobs.

The concept of work orientation is derived from a set of arguments in sociology that claim that work is subjectively experienced by individuals in one of three distinct ways: as a job, a career, or a calling. These three categories represent three different work orientations, defined as the ways in which work relates to one's sense of oneself. Work orientation guides the types of goals individuals strive to meet through working, encompasses beliefs about the role of work in life and, as such, is reflected in work-related feelings and behaviors. The goals associated with work orientation have implications for how individuals conduct themselves in relation to their work. Therefore, work orientation is a useful lens through which to understand what individuals are searching for in their careers. Prior research has shown that each type of work orientation can be found both across and within various occupations and that individuals are unambiguous in reporting that they experience their work as a job, career, or calling. To address the implications of seeing one's career as a calling, it is first necessary to define and explore job and career orientations to work.

Each work orientation is associated with the kinds of goals individuals pursue in their work lives. Thus, those with a *job orientation* toward work are primarily interested in the material benefits from work and do not seek many other types of rewards from it. The

work is not an end in itself, but instead is a means for acquiring the resources needed to enjoy time away from the job. In essence, the main goal of those with job orientations is to make an income, and leisure is kept separate from work.

In contrast to those with a job orientation, employees with a *career orientation* are more personally invested in their work and tend to mark their achievements not only through monetary gain but also through advancement within the occupational structure. This advancement often brings higher social standing and self-esteem, as well as increased power within the scope of one's occupation. Thus, the goal of the career oriented is to increase income, social status, power, and prestige in their occupations, whether within or between organizations. For example, a career-oriented middle manager may strive to become a vice president, or a young attorney may strive to make partner in a law firm.

By contrast, a calling-oriented middle manager or attorney works not for advancement but for the fulfillment that the work brings. Specifically, people with a *calling orientation* tend to view their work as inseparable from the rest of their lives. Individuals with callings are not working for material rewards or career advancement but instead view the work as an end in itself. The goal of those with callings is to gain deep fulfillment from doing work that they view as having a positive impact on the wider world. Most popular examples of calling orientations come from the arts or helping professions (e.g., medicine, social work), as many individuals in these occupations are compelled to do expressive work or to be of service to others. Traditionally, job and calling orientations have been thought of as representing opposite extremes of the same dimension. If one has a strong calling orientation, it is unlikely that a strong job orientation would also be present, given the focus on intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation to perform one's work.

The notion of a career as a calling is supported by research that shows that any kind of work can be viewed as a calling. Work orientation is essentially the frame of meaning applied to the work one does; thus, it is possible to do the same work and view it quite differently based on which orientation is applied to the work. For example, a computer programmer can view the work as a way to make a paycheck (job orientation), as a way to move into project management and infrastructure design on the way to securing a director-level position (career orientation), or as a way

to carry out the enjoyable, fulfilling work of programming that is seen as contributing to knowledge management and creation in the wider world (calling orientation). The calling-oriented programmer is much more likely to thrive in a work world in which career structures are increasingly complex, sequential, and unpredictable, because a calling orientation provides a life narrative to the work that is both deeply meaningful and less reliant on the external career structures of the organization. Thus, calling-oriented individuals are more protected from the episodic and uncertain nature of career progression in organizations, whereas those with career orientations are perhaps most exposed to the changes in organizations that make advancement less certain. Like the calling oriented, the job oriented are also protected from both traditional and modern career structures in organizations, for they are working for pay and little more and thus do not need to impose broader goals for advancement on the work they do. However, in contrast to the job oriented, calling-oriented individuals gain a deeper source of meaning and fulfillment from work, which creates a deeper bond to the work itself. Although those with calling orientations value doing work for the meaning that the work represents, clearly, the financial rewards of work hold some importance for them. However, these rewards are subordinate to the meaning that doing the work itself brings to the person. Work orientations are not mutually exclusive, but instead represent the relative importance to individual employees of their reasons for working.

IMPLICATIONS OF A CALLING ORIENTATION FOR MODERN CAREERS

Viewing one's work as a calling has been shown to be related to a number of positive outcomes for both employees and their employers. Calling-oriented individuals report higher job and life satisfaction, even after controlling for income, level of education, and occupation, than people who view their work as jobs or careers. These employees also report higher work motivation and are less likely to regret their choice of occupations. Individuals who feel called to perform their work also report greater occupational commitment and enthusiasm and are more likely to create new tasks, responsibilities, and approaches to their work. Such new approaches to the work infuse the work with deeper meaning and may help organizations to more effectively meet their goals.

Individuals with callings appear to be at an advantage given today's changing career environment. Modern careers require individuals to interact with changing career structures to fulfill their goals for working. Thus, work orientation, specifically a calling orientation, offers continuity to work trajectories at a time when work histories are more fragmented. Calling orientations endow both the individuals who adhere to them and the organizations that employ such individuals with positive outcomes that flow from a deeper connection to the work and a stronger passion for the activity of performing job tasks. Thus, a calling orientation provides a possible answer to the question of how narratives of identity and life history will be derived in a changing society in which careers are increasingly made up of episodes and fragments. For individuals with calling orientations, a relatively stable set of goals can be pursued in their work that could be expected to persist within, between, and beyond specific jobs.

In this sense, a calling orientation shares some elements with the factors that constitute a protean career orientation, such as the extent to which decisions regarding one's careers are based on personal values versus financial or other extrinsic factors. It follows that individuals who are more attached to the intrinsic nature of the work itself, those with a calling versus job or career orientation, are more likely to take whatever steps are necessary to continue along their preferred paths, what scholars have referred to as the "path with a heart." Indeed, ongoing research in the area of careers has begun to focus on the role of meaning and values in the context of changing career structures. The promise of career as a calling is but one direction that this work has taken, offering an alternative path for understanding the responses individuals could have to a work world in which careers are the responsibility of the employee.

—Amy Wrzesniewski and Jennifer Tosti

See also Boundaryless career, Protean career, Work ethic, Work values

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CAREER CENTERS

The comprehensive college and university *career center* is a uniquely American phenomenon that has evolved over the past 100 or more years in response to changing educational, economic, political, and social conditions. This entry identifies several historic events in the evolution of the career center, outlines the core functional elements, enumerates the behavioral objectives, and provides a brief summary and look to the future.

Prior to the passage of the Morrill Act, also known as the Land Grant College Act, in 1862, higher education in the United States was a privilege to which a relatively small percentage of the population had access. Students entering higher education did so largely with a view to entering the professions, and there was little need for career assistance that could not be provided by faculty who took a natural interest in the career development and aspirations of their students. The Land Grant College Act changed all that. With the passage of the Morrill Act in 1862, the

nation entered an era of unprecedented public support for higher education. Prior to that, the majority of those who entered college were generally more concerned with accumulating credits and acquiring licenses than with learning any particular skill while enrolled. The passage of the Morrill Act signaled a sea change in the national philosophy toward and resource commitment to public higher education and redefined higher education as a means by which the masses could acquire not only knowledge but also marketable skills and professional preparation to enter the workforce.

The Truman Commission Report of 1948 acknowledged the economic significance of higher education for the first time, determined that half or more of the American public was capable of completing a baccalaureate degree and, more important, that the public had a "right" to expect that public support of higher education would put a bachelor's degree within reach of any American who had the ability to secure one. Essentially, higher education became a "right" rather than a privilege, and a massive resource influx from the GI Bill and other sources propelled public higher education to unprecedented growth. With this rapid growth and the necessity to meet the needs of huge, diverse student bodies, higher education was forced to specialize. Faculties were no longer able or willing to provide for myriad out-of-class needs of students, giving birth to a new classification of professionals called "student affairs." The offices that evolved to provide for the career development needs of students were called "placement offices," the early forerunners of career services.

By the end of World War II, public higher education had become a major societal force whose *raison d'être* had become so integrated with that of business and government that some critics began to refer to the educational/military/industrial complex in a derogatory way. The single-purpose placement office that had done little more than assist students in finding their first jobs was no longer adequate to meeting the increasingly complex career development needs of students and the greater society.

At the same time that public higher education was experiencing massive growth, the world of work had shifted from being primarily agrarian to manufacturing and was now moving into the postindustrial era: The "knowledge revolution" had begun. With these changes came the recognition that the work of the career center was more than simply finding jobs for students, a

“point-in-time event”; rather, career development was increasingly seen as a complex, lifelong process.

These were the conditions that led to the establishment of the core elements of the comprehensive, modern-day career center as enumerated by Jack Rayman. An annotated list of these core elements is as follows:

- Career counseling and planning: Drop-in, individual, computerized, and group counseling, including formal assessment and evaluation
- Recruitment and employer relations (placement): The establishment and maintenance of formal relationships with a broad range of potential employers, including on-campus recruiting services, vacancy listing services, and elaborate informational resources in support of the placement function
- Career programming, outreach, and marketing: A sophisticated and expansive array of seminars, workshops, courses for credit, and career fairs and the technology to deliver these programs in person, via phone, fax, and the Internet to clients throughout the world
- Information technology support: The technical personnel, hardware, software, and communications network to deliver the broad array of career services described above 24/7, anywhere in the world, and the technical capacity to free up professional career services staff time for tasks that require human sensitivity
- Career information management and communications: A well-developed career library and employer information center including Web and Internet access and the communications network to deliver all informational resources on demand to students, faculty, staff, employers, and alumni clients anywhere in the world
- Training: The staff, facilities, and commitment to provide continuous and ongoing professional development and training to work-study students, volunteers, interns, graduate assistants, counselors in training, graduate students, clerical and professional staff, and postdoctoral interns seeking to enhance their skills as career services counselors and professionals
- Research, assessment and evaluation: The staff, resources, and commitment to conduct ongoing career development and choice research, assessment, and evaluation, including evaluation of all facets of the center’s staff, functions, and services, both summative and formative

Perhaps the most important factor in defining the modern career center is a set of nine behavioral objectives or learning outcomes for clients who use those services. The following is a set of widely accepted

behavioral objectives for clients of the modern career center:

1. Increased exploration and understanding of career information and options
2. Increased self-understanding in terms of values, interests, skills, and abilities and how those personal characteristics relate to a variety of careers
3. Increased awareness of the need to plan and to take responsibility for one’s own career destiny
4. The development of greater understanding of one’s self, occupations, and the relationship between self and occupations
5. The development of a realistic, appropriate, and congruent occupational choice
6. Increased knowledge of available career options and an understanding of the means of attaining those options
7. Increased knowledge of appropriate job-search strategies and job-seeking skills and experience using those strategies and skills
8. Placement into a job, acceptance into further education or training, or some client-accepted alternative life/career objective
9. The development of an awareness that career development is a lifelong process and the development of a set of skills to ensure the successful navigation of that process

In the last century, the college and university placement office has evolved from a single-purpose administrative unit offering a narrow range of placement services to a comprehensive services center providing a complex array of career services to multiple constituent groups throughout the life span. While career centers vary in size, mission, and organizational structure, the trend is inescapably toward greater size, increasing centralization, and a broader, more comprehensive mission.

—Jack R. Rayman

See also Academic advising, Career counseling, College student career development, Internet career assessment, Occupational choice

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CAREER CHANGE

Career change has been alternatively defined as any major change in work role requirements or work context or as a process that may result in a change of job, profession, or one's orientation to work while continuing in the same job. Here, career change refers to a subset of work role transitions that include a change of employers, along with some degree of change in the actual job or work role and the subjective perception that such changes constitute a "career change." Examples of career changes include interfirm, interindustry, and intersector transitions or occupational changes, as, for example, when a litigator leaves law to run a nonprofit organization, a corporate employee starts his or her own business, a government official enters private industry, or a consultant becomes a movie producer.

A compelling scholarly argument has been made that career change is on the rise in our society: Careers are "boundaryless" and unfold outside traditional organizational parameters; business firms continue to downsize, restructure, and lay off; and values have changed such that people increasingly change work settings in search of greater autonomy, life balance, and meaning in work. Despite this well-documented litany of trends, the last two decades have witnessed a scarcity of empirical research on career change, and key theoretical issues pertaining to the antecedents, process, and outcomes of career change remain undeveloped.

Many alternative conceptualizations and approaches to the study of career change exist. The socialization literature has been a rich source of guidance for researchers concerned with work transitions of all sorts. Most of the empirical work on which existing conceptual models are based, however, concerns early career socialization and highly institutionalized status passages, such as entry, promotion, and transfer. Career change, in contrast, tends to occur later in a

person's career and is rarely guided by institutionalized separation, transition, or incorporation processes and rituals. Instead, the person creates the rupture with the old career while generating and learning about new alternatives.

This entry is divided into three sections. The first section reviews the literature on antecedents of career change. Self-conceptions, social networks, and exogenous events emerge as key influences in an unfolding process. The second section deals with the transition processes and dynamics of change, noting the need for new theory to guide empirical research on noninstitutionalized processes. The third section explores outcomes of career transition, highlighting a range of factors that have been identified as potential moderators of the likelihood of change or the ease and duration of the transition process. Throughout, the entry highlights key unanswered questions for future investigation.

WHY DO PEOPLE CHANGE CAREERS?

Both exogenous conditions and individual factors explain change or deviation from an established career path; these might pull individual toward a new career or push them away from the old (see Figure 1). Situational factors include external market forces that determine what alternatives are available. These may prompt individuals to exit an organization or career voluntarily in search of better opportunity (pull) or, alternatively, may result in restructuring, downsizing, and other forms of job loss (push). While labor economists have focused primarily on the supply and demand of labor, in recent years, organizational scholars have also documented the role of market intermediaries, such as headhunters, in facilitating career changes as well as changing occupational configurations that have created new choices, such as contract work. Individual factors include the skills, talents, preferences, past experiences, developmental stage, and self-conceptions that individuals bring to their work roles and careers. Three themes or categories of antecedents emerge as highly influential: self-conceptions, networks, and triggers.

Self-conceptions

Professional identity represents the relatively stable and enduring constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences through which

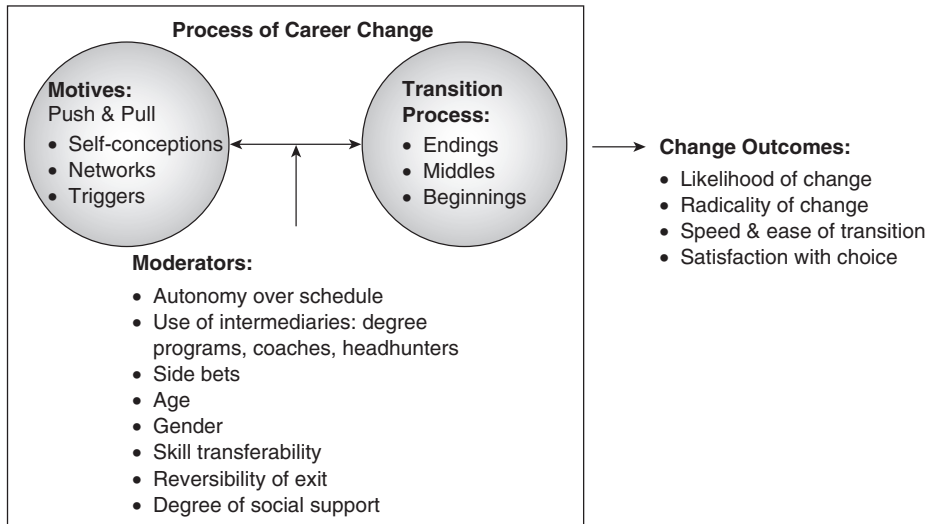


Figure 1. Process of Career Change

people define themselves in professional roles. A basic assumption is that professional identity forms over time with varied experiences and meaningful feedback that allow people to gain insight about their central and enduring preferences, talents, and values. Identities affect career change by their impact on people's perception of fit between their sense of who they are and their current careers. But identities also exist in the future and in people's heads as possible selves, images about who one might become, would like to become, or fears becoming. Possible selves affect career change by affecting perceptions of fit between individuals' ideas about who they would like to become and their beliefs about future opportunities afforded by their current careers.

Self-conceptions motivate change or deviation from an established career path in one of two principal ways. First, a person's chosen path may cease to reward the preferences and skills the person brought to it or reduce opportunities to work toward his or her career goals. In a study of physicians, Seymour Sarason, for example, found that encroaching bureaucracy and a rising need for malpractice protection disillusioned many doctors, who felt these preoccupations detracted from their role as healer. Faced with declining opportunity as the career pyramid narrows or the organization enters a period of downsizing or decline, or offered more consonant opportunities outside, a person may exit a career. Second, people may change with experience and adult development and come to find that their interests and preferences have changed such that they now

conflict with the chosen career. A person who valued getting ahead earlier in his or her career may come to desire a greater balance between work and personal life, for example, or a person who valued corporate status may come to desire the autonomy of an entrepreneurial career.

Social Networks

Career decisions are socially embedded and are thus influenced by the social networks that affect referrals and opportunities as well as the development and change

in people's identities over time. Thus, it stands to reason that the desire to exit or remain in a career is in part a function of a person's relational context.

If career change involves moving from one firm or sector to another, networks high in external relationships will be more valuable. Contact with people in alternative occupations provides information about new options as well as validation for changes one may be contemplating. In one recent study by Gideon Kunda, Steven Barley, and James Evans, for example, the decision to enter contracting required exposure to people or opportunities that made contracting seem more viable or attractive than taking another full-time job. Most people who switched to contract work had worked beside contractors in previous jobs, where they had the opportunity to observe the realities of freelance work. Similarly, Toby Stuart and Waverly Ding found that having network ties to scientists who have left academia for commercial science increases the likelihood of making the shift oneself. These extra-university ties, they have argued, facilitate the formation of a reference group that condones what the scientific community sanctions.

Networks also affect career change by providing role models that embody future possibilities. Daniel Levinson noted the key role of "guiding figures" in helping the person in transition to endure the ambiguity of the transition period by conferring blessings, giving advice, and, most important, believing in his or her "dream." The guiding figure embodies the fledgling possibility and shapes it through his or her efforts

as teacher, critic, sponsor, or mentor. People may consciously seek to establish ties compatible with desired future selves, using these new relationships to pull themselves into new social and professional circles. Alternatively, fortuitous encounters with people who have already made a transition to a different kind of work may lead a person to make a similar shift.

Finally, social networks can hold a person back from making a career change. About one-fifth of Helen Rose Ebaugh's sample reported that someone significant to them responded negatively; this negative response interrupted the exiting process or retarded the process for a significant time period. Similarly, Herminia Ibarra found that people considering career change face doubt, skepticism, conservatism, and pigeonholing on the part of friends, family, and close work associates. She argued that career transitions are facilitated by dual relational tasks: forging new, high-quality working relationships while, at the same time, ending or diluting the strong ties within which outdated role identities had been previously negotiated.

Trigger Events

A diverse set of studies and theoretical perspectives have converged on the key role of trigger events in stimulating change. Triggers may be positive or negative, momentous or small. They range from major job, organizational, and personal life changes or shocks to jolts produced by more mundane interactions. Scholars concur that critical events do not directly produce change; rather, they trigger personal explorations and trial experimentation with new forms of social interaction, which may later lead to career changes. Kunda and colleagues, for example, found that triggers such as getting laid off were insufficient to tip the balance in favor of becoming a contractor; but such triggering events were crucial for deciding to move from permanent to contingent employment because they led informants to consider their options. Positive triggers, such as a chance encounter with someone who becomes a role model for a possible professional future, may play a similar role in clarifying possible selves and increasing the motivation to explore alternatives.

HOW DOES THE TRANSITION PROCESS UNFOLD?

How does the process of career change unfold? *Transition* refers to the process of simultaneously leaving

one thing—a role or identity, for example—without having fully left it, while, at the same time, entering another without being fully a part. Meryl Louis has defined *career transition* as the period during which an individual is changing roles or changing orientation to a role already held; thus, the term transition suggests both a process of change and the period during which the change is taking place. Most existing models of the transition process identify phases or stages of change, with most models based on three phases of a rite of passage: separation, transition, and incorporation. A similar model consists of endings, a “neutral zone” or “in-between” phase, and beginnings.

Socialization researchers have devoted most of their attention to the incorporation or beginnings phase and its associated rites and rituals. In Nigel Nicholson's preparation, encounter, adjustment, and stabilization model, for example, the encounter period extends from the time of entry into the new situation until the individual has adjusted to that new situation. With the exception of involuntary job loss, these theories treat incorporation as negotiated adaptation to an existing and easily identifiable next position.

A defining feature of career change, however, is that it is not guided by institutionalized transition processes. Whereas separation in early career is accomplished through institutionalized events, such as promotions, transfers, layoffs, retirement ceremonies, and so on, there are no institutional forces to impose a separation from the old role at midcareer, unless a person is fired. Much of the work of incorporation is also self-initiated, often according to the person's own timetable. Although in many cases movement may be clearly away from the old, the destination, or the new career, in many cases, remains undefined and uncertain for a good portion of the process. In career change, therefore, separation and incorporation are often overlapping stages; the fact that both are occurring simultaneously defines a transition stage that is indeterminate in length and not necessarily finite (as when the individual fails to find a suitable career alternative). As a result, several theoretical issues pertaining specifically to career transition as a process remain undeveloped—in particular, how people identify alternatives and what replaces institutionalized separation and incorporation mechanisms.

BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

Scant career change research has examined the separation/endings stage, with Ebaugh's “becoming

an ex” study a notable exception. Although her primary samples were ex-nuns and transsexuals, Ebaugh found that similar processes characterized physicians leaving the practice of medicine and other occupational exits. The process begins with simmering doubts that give way to a search for alternatives, followed by a turning point that symbolizes the impossibility of return.

In many cases, endings are long and gradual; often people are not aware that they are laying the groundwork for a career exit: They simply take up a side activity that over time encroaches more and more on their time and interest. Ebaugh describes the case of an ex-astronaut who, over a 10-year period, found himself spending more and more of his time on real estate investment. In Ebaugh’s study, about a fourth of those who changed careers had begun retraining while still in their current jobs, in several cases going to back school part time or working in the new area on the side as a personal interest or hobby. Such side activities are an important way people learn about new career options and test unfamiliar waters from the safety of their current jobs: Provisional activities such as moonlighting, freelance or consulting work, side projects, volunteer work, and enrolling in courses often precede a more permanent shift to a different career. Entrepreneurs, for example, often spend years building a business on the side, maintaining a “day job” until the new enterprise becomes clearly viable. Side activities directly augment a person’s capacity to become a realistic candidate by allowing him or her to accumulate relevant experience and a network of social contacts in that sphere.

Career change, therefore, requires identifying a future path, a difficult task given that most recruitment and socialization experiences are aimed at workforce entrants and attaining some degree of anticipatory incorporation into the new occupation in order to become a credible entrant to the new field. Future research on career change must take into account ignorance of, or uncertainty about, alternative possible careers as well as the necessity of taking time to consider options and gain enough firsthand experience with them to be a plausible candidate.

When there are no institutional forces to impose a separation from the old role, the decision to separate and the act of separating are left to individual initiative: There is no prescribed start or end point. In Ebaugh’s study, the majority of exit decisions occurred in connection to some abrupt and dramatic turning point in the person’s life. But triggers alone are insufficient for sparking change; people may

ignore the information, dismiss it as irrelevant, blame the undesired outcome on fate, or deny its validity. Alternatively, what might objectively appear to be a trivial episode may be infused with great significance by an individual on the brink of change. Whether the turning point is an objectively significant event or simply bears emotional significance for the person, its function is to justify and rationalize the change. Future research is needed to provide a basis for predicting the impact that trigger events will have on the course of transition.

TRANSITIONS: IN THE MIDDLE

To date, the transition phase has been mostly treated (a) as a matter of anticipatory socialization, whereby the individual begins to take on the identity, attitudes, and relationships of the next role before he or she has actually attained it, or (b) as the state of marginality experienced by a new recruit who has yet to make his or her place in a new role and organization. Qualitative studies of a broad range of career change, from exiting an occupation to moving into a very different line of work, however, suggest that transition periods have unique characteristics, in particular, the experience of liminality: People in transition invariably feel “between identities,” describing the state as like being “in a vacuum,” “in midair,” “neither here nor there,” or “at loose ends.” This liminal period is not a literal space between one job and the next but a psychological zone in which the individual is truly between identities, with one foot still firmly planted in the “old world” and the other making tentative steps toward a new one.

In some cases, the experience of liminality results from the simultaneous pursuit of two different career paths, as when a would-be entrepreneur works on a new business idea on the side while continuing a day job; in others, it is created by diverse forms of “time-out,” as when a person is laid off, follows an outplacement program, takes a sabbatical to reflect on what comes next, or follows some form of adult education intended to help him or her change careers. Although Ebaugh reported a high incidence of returning to graduate schools (e.g., law, engineering) among her role exiters and the popular press has heralded business schools and other forms of adult education as means for changing careers, few studies to date have investigated the comparative effects of returning to school on career change.

Emerging thinking on the nature of liminal experience in organizational life raises interesting questions,

for example, the effects on career change of a transitional time that is open-ended compared with one limited to a more fixed period, or transitional space that varies on dimensions such as the degree of physical and social encapsulation of the individual. Future work on transitional states is needed to explore the extent to which variables, such as dedicated time, space, and the support of guiding figures, affect transition outcomes, such as generating viable alternatives or satisfaction with one's ultimate career choice.

WHAT ARE TRANSITION OUTCOMES AND THEIR MODERATORS?

Research on the outcomes of career transition and career change has focused on the extent to which a person and organization engage in mutual adaptation and, to a lesser extent, on the ease and speed of the transition process. Most adaptation work, as noted above, assumes a clear and identifiable next role into which the person will step. The question of interest is the extent to which the person will shape the role to fit his or her interests and strengths or, instead, will conform to the role's requirements. Most scholars concur with Blake Ashforth and Alan Saks that person and role evolve and synthesize beyond a middle ground between unchanging role and self-demands.

In work on institutionalized work role transitions, the ease and speed of transition have been explained to date in terms of the magnitude or novelty of the change from one role to the other, that is, the number and intensity of changes involved in any given career transition or the degree to which the role permits the exercise of prior knowledge, practiced skills, and established habits. The greater the magnitude or novelty, the more difficult and longer the transition process. In research on noninstitutionalized transitions, an additional set of outcome variables becomes important, notably, whether a person makes a career change versus recommitting to stay in a role after a period of harboring doubt and considering alternatives, as well as the ease and speed with which a person arrives at a viable alternative.

Ebaugh found that the kinds of alternatives explored and entered as well as the duration of the transition process are in part determined by the transferability of skills, interests, and experience that the person perceives between the old and potential new career. In her study, some occupational exiters considered jobs at least tangentially related to what they were doing before (e.g., business teachers found jobs

as accountants in business; police officers went into private security work); others, however, notably physicians, moved into completely different lines of work (e.g., law, real estate). Future work is needed to investigate what kind of transition processes lead to more or less radical changes.

A more important determinant than skill transferability of taking the leap may be the capacity to explore alternatives. Teachers and coaches who worked on nine-month contracts were easily able to try out alternative roles during the summer months. Similarly, professionals, including lawyers and consultants, who had greater flexibility in terms of how they spent their working hours (and who also, by the very nature of their jobs, spent much of their time interacting with clients and other outsiders to their organizations) found it easier than corporate managers to explore alternatives. Other important factors appear to be barriers to entry into a new occupation and the extent to which necessary credentials may be acquired by going back to school. Although Ebaugh argued that fields that have relatively low barriers to entry, such as real estate, tend to be attractive second careers, she also found a high incidence of returning to graduate schools (e.g., law, engineering) among her role exiters.

Few studies have investigated whether and why people actually make career changes once a set of alternatives is available or what explains satisfaction with one's ultimate choice. Ha Hoang and Javier Gimeno found, for example, that although getting financial backing is typically the event that pushes a nascent entrepreneur to take the leap, many who secure financing do not continue. Hoang and Gimeno suggested that building an entrepreneurial identity is a process that occurs in parallel with the evolution of the business case. If either is lacking, the person will not become an entrepreneur. Ebaugh suggested an alternative explanation, using Becker's notion of "side bets." Side bets are things of value to individuals that accrue in the course of jobs and careers, which they would have to give up should they give up their careers; these include "golden handcuffs" (e.g., stock options and retirement benefits) as well as intangibles, including security, status, and prestige.

Age or developmental stage may also be an important category of moderators. A long tradition of adult development research suggests that midcareer change is often motivated by age-related concerns. Although the midlife crisis has been debunked as a psychological phenomenon, it does appear that approaching midlife has at least two effects that may motivate

career change: (1) the feeling that time is running out and (2) greater self-knowledge combined with a reduced tendency to make choices based on social or family approval. While reaching a certain age, such as 40 or 50, may not have any distinct objective effect, for many people, it serves as a symbolic marker that the time is ripe to make a change.

Also ripe for future investigation is the subject of gender differences in the incidence and process of career change. It has been argued that men experience radical transitions early in their careers, whereas women maintain a higher rate of divergent mobility throughout their careers. Future work might investigate a range of topics, including how being part of a dual-career couple, taking time out to raise children, or perceptions of limited opportunity affect the likelihood and process of career change.

Other moderating factors include the reversibility of the exit and the degree of social support for making a career change. Ebaugh found that professionals (ex-physicians, ex-dentists, and ex-lawyers), who had all gone through lengthy training programs, tended to experience a prolonged transition process. They tended to see their exits as permanent and irreversible, since professional norms inculcate a sense of lifetime commitment. By contrast, corporate managers who start their own firms or who move into the government or nonprofit sector may be more likely to perceive that return to the corporate world is possible should the new venture fail to meet expectations. Few researchers have investigated involuntary turnover as a trigger for career change or investigated conditions under which job loss may generate a creative response, such as career change. Finally, positive social support also speeds up the process by encouraging people to seriously look at alternatives.

While the list of variables that might moderate likelihood of career change or characteristics of the process may always be lengthened and fine-tuned, an important and unaddressed theoretical question concerns the dynamics and nature of career change: Should scholars view career change as an outcome that can be predicted as a function of facilitating and constraining factors or, instead, as a process in which a tipping point is reached, beyond which career change is inevitable? Nicholson and Michael West argued for a model of careers as made up of changing responses to unfolding opportunities. The scant empirical work since supports their conclusion, pointing to the promise of further conceptualizing career change as a social process.

CONCLUSION

Until recently, research on careers assumed that people developed and advanced largely within the confines of a single organization and occupation and that the transitions that paced their careers were institutionalized in form and timing. New developments have dramatically altered this model. As the myth of lifelong job security unravels, career development increasingly involves moving from one firm, sector, and occupation to another in search of opportunity and fulfillment. Individuals increasingly develop careers as self-employed professionals independent of formal organizations. These self-designing professional trajectories place a premium (a) on individuals' abilities to create, alter, and dissolve career roles and identities as their personal and professional situations change and (b) on our ability as researchers to study and conceptualize these noninstitutionalized transitions.

It is ironic that a field that for the past 15 years has so emphatically heralded the arrival of new career forms and trajectories has so few empirical studies of career change to show for it. In moving forward, we need new theories that explain how people identify new career options, what replaces traditional means of socialization and its concomitant identity transformation, and what provides propulsion in this process, absent an externally imposed role change. A particularly promising theme, prevalent in most recent treatments of career processes, concerns the identity transitions that necessarily accompany career changes. Future studies that focus empirical attention on the timing of changes, how they are embedded in social networks that also cross firms and sectors, and how role changes necessarily imply identity transitions will allow scholars to more fully understand the boundaryless career.

—Herminia Ibarra

See also Boundaryless career, Career transition, Occupational choice

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CAREER COACHING

Career coaching has become a popular form of career development services since the mid-1980s. The International Coach Federation has estimated that there are currently more than 10,000 career coaches in the United States. The general goal of career coaching is to assist clients' personal and professional development so that they can (a) better identify or develop their skills, (b) make better career choices, and (c) be a more productive and valuable member at work.

Career coaching is a contractual relationship between the coach and the client for a wide range of career services, depending on the needs of the client and the expertise of the coach. Career coaches can be hired as personal consultants for any work-related issues, such as balancing home and career, job interview skills, managerial efficacy, long-range personal and career planning, business success, financial independence, academic excellence, personal success, physical health, interpersonal relationships, and training managers to become career coaches to their employees. Many coaches identify themselves as coaches, personal coaches, or life coaches rather than career or job coaches, mainly because their consultation is not limited to work issues.

Career coaches come from a variety of vocational backgrounds, such as accountants, athletic trainers, academics, lawyers, clergy, psychologists, business executive officers, theater directors, and homemakers. A survey of International Coach Federation members found that more than 70 percent of the members were former consultants or managers. Career coaches usually advertise their services through Web sites and professional and personal networking. Their contact with clients often takes place via the Internet and telephone, at the clients' homes or workplaces, or in public places, such as coffee shops. Career coaching can also be conducted using a seminar-based program in addition to the one-on-one fashion. The reduction of overhead cost (e.g., office space and administrative support), along with a potentially lucrative income ranging from \$75 to \$300 an hour, make career coaching an attractive career option. One special form of career coaching is called *executive coaching*. Such career services are typically provided by licensed psychologists and delivered to high-ranking managers, such as chief executive officers. This kind of consultation often involves a long-term contractual relationship to assist the manager in strategic planning, organizational and employee development, and productivity improvement.

Y. Barry Chung and M. Coleman Allen Gfroerer have discussed some distinctions among career counselors, career development facilitators, and career coaches, the three major providers of career development services. *Career counselors* are counselors or counseling psychologists by training. They have at least a master's degree in their respective disciplines and may practice only with a state license or under the supervision of a licensed counselor or psychologist.

Career development facilitators often work under the supervision of career counselors to provide career services that do not require professional training (e.g., résumé writing and job interviews). Some major professional organizations offer training programs for career development facilitators (e.g., National Career Development Association, National Employment Counseling Association). The Center for Credentialing in Education, a subsidiary of the National Board for Certified Counselors, awards certificates for Global Career Development Facilitators.

Currently, there is no nationally recognized body to regulate the training, credentialing, and professional conduct of career coaches, nor are there state licensures for the practice of career coaching. However, major coaching institutes do offer training programs, certificates, and ethical codes (e.g., Coach U, International Coach Federation). Formal training can be a two-year program with at least 250 hours of direct service. Seasoned career coaches also provide seminars and workshops in major cities across the country to train other career coaches. The National Career Development Association charged its professional standards committee to explore training and consumer guidelines for career coaching. CoachVille offers international coaching licenses in a number of countries outside the United States.

Whereas career development facilitators perform a subset of career services conducted by career counselors, the work of career coaches overlaps substantially with that of career counselors (e.g., career decision making, job search, work adjustment). Generally, the work unique to career counselors requires professional training in assessment, psychological intervention, or sometimes diagnosis, whereas career coaches may have more expertise in organizational dynamics, corporate and managerial development, and work productivity. Furthermore, career coaching is unique in that career coaches may work with clients in settings nontraditional to career counselors, such as the client's homes, workplaces, and public places.

The boundary between a career coach and client often is not as rigid as in a counseling relationship. Clients may introduce their career coaches to coworkers and allow their coaches to observe work behavior and organizational dynamics in order to advise the clients on how to improve productivity and workplace climate. However, the aforementioned distinctions between career coaching and counseling are not without exceptions, because many career coaches are

counselors or psychologists by training. These counseling professionals choose to provide career services using the title of a career coach. Some advantages for this decision include more flexibility in the consulting relationship and less negative stigma attached to coaching than to counseling. In fact, some people believe that hiring a career coach is as fashionable as having a personal fitness trainer.

—Y. Barry Chung

See also Career counseling, Executive coaching, Performance appraisal and feedback, Three-hundred-sixty degree (360°) evaluation

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CAREER CONSTRUCTION THEORY

Career construction theory provides a way of thinking about how individuals choose and use work. The theory presents a model for comprehending vocational behavior across the life cycle as well as methods and materials that career counselors use to help clients make vocational choices and maintain successful and satisfying work lives. It seeks to be comprehensive in its purview by taking three perspectives on vocational behavior: differential, developmental, and dynamic. From the perspective of individual-differences psychology, the theory examines the content of vocational personality types and *what* different people prefer to do. From the perspective of developmental psychology, it examines the process of psychosocial adaptation and *how* individuals cope with vocational development tasks, occupational transitions, and work traumas. From the perspective of narrative psychology, the theory examines the dynamics by which life themes impose meaning on vocational behavior and *why* individuals fit work into their lives in distinct ways. In coordination, the three perspectives enable counselors and researchers to survey how individuals

construct their careers by using life themes to integrate the self-organization of personality and the self-extension of career adaptability into a self-defining whole that animates work, directs occupational choice, and shapes vocational adjustment.

RATIONALE FOR CAREER CONSTRUCTION THEORY

Career construction theory is one of many career theories that seek to explain occupational choice and work adjustment, each interrogating a different aspect of vocational behavior. Career theories that have risen to prominence have done so because they effectively address important questions. For example, the model of person-environment fit emerged early in the twentieth century to address the question of how to match workers to work. The model of vocational development emerged in the middle of the twentieth century to address the question of how to advance a career in one organization or profession. These theories of vocational personality types and vocational development tasks remain useful today when considering how to match workers to work and develop a career in an organization. However, the global economy of the twenty-first century poses new questions about career, especially the question of how individuals can negotiate a lifetime of job changes without losing their sense of self and social identity.

Career construction theory responds to the needs of today's mobile workers, who may feel fragmented and confused as they encounter a restructuring of occupations, transformation of the labor force, and multicultural imperatives. This fundamental reshaping of the work world is making it increasingly difficult to comprehend careers just with person-environment and vocational development models that emphasize commitment and stability rather than flexibility and mobility. The new job market in our unsettled economy calls for viewing career not as a lifetime commitment to one employer, but as selling services and skills to a series of employers who need projects completed. In negotiating each new project, the prospective employee usually concentrates on salary yet also seeks to make the work meaningful, control the work environment, balance work and family responsibilities, and train for the next job.

While the form of career changes from stability to mobility to reflect the labor needs of postindustrial societies, career construction theory seeks to retain

and renovate the best concepts and research from the twentieth-century career models for use in the twenty-first century. For example, instead of measuring personality traits as realist concepts and trying to prove construct validity, the theory concentrates on how individuals use what they have. In replacing scores with stories, career construction theory focuses on how individuals use their vocational personalities to adapt to a sequence of job changes while remaining faithful to themselves and recognizable by others. The theory does this by focusing on the meaning that structures an individual's career as it plays out across the 10 or more different jobs that a worker today can expect to occupy during her or his work life.

LIFE THEMES

Career construction theory, simply stated, holds that individuals build their careers by imposing meaning on vocational behavior. Personality types and developmental transitions deal with what a person has done and how they have done it. However, they do not address the question of why they do what they do, nor do they focus on the spirit that animates or the values that guide the manifold choices and adjustments that build a career. Thus, career construction theory emphasizes the interpretive and interpersonal processes through which individuals impose meaning and direction on their vocational behavior. It uses social constructionism as a metatheory with which to reconceptualize vocational personality types and vocational development tasks as processes that have possibilities, not realities that predict the future. From a constructionist viewpoint, *career*, or, more precisely, *subjective career*, denotes a moving perspective that imposes personal meaning on past memories, present experiences, and future aspirations by weaving them into a pattern that portrays a life theme. Thus, the subjective career that guides, regulates, and sustains vocational behavior emerges from an active process of making meaning, not discovering preexisting facts.

The *life theme* component of career construction theory addresses the subject matter of work life and focuses on the *why* of vocational behavior. Career stories reveal the themes that individuals use to make meaningful choices and adjust to work roles. By dealing with the *why* of life themes along with the *what* of personality types and the *how* of career adaptability, career construction seeks to be comprehensive in its purview. Although the content of personality and

process of adaptation are both important, studying vocational personality and career adaptability as separate variables misses the dynamics that integrate personality and adaptability into a self-defined whole. The essential meaning of a career and the dynamics of its construction are revealed in self-defining stories about the vocational development tasks, occupational transitions, and work traumas that an individual has faced. In chronicling the recursive interplay between self and society, career stories explain why individuals make the choices that they do and the private meaning that guides these choices. From these prototypical stories about work life, counselors attempt to comprehend the life themes that construct careers and understand the motives and meaning that pattern work life.

The life theme component of career construction theory emerged from Donald E. Super's postulate that in expressing vocational preferences, individuals put into occupational terminology their ideas of the kind of people they are; that in entering an occupation, they seek to implement a concept of themselves; and that after stabilizing in an occupation, they seek to realize their potential and preserve self-esteem. This core postulate leads to the conceptualization of occupational choice as implementing a self-concept, work as a manifestation of selfhood, and vocational development as a continuing process of improving the match between self and situation. From this perspective on the self, work provides a context for human development and an important location in each individual's life, a place that matters.

The life theme perspective highlights the view that careers are about *mattering*. Counseling for career construction aims to help clients understand how their life projects matter to them and to other people. In career construction theory, the theme is what matters in the life story. It consists of what is at stake in that person's life. On the one hand, the theme matters to individuals in that it gives meaning and purpose to their work. It makes them care about what they do. On the other hand, what they do and contribute to society matters to other people. The belief that what they do matters to others sharpens identity and promotes a sense of social meaning and relatedness. What individuals choose to do is the subject matter of vocational personality.

VOCATIONAL PERSONALITY

Vocational personality refers to an individual's career-related abilities, needs, values, and interests. Individuals form personalities in their families of

origin and develop these personalities in their neighborhoods and schools as they prepare to eventually enter the work world. Before these characteristics are expressed in occupations, they are rehearsed in activities such as household chores, games, hobbies, reading, and studying.

Career construction theory prefers to view interests and other career-related "traits" as strategies for adapting rather than as realist categories. Concepts such as interests should not be reified as factors or traits. They do not reside within an individual, and they cannot be excavated from within by interest inventories. They should not be treated as objects by counselors; they are verbs, not nouns. Career-related abilities, interests, and values are relational phenomena that reflect socially constituted meanings. They are dynamic processes that present possibilities, not stable traits that predict the future. From this perspective, individuals can adopt or drop selected strategies as situations call for them. Of course, long-practiced strategies do coalesce into a tested style. This style can be compared with that of other people to form types or groups, but these socially constructed categories should not be privileged as anything more than similarities.

Career construction theory asserts that vocational personality types and occupational interests are simply *resemblances* to socially constructed clusters of attitudes and skills. They have no reality or truth value outside themselves, because they depend on the social constructions of time, place, and culture that support them. Regulated similarities in work environments produce vocational personality types and occupational groups from among individuals with heterogeneous potentials. Thus, career construction theory regards vocational personality types and occupational interests as relational phenomena that reflect emergent and socially constituted meanings. For this reason, career construction theory views vocational personality as an individual's *reputation* among a group of people. Accordingly, the theory concentrates on what individuals can become in doing work, not what they are before they go to work. Work, as a context for human development, provides the outer form of something intensely private; it is the bridge between public and private. Crossing the bridge between self and society is called *adaptation*.

CAREER ADAPTABILITY

In concert with life themes and vocational personality, the third central component in career construction

theory is *career adaptability*. Life themes guide the expression of personality in work, while the expression itself is managed by the process of career adaptation. Viewing career construction as a series of attempts to implement a self-concept in social roles focuses attention on adaptation to a series of transitions from school to work, from job to job, and from occupation to occupation. Career construction theory views adaptation to these transitions as fostered by five principal types of behaviors: orientation, exploration, establishment, management, and disengagement. These constructive activities form a cycle of adaptation that is periodically repeated as new transitions appear on the horizon. As each transition approaches, individuals can adapt more effectively if they meet the change with growing awareness, information seeking followed by informed decision making, trial behaviors leading to a stable commitment projected forward for a certain time period, active role management, and, eventually, forward-looking deceleration and disengagement. For example, an employee begins a new job with a period of growth in her new role, including exploration of the requirements, routines, and rewards of that role. Then she becomes established in the role, manages the role for a certain time period, and eventually disengages from it either voluntarily when further growth readies her to change jobs or involuntarily when organizational changes make her position redundant. In postindustrial economies, people do not work at one job for 30 years. New technology, globalization, and job redesign require workers to more actively construct their careers. They change jobs often and make frequent transitions, each time repeating the cycle of orientation, exploration, stabilization, management, and disengagement. The ability to adapt to new circumstances is enhanced by certain coping resources for solving the unfamiliar, complex, and ill-defined problems presented by developmental tasks, occupational transitions, and work traumas.

In considering adaptability, career construction theory highlights a set of specific attitudes, beliefs, and competencies—the “ABCs” of career construction—that shape the actual problem-solving strategies and coping behaviors that individuals use to synthesize their vocational self-concepts with work roles. The ABCs are grouped into four dimensions of adaptability: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. Thus, the adaptive individual is conceptualized as (a) becoming *concerned* about the vocational future, (b) increasing personal *control* over one’s vocational

future, (c) displaying *curiosity* by exploring possible selves and future scenarios, and (d) strengthening the *confidence* to pursue one’s aspirations. Increasing a client’s career adaptability is a central goal in the goal of career construction counseling.

COUNSELING FOR CAREER CONSTRUCTION

Counseling for career construction begins with an interview that poses a uniform set of questions to a client. The *career style interview* elicits self-defining stories that enable a counselor to identify and appreciate the thematic unity in a client’s life. In addition to revealing the life theme, data from a career style interview also manifest the client’s vocational personality and career adaptability.

It is critical that neither the counselor nor the client view the career stories as determining the future; instead, they should view storying as an active attempt at making meaning and shaping the future. The stories guide adaptation by evaluating opportunities and constraints as well as by using vocational personality traits to address tasks, transitions, and traumas. In telling their stories, clients are remembering the past in a way that constructs a possible future. Clients seem to tell counselors the stories that they themselves need to hear; from all their available stories, they narrate the stories that support current goals and inspire action. Rather than reporting historical facts, individuals reconstruct the past so that prior events support current choices and lay the groundwork for future moves. This narrative truth often differs from historical truth, because it fictionalizes the past in order to preserve dispositional continuity and coherence in the face of psychosocial change.

In attempting to discern life themes while listening to individuals’ career stories, counselors and researchers can become disoriented by the numerous particulars of people’s lives. To prevent becoming confused by a client’s complexities and contradictions, a counselor or researcher must listen not for the facts, but for the glue that holds the facts together as they try to hear the theme or secret that makes a whole of the life. Arranging the seemingly random actions and incidents reported in career stories into a plot can be done in many ways. Career construction theory proposes for this purpose that the listener try to hear the quintessence of the stories a client tells. Counselors and researchers approach this task by assuming that the archetypal theme of career construction involves turning a personal preoccupation

into a public occupation. As they listen to a client narrate his or her stories, a counselor or researcher concentrates on identifying and understanding the client's personal paradigm for turning essence into interest, tension into intention, and obsession into profession. The progress narrative in the twentieth-century career model that told about climbing the occupational ladder is thus transformed into a progress narrative that tells how individuals can use work to actively master what they have passively suffered and thus move from a felt minus to a perceived plus. Thus, in its counseling application, career construction theory assists clients in fully inhabiting their lives and becoming more complete as they sustain themselves and contribute to their communities.

—Mark L. Savickas

See also Career development, Crystallization of the vocational self-concept, Holland's theory of vocational choice, Super's career development theory

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CAREER COUNSELING

Career counseling is a multifaceted set of activities designed to help people (a) make or remake occupational choices, (b) find jobs, or (c) achieve satisfaction and success in the workplace. Career counseling had its beginnings in the vocational guidance movement, a progressive political reform movement that emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century to improve living conditions and reduce poverty in major urban areas of the newly industrialized United States by helping young people find satisfying and sustaining work. Pioneered by Frank Parsons in the establishment of the Vocational Bureau in Boston's Civic Service House, vocational guidance activities initially were focused on helping the poor and marginalized in American society make more informed choices about work that would provide them with a living wage and a sense of satisfaction.

While career counseling activities today are still largely focused on helping people make more informed occupational choices, career counseling has expanded to include providing assistance with other important work-related tasks, including finding work and achieving more satisfactory adjustment (i.e., satisfaction and success) in the workplace. Thus, career counselors work not only with people who are having difficulties deciding (or redeciding) on the type of work that they want to pursue but also with people who are having problems finding work and those whose job performance or feelings of work satisfaction are less than satisfactory.

COUNSELING FOR CHOICE MAKING

One of the main focuses of career counseling remains on helping people decide on the type of work they want to pursue. People seeking help for choice-making difficulties include adolescents and young adults making first-time career choices and older adults contemplating career changes or returning to the paid workforce after a number of years of absence.

Most counseling interventions for choice-making difficulties that have been empirically tested are based on a model of vocational guidance originally proposed by Frank Parsons in his 1909 book *Choosing a Vocation* and by more recent theories of the choice-making and work adjustment process, most notably John L. Holland's theory of career choice and Lloyd Lofquist and Rene V. Dawis's theory of work adjustment. Parsons proposed that for vocational guidance (i.e., career counseling) to be effective, it needed to help people (a) gain greater self-understanding of their work personalities, (b) gather information on occupations, and (c) combine self- and occupational knowledge to arrive at a choice of occupation via "true reasoning."

The subsequent theories of Holland and Lofquist and Dawis have helped flesh out Parsons' model by suggesting the types of self- and occupational information that are necessary to make an informed choice, a choice that will lead, in the long run, to occupational success and satisfaction. According to Holland, people and occupational environments can both be described in terms of their resemblance to six different personality types: Realistic (R), Investigative (I), Artistic (A), Social (S), Enterprising (E), and Conventional (C). Holland further proposed that the degree of congruence (i.e., match) between an individual's personality type (e.g., RIA) and the personality type of a work environment (e.g., RIA) is associated with increasing levels of occupational satisfaction and performance. Thus, most extant career interventions help people identify their personality types and gather information on occupations that are most congruent with their personalities.

Lofquist and Dawis proposed a somewhat more fine-tuned explanation of how work satisfaction and satisfactoriness (performance) are attained, namely by the degree to which the work environment reinforces an individual's most important vocational needs and the degree to which the individual's abilities are commensurate with the ability requirements of the job. *Need-reinforcer match* (or correspondence) predicts how well a person will like his or her job (satisfaction), and *ability-ability requirement correspondence* predicts how well a person will perform (satisfactoriness). Thus, career choice interventions also often help people identify their vocational needs and abilities and gather information on occupations that are correspondent with both their needs and abilities. Each of these theories has individually garnered a good deal of empirical support, and an important 1990 study by James B. Rounds at the

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign found that a focus on both congruence and correspondence did a better job of predicting clients' work satisfaction than did focus on either alone.

Counseling interventions, although usually based on a common model and often built around a common set of theories, vary widely in format, from those that can be largely self-directed via print, computer, and Web-based resources to those that involve a great deal more professional contact. The latter (i.e., those involving professional contact) can take the form of semester-long high school or college courses, shorter structured groups and workshops, or individual counseling of one to several sessions in length.

Much research has accumulated on the effectiveness of career-choice interventions and has resulted in a series of meta-analyses that have shed some empirical light on the effectiveness of career choice interventions and how they might be improved. *Meta-analysis* is a statistical approach to synthesizing the results of numerous studies to arrive at empirical conclusions from a body of research and to suggest some precise directions for future research. The major quantitative yield from most meta-analyses of counseling outcome research is an effect size (usually symbolized as *d*) that estimates the magnitude of effect of an intervention. This effect size is interpreted as the difference, in standard deviations, between the intervention and control or comparison group outcomes. A *d* of 1.00, for example, means that the average person in one group (e.g., the counseled group) improved a standard deviation more than the average person in the other group (e.g., the control group).

Meta-analyses of the career counseling outcome literature have yielded several important findings. First, it is clear that interventions on the whole are effective; people who are seen for career choice-making difficulties improve on relevant outcomes about a third of a standard deviation ($d = .34$) more than those who do not receive career choice-making help. Second, outcome does not seem to vary by intervention format, except that totally self-directed interventions seem to be less effective than interventions that involve some level of professional contact, regardless of whether contact is through classes, structured groups, or individual modes of counseling. Third, self-directed interventions (via print-, computer-, or Web-based formats) can be improved to levels obtained through other formats with counselor involvement at some stage of the process.

The meta-analyses have also yielded insights about how counseling, regardless of format, can be improved. Five intervention components seem to be critical to outcome: (1) having clients, near the end of the intervention, write goals for how they plan to use in the future what they gained through counseling; (2) discussing goals individually with clients and helping them fine-tune their goals; (3) facilitating clients' use of occupational information; (4) helping clients consider how much support they have for different career options and how to build further support for preferred options; and (5) exposing clients to models of effective decision making. Evidence further suggests that the number of critical components included in counseling may be related to increasing effectiveness; one meta-analysis, for example, found that interventions that employed at least three of these components yielded an average effect size of .99, versus an average effect size of only .22 when none of them were employed.

Taken together, the meta-analytic results suggest that career counseling, based largely on Parsons' model of vocational guidance and two prominent theories of career choice making and work adjustment, is effective. Indeed, on the average, people gain about one-third of a standard deviation in choice-making outcomes when they receive counseling compared with those who do not, regardless of whether they are seen individually, in structured groups, or in career classes. The results further suggest that outcomes can be improved further if clients are helped individually to develop written goals, make greater use of occupational information, consider how much support they have from others for their choices, and are exposed to models who have overcome difficulties in the career choice-making process. Clients who have been exposed to at least three of these additional components have improved, on the average, a full standard deviation more than persons who did not receive career intervention and about three-fourths of a standard deviation more than clients who received career intervention without being exposed to any of these apparently critical components.

Despite these quite positive results, there is still a great deal more that needs to be learned about the career counseling process for persons with choice-making difficulties. Foremost among these are (a) whether outcome can be improved further by incorporating more fully other empirically supported career theories into counseling (e.g., social cognitive career theory, Super's theory of career development);

(b) whether intervention effectiveness varies on the basis of, for example, client gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or help-seeking goals; and (c) how, if necessary, counseling can be modified or extended to meet the choice-making needs of diverse clientele.

COUNSELING FOR FINDING A JOB

Career counseling can also involve helping clients find jobs. People seeking job-finding assistance can include new entrants and reentrants into the labor force as well as those who have lost jobs and those who are seeking to change jobs. There is a wealth of data on factors related to job-finding success that can be used to direct counseling efforts. There are equally impressive data on the effectiveness of specific kinds of job-finding assistance.

Research on factors related to job search success—defined by outcomes such as percentage of clients who find employment, speed of employment, and income—has consistently revealed that job search effort and intensity (i.e., number of different resources used) are the strongest predictors of job search success. There is emerging empirical consensus that job search effort and intensity are related in predictable ways to various personality (e.g., extraversion and conscientiousness), situational (e.g., economic hardship), cognitive (e.g., employment commitment, job search self-efficacy), and social/contextual (e.g., job search support) variables and also that the personality characteristics of extraversion and conscientiousness may influence job search success independently of effort and intensity through their effects on hiring decisions. It is equally clear, however, that job search effort and intensity do not relate consistently to indices of employment quality (e.g., job satisfaction, intent to leave) unless people also engage, or are helped to engage, in some form of career planning that allows them to identify jobs that come closest to matching their work-related needs and goals.

These data therefore suggest that the most effective ways to help people having trouble finding work would involve encouraging, assisting, and reinforcing greater effort in the process and more comprehensive use of job finding resources, including but not limited to making greater use of their social networks to find job leads. The findings on factors related to job search effort and intensity also suggest that effective counseling interventions should help people develop greater confidence (i.e., self-efficacy) in their job

search skills, provide support to sustain efforts, and assist them in more effectively using their social networks to find job leads and in developing more effective job-interviewing skills. Counseling efforts to promote greater social network use and more effective interviewing skills may be especially necessary for those whose personalities may predispose them to be less than comfortable seeking assistance from friends, families, and acquaintances and interacting in one-on-one job interviews.

Finally, data suggest that counseling efforts to increase effort and intensity may need to be complemented by career-planning activities if employment quality as well as job-finding success is a goal of counseling. Although the research is far from clear on what would constitute effective career planning, it is likely to involve helping people identify jobs and employing organizations that fit their values and work-related goals.

Research testing the effectiveness of job-finding interventions has largely supported these findings: Interventions that are built to increase job search effort and intensity, provide support, facilitate job-finding self-efficacy beliefs, and improve interviewing skills are substantially effective in helping people attain leads and procure jobs, but they may not be as effective in ensuring that the jobs people attain will be the most satisfying to them. Two specific job-finding interventions that have received extensive research and empirical support in the literature are Job Clubs and the JOBS program. Although developed from different theoretical models, both interventions are rather intensive, structured group programs that help participants use a variety of resources to locate job leads, provide reinforced practice in job interviewing and other skills necessary to obtain jobs (e.g., cold calling, letter writing, résumé preparation), encourage and reinforce participants to support each other in the job-search process and share job leads, and require participants to establish weekly goals.

The Job Club in particular has received widespread application and has been tested in samples of psychiatric patients, physically handicapped adolescents and adults, welfare recipients, college students and college graduates, and unemployed older adults. Job placement rates have varied from 13 percent for one psychiatric patient sample to 93 percent for an unemployed adult sample, with an average job placement rate of about 70 percent. The JOBS program has demonstrated similar job placement rates with unemployed adult samples, as

well as improved mental health outcomes, but neither the Job Club nor the JOBS intervention has shown as consistent effects on job satisfaction and other measures of employment quality. The latter may be attributable to the fact that neither intervention engages systematically in career-planning activities.

COUNSELING FOR WORK ADJUSTMENT

Employed adults also frequently seek out career counseling because they are feeling dissatisfied with their current employment or are performing less than adequately in it. Some are seeking a new career direction, while others are seeking ways to feel more satisfied or to perform more satisfactorily in their current work. The former (career or job changers) seem to benefit from career choice or job-finding counseling, while the latter need help that is specifically targeted to improving their satisfaction or performance in their current jobs.

Large bodies of research on factors related to job satisfaction and success can provide important insights for counseling about potential sources of dissatisfaction or work performance problems. Both bodies of research have found that the degree of fit between the person and his or her work environment is an important determinant of satisfaction and success. Need-reinforcer correspondence, as suggested by the theory of work adjustment, seems to be substantially related to work satisfaction, while ability-ability requirement correspondence is strongly implicated in work performance outcomes. Facets of the work environment itself also seem relate to satisfaction and success over and above the influence of person-environment fit. Work overload, lack of supervisor support, and role conflict and ambiguity have all, for example, been found to relate to job dissatisfaction, while lack of challenging assignments and mentors has been found to relate negatively to work success. There are, finally, also characteristics of the person that may relate to satisfaction and success, most notably neuroticism in the case of job dissatisfaction and conscientiousness in the case of work performance.

Unfortunately, there is virtually no research that has tested, in the counseling arena, interventions built around these findings for their effectiveness in promoting work satisfaction among dissatisfied workers or work performance among unsatisfactory employees. Thus, although much is known about the reasons

people feel dissatisfied with their work or are performing less than adequately in it, little is known about how these findings might be translated into counseling interventions for the dissatisfied or unsatisfactory workers who make up a large portion of the caseloads of counselors working with adult career concerns.

—Steven D. Brown

See also Career coaching, Career counseling competencies, Career intervention outcomes

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CAREER COUNSELING COMPETENCIES

Career counseling competencies consist of the knowledge, skills, and personal attributes that career counselors need to deliver quality services to clients. Even in so-called developed countries, large portions of the population are not well served by existing approaches to delivering career development services. Articulating career development competencies that are cross-indexed to client services is a substantial step toward providing comprehensive and quality career development services.

Career development is a lifelong process of managing learning, work, and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future. Career paths develop over time, regardless of whether people are planful about the process or leave it to chance. Those who are planful about their education and training and the opportunities they pursue are more likely to achieve a meaningful and satisfying life. When people have a vision of what they want to do with their lives, they tend to be more focused, better able to spot opportunities, and more persistent in pursuit of those opportunities.

Some people naturally develop the ability to create focus in their lives, but others need assistance, especially as the rate of economic, occupational, and social change escalates. Comprehensive career guidance and counseling services are designed to provide that assistance. Providing effective and comprehensive services requires a broad base of knowledge, skills, and personal attributes (i.e., competencies). In addition, those providing the services also need to devote attention to developing an infrastructure that makes such services available and to creating a culture that encourages people to seek assistance when they need it.

BACKGROUND

Over the past 10 years, there have been several initiatives directed at articulating the competencies needed to provide quality career development services to clients. In most cases, the starting point was to identify the types of services clients need, then map out the roles involved in providing those services, and, finally, elaborate on the competencies needed to perform those roles. In most initiatives, career counseling is seen as one of many services that clients need.

Clients also need career information, assessment, advocacy, job-search knowledge and skills, and job-maintenance knowledge and skills. These services are provided by a range of practitioners, with varying degrees of training and a wide variation in competencies. Most initiatives have recognized this and have developed a competency framework that is inclusive of all service providers.

In developing a competency framework, most initiatives have focused on the functions performed in providing comprehensive services to clients. It is a competency-based (rather than a training-based) approach, emphasizing what service providers do to offer quality services to clients rather than how they learned to do it. This approach has many advantages: It recognizes that people become skilled in different ways, not only through formal training; it readily connects to prior learning assessment and recognition; and focusing on the activities professionals perform is easily understood by both practitioners and clients.

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS

Most career development competency frameworks have two types of competencies: *core competencies* that all practitioners should have and *specialized competencies* that depend on the nature of a person's work. In most cases, the areas of specialization extend into the core competencies but are elaborated in more detail and at a more advanced level in the specialization. For example, all career development practitioners need to have a certain amount of competence in assessment (core); however, assessment specialists have these core competencies plus many additional and advanced assessment competencies.

Core competencies are usually grouped into categories such as ethical behavior, professional conduct, advocacy, awareness and appreciation of client cultural differences, awareness of their own (i.e., the professional's) capacity and limitations, knowledge of labor market information, and the ability to communicate effectively with colleagues and clients. Specialized competencies are usually grouped into categories such as assessment; ability to design, implement, and evaluate guidance and counseling programs; career counseling; consultation and coordination; group facilitation and educational guidance; program and service management; information and resource management; work development and job placement; research; and community capacity building. All service providers are

expected to have the core competencies, and, in addition, they may have competencies in one or several areas of specialization, depending on the nature of their duties and the services they provide. There is no hierarchy intended between core and specialization or among the specializations. All competency areas are equally valued, and no area of service is more or less important. All competency areas are important in providing comprehensive career development services to clients.

To date, career development competency initiatives have stopped at identifying the competencies needed to deliver quality services to clients. The next step will be to articulate in greater detail the specific knowledge, skills, and personal attributes that make up the competencies, for example, the specific knowledge, skills, and personal attributes needed to work effectively with a diverse range of clients with a social inclusion perspective and in the context of a global labor force. It will also be necessary to specify the knowledge, skills, and personal attributes needed to advocate effectively for all areas of the competency framework. Once these competencies (the knowledge, skills, and personal attributes) have been identified and validated, it will be important for practitioner training programs to modify their curricula to give greater emphasis to these competencies.

PREPARING CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS

The career development competency initiatives undertaken to date have adopted a broad vision based on providing comprehensive and quality career development services to clients. Most counselor education programs focus primarily on the core competencies outlined above. However, to offer effective service, career counselors will need to extend their expertise beyond the core competencies to include a range of specializations. Thus, the scope of most training programs will have to expand substantially in order to provide the competencies needed to deliver comprehensive services. There is a need for making program evaluation a more integral part of training programs, teaching the knowledge and skills required for more effective interactions with policymakers and fund providers, expanding the role boundaries of career counselors to include social action and advocacy, and including a greater emphasis on assessing and intervening with contextual variables that affect career-life planning of clients.

—Bryan Hiebert

See also Career construction theory, Career counseling, Career Development Inventory, Cognitive information processing in career counseling

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CAREER DECISION-MAKING STYLES

Career decision making is generally regarded as a process that entails identifying alternatives, gathering information, weighing the options, selecting one choice, and implementing the chosen alternative. While this basic process seems fairly straightforward, it has been noted that individuals differ considerably in how they negotiate the decisional process. *Career decision-making styles* thus have been advanced to describe the variety of ways in which individuals approach, respond to, and behave in career decision situations. These observable variations in career decision making have led to a number of taxonomies of

career decision-making styles and considerable theorizing and research on the effectiveness of different styles.

Early research into career decision-making styles largely focused on developing taxonomies to describe different types of deciders. Lilian Dinklage is widely cited as the initial scholar to identify a set of career decision-making styles. Based on interviews with high school students, she posed a traitlike taxonomy: *Planners* are characterized by methodical pursuit to decision resolution; *agonizers* devote considerable effort to information gathering but often get overwhelmed by the resulting data; *delayers* recognize the need to decide but defer action at present; deciders with *paralysis* are highly cognizant of the need to decide, but are unable to engage in the process; *impulsives* take the first available alternative; *intuitives* choose what "feels right"; *fatalists* leave choice to fate or chance; and *compliant* deciders defer to the recommendation of others.

Similar taxonomies have been proposed by Tanya Arroba, John Krumboltz and his colleagues, and Vincent Harren. Arroba suggested that individuals may use different decision-making styles depending on the particular decisional situation. In her classification, six state-specific styles are identified: *logical* (objective appraisal and selection); *hesitant* (procrastination or postponement of decision making); *intuitive* (choices based on an inner feeling of rightness or inevitability); *emotional* (choices based on subjective preferences or feelings); *no-thought* (little objective consideration, as might occur in a routine decision or in an impulsively chosen alternative); and *compliant* (passive; choice based on expectations of others or self-imposed expectations). In addition, Arroba attempted to identify underlying factors, revealing a clustering of logical and hesitant (implying an element of extended personal time and effort in the decision-making process) and a separate cluster of emotional and intuitive (implying a subjective emphasis in choosing). The no-thought style also appeared to have some association with this latter group. The compliant style consistently appeared as a separate factor.

Krumboltz's taxonomy proposes five statelike styles: *rational* (making decisions in a logical and systematic manner); *fatalistic* (believing that one has little personal control); *intuitive* (relying on nonspecific impressions); *impulsive* (spontaneous, spur-of-the-moment choice making); and *dependent* (relying on the expectations or advice of others).

Harren's taxonomy suggests that styles vary on two dimensions. First, he proposed that deciders vary in the extent to which they view themselves as personally responsible (in contrast to assigning responsibility to others or to fate). Second, he suggested that deciders differ in the extent to which they rely on logic (in contrast to emotion) in their decision making. His widely used taxonomy poses styles as relatively enduring traits, and includes *rational* (individually responsible, systematic, logical); *intuitive* (individually responsible, primary consideration of emotional factors, often impulsive); and *dependent* (responsibility deferred to others, passive, sees limited options).

Additional taxonomies have been offered, drawing on underlying dimensions. Richard Johnson, for example, based his taxonomy on what he termed a "mental factor analysis" of his clinical observations. He proposed that individuals differ in the manner in which they gather information (systematically or spontaneously) and process information (internally or externally). These variations produce four styles: *internal-systematic*, *internal-spontaneous*, *external-systematic*, and *external-spontaneous*. Donna Walsh undertook a comprehensive review of the literature on individual variations in career decision making and offered a taxonomy combining Jungian theory and a review of known variations in the decision-making process. Two bipolar dimensions were proposed: *intraversion-extraversion* (reflecting an orientation toward or away from others in the various aspects of the decision-making process), and *thinking-feeling* (reflecting how judgments are made). Finally, Susanne Scott and Reginald Bruce articulated a taxonomy similar to those described above but not specifically devoted to the career domain, which includes five essential decision-making styles: *rational*, *avoidant*, *intuitive*, *dependent*, and *spontaneous*.

Although the available taxonomies have been presented above in a descriptive frame, there has also been considerable prescriptive endorsement of the benefits of some decision-making styles. Following with the Parsonian "true-reasoning" paradigm of the early 1900s, theorists and researchers (including those noted above) have provided a widespread conclusion that a rational, systematic, and independent approach to decision making is "best." The adaptive decider is seen as objective, systematic, and logical and free of emotional distractions and cognitive distortions and approaches the generally solitary decision-making task with considerable autonomy and independence.

In support of this view is literature in which it is generally concluded that the more systematic, rational decision-making style has proved adaptive: A rational style has been related to an approach to problem solving, rather than avoidance of it, and has been related to greater self-knowledge and to greater progress in making career decisions as well as in implementing those decisions. "Systematic-internals" have been shown to be least likely to experience indecision about a career choice. Furthermore, individuals who have achieved a firm sense of individual identity use a more systematic, rational decision-making style. Mixed results are evident for a link between decision-making styles and vocational maturity, however, with some evidence that the more vocationally mature student uses a less dependent style and other evidence linking vocational maturity to a rational style.

Just as the rational decision-making style has received generally favorable evidence, the dependent or compliant style has been largely linked with less favorable functioning. For example, those whose identity was foreclosed (committed without exploration) tended to rely on a dependent style. Furthermore, a dependent style has been related to negative outcomes such as less progress in decisions, use of an avoidance strategy in problem solving, and lack of problem-solving confidence.

Despite the conclusion suggested by this brief review that rational, nondependent decision making is preferable, there is also evidence that it is definitely not the only adaptive way of making decisions. Other research has focused on developing counseling interventions to aid individuals in making career decisions. This research has shown that different career decision-making styles have successfully predicted the effects of career interventions, whereas a rational style per se does not appear to be predictive of treatment outcome. Rather, evidence suggests that treatments designed to match participants' decision-making styles (e.g., systematic intervention for clients with a rational career decision-making style; feeling-focused interventions for intuitive deciders) are more beneficial to the participants. Furthermore, people with different styles may approach counselors differently, with the more dependent deciders expecting more directiveness, acceptance, and nurturance. (It should be noted, however, that these findings have not been replicated in other learning situations outside the counseling realm.)

More recent perspectives on career decision-making styles have focused on the adaptability of other styles

beyond a rational style. Drawing on literature in decision making and judgment, Susan Phillips noted that the prescribed rational, autonomous decision making may be neither possible nor desirable. Consideration of the limitations on human information-processing capacity suggests that decisions simply are not made with the dispassionate precision of a systematic, comprehensive, rational process. Furthermore, emotion or intuition (implied as risky in some decision style models) can be seen as highly useful sources of information about alternatives. And in the study of expert judges, drawing on the wisdom and expertise of others is seen as highly beneficial. In light of these observations, Phillips suggested that career decision-making styles other than rational (e.g., the intuitive or dependent styles) may not necessarily reflect an irrational (negative) style, but rather may represent a different kind of adaptation that incorporates affective components in decision making and/or collaborates and consults with others.

Finally, there is also an emerging body of literature to suggest that the context of career decision making—particularly the cultural and the interpersonal—may well play a larger role than previously suspected in determining what style an individual uses and how effective that style is. Thus, noting that collectivist cultures place a different value on the role of others in decision making, Wei-Cheng Mau showed that students from a more individualistic culture were more confident if they did not use a dependent decision-making style, whereas students from a collective culture were more confident only if they used a rational style.

Other recent research has focused on exploring how an individual's decision-making style might incorporate "others." Whereas the existing taxonomies of decision-making style acknowledge a role for other people only in the dependent or compliant decision-making styles, Phillips and her colleagues suggested that a relational perspective would provide a more complete and less pathological view of how deciders make decisions in a relational context. They proposed a taxonomy of how deciders use others in decisional situations in more or less self-directed ways (self-directedness) and how others involve themselves in the decision-making process (actions of others). While this perspective is still nascent, there is growing evidence that the use of "others" is valuable and is likely to reduce decision errors, foster vocational maturity, and promote adaptive transitions from school to work.

—Susan D. Phillips and LaRae M. Jome

See also Career exploration, Career indecision, Career maturity

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CAREER DECISION SCALE (CDS)

Samuel H. Osipow, with a colleague and several graduate students, developed the *Career Decision Scale* (CDS) at The Ohio State University (OSU) in the mid-1970s. First published by Marathon Press of Columbus, Ohio, the scale and its manual have been available from Psychological Assessment Resources of Odessa, Florida, since 1986. Although the instrument derives from an effort to establish types of career indecision, the CDS typically is used as a scale to assess degree of career indecision rather than as a set of category descriptors to assign to individuals. The CDS has 19 items, of which the first 2 items constitute

a Certainty scale and act as a validity check on the rest of the scale; 16 items constitute an Indecision scale; and the last item provides an opportunity for the client to present a self-descriptive phrase or sentence if no other item appears to him or her to be sufficiently descriptive. The third revision is the only version of the CDS that has been readily available to researchers or practitioners outside the original group of authors during the development phase. The CDS has been translated from English into French, Hebrew, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swedish, but these translations have not been marketed.

Professor Osipow and his colleagues initially sought to describe types of career indecision in order to develop interventions keyed to specific problems of varying severity. The original research plan envisioned the outcome to be a set of audiocassette tapes that invited the client to engage in self-assessment and self-counseling for his or her career indecision, either independently or as a precursor of counseling by a professional. Each tape would describe a type of career indecision and present exercises to help the listener resolve the problems associated with that type. The proposed categories and interventions were developed from discussions among the investigators and others of their experiences as career counselors and from knowledge and review of the career decision-making literature. The actual outcome of the initial research program was the CDS, in which each scale item had evolved from the drafts of the scripts originally developed for the audiocassette tapes.

Research using the CDS has been conducted by the original investigators and others in the United States and numerous other countries, primarily but not exclusively in the English-speaking world. In addition to being the subject of thesis and dissertation research (e.g., OSU, Texas Tech University [TTU]), the CDS has appeared in research published in refereed journals and presented at professional conferences. By 1986, the CDS had become one of the most highly cited new works in *Journal of Vocational Behavior* and *Vocational Guidance Quarterly*.

Measurement research on the CDS has focused primarily on the Indecision scale or the Indecision scale and the Certainty scale, addressing questions of reliability and validity across samples, factor structure, and the relative merits of using the CDS as a scale or as a set of categories. Other questions addressed in CDS research have included the relationship of career indecision to vocational interests, gender, irrational

beliefs, alcohol use, success in the first year of college, anxiety, and neuroticism. The CDS has been used to assess the effectiveness of counseling interventions, such as classroom- and computer-based career-planning courses, and to understand possible interactions between degree or type of career indecision and responsiveness to various career counseling modalities. Populations of research interest have included college undergraduates of various nationalities, ethnicities, socioeconomic status, and geographic locations in the United States; students in various undergraduate and graduate majors; traditional and nontraditional students; pre- and postcollege individuals; college students who are physically challenged; individuals employed in various occupations, such as managers or professionals; and parents who wish to help their children make career decisions.

The CDS has contributed strongly to a better understanding of career indecision. The literature of the CDS led to the development of other measures of career decision problems, some more grounded in theory, some emphasizing particular factors suggested by work on the CDS. In particular, the CDS helped focus attention on possible differences between a state of career undecidedness and a more traitlike career indecision. Career undecidedness could be changed by, for example, the provision of specific occupational information, but career indecision suggested the presence of barriers to decision perceived by the client as irresolvable.

The greater attention paid to undecidedness versus indecision has led to the discovery of the apparent usefulness of the CDS in suggesting psychodynamic explanations and interventions for career issues. Three decades ago, what was intended to be a typology became a scale, and what was intended to be a counseling device became a research instrument. The CDS, a scale based in practical counseling experience in what some consider the most mundane and simple counseling issue, has helped to restore interest in the most venerable of psychological theories, for which no counseling issue is mundane or simple. This, perhaps, is the research and practice direction most unexpected for the CDS by its authors. As these authors have reached or approached retirement age, it is a matter of professional satisfaction that the CDS continues to raise new questions for others to pursue.

—Jane L. Winer

See also Career decision-making styles, Career indecision, Career maturity

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CAREER DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY

Interest inventories are commonly used to assist high school and college students with vocational choices. However, the results of such instruments offer little value if the individual lacks the requisite attitudes and competencies required to make sound vocational decisions. The *Career Development Inventory* (CDI), created by Albert Thompson, Richard Lindeman, Donald Super, Jean Pierre Jordaan, and Roger Myers, can be used before administering an interest inventory to measure an individual's readiness to make vocational choices or with an interest inventory to determine how best to interpret the interest inventory results.

The CDI operationally defines Super's structural model of career choice readiness among adolescents and emerging adults. Inspired by the construct of reading readiness, Super, at midtwentieth century, reasoned that the readiness to and resources for making fitting educational and vocational choices emerged during childhood and developed during adolescence. He spent nearly 40 years identifying the critical attitudes and competencies that lead to sound educational and occupational decisions, constructed inventories to measure these attitudes and competencies, and studied their development in students from middle school through college.

CAREER CHOICE READINESS

Super believed vocational choice to be an individual's attempt to implement his or her self-concept in a work role. Through fitting work, individuals can manifest their self-concepts in daily activities. Accordingly, the choice of an occupation is a major decision that

adolescents must make as they enter the adult world. Workers' levels of satisfaction and success depend on the realism and wisdom of their occupational choices. To make a fitting choice and avoid occupational failure and frustration, individuals must possess the requisite readiness and resources.

Career choice attitudes denote an individual's disposition with regard to the amount of thought, effort, and planning he or she gives to future occupational or educational choices. *Career choice competencies* denote an individual's ability to apply his or her knowledge and understanding of careers and the world of work in making rational career decisions.

The two most important attitudes are planfulness and curiosity. *Attitudes toward planning* reflect a future orientation, an awareness of choices to be made, and a disposition to be involved in preparing to make imminent and distant choices. Well-developed attitudes toward planning prompt behaviors such as discussing career plans with adults, getting part-time jobs, taking part in college or community activities, and finding out what people do in one's field of interest. All of these can help one gain a clearer understanding of one's vocational interests. *Attitude toward exploration* means curiosity about the world of work and one's place in it. Well-developed attitudes toward exploration prompt behaviors such as information seeking, role-playing, and talking with career counselors, professors, and professionals in one's field of interest.

The critical competencies identified by Super are *knowledge about occupations* and *skill at decision making*. Occupational information, in breadth, means knowing the requirements, routines, and rewards of a variety of occupations in which one may be interested. Information, in depth, means having detailed knowledge about the occupational group that one currently prefers. Decision-making competence means the ability to apply the principles of rational decision making to one's educational and vocational choices.

These four variables, two attitudinal and two cognitive, compose Super's model of readiness for making vocational choices during adolescence. Super and his colleagues operationally defined this structural model of vocational development during adolescence and emerging adulthood by creating the CDI.

INTERPRETATION OF THE CDI SCALES

Two versions of the CDI exist. The CDI School Form is designed for students in Grades 8 through 12,

and the CDI College Form is designed for college students from freshman through senior years. Although both forms measure the same constructs, they differ in content. The different content reflects the educational level of the subjects being tested. Scores are reported for four scales: Career Planning (CP), Career Exploration (CE), Decision Making (DM), and knowledge of the World of Work (WW). CP and CE make up the attitudinal components of Super's model, whereas DM and WW measure the competencies.

Low scores on CP indicate that one may have given little thought to career decisions and therefore may not yet be serious about attending to future occupational or educational choices. One may benefit from increasing one's awareness of current and future occupational decisions that need to be made, as well as engaging in activities that arouse one's curiosity about different occupational paths. High scores on CP indicate that one has actively engaged in career-planning activities and behavior, indicating an appropriate awareness of occupational decisions that need to be attended to, as well as a heightened sense of curiosity with regard to one's place in the world of work. As a result, high CP scores indicate a readiness to narrow one's choices and focus on advanced exploration in a few occupational fields.

Low scores on the second attitudinal scale, CE, indicate one has not yet adequately explored sources of quality information regarding career opportunities available to them. One may benefit from identifying quality resources and investigating a number of different occupational fields. High scores on CE indicate one has actively employed the resources available and gathered information relevant to future occupational choices. One may be ready to engage in broad exploration of the world of work and to investigate occupational fields that are attractive.

Because DM represents one's skill at applying the principles of rational decision making to educational and vocational issues, low scores indicate that the student may benefit from studying and practicing the principles and processes involved in effective decision making, such as identifying the problem and gathering the information required to solve the problem. High scores on DM indicate that the student has developed the essential decision-making skills for making effective vocational decisions. Thus, the individual may now be ready to match his or her abilities and interests to the requirements and rewards of different educational majors and occupations.

The second competence scale is WW, where low scores indicate that the student may need more information about, and inquiry into, occupational fields and career development tasks before making important career decisions and occupational choices. Students may benefit from learning more about their tentative preferences, how people get jobs in those occupations, and how they adjust to those jobs. High scores on WW indicate that students may have a broad fund of information to support their career decision making. However, they still may need to gather more information about the specific occupations they are considering before committing themselves to particular choices.

In addition to the above-mentioned scales, there is a fifth scale, Knowledge of Preferred Occupation (PO). PO measures the amount of in-depth knowledge one has with respect to one's primary field of interest. PO is measured separately from the other four scales and should not be administered to students below the 11th grade. This is due to the fact that it is unlikely such students have acquired the knowledge and maturity to answer the questions in an informed manner. When administered to the appropriate population, low scores on PO indicate students may need to gather more detailed information regarding their occupations of choice. Such information can be ascertained from professors, career counselors, and professionals already working in that field.

The CDI also reports on three composite scales. Career Decision Attitudes (CDA) is the combination of CP and CE. Career Decision Knowledge (CDK) is the combination of DM and WW. Career Orientation Total (COT) is the combination of CDA and CDK. These composite scores exist to help gain a more reliable measure of attitudes toward career, knowledge of careers, and the world of work.

THE CDI ON THE INTERNET

With the permission and encouragement of the CDI authors, the CDI is now available at no charge on the Internet. The CDI is one of a number of career instruments available through Vocopher: The Online Career Collaboratory (<http://www.vocopher.com>). Scoring of the CDI is done on the Internet, and the results are shown immediately to the user. It is important that practitioners take the time to interpret these results with their clients. Practitioners can use the ideas presented herein to help raise their clients' levels

of awareness and curiosity with regard to vocational decisions they will be required to make. Suggestions for improving one's decision-making skills and knowledge about the world of work have also been outlined. Additional ideas are presented in the CDI manual, which is also available on Vocopher.

—Kevin W. Glavin

See also Career exploration, Crystallization of the vocational self-concept, Interests, Super's career development theory

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CAREER EDUCATION

Career education refers to both a historical education reform movement and an evolving concept that reflects a process of bringing occupational relevance to academic curriculum and informing adolescents about themselves and the world of work. As a reform movement in the 1970s, U.S. Commissioner of Education, Sidney P. Marland Jr., initiated and sustained an effort to enact federal legislation supporting career education. Throughout that decade, the concept of career education assumed an increasingly significant role in federal education policy. In 1977, the Career Education Incentive Act (P.L. 95-207) was enacted into law, and throughout the 1970s, more than \$130 million was appropriated by the federal government for career education activities.

Kenneth B. Hoyt, appointed Associate Commissioner for Career Education in 1974, further advanced and shaped Marland's initial efforts. He defined career education broadly, viewing it as a composite of activities and experiences designed to prepare and engage

individuals in paid or unpaid work during their lives. Thus, the notion of career education related not only to preparing students to earn a living (product) but also to developing a way (process) for them to learn. The *process* aspect of learning emphasized the integration of work and careers throughout the academic curriculum, making learning more relevant and meaningful to students.

While formal and informal definitions of career education have been advanced over the years, the most enduring is one proposed by Hoyt. In his 1977 monograph, *A Primer for Career Education*, Hoyt defined career education as an effort to refocus both the U.S. education system and the actions of the broader community to help adolescents acquire and use the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to make work a meaningful, productive, and satisfying part of their lives.

The underlying goal of the career education movement was a total kindergarten to Grade 12 (and post-secondary) school reform process geared to all students regardless of postsecondary plans. The career education concept was also inclusive from the standpoint of incorporating a *careers* focus throughout the entire school curriculum and serving as a means of redirecting the teaching-learning process. Two proposed strategies for achieving reform were the *articulation* of curriculum across grade levels and the *integration*, or *infusion*, of school subjects with work. These strategies were enacted to enhance the occupational relevance of education and reduce social class distinctions between students enrolled in vocational versus academic educational tracks.

Advocates of career education promoted a number of major themes, including the inclusion of career awareness, exploration, and decision-making opportunities; enhancing general employability, adaptability, and "promotability" skills; participation in private-sector education system partnerships; experiences highlighting the interconnectedness of school and work; emphasis on careers; envisioning work as a meaningful part of a total lifestyle; a reduction of bias and stereotyping; and the protection of personal freedom of choice. Philosophically, career educators emphasize the importance of work and work values and view the classroom as a workplace. From this perspective, teachers are charged with encouraging students to recognize the importance of work, rewarding academic work appropriately, introducing a variety of methods and procedures for attaining stated

goals, and emphasizing the practice of good work habits.

The terms *career education* and *career guidance* are often used interchangeably. However, there are important differences between them. Career education refers to the totality of experiences (school-based and otherwise) that help individuals acquire and use the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to make work a meaningful, productive, and satisfying part of life. In contrast, career guidance typically refers to a systematic process of providing self-assessment and information about the world of work to facilitate individual career development and decision making. In this respect, guidance activities can be viewed in a support role or as one component of a comprehensive career education program.

Career education is also distinct from *vocational education* (now known as *career and technical education*), although in recent years this distinction has blurred considerably. Public vocational education was originally established in the early 1900s to prepare young people for the world of work. From its inception, a clear distinction was made between vocational and academic education, with vocational education emphasizing entry-level work skills for youth deemed non-college bound, displaying special learning needs, or otherwise placed at risk of school failure.

Education reform initiatives (e.g., the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994) and rapid changes in the workplace over the past several decades have resulted in significant changes in the orientation of vocational education. In fact, current secondary vocational education reflects many of the principles and practices embodied in the career education movement. For example, current career and technical education programs emphasize academic achievement and preparing young people for postsecondary education and work through school-based and work-based approaches (e.g., apprenticeship, cooperative education, work-based learning, career academies, and programs articulated between secondary and postsecondary institutions). Additional examples are initiatives that integrate academic and vocational curriculum and develop extensive articulation between academic and vocational or secondary and postsecondary programs. Thus, while similar, career education seeks to provide a career-based instructional emphasis for all students, while vocational programs are still, for the most part, separate from general academic curricula and targeted to a smaller segment of the student population.

MAJOR DELIVERY MODELS

During the 1970s, the U.S. Office of Education supported the development of four approaches to implementing effective career education programs, including the school-based (comprehensive) model, employer-based (work/experience-based) model, home/community-based model, and the residential-facilities-based model. The *school-based* or *comprehensive career education model* was the most widely adopted approach to career-education delivery. At the time, it was assumed that many effective career-education programs existed throughout the country and that exemplary program components could be identified and then used as the basis for developing a comprehensive model program. The result was an approach where the classroom was seen as a workplace and both teachers and students were treated as workers. Work values, including the practice of productive work habits, were stressed and rewarded. Infusion of career-education principles in existing K-12 curriculum and instruction was the primary approach used for increasing student understanding of the connections between course content and workplace competencies. This point is important, since many career educators view the emphasis on career as a means to an end—academic achievement, life satisfaction, and success—rather than an end in itself.

The *employer- or work-based model* was first proposed as a way to address the concerns of critics and members of the business community who charged that the U.S. education system was not preparing workers who could meet rapidly changing workplace demands. Given this context, the model assumes that overly rigid, formal educational structures make school irrelevant to substantial numbers of students. These same students, however, might be successful if substantially different methods and environments were used. Thus, this model capitalizes on experiences gained from using the community as a primary resource by making close connections between school curriculum and workplace demands. Developers advocated the operation and support of work-based programs entirely by local employers, parents, and other community organizations. In fact, the notion of joint effort, joint authority, and joint responsibility between the education and business communities was a key element of early efforts. Career educators viewed the community as a *learning laboratory* and made use of a variety of programs, such as work-study,

cooperative education, and job shadowing. Another key element of this model was a flexible approach to designing individualized curriculum plans based on students' learning needs and specific work environments.

The *home* or *community-based model* targeted the needs of adult populations, particularly those who were homebound, women reentering the workforce after raising their children, and older adults. Model designs, inspired by the success of the children's educational program *Sesame Street*, used a multimedia approach that combined educational television and radio shows, correspondence programs, and community-based referral centers to provide career guidance and counseling. A fourth approach, the *residential-based model*, was developed to address the unique needs of disadvantaged rural families. This particular model offered intensive programs at residential centers for all family members, not just heads of household. A broad array of services was provided, including academic education, medical and dental services, independent-living-skills training, career and personal counseling, and welfare services.

While modality and context differ depending on type of approach, each model reflects the same basic sets of components or activities, such as career awareness, exploration, decision making and planning, preparation, entry, maintenance, and progression, in selected career paths. Career education offerings vary, depending on the characteristics and needs of locations and situations and may include one or more of the following: school-business partnerships, infusion of career concepts into school curriculum and instruction, delivery of comprehensive programs, and single events or practices. In addition, each of the four approaches is sequential in nature, progressing from awareness-information to accommodation-skill building to action-application. The basic assumptions and interventions represented by these four models provide a backdrop for current career and technical education and school-to-work initiatives.

CAREER EDUCATION: 1980s-1990s

Despite its appeal to a segment of the education community, federal legislation promoting career education was repealed in 1981 as a result of federal budget cuts and emerging national concerns over the quality of public education. For the next 20 years or so, career education was not a priority in national policy and did not match well with the *academics first* and *back to basics* movements of the 1980s, which

eschewed integrated or infused teaching-learning designs in favor of classroom-based, academic-only approaches. Even so, several enduring features of the federal initiative were evident during this period, including Career Information Delivery Systems, recognition in the 1984 Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of career guidance and counseling programs, and the visibility of National Career Development Guidelines. In addition, many local school districts continued to offer, either in whole or in part, their own career education programs.

In the 1990s, several major educational initiatives, for example, school-to-work, technical preparation (tech-prep), contextualized teaching and learning, and work-based learning programs, embraced the essential character and focus of the career education movement. While not touted as career education per se, passage of the School-to-Work-Opportunities Act in 1994 was viewed by many as a renewal of key elements embodied in the career education movement, including the belief that public schools should offer challenging educational programs for all students by relating subject matter to work, helping students identify career-related interests, and stimulating students to make educational and career plans.

Today, the broader school-to-work movement and the ongoing transformation of career and technical education encompass a number of specific career-related programs, such as apprenticeship, work-based learning, tech-prep, or 2+2 models emphasizing program articulation between secondary and postsecondary curricula, cooperative education, mentoring, job shadowing, and school-based enterprises. Other educational concepts that integrate school and work life include service learning, constructivism, and contextualized teaching-learning. All of these enhance the relevance of education by striving for common goals such as bridging the gap often encountered between school- and work-related demands and experiences, informing adolescents about themselves and preparing them for the world of work, and addressing issues related to the transition from high school to postsecondary education and the world of work.

Although numerous similarities exist in recent work-education initiatives, career education is distinct in three primary ways. First, career education promotes a substantial change in the way education is conceptualized and delivered. Second, career education focuses on work in a broad sense, not on specific job training. Third, general employability skills are stressed, for example, basic academic skills, productive

work habits, and work values, as opposed to an emphasis on specific job skills attainment.

EFFECTIVENESS OF CAREER EDUCATION

A flurry of evaluation studies and reviews of career education programs occurred in the mid- to late 1970s. The vast majority of these reports were never published, and criticisms have been raised about the lack of stringent research designs and generalizable results in many of these investigations. Many of these early studies reported mild but not totally positive increases in student performance. Some studies, particularly those conducted in the late 1980s and early 1990s, have shown no statistically significant advantage in either academic achievement or postsecondary outcomes of students who participate in career education. However, more recent efforts have shown that students in career education programs are more likely to take college entrance and advanced placement exams, graduate from high school, and enroll in two-year or four-year postsecondary education. Future evaluation efforts of career education interventions should address several important questions, including the following: Who should participate in career education activities? What are the characteristics of effective career education programs? Does participation in career education affect academic achievement, high school completion rates, and college enrollment and success?

CONCLUSION

Traditional career education models were designed for a very different workplace, stressing developmental stages, basic and academic learning, employment skills, school-work linkages, and a need for lifelong learning. To a large extent, many of these program goals remain important. However, future career education efforts must also help students adapt to the demands of an increasingly global workforce characterized by a need to take personal responsibility for career, employability skills, interorganizational mobility, flexible work arrangements, teamwork, technology, and international relationships. Thus, *knowing how*, *knowing why*, and *knowing who* must assume greater prominence in career education experiences. Career education must also emphasize career pathways, exploration, and multiple future careers rather than specific jobs and career decision making. Finally, contemporary career education programs must continue to be client focused, mainstream and systemic,

and multifaceted; actively involve students; involve local communities through work experiences; and provide relevant and accessible information about the world of work and adult life.

—Jay W. Rojewski

See also Apprenticeships, Continuing professional education, Employability, Lifelong learning, Vocational education

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CAREER EXPLORATION

An individual engages in *career exploration* as a way of gathering information about self and the environment, with a goal of fostering progress and career

development. Although proactive career exploration is common when individuals undergo a career transition and when they are faced with the need to make an imminent career decision, exploration may also be triggered by curiosity and a natural desire to explore.

There are two types of career exploration. *Environmental career exploration* is the investigation of various career options that an individual may consider pursuing at any point in his or her career. In exploring the environment, the individual proactively collects new information on jobs, organizations, occupations, or industries that allow more informed career decision making. *Self-exploration*, on the other hand, is focused on defining and exploring one's own interests, values, previous experiences, and career goals. It is a way of reflecting about and rethinking one's career and gaining a deeper understanding of oneself. As a result of self-exploration, individuals obtain a clearer perspective on their desires and abilities and possibly the type of work environments they want to avoid.

Whereas environmental exploration is primarily behavioral in nature (e.g., informational interviews, library and computer research, site visits, attending networking events), self-exploration is more cognitive (e.g., reflection, completing self-assessment instruments, analysis). This is not a completely clean distinction, however, as self-exploration can also include behaviors such as soliciting and discussing feedback from others, working with mentors and coaches to gain self-insight, and observing one's own behavior. Similarly, environmental exploration can contain cognitive activities such as reflection on personal experiences in potential employment settings, as in interviews, internships, or field projects. But in general, environmental exploration is a more active process, involving getting out there in the employment world, and self-exploration is more internal and cognitive, gathering and processing data about oneself. The two processes may occur at the same time and may influence each other. For example, as a result of an interesting work option encountered during environmental exploration, an individual may decide to conduct more self-exploration and reconsider his or her interests, values, and experiences related to the particular option encountered. Environmental career exploration is measured by the frequency of performing environmental career exploration behaviors, such as exploring other career options; self-exploration, on the other hand, is measured by the frequency of reflecting about oneself and one's past career.

TRIGGERS OF CAREER EXPLORATION

External Triggers

Sometimes career exploration is prompted by external factors, such as the triggers of undergoing a career transition; the contraction, expansion, or other changes within one's organization; or factors related to one's nonwork life (e.g., a work-family issue triggering exploration of other options). Even more distant contextual factors, such as the political and social environment in which an individual lives, can foster or constrain one's exploratory activity. Thus, career exploration may take on different forms and functions in various cultures and time periods; however, there is much to be learned about these cultural influences on career exploration.

Although career exploration is a lifelong process, it has been studied more frequently among students making initial career choices than among employees in later stages of their careers. Nevertheless, it is likely that career exploration behaviors conducted during a school-to-work transition in one's early career are qualitatively different from the behaviors conducted later on. In the early career years, there is a great deal of conscious, purposeful exploration of career alternatives as individuals search for the most suitable career fields, at least for the short term. On the other hand, in mid- and late career, more well-established individuals seeking a career change often search for alternative career options in order to "break their routines" in the particular career fields to which they have become accustomed. In other words, the task in early career is to end exploratory behaviors and "settle down," whereas the task in later career years is to disrupt the habitual routine and engage in exploration that will lead to desired or necessary changes. For example, late-career individuals are often faced with social and contextual factors, such as changes in the labor market or lifestyle preferences, which require them to engage in exploratory activities. In this case, career exploration can be seen as a way of coping and preparing for unexpected shifts in today's work environment. Given the instability of today's employment contracts, the need to be introspective regarding oneself and one's career, in the form of career exploration, is by necessity a lifelong issue.

For example, the importance of lifelong career exploration is highlighted for individuals in the midst of involuntary career transitions, such as loss of employment, which often triggers the exploration of other

career options. Career exploration during this type of career transition can be seen as a coping strategy that allows for more extensive learning about oneself and other career options available in the environment. For individuals experiencing career transitions, it is also common to find that a high level of stress and an immediate need to make a career decision function as powerful triggers for career exploration.

Internal Triggers

In addition to career transitions and other external factors, various internal dynamics and individual characteristics may trigger exploratory activity. One of the important individual characteristics that positively relate to career exploration at the time of transitions is career *role salience*. Individuals who consider their careers to be a particularly salient component of their identity are likely to conduct more career exploration. These individuals feel more concern for their career development and more urgency to act and get involved in their career decision making. Career role salience has been found to influence career decision making in early as well as late career. For example, career role salience is positively related to exploration by students transitioning from school to work as well as by employed adults who aspire to a different position in an organization. Finally, career role salience is also an important predictor of environmental exploration, particularly for individuals facing involuntary career transitions later in their careers.

Other internal triggers of career exploration include intrinsic motivational factors, such as self-determination, natural curiosity, and proactivity. In addition, individuals who are goal directed, have high self-esteem, and are self-confident about their career decision making tend to engage in extensive career exploration. In this respect, career exploration can be considered a subset of a broader human tendency for purposeful action and making sense of one's internal and external experiences. Individuals may be intrinsically motivated to explore and seek out novel experiences, thereby enhancing knowledge about themselves and the world.

There is also some recent evidence that the "Big Five" personality characteristics can serve as triggers of career exploration. The achievement-oriented and self-disciplined nature of conscientious individuals appears to be associated with greater exploration and career information seeking. Similarly, the assertive, gregarious, and energetic nature of the extraverted

person is also associated with career exploration. Moreover, individuals whose personalities are highly neurotic and those who are open to new experiences are likely to engage in self-exploration. Research suggests that neuroticism may lead to behaviors that serve to compensate for feelings of inadequacy and vulnerability. A neurotic person's emotional instability may lead him or her to engage in greater self-exploration for the purpose of reassurance regarding any doubts about the correctness of his or her career choice. On the other hand, emotionally stable individuals facing job loss situations, for example, tend to see reflection and self-exploration as unnecessary tasks; these individuals are very sure of themselves and their career choices, and they perceive self-exploration as a task for individuals who are more disturbed by job loss. Thus, although stressful situations generally trigger career exploration, the effect of stress on exploration may depend to some extent on one's personality characteristics.

Individuals who are open to new experiences are more curious about themselves and prefer a wide range of options with regard to ideas, values, and experiences. Therefore, thinking and reflecting on one's career-related abilities and interests may be particularly stimulating to the open person because they provide opportunities to master new challenges and enhance self-knowledge. Nevertheless, additional research is required to learn more about the relationship between personality and career exploration.

SOCIAL SUPPORT AND CAREER EXPLORATION

Another important predictor of exploration is the involvement of others who are significant to the explorer. Individuals who are able to provide social support and psychological resources can have a positive effect on the explorer's experience. For example, safe and secure relationships within one's family are extremely important determinants of exploratory activity. The support and security obtained in close family relationships promote general exploration in childhood, and this tendency is carried into adulthood. Later in life, career counselors and coaches may also foster exploration by providing constructive support and resources that individuals can use in career decision making. Especially in times of transition, tangible support provided by counselors and coaches can increase one's ability and motivation to explore. In

particular, it is known that counselors can increase clients' control and competence in both self- and environmental-exploration tasks. Thus, any intervention that bolsters one's confidence with respect to decision-making tasks also fosters exploratory activity. In addition, as suggested earlier, individuals may be faced with the need to engage in exploratory activity if they experience stress concerning their careers (e.g., during transitions or when faced with the need to make a career decision). Counselors may help these individuals manage their stress levels while they engage in productive exploration. Finally, it is known that individuals are often prone to biased information gathering and processing, which may lead to insufficient exploration of various options or premature career decision making. Support from career professionals may be especially relevant in helping clients evaluate their career decisions objectively, emphasizing the importance of alternative-hypothesis testing and proper information-gathering processes. Thus, guidance and support can lead to improved self-exploration, as well as to more comprehensive and diverse environmental exploration, allowing individuals to develop exploratory attitudes in relation to their overall life experiences.

OUTCOMES OF EXPLORATION

In addition to understanding the factors that may trigger career exploration, it is important to recognize the specific outcomes of exploration. In considering exploration in a broader context, it is often emphasized that the exploration process fosters a coherent sense of self or identity. Engaging in exploration promotes autonomy and integration of the self. Thus, the core outcome of exploration is self-construction, which refers to the process of developing a coherent and meaningful identity and implementing that identity in a life plan. Exploration can also be seen as a critical means by which individuals can construct and reconstruct themselves throughout the life span and across life roles. Through exploration, individuals seek self-relevant and interest-relevant information in different arenas of their lives.

The exploration process very likely cuts across life roles and domains and yields benefits that may not be limited to one domain. For example, learning about ourselves in the student role through self-exploration may change our self-concepts in general and influence the way we interact with others in our families or at work. Thus, exploration is embedded across life roles and can

be seen as a lifelong process. This seamless quality of exploration allows learning or exploration in one domain to be mutually beneficial across the life space.

As individuals explore, they also gain greater levels of competence, and they may be able to experience an increasing feeling of "ownership" of their adaptive career behaviors and attitudes. Developing a capacity to explore one's environment and one's own internal psychological experiences, especially early in one's career, may offer a unique advantage in an era of rapid social and economic change.

One of the most important outcomes of career exploration is improved occupational decision making. Exploration generates useful information about oneself and alternative occupations, thus helping individuals make the right occupational decisions at any point in their careers. For example, environmental career exploration at the time of an involuntary career loss has been found to lead to the acquisition of a higher-quality job upon reemployment. In this instance, career exploration is used as a coping strategy, and the exploration of various options at the time of transition helps individuals find new jobs that more strongly fit their personal qualities.

Career exploration activities have also been associated with recruiters' ratings of an individual's interview performance during a job search. Thus, career exploration enhances interview readiness, which relates to interview performance and outcomes. In addition, career exploration helps in making more informed job-search decisions, especially during school-to-work transitions. Later in adulthood, exploration is often conducted together with various job search behaviors, and the two processes influence each other. In searching for a new job by looking at job advertisements or talking to colleagues, individuals may encounter options that they may want to explore further, and thus exploration and job search may complement each other.

Thus, it is necessary to maintain this exploratory attitude throughout life and use exploration as a means of coping with and adjusting to a shifting set of challenges presented by a variety of career transitions and challenging job situations. While career exploration following a school-to-work transition can be seen as an adaptive process, conducting repeated exploration allows one to cope with social change and adapt to the realities of the modern world of work.

An exploratory attitude represents an open and nonrigid way of relating to the world, such that individuals are able to approach the vast number of new

situations and changes they face in a manner that encourages growth and further self-development. Cycles of exploration are expected to occur throughout an individual's life, particularly during the period preceding and following career transitions. Career exploration should be viewed as a lifelong process, with implications for individuals' development at all stages of their careers.

—Jelena Zikic

See also Career decision-making styles, Environment awareness, Self-awareness

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CAREER GOAL

Goal setting is often a significant component of performance improvement programs in the corporate

world, because employees who are committed to specific, challenging goals perform more effectively on the job. Researchers have identified a number of factors that explain why goal setting can improve job performance. Working toward a specific, challenging goal motivates an individual to work hard and provides a focus to the individual's effort. In addition, the establishment of a goal helps the individual develop a strategy for accomplishing the task and provides feedback for monitoring progress and performance.

Although substantial research has been conducted on the importance of "task" goals or "work" goals as described above, far less research attention has been directed toward the study of career goals despite the fact that career goal setting is often a central feature of career-planning and career-development programs. This entry discusses the meaning of a *career goal*, the advantages and cautions associated with career goal setting, and the factors that enable individuals to set useful career goals.

THE MEANING OF A CAREER GOAL

Jeffrey Greenhaus, Gerard Callanan, and Veronica Godshalk have defined a career goal as *a desired career outcome that an individual intends to attain*. It is important to note that a career goal is more than a wish or a dream; it also represents an intention or a striving to accomplish the outcome. Many people equate a career goal with a specific target job, such as becoming a vice president of sales or becoming a head coach of a Division 1 collegiate football team. However, Greenhaus and his colleagues point out that a career goal need not target a specific job. Instead, it can represent the *type of work experiences* an individual intends to achieve, or what is called a *conceptual career goal*. For example, an individual might set a conceptual goal to attain a position that involves extensive financial data analysis and preparation of written reports in an office setting with minimal travel. Both types of career goals, conceptual goals and target job goals, are important. Conceptual goals are useful because they focus on the attributes of a position that are compatible with one's talents, needs, and values. Target job goals are important because most work experiences are embedded in specific jobs in an organization. In fact, achieving a target job should enable the individual to meet his or her conceptual career goal. Moreover, it is likely that a number of different target jobs are compatible with a person's conceptual goal.

ADVANTAGES AND CAUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH CAREER GOAL SETTING

Career goals can be useful for the same reasons that task goals are useful. Holding a specific career goal can motivate an individual to work hard to achieve the desired outcome, suggest useful strategies to attain the desired outcome, and provide feedback on how effectively the individual is directing his or her efforts. For example, a salesperson who sets a goal to become sales manager (the target job goal) may be energized to do what it takes to achieve the position and may explore, through readings and discussions with other people, the most effective strategy for becoming a sales manager. Moreover, because the goal is a consciously held objective, the individual is able to gauge how well his or her actions (e.g., attending a management skills workshop or returning to school to acquire an MBA degree) are facilitating the accomplishment of the goal. Research has shown that employees who set career goals, who are committed to their goals, and who have clear career goals and plans are optimistic and resilient in their careers, highly involved in their jobs, and successful in job-search activities.

Nevertheless, there are some cautions associated with career goal setting. Greenhaus and his colleagues suggest that a career goal is likely to be *dysfunctional* when the goal has the following characteristics:

It is someone else's vision. The goal is seen by another person as what is best for an individual rather than the individual's own vision for meeting his or her personal needs and values.

It ignores family and lifestyle preferences. Some jobs may be so demanding or intrusive that they prevent a person from meeting other important needs for family, leisure, or community service.

It ignores the current job. Some people are so preoccupied with achieving a promotion or another position that they fail to see that many of their needs and values can be accomplished in their current jobs, especially if they work with their managers to improve their jobs to achieve greater fit with their personal preferences.

Is too vague. The conceptual goal discussed previously—a position with extensive financial data analysis, preparation of written reports, office setting, and minimum travel—is specific enough to steer the individual toward a target job and strategies to attain the job. An overly fuzzy conceptual goal (e.g., “a job that is fun”) may not provide enough information to be useful.

It is too easy or too difficult. The accomplishment of a goal that is too easy doesn't provide the same feeling of accomplishment as the accomplishment of a challenging goal. However, a goal that is too difficult is unlikely to be attained and can produce frustration. This is why it is often recommended that individuals set “challenging but attainable” goals.

It is inflexible. People change; technologies advance; career paths disappear; organizations merge; and new industries develop. Individuals who hold on to outmoded career goals in the face of change are not adaptable and run the risk of failing to get their needs met.

FACTORS THAT ENABLE INDIVIDUALS TO SET USEFUL CAREER GOALS

Self-awareness is an essential ingredient for effective career goal setting. An individual who is unaware of his or her needs, values, strengths and weaknesses, and lifestyle preferences can certainly set a career goal. However, it may not be a useful goal. Even if the goal is achieved, it is unlikely to meet the individual's personal needs and values and take advantage of the individual's talents, because it wasn't based on an accurate self-assessment.

An awareness of the environment is also crucial to effective goal setting. Individuals may understand themselves well (high self-awareness), but what if they are unaware of the duties and requirements of different jobs or career paths, the cultures of their organizations or other organizations where they might seek work, the impact of technology on their work lives, or the changing nature of the economy? Their career goal is likely to be flawed because it is not based on a realistic assessment of the environment. Opportunities may be missed (“I never knew that there was such a job as fuel cell technician”); goals may be unattained (“I didn't realize that jobs in farming are declining so much”); or goals may not meet the individual's needs (“It never occurred to me that engineering managers spent more time solving people problems than technical problems”). In short, an effective career goal should be based on extensive knowledge about oneself and the work environment.

Achieving self-awareness and awareness of the environment is ultimately an individual's responsibility. Therefore, people should seize every opportunity to learn about themselves and the work world. People learn a great deal from everyday experiences: introspection, reading, and conversations with colleagues,

mentors, friends, or family members. Awareness can also be derived from more formal activities, such as seeing a career counselor, joining a professional association, attending a conference, or participating in a training-and-development program.

Moreover, organizations can help their employees become more aware of themselves and the environment so they can select a viable career goal. For example, organizations can offer orientation programs for new employees, career assessment and planning assistance, career counseling services, performance appraisal programs, coaching or mentoring programs, job rotation opportunities, job posting, training and development activities, and outplacement services. All of these initiatives have the potential to enhance individuals' knowledge and awareness, which should contribute to their well-being and, ultimately, to the well-being of the organization as well.

—Jeffrey H. Greenhaus

See also Career exploration, Environment awareness, Individual career management, Self-awareness

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CAREER INDECISION

Career indecision, the state of being undecided regarding occupational interest or career path, has been defined in a variety of ways, making it somewhat difficult for investigators in this area to reach consensus on its nature and causes. Researchers have described individuals as undecided if they have not chosen or declared a college major, if they reported that their certainty about vocational choice was low, if they could not name a career choice, if they were unable to articulate career goals, or if they scored below a specified point on a measure such as the Career Decision Scale. The term career indecision has also been used to apply to the range of problems and difficulties individuals encounter during the career

decision process. An individual might, for example, know that she wants to be a therapist but is not sure whether she wants to major in psychology or social work. Another individual might narrow his career options down to two choices but may have difficulties in choosing one over the other. Such individuals might be said to be career undecided to a degree, illustrating that career indecision can be thought of as existing on a continuum rather than as an either/or proposition.

Many people will, at some point in their lives, face a certain amount of indecision related to making career choices. It has been estimated that between 10 percent and 30 percent of college students could be classified as "undecided." In fact, in many cases, career indecision might be thought of as a normative phenomenon, closely related to an individual's age and educational level, with younger and less educated individuals more likely to be career undecided. In this regard, some researchers have suggested that a certain amount of indecision might actually be beneficial. The undecided student or adult may be more likely to systemically explore his or her options in hopes of making a more informed career decision than would the individual who hastily chooses a line of work but is nonetheless classified as "career decided."

Most individuals who are undecided at some point do eventually move forward, make choices, and enter the workforce. However, for some individuals, career indecision is more than just a passing phase or a normative part of the developmental process. For those people, career indecision can be a major impediment to successfully preparing for work, for entering an occupation or profession, or for maintaining a satisfying work life. Since identity and self-concept are closely tied to an individual's occupation and since job satisfaction is positively related to overall life satisfaction, prolonged or chronic career indecision can have a detrimental effect on an individual's mental health and well-being.

The definition of what is prolonged or chronic is not always clear, but career counselors typically become involved after the individual or family members have become frustrated with a lack of progress toward a decision. Since career decision making is an important task in the life-span developmental process, the developmental timetable accepted by a given society often defines the point at which an individual's indecision may be viewed as problematic. In the United States, the educational system expects that college students will declare majors by

approximately age 20. Societal norms suggest that most young adults, unless headed for graduate school, begin to pursue careers after college graduation, when they are approximately 22 years old. Young adults who do not pursue college degrees are expected to choose and enter careers even earlier. However, in light of recent findings that suggest that brain development may not be complete until the mid-20s, as well as the sociological phenomenon of “extended adolescence,” it is not clear that these timetables are always appropriate. One viewpoint is that the diagnosis of career indecision cannot be made reliably until the individual is 25 years old. There is, however, evidence that chronic career indecision can be predicted at a much younger age. Because chronic career indecision is related to underlying psychological issues rather than a normal development process, individuals at risk for chronic career indecision will gain no advantages if they wait until they are 25 years old to begin treatment for their underlying condition(s). Chronic career indecision and its causes are discussed in more detail later in this article.

HISTORY OF THE CONSTRUCT OF CAREER INDECISION

The construct of career indecision has been a focus of investigation since the 1930s. At that time, the population of interest was college students, who were dichotomously characterized as either career decided or career undecided. (Note that even today, most career indecision research focuses on college undergraduates.) In 1937, E. G. Williamson and John Gordon Darley published the results of their investigation into the differences between decided and undecided students in terms of academic commitment and achievement. Even though their results indicated that there were no significant differences between decided and undecided students, Williamson nonetheless extrapolated that there were many causes of career indecision, among them fear, lack of aptitude, and emotional instability. It was not until 1969 that Leonard Baird published the results of two large studies, with a total of more than 70,000 subjects, in which he concluded that there were no significant differences between decided and undecided students, particularly in terms of academic aptitude. His position was in accord with the developmental perspective of career indecision that was pervasive in the 1950s and 1960s, as put forth by theorists such as Donald Super

and Erik Erikson. Baird maintained that his findings had important implications for counseling undecided students. He recommended that such students should not be pathologized. Rather, he maintained that undecided students should be made aware that their undecided status is normative in nature and that they are not academically inferior to students who are career decided.

During the 1960s and 1970s, career-indecision research continued to focus on the question of whether and how individuals who are career decided differ from those who are career undecided. It was hypothesized that understanding the inherent differences between the two groups would yield valuable information as to how counselors could best assist the career undecided. Although many researchers studied various hypothesized differences between the two groups in terms of achievement, aptitude, and personality factors, they could not reach a consensus. Some researchers found no significant differences between career decided and undecided students, while others found undecided students to have, for example, higher attrition rates, lower academic achievement, and lower self-esteem. Those who found no differences between the two groups point to the benefits of not pathologizing career indecision for those students who are undecided. Nonetheless, these contradictory findings did little to settle the question of whether characteristic differences exist between those who are career decided and those who are undecided.

Some of this confusion may be attributed to the failure to distinguish between developmental career indecision and chronic career indecision. Since most undecided individuals do eventually become decided, in many cases, there really are no major differences between the two groups, other than perhaps the age at which individuals pass through different developmental stages. However, researchers also uncovered evidence that career decision making remains chronically problematic for some people. For these individuals, career indecision can be a debilitating condition.

From that point on, researchers began to understand that there are separate, distinct categories of career indecision and that identifying the category into which an individual might fall could aid in the intervention process and help achieve positive outcomes. Much of the investigation that followed centered on the relationship between career indecision and multiple variables, such as personality factors, aptitude, cultural norms, and attachment style.

SUBTYPES OF CAREER INDECISION

Although there seems to be clear consensus that there are multiple subtypes of career indecision, there is less agreement as to the exact nature and definition of those subtypes. Moreover, researchers have been inconsistent as to the variables they have chosen to study in their attempts to explain career indecision. As a result, investigators have devised numerous methods for categorizing and conceptualizing career indecision.

One way to classify career indecision is to ascertain whether the individual is merely career undecided or is generally indecisive. It is important to note that there is an obvious difference between the states of being “undecided” and “indecisive.” Individuals who are career undecided may be that way for a number of relatively benign reasons, including their educational levels, lack of general work experience, or lack of information surrounding vocations. This type of career indecision is often thought of as a normal part of the developmental process. Individuals who are developmentally career undecided may benefit from brief and focused interventions, with the goal of providing information to assist them in making a career choice. Conversely, individuals who are generally indecisive in other areas of their lives are very likely to also encounter difficulties in making career decisions. This type of career indecision is generally more problematic and may require more extensive intervention.

Another way to categorize career indecision is to focus on the relative comfort level of the undecided individual. Some individuals may be career undecided yet experience little or no distress because of their undecided states. Such individuals, further characterized as emotionally stable, may not feel internal or external pressure to make a career decision at a given point in time, and therefore may be said to be comfortable with their undecided states. For other individuals, the inability to make a decision may cause varying amounts of stress and anxiety. These individuals might also report low vocational identity and lower levels of self-esteem.

It has been suggested that individuals with lower levels of academic abilities could constitute another subtype of career indecision. These individuals may see their choices as limited due to their academic disadvantages and may also believe that their career choices are unrealistic. They may become discouraged with their perceived lack of ability as well as their overall ability to choose and enter a career.

Many researchers have investigated the connection between various aspects of personality and career indecision. Some of these aspects include anxiety, self-esteem, locus of control, career self-efficacy (the beliefs that individuals have about their abilities to pursue and succeed in various careers) and vocational maturity (an indication of an individual’s vocational orientation and consistency of vocation preference, along with the level of information about and wisdom of a particular vocational choice).

CHRONIC CAREER INDECISION

A certain degree of career indecision can be seen as a normal part of the developmental process, but when the indecision is related to underlying psychological issues, it is not likely to resolve over time. Bruce Hartman and Dale Fuqua introduced the term *chronic career indecision* in the early 1980s. The factors most often associated with chronic career indecision are anxiety, external locus of control, poor identity formation, and low self-esteem. Much of the current body of research focuses on the relationships between these factors and career decidedness and indecision.

Anxiety is one of the most common conditions researchers associate with career indecision and career indecisiveness. Research has addressed the impact of both state anxiety (associated with the act of choosing a career and/or the condition of being career undecided) and generalized trait anxiety. In essence, anxiety has been characterized as both a by-product of the decision-making process (state anxiety) and as a cause for career indecision (trait anxiety). Individuals who become anxious as a result of having to make career decisions may briefly question their own abilities to make correct decisions, possibly because of perfectionist traits, which can lead to avoidance of the decision-making process. Once these types of individuals ultimately make a decision, however, they are likely to become less anxious. This is in contrast to individuals for whom anxiety is a primary cause of indecision. These individuals may lack confidence in their abilities to make decisions and may also have poor overall problem-solving skills. For such individuals, making a decision leads to increased anxiety and self-doubt regarding the appropriateness of the choice. Trait-anxious individuals may also prematurely drop out of career counseling because of their discomfort with the decision-making process.

A condition related to career choice anxiety is *external locus of control*, in which the individual

perceives little control over his or her own life and life choices. This may lead such a person to avoid engaging in problem-solving processes, which could reduce the level of anxiety and assist in decision making, because of a low level of confidence that such activities will make a difference. This, unfortunately, becomes a self-defeating cycle, as problem-solving skills can only develop through the process of practicing them.

A third area of concern for individuals who are chronically undecided is *poor ego identity formation*. This is based on the stages of psychosocial development described by Erik Erikson, the first five of which must be resolved by early adulthood. Beginning in infancy, these first five stages are trust versus mistrust, autonomy versus shame and doubt, initiative versus guilt, industry versus inferiority, and identity versus identity confusion. If the individual has difficulty in any of these stages, he or she will not successfully form a clear sense of identity, which is thought to be an important precursor of career choice. Possible reasons for this are discussed below, under "Family Influences."

Low self-esteem is another variable that can contribute to chronic career indecision. Research has related low self-esteem to general indecisiveness, as well as to low self-efficacy (belief in one's ability to perform certain tasks) and depression. All of these variables can inhibit the thoughtful problem-solving processes necessary for making effective life decisions.

A final, but somewhat controversial, cause of chronic indecision is referred to as *multipotentiality*. Some individuals who are considered gifted and talented may have difficulty choosing a career path because they have many different interests and skill sets. They may score uniformly high in several areas of aptitude and achievement. Moreover, results of career interest measurements for this group may indicate no clear preferences. Thus, the gifted and talented may be presented with a seemingly endless array of vocational choices, perhaps leading to a condition of career indecision. However, recent research has questioned the methods used to evaluate aptitude and preferences for this population, thereby casting some doubt on whether traditional assessment measures are useful in identifying relevant areas of concern.

FAMILY INFLUENCES

Over the past two decades, career theorists have acknowledged that families and family influences are

important factors in career decision making. The importance of considering family systems becomes even more critical in the current era, in which the definitions of *family* and *work* have become more expansive and complex. Family members may serve as career role models, providing concrete examples of how to succeed in a particular vocational area. Often, family members may be influencers, directing young adults toward high-profile or high-status careers or toward careers that meet the family's needs in other ways, such as joining a family-owned business. Family members can also act as mentors, helping the young adult bypass traditional hurdles and hence overcome obstacles. For example, parents can help their child get a job within their own place of business, bypassing the usual interview process. They may know influential people who are already successful in their child's choice of career and may make introductions, thereby helping the child to network. Family members, conversely, may function as gatekeepers, erecting financial or emotional barriers to careers they deem to be unsuitable for their dependent young adult. They may refuse to pay for college if their child does not pursue the course of study of the parents' choice, or they may subject the child to high levels of guilt.

According to family systems theorists, when a child does not sufficiently gain a level of independence from the family of origin, that child may encounter difficulties in identity formation, a factor that career theorists associate with career indecision. It follows that a young adult's career decision making may suffer when families exert too much influence or when the young adult does not sufficiently separate or differentiate from the family of origin. If the young adult fails to achieve autonomy and is not encouraged to explore career options independently, career indecision may result. Furthermore, researchers have suggested that young adults who are overly dependent or rigidly connected with their families may be conflicted between pursuing careers of their own choosing and careers that their families would prefer. As a result, a condition is created in which career decision making becomes even more problematic. However, this interpretation varies by culture, as discussed below under "Multicultural Considerations."

INTERVENTIONS

Interventions for career indecision must be chosen based on an assessment of type and causes for the

indecision. An individual who is developmentally undecided will tend to benefit from short-term career counseling, the focus of which will be psychoeducational and centered on assessment of interests, needs, and values. Career counselors can provide such individuals with practical information, including descriptions of various careers, workplace environments, and expected salaries. Counselors can encourage these clients to set up informational interviews or opportunities for job shadowing; they may also suggest various computer- or Internet-based tools to help clients with self-assessment and career evaluation. One effective form of intervention is referred to as *cognitive information processing*. This approach teaches a systematic method of identifying and solving problems, and it can be quite effective with those who need assistance in organizing the career choice process. In essence, with developmentally undecided clients, the counselor acts as a facilitator, providing assessment, assistance in gathering information, goal setting, and career plan implementation.

In contrast, the chronically career undecided or indecisive individual may require assistance in determining the underlying reasons for the indecisiveness before coming to terms with choosing an occupation. The counselor must consider that it may be neither the absence of self-awareness nor the lack of vocational information that is rendering the individual incapable of making a career choice. In this instance, a psychoeducational approach alone may be ineffective or even detrimental, as the individual may become even more anxious and frustrated by the continuing inability to make a career decision, even with the help of a counselor.

Among the areas of focus for interventions with chronically undecided individuals are anxiety, career self-efficacy, and family dynamics. Individuals whose career indecision is related to anxiety will benefit from treatment focused on both relieving general anxiety and anxiety specifically related to career decision making. An example of a career-focused intervention for anxiety is *cognitive restructuring*, which helps the individual recognize and change rigid and unreasonable beliefs. These may be beliefs regarding an inability to succeed, their own fit (or misfit) with certain careers, an inflexible demand that the chosen career must provide immediate and high levels of success, and the need to be completely certain before any decision can be made.

To move forward in developing a career plan, it is necessary to believe that one's efforts will be

rewarded and that career success is possible. Interventions focused on self-efficacy attempt to increase the belief that goals can be achieved. Like cognitive restructuring for anxiety, these interventions may focus on helping the individual modify her or his self-defeating beliefs, in this case specifically related to potential for success. The counselor may also structure activities that create successful experiences or help the individual recognize areas in which he or she has been successful that may then translate into career success.

In some cases, chronic career indecision is effectively treated through psychotherapy focused on family dynamics, such as inadequate developmental separation from the family of origin or family dysfunction related to parental alcohol or drug abuse. Those who have grown up in dysfunctional families may tend to think in black-and-white terms, and they are more likely to face psychological problems that interfere with all life choices. In such cases, treatment may be difficult and will initially focus on addressing the family system and psychological issues before addressing career choice.

CAREER INDECISION THROUGHOUT THE LIFE SPAN

Although career indecision, by its very nature, usually is first seen during late adolescence or early adulthood, individuals may be career undecided at any time throughout the life span. Career indecision can occur when an individual is making an initial career choice, considering a career change, returning to work after a break in employment, or even beginning a new career after retirement. The need for ongoing monitoring and reevaluation of career direction may be especially necessary in the current work environment, in which individuals may no longer expect employment for life in any one particular field or industry. This is true for a variety of reasons. One is the rapid pace of technological change, which has made some careers obsolete. Another factor is globalization, which has led to economic pressures on companies to outsource jobs to the lowest bidder, often in other countries. Furthermore, downsizing has forced thousands of workers to suddenly reenter the job market, often with skill sets that may not meet current employers' demands. A career choice that seemed safe and appropriate during the first phase of entering the world of work may look very different several years later, and, in fact, no career may be

considered immune to changes or even obsolescence. Considering the stress and uncertainty associated with the current work environment, even individuals who have not lost their jobs may very well begin to feel anxious and unsettled about their current occupations, thus promoting one of the major conditions associated with career indecision. This may be especially true for individuals who were career undecided in the first place.

MULTICULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Much of the early research on career indecision focused on White, middle-class college students and adolescents. In the past decade, research has begun to examine the variables that may uniquely affect career decisions of racial and ethnic minorities; women; lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals; and individuals with disabilities.

The culture of the United States and European countries is focused on individual achievement and autonomy, which encourages decision making independent of the family of origin. This is not the case in more collectivist cultures, however, such as those of Asia and South America. In such cultures, it is normal and expected for the family to have a strong influence on career decision making, and this can result in an inaccurate assessment of career indecision for an individual who appears by U.S. standards to have difficulty making an independent choice. Another important cultural variable is orientation toward time, which in the United States is toward the future. The Latino and Native American cultures, by contrast, are more present focused, and this again may cause an inappropriate assessment of indecision because of apparent inattention to advance planning. When working with individuals from other cultures, it may be important to assess the level of acculturation, or the degree to which the individual has adopted the norms of the host culture. Finally, it is important to consider the degree to which career decisions may be affected by workplace or educational discrimination and by financial barriers faced by individuals of lower socioeconomic status.

Historically, career decision making for women was viewed as secondary to life goals of marriage and child rearing. It is important to note that this view was never universal and that it applied only to women of higher socioeconomic status. Nonetheless, career counseling for women has almost always considered a balance of work and family obligations to be an important factor

in women's career choices. Because of a continuing pull between work and family, it might be assumed that women would face more difficulty with career indecision than would men. However, minimal evidence exists to support this assumption. Similarly, there is little evidence of a relationship between sex role and career indecision. However, for women in nontraditional careers, as well as for LGB individuals, anxiety related to career choice may result from either experienced or anticipated discrimination in the workplace. Measures of career indecision that do not account for barriers related to workplace discrimination may be problematic for such individuals, as well as for racial and ethnic minorities.

A relatively new dimension of diversity in career theory is disability status. Because of new laws providing access to higher education and the workplace, as well as medical advances, students with disabilities are increasingly present on college campuses and seeking advice in career choice. These disabilities may be physical or medical, learning based, or psychiatric. It is not yet clear whether individuals with disabilities experience indecision at a higher rate than do others. Some evidence suggests that individuals with disabilities may experience more self-doubt and that this may lead to higher levels of indecision. Furthermore, individuals with disabilities may tend to aspire to lower-level careers than do their counterparts without disabilities. Additional research is needed to determine the causes of career indecision in this population and whether individuals with disabilities require different interventions than do others.

AREAS REQUIRING FURTHER STUDY

While some research has begun to define cultural variables in career decision making, much more remains to be done. One important task will be to examine the existing career decision models to incorporate the values of interdependent cultures and therefore to refine the criteria for diagnosing indecision. Furthermore, although there is general recognition that career decisions occur throughout the life span, existing models still tend to focus on adolescence and early adulthood. Given the increasing rate of change in the workplace, which has led to a trend toward multiple careers rather than a single lifelong career choice, it will be important for both theory and practice to consider variables that may contribute to career

indecision in older adults. Finally, a relatively unexplored area is the process of decision making and the nature of indecision for individuals whose career exploration process is more spiritually based, that is, those who have followed a “calling” into a career rather than having made a more data-driven decision.

CONCLUSION

It is clear that the concept of career indecision is much more complex than it would appear to be at first glance. There are numerous ways to define the construct and to identify its subtypes, as well as a wide range of antecedent factors and interventions to consider. In particular, it is important to differentiate between indecision as a normal developmental phase and chronic career indecision, which may require psychological intervention. Furthermore, these many factors are affected by multicultural variables that have only recently been addressed in the vocational literature.

—Pamela F. Foley, Mary E. Kelly, and Bruce W. Hartman

See also Career counseling, Career decision-making styles, Occupational choice, Vocational self-concept crystallization

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CAREER INTERRUPTIONS

Career interruptions are breaks, pauses, or disruptions in one’s current career. A career interruption occurs when an individual’s typical and usual work is interrupted or changed by some internal (e.g., change in one’s desired career path or life’s goals) or external (e.g., job loss or disability) event. Alterations or changes in a person’s career activities can change the course of one’s work either temporarily or permanently. For example, a temporary career interruption may occur when a woman decides to leave the paid workforce to care for her children and reenters that same career at a later time. An example of a permanent interruption of one’s career may occur in the face of an incurred disability or illness that makes it difficult or impossible to return to one’s previous job. The world of work can be conceived of as a series of starts and stops, accelerations and waiting periods. With advances in technology and other global occupational and economic changes workers are increasingly being faced with expanding career options and the challenge of more frequent involuntary career interruptions. Research indicates that a career interruption or transition can be an opportunity for either growth or deterioration. An understanding of career interruptions is needed for counselors to effectively facilitate healthy adult functioning through all types of career transition processes.

There are various ways to categorize career interruptions. Career interruptions can be either anticipated or unanticipated, voluntary or involuntary. Anticipated interruptions are events that are expected to occur.

Examples of anticipated career events are quitting a job, changing careers, or retirement. Unanticipated interruptions are those that one does not expect to happen, such as the loss of a job or an injury or illness that interferes with one's ability to continue in the same type of work or even engage in paid work at all. Career interruptions can also be classified as voluntary or involuntary. In a voluntary interruption, one chooses to interrupt the current course of one's career. An example of a voluntary career interruption is a person who chooses to exit the paid workforce to obtain a college or advanced degree. An example of an involuntary career interruption would be getting fired from one's job. It also is possible to have an anticipated career interruption that is involuntary and an unanticipated career interruption that is voluntary. For example, an individual may anticipate an impending layoff as a result of organizational downsizing. Similarly, an unanticipated voluntary career interruption can occur when a company is sold to another corporation that then offers continued employment, but under less than acceptable terms. In these circumstances, some people voluntarily choose to resign from their jobs, interrupting their careers in order to reassess their career and life goals. As a result, some people might choose to search for more desirable paid work; others may choose to use this opportunity to change careers completely; and others might decide to exit the paid workforce entirely to care for young children or elderly parents.

Although not all career interruptions are experienced as negative, there are a number of common issues faced by those experiencing breaks in their careers. For example, individuals might experience fear and anxiety as they establish a realistic appraisal of their current skills and abilities, confront financial loss or instability, or experience the loss of job security, colleagues, identity, self-confidence, and self-esteem. Counselors attend to three sets of important factors when facilitating transitions through career interruptions: (1) the individual's perception of the interruption (e.g., voluntary versus involuntary, anticipated versus unanticipated); (2) the characteristics of pre- and postcareer interruption environments (e.g., financial, social, and health and ability status); and (3) internal resources (e.g., confidence and abilities) and adaptability. While attending to these factors, counselors can help people achieve adaptive transitions by facilitating the development of agency, optimism, clear and realistic planning, and perceived

opportunity. Specifically, counselors can assist people in developing *agency*, or an internal motivation to take action to make adaptive changes. They can help people reframe the experience from one of loss to one of opportunity. Counselors also can assist clients in developing clear and detailed plans for achieving their goals. Finally, by encouraging the exploration of diverse alternatives, counselors can encourage individuals to expand the range of their perceived opportunities.

Career interruptions can occur for a number of reasons, including leaving paid work to concentrate one's energies on other life roles, such as caring for children or aging parents, job loss, and illness or disability. It is important to have an understanding of the important issues involved in each of these interruptions. One of the most common career interruptions occurs when someone takes a leave from paid employment to care for his or her children. This type of career interruption is more common for women than for men, as women continue to be more involved in caring for the home and children, despite their increased presence and responsibilities in the paid workforce. Much of the literature on women's career interruptions focuses on the difficulty of combining family and labor market work. The length of the break from paid employment can be influenced by a number of factors, including eligibility to take advantage of the Family and Medical Leave Act, availability of acceptable child care, financial resources, work role salience, and compatibility with the role expectations of full-time work in the home caring for one's children. For some women, leaving and reentering the paid workforce might go relatively smoothly given that family leave programs can allow for people to reenter their previous positions without a loss of pay or status.

Other individuals reentering the workforce might find their previous careers to be unsatisfactory given the multiple life roles they must negotiate. For those who choose to stay out of the paid workforce for longer periods of time, a whole new job search process could be necessary. Reentering paid work may be motivated by vocational, family, or financial concerns. For some people, reentry might be precipitated by circumstances related to their spouses or partners, such as disability, divorce, death, or a geographical move due to job relocation. These individuals may never have anticipated working outside the home, may lack the necessary skills and confidence, or may be unsure of how to manage the reentry process into paid employment.

Navigating life transitions through complex life roles such as those of paid worker, parent, and caregiver can result in a number of personal and professional challenges that have the potential to disrupt one's life. The work of raising children and sustaining families can be a barrier to paid employment and lead to professional marginalization and loss of status in the paid workforce. These issues are especially relevant for women, and women of color in particular, who may already be facing the consequences of gender and racial discrimination that have impeded their access to work or advancement within their fields.

Job loss is the second major reason for career interruption. Mergers, downsizing, restructuring, and economic downturns can all contribute to job loss. Losing a job can create stress and negatively affect one's finances, family life, and mental and physical health. Loss of one's previous vocational role, function, and status can be very disruptive in a person's life. Many individuals face shock, confusion, anger, anxiety, depression, feelings of isolation, failure, rejection, and decreased self-confidence and self-esteem.

Reactions to career interruptions due to job loss change over time, creating an identifiable pattern. Five phases (disbelief, sense of betrayal, confusion, anger, and resolution) have been identified in the transition process from unemployment to reemployment. Disbelief is frequently the initial reaction to news that one is being let go from one's current job. It is typical for these situations to be totally unanticipated and for the affected individuals to ask, "Why me?" A sense of betrayal results from a disruption in the belief that if one is a good, responsible worker, one will always be rewarded with continued employment and benefits. It is as if a psychological contract, or agreement, has been breached and one has been dealt with unfairly. Once people recover from the initial shock of job loss, confusion typically ensues over what comes next. When employers provide outplacement or career counseling services, some people vacillate between anger, betrayal and anxiety, and feeling grateful and excited about future possibilities. Over time, most people are able to come to some resolution by moving on to new employment situations. The degree to which an individual is able to successfully move through these transitional stages will depend on a number of factors, including one's psychological resources and abilities, educational and financial resources, coping skills, and personal and demographic characteristics that may make one vulnerable to

career barriers related to age, gender, race, and social class.

Counselors can assist individuals in moving from unemployment to employment in several ways. They can provide counseling to deal with the negative effects of job loss and enhance optimism and self-efficacy. They can also encourage people to seek out social support and encourage them to maintain an active daily schedule. A flexible and adaptive family appears to be important for women, so encouraging communication with family members is recommended. For men, problem-focused interventions, in addition to emotionally focused interventions, are also important. The literature suggests that the psychological effects of job loss need to be addressed before individuals can successfully engage in employment seeking. This includes helping individuals more adaptively cope with emotional and financial concerns, providing support and encouragement, and enhancing job-search skills and job-hunting strategies. In today's economy, counselors must also help individuals to adapt the changing nature of work and recognize the need to be flexible and adaptable and to upgrade their skills.

Disability and illness create a third reason for career interruption. These interruptions occur when individuals are no longer able to function in the capacity required by their current jobs. For example, a surgeon who develops a degenerative eye disease that results in blindness will no longer be able to perform surgical procedures. Although many of the same psychological and physical consequences of job loss for other reasons can accompany job loss from disability and illness, these individuals also are faced with fears and concerns associated with their physical condition.

One of the challenges of conceptualizing the career interruptions of individuals with disabilities and/or illness is the immense heterogeneity of individuals with these difficulties. Thus, individual and environmental factors must be considered in the career interruptions of these individuals. Despite the great strides that have been made in medicine, technology, and accessibility, paid employment presents a challenge to people with disabilities. National polls indicate that two-thirds of working-age people with disabilities are not employed, despite their desire to work. An array of factors has been identified to explain this persistent lack of employment. These include federal policy concerning disability benefits and access to health insurance (e.g., people who qualify for social security disability may

be discouraged from considering employment for fear of loss of benefits, including health insurance), employer attitudes and discrimination, inadequate preparation for work, lack of postsecondary education and training, lack of available community employment services, and perceived difficulties in providing vocational guidance to this group.

A number of factors influence the vocational behavior of those whose careers have been interrupted by disability and illness, including external issues or barriers (such as social policy and laws) and internal factors (such as functional capacities and psychosocial issues). The literature suggests that employers tend to rely on stereotypes of disability and hold inaccurate views of the extent to which a functional impairment may interfere with vocational performance. Despite legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), these attitudes continue to have an effect on individuals' perceptions of their capacities and their emotional reactions to them. The rehabilitation literature has focused on the effect that negative attitudes have had on lowering work-related self-efficacy, future work expectations, and work motivation. The ADA has positively influenced the formation of occupational goals by reducing environmental barriers that may have previously constrained vocational options. Accommodations mandated in the ADA enable individuals with disabilities to perform a much wider array of jobs than was previously possible.

An important internal factor for career counselors to consider is the meaning of work in the lives of people with disabilities. Work may or may not continue to be incorporated into an individual's life planning. Instead, individuals whose careers have been interrupted by disability or illness may choose or need to focus their energies on managing their physical condition, shifting attention away from previous vocational roles and involvement in paid work.

Career counseling for people experiencing career interruptions due to disability or illness might include a strength-based assessment approach that incorporates informal interview and observational techniques. It might also include helping clients assess and improve self-efficacy and outcome expectations. Counselors may be particularly interested in assessing how these beliefs may have compromised their clients' interests, goals, and future expectations. They may focus on anticipating, analyzing, and preparing clients to deal with contextual barriers, as well as building up support systems to help them persist with their career goals.

Change can be difficult for many people. Given that one's career consumes a large amount of one's time and energy, interrupted careers (whether anticipated, desired, or not) can create anxiety. Unwanted and unanticipated interruptions can be extremely disruptive life events. However, such events also can provide opportunities for positive change given that they require people to regroup and consider new, and possibly more fulfilling, possibilities.

—Donna E. Palladino Schultheiss

See also Career transition, Derailment, Downsizing, Job loss

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CAREER INTERVENTION OUTCOMES

This entry provides a brief overview of the research related to *career intervention outcomes* or effectiveness.

Traditionally, *career interventions* have been defined as any treatment or effort intended to enhance an individual's career development or to enable the person to make better career-related decisions. This is a broad definition that encompasses a wide range of interventions, including career counseling and other modalities, such as workshops, career classes, computer applications, and self-administered inventories. In the field of vocational psychology, career counseling is often viewed as a subset of career interventions. This entry discusses the outcomes of career interventions in general, identifies which types of career interventions appear to be more efficacious, and addresses research related to which factors or variables (e.g., number of sessions, content of sessions) have been found to be most helpful to individuals needing career assistance.

EFFECTIVENESS OF CAREER INTERVENTIONS

In examining the effectiveness of any intervention, researchers often compare those who have received the intervention to those who have not received it. Concerning the effectiveness of career interventions compared to no treatment, three meta-analyses have been published, and they indicate that career interventions tend to be moderately to very effective. In considering the results of these three meta-analytic reviews, it appears that the overall effect sizes for career interventions tend to fall in the range of .30 to .60. Although complicated weighting procedures are typically used in meta-analysis, an effect size is essentially the average difference between those who received the treatment and those who did not. Thus, an effect size of .30 means those who received a career intervention were about a third of a standard deviation above the control group, while an effect size of .60 reflects that the treatment group was closer to two-thirds of a standard deviation above the control group. Effect sizes in this range are often considered to indicate that the interventions are "moderately" effective. However, even the most conservative effect size of .30 shows that the average career client exceeds 62 percent of the control group. Furthermore, the benefits from career counseling appear to continue for clients. In following up with clients 1 to 12 months after receiving career counseling, Charles Healy found that 85 percent of the clients reported continued progress (e.g., pursuing degrees, gathering information, and changing occupations). Although career

interventions appear to be moderately effective, it should be noted that different career interventions have been found to vary significantly in their effectiveness.

WHICH CAREER INTERVENTIONS ARE MOST HELPFUL?

Susan Whiston combined the average effect sizes from two previous meta-analyses and found that career classes and individual career counseling were the most effective interventions. In fact, both individual career counseling and career classes have very large effect sizes. A second group of interventions had effect sizes in the moderate range, and these interventions were group career counseling, group test interpretation, workshop or structured groups, and computer-assisted interventions. In another study, Whiston and her colleagues directly compared different career interventions and found that participants who used a career computer system supplemented by counseling had better outcomes than those who just used a computer system. In addition, they found that counselor-free interventions (e.g., reading occupational information or completing a self-directed activity) were consistently less effective than other types of treatment modalities, such as individual career counseling, workshops, or career groups. Their results indicate that counselors play a critical role in assisting individuals with their career development and decision making. Therefore, it is important, particularly given the substantial increases in Web-based career assessments and materials, that appropriate counseling interventions provided to individuals be and people are not encouraged to simply go and get some career information off the Web. Research findings clearly indicate that counselor-free interventions are the least effective approach in providing career interventions and that more systematic assistance provides better outcomes for most individuals needing help with their careers.

MEASUREMENT OF CAREER INTERVENTION OUTCOMES

To interpret the research on the outcome of career interventions, one needs to understand the outcome measures, or indicators, of effectiveness. An intervention could produce a large effect size, but the results may be meaningless if a poor outcome measure is

used. Some researchers have recommended using both career (e.g., certainty/decidedness, career maturity) and noncareer (e.g., self-concept, locus of control, anxiety) outcomes, because career counseling probably affects multiple areas of functioning. In career intervention outcome research, the most common measures used are career maturity, career decidedness, and career information seeking. Measures of career maturity typically involve comparing adolescents or young adults with others in the same age group in terms of their career development and determining whether their knowledge and attitudes about career issues are higher or lower than that of their peers. Although career-related measures are often used to evaluate outcome, research has found that career counseling also has a positive effect on noncareer outcome, such as self-concept, anxiety, and depression. Hence, career interventions often have an effect on both career and personal measures of outcome.

COMMON FACTORS IN EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS

Across different types of career interventions, Steven Brown and Nancy Ryan Krane found there are five critical ingredients that positively influence outcome regardless of modality or format. These five critical ingredients are written exercises, individualized interpretations, occupational information, modeling, and attention to building support. Moreover, they found not only that these five critical ingredients were important independently but also that combinations of them yielded larger effect sizes than any one ingredient individually. Although no study in their analyses employed all five critical ingredients, adding one, two, or three critical ingredients yielded increasingly larger effect sizes. In a further analysis of this data, Brown and his colleagues found some preliminary findings that the written exercises are more effective if they include (a) opportunities for occupational comparison and future planning and (b) opportunities to articulate future goals and activities related to achieving those goals. They further found evidence that the individualized interpretation and feedback should be targeted toward assisting clients in planning for the future and setting goals. In addition, their research indicates that occupational information should be explored in session and not relegated to homework activities. Related to the fourth critical ingredient, modeling, they found some initial evidence that modeling and self-disclosures by the counselor or facilitator can be potent, thus indicating

that modeling can occur in individual career counseling. The final ingredient has received the least attention, but there are some indications that when career counselors devote attention to helping clients build support for their career choices and plans, the counseling is rated as being more effective by clients. This support may be particularly important when clients are coping with existing or perceived barriers.

The role of career assessments in providing effective career interventions is somewhat difficult to precisely determine. Howard Tinsley and Serena Chu concluded that there was no credible body of evidence to document that test or interest inventory interpretation by a trained clinician is helpful in career counseling. This finding, however, is contradicted by Brown and Krane's conclusion that when the outcome concerns career choice, one of the critical components of career counseling is individualized interpretation and feedback. Although there are no definitive findings related to traditional test interpretation, the world of career assessment is changing, and evolving technologies are having a substantial impact on how career assessments are delivered and interpreted. The influences of developing technologies on career assessment are significant, and we suggest the continued exploration of the effectiveness of both traditional career assessments as well as the use of new technologies related to career assessment.

Other factors that some researchers have found to positively influence the outcome of career intervention are longer and more comprehensive interventions. Brown and Krane found that outcomes improved exponentially as the number of sessions increased from one to four or five sessions. The effectiveness, however, seemed to decrease dramatically after around five sessions, which led them to recommend that career interventions are most effective when they include the five critical ingredients and last around four or five sessions.

WHO BENEFITS FROM CAREER COUNSELING OR INTERVENTIONS?

Sometimes practitioners wonder when or which clients or individuals benefit the most from career interventions. Career interventions have been found to be effective with clients of all ages, with the possible exception of elementary students; however, very little research has been conducted related to career interventions with elementary students. Most of the

research related to career interventions has been with college students, and researchers have found that college students generally tend to see value in career counseling and do not believe there is a significant stigma attached with seeking career assistance. Interestingly, some research indicates that men seem more likely to report a higher stigma attached to career counseling than do women, while other research suggests no gender differences in terms of the usage of career counseling services. Little research, however, has been conducted that has compared different interventions with males and females or explored whether the approach to career counseling should vary based on the gender of the client.

Although much has been written about the unique career development needs of racial and ethnic minorities, there has been very little exploration of the effects of varying career interventions with these different groups. A recent study found that African American and Asian American/Pacific Islander students were more likely than Caucasian students to use career counseling services in their colleges. Hispanic students, however, were the group least likely to seek career counseling compared with other ethnic groups. Some models have been developed to provide career counseling specifically for clients from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds. One of the more eminent models is that of Nadya Fouad and Rosie Bingham, in which they have proposed a seven-step process. The steps of their culturally sensitive career counseling model include establishing rapport, identifying career issues, assessing cultural variables, establishing culturally sensitive processes and goals, designing culturally appropriate interventions, making appropriate decisions, and implementing the career plan with follow-up. This model appears to hold promise, but it has yet to be investigated empirically, and more research is needed in this area.

CONCLUSION

In general, career interventions tend to have positive outcomes, and most individuals report positive results after receiving some sort of career assistance. Career classes and individual career counseling appear to be the most effective modes of assisting individuals, particularly in terms of facilitating their career development and helping them make career decisions. Other intervention strategies that tend to be more moderately effective include group career

counseling, group test interpretation, workshop or structured groups, and computer-assisted interventions. There is also research indicating that longer career interventions that involve five critical ingredients (i.e., written exercises, individualized interpretations, occupational information, modeling, and attention to building support) tend to be more effective than shorter and less comprehensive approaches. Furthermore, there is substantial empirical support indicating the importance of interventions that involve counseling and the tendency for counselor-free interventions to be ineffective. For example, individuals report better outcomes when counseling is added to the use of computerized career information systems compared with just using the computer systems in isolation. More research is needed to clarify which interventions work best with which clients or individuals. In particular, more research needs to be conducted related to whether different interventions are more or less effective with males and females, as well as with individuals from different racial or ethnic groups. In conclusion, although career interventions tend to produce a positive outcome, additional research is needed to assist practitioners in providing the most effective career interventions to individuals.

—Susan C. Whiston and Wendi L. Tai

See also Career counseling, Career counseling competencies, Career-planning workshops

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CAREER INVESTMENTS

Career progress of various groups is one of the central concerns in organizations, occupations, and work. People choose careers for different reasons. Chief among them are occupational prestige, rewards, and prospects for advancement. People are constantly making conscious decisions on career progress in light of their own interests and circumstances. At the same time, multiple factors shape a person's career aspirations and career trajectory.

The factors and circumstances leading to the career success of men may be different from those for women. Due to differences in historical experience, the educational and career opportunities that are available to men and women are invariably different. For example, in the United States, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in federally assisted education programs. This legislation has had the single most dramatic impact on the presence of women in the sciences.

The gender role socialization thesis has been used to account for gender differences in career orientations. Because of their traditional upbringing, men and women are inclined to choose different careers. For instance, school counselors may encourage male students to pursue science careers but advise equally talented female students to choose careers in nursing or teaching. Because of competing commitments to family and work, educated women may avoid positions with rigid career lines and prefer less demanding jobs. Compared with male workers, women are more likely to interrupt their careers owing to marriage and family responsibilities. This is probably why women are disproportionately found in part-time or temporary positions.

Employers' stereotypical views of members of different groups (statistical discrimination, "profiling"), although reducing "information costs" may bias their

hiring and promotion decisions. Employers may hold the (appropriate or inappropriate) belief that personal attributes such as race or gender are related to a person's performance or productivity. These subjective judgments would have an impact on the employers' hiring preferences. For example, because of family obligations, women are more likely than men to interrupt their careers and are therefore perceived as less dependable workers. To reduce training costs and worker turnover, employers would probably favor men over women, all else being equal. All this suggests that women are less likely than men to receive on-the-job training that is firm specific or to be put on the "fast track."

Gender is also embedded in executive succession; not only does top management affect the selection of successors in an organization, but workers can also play an important role in leadership change. Employees of a company could potentially mobilize themselves to support or challenge an incumbent or an outsider for the executive position. Research has also suggested a conflict of gender and professional roles even for female bosses. For instance, the founder's maternity leave could lead to workers' collective effort to increase the firm's independence and weaken the female founder's role.

According to human capital models, productivity-enhancing factors are the key determinants in career attainment. Theoretically, there should be a positive correlation between human capital endowment and a person's productivity. Based on "The more you learn, the more you earn" argument, those with higher investments in human capital, through education and training, are expected to fare economically and occupationally better than individuals with less human capital endowment. Research has shown that the effects of education, work experience, and professional training on career attainment may be weaker for female, minority, and immigrant workers. This is because they tend to have insufficient social capital.

Successful people tend to have the ability to build important, long-lasting relationships. They take bold and strategic actions to become part of the "old-boy" network. It is widely held that "who you know" (social capital) is generally more important than "what you know" (human capital) in career moves. The role of social networking on building one's career cannot be overstated. Due to their marginal status in mainstream society, women, racial minorities, and foreign nationals have a more difficult time than do

men, Whites, and natives in developing and expanding their network ties. Organizational memberships and cross-gender/racial networks can become critical when many job openings are filled by word-of-mouth.

The societal norm of homosociality tells us why women have difficulties in gaining entry into the old-boy network, a form of “social capital” that is essential for career advancement. Aside from similarity in background, men as well as women have more to gain professionally by associating more with men than with women, all things being equal. Due to their master status in the society, men generally have a greater control over a wide range of resources. By comparison, due to women’s subordinate role in the society and limited access to resources, they are in a weaker position to offer professional assistance or support to others. Men who associate with women as equals run the risk of being marginalized. As the gatekeepers of resources for career mobility, men become the preferred choice of social interaction and professional collaboration. In contrast, female networks are less useful. For one, women generally control fewer and less important resources in the society. This can be attributed to their not being part of a much larger pattern of a male, homosocial world. Women’s lack of resources and crucial information makes the “new-girl network” a less valuable asset relative to the old-boy network. In addition, it has been suggested that women tend to have a hard time building up their reputations in the workplace because male-initiated actions tend to be taken more seriously than those initiated by women. The same can be said about the relative status of racial minorities in the workplace. To make up for a deficit of social capital, members of minority groups may need to work harder to demonstrate their worth and to gain acceptance from their peers.

Researchers have also underscored the importance of language use and proficiency for minorities and immigrants in social networking. For both native- and foreign-born minority workers, the language network is one of the most important dimensions of human resources for career mobility. Members in the dominant culture can not only offer one another career information, support, and employment opportunities in mainstream society but can also shape each other’s attitudes, orientations, and approaches to career advancement. Being in an English-speaking network facilitates the assimilation of minorities into the mainstream and improves their career prospects. Conversely, participating in a predominantly non-English-speaking network suggests dissimulation and

fewer opportunities for advancement in mainstream economy. For racial minorities, jobs obtained through segregated networks tend to have less desirable outcomes in terms of rewards, job security, and prospects for advancement. Most of the jobs in immigrant enclaves (i.e., areas with a high concentration of coethnic employers, workers, and customers) tend to be low paying and low skilled.

Being plugged into different channels is a crucial ingredient of career success for educated workers. Networking and sponsorship confer potential career benefits. For example, having a friend in the hiring firm is a decisive influence on salary negotiation outcomes, regardless of the job applicant’s racial background. An employed friend can provide sensitive information and influence in the hiring firm and in the negotiation process. Referral often results in favorable outcomes for the job seekers and employers in terms of job offers, satisfaction, performance, and turnover compared with those obtained through formal methods. Specifically, the exchange of informal information about the job or offers between job applicants and prospective employers via an intermediary reduces uncertainty and risks for both parties. All this suggests that young people should begin to cultivate communal and professional ties early on. They should attempt to build their reputations and gain access to different channels through relationships with peers, teachers, mentors, sponsors, or colleagues.

For women and racial minorities, finding something in common with the gatekeeper or sponsor, such as values or experiences, would be useful in career mobility. The notion of “homosocial reproduction” has been used to characterize the hiring or promotion of someone who has a background or characteristics similar to those of the employer. It is understandable that individuals are more comfortable having people around them who think and act alike. Despite having formal rules of selection and succession in a corporation, “people who are different” are less likely than “people who are similar” to be potential internal or outside candidates for executive positions. If there is an internal labor market for CEOs in a corporation, women and minorities are less likely to be contenders for the top posts. They are less inclined to be groomed as the heir apparent to gain on-the-job training, knowledge, and experience about the firm. The expression “glass ceiling” has been used to describe the artificial barriers against the mobility of women and minorities beyond a certain point in their careers. Thus, women and minorities generally are

at a disadvantage in selection and succession, all things being equal. The accumulation of social capital would be an important means of circumventing these structural barriers.

To create the perception of similarity with the majority, women and minorities can develop social ties with members of the majority group. In addition to developing ties with coworkers, women and minorities ideally should have prior experience in functioning in a statistical minority role in decision making. Members of the majority who have experience occupying a statistical minority role in decision making can also enhance the influence of minority workers in organizational settings.

To build personal relationships or maintain support in workplaces, people can use “soft” (ingratiation and persuasion) or “hard” (coercion) forms of influence. The use of political or interpersonal influence tactics is contingent on one’s relative status and power in the organizational hierarchy. People can rely on their specialized knowledge or technical expertise to maintain control over decision-making outcomes. On the other hand, they may use friendship ties with peers and superiors to obtain political backing or minimize challenge in decision making.

Careers can be conceived of as a sequence of competition: The winner advances to the next level for further competition, while the loser is denied the opportunity to compete for higher levels. According to this “tournament” model, the outcome of each competition has enormous implications for a person’s chances for mobility in subsequent selections. This system may eliminate some very talented workers from advancing to the top, perhaps especially young female workers who are expected to demonstrate their abilities and achieve their best performance at a time when they are most pressed with family and domestic responsibilities.

Combining career, marriage, and family responsibilities poses a challenge for professional women. It is nonetheless possible for women who are highly committed to family to pursue career success. Such individuals tend to have supportive spouses and enjoy reliable child care assistance from relatives or hired employees. For example, it is not necessary to take the linear career path by giving priority to work in order to achieve success. There is more than one way for young people to get ahead. In fact, the traditional, single-minded focus on career is losing its appeal to a new generation of workers. There is a growing desire

for a balance between personal and professional lives among young male and female workers alike.

Being at the right place is also essential for career advancement. First, career prospects can be affected by structural arrangements in the workplace. Women and racial minorities may perform better and have better opportunities for advancement in bureaucratic settings where guidelines for job assignments, evaluations, and promotions are more formalized. Furthermore, compared with the private sector, the government may be more committed to recruiting, retaining, and promoting members of underrepresented groups. Civil services offer well-educated women and minorities job security and attractive employment opportunities. There is also greater sanction for affirmative action at higher levels of government.

Second, organizational cultures have a strong bearing on career processes and outcomes. The impact of workforce diversity on productivity or performance is context dependent. In academic settings, women in “relational departments” tend to fare better occupationally than their counterparts in “instrumental departments.” Relational departments have a positive influence on one’s career because their culture is characterized by cooperation and collegiality. This kind of atmosphere encourages collegial interaction and communication. In contrast, instrumental departments can have a negative impact on women’s careers because their culture is characterized by competition and hierarchy. This kind of departmental culture discourages intellectual exchanges and fosters professional isolation among female faculty. Therefore, instrumental academic departments can be detrimental to women’s career development. Similar situations are observed in other settings. Demographically different people are more affected by organizational culture than are demographically similar people. Collectivistic organizations promote creativity and productivity among diverse workers. Despite their demographic differences, workers in these settings share common organizational interests. In contrast, organizations that emphasize individualism and distinctiveness minimize interaction and collaboration among diverse workers.

Third, restructuring and downsizing have recalibrated the relationship of workers with their employers and the job markets. Recent trends of external outsourcing and proliferation of contingent work have profound implications for the prospects of workers at entry-level positions and upper-level management.

Uncertainties in the markets have compelled employers to reduce fixed costs (e.g., job- or firm-specific training, wages) and to increase flexibility of the workforce (e.g., contingency work, subcontracting). Lifetime job security, attrition based on seniority, and job ladders are a thing of the past. Workers who are able to cross organizational boundaries, to handle complex and interdependent projects, and to operate in team-based environments would be assets to any organization. On the other hand, workers have become less attached to and less identified with their organizations, and employers are less inclined to make investments on upgrading the skills of the workforce. Internal development of employees is less common when more advanced and different skills can be acquired easily from external markets. As a result, it is not uncommon for individuals to self-manage their careers as subcontractors or entrepreneurs.

In sum, to cope with market and technological changes, one is expected to be self-motivated, independent, and innovative. Upwardly mobile people augment their skills and knowledge through self-education and training. For free agents, building up “reputational” capital (i.e., résumé enhancement) is of paramount importance in an increasingly competitive labor market. Even for entry-level clerical jobs, there is a rising demand for basic “hard” and “soft” skills. Many of these jobs are customer oriented and require competent use of computers as well as good communication and social skills. Thus, regardless of the types of jobs, applicants or incumbents need to continuously enhance their credentials, such as education, training, work experience, and references.

—Joyce Tang

See also Career success, Glass ceiling, Human capital, Networking, Social capital

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CAREER MATURITY

Initially called “vocational maturity,” the construct now known as *career maturity* (CM) was proposed by Donald Super 50 years ago. In the context of developmental theories current at the time, Super saw careers as unfolding in a series of developmental stages, with each stage characterized by certain tasks. The developmental task of relating knowledge of oneself to knowledge of occupations was referred to as “specifying a choice.” Within Super’s framework, individuals are career mature or ready to make appropriate choices when they have engaged in planful exploration and have appropriate occupational knowledge, self-knowledge, and decision-making knowledge.

In specifying the sets of tasks, Super also thought about how progress in these tasks might be measured so that individuals could be compared both ipsatively and with others at the same developmental stage and therefore theoretically undertaking the same tasks. Almost all instrument development and much of the research related to the CM construct has addressed the latter kind of comparison. A number of measures of CM, most often closely aligned with Super’s theories, have been developed for use with adolescents and adults.

One of the largest areas of research into CM has been in relation to the constructs with which it is related. Research into the CM construct and its correlates is now well into its fifth decade. Correlates that have received recurring attention include age, level of education, gender, socioeconomic status, and a wide spectrum of career-related variables, such as vocational identity, career decision, career indecision, and

work role salience. Findings of large bodies of international research in relation to age and gender have produced equivocal findings, although in general, career maturity scores in adolescents increase with age, and overall, the development of CM seems to differ for females and males. While socioeconomic status has been theorized as likely to be an important determinant of career behavior, even if acting largely through moderator variables, most studies have found only a minor or no correlation between CM and socioeconomic status in school-age adolescents and in university students. Several studies have reported that students who were more mature were also more career decided. Similarly, studies have reported that career indecision was the single most important predictor variable of career-immature young people.

A number of studies have investigated whether the amount of part-time work in high school is able to predict CM. Findings have been mixed, with some studies demonstrating no relationship between individuals who did a large amount of part-time work and levels of CM and other studies reporting higher mean scores on CM for students with work experience than for students without. It has been suggested that young people will benefit from part-time employment only when the job area is congruent with their career aspirations.

While research has been conducted on the relevance of CM in ethnic groups within the United States, very little work has been conducted outside the United States to explore its relevance across cultures. Although studies have been conducted in Nigeria, Israel, Lebanon, India, Canada, and Australia, there have been few studies of comparison across cultures. However, a considerable body of work from South Africa has consistently shown that Black high school and university students are less career mature than their White counterparts. Researchers have suggested that measures of CM may be oriented to Western White values and need to focus more broadly on life role salience.

Super envisioned that the relative importance assigned by individuals to roles at different stages of their lives would govern their commitment to and involvement in tasks associated with the roles, as well as the rewards they expected to experience in the roles. Very few studies have examined the relationship between the salience of student or worker roles to aspects of CM. Only a few studies of relationships between these constructs have been reported, with those studies reporting the relationships expected

between student and work role salience and aspects of CM.

RECENT CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF CAREER MATURITY

With the acknowledgment of the notion that careers evolve in a social context, the 1980s saw a concentrated move to extend theory to situate careers in social contexts and define their relationships with historical eras, geographical locations, race, and culture. A number of authors emphasized the importance of social ecology in careers and stressed the reciprocity of individual and societal development, meaning that the social context is important in the individual's development and the individual is important in the development of social contexts. In addition, the individual and the context may change. The timing of the interaction between the organism and the environment, not sufficiently captured in the portrayal of CM as based on time- and age-based stage models, is an important underpinning of a number of recent theoretical formulations. Research has also demonstrated that CM is influenced by differences in social and political systems.

Constructivists have encouraged career theorists to assist individuals in consciously working to construct their own development. Specifying a career choice involves more than just the cognitive activity of aligning self- and occupational information. This activity takes place within a larger story that engages the sociocultural context of the individual. The individual's career story is the collection of images of the way the individual sees himself or herself in the world. Whereas the informational aspects of the self (e.g., interest, abilities) and of the world of work constitute the content of the story, the individual's constructions of these and the positioning of them within the story—the individual's narrative about self—provide its uniqueness for each individual. And it is the individual's understanding of his or her role in the construction of the story that is a signal point for the traditional construct of CM.

As shown in this review, the construct of CM has received considerable theoretical, conceptual, and research attention, including suggestions for ways in which it can be enhanced to make it more appropriate in times of changing career patterns and more applicable to a wider range of societal groups. The importance of taking contextual factors into account was part of

Super's original formulation of the construct, as was the idea of adjustment as a component of mature behavior. In his later writings, Super himself proposed a change in terminology from "career maturity" to "career adaptability" to better convey the range of career-related attitudes, knowledge, and skills at the various stages and transition points in career development.

The amount of research that continues to be reported on CM, almost 50 years since the construct was first proposed, is indicative of its importance in our understanding of career behavior. The construct has matured to a point where it may change in name or form to better reflect the changing world of work in the twenty-first century. However, it is likely that Super's principles will remain central to any reformulation.

—Wendy Patton

See also Career salience, Continuing professional education, Erikson's theory of development, Lockstep career progression, Super's career development theory

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CAREER MOBILITY

Career mobility represents individuals' patterns of transitions between organizations and within organizations in the course of their work lives. It is a very broad term that essentially incorporates all possible movements in one's career. As organizational layoffs

and restructuring are becoming common, it is not surprising that employees, who realize that lifelong job security may no longer be a realistic employment goal, are ready to become more mobile. In fact, moving across jobs and even occupations is now the rule rather than the exception. Unlike in the past, today people increasingly have multiple career transitions and changes, such as internal transfers, job rotations, overseas assignments, switching from full-time to part-time, and changing employers and occupations. These frequent career transitions and changes in recent years are attributed to an increasing emphasis on learning, skill enhancement, meaningful work, personal control, job satisfaction, and career satisfaction.

The interest in obtaining a variety of work experiences across jobs and occupations (careers)—and therefore individuals' constant movement across these boundaries—is causing careers to become increasingly "boundaryless." In the era of boundaryless careers, people's work experiences are not limited to only one or two firms. Instead, their careers span across multiple firms and employment settings. As such, portable skills are important assets. When equipped with portable skills, employees more easily move from one employer to another and from one occupation to another. Multiple career transitions also further facilitate the building of repertoires of skill sets that can benefit individuals' careers in the long run.

Types of career mobility can be differentiated on the basis of at least two dimensions. The first mobility dimension is *vertical-horizontal*. A vertical movement involves changing to a job with a significantly higher or lower level of responsibility. The second mobility dimension is *internal-external*. An internal movement is narrowly defined as changing to a job that is offered by the same employer. An external movement involves changing to a job that is offered by a different employer. Crossing these two dimensions gives rise to four generic types of career mobility, which will be discussed in turn below: internal-vertical, internal-horizontal, external-horizontal, and external-vertical. One's career often contains multiple instances of these transitions.

Internal-vertical career movement involves changing to a job internally with increased or decreased responsibility. Taking a promotion offer from the current employer is a common example. Specifically, being promoted is traditionally the most desired type of career mobility, because it can enhance status, responsibilities, satisfaction, and esteem. Also, promotions often improve one's financial rewards on the

job, which are generally valued. It has been suggested that two theoretical perspectives on upward mobility are particularly relevant to understanding what predicts employees' promotions: a contest-mobility norm and a sponsored-mobility norm.

The *contest-mobility norm* perspective suggests that all individuals have the same likelihood of winning the competition for mobility on the basis of their individual merits. The goal of this system is to give elite status to those who earn it. People compete with each other in an open and fair contest for the advancement, and victory comes along to those who demonstrate accomplishments. For instance, those who have better human capital investments, such as higher levels of education, are more likely to obtain internal promotions. Work experience also increases one's likelihood of obtaining promotions, because work experience is often valued and thus rewarded in the labor market. Skills acquired in training and development programs also equip employees with more competencies and skills for competing for promotions.

In contrast, the *sponsored-mobility norm* perspective suggests that established elites pay special attention to members who are deemed to have high potential and then provide sponsoring activities to them to help them win the competition. Thus, those who have early successes are more likely to receive sponsorship, and those who do not are likely to be excluded from such support activities. For instance, one's broader social network at work should result in greater career sponsorship from senior colleagues, including supervisors and mentors, which can, in turn, increase the chances for promotions. Also, those who are able to manage their impressions better or have stronger social influence skills should also have more promotions because these skills increase interpersonal liking. Thus, this theoretical perspective implies that social factors play an important role in determining who gets ahead. The contest- and sponsored-mobility norm perspectives together suggest that employees' competencies and hard work and employers' support and sponsorship collectively result in upward mobility.

Demotion is another type of internal-vertical career movement. Because layoffs are common in recent years, some employees may accept demotions in return for not being laid off. However, as one would expect, it is a common research finding that demotions lead to unfavorable job attitudes, such as lower fairness perceptions and greater turnover intentions. The exception is when an employee volunteers for the

demotion. One of the motives to do so is to better understand the operations in an organization. Another reason is the desire to equip oneself with different sets of skills. Compared with promotions, the topic of demotions has received less research attention.

Internal-horizontal career movement is changing to a job that entails different tasks or settings without significant change in responsibility, while remaining with the same employer. In response to the intense global competition, organizations in recent decades have frequently downsized or restructured their operations, creating new work tasks or redesigning old ones. This gives rise to abundant opportunities for internal-horizontal transfers, including internal job rotations, relocations to another city or state, and international assignments. This type of career mobility may be increasingly welcomed because, as mentioned, employees may want to work on jobs that allow them to build repertoires of different skills.

More specifically, an internal-horizontal career transition causes disruptions to as well as generates benefits for one's work and career. The possible disruptions associated with such a change may involve losing one's place in line for promotion; losing social ties; disruptions to family, especially if the change involves a geographical move; confusion about one's own goals; and general stress caused by adapting to the new environment. However, such a change can also be beneficial if individuals want to expand their skills sets or networks, obtain new experiences and personal growth, rejuvenate their careers, or forge paths for future promotions or are bored with their current positions. A decision to take the internal-horizontal transition is made when the benefits are believed to outweigh the costs.

One of the most important costs to consider is whether the change involves geographical moves. Horizontal transfers that involve geographical moves are often less welcomed than those that don't. For instance, relocation to another city or state should be less desired than internal job rotation. However, relocation has occurred more frequently in recent years, especially for those who work in large corporations. It has been found in research that those who have less to sacrifice in leaving their current communities (e.g., have fewer social ties) are more willing to accept relocation. However, when the relocation is an overseas transition, more unique factors have to be considered. It is widely acknowledged that expatriates face a variety of obstacles and challenges in their overseas

transitions, such as language barriers, stressful environmental conditions in the assigned county/region (e.g., potentially unstable political situations), learning and sensitivity to cultural differences and local customs, as well as work-related adjustment issues. In terms of research, a number of studies in this area have investigated the adjustment of expatriates. One of the factors that facilitate their adjustment is support from different sources. For instance, it has been found that positive attitudes of and support from spouses facilitate expatriates' transitions. Furthermore, home country organizational support, local country organizational support, and supervisor support are all related to expatriates' work, interactional, and general adjustment. Expatriates' premature departures are said to indicate unsuccessful overseas transitions.

Another increasingly common type of internal-horizontal career movement is changing from full-time to part-time status. The benefits of such a change include freeing up time to take care of families and pursue other interests, decreasing work stress, and making working multiple part-time jobs possible if the individual does not want to work in the same environment all the time. Possible costs include lower income, reduced chances of promotions, loss of some fringe benefits, and feelings of alienation at work.

External-horizontal career movement involves changing to a job with a different employer that entails different work tasks or settings without a significant change in responsibility. That is, it involves individuals leaving their current organizations and looking for similar jobs. It can entail changing employers with or without changing professions. For instance, a nurse may work in different hospitals over the course of his or her career. Another nurse may quit working in a hospital and become an assistant at an elder care center.

Changing employers is said to be highly common in boundaryless careers. A great deal of research has been devoted to identifying predictors of voluntary turnover. One consistent finding is that "morale" factors (e.g., job dissatisfaction) dominate individuals' decisions to change employers. That is, the main reason people change employers is that they are not satisfied with their current jobs or/and organizations. However, in recent research, a number of non-morale-related factors have been identified as being relevant to predicting voluntary turnover. For instance, those who perceive a lack of sufficient opportunity for skill enhancement will express higher intention to change

employers. This is not surprising given that, as mentioned, individuals increasingly emphasize knowledge acquisition and personal learning. Furthermore, employees want creativity at work and in their careers, too. It has been found that employees are more likely to leave when they perceive that their jobs or work environments do not allow or promote creativity. Thus, employees increasingly switch employers for reasons other than general like or dislike of their jobs or organizations.

Changing occupations is a huge decision, though it is becoming common. The individuals have to "start from scratch" and learn a new set of skills for the new occupation. This creates psychological distress and financial burdens for the individuals as well their families. Furthermore, there may be limited choices of occupations. Thus, as in the case of changing employers, research in this area continues to identify predictors of occupational turnover. For instance, it has been found that males, younger individuals, or those who are less satisfied with their jobs have greater intentions to leave their occupations. Furthermore, occupational context variables, such as professional role orientation and occupational commitment, negatively predict occupational turnover intention. Changing occupations can also be precipitated by social factors. When one's network is more diverse (i.e., knowing more people of different backgrounds), one is more likely to change occupations as a result of more career information and opportunities. Also, when one has more instrumental relationships (from which one obtains career-related advice), one is more likely to change occupations.

Finally, *external-vertical* career movement involves changing to a job with a significant change in responsibility and working for a different employer (i.e., a diagonal movement). For instance, an associate professor with an outstanding publication record may be invited by another university to become a full professor. An outstanding football player may self-recommend himself to another team and become the new leader of that team. Some people quit their jobs and become the owners of new firms. Finally, some people may be laid off and settle for jobs that are of lower importance in different organizations (i.e., external demotions). This type of career mobility is perhaps the least desired. Not surprisingly, this group of individuals has more negative job attitudes after transitions, because they constantly compare their current jobs with their previous ones.

A growing number of employees who are laid off choose to start businesses of their own. It has been found

that certain personality traits, such as being emotionally stable, distrusting, expedient (less conscientious), and tough-minded, predict new business start-ups. Entrepreneurial orientation also predicts this type of career transition. Those with a strong entrepreneurial orientation emphasize creating something that is new and valuable. Overall, this type of external-vertical career mobility (business start-ups) is still relatively infrequent, and therefore research on it is still limited.

Bridge employment is another type of external-vertical career movement. It involves a person's employment after retirement from full-time work but before his or her entire withdrawal from the labor force. It usually involves significantly less workload, such as part-time or temporary work. Researchers have found that employees report greater likelihood of engaging in bridge employment if they are healthy, younger, have high organizational tenure, earn lower monthly salary at the time of retirement, have declined previous early-retirement opportunities, and have working spouses or dependent children.

To conclude, career mobility involves intra- and interorganizational transitions. Internal-vertical, internal-horizontal, external-horizontal, and external-vertical career movements have been increasingly common in recent years. Researchers in this area often focus on one specific type of career mobility. However, we also need to make sense of the patterns of career transitions individuals create. For instance, why do some people prefer internal-horizontal transitions over internal-vertical ones? Also, what is the relationship between changing employers and changing occupations? This search for traceable patterns of career mobility is especially important and interesting in the era of boundaryless careers. Though careers are increasingly boundaryless, people still act according to some dispositional sources of influence, such as values, interests, and personality. As such, it is likely that we will be able to predict why certain individuals create certain patterns of changes in their careers.

—Thomas Ng

See also Boundaryless career, Career success, Career transition, Protean career

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CAREER MOTIVATION

Career motivation is the desire to exert effort to enhance career goals. It is a multidimensional construct that combines elements of needs, interests, and personality characteristics that reflect the stimulus, direction, and persistence of career-related behaviors. Career motivation is organized into three domains. *Career insight* is the stimulus or energizing component. This is people's ability to be realistic about themselves and their careers. People who are high in career insight have an accurate understanding of their strengths and weaknesses and set clear career goals. *Career identity* is the direction component. This is the extent to which people define themselves by their careers. People who are high in career identity are highly involved in their jobs, their organizations, and/or their professions. They strive for advancement, recognition, and a leadership role. *Career resilience* is the persistence component. This is the ability to adapt to changing conditions and overcome career barriers. People who are high in career resilience believe in themselves, need to achieve, and are willing to take reasonable risks to do so.

Resilience, insight, and identity have their foundation in trait factor career theories. Resilience is conceptually related to the need for reassurance, the ability to

face barriers, hardiness, self-efficacy, agency (being assertive, instrumental, and interpersonally facile), mastery motivation, and achievement motivation. Career insight is conceptually similar to self-concept, feedback orientation, and openness. Career identity is conceptually linked to job commitment, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship.

The model proposes that resilience results from reinforcement contingencies during childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood. As a result, resilience is less likely to change, but it can be supported by positive reinforcement and chances to learn and achieve. Career insight and identity are the result of information processing and can be more easily affected by feedback and changes in situational conditions. Career insight is affected by support for goal setting, including information about alternative career paths, advice in establishing career goals, organizational flexibility, opportunities for change, and clarity of organizational processes, such as appraisal and promotion decisions. Career identity is influenced by encouragement of professionalism, reinforcement for organizational commitment (e.g., pay bonuses and pensions), leadership opportunities, and programs that recognize and reward excellent performance.

Prospective and retrospective rationality explain how situational conditions influence the career motivation domains and career-related behaviors. *Prospective rationality* suggests that situational conditions affect career resilience, insight, and identity, which, in turn, influence career behaviors. *Retrospective rationality* argues that behaviors influence feelings of career motivation and perceptions of current conditions. So people who are resilient and high in career identity and who take action to support their career goals (for instance, participate in employee development activities) are likely to perceive favorable situational conditions.

The three career motivation domains form different patterns of career development. Career resilience sets the stage for meaningful career insight (e.g., receptiveness to feedback), which, in turn, influences establishing an achievable career identity. People who are resilient at the start of their careers are likely to use information about themselves and the environment to develop accurate career insight and realistic career identity. They will be able to overcome career barriers and, if necessary, redirect their careers. Failure or severe negative feedback may undermine resilience. Career coaches may help people put these negative experiences in perspective, gain insight into themselves

and the situation, and discover alternative directions for career satisfaction and success. People who lack confidence from the start and fail are not likely to break away from an ineffective pattern of career motivation (low resilience, insight, and identity). They are likely to have low or unrealistic career goals and are good candidates for career or psychological counseling.

Career motivation has been measured by developmental assessment centers and questionnaires. A developmental assessment center includes a personal history form, a detailed background interview, personality instruments, interest inventories, exercises on life and career decisions (e.g., reactions to hypothetical job choices), and a career projectives test that asks for reactions to ambiguous pictures of career-related topics. Assessors record and evaluate participants' scores, reactions, and behaviors and rate them on the career motivation domains. The results are fed back to participants as input for career-planning discussions.

Career motivation survey items have also been developed to measure behaviors and attitudes that reflect the three domains. For example, a measure of career insight includes these items: "I have a specific plan for achieving my career goal," and "I have realistic career goals." A measure of career identity includes this item: "I am very involved in my job," and "I spend free time on activities that will help my job." A measure of career resilience includes this item: "I believe other people when they tell me that I have done a good job," and "I am able to adapt to changing circumstances." Research has found convergent validity for different measures of career motivation.

Research has been conducted on the antecedents and consequences of career motivation. Career mentoring has a positive influence on performance by first affecting career motivation; that is, career motivation mediates the relationship between mentoring and performance. Individuals who are higher in career motivation benefit more from training than those who are low in career motivation. Older workers show as much career motivation as younger workers. People who believe that mentoring and new skill development are appropriate for older people have higher career motivation. Part-time workers are higher in career resilience than are full-time workers, perhaps because part-time workers have to adapt to changing work schedules and responsibilities. Career resilience is related to career persistence, and career insight is negatively related to turnover intentions. Overall, situational conditions can strengthen or lessen career motivation components, as the model predicts.

The model has been used to generate guidelines to support career development. Career resilience is reinforced through opportunities for achievement, rewards for innovation, interpersonal concern, and positive reinforcement for excellent work. Career insight is supported by providing career information and performance feedback and encouraging goal setting. Career identity is supported by providing job challenge, chances for professional growth, and opportunities for leadership and advancement.

—*Manuel London and Edward M. Mone*

See also Career goal, Career strategy, Career success

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CAREER-PLANNING WORKSHOPS

American citizens enjoy a relatively large number of educational and career options from which to choose. Thus, planning for career entry or change can require individuals to engage in a number of relatively complex and interconnected career-related tasks and activities. Many individuals elect to facilitate their progress in career planning by participating in *career-planning workshops*, group-based, psychoeducational services offered by most agencies that provide career-related assistance.

Career-planning workshops typically involve a limited time commitment on the part of participants. Most workshops range in duration from just a few hours to a day or two of structured meetings and activities. From a practitioner perspective, career-planning workshops can be one of the most efficient and cost-effective ways to help adults address their career concerns. They generally have the overarching goals of (a) assisting individuals in taking more personal responsibility for their career paths and (b) helping individuals become more intentional in their career behavior so that (c) participants are more likely to identify, implement, and, ultimately, achieve career goals.

The first few hours of career-planning workshops typically focus on helping participants identify and explore a range of career and educational opportunities. Because career development theories are predicated of the idea that a good fit between an individual and his or her career will result in positive outcomes, a notion termed *career congruence*, many, if not most, career-planning workshops include at least one assessment-related activity. These activities help individuals discover congruent career or educational possibilities or confirm the congruence of options already under consideration. Such assessment-related activities probably will include the administration and interpretation of a paper-and-pencil or computer-based career interest inventory; however, some workshops may include less formal career assessment activities, such as career card sorts, career time lines, or narrative methods. Many practitioners believe it is important to augment career interest information with measures of participants' values, personality styles, and abilities. The workshops that these practitioners deliver may be more psychologically oriented and spend relatively more time helping individuals come to know themselves. The availability of self-scoring versions of paper-and-pencil questionnaires such as the Strong Interest Inventory, the Self-directed Search, and the NEO-Five Factor Inventory make it possible for workshop participants to complete, score, and have the results of their inventories interpreted during the course of the workshop. However, because completing these assessments is time-intensive, practitioners may consider providing assessment materials to participants in advance of the workshop, so that face-to-face time can be focused on interpreting participants' results.

Only after participants have achieved a clear understanding of themselves and their situations and have identified a few congruent career or educational

choices do workshop activities typically move to a focus on helping individuals implement their choices. At about this point in a workshop, some participants may come to understand that either personal or environmental factors complicate their identification of viable career alternatives. For example, personal factors, such as being indecisive with regard to important life decisions or having trouble making a commitment to a plan of action, can complicate career planning. Similarly, environmental barriers, such as child care or elder care issues or economic difficulties, can also present challenges. In such cases, referrals for individual career counseling or other supports can often be helpful.

Career implementation pertains to the steps that are necessary to realizing a career-related choice. Depending on participant characteristics such as age, employability, and previous work history, career implementation activities may involve teaching individuals to thoroughly investigate the local job market or to explore educational opportunities such as apprenticeship programs, trade or technical schools, community colleges, or colleges and universities that offer formal educational degrees. Career workshops often teach participants skills such as how to search for jobs and how to write job applications, cover letters, and résumés. Many participants can also benefit with behavioral rehearsals (i.e., role plays) focused on how to communicate with potential employers, including how to conduct a successful job interview. Workshops offered for educationally bound participants may focus, in parallel fashion, on how to select an appropriate college or other educational program and, again, help participants enhance their interaction during the admission process. Such skills are especially important for individuals who have not historically had access to educational experiences.

Because personal characteristics can affect career choice and adjustment, it may be important for practitioners to consider the target audience for any given workshop. Although some degree of heterogeneity among workshop participants can be useful, from a clinical perspective it may be difficult to meet the needs of a group whose lives are vastly different. For this reason, practitioners sometimes find it useful to offer workshops for individuals who have similar needs. Examples include workshops for undecided college students, students of nontraditional age who are returning to school or work, individuals returning to work after beginning a family, individuals returning

to work after an accident or illness, midlife career changers, and individuals transitioning to the workforce after incarceration. Career-planning workshops are often a mainstay of agencies offering career-related service because the group-based, structured nature of these interventions makes them extremely adaptable. However, practitioners will need to anticipate, as much as possible, the needs of their clientele and target workshop tasks and activities accordingly.

Finally, in terms of the efficacy of career-planning workshops, meta-analytic investigations suggest that this treatment modality is, indeed, an effective way of helping individuals. Perhaps more important, meta-analytic findings suggest that five components of career intervention appear to contribute significantly to their effectiveness. These include written or reflective career-related exercises, offering clients individualized interpretations and feedback of career-related assessment, providing access to up-to-date work-related information, offering clients opportunities to model from successful individuals, and helping clients build or access social support for their career choices. Practitioners may wish to ensure that these components are in place as they design their career-planning workshops.

—Victoria A. Shivy

See also Assessment centers, Career centers, Career counseling, Computer-based career support systems

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CAREER PLATEAU

Since Thomas Ference, James Stoner, and Kirby Warren's seminal work first defined the *career plateau*, researchers have continued to investigate this

antithetical phenomenon. This is due to the fact that many employees consider promotions and upward hierarchical movement as synonymous indicators of success at work. The career plateau phenomenon involves situations within which an employee perceives a low likelihood of increased responsibility.

There are two types of career plateaus: structural and content. In *structural plateauing*, the individual becomes unable to rise further in the flattened organization's pyramid structure and reaches a point where the likelihood of additional hierarchical promotion is very low. Structurally plateaued employees who equate career success with hierarchical movement may become distressed upon acknowledging their plateaus with their current employers. These employees may take action to remove themselves from the situation, withdraw from organizational involvement, and lower their productivity. All of these scenarios provide a rationale for explaining why career plateauing often has a negative connotation.

Judith Bardwick suggested that employees also plateau when their likelihood of increased growth or challenges associated with the current job is low. When increasing job-specific task responsibility that offers developmental opportunities becomes unattainable, an employee is said to experience a *content plateau*. Content-plateaued employees may already be proficient in their jobs, expect no further challenges to be associated with the job, and feel stifled regarding the job's content. Content-plateaued employees are no longer intrigued by their work and often feel they have reached a dead end. Many researchers have empirically confirmed the existence of both of these plateau types.

Over the years, career plateauing has been subject to a variety of conceptual interpretations and empirical measurements. Career plateauing has been objectively measured and defined as either age or long job tenure when comparing the plateaued employee with the average workforce member. Objective measures fail researchers in two respects. First, chronological age and length of tenure will vary from industry to industry, and these measures fail to capture the notion of a stalled career. When is one stalled? How can age or tenure be a proxy when individuals often move from company to company or through myriad industries and restart careers at a senior age? Second, objective measures fail to capture one's personal perception of being plateaued. Plateauing seems to run along a continuum where some individuals perceive being

plateaued quickly, while it takes others longer job tenures to feel plateaued. Therefore, the exact time (or age) when someone plateaus varies greatly.

Plateauing has also been measured subjectively as the perception of the individual (or his/her employer) regarding one's likelihood of increased responsibility. Many have found that the perceptual measure better informs us regarding work attitudes and behaviors than does the objectively measured construct. Some have suggested that there may be different degrees of "plateauedness" and therefore that the career plateau construct should be measured on a continuous scale. While self-reported measures may cause some measurement bias, in the case of career plateauing it appears that perceptual measures truly capture one's career situation.

REASONS FOR THE CAREER PLATEAU

Researchers have suggested different reasons to explain why employees may become plateaued. Once an individual acknowledges that a plateau has occurred, an attribution to explain why it happened is a common psychological process. Firms may plateau employees for either organizational or personal reasons. Within these broad terms, there are specific types of attributions plateaued employees may recognize. First, plateaued employees may perceive that they are plateaued because of the organization's negative assessment of their capabilities. Individuals may be plateaued because they are seen by the organization either as lacking in ability for higher-level jobs or as not desiring higher-level jobs. Managers within organizations may consciously (or subconsciously) pigeonhole employees as those who are competent and willing to move up the corporate ladder and those who are not. An organization's assessment of an individual, whether it is accurate or not, may be an antecedent condition that the employee believes created his or her plateaued state.

Another situation in which individuals may suggest organizations have caused their plateaus is due to the narrowing employment pyramid. The organizational structure allows fewer and fewer employees to move up to higher management ranks. Also, downsizing eliminates many middle-management layers of the pyramid. As firms cut employees throughout the organization, the structure becomes flattened, creating even more competition than had previously existed. Since flattened organizational structures are a fact of

organizational life for the foreseeable future, fewer higher-level jobs will exist at many firms. These organizational constraints may effectively plateau employees.

An employee's personal preference may be offered as a reason for being plateaued. This reason may become more prevalent given today's high percentage of dual-career couples in the workforce. Some individuals explicitly make their desires known not to be promoted further, while others send ambiguous signals to the organization or place constraints on proposed promotions. The typical employee during the 1970s was the strongly committed, ideal "organization man," whose every desire focused on staying with the company for life and progressing at a sure and steady pace up the hierarchy. Hardly any of these individuals chose being plateaued. However, few of today's workers embody the "organization man." Individuals may choose for personal reasons, such as family or health, not to seek additional responsibilities. This is true for both men and women, since both may be juggling work and family responsibilities. Also, an individual may not feel that the added stress (or income) associated with the promotion is worth what the person may have to give up to do the job. In summary, individuals may be plateaued for organizational assessment, organizational constraint, or personal-choice reasons.

EXAMPLES OF PLATEAU REASONS

Given that two types of plateaus, structural and content, have been identified, along with the reasons one might plateau, a discussion is warranted on the typical plateau attributions an employee might give for his or her plateau status. For example, an employee may be structurally plateaued for *organizational assessment reasons*. An employee may not receive future promotions because management believes the individual lacks the managerial ability or skills needed for higher-level jobs. Or the organization may believe that the employee is not truly committed to the organization or lacks the desire to rise through the ranks. Hence, the organization has made an assessment of the individual that precludes that employee from career advancement within the firm.

Employees may be structurally plateaued due to *organizational constraints*. The lack of positions may be caused by a poor economy, downsizing, inappropriate recruiting and staffing efforts targeted at the same population, or an enlarged management rank. In any of these examples, the actions of the organization have resulted in employees who are structurally

plateaued, with no opportunity for hierarchical advancement. The employee has been plateaued in this case due to issues outside the employee's (and maybe the firm's) control.

An employee may also be structurally plateaued for *personal-choice reasons*. It may be that the employee does not desire a higher-level job, stemming from non-work-related issues. In these cases, the reason the employee is structurally plateaued may have everything to do with the personal choices the individual makes (e.g., not wanting/needing the stress associated with higher-level jobs, not taking a promotion because of possible need for family transfer or health reasons). This situation occurs when one makes a conscious decision and takes control of one's career and therefore may be referred to as being structurally plateaued for personal-choice reasons.

Individuals may be content plateaued for either organizational or personal reasons. When the organization has negatively assessed the employee's capabilities, the employee may not receive any further increases in responsibility associated with the current job. The organization may believe that the employee doesn't have managerial or technical skills, ability, desire, or work ethic to manage more advanced tasks. This is oftentimes deemed being "put out to pasture."

Also, the organization may place constraints on the individual's job such that no further learning may take place. These constraints may include inflexible job descriptions or unavailable training. The employee may want additional increases in responsibility but does not receive them because of personnel decisions imposed by the organization. This may cause the employee to perceive that there is little growth opportunity in the job and hence creates a perception of content plateauing for organizational constraint reasons.

An individual may decide for personal reasons that declining additional increases in responsibility in the current job is agreeable with other life domains. The additional workload associated with more responsibility doesn't seem worth the extra effort. There may be no additional financial remuneration for the excessive work hours; family responsibilities may suffer; or physical or emotional health may be jeopardized. This would be an example of content plateauing for personal-choice reasons.

This summary of the career plateau phenomenon is meant to bring closure to the lack of consensus among researchers about construct definitions. Individuals who experience career plateaus may experience one

or both of its two types, structural and content. Within these types of plateaus, there are also reasons to which individuals may attribute their plateaued states. Organizational assessment, organizational constraint, and personal choice are either external or internal decisions that affect the employee's work situation.

NEGATIVE OUTCOMES ASSOCIATED WITH PLATEAUS

Career plateauing is an important issue for researchers to examine because of the potentially negative outcomes that may affect both the employee and the organization. Career plateauing has been found to produce negative work attitudes and reflects disappointments stemming from one's work domain. Plateaued employees are described as displaying low levels of job involvement and work motivation. Plateaued employees become less job involved because they believe that the organization has devalued their contributions. Employees who perceive that the organization does not care about them report lower levels of involvement in job responsibilities. The organization has plateaued the individual, and this action causes a blow to the individual's self-image. The employee responds with a low level of job involvement as a behavior that is consistent with his or her perception of the situation. The resulting behavior often involves lower job productivity, and plateauing has been found to be negatively related to performance.

Few researchers have investigated the relationship of one's plateaued type to job involvement. Structural plateauing and content plateauing have both been found to be negatively related to job involvement. Researchers have found that structurally plateaued technical specialists report lower job involvement than their nonplateaued counterparts, and state government employees who report being content plateaued also report low job involvement. This negative relationship between both structural/content plateauing and job involvement would be expected given the definition of job involvement.

Plateaued employees report low levels of job satisfaction and career satisfaction. Researchers have found that both structural and content plateauing are negatively related to personal development satisfaction, while content plateauing is related to task dissatisfaction. Others have found that both structural and content plateauing are negatively related to both job and career satisfaction.

Plateaued employees also exhibit a greater propensity for leaving the organization. Results have shown that content plateauing has a negative effect on affective commitment to the organization. This type of employee reaction to career plateauing results in a loss of employee morale and productivity and leads to turnover, which may prove very costly to organizations.

While the organization may experience negative repercussions when the employee experiences a plateau, the employee may also realize some personal consequences. Harmful psychological effects include lower self-worth due to promotions being taken away, lower skill assessment, and less acceptance by peers and superiors due to devalued work contributions. Plateaued employees may experience negative stereotyping as "deadwood," neglect by supervisors, and avoidance by coworkers.

Work-related stress and strain have been examined as outcomes of an employee's plateau state. Structurally plateaued employees have reported greater work-related stress than have nonplateaued employees. Researchers have found that both structural- and content-plateaued employees experience high levels of job strain and that structurally plateaued employees report experiencing high levels of job-induced tension. Although these studies used various stress scales, there seems to be consistency in the direction of these relationships.

It is conceivable that the reasons for structural and content plateauing could be considered work stressors. This may be particularly true when the reason for becoming plateaued is outside the employee's control. For example, structurally plateaued employees may become distressed upon acknowledging there are no more available positions; that is, there are organizational constraints disallowing further promotions. Some suggest that the mismatch between professional employees' advancement desires and available positions, due to shorter corporate ladders, is a significant source of stress. Employees may become distressed should they perceive that the organization has negatively assessed their abilities and therefore has structurally plateaued them for organizational assessment reasons. Content-plateaued employees may respond similarly when they acknowledge that their jobs will no longer be challenging or that they offer little growth, little flexibility, or few increases in job responsibility. Bardwick once noted that the end of job challenge can generate as much stress as the end of the hierarchical or structural climb.

Researchers have found that stress regarding career progression may be equal among people of various career anchors and more prevalent among early career stage professionals. Both male and female employees expect the same chances for career progression and have similar aspirations and social expectations for advancement. Since the firm is taking those opportunities away, employees may become distressed upon realization of their plateau status.

POSITIVE OUTCOMES ASSOCIATED WITH PLATEAUS

Although many negative sentiments have been associated with career plateaus, plateaued employees appreciate a few positive experiences. Most important, some research suggests that given the flattened organizational structures common to many companies, experiencing a career plateau may not be as embarrassing or stressful as it once was. In fact, the plateau event may not be a unique situation but rather the norm for many employees' career progressions. From this perspective, plateaus may be more common and acceptable periods in one's career than was previously thought.

Plateaus are a time when new ideas are digested. They afford highly desirable stable, secure, and restful periods. Plateaus allow for reflection and offer individuals time to regroup and plan the next phase of personal and professional growth. Plateaus permit the employee the time to assimilate new knowledge and integrate that knowledge into his or her functional repertoire. From a more pragmatic perspective, plateaus allow time to "de-stress" and also to take stock of and reinforce accomplishments. Some employees may even hope for a plateau due to their inability to cope with the stress that career mobility and progression impose. In fact, plateaued university employees have reported a greater likelihood of staying with and being committed to their organizations.

Plateaued employees are expected to invest less of themselves in the job and more in nonwork activities. According to compensatory theory, disappointments in one sphere of life tend in some way to be made up for in another sphere. Therefore, plateaued employees psychologically distance themselves from work by becoming more involved in nonwork issues. Individuals become involved in these nonwork activities in order to perform well in another domain and maintain their self-esteem. Similarly, plateaued employees may devote more time to their families,

leisure interests, and community activities. Researchers have suggested that plateaued employees realize their needs are not being fulfilled within the workplace and look to other life domains for fulfillment. These studies suggest that employees experience positive non-work-related outcomes because of their plateau status.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There are many opportunities for future career-plateauing research. First, researchers need to be aware of the conceptual differences between the structural and content plateau construct types noted herein and pursue studies that validate these constructs. Also, more research needs to investigate the reasons for career plateaus and their effects on work and nonwork outcomes.

Second, it is acknowledged that the current definition of career plateau holds a relatively narrow perspective of career mobility within an organization. It is also acknowledged that the boundaryless career, in which the employee is self-reliant in forging his or her career across organizational boundaries, is becoming the norm. This type of career requires lifelong learning to allow individuals to become functionally capable and marketable. Employees are shifting their notions of careers from an organizational advancement focus to a professional achievement orientation. Therefore, the notion of the professional plateau may be a more timely construct for researchers. However, like career plateau, the definition of professional plateau needs greater clarity.

Third, researchers may want to analyze and recognize the differences between plateaus and permanently stalled careers, and when situations require career shifts. It will not be uncommon in the future for individuals to have as many as 10 different careers. Although lateral moves are excluded from the definition of career plateau, the effects of lateral moves on individuals' perceptions of either career or professional plateauing and work outcomes need to be investigated, given the economy today.

Finally, individual or situational factors may explain why some plateaued employees succeed while others suffer negative psychological, social, or organizational effects. What discriminates plateaued employees who are successful from those who are not needs to be explored. Given that many employees will have stalled careers, organizations want to maintain as many solid contributors as possible. Chaos theory has been used in

the counseling literature to help explain how plateaued employees deal with the events that lead to their perceptions of being plateaued. Future research should consider chaos theory, or other theories outside the management literature, as part of the remedial process of coping with the plateau trigger event.

The notion of a career plateau will continue to intrigue researchers for some time, due to the complexities associated with career management. Whether individuals are in organizationally bounded or boundaryless careers, some pause in career progression should be expected. How and why careers become plateaued and the outcomes associated with these situations, which affect individuals and organizations, will provide many future research opportunities.

—Veronica M. Godshalk

See also Boundaryless career, Career mobility, Career success, Protean career

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CAREER SALIENCE

The word *salience* comes from the Latin word *salire*, "to go out," as out of a door or gate. Salient may also mean "standing out from the rest" or "prominent." Donald Super linked the idea of salience, meaning prominent or standing out from the rest, to career development theory in the 1970s. During the next 30 years, research and development efforts expanded understanding of the relationship of career salience within career development theory and also its uses in career counseling.

Career salience should always be thought of in relation to other life roles and not as something existing by itself, independent of these roles. Career salience relates to the prominence for a person of his or her career role in relation to other life roles, such as the family or leisure role. The responsibilities of raising a family (family role) may lower the importance of a person's career role salience, especially during the time when that person's children are young. Therefore, career salience is not an absolute value but is relative to the salience of other life roles and commitments at any particular time.

Career salience changes for persons as they move through differing career development stages, for example, when moving from the growth-development stage to the career-establishment stage. Thus, career salience for adolescents is often not significantly related to their career salience when they are young adults. Career salience increases or decreases at various times with the increases or decreases in commitment and involvement in other life roles. Although scholars in addition to Super have studied career salience, they have usually done so independent of other life roles and have failed to take into account the developmental nature of career salience.

The concept of career salience is relevant to career counseling because it deals with the special problems and challenges faced by persons engaged in career

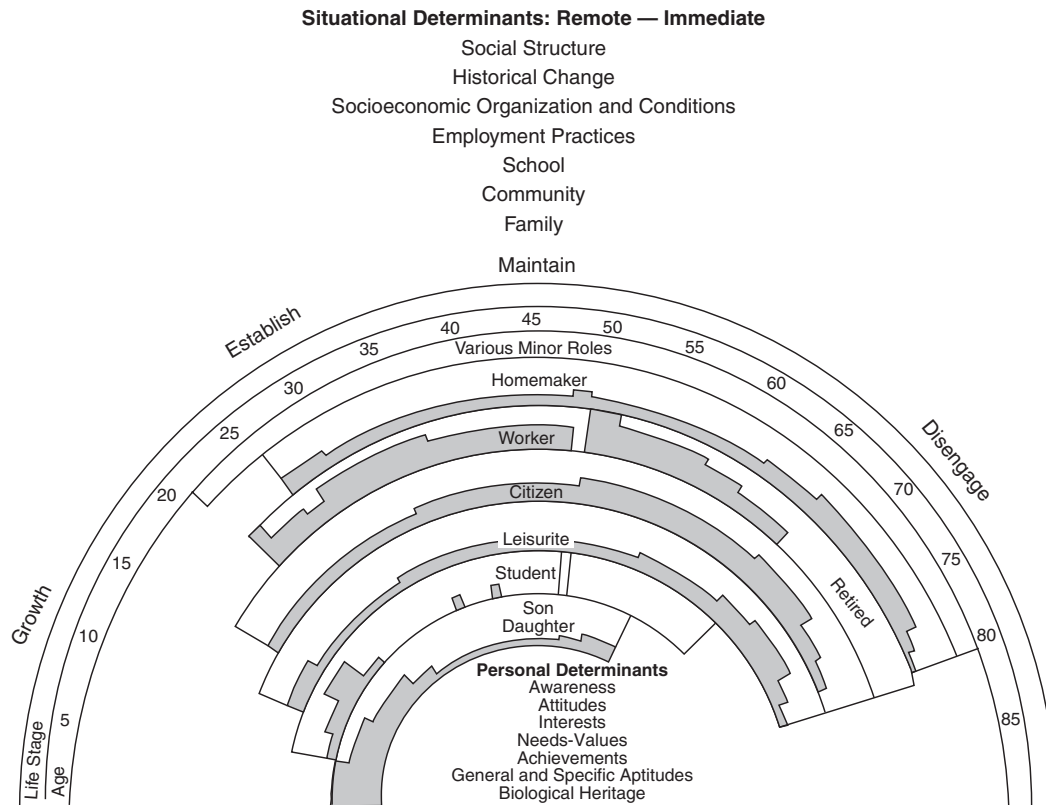


Figure 1. Life-Career Rainbow

SOURCE: Super (1990).

decision making and planning. A majority of workers engage in multiple roles, roles other than career, and these multiple roles put stress on their lives. This is especially true of working women who are also young mothers. Persons from ethnic minority groups experience challenges too, as they often hold values related to work and home roles that differ from those of the mainstream population. Career counseling that helps ethnic minority persons clarify their role priorities in light of their own value systems can help to reduce their alienation and stress related to being different.

LIFE SPAN, LIFE SPACE, AND CAREER SALIENCE

Super developed the Life-Career Rainbow (see Figure 1) to illustrate his “life-span, life-space approach” to career development. The Rainbow presents the role salience of various typical life roles, such as child, student, “leisurite,” citizen, worker, spouse, homemaker, and parent, over the life of an

individual as these roles change in their salience depending on which career development stage the individual is in. The Life-Career Rainbow is a tool that can be used by counselors in introducing a client to the idea of the interdependence of various life roles and their changing importance throughout life. The career development stages represented in the life-span dimension of the Life-Career Rainbow include growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. Each role in the Life-Career Rainbow is depicted as beginning at a different age and changing in importance or intensity during the rest of a person’s life. For example, the role of son or daughter begins at birth and continues during the life of a son’s or daughter’s parents. When both parents are deceased, the role of son or daughter ceases. The role of worker within a career may begin for a person around age 22 and end around age 65.

The salience to individuals of their career roles is dependent on the salience to them of other life roles at any given point in time. Most working women and

working men fill several roles at the same time. The result for the career role is sometimes positive and sometimes stressful and may even result in role conflict. Super reported evidence that persons engaging in multiple roles can increase life satisfaction and a sense of well-being, especially if their personal self-esteem is high. There is also research indicating that women who engage in both the parenting and career roles at the same time feel more satisfied with their lives. However, role stress is particularly evident for working parents of young children. Role conflict may result when the parents' other role values are in conflict with their work role values. For example, a mother who believes that her first priority is to her child is likely to skip work or come late to work if the child is ill in order to first take care of the child.

CAREER SALIENCE: THREE ASPECTS

Super defined career salience as consisting of three aspects: commitment, participation, and knowledge. *Commitment* means the value or emotional attachment to the role a person feels and his or her degree of identification with the role and its activities. *Participation* means behavioral participation or time spent in the role. *Knowledge* means the degree of information about a career learned either through participation or through vicarious watching of others in that career role. These three components of career salience have been found by various researchers to be only slightly or not at all related to each other for students whose role decisions are still tentative and whose role participation is still limited. That is, a person with high career commitment is not necessarily highly involved in a career or knowledgeable about careers. Super defined *career development tasks and involvement* as beginning in childhood with fantasy play, in which the child takes on adult roles, such as those of sailor, doctor, teacher, or astronaut. Thus, the commitment component and the cognitive component may develop early, whereas the participation or behavioral component will vary in different career-development periods, depending on the demands of other roles, such as student, parent, or citizen.

LIFE ROLE VALUES AND CAREER SALIENCE

The role values a person holds are part of the commitment or affective dimension of career salience. The values satisfied by each role a person engages in are

central to understanding the career salience of that person. Role values are a mix of intrinsic and extrinsic values. *Intrinsic values* are satisfied by participation in a role, whereas *extrinsic values* are satisfied by the outcomes of participation. Intrinsic values include ability utilization and altruism; extrinsic values include economic rewards and prestige. Helen Farmer found that for adolescents and young adults, altruistic values are more predictive than achievement values of high career salience. Altruistic values involve valuing providing a service to others and helping others. Career-related values develop prior to career-related interests; in fact, career interests develop as a means of satisfying the values a person holds. For example, if a person values earning a lot of money, he or she will express this value by engaging in activities that are likely to promote a high salary.

NEED TO ACHIEVE AND CAREER SALIENCE

Joel Raynor pointed out that the need to achieve typically relates to mastering short-term challenging tasks, whereas career salience relates to long-term commitment and participation in a career that the person is highly knowledgeable about. When short-term achievement tasks are viewed by individuals as affecting their long-term achievement goals, for example, acceptance into a particular job or institution of higher education, short-term and long-term goals are contingent and therefore related. Career salience, that is, the commitment to, participation in, and knowledge about a career, is sometimes related to a person's need to achieve in life. However, a salient career is not necessarily a challenging one, whereas high need for achievement is related to seeking out challenging tasks to master. A person with high career salience may choose a career that gives meaning to his or her life and that is highly satisfying, but not necessarily challenging and risky.

GENDER DIFFERENCES AND CAREER SALIENCE

Farmer has shown that adolescent women and men in the career exploration stage score similarly on measures of family and career role salience. However, for adolescent women as well as young adult women, the more they value their family roles, the less they value their career roles. For adolescent and young adult men in these two career-development stages, the valuing of

these two life roles is relatively independent. That is, for boys and young men, both career and family salience may be high. Another relationship found for adolescent and young adult women, but not for boys and young men, is that career salience is significantly related to a positive view of the support available in the workplace for working women. This finding illustrates the importance of a supportive environment or context in determining women's career salience.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND CAREER SALIENCE

Rabindra Nath Kanungo, in his study of work alienation, demonstrated that some workers prefer other life roles over their work roles. In fact, a majority of the workers in the United States work because they have to. This is true of both men and women. Often workers at the lower end of the economic scale resent work, but they work because of their survival needs and to satisfy their need for pleasure, acceptance by others, and recognition in other life roles, such as the role of citizen. Also, many persons from the lower socioeconomic strata of society do not have the freedom to choose the kinds of careers they will enter. Rather, they choose whatever employment opportunities are open to them. For many workers, the emotional dimension of career salience is low, but the participation dimension is high. If circumstances dictate that a person's career does not bring him or her satisfaction, a career counselor can help that person plan to engage in other life roles, such as leisure roles, that are more satisfying.

CAREER MATURITY AND CAREER SALIENCE

Super and Dorothy Nevill reported that for adolescents, career maturity is a better predictor of career salience than is social class or gender. Super's measure of career maturity includes assessment of career planning, career exploration, career decision making, world-of-work information, and knowledge of the preferred occupational group. If work is not important to an adolescent and his or her career maturity is low, that individual is not ready to engage in career planning and decision making. Also, that person's scores on career interest inventories and other career-planning measures will have low validity. This has important implications for career counseling with

adolescents and adults who are low on career maturity. Low levels of career maturity may suggest that an individual is *career alienated*, that is, sees no value for himself or herself in a career. Other reasons for low career maturity and career salience include the responsibilities and demands of other life roles on the person at the time of the assessment and a possible lack of experience in and knowledge about careers and work. Although Super and Nevill found that among adolescents, both gender differences and social class differences are less related to career salience than to career maturity, gender and social class differences are still relevant, though less so, to understanding adolescent career salience.

CAREER COUNSELING AND CAREER SALIENCE

Nevill and Super proposed a form of career counseling called the *developmental assessment model*. Using this model, the career counselor conducts an initial interview with the client, explaining the life-role planning process and the interrelationships of multiple life roles a person plays at different points in time. The Life-Career Rainbow described earlier is a useful tool in this initial stage. The developmental assessment model of career counseling includes collecting a large array of information about the client prior to engaging in career decision making. To understand whether or not a client or individual is ready to make a career decision using the development assessment model, it is necessary to assess three things. Assessment devices were developed by Super and his colleagues for role salience, the values expectations related to each role, and career maturity. This is to ensure that the client can make an informed choice about a career within the larger framework of multiple roles and life planning. The three measures are briefly described next.

The Salience Inventory

The Salience Inventory published by Nevill and Super in 1986 has been shown to benefit clients in individual counseling, group counseling, and career development workshops and counseling. The Salience Inventory was developed out of earlier work in the 1970s by Super and members of the Work Importance Study (WIS), an international consortium in a dozen European, Asian, Australian, and North American

countries. Super was the coordinator of the WIS. The Salience Inventory assesses the client's current commitment and participation in five life roles: student, worker, citizen, home and family, and leisure. The knowledge component of role salience is not assessed, because it would vary depending on the particular career the client was interested in and/or had participated in. Once the counselor knows the relative importance of the client's career role in relation to other life roles, the counselor may proceed to administer the Values Scale to the client.

The Values Scale

Super and Nevill developed the Values Scale in 1986. The role values included in the American version are those found most frequently among American adults. International versions of the Values Scale may vary, based on the values identified most frequently in the country of intended use. The Values Scale used in the developmental assessment mode separately assesses the importance of 14 values for each of the five roles. Sometimes a person holds two or more values that cannot all be met or satisfied in a particular career. A person who values both altruism and earning a high salary might satisfy earning money through his or her career and satisfy altruistic values in other roles, such as that of citizen or engaging in church activities.

The Career Development Inventory

The third element of the career development assessment model is administration of a career development measure such as the one developed by Super and his colleagues. This measure provides a career maturity score on career planning, career exploration, decision making, world-of-work information, and knowledge of the preferred occupational group. When this step is completed, the counselor reviews the information to determine whether the client is ready to engage in career decision making and is likely to provide valid career interest and ability scores or whether the counselor should encourage the client to do more career exploration.

—Helen S. Farmer

See also Career maturity, Career motivation, Occupational commitment, Work values

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CAREER SATISFACTION

Career satisfaction is an important variable in research on career development and other areas of inquiry dealing with occupations, work dynamics, and individual adjustment. Although career satisfaction is seldom the primary topic of research investigations, it is often studied as an important criterion variable in relation to many different personal and organizational factors. It should be emphasized that the term *career* refers to all of the work-related activities a person engages in and all of the work-related experiences a person has over the course of a lifetime. Defined this way, *career* applies to everyone who works, not just individuals in a profession or higher-level occupations. On the other hand, most empirical studies in this area have focused on professional occupations in which a career represents a sequence of related jobs over time, with an emphasis on advancement, progression, and cumulative experience.

When researchers ask people to look back over their lives and indicate how satisfied they are with their careers, several assumptions are usually made. First, a career is a concept that has meaning for people as a discrete phenomenon in its own right, as a specific domain of experience. Most people do not have to stop and think about each job they have had and how satisfied they were with each one to tell you how satisfied they are with their careers. They think about their careers as a whole. A second assumption is that careers change over time, and satisfaction depends on advancement. A person who starts out in a higher-level job and ends up in a midlevel job will almost always be less career satisfied than someone who starts out in a low-level job and ends up in a midlevel job. Thus, most scales that are used to measure career satisfaction have one or more items dealing with the progress a person has made over time in key areas such as income and job responsibility and in the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities. Third, as in most areas of satisfaction, the assessment of career satisfaction usually involves consideration of current versus desired or expected level of experience. For example, a career satisfaction item might ask: How satisfied are you with the progress you have made (in your career) toward achieving your goals for earnings? The lower the discrepancy between the current level versus the desired or expected level, the greater the satisfaction. If this model were valid, one possible strategy for achieving career satisfaction would be to keep expectations low. But such a strategy is unlikely given the optimistic expectations most people, particularly those with college degrees, have when they begin their careers. Moreover, it may be difficult to modify unrealistic career expectations, as suggested by studies of individuals in midcareer who still have high levels of ambition and desire for upward mobility while reporting lower levels of career satisfaction.

It is also important to recognize that career satisfaction is not job satisfaction. It is easy to see how satisfaction with career as a whole, covering all jobs, is conceptually differentiated from job satisfaction, which is usually a person's satisfaction with a single job, typically the job he or she currently holds or most recently held. Even if one were tempted to consider career satisfaction as the average level of job satisfaction across jobs, we would not know which direction satisfaction is going or how satisfaction is impacted

by nonjob variables such as work-nonwork dynamics or changes in personality. Another important distinction often made is that career satisfaction represents a *subjective* indicator of career success, as distinguished from *objective* indicators of career success, such as salary or earnings and promotions or professional advancement.

Career satisfaction is often regarded as a key outcome variable representing career success and personal fulfillment. Its value as a criterion of success is such that policy implications are drawn about professional practice and specialty choice based on career satisfaction. In the medical profession, for example, differences in career satisfaction inform theorists and policy analysts about the attractiveness of the medical profession, the impact of managed care, and physicians' quality of life in different areas of specialization (e.g., family practice, internal medicine, surgical specialty, and psychiatry).

One reason so much importance is attached to career satisfaction is that it represents an overall summary of how a person feels about a lifetime of work—which represents about 100,000 hours for the typical American—and all the accompanying personal achievements, feelings of accomplishment, and gratification, as well as the setbacks and disappointments experienced in the course of a career. It is encouraging to see that in most studies, at least two-thirds of the respondents indicate that they fall in the *fairly satisfied* to *very satisfied* range for career satisfaction. Another way to view career satisfaction is as component and predictor of global life satisfaction, which is considered by some to be an overarching existential criterion or ultimate outcome of human experience. For younger individuals who can still modify their work behavior and alter their career trajectories, career satisfaction can serve as a benchmark against which subsequent assessments can be compared, to track career progress and monitor relative success. For older individuals, there are no career “do overs,” and career satisfaction can represent a final summary or subjective report card on the result of all their career endeavors.

Turning to the question of what factors relate to career satisfaction, one starting point is demographic characteristics of the individual. One might expect that career satisfaction increases with variables such as age or education. However, career satisfaction tends to be unrelated, or related at a low level of

magnitude, to most demographic variables, including age, gender, education, marital status, parenting status, child care responsibility, time spent with children, and collegiate grade point average. Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that construct relationships involving career satisfaction, such as the relationship between challenging work and career satisfaction, are fairly similar for most demographic variables, including type of occupation, as well as for individuals working in the same type of job in different countries. Such results offer hope for the development of generalizable models of career satisfaction.

As is the case for many other psychological constructs, career satisfaction can be viewed as the result of *person-environment fit*, or the interaction of person and environment. If a person's career is well suited to his or her personality, career satisfaction should ensue. One way to evaluate this proposition is to examine the relationship between vocational interests and career satisfaction, with an eye toward whether satisfaction increases if career choice or occupational membership is congruent with one's vocational interests. Research findings in this area generally indicate that career satisfaction is, indeed, related to expressed vocational interests and the fit between vocational interests and abilities in relation to occupational membership and career choice. Such results are important for practitioners involved in vocational planning, counseling, and career development, in which the focus is on helping individuals make educational and occupational choices that lead to career satisfaction.

PERSONALITY AND MENTAL ABILITY FACTORS

Another line of research has examined the relationship between personality traits and career satisfaction. One rationale for such research is that people both choose and are satisfied with careers that are consistent with their personality characteristics. A second rationale for linkages between personality traits and career satisfaction is that some traits are generally advantageous for performance, adjustment, and feelings of satisfaction regardless of career path. A recent trend in this area has been to investigate construct relations using both the broadly defined Big Five personality traits as well as more narrowly conceptualized traits. The Big Five model, which includes the traits of Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Neuroticism, and Openness, has emerged as the most widely accepted and well-validated taxonomy of

normal personality traits in psychological feature. Two of the Big Five traits, Extraversion and Conscientiousness, have been found to be positively related to career satisfaction in occupations in which there is a logical connection (e.g., Extraversion for customer service jobs; Conscientiousness for engineers) and in which the connection is less obvious (e.g., Extraversion and computer programmers). One of the most consistent relationships is for Neuroticism, which is negatively related to career satisfaction in a wide range of occupations. One explanation that has been offered for the Neuroticism-career satisfaction relationship is that there is considerable stress in most jobs these days (especially given the increased demands placed on jobholders and the greater threat of job loss in many fields). Stress accumulates over the course of a career, and less resilient individuals are less able to cope than are more resilient individuals, which can directly impact career satisfaction as well as indirectly impact it through lower performance. In addition, two "narrow" personality traits, Optimism and Work Drive, have been found to be positively related to career satisfaction for a variety of occupations.

Beyond the Big Five personality traits, a variety of other personality-related traits have been found to be associated with career satisfaction for one or more occupations. These personality-related factors include assertiveness, image management, team-mindedness, workaholism, locus of control, tough-mindedness, and proactive personality. One interesting point to consider in regard to significant relationships between personality traits and career satisfaction is that from a life span developmental perspective, personality precedes most of the other variables that have been found to be related to career satisfaction, such as mentoring, training, salary, job satisfaction, and supervisory support, to name but a few. Therefore, not much is known about the independent effect such variables have on career satisfaction, because most of the studies did not first control for the effects of personality traits. It may be that some personality traits account for the effects of, say, promotions or salary increases, on career satisfaction, which may lower the importance accorded to the latter variables as determinants of career satisfaction.

Given that intelligence is related to job performance, income, and organizational level, it is logical to inquire as to whether intelligence is also related to career satisfaction. One initial answer is that it may depend on type of career path and the opportunity to use one's mental ability, as the relationship between career satisfaction and intelligence has been found to

be negative for hourly jobs but positive for managerial jobs.

JOB CHARACTERISTICS

Another area of inquiry has looked at job characteristics and job-related variables in relation to career satisfaction. Because there is continuity of personality over the life span—which means that people are similar over time with respect to attitudes, values, feelings, and dispositions—and because most people work in similar jobs over the course of a career, one might expect job-related variables to be related to career satisfaction. On the other hand, we would not expect these to be highly related to career satisfaction, since the average person works in 10 or more jobs before retiring and has three or four different careers in his or her life. Stronger relationships might be expected in studies of young people who have had only 1 or 2 jobs or if there is a nexus of job features and job experiences over time, which is usually the case for professionals who progress along a single career path. In fact, most of the studies reviewed here are based on a single professional occupation or job group. Whether or not this is a weakness depends on one's point of view. If one is an hourly worker who might expect to change jobs and even careers more than most people, these results might be of questionable value, but if one is a budding professional expecting to build a career in a single field, these results might be quite relevant.

One common finding is that job satisfaction is highly related to career satisfaction for occupations such as teachers, lawyers, managers, and psychologists. Also, a modest, positive relationship between job salary/earnings and career satisfaction has been observed in studies of specific occupational groups as well as studies of diverse occupations and organizations. Several other subjective job-related variables have been found to be moderately related to career satisfaction, including perceiving that one has job security, having challenging job assignments, doing "significant" work, feeling involved in one's work, and having supervisory support. Several of the more objective job measures have been found to have little or no relationship to career satisfaction, including the number of hours worked, job tenure, and type of job; however, working full-time rather than part-time has been linked to higher levels of career satisfaction. Although there have been few studies on the consequences of career dissatisfaction, intentions to search for a new job and a

new employer and to quit a job have been found to be inversely related to career satisfaction, which suggests that a relationship may be found between career satisfaction and the incidence of job turnover as well as the relative frequency of job turnover in a career.

ORGANIZATION CHARACTERISTICS

Another area of research inquiry on career satisfaction has looked at the role of organizational variables. Most of the objective organizational variables studied have been found to have no relationship to career satisfaction, including organization tenure and organization size, though for physicians, there is some evidence that physicians in small-group practices are more satisfied than those in large-group practices. Managers generally report higher levels of career satisfaction than do non-managers, though this may merely reflect the influence of other variables, such as greater income and more challenging work. Organizational norms and values are found to be positively related to career satisfaction, including support and encouragement, training and development emphasis, value for work-personal life balance, and the congruence of personal values and organizational values. Social networks have also been studied in relation to career satisfaction, with results indicating that career satisfaction is positively correlated with having an integrated network of relationships in the organization as well as having more breadth of social networks outside the organization.

CAREER CHARACTERISTICS

One of the most promising and potentially useful approaches to the study of career satisfaction involves examination of career-related constructs and characteristics. Looking first at objective attributes, we find that career satisfaction is moderately related to extrinsic rewards or objective indicators of success, including career income, salary increases, percentage of raises over time, and promotions. On the other hand, type of career path and work experience seem to account for little, if any, variation in career satisfaction.

A number of subjective measures that reflect satisfying experiences, fulfillment of expectations, and positive prospects for the future are related to career satisfaction at levels that range from moderate to high. These include satisfaction with opportunity to achieve career goals, prestige of jobs held, career skills, career identity, perceived promotion opportunities, career prospects, perceived marketability, and career initiative.

From ancient Greek and Roman times onward, more experienced individuals have served as mentors to help less experienced, and usually younger, individuals develop their skills and abilities. Today, mentoring has become an established practice in many work settings to facilitate the professional development and career enhancement of employees. One line of research in this area has focused on the role of mentors and the mentoring process in relation to career satisfaction. Modest relations have been found for having a mentor, length of mentoring relationship, mentor support functions (such as instrumental, career development, and idealized influence), and learning goal orientation. Mentoring functions can also serve as moderator variables; that is, as variables that affect the relationships between other variables. For example, employees who report that their mentors provide more psychosocial support to them appear to have higher levels of career satisfaction when they use self-set goals as a career management strategy. Mentoring functions have also been studied as moderators of career satisfaction relationships. For example, employees who report that their mentors provide more psychosocial support report higher levels of career satisfaction when they use self-set goals rather than other self-management strategies.

With the emergence of interest on the *boundaryless career*, wherein an individual's career spans multiple employers, jobs, and areas of skill development, has come an emphasis on individuals engaging in proactive behavior to ensure career success, rather than waiting for the vicissitudes of economic, technological, and organizational change to impact their career success. Initial results indicate that proactive behaviors (such as taking the initiative to update skills) and having a generally proactive personality contribute to career satisfaction. Similarly, career satisfaction has been found to be positively related to self-management strategies such as self-set career goals and having positive career expectancies.

MULTIPLE SOURCES OF CAREER SATISFACTION

Some studies have looked at how different types of variables uniquely and jointly predict career satisfaction. As might be expected, when multiple sets of predictors are considered, more variance in career satisfaction is explained, with estimates ranging up to nearly half of the variance in career satisfaction being

explained when using demographic, personality, job, organization, and career-related variables. It is somewhat premature to conclude which variables are more important than others, though the picture that is emerging points toward the importance of personality and motivational variables as well as career-related constructs and human capital variables (e.g., training, professional development, education, tenure) as important contributors to career satisfaction.

—John W. Lounsbury

See also Career appraisal, Career salience, Career success, Job satisfaction

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CAREER STRATEGY

A *career strategy* is any behavior, activity, or experience designed to help a person meet career goals. A career strategy represents a conscious choice by an

individual as to the type of investment he or she is willing to make in attempting to reach career objectives. Ideally, people pursue a particular career strategy based on the expectation that it will result in the greatest chances of achieving personal and professional success.

Research on the effectiveness of various career strategies suggests that developing a variety of skills and having a diverse number of work experiences significantly improves one's chances of attaining career success. Other research has found that the use of strategies such as self-nomination and networking contribute to an individual's career success. The usefulness of a particular career strategy is dependent on a number of factors, including the nature of the job, the type of the industry, and the culture and norms of the particular organization. Indeed, a career strategy that might be successful in one case might not work in another.

TYPES OF CAREER STRATEGIES

Past research identifies at least seven general categories of career strategies that can be used to enhance an individual's chances of career goal fulfillment. The seven strategies include attaining competence in the current job, putting in extended work hours, developing new skills, developing new opportunities at work, attaining a mentor, building one's image and reputation, and engaging in organizational politics.

Attaining competence in the current job is a basic career strategy, given that organizations make promotion decisions, at least in part, on an employee's present performance. In addition, the skills acquired or honed in one job might be essential for performance in another job either with one's current employer or with another organization. The concepts underlying the protean and boundaryless career philosophies make it necessary for individuals to have relevant skills at the times when those skills are required by employers. Focusing on developing abilities in a current job can improve an individual's chances for employability in the future.

Putting in extended hours either at the work site or at home is a popular career strategy, especially in the early career, when an employee is proving himself or herself to the company. Working beyond normal hours can enhance performance in one's current job and can signify to the organization that one is committed to the job and capable of taking on large volumes of

work. However, putting in extended work hours can also result in negative consequences over the longer term, given that extra work hours during evenings and weekends might impinge on the time a person can spend on family or personal activities.

Developing new skills is a career strategy that involves the acquisition or enhancement of work abilities that either improve performance in the present job or will be required in a subsequent position. Michael Arthur, Priscilla Claman, and Robert DeFillippi have called this strategy "knowing how." They have noted that skill development can involve formal occupational training as well as experiential learning. Skill development can include activities such as participation in training seminars, degree or nondegree university programs, or attendance at a leadership development workshop. Employees can also develop skills by acquiring additional responsibilities on their current jobs, working with an experienced colleague, or joining occupational associations that sponsor continuing education.

Developing new opportunities at work includes a number of more specific strategies that are designed to increase one's career options. In their typology, Arthur and his colleagues have referred to this career strategy as "knowing whom." As an example, self-nomination is a frequently observed strategy that involves the willingness to inform superiors of accomplishments, aspirations, and desired assignments. Self-nomination is intended to enhance one's visibility and exposure to those in more senior positions within the organization, which can bring recognition, special assignments, and sponsorship. Another relevant career strategy under this category is networking, which involves the identification of and communication with a group of relevant acquaintances and friends who can provide information, advice, and support regarding career opportunities.

Attaining a mentor as a career strategy has received considerable attention in recent years. Mentoring can be defined as relationships between junior and senior colleagues or between peers that provide various developmental functions. The mentoring role can be filled by a variety of individuals, not by just one person. A mentor can provide coaching, friendship, sponsorship, and role-modeling to the younger, less experienced protégé. In the process, the mentor can satisfy his or her need to have a lasting influence on another person's life.

Building one's image and reputation is a career strategy in which the individual attempts to convey an

appearance of success and suitability. For example, being married, participating in community activities, and dressing properly can provide a positive public image that can bring career rewards. While this type of strategy is not necessarily important in all or most situations, past research has found that significant numbers of employees make the investment in image building because of the perceived high value to career advancement. Building one's work reputation is an important strategy because it is presumed that an individual's past experiences and accomplishments bode well for future performance. Thus, a focus on building a strong work reputation can improve a person's employability regardless of the employer.

Engaging in organizational politics is somewhat similar to the "knowing why" strategy described by Arthur and his colleagues and covers such diverse activities as agreeing with or flattering one's supervisor, advocating company practices, not complaining about rules or regulations, and forming alliances or coalitions with others in the organization. More extreme and often personally unacceptable political practices can include sabotaging another person's work or spreading rumors about a colleague. In many organizations, becoming involved in organizational politics is a career strategy that is necessary for career advancement, although certain behaviors might be viewed as unethical or reprehensible. Nonetheless, regardless of the personal acceptability, engaging in organizational politics is a career strategy that is used regularly.

—Gerard A. Callanan

See also Career appraisal, Career goal, Career investments, Career mobility, Career success

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CAREER SUCCESS

Career success can be defined as the positive material and psychological outcomes resulting from one's work-related activities and experiences. This definition reflects both objective and subjective aspects of career success. Career success is important because it reflects an overall evaluation of the individual's career: the ultimate outcome of career development. Theoretical explanations of career success come from a range of social-science disciplines, including psychology, social psychology, organizational behavior, sociology, and economics. Numerous empirical studies have been conducted, although the primary focus of most studies is on the careers of managerial, professional, and technical workers employed in for-profit organizations. Individual characteristics, work and career-related decisions and behaviors, interpersonal processes, and organizational context and social structural characteristics have all been shown to influence individuals' career success.

Objective career success reflects career accomplishments that are objectively observable by others and can be measured in terms of the individual's level of income as well as the individual's promotion history, hierarchical level in the organization, or job title. Because these outcomes can be seen as rewards that are external to the work itself, they have sometimes been referred to as *extrinsic career success indicators*. However, these factors may also be associated with the psychological experience of intrinsic reward, since they reflect an individual's level of skill and mastery within a chosen field as well as the level of autonomy and responsibility that person exercises in the work role. Thus, objective career success is the preferred term.

Traditionally, the concept of career has been applied to managerial, technical, and professional occupations within large, bureaucratic organizations. This type of employment situation offers relatively clear career paths and a view of career advancement as vertical, linear, and bounded by membership in a single organization. The concept of objective career success seems to rely on the assumptions of this model of career progress. Many scholars have come to question the accuracy of this model for most workers, due to changes in the economy and in the strategies and structures of organizations in the last two decades as well as changes in the goals and expectations of

individuals. *Subjective career success* reflects the individual's personal feelings of satisfaction with his or her career path, career progress, or career outcomes. The concept of subjective career success is necessary because the use of only objective indicators may provide an overly narrow conceptualization of career success. Objective indicators assume that all workers place primary value on vertical career progress and are employed in large hierarchical organizations that have clear vertical career paths. The subjective career success conceptualization recognizes that a number of intrinsic career outcomes, which are not necessarily observable to others, may also be important to the individual. Intrinsic career outcomes may include, for example, interesting and meaningful work, individual autonomy, tolerable stress levels, and work with enjoyable colleagues. Extrinsic outcomes that are less tangible and observable than the objective indicators, such as job security or future employability, may also enter into one's subjective evaluation of career success. In addition, each individual may have a unique set of life goals, interests, and values that leads him or her to value specific extrinsic and intrinsic career outcomes differently when assessing personal satisfaction with a career.

THEORIES OF CAREER SUCCESS

A number of theories have been used to provide an explanation of career success. These theories explain why or how specific variables are associated with career success and provide an account of the processes involved in acquiring higher levels of salary, more promotions, or greater satisfaction from one's career. The source discipline for these theories ranges across areas of psychology and social psychology, organizational behavior, and sociology and economics and focuses on individual traits and abilities, interpersonal processes, and the constraints and opportunities posed by social structures.

Psychological Theories

Individual skills and abilities, including cognitive ability, provide one of the most basic explanations of career success. The assumptions implicit in this approach are based on the rational/bureaucratic view of organizations. According to this view, the possession of particular skills and abilities leads to higher job performance, which is, in turn, rewarded by

supervisors and the organization with higher pay, promotion, greater responsibility, and possibly more pleasant or interesting work. Much of the theoretical development in this area involves specification of the relevant skills or capabilities necessary for productive behavior in specific jobs or in managerial work located in an organizational setting.

Personality, need theories of motivation, and other individual-difference theories have also been applied to the topic of career success. The basic model relating these individual-difference approaches to career success assumes that these traits or predispositions are associated with behaviors that are appropriate or effective across a range of work situations or interact with a more narrow set of work situations or task demands to produce career success. Explanations focus on the relationship between a specific individual-difference variable and job performance, interpersonal behavior, or the nature of the individual's emotional reactions to work and occupational demands. Some personality variables take a more interactionist perspective and explain career success through the tendency either to match oneself to the situation or, conversely, to alter the situation or select oneself into situations that will produce higher satisfaction, performance, and career outcomes.

Theories growing out of the area of vocational psychology and occupational choice are also relevant to the topic of career success. The focus of these theories is on congruence or fit between various work-related characteristics of the individual and the attributes of the work environment, including job, organizational, and occupational demands and rewards. Fit is assumed to produce individual job and career satisfaction and, through job performance and employment stability, career advancement. Theories of career management extend the earlier vocational perspectives to focus on ongoing career-related activities, such as setting career goals, developing career strategies, and adapting career goals and plans to changing circumstances. These activities, centered on the development of greater career self-insight and adaptation, are thought to ultimately result in greater career satisfaction and progress.

Social Psychological Theories

A number of theoretical approaches focus directly on interpersonal behavior, social interaction, or personal relationships as a determinant of career success.

Growing out of the life span development perspective, researchers have devoted considerable attention to the impact, function, processes, and problems of mentors in facilitating career success. Mentors are thought to fulfill important functions that help their protégés to develop a clear sense of identity and commitment to their work roles and practical help planning and managing their careers. *Psychosocial mentoring* involves acting as a role model, communicating acceptance and confirmation of the protégé's identity, counseling, and friendship. *Career mentoring* involves sponsoring the protégé for challenging assignments, providing positive exposure and visibility, and coaching on work tasks and protection from politics. These activities help the protégé succeed at work tasks, overcome barriers and challenges at work, gain promotions in the organization, and adapt to the psychological demands of the job and organization.

Theories based on politics at the interpersonal level focus on the types of influence tactics and impression management strategies used by individual employees. These tactics and strategies range from rational persuasion and bargaining to ingratiation and self-promotion. This approach argues that these interpersonal behaviors influence numerous career-related decisions that indirectly impact career success, including performance evaluations, job assignments, and access to developmental opportunities. Political behavior can also have a direct effect on promotion decisions, apparently through the creation of a sense of similarity and comfort among the key decision makers. Demographic similarity or homophily can also play a role in career success through the perception of similarity between the individual and his or her supervisor or other career decision makers. Gender and race are the two demographic markers typically examined.

Sociological Theories

Social capital theory, growing out of the field of sociology, focuses on the ways that patterns of social relationships facilitate *goal-directed action*, which as applied here refers to the attainment of career success. The pattern of relationships or ties among "actors," known as the *social network*, is viewed as a channel for information and influence flows. One assumption that underlies this approach, well-grounded in empirical findings, is that the social world is "clumpy," with high rates of interaction and information sharing taking place within cliques but relatively little interaction

taking place between them. Individuals are conceptualized as strategic actors who work to develop advantageous social network positions or structures for themselves. For example, centrality in a social network reflects the fact that one has many direct or indirect (for example, "friend of a friend") relationships with other people in the network. Strong ties are intimate, frequent, mutual, and diffuse relationships with others, whereas weak ties reflect casual, infrequent, or narrowly defined relationships. A *structural hole* is defined as the absence of a tie between two contacts who are each linked to the focal individual. Structural position within the full social network, such as centrality, and structural characteristics of the individual's personal social network, such as weak ties and structural holes, are thought to provide advantages because they connect or reach a diverse range of people in different social cliques with a minimum of time and effort invested on the part of the focal actor. Networks that provide access to a diverse range of information, support, or other social and material resources are thought to lead directly (through greater influence over career decision makers) or indirectly (through higher job performance) to higher career success.

Discrimination theory explains differential career outcomes for women and racial minorities. A stereotype is the application of generalizations about broad groups to individual members of that group. Discriminatory behavior is thought to be the result of decision making based on these stereotypes. Stereotypes regarding the ability, motivation, experience, work involvement and commitment, or similarity in values and attitudes work to the disadvantage of women and minorities when career decisions are made. Differences in the gender composition of occupations and organizational hierarchies may also create additional challenges for women and minorities.

Economic Theories

Human capital theory, growing out of the field of economics, assumes that workers invest in their education and training in order to increase their productivity and thus their returns from the labor market. Education serves as a signal of individual productivity. Indicators such as work experience and organizational tenure serve as proxies for investments in training made by the individual, which should also influence productivity. Education may be most important as a determinant of selection and initial pay

decisions upon organizational entry, while training and job experience are rewarded with pay increases and promotions once the individual has been hired by the organization.

Internal labor market and *tournament theories* focus on the opportunity structure of the organization as a determinant of career outcomes. Here, the focus is not on the individual, but on the social structure in which the individual finds himself or herself. Internal labor market theory focuses on factors such as the size, growth rate, and job vacancy rates of the organization, the presence and characteristics of promotion ladders, and characteristics of the incumbent's job, such as skill level, function, or occupational orientation as determinants of individual promotions and pay increases. Tournament theory provides an explanation for certain aspects of internal wage structures and organizational promotion patterns. This theory argues that career advancement can be viewed as a series of single-elimination tournaments in which "players" compete with their coworkers for promotions or wage increases. Since players must win a given round to advance to subsequent tournaments, early career success, such as being promoted sooner than other members of one's cohort, is seen as an important determinant of eventual career attainment. Early career success can also lead the organization to sponsor the individual for specialized training and developmental experiences, which gives the individual cumulative advantage in subsequent rounds. Relative performance ranking rather than absolute performance determines the winner of a tournament, and wage differentials across organizational levels are seen as "prizes" that motivate employee effort, possibly including efforts to sabotage other tournament competitors.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON CAREER SUCCESS

Individual Characteristics

Broadly conceived, this category encompasses all characteristics of individuals that have an impact on career success. Empirical research has examined individual difference variables, including cognitive ability, personality, and motivation; demographic variables, such as age, race, gender, and family structure; and acquired characteristics, such as skills and work experience. Some of these characteristics, such as gender and race, are biologically determined, although their impact on career success may have more to do

with social processes than biology. Individual differences such as cognitive ability and personality are thought to have a biological or genetic substrate. They are viewed as relatively fixed by adulthood. Still other characteristics are learned or acquired, can change over time, and may be the outcome of specific decisions and choices on the part of the individual.

Cognitive ability or *intelligence* is defined as the person's current capacity to perform mental tasks. Intelligence reflects how much information an individual is capable of processing and how quickly a person learns. Cognitive ability is consistently related to job performance across a broad range of jobs. The assumption that high job performance will lead to promotions underlies the theoretical relationship of cognitive ability to career success. Indeed, numerous studies have shown intelligence to be positively related to career achievement, especially extrinsic career success. However, intelligence may interact with other situational or personality variables to produce career success. For example, intelligence may be a more important predictor of job level for those who were less successful early in their careers. Presumably, those with early career success garnered advantages in terms of developmental experiences and social contacts that made their career success less dependent on their cognitive abilities. Likewise, intelligence has been found to predict the career success of individuals possessing MBAs only when combined with high conscientiousness, a personality trait associated with achievement motivation and dependability. Recently, promising developments have been made regarding the role of emotional intelligence at work, but not enough research has been conducted to draw a firm conclusion regarding the relationship between emotional intelligence and career success.

The basic model relating personality and motivation to career success assumes that these predispositions are associated with behaviors that are appropriate or effective across a range of work situations or that interact with a more narrow set of work situations, task demands, or organizational rewards to produce high job performance, career advancement, and satisfaction. Early research focused on *motives*, defined as an unfulfilled need that drives the intensity, direction, and persistence of behavior. A number of motivational variables, including career advancement motivation, motivation to manage, and need for power, were shown to positively relate to advancement in managerial careers. More recently, attention has shifted to

personality traits, which are relatively stable predispositions to think, feel, or behave in particular ways. Several of the “Big Five” personality dimensions have been identified as contributors to career success. Emotional Stability and Extraversion have shown the most consistently positive relationship, while Agreeableness is negatively related to career success. One study showed Openness to Experience to be positively related to subjective career success, although a different study showed Openness to be negatively related to salary. Recent work has shown how personality traits that are more narrowly defined than the Big Five, such as proactive personality and self-monitoring, are associated with specific behaviors that, in turn, lead to career success. *Proactive personality* is defined as a predisposition to taking initiative and effect environmental change. Proactive personality is related to innovative work role behavior, political knowledge, and career planning and skill updating, which are, in turn, related to career success. High self-monitors, people who monitor and control their self-expression to match the requirements of the social situation, achieve higher extrinsic career success than do low self-monitors, apparently due to the fact that they initiate relationships with mentors and, over time, come to occupy strategically important positions in the social networks of their organizations.

Several demographic factors also show a relationship to career success. Age tends to be positively associated with the extrinsic aspects of career success. This appears to be due to the accumulation of training and work experience over time, although some evidence suggests that for women, age is less strongly associated with work experience but has a direct relationship with advancement. The rate of career advancement, however, appears to slow with age, leading to the phenomenon of the *career plateau*. For example, managers who are younger than the average age of other managers at their levels have the highest expectations of advancement and the highest ratings of “promotability,” while managers who are older than others at their levels have the lowest. Nonetheless, salary tends to increase continuously with age.

Race and gender differences in career success are also apparent. Although some evidence suggests that African Americans are more likely to be promoted to entry-level managerial positions, differences in ratings of promotion potential and differences in pay have been consistently found to be to the disadvantage of African Americans. Gender is also associated with

career success, such that men have higher outcomes, especially with regard to salary and hierarchical level. Although gender is associated with a number of career-related choices, gender differences persist even when these differences are taken into account. In fact, it appears that gender interacts with many other factors discussed here such that these factors have different effects on the career success for men than for women. For example, women’s careers are less likely to benefit from moving between firms or from training, development, and work experience. One study found job-specific personality variables to be stronger predictors of career success for men, while career move decisions and occupational opportunity structures were more important determinants for women. Even the outcomes of promotion vary by gender such that women who earn the same number of promotions nonetheless find themselves at a lower hierarchical level. The effects of family structures on career success, such as having a spouse or a dependent, also appear to vary for men and women. Being single has a negative effect on success for both men and women. But for men, being a single parent has a negative effect, and having a spouse who works also has a negative effect. No such negative effects seem to apply for women.

Levels of education, training, and work experience have been consistently and positively related to individuals’ levels of career success, especially extrinsic success. The evidence suggests that educational level is not related to promotions within the firm but is related to managerial level and pay. The type of degree and even the quality of the institution granting the degree also appear to matter. Participation in on-the-job training and development activities, on the other hand, is related to promotions. This is especially true for the participation of technical professionals in managerial development activities and their promotion to initial managerial levels. Employment gaps or the use of leaves of absence are negatively related to promotions.

Work and Career Behaviors

The number of hours worked per week is positively related to extrinsic career success, especially to pay. Job performance has also shown a consistent positive relationship with extrinsic career success, especially for promotions taking place within a single firm. However, job performance appears to interact with age such that high job performance is related to ratings of “promotability” and promotions for younger (approximately

under 50 years of age) but not older (over 50) workers. Race also appears to play a role, with some studies showing that supervisors are less likely to credit internal attributions (performance based on ability and effort rather than luck) to the performance of African Americans and that African Americans receive lower job performance and promotability ratings.

The choice an individual makes regarding occupation, organization, or even a job can have an impact on that individual's career success through the level of congruence such a decision produces. Considerable evidence shows that the degree of congruence or "fit" between the person and the job and between the person and the organizational environment is related positively to job satisfaction and negatively to turnover. More limited evidence demonstrates a positive effect of fit on intrinsic and extrinsic career outcomes, presumably due to higher work performance and similarity to peers and influential decision makers in the organization. For example, one study showed that person-organization value congruence is related to career satisfaction only when the level of perceived organizational support is low or the quality of the individual's relationship with his or her supervisor is poor.

Several career self-management behaviors are also related to career success. Activities such as setting career goals and objectives, formulating career strategies and plans, and updating skills through formal or self-sponsored activities are positively related to intrinsic career success. Job relocation within the same company is frequently listed in the career histories of successful managers and is consistently related to extrinsic success. The effects of job changes across companies, or what economists call an *external labor market strategy*, appear to have a more complex relationship with extrinsic career success. For example, one study showed that White male MBA degree holders who had changed employers after receiving their degrees received higher compensation than those who had stayed with one employer, but the compensation advantage from changing employers was not experienced by female or minority MBAs. Company change may also be more advantageous for younger managerial workers early in their careers than for middle- and upper-level managers.

Interpersonal Processes

Interpersonal processes focus on the way specific social behaviors and relationships affect career

success. For example, leader-member exchange, a construct that reflects the quality of an individual's relationship with his or her supervisor, is related to objective and subjective career success. Impression management strategies are also related to extrinsic career outcomes. One study showed that a supervisor-focused strategy that makes use of ingratiation has a positive effect on advancement, whereas a job-focused strategy based on self-promotion has a negative effect on advancement.

The establishment of a relationship with a *mentor*, usually defined as a more senior manager in one's own organization who is not a direct supervisor, has consistently been found to promote both the extrinsic and intrinsic career success of the mentored individual, or protégé. Mentors engage in a range of activities either with or on behalf of their protégés. Career mentoring includes sponsorship, exposure and visibility, and coaching and protection, and psychosocial mentoring involves acting as a role model, communicating acceptance and confirmation of the protégé, counseling, and friendship. Rather than the type of mentoring activity, the amount of career mentoring provided by the mentor appears to be more strongly related to the extrinsic career success of the protégé, and both career and psychosocial mentoring have positive effects on career satisfaction, although perhaps for different reasons. Psychosocial mentoring, as a form of social support, may have direct effects on career satisfaction, while career mentoring may enhance one's feelings of control over one's career as well as extrinsic success, which, in turn, leads to greater career satisfaction. Employees may have more than one mentor; they can, in fact, maintain a constellation or network of career-supportive relationships throughout the organization. One study showed that employees with multiple supportive relationships at an organizational level higher than their own receive more career mentoring and experience greater extrinsic and intrinsic career success. Mentors at higher levels and in other organizational functions also provide greater access to organizational information and resources, which, in turn, has a positive effect on individuals' careers, independent of the amount of direct career support they receive.

Social networks appear to be important both for securing desirable jobs and for moving up once employed by the organization. Generally, larger personal networks are better. For example, the number of professional memberships and personal contacts

external to one's organization has been found to be related to the organizational level or status of the job position obtained and income. Weak ties, which reflect people to whom we have only a limited or indirect relationship, are often the crucial source of information about new job opportunities. Weak ties reach higher-status people who help one to secure a higher-status job. One's position in the informal social networks within the organization is also important to career success. Being central within the social network of the organization or subunit is related to subsequent promotion. However, maintaining a large number of ties to others requires considerable time and energy and can have a negative impact on one's job performance, which can have a negative impact on career success. Personal networks rich in structural holes are an efficient way to enjoy the information and access benefits associated with a diverse set of contacts while minimizing the time investment. Several studies have shown that such networks are associated with greater career advancement. One study showed that structural holes are associated with a more diverse set of contacts throughout the organization, which, in turn, is associated with greater access to organizational information, resources, and career sponsorship. These social benefits are, in turn, associated with higher levels of extrinsic and intrinsic career success.

Social Structure and Context

It has often been assumed that individual career advancement is determined in part by a range of structural factors, such as industry, occupation, and characteristics of the organization. Our knowledge of the effects of these factors may be limited by the fact that they have rarely been the specific focus in studies of individual career success. But at this time, we must conclude that structural factors are only inconsistently related to career success. For example, the level of an individual's career success, especially judged in terms of compensation, is influenced by the industry in which that individual works. However, the effect is inconsistent across studies, possibly due to differences in the populations sampled or differences in the coding and treatment of industry effects. The same can be said for the impact of organizational function on career success: Differences in salary or salary growth are often noted across categories, but little consistency is obvious in differences between specific functional categories. One exception may be for

general managers, who often earn more than their counterparts in positions as functional managers or professional and technical workers. Even factors such as organizational size and growth rate show no consistent relationship with career success. While larger organizations are more likely to have internal promotion systems and "fast tracks" for managerial promotion, such internal systems are not, on average, related to the rate of career advancement.

—Scott E. Seibert

See also Career mobility, Career motivation, Career satisfaction, Human capital, Social capital

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CAREER THOUGHTS INVENTORY

The *Career Thoughts Inventory* (CTI) is a theory-based assessment and intervention resource intended to improve thinking in career problem solving and decision making. The CTI measures dysfunctional career thoughts that may inhibit the ability to effectively engage in the career decision-making process. The 48-item inventory is a self-administered and objectively scored measure that can be completed by most clients within 7 to 15 minutes. The assessment is designed to be used by (a) 11th- and 12th-grade high school students choosing an occupation, choosing a postsecondary field of study, or seeking employment; (b) college students choosing an occupation, choosing a major or field of study, or seeking employment; and (c) adults considering an occupational or employment change or reentering the workforce after a period of unpaid work.

The CTI is based on *cognitive information-processing theory*, which states that effective career decision making requires effective processing of information in the four processing domains of self-knowledge; occupational knowledge; decision-making skills (comprising the subcomponents of communication, analysis, synthesis, valuing, and execution); and executive processing (self-talk, self-awareness, and monitoring and control). In addition, the CTI draws on concepts from cognitive therapy specifying that dysfunctional cognitions have a negative impact on behavior and emotions. By learning to identify potential negative thoughts, clients can learn to challenge and, ultimately, alter dysfunctional thinking, resulting in positive changes to their behavior and emotions. The CTI can be used to identify negative career thoughts that may affect the ability of individuals to accurately consider information about themselves or options as well as impede engagement in the career decision-making process. Having identified dysfunctional career thoughts, individuals can begin challenging their thinking patterns and work toward altering negative self-talk regarding career decision making. The *CTI Workbook*, which accompanies the CTI, can be used to further identify, challenge, and alter career thinking that impedes the effective processing of information necessary for career problem solving and decision making.

Instructions for the CTI are to respond to items in terms of the extent of either agreement or disagreement

with the statement. Items on the inventory reflect thoughts that people have when considering career choices. Responses range from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. The total CTI score reflects the extent to which individuals engage in thinking that may inhibit effective career problem solving and decision making. Higher scores are indicative of the presence of dysfunctional thoughts that may impede the processing of information necessary to confidently make an informed career choice. Lower scores reflect few dysfunctional career thoughts that negatively influence the career decision-making process and suggest overall readiness to engage in career decision making. Information on the standardization, potential for bias, readability, reliability, and validity of the CTI is presented in the professional manual.

Three construct scales underlie the CTI: Decision-making Confusion, Commitment Anxiety, and External Conflict. Decision-making confusion is the inability to initiate or sustain the decision-making process due to disabling emotion or lack of understanding about the career decision-making process. Commitment Anxiety refers to the inability to commit to a specific career choice, accompanied by anxiety about the outcome of the choice. External Conflict relates to the inability to balance one's self-perceptions with the input from significant others, which may lead to a reluctance to assume responsibility for the decision-making process. Construct scale scores of the CTI enable practitioners to identify specific blocks that impede the processing of information. Individual items on the CTI may also be used to further assist individuals in identifying statements that limit the ability to move forward in the career decision-making process.

The CTI can be used as a screening tool, for needs assessment, and as a learning resource. As a screening tool, the instrument can be used to identify individuals who may have a low readiness for career decision making. Identifying individuals who are less ready to engage in the career decision-making process may inform the decisions of practitioners and individuals regarding the appropriateness of specific career services and programs offered. Individuals reporting more dysfunctional career thoughts would likely require more counselor assistance, whereas those reporting fewer dysfunctional career thoughts may benefit from the use of available resources and materials, with little counselor intervention or engaging in a self-help mode. For needs assessment, the CTI can

be used to identify the specific nature of dysfunctional thinking identified during the screening process. The individual's construct scores and individual items on the CTI may be of assistance in further clarifying needs assessment. Considering both the context and the complexity of the career problem identified is important as specific career concerns are explored. As a learning resource, the CTI can be used with the *CTI Workbook* to assist clients in identifying, challenging, and altering specific dysfunctional career thoughts identified as problematic in the needs assessment process. Homework assignments contained in the *CTI Workbook* may be used to reframe career thoughts that hinder the career decision-making process and to encourage the use of rehearsal and practice to alter potentially problematic statements so that they become less inhibiting.

The CTI can be quickly administered and scored, easily interpreted, and readily integrated into a variety of counseling modalities. As such, it provides a cost-effective measure for use in career services in a variety of settings. The CTI has multiple uses and can be used during an initial intake procedure or during a counseling session. The use of a limited number of scales on the CTI simplifies interpretation, enhancing its usefulness in practice. When they use it in combination with the *CTI Workbook*, practitioners have access to interpretive information about the scales and materials for test interpretation. Other components of the workbook provide opportunities to develop an action plan for using career resources and learning about the career decision-making process. All of these facets contribute to easier integration into existing programs and services.

—Denise E. Saunders and James P. Sampson Jr.

See also Career counseling, Cognitive differentiation grid, Cognitive information processing in career counseling

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CAREER TRANSITION

The term *career transition* has developed out of years of important and groundbreaking research and theoretical work on the process of vocational development. Beginning in the 1950s, Donald Super wrote extensively on the stages of vocational development, with each stage marking a specific "transition" in an individual's career path. These stages span an entire life and include all career-related events, from an individual's first job to the time he or she retires or stops working altogether. Each of these life events is a career transition and serves as an important milestone throughout the life span. However, much of Super's work has focused on career transitions that are expected or planned. There are numerous types of career transitions that involve unanticipated or even undesired shifts in an individual's career path. In addition, the term career transition may refer to the process by which an individual changes from one job to another within the same job family; and it may also refer to a more dramatic career change from one occupational category to an entirely different one. Finally, a career transition takes place when an employee merely shifts to a new position within the same company or organizational structure. Regardless of the type of career shift, many transitions take place in adulthood, and it is important for career counselors to be equipped to handle such midlife career changes with their adult clients.

As a result of this somewhat broad definition of career transition, it is difficult to determine how many people are actually going through such transitions at any time. However, past research has estimated that approximately 5 percent to 10 percent of Americans change occupations each year. Thus, despite the popular notion that adulthood is a time of general stability, these figures indicate that for many Americans, this is not the case. Outside of Super's work, transitions have often been described in the professional literature as "difficult" and even "traumatic" life events. Nancy Schlossberg points out that much of our thinking about transitions has come

out of crisis theory. Daniel Levinson and his colleagues were perhaps the most influential in helping to define career transitions as developmental in nature and as a turning point or boundary between two periods of greater stability. Schlossberg also stated that while the outcomes of life transitions can be negative, they are also frequently positive and may provide opportunities for psychological growth.

Two broad categories of career transitions are *voluntary* and *involuntary*. A voluntary career transition can occur for a host of reasons. For example, individuals might believe that their interests have changed since entering an occupational category, and they want to transition out of that category and into a position closer to their current interests. In addition, many individuals choose career fields based on parental wishes or the desire to earn a lot of money but may find that they are not satisfied once they have entered the occupation. In addition to factors that are negative and thus propel the person to depart from the chosen career, other career transitions result from more attractive career options that cause the individual to utilize approach behaviors in changing careers. In addition to voluntary and involuntary career transitions, Cindy Juntunen and her colleagues have also identified other career transition classifications, including (a) maintenance transitions, or changes in the individual's role without a change in the company or job title; (b) advancement transitions, or the opportunity to shift to a better position; (c) entry or reentry transitions, or the return of an individual to the workforce after a long absence; and (d) leave-or-see transitions, or changes whereby the individual makes the conscious decision to move to a new career.

Given global shifts in the economy, many workers are involved in nonvoluntary career transitions. Companies are increasingly downsizing and shipping jobs overseas, where labor costs are lower, forcing many Americans who would not have opted voluntarily for them into career transitions. This type of involuntary career change is often difficult for workers and families, especially if they reside in communities with few alternative job options. The agricultural crisis of the 1980s in the midwestern United States created many poignant examples of involuntary career change, when farmers and farm families, many of whom had been on family farms for generations, were forced into career transitions. The continued shift from an agrarian and manufacturing society to one based on service and technology means increasing career change for

workers. Workers who previously held stable employment now possess considerably less job security as a result of the skills of newer workers who may have more recent technological training.

In many ways, career transitions have become much more normative as the labor market requires a more fluid and dynamic employment pattern. There is now the expectation that workers will change jobs more frequently, and the image of "career changers" is also evolving. As Edwin Herr and his colleagues have pointed out, career changers previously were seen as having character or personality flaws that caused them difficulty in maintaining a position. They were often seen as malcontents or somehow lacking in the skills necessary to function in a given position. With increasing normalcy of career change, these perceptions are rapidly changing, and the process of career change is seen as an adaptive development stage.

Recent studies on adult career changes indicate that the career change is intricately connected with the individual's psychological adjustment. The process of adaptation is important to the psychological well-being of individuals who are going through (or have recently experienced) some kind of life transition, including those that are career related. Schlossberg has defined *adaptation* as a process during which an individual moves from being totally preoccupied with integrating the transition into his or her life. While some individuals may adapt quite easily to career transitions, others may have difficulty adapting and may be at risk for depressive or anxious symptoms. In fact, in a recent study, the majority of career changers coming to a university-based career center had levels of depression and anxiety in the distressed range.

A number of factors may contribute to an individual's ability (or inability) to adapt successfully to a given career transition. Schlossberg has asserted that the adaptation process may differ according to the type of transition as well as the individual's personal resources. In other words, characteristics of the worker and of the transition interact to predict an outcome. Characteristics of the transition, for example whether the change was expected or abrupt or whether it was voluntary or involuntary, affect how the person perceives the transition and progresses through it. Personal factors that can affect adjustment to transition include the individual's values, self-efficacy, and emotional responses. In addition, many adults engaged in midlife career transitions may have family responsibilities, such as caring for children or partners.

This added factor has the potential to serve as either support or barrier but will, regardless, have an effect on an individual's ability to adapt to a transition. Finally, demographic and environmental factors are important to consider in assessing how well adults may adjust to midlife career transitions. For example, degree of financial freedom and socioeconomic status may play a role in the transition process, again serving as either support or barrier depending on the individual's specific circumstance. Similarly, the individual's racial/ethnic background, gender, and sexual orientation may either help or hinder the adjustment to a new career, whether it is planned or unplanned.

When one considers the numerous and diverse factors that contribute to an individual's psychological well-being during the career-transition process, it is evident that he or she could use additional support and guidance. Specifically, it seems that during times of career transition, many people could benefit from the support provided by counselors. Counselors can help individuals identify the strengths or resources they bring to the career transition and help them overcome the barriers and obstacles they may be experiencing. Among the many tools used for counseling adults in career transitions, one important assessment is the Career Transition Inventory. Through the development of this assessment, the authors sought to create a tool that would help counselors identify resources that could aid clients in career transitions. This 40-item inventory consists of five factors: (1) readiness, (2) confidence, (3) control, (4) perceived support, and (5) decision independence. By identifying his or her strengths, the client could find it easier to progress through the career change.

Many societal factors indicate that the pace of career transitions, both voluntary and involuntary, will accelerate in the future. Understanding the varied types of transitions, the reasons for relative ease or difficulty in moving through them, and the tools available to assist people in their transitions is vital to the field of career development.

—Mary J. Heppner and Anne B. Scott

See also Career change, Career interruptions, Derailment, Midlife crisis

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CAREERS AND HEALTH

The link between social and occupational standing on the one hand and health on the other has long attracted interest. Michael Marmot has investigated this issue for over 30 years, a program of research for which he received a knighthood in the United Kingdom. In a diverse and broad collection of studies, Marmot and his colleagues have shown that health follows a social gradient, such that the higher one's position in the social-status hierarchy, the better one's health. Simply stated, status has health benefits for a broad range of problems, including heart disease, kidney disease, stroke, lung cancer, infectious diseases, suicide, and violence. This holds true everywhere researchers have looked, including samples of British bureaucrats, Oscar-award-winning actors and actresses, and Swedish PhDs. Marmot has argued that autonomy and the opportunity for full social participation are

central to understanding the social gradient in health and that one's well-being and longevity are intimately intertwined in these factors. Specifically, he shows that people of lower status succumb to illness more often and to death more quickly, not because of poorer habits, diets, medical care, or genes but because they have less control over their lives and their social engagement.

We commonly categorize society and the world into the rich, the poor, and those somewhere in the middle. For the unfortunate individuals who find themselves in the poorest segments of our social world, their social position can have dramatic implications for nutrition, disease, and longevity. In itself, however, this situation is not the social gradient of health, nor is it simply a product of the division between rich and poor. The social gradient of health delineates the hierarchy much more finitely. People with postgraduate education generally have better health and longevity than people with undergraduate education, who generally have better health and longevity than people with high school education. Likewise, doctors are likely to have fewer health problems than skilled workers, who are likely to have fewer health problems than unskilled workers. The same can be said when people are grouped by income, by their parents' social class, or even by height; higher rankings equate to superior health. Thus, regardless of where people fall in the status hierarchy, they will typically have better health than those people lower in the hierarchy and worse health than those people higher in the hierarchy. This trend is what Marmot has called the "status syndrome," and this entry explains that it has important implications and lessons in understanding the relationship between *careers and health*. For this reason, we first need a better understanding of the status syndrome.

Could the status syndrome be the result of individual behavior? Is the status syndrome the result of people's free choice to smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, eat unhealthful foods, and refuse to exercise? Marmot has shown that the lower people find themselves in the gradient, the more undesirable are their health behaviors. Could this be a function of self-destructive behavior? Marmot has discounted this argument. First, research shows that individual risk factors account for only about a third of the health gradient. For example, at any risk factor level, the risk of heart disease is greater for smokers with lower social rankings and lesser for smokers with higher

social rankings. Second, Marmot has questioned whether unhealthy habits may actually be autonomous choices made by socially deprived individuals who desire some form of control over their lives.

Could the status syndrome be genetically predetermined? Do people end up in life (and by extension, in certain careers) where they do because of who they are, making their social conditions indirectly related to the social gradient of health? While obviously not discounting the role of genetics, Marmot thinks not. Heredity clearly accounts for individual differences in intelligence; however, the degree to which genetics accounts for overall group differences is minimal. Accordingly, genetic differences do not sufficiently explain the gradient; environmental factors must help determine a person's socioeconomic position in the hierarchy of health. Because socioeconomic status is so closely related to occupational class, recognizing this macroconnection is essential to understanding the link between people's careers and health.

Could reverse causality be a plausible explanation, such that good health results in status and success, leading to high social rankings? Do the healthy prevail over the unhealthy? Health-related social mobility actually blurs the social gradient in health, making it appear less steep. Although healthier people are more likely to be upwardly mobile and unhealthy people are likely to be downwardly mobile, a distinct social gradient still exists after accounting for this tendency. Moreover, as healthy people move to a higher social status level, they are still less healthy than the people already occupying that position, and thus, they bring down the average measure of health for that status level. Similarly, as less healthy people move to lower ends of the status hierarchy, they are still healthier than the others already in that group, and therefore, they raise the average level of health for that group. Accordingly, health-related social mobility causes the status syndrome to be understated.

Thus, because bad habits, genetics, and health-related social mobility cannot explain the social gradient of health, Marmot has considered three socioeconomic conditions of societal inequality, namely, money, power, and status, and their relationships with health. Obviously, more money can benefit health for obvious reasons, especially for poorer people, and poverty reflects the inability to lead the lives people wish to lead and to fully participate in society. But there is more to it than money. An equally important distinction is between stress and challenge.

Stress operates through five characteristics, namely, lack of control, weak social support, unpredictable outcomes, absent outlets, and threats to status. This is not to be confused with the challenge of intense decisions, busy schedules, or high demands. Stress concerns the lack of control over the present and the future and the path in between. In the workplace, this describes the situation of lower-level employees, not the stereotypical, highly stressed upper-level managers. High-level executives may well experience great demands, but they have more control in meeting those demands. Thus, having money, status, and power or, alternatively, occupying a position high in the social hierarchy gives people the ability to direct their lives freely and limit uncontrollable stress. This kind of control, or more generally, these social conditions, may buffer individuals against the adverse effects of stress. How do social conditions influence the status syndrome? For Marmot, people lower in the hierarchy are in psychological states of uncontrollable stress more often than those people higher in the hierarchy, and this has negative health effects. Marmot believes that both acute and chronic stress contribute to a multitude of physical diseases.

A second psychological culprit is the feeling of social isolation. Like health, supportive social relations and networks follow a social gradient. Social support is positively related to good health and well-being; however, moving down the status hierarchy, less access to supportive social relations leaves lower-status individuals more vulnerable to a broad range of illness and causes of death. Consequently, both a lack of control and full social engagement underlie the social gradient and thus have important implications for career development and health. The following section discusses the roles that work and careers play in generating social hierarchies and health inequalities.

CAREERS, CONTROL, AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Occupation is a central determinant of social status or class, and in the workplace, job characteristics are stratified by status, whereby higher-status workers experience more favorable job characteristics, such as job variety, autonomy, and more physically hygienic conditions at work. Similarly, job characteristics are also associated with worker health and well-being. For example, a model developed by Robert Karasek argues that low levels of job control combined with high levels

of job demands lead to a number of stress-related physical illnesses, such as coronary heart disease. Likewise, employee health and well-being can improve with increased control and participation on the job. Conversely, working characteristics, including work overload, job insecurity, and low control, negatively influence workers' physical health. More broadly, research studies have shown a significant association between mental and physical ill health and six workplace pressures, namely, factors in the job (e.g., hours of work, decision-making authority, job variety); organizational role (e.g., lack of power, role ambiguity, role conflict); relationships at work (e.g. support, isolation); career development (e.g., unclear expectations, over- or underpromotion); organizational climate (e.g., organization structure or design, lack of communication); and home/work pressures.

More recent research has shown that both physical and psychosocial job characteristics play a significant role not only in predicting health outcomes but also in explaining the relationship between socioeconomic status and health. After controlling for a number of lifestyle differences (e.g., smoking, body mass, exercise) and the social origins of low- and high-status individuals, job characteristics, such as physical cleanliness on the job, working hours, autonomy, postsecondary training requirements, workload, cognitive demands, and job challenge still help explain the social gradient in health. These findings illustrate the centrality of occupations and workplace experiences in explaining how health inequalities are created. Accordingly, researchers have argued that workplace and job design can be an important vehicle for understanding and reducing societal-wide health disparities.

The social gradient may also be manifest occupationally, helping us understand the link between careers and health. People's choice of occupations and their associated characteristics are not the only "work" factors that determine their social status. Career paths also have a number of implications for a person's position in the social gradient of health. Patterns of work experiences, such as upward and downward mobility, mobility in and out of the labor force, and transitioning into retirement, are also integral to understanding the relationship between socioeconomic status and health. In general, researchers have considered career progression in explaining the relationship between social class and health, noting that occupational demotions have a negative impact

on employee psychological well-being due to the loss of perceived status and opportunity.

Occupational mobility also exerts consequences for status-related health risks. Although occupational classes themselves show a social gradient in mortality, within each class, mortality risks also differ by career paths and development. Specifically, individuals who experience upward occupational mobility to more favorable, higher-status jobs manifest lower mortality risks than individuals remaining immobile in their occupational classes of origin. Generally, greater levels of autonomy, variety, and physical cleanliness will characterize these higher-status occupations. The reverse is true for the downwardly mobile: Workers moving to lower-status positions experience higher mortality risks than their counterparts remaining stationary in their original occupational classes. In this case, downward occupational mobility is associated with an increase in working characteristics that are negatively related to health, such as reduced control and work overload.

Individuals who are promoted to a higher occupational status, however, typically do not achieve the same low-mortality risk levels as individuals already occupying the higher social class, and vice versa. Overall, when people's careers progress or regress to a new occupational status, their mortality risk adjusts to a level that is between the average risk level of the occupants in the class left behind and the average risk level of the occupants in the class joined. A similar trend exists for careers and health as measured by incidents of cancer, where lack of career progression is significantly related to a greater risk of cancer (including cancer in the upper respiratory and digestive track and the lungs) after accounting for various other risk factors. Accordingly, research findings show that although socioeconomic status is clearly important in predicting health, career development and upward career mobility are equally important explanatory factors.

Career movement in and out of the labor force is also predictive of health inequalities, and such moves can be a function of unemployment (and reemployment) or of retirement. Unemployed individuals have lower mental and physical well-being, including life satisfaction, self-esteem, and marital and family satisfaction, compared with employed individuals. The unemployed also have higher depression and mortality. In fact, feeling insecure about one's job or employment has negative health implications even

before employment status changes. Researchers have argued that this health effect occurs because unemployed individuals lose the positive benefits of employment influencing health, such as the opportunity for control and skill use, externally generated goals, variety, environmental clarity, physical security, financial income, socialization, valued social position and status, a feeling of purpose, and time structure.

Marmot has placed specific emphasis on the loss of status, the uncontrollability, and the unpredictability of job loss when considering its health consequences, arguing that stressful situations are defined by these factors. In addition, unemployed individuals' well-being is mediated by social support, such that unemployed people who feel socially supported experience greater well-being than those who do not. Both the quantity and the quality of the support are critical. While unemployed individuals typically have similarly sized social networks compared with employed individuals, their social support comes predominantly from family members who provide emotionally based support, as opposed to friends and colleagues. This type of support can leave the unemployed feeling more vulnerable and socially isolated and therefore lead to further stress. Thus, *unemployment*, by definition the loss and lack of one's occupational role, is ultimately characterized by a loss of control over one's life and the ability to fully participate in society, two factors underlying the social gradient in health. On the other hand, a positive relationship exists between reemployment and well-being, mental health, and physical health. Longitudinal data show that individuals experience declining well-being as they move from employment to unemployment but experience increasing well-being as they move from unemployment to reemployment. Reemployment provides positive benefits of work that are integral to the status syndrome, including increased status, control, social support, and predictability.

The relationship between socioeconomic status and health is not static throughout a person's life. Instead, research has shown that the social gradient in the incidence of cancers is most volatile in the beginning of an individual's career and changes less after midcareer. However, the social gradient in health is present not only during a person's working life. Socioeconomic status at middle age has been found to predict morbidity into old age, and, in general, socioeconomic health differentials persist well into a person's retirement

years. For example, mortality differences between people of high and low employment status have been shown to increase after retirement age. Although evidence conflicts as to whether health improves or deteriorates after retirement, a number of key patterns have appeared. First, people's transitions into retirement are important predictors of their postretirement health. People who have control over the decision to enter retirement, and its timing, experience better health than do people who are forced into retirement. Second, environmental characteristics that motivate the social gradient in health also mediate the relationship between retirement and well-being. For example, retired individuals who perceive that they have the opportunity for personal control, variety in demands and opportunity, environmental clarity, physical security, social or interpersonal contact, and valued social position have better well-being or life satisfaction than do retired individuals who do not experience these benefits. Accordingly, people's careers have implications for their status-related health not only during early or midcareer, when status changes most frequently, but well into their transitional and retirement years as well.

In conclusion, therefore, Marmot has delineated a unique perspective of the social causes of health, explicitly underscoring the role of work in generating health inequalities. This entry highlights various insights and their relevance to career development and health in a number of ways. First, as a macrophenomenon, the social gradient in health is an overarching explanation for societal and occupational health. Second, although job characteristics are thought to contribute to socioeconomic health inequalities, career paths themselves show a gradient in health. In particular, people who have upwardly mobile careers have better health and mortality than do people in the same social class with immobile careers. Finally, autonomy and social participation not only mediate the relationship between socioeconomic status and health but also help explain the relationship between health and other career factors, such as progression, unemployment, and retirement.

—Amy Christie and Julian Barling

See also Socioeconomic status, Stress

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CENTER FOR CREATIVE LEADERSHIP

The *Center for Creative Leadership* (CCL) is an internationally recognized resource for understanding and expanding the leadership capabilities of individuals and organizations from across the public, private, nonprofit, government, and education sectors. A nonprofit educational organization founded in 1970, CCL's mission is to advance the understanding, practice, and development

of leadership for the benefit of society worldwide. It pursues this mission through leadership development programs for midlevel to senior managers, leadership research and publication, and networks and events aimed at building learning communities.

CCL'S ACTIVITIES

One of the core activities of CCL is feedback-intensive leader development programs. CCL defines *leader development* as the expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in leadership roles and processes. Feedback-intensive programs provide individuals with a comprehensive assessment of their personal preferences, their capabilities, and how they are perceived by others. The goal is to gain a more in-depth understanding of one's strengths and weaknesses as a leader and to use that understanding to set and work toward goals for enhancing one's effectiveness and satisfaction. The programs make use of assessment tools (e.g., personality measures, 360-degree feedback instruments, value inventories), models and frameworks for understanding leadership work, experiential exercises and simulations, and peer and staff coaching.

CCL offers two types of leadership development programs: *open enrollment* (scheduled programs open to any leader and thus made up of participants from multiple organizations) and *contract* (programs for a single organization that are often customized for that organization's specific needs and context). The various open-enrollment programs are for the most part targeted to address the needs of different populations. For example, there are programs for early career leaders, for top-level executives, for women, for team leaders, and for individuals leading organizational transformations. Increasingly, contract programs are part of longer-term leadership development processes that include activities such as ongoing coaching, action learning projects, and online learning.

Research is another core activity. Historically, research at CCL has focused on individual leader development and on leadership and diversity. One influential study examined key events in managerial careers and produced the book *Lessons of Experience*. This study found that the majority of management development occurs on the job through assignments, relationships, and hardships. Formal development programs were found to play an important and distinct role in leader development, but they are not a substitute for on-the-job experiences.

Another important research thrust looks at issues in developing women and people of color—often referred to as “glass ceiling” research. Recent research in the diversity arena has examined the choices and trade-offs made by high-achieving women and the development of global leaders.

CCL also facilitates a number of networks, councils, and learning communities that bring together alumni, donors, faculty, practicing leaders, and leaders of thought from around the world. These groups provide a setting for members to learn from one another, develop relationships, and gain energy and support from others working in the leadership field.

CCL'S LEADER DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Integrating knowledge developed through its programs, research, and learning communities, CCL has articulated a model that guides its approach to leader development. A key component of the model is developmental experiences. Experiences are developmental to the extent that they provide individuals with assessment, challenge, and support. *Assessment* consists of the formal and informal processes for generating and delivering data about an individual: What am I doing well? Where do I need to improve? How do others see me? How am I doing relative to my goals? What's important to me? *Challenge* is the aspect of experience that pushes people out of their comfort zones, creates disequilibrium, and calls for enhanced knowledge and skills, new approaches, and more developed ways of understanding oneself and the world. *Support* helps individuals deal with the difficulties and struggles of a learning experience and helps them maintain a positive view of themselves as capable, valuable people who can learn and grow. Support often comes from other people but can also come from organizational cultures and systems.

The CCL model of leader development proposes that development is maximized over an individual's career to the extent that he or she (a) has the opportunity to engage in a variety of developmental experiences and (b) has a high ability to learn from experience. The ability to learn is a broad concept incorporating motivational factors, personality factors, and learning tactics. The model also recognizes that any leader development process is embedded in a particular organizational context: the organization's business strategy, its culture, and the various systems and processes within the organization. This context

shapes the leader development process: how it is focused, how well integrated and systemic it is, and who is responsible for it.

Leader development is aimed at enhancing the capabilities individuals need to be effective in leadership roles and processes. These include self-management capabilities (how individuals manage their own thoughts, feelings, and actions), social capabilities (how individuals work with others in a social system), and work facilitation capabilities (how individuals facilitate the accomplishment of work in organizational systems).

Finally, the model suggests three broad strategies for enhancing leader development: (1) create a variety of rich developmental experiences that provide assessment, challenge, and support; (2) develop people's ability to learn from experience; and (3) build an organizational system that supports and values development.

ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

CCL is headquartered in Greensboro, North Carolina, and has campuses in Brussels, Colorado Springs, San Diego, and Singapore. Its work is carried out by 500 employees and a network of adjunct staff. Approximately 20,000 leaders participate in CCL programs and events each year. More information about the organization can be found at <http://www.ccl.org>.

—Cynthia D. McCauley

See also Glass ceiling, Leadership development, Lifelong learning

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CHILD CARE PRACTICES

The child care market was largely irrelevant to professional careers during the historical period when most professionals were White men with wives in the home performing unpaid work. Beginning in the 1960s, the large-scale entry of women into higher education and professional labor markets changed this situation. That change occurred in large measure because women continue to perform most unpaid child care in the home, while professional careers often demand long hours of paid work during the prime child-rearing years. Work and family therefore often appear as competing responsibilities.

Formal child care can serve as a bridge between these competing demands, permitting women to make commitments to both professional careers and children. However, it has been estimated by the National Council of Jewish Women that 80 percent of child care centers in the United States are of mediocre to poor quality, undercutting the value of this bridge.

Partly as a result of the shortfall of quality child care, many young women continue to view professional careers and family commitments as mutually exclusive. Professional women are less likely than professional men to have dependent children in the home, thereby sacrificing family for career. By the same token, many women who wish to rear children hold high levels of formal education yet do not enter professional careers, sacrificing career for family. These outcomes are unfair in the sense that men are rarely forced to choose between family formation and career; these outcomes are also inefficient, since much valuable talent and human capital are lost when parents abandon careers for family.

Beginning in the 1970s but with faster growth during the 1980s and 1990s, some corporations responded to these issues by developing on-site child care centers. Such centers are typically expensive on a per-child basis, in part because utilization rates are difficult to predict except in very large establishments. The single most important predictor for the implementation of on-site child care is the proportion of professional, technical, and managerial employees in the workplace. The long hours required by professional careers help explain the connection between these occupations and on-site child care. In addition, however, it seems likely that the high wages provided to many professionals and managers help make

on-site child care economically viable. The flip side of this economic argument is the frequent complaint with regard to on-site child care that it is too expensive for nonprofessional employees to afford. In part due to the latter dynamic, on-site child care remains relatively rare.

More common among corporations are limited child care subsidies and programs providing referrals and other information relevant to the search for formal child care arrangements. These programs facilitate the employee's ability to meet work responsibilities and may be associated with higher-quality child care.

An alternative route to the provision of child care is for parents to reduce their hours of employment while children are young, returning to full-time employment as children grow. Relevant reduced hours options attracted the term *mommy track* during the 1980s, a term denoting the fact that men rarely reduced working time in response to family responsibilities and denigrating the women who chose not to work long hours for their employers.

Regardless of these problems, the time arithmetic of professional careers and child care tends to drive researchers and policymakers back to reduced-hours options. If professionals are typically present in the workplace for 50 to 60 hours per week and spend another 10 hours per week commuting, the complete replacement of parenting time by paid providers involves 60 to 70 hours per week of formal child care. Most parents do not view such long hours of child care in a positive light, so they strive to reduce working time in one fashion or another.

Somewhat belatedly, men have also responded to these issues. Fathers in dual-earner couples increased their time devoted to child care by 6 hours per week between 1981 and 1997, such that men were performing 46 percent of all parental care by the end of the period.

It seems likely that some mixture of private market, mother, and father care will continue to provide the best options for professionals striving to simultaneously make and meet family commitments, perhaps with the help of limited tax subsidies from the government (i.e., Dependent Care Assistance Programs) and subsidies from employers. For young professionals seeking quality child care, the increasing acceptance and expectation of accreditation for child care centers by the National Association for the Education of Young Children must be viewed as a positive development. For women, a less positive note is sounded by

the emergence of discriminatory behavior among employers against mothers, particularly against mothers attempting to sustain professional careers.

—Robert Drago and Tara Habasevich

See also Elder care practices, Family-responsive workplace practices, Flexible work arrangements, Gender and careers, Work-family conflict

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CHURNING OF JOBS

Churning the workforce is an approach to talent management that relies on use of the outside labor market to meet changing skill needs. Specifically, employers needing new skills, knowledge, and abilities, perhaps most often to meet changing demands from product markets, acquire them by hiring employees from the outside market. The employees they currently have, whose skills are no longer needed, are then laid off.

Churning as a human capital strategy represents a sharp contrast to what had been the dominant model for accommodating change in the workforce: retraining and relocating existing employees to meet the demands for new and different skills and internal development of skills more generally. Lifetime employment models that were popularized in Japan and also operated in the United States were essentially based on this retraining and relocating approach.

Evidence of the prominence of the churning approach comes from several indirect sources: high

levels of layoff rates, higher among white-collar and managerial employees than among other occupation groups even when overall economic indicators are strong; growing use of search firms and job boards that facilitate outside hiring; and growing turnover across organizations. There are also some direct sources of information: Only 3 percent of large corporations in the United States reported to the Conference Board in the mid-1990s that they still offered job security to their employees, although they had previously; only 35 percent of U.S. establishments in the 1997 Census National Employer Survey reported that they retrained workers who were at risk of layoff because of obsolete skills.

Several factors appear to have increased the use of the churning strategy: the notion that the pace of change that businesses must accommodate has increased over time and that it is no longer possible to meet those demands by internal restructuring; the labor market infrastructure that makes it possible to hire from the outside (e.g., job boards, search firms) has grown vastly; and at least some employees in large corporations are more resistant to geographic relocations that might allow them to stay in the same corporations, albeit in different positions.

At the extreme, the churning approach raises interesting questions about what constitutes a firm and its competencies. Especially for companies whose competencies seem strongly related to knowledge or human capital, the boundary of a firm and its competencies seems less clear if all the talent is hired from the outside market and is changed on a continual basis. Silicon Valley companies would seem to fit this model, and some say that their true competency is the ability to assemble the right talent in ways that essentially reinvent the firm.

There has been a long academic discussion about the merits of the churning approach, especially the negative consequences for employment security. A number of alternative models have been offered to allow employers to achieve high levels of flexibility in response to changing demands while preserving something like stability in employment relationships.

Perhaps the best known of these alternative arrangements is the *core-periphery model*, based on the notion that firms have certain core resources and capabilities that are important to protect. In this case, those resources refer to people. The *core* refers to employees whose skills are crucial to the organization and difficult to replace. Ups and downs in business

demand are then accommodated by shifting all the fluctuations in employment to groups other than this core, what one might think of as “peripheral workers,” whose skills are less crucial and easier to replace. A good example is a professional services firm, such as a law firm, in which partners represent the core knowledge and skills of the firm, and the associates, counsel lawyers, or other nonpartner lawyers are hired to meet peak demand and then let go if business falls off.

Although the logic of core-periphery models is appealing, there is little evidence that organizations make much use of it. Part of the reason is that the variations in demand to which organizations must respond are changes not simply in the volume of products and services they produce but also in the types of products and services. With the latter, it is more difficult to think of a permanent “core.”

An alternative model, which has been especially prominent in Europe, sees *functional flexibility*, the ability to reassemble existing competencies in new ways, as a substitute for *numerical flexibility*, the ability to respond through hiring and layoffs. Exactly what practices and policies constitute functional flexibility may not be completely clear, but teamwork, employee involvement, and other systems of work organization that provide opportunities to respond to change quickly appear to be important components. Here, the evidence is more supportive, especially case studies that show that the capacity for internal adjustments and flexibility may reduce the need for hiring and layoffs. There is also evidence, however, that firms may make use of both functional flexibility and numerical flexibility to accommodate the changes in their markets.

The churning approach to human capital is clearly tied to broader changes in the economy that demand more rapid updating of overall business strategies and underlying competencies. It has both helped drive and responded to related changes in employment relationships, such as declining loyalty between employers and employees and the rise of infrastructure to facilitate outside hiring. Many believe that the consequences for firms have been positive, allowing them to restructure more quickly and in more dramatic ways. The consequences for employees, however, have been mixed. On the upside, workers now benefit from greater opportunities associated with more hiring across companies; on the downside, more face layoffs because of mismatches with changing firm needs.

There have been two policy responses to help employees address the downside of the churning strategies. The first, which is associated with European perspectives, is simply to limit an employer's ability to lay off workers, especially when the motivations concern demands for new competencies and not poor performance or declining demand. Restricting the ability to lay off, in turn, reduces the ability to hire from the outside. The goal of these restrictions is to force firms to meet their needs for flexibility through internal restructuring. The second response, which is associated with the U.S. system, takes the exact opposite approach in trying to make it easier for employees to move across employers. Here, policy interventions include making pensions and other benefits more portable, so that it is easier to change jobs, and giving workers more information about employment prospects and related skill requirements to help them make better decisions. These two different perspectives are at the core of economic policy differences between the United States and Europe.

—Peter Cappelli

See also Boundaryless career, Contingent employment, Downsizing, Job security, Outsourcing and offshoring

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CIRCUMSCRIPTION AND COMPROMISE

Vocational choice is a search for a life career that fits one's concept of self, both socially and psychologically. According to *circumscription and compromise* theory, four developmental processes guide this person-job matching process during the first two decades of life: *cognitive growth*, age-related growth in cognitive ability; *self-creation*, increasingly

self-directed development; *circumscription*, progressive elimination of one's least favored vocational alternatives; and *compromise*, accommodation to constraints on implementing one's most favored alternatives.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Children progress from thinking intuitively in the preschool years to concretely in the elementary years to abstractly in adolescence. With age, they become able to take in, understand, and analyze larger bodies of information, make subtler distinctions among people and occupations, compare them along more dimensions, infer internal states, and discern patterns in their own behavior.

By adolescence, most young people perceive the same complex social structure of work that adults do, specifically, a cognitive map of occupations that arrays jobs according to sex type and prestige level and, within that array, according to field of work. Young people develop increasingly individualized self-concepts, however, as they become better able to discern who they are as unique psychological beings. This learning process is inherently complex. The challenge for counselors is to enhance learning by reducing the complexity of the information they provide and to accommodate counselees' differences in ability to learn and comprehend.

Self-creation

Children are born into a preexisting occupational world that can be observed and explored, but none is born with an already-formed self. Our personalities, interests, and other enduring traits are not stamped in by either our genes or our environments. Rather, those traits develop and are revealed only via experience as we daily engage the world around us. Each self is unique because both the genotypes and personal environments that jointly shape the flow of personal experience are unique. An inner "genetic compass" is the core of our individuality, however, because it quietly but incessantly inclines us to take some paths rather than others, be attracted to or repelled by certain activities, seize different opportunities, respond differently to the same environments, and create different social niches for ourselves when given a choice. Children gain greater control over their lives as they mature, thus becoming—or having the potential to become—more active agents in their own self-creation.

Vocational interests represent constellations of genetically influenced personality traits and abilities. The activities that would activate, exercise, and consolidate these constellations as distinct vocational interests are not available to people of all ages or in all places, so many adolescents lack sufficient experience to know what their vocational interests and talents might be. They are thereby less able to recognize ill-fitting expectations and circumstances, break away from them, or fashion lives more compatible with their own interests, abilities, and goals. The counseling challenge is thus to optimize experience, by both providing broad menus of vocationally relevant activities for young people to sample and promoting self-agency in seeking out formative experiences.

CIRCUMSCRIPTION

Early vocational choice proceeds as a process of elimination. As children become aware of occupational differences in sex type, then prestige, and finally field of work, they successively rule out more sectors of work as unacceptable for someone like themselves.

Stage 1: Orientation to Size and Power (Age 3-5)

Children in the preschool and kindergarten years begin to classify people in the simplest of ways: as big and powerful versus little and weak. They also begin to recognize occupations as adult roles and cease reporting that they would like to be animals or fantasy characters when they grow up.

Stage 2: Orientation to Sex Roles (Age 6-8)

Children at this age have progressed to making simple distinctions among people and jobs, primarily because of their most concrete, visible attributes. The most obvious and salient distinction for them is sex role, which they see simplistically in terms of sex-appropriate clothing and behavior. They start to eliminate occupations that seem incompatible with their gender self-concepts.

Stage 3: Orientation to Social Valuation (Age 9-13)

Children have now become acutely aware of differences in social status: in particular, which occupations

are higher up the social ladder, which personal attributes (especially academic ability) help individuals get higher-level jobs, and what the minimum threshold is for being thought successful in their social circles. They eliminate from further consideration all occupations that are too low in prestige for someone like themselves, as well as all that seem out of reach in terms of ability or effort required. These choices may not be wise, but they tend to be permanent unless challenged in some way.

Stage 4: Orientation to Unique, Internal Self (Age 14 and Older)

Children take their preferred social selves—their self-defined *social space*—for granted by adolescence. This social space is much circumscribed, but it becomes more densely populated with occupational alternatives as adolescents begin to recognize how diverse work is across different fields of work. They are now also better able to make out their own interests, values, and goals, and they struggle to determine which field of work best fits their emerging pattern of interests and talents. Circumscription at this stage thus involves rejecting incompatible fields of work (for example, Realistic or Investigative fields, from John Holland's theory).

The challenge for counselors is to prevent or reverse inappropriate circumscription by promoting *self-insight*: specifically, by helping young people to inventory and integrate relevant information about themselves and promoting a sound conception of which career lives would best fit and satisfy the developing self.

COMPROMISE

Not all suitable choices are accessible, so individuals must often compromise. Theory predicts that individuals will opt for work in a different field within their social space rather than compromise either prestige or sex type of work. If no such work is accessible, they will opt for lower-level work before seeking jobs that conflict with their gender self-concept, because the latter is more central to one's self-concept.

Accessibility is limited by labor market conditions, the availability of appropriate training, and many other factors over which the person has no control. It is also limited, however, by the cost and effort of locating current opportunities for education, training,

and employment. Individuals increase the accessibility of their preferred options when they seek information more widely and in a timely manner, are more persistent and optimistic, and take steps to increase their competitiveness for available opportunities. The counseling challenge is to minimize unnecessary compromise by optimizing *self-investment*, specifically, by helping young people assess the accessibility of their preferred education, training, and employment and by promoting self-agency in improving their own opportunities, qualifications, and support network.

—Linda S. Gottfredson

See also Career exploration, Occupational choice, Self-concept

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CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

The *Civil Rights Act of 1964* was passed by President Lyndon B. Johnson in the wake of the assassination of President Kennedy and as the civil rights movement continued its struggle for social equality. Although a bill prohibiting discrimination in the workplace had been introduced in Congress every year since 1943, the filibuster and other political tools had kept the proposed bills from being passed, and the same result seemed certain after President Kennedy introduced

his highly controversial antidiscrimination Civil Rights Act in 1963. However, President Johnson was able to gain the support of influential senators in support of a version of the bill that was even stronger than what Kennedy had proposed. On June 10, 1964, after 57 days of debate due to a well-planned filibuster by the bill's opponents, the bill's supporters were able to amass the requisite two-thirds of the Senate to vote to end the filibuster, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 became law. The act's constitutionality was immediately challenged and upheld.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a comprehensive piece of legislation banning discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin in numerous aspects of society, such as public schools and public accommodations, and a full discussion of the significance of the act could take volumes. However, as only Title VII is relevant to career development and issues in the workplace, it will be the sole focus of this writing.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 applies to a wide range of employers due to its broad definition of *person*, which in part is a key component to the definition of *employer*. The definition of person includes, for example, governments, government agencies, labor unions, partnerships, corporations, mutual companies, trusts, and receivers. An employer must have at least 15 employees to be covered by the act.

Title VII was aimed at both prohibiting intentional discrimination and widening the door to employment opportunities. Title VII makes it "an unlawful employment practice for an employer . . . to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual or otherwise discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." It also prohibits employers from engaging in practices "to limit, segregate, or classify his employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin."

The language of Title VII has provided employees who believe they were subject to discrimination with an arsenal of legal claims and numerous methods of proving them. Two of the most commonly used claims are (1) an employee's claim that he or she has suffered from disparate treatment and (2) its cousin, adverse or

disparate impact. Under the *disparate-treatment theory*, the employee alleges that he or she has been treated differently from other employees due to his or her protected characteristic of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Disparate-treatment claims can be further divided into single-motive claims and mixed-motive claims. In both types of cases, the employer argues that the allegedly discriminatory act was based on a nondiscriminatory reason; in a *single-motive claim*, the employee alleges the act was solely motivated by discrimination, and in a *mixed-motive claim*, the employee alleges the employer was motivated by both legitimate and unlawful factors. A 1991 amendment to the Civil Rights Act addressed the uncertainty that had surrounded the mixed-motive cases until that time by clarifying that even if other legitimate factors also motivated the employer's actions, the employer violated Title VII if the protected characteristic was a "motivating factor" in the employer's act.

If an employee cannot establish intentional discrimination, another option is to bring a claim under the *disparate-impact theory*. The disparate-impact theory addresses the situation in which an employment practice or policy is neutral on its face, but as applied has a disproportional effect on a protected group in a manner not justified by business necessity. Examples include educational requirements, experience requirements, arrest and conviction records, or dress requirements. The disparate-impact theory was created in a 1971 Supreme Court case and remained a judicially created cause of action until the 1991 amendment to the Civil Rights Act, which specifically included practices that cause a disparate impact as unlawful. Statistical evidence is generally used to establish such claims.

Other than disparate-treatment and disparate-impact claims, Title VII provides claims that an employer has subjected the employee to a hostile environment, that the employer discriminated against the employee as retaliation for opposing a discriminatory practice, and that an employer has failed to accommodate the employee's religious expression. In a *hostile-environment claim*, the employee alleges that the employer's unwanted conduct has created an environment so pervasive that a reasonable person would find it hostile or abusive and that the employee bringing the claim did, in fact, find the environment abusive. The most common form of hostile-environment claim is based on one type of what has become known

as *sexual harassment* (the other type of sexual harassment is the more clear-cut quid pro quo claim, which also violates Title VII). In a *retaliation claim*, the employee alleges that he or she was discriminated against for opposing a discriminatory practice or participating in an investigation of a potential Title VII claim. Finally, an employee has a distinct claim under Title VII if the employer failed to accommodate his or her religious expression when doing so would not have caused undue hardship to the employer.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, which has been called the greatest civil rights statute since Reconstruction, has been amended several times, including a significant amendment in 1991. Over the years, the act has seen waves of strict construction and liberal interpretation by the courts. However, even under its strictest interpretation, there is no denying that the act was a major step toward equality in the workplace.

—Joanne G. Noble

See also Age discrimination, Civil Rights Act of 1991, Hostile working environment, Religious discrimination, Sex discrimination

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CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1991

The Civil Rights Act of 1991 is compromise legislation passed after a heated two-year political struggle and ambitiously amended Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (referred to as "Title VII"); the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; Section 1981 of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 (referred to as "Section 1981"); the Attorney's Fees Award Act of 1976; and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA). President George H. W. Bush had vetoed an earlier version of the bill in 1990, based on what he perceived to be its encouragement of quota-based hiring.

However, the struggle continued, and after the much-publicized Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings in the summer of 1991, the president signed a newly passed Civil Rights Act of 1991. In large part, the act counters a succession of seven significant Supreme Court decisions that had made it more difficult for employees to prove discrimination and provides for compensatory and punitive damages in cases of intentional discrimination.

Prior to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1991, the Supreme Court had reached several decisions involving employment discrimination, five of them in 1989 alone. The act was intended to address these rulings. One such ruling was the 1989 decision of *Wards Cove Packing Co. v. Antonio*, involving a claim of disparate impact, which until this time had existed only by judicial creation. In *Wards Cove*, the Supreme Court held that the plaintiff employee has the burden of proving both that the challenged practice disproportionately affects a protected group and that the employer does not have any legitimate business justification for the practice at issue. If the plaintiff is unable to prove that the challenged practice does not have any legitimate business purpose, he or she can still prevail by proving that there are alternatives to the practice that did not have a disparate impact. This test places the whole burden on the plaintiff and proved very difficult for a plaintiff to meet.

The Civil Rights Act of 1991 reversed a portion of the *Wards Cove* decision by codifying the disparate-impact claim and shifting some of the burden to the employer. Once the plaintiff establishes that the challenged practice has a disparate impact on a protected group, the burden of proof shifts to the employer to prove that the practice is justified by business necessity. The act clarifies that the employer must demonstrate that the challenged practice is “job-related for the position in question and consistent with business necessity.” Neither *job-related* nor *business necessity* is defined by the act.

These definitions, or lack thereof, were at the heart of the controversy that had surrounded earlier versions of the Civil Rights Act. Previous versions had included a definition of “job-related” that required a much closer relationship between the challenged practice and the job in question than the loose “any legitimate business objective” standard that existed under *Wards Cove*. Opponents of the 1991 act believed that the combined effect of shifting the burden to the employer and requiring a high degree of relatedness

between the challenged practice and the job at issue would force employers to adopt quotas in order to avoid litigation under the disparate-impact theory. The enacted version of the act thus does not include any definition of “job-related,” leaving the issue undecided. On the other hand, the act does decide that an employee who cannot pinpoint a particular practice that caused the disparate impact but can demonstrate that the “elements of a respondent’s decision making process are not capable of separation for analysis” can challenge the whole process as one practice, a method not permitted under *Wards Cove*.

The passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1991 also clarified what had been a hotbed of confusion: the mixed-motive claim of intentional discrimination. In the 1989 Supreme Court case *Price Waterhouse v. Hopkins*, the Court held that an employee is prohibited from recovering in cases where he or she alleges that the employer had both legitimate and discriminatory reasons for its challenged practice if the employer demonstrates that it would have made the same decision for nondiscriminatory reasons. Under the Civil Rights Act of 1991, it is unlawful if the protected characteristic was a “motivating factor” in the employer’s decision, even if the employer would have made the same decision based solely on a legitimate business decision. However, if the employer does demonstrate that he or she would have made the same decision, the employee is not entitled to damages and can receive only declaratory relief, attorney’s fees, and costs of the action.

On the subject of damages, the Civil Rights Act of 1991 provided that for the first time, employees who could successfully prove intentional employment discrimination under Title VII could be awarded with monetary damages and could seek a trial by jury. A plaintiff can recover compensatory damages, and if the employer has acted “with malice or reckless disregard” for the plaintiff’s rights, that person can also recover punitive damages. The act caps the amount of total damages at a rate dependent on the number of employees, ranging from \$50,000 for a company of 15 to 100 employees to \$300,000 for a company with more than 500 employees.

The Civil Rights Act of 1991 contains several other significant provisions, including applying Title VII to employees working abroad for American companies; prohibiting the use of “race norming,” or adjusting test scores based on a protected characteristic; and extending the statute of limitations for certain cases under

Title VII and the ADEA. The act also allows unhappy employees to challenge prior-consent decrees entered to remedy discriminatory conduct only if they had not received prior notice that the settlement would hurt their interests; permits successful plaintiffs in Title VII and Section 1981 claims to recover expert fees and attorney's fees; and applies Section 1981 to racial discrimination in all phases of the contractual relationship, not just hiring decisions as previously held. Finally, the act creates the Glass Ceiling Commission, to study the barriers to the advancement of women and minorities, and the EEOC's Technical Assistance Training Institute to assist in the implementation of the act. The Civil Rights Act of 1991 is a sweeping legislation that, even with its ambiguity, reduces the obstacles to establishing discrimination and provides disincentives to employers for violation of the rights of their employees.

—Joanne G. Noble

See also: Age discrimination, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Hostile working environment, Religious discrimination, Sex discrimination

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COGNITIVE DIFFERENTIATION GRID

The assessment and investigation of vocational processes represents some of the most active and sustained contributions that have derived from George Kelly's 1955 personal construct theory. Kelly's theory is often interpreted as an early forerunner of contemporary cognitive theories, although his emphasis on personal agency, meaning, choice, and growth have variously aligned him with humanistic, existential, and postmodern positions.

The *Cognitive Differentiation Grid* is an early adaptation of Kelly's Role Construct Repertory Test,

a measure designed to elicit a representative sample of an individual's personal construct system and to assess the organizational properties of these construct dimensions. In its original form, the Cognitive Differentiation Grid provided individuals with a fixed set of 12 different careers (e.g., lawyer, teacher, artist, carpenter) together with a fixed set of 12 vocational constructs (e.g., high vs. low salary; blue-collar vs. white-collar; high vs. low education) and asked them to rate each of the 12 occupations along each of the 12 vocational constructs, yielding a matrix of 144 ratings. These ratings were then subject to a wide variety of analyses designed to explore the organizational properties of the vocational construct system.

The vocational construct system is understood as the set of idiosyncratic dimensions, or constructs, that an individual brings to bear in viewing the world of work. As bipolar dimensions of personal meaning (e.g. stimulating vs. boring; secure vs. insecure employment; creative vs. technical skills), systems of constructs collectively form networks of meaning that enable the individual to understand, evaluate, and negotiate career alternatives, choices, and development. Importantly, while broader social and cultural forces ensure some commonality among individuals' vocational construct systems (Kelly's Commonality Corollary), no two systems are presumed to be exactly alike (Kelly's Individuality Corollary).

Individual construct systems can differ not only in the content of their dimensions but also in the organization and complexity of those dimensions (Kelly's Organization Corollary). Two people may share a set of three common constructs, for example, but those constructs may occupy different positions in the overall vocational construct system and may be related differently to one another as well. For example, two individuals may evaluate careers in relation to, for example, salary (high vs. low salary), security (high job security vs. low security), and creativity (creative vs. boring). For one individual, salary may be the most important dimension, whereas for the other individual, creativity may be the most critical feature. Moreover, one of them may view salary and creativity as positively related to one another (i.e., he or she anticipates that more highly paid jobs will enable greater creativity), whereas the other may view them as inversely related (i.e., he or she anticipates that higher paid jobs tend to be more boring and permit less creativity). In each instance, Kelly's personal construct theory places emphasis on individual differences,

underscoring the idiosyncratic ways in which an individual perceives the world and orders, structures, or organizes his or her perceptions. In this regard, the theory is closely allied with postmodern developments in psychology, because a greater emphasis is placed on personal perception than on reality or the correspondence of that perception to a reality independent from the knower. It follows from Kelly's Individuality Corollary that no two people are likely to rate all 12 occupations exactly alike in relation to all 12 constructs, and individual differences in this regard are the subject of particular interest.

COGNITIVE DIFFERENTIATION

The concept of *cognitive differentiation* refers to the number of different dimensions of meaning, or personal constructs, that a person has available within his or her system of meaning. Vocational construct systems that are composed of multiple, relatively independent dimensions of meaning would situate the individual to understand the world of work in relatively complex ways, whereas a system marked by only one or two dimensions of meaning would restrict the perspectives that could be brought to bear in making career decisions or evaluating career options.

The Cognitive Differentiation Grid specifically assesses this property, the number of relatively independent vocational constructs available to the individual, and hence it provides a measure of an individual's vocational complexity. Although the specific forms of calculating this complexity may vary, they share a common conceptual rationale. That rationale relies on the notion that two vocational constructs are different to the extent that they are used differently in perceiving and ordering different occupational alternatives. In other words, if the 12 different occupations are rated identically along two different constructs, those constructs are regarded as functionally identical. Despite the fact that they may have different labels (high vs. low salary, and high vs. low status), if they are used identically (e.g., a perfect correlation between the ratings of salary and status), they are functioning in the same way in perceiving or organizing the world of work, and hence they are counted as the same construct. In the limiting cases, all constructs could be used the same way in rating all 12 of the occupations (i.e., low complexity), or each of the 12 constructs could be used in functionally different ways in ordering or rating the set of 12 occupations

(i.e., high complexity). In practice, individuals ordinarily fall somewhere between these two extremes and therefore reflect relatively high or low levels of vocational differentiation.

THE EFFECTS OF DIFFERENTIATION

From its inception, the assumption has been that more highly differentiated vocational construct systems should be linked to more effective career decision making and more appropriate career choices. This assumption and its implications have been the subject of ongoing research since the introduction of this instrument. Research has provided a range of evidence in this regard and noted the sensitivity of the instrument to the wide variety of adaptations it has received. Contemporary applications of the measure tend to emphasize the idiographic nature of the construct dimensions themselves, rather than their organization or differentiation alone. Returning to Kelly's original Role Construct Repertory Test instructions, individuals are often given sets of three different occupations at a time and asked to indicate "any way in which any two of these are alike in some way" (e.g., high status) "and different from the third" (e.g., low status). This vocational construct (e.g., high versus low status) is then entered on the Cognitive Differentiation Grid and used to rate the full set of 12 occupations. The procedure is repeated 11 more times, until all 12 occupations have been rated along all 12 personally elicited construct dimensions and the idiographic nature of the constructs themselves, as well as their organization and differentiation, is available for analysis and discussion with the individual.

—Greg J. Neimeyer

See also Cognitive information processing in career counseling, Kuder Career Assessments, Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI)

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COGNITIVE INFORMATION PROCESSING IN CAREER COUNSELING

There is an old adage, "Give people a fish and they eat for a day, but teach them how to fish and they eat for a lifetime." This wise maxim succinctly captures the ultimate aim in using the *cognitive information processing* (CIP) approach to career counseling: to enable individuals to become skillful career problem solvers and decision makers. Through the CIP approach, individuals learn not only how to solve the problem at hand but also how to generalize this experience to future career problems.

In the early 1970s, a line of inquiry emerged from the field of cognitive science that offered a new way of thinking about human problem solving and decision making. This paradigm, referred to as "cognitive information processing," was initially formulated in the works of Earl Hunt, Allen Newell, and Herbert Simon and of Roy Lackman, Janet Lackman, and Earl Butterfield. When applied to the realm of career choice, this paradigm, herein referred to as the "CIP model," provides a way to describe the fundamental memory structures and thought processes involved in solving career problems and making career decisions. With the CIP model, career counselors are able to assist clients in becoming better career problem solvers and decision makers.

DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

The following are key definitions in the CIP model:

Career problem: A gap between an existing state of career indecision and a more desirable state of decidedness. The gap creates a state of cognitive dissonance that becomes the primary motivational force driving the problem-solving process. The presence of a gap results in tension or discomfort that individuals seek to eliminate through problem solving and decision making.

Problem space: All cognitive and affective components contained in working memory as individuals approach a

career problem-solving task. In the lives of clients, the problem space entails the career problem at hand in addition to all the issues associated with it, such as marital and family relationships, as well as the emotional states embedded in them.

Career problem solving: A complex set of thought processes involved in the acknowledgment of a gap, an analysis of its causes, the formulation and clarification of alternative courses of actions, and the selection of one of these alternatives to reduce the gap. A career problem is solved when a career choice is made from among the alternatives.

Career decision making: A process that not only encompasses career choice but also entails a commitment to and the carrying out of the actions necessary to implement the choice.

Career development: The implementation of a series of career decisions that constitute an integrated career path throughout the life span.

THE PYRAMID OF INFORMATION PROCESSING AND THE CASVE CYCLE

Two fundamental structures constitute the CIP model: (a) the Pyramid of Information Processing and (b) the CASVE Cycle.

The Pyramid of Information Processing

For individuals to become independent and responsible career problem solvers and decision makers, certain information-processing capabilities must undergo continual development throughout the life span. These capabilities may be envisioned as forming a pyramid of certain "information-processing domains," with three hierarchically arranged domains (see Figure 1). The Knowledge Domain lies at the base, the Decision-making Skills Domain constitutes the midlevel, and the Executive Processing Domain is at the apex.

The Knowledge Bases. Two Knowledge domains, Self-knowledge and Occupational Knowledge, lie at the base of the pyramid. *Self-knowledge* includes knowledge about one's interests, abilities, skills, and values based on an ongoing construction of one's life's experiences. *Occupational knowledge* consists of one's own unique structural representation of the world of work and an understanding of individual occupations in terms of their duties and responsibilities, as well as education and training requirements for attaining them.

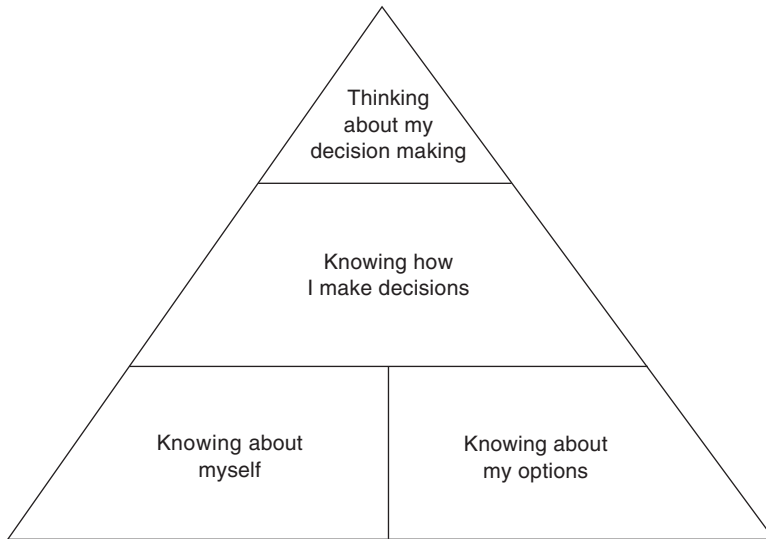


Figure 1. What's Involved in Career Choice

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The CASVE Cycle. The middle level of the Pyramid of Information Processing, referred to as the “Decision-making Skills Domain,” involves generic information-processing skills that combine occupational knowledge and self-knowledge to solve a career problem and to make a decision. A five-step recursive information transformation process, the CASVE Cycle (pronounced “ca-sah-veh”), is used as a heuristic for the career counseling process (see Figure 2).

Communication (C). Information is received and encoded that signals that a problem exists. One then queries oneself and the environment to formulate the gap (or discontinuity) that is the problem. It also entails getting “in touch” with all components of the problem space, including thoughts, feelings, and related life circumstances.

Analysis (A). The causes of the problem are identified, and the relationships among problem components are placed in a conceptual framework or mental model.

Synthesis (S). Possible courses of action are formulated through the creation of possibilities (synthesis elaboration) and then narrowed (synthesis crystallization) to a manageable set of viable alternatives.

Valuing (V). Each course of action or alternative is evaluated and prioritized according to its likelihood of

success in removing the gap and its probable impact on self, significant others, cultural group, and society. Through this process, a first choice emerges, and the career problem is solved.

Execution (E). An action plan is formulated to implement the choice, which becomes a goal for the client. A series of milestones are laid out in the form of a means-ends relationship that will lead step-by-step to the attainment of the goal. Thus, a career decision is made when individuals move deliberately toward a goal, such as enrolling in a training program or taking a job in a chosen occupational field.

Upon executing the plan, there is a return to the Communication phase of the cycle to evaluate whether the decision successfully removed the gap. If so, the individual moves on to solve succeeding problems that arise from the implementation of the solution. If not, one recycles through the CASVE cycle with new information about the problem, oneself, and occupations acquired from the initial pass through the CASVE cycle.

The Apex. The apex of the pyramid, the Executive Processing Domain, contains metacognitive components that guide and regulate the lower-order cognitive functions. We describe this domain as “thinking about thinking,” which entails the ability to view oneself as a career problem solver from a detached perspective. The domain involves metacognitive components that (a) control the selection and sequencing of cognitive strategies to achieve a goal and (b) monitor the execution of a given problem-solving strategy to determine whether a goal has been reached.

READINESS FOR CAREER PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING

An initial consideration in the application of the CIP model in career counseling is acquiring an understanding of two critical factors, *complexity* and *capability*, associated with readiness for undertaking the task of solving a career problem. These factors are taken into account in administering assessments and prescribing learning experiences to enhance the acquisition of career problem-solving and decision-making skills.

Complexity. The career problems of clients often emanate from highly complex lives. The career

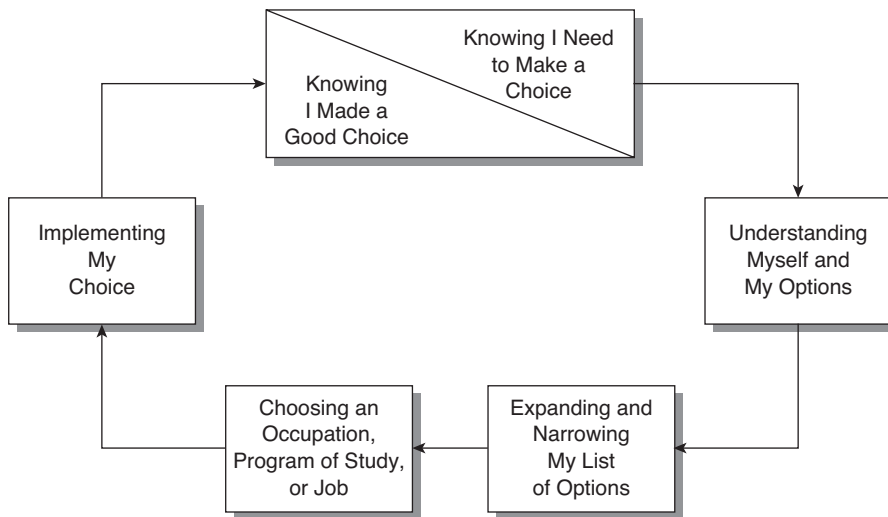


Figure 2. Guide to Good Decision Making

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problem space may include, in addition to career concerns, many personal issues, such as the desire to have committed relationships, children and family responsibilities, property ownership, community and spiritual involvement, and leisure pursuits. These aspects are interrelated with the presenting career issue and directly influence how a client engages the respective stages of the CASVE Cycle.

Capability. Clients bring a wide range of individual differences in prior learning experiences and general problem-solving abilities to the career decision-making process. Moreover, clients vary in terms of aptitudes for further education and training, attitudes toward risk taking, self-esteem or self-efficacy, family support and values, and thoughts, beliefs, and assumptions about the world of work.

OPERATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS

The Assessment of Client Learning Needs

Assessment from the perspective of the CIP model concerns what clients need to learn to enhance their career problem-solving and decision-making skills so as to effectively address the career problem at hand. The Pyramid and the CASVE Cycle serve as heuristics for the identification of client learning needs.

Assessing Readiness for Career Problem Solving and Decision Making

Not all clients are prepared to immediately engage the career problem-solving process. They may require intensive personal assistance from a career counselor to manage factors in the problem space that impede learning before they are able to begin.

The assessment of readiness may be accomplished through the integration of information gathered through the administration of the Career Thoughts Inventory (CTI), followed by a client interview. The CTI is a 48-item self-report measure

that assesses the level of a client's dysfunctional thinking through three principal construct scales, Decision-making Confusion (DMC), External Conflict (EC), and Commitment Anxiety (CA). Scale scores along with responses to individual items enable a career counselor together with the client to identify discrepancies in the Pyramid or blocks in the CASVE Cycle that impede career problem solving and decision making. On the basis of the readiness assessment, clients may be assigned to one of three levels of career service: (1) self-help, (2) brief staff assistance, and (3) individual case-managed career counseling.

Assessing Career Problem-solving Skills

The assessment of problem-solving and decision-making skills entails identifying specific domains in the Pyramid that require further development in order to be able to solve the career problem at hand.

Self-knowledge. The assessment of self-knowledge is often a confirmatory process in which interest inventories, such as the Self-Directed Search, allow clients to clarify and reaffirm their interests. Computer-assisted career guidance (CACG) systems, card sorts (values, interests, skills), and autobiographical sketches may also be useful.

Occupational Knowledge. Occupational knowledge may be assessed through traditional vocational card sorts or through using a card sort as a cognitive-mapping task. Through the use of a think-aloud procedure, clients reveal their knowledge about occupations as they sort the cards into *Like*, *Dislike*, or *Maybe* piles. In a cognitive-mapping task, the clients reveal a schema of the world of work by sorting cards into piles of related occupations and then identifying the pile *Most like me*.

Decision-making Skills. The CTI may be used to identify specific phases in the CASVE Cycle in which a client is experiencing blocks in the career problem-solving process brought about by dysfunctional career thoughts. The Decision-Making Confusion (DMC) scale reveals dysfunction in the Communication, Analysis, and Synthesis phases, which entail the derivation of career alternatives. The External Conflict (EC) scale addresses the Valuing phase, in which clients weigh the importance of their views in relation to the views of significant others. The Commitment Anxiety (CA) scale alludes to the transition from arriving at a solution to the career problem in the Valuing phase to making a commitment to action in the Execution phase.

Executive Processing. Dysfunctional thoughts in this domain may also be assessed through responses to individual items on the Executive Processing content scale of the CTI. In addition, during interviews with a client, a career counselor may listen carefully for instances of negative self-talk, ineffective cognitive strategies, and lack of control in staying focused on the task at hand.

The outcome of the assessment process is the development of an individualized learning plan (ILP) that comprises the goals of counseling in order to address the identified deficiencies and blocks that impede problem solving and decision making.

HELPING CLIENTS ACQUIRE CAREER PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION-MAKING SKILLS

The Pyramid and CASVE Cycle are instrumental in developing interventions that facilitate the acquisition of self-knowledge, occupational knowledge, and career problem-solving and decision-making skills.

Acquiring Self-knowledge. The acquisition or clarification of self-knowledge may be accomplished through the use of interest inventories, values inventories, and ability and skills assessments that typically affirm and clarify the elements of the Self-knowledge Domain. Autobiographies may also be helpful in describing and organizing life experiences that bear on the career problem at hand.

Acquiring Occupational Knowledge. In career counseling, clients engage in the processes of *schema specialization*, in which they are able to make finer discriminations among occupations, and *schema generalization*, in which they form more extensive networks of connections among extant occupational knowledge structures. When career counseling takes place within comprehensive career centers, the acquisition of occupational knowledge may be facilitated through the use of a variety of media, such as print materials in the form of occupational briefs, vocational biographies, and reference books; special-topics books are an efficient means of acquiring factual knowledge about occupations, interactive media, and Internet Web sites. Reality testing through job shadowing or interviews with incumbents allows clients to experience occupations even more directly.

Acquiring Career Problem-solving and Decision-making Skills. The concept of the Pyramid of Information Processing is presented directly to clients in the form of a handout, "What's Involved in Career Choice." The concepts of Communication, Analysis, Synthesis, Valuing, and Execution, as well as the cyclical relationship among these concepts, are learned through presenting a visual representation in the form of a handout, with a figure depicting the CASVE Cycle and easy-to-grasp statements describing each stage. Then, through subsequent considerations of activities included in the ILP and feedback from a counselor, clients begin to *accommodate* and *assimilate* the CIP model into their own decision-making styles. At the termination of counseling, the counselor reviews the decision-making process undertaken and demonstrates how the CIP model can be used in future career problem situations.

Acquiring Metacognitive Skills in the Executive Processing Domain. When dysfunctional or negative thoughts have been identified in the assessment

process, clients learn how to change their dysfunctional or negative career thoughts using the ICAA algorithm (Identify, Challenge, Alter, and Act). *The CTI Workbook* takes clients step-by-step through a cognitive-restructuring process. Clients also learn how to self-monitor their progress through the CASVE Cycle.

IMPLEMENTING THE CIP MODEL IN CAREER COUNSELING

A seven-step career service delivery sequence is used as a heuristic for implementing the CIP model in career counseling:

1. *Initial interview.* The career counselor gathers qualitative information about the nature of the presenting career problem.
2. *Preliminary-readiness assessment.* An individual's readiness for career counseling is assessed through administering the CTI and the Problem Space Worksheet. The findings are reviewed with the client.
3. *Define the problem and analyze the causes.* The counselor and the client come to a mutual understanding of the career problem and related issues. The specific causes of the problem lie in the deficiencies within the respective domains of the Pyramid or blocks that impede or inhibit progressing through the CASVE Cycle. We refer to this as the "career diagnosis," according to the CIP model.
4. *Formulate goals.* The counselor and client together formulate a set of attainable goals, stated in behavioral terms, to remove the respective deficiencies or blocks.
5. *Develop an individualized learning plan (ILP).* For each goal, the counselor and client develop learning activities to attain the goal and identify resources used in the activities, estimate the time needed to carry out the activities, and establish priority in the sequence of goal attainments as well as an indicator or measure of their attainment.
6. *Execute ILP.* Clients carry out the ILP while the counselor monitors the attainment of the respective goals and assists the client when required.
7. *Summative review and generalization.* At the conclusion of the ILP, the client and counselor review the process used to solve the problem, make the decision at hand, and evaluate its effectiveness. They also explore how the CIP model might be applied to future career problems or even life problems in general.

IMPLICATIONS FOR BEST PRACTICES IN CAREER COUNSELING

The CIP model advances the state of the science in career counseling by providing a theory base for introducing a value-added dimension, that is, using the problem at hand as a means of furthering the acquisition of career problem-solving and decision-making skills. Furthermore, focusing specifically on what clients are required to learn to improve their career problem-solving skills, counselors are freed up to look beyond the traditional one-on-one counseling relationship and creatively develop facilitative learning environments. Finally, the assessment of readiness for career problem solving enables counselors to match career service delivery resources to the depth and scope of the presenting problem, thereby fostering greater efficiency in the administration of career services.

The intent of the CIP model is to serve as a heuristic to enable individuals to systematically think through a career problem that will improve opportunities for career and lifestyle enhancement. Through the application of the model to solve a presenting problem, clients become better career problem solvers and decision makers, which, in turn, ultimately leads to satisfying, meaningful, and productive careers.

—Gary W. Peterson, James P. Sampson Jr.,
Robert C. Reardon, and Janet G. Lenz

See also Career appraisal, Career decision-making styles, Career exploration, Social cognitive career theory

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COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Collective bargaining is an activity that takes place between workers and employers. It can be defined as the ongoing process by which workers and their employers negotiate to resolve disputes over workplace issues. These issues typically include compensation (wages and other pay, such as overtime, holiday pay, vacation pay, and benefits, which include health care and retirement); hours of work; and conditions of work (work rules, safety and health procedures, work duties, seniority provisions, etc.). The formal resolution of the disputes is written into a collective bargaining agreement or contract. In the United States, bargaining is done through a labor union (or employee organization) that the workers have chosen to represent them in dealing with their employer for collective bargaining purposes. It takes place under governmental labor relations regulations and is strongly influenced by prevailing economic and political conditions.

In the United States, labor relations are regulated by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), which covers private employers and the unions that deal with them, and by various federal, state, and local laws and ordinances, which cover the relationship between the public or government sector and the unions representing government employees. Under such regulations, labor-management relations in the United States focus on collective bargaining, which has evolved into two mutually supporting levels: (1) negotiating the bargaining agreement, or contract, and (2) enforcing that contract through the use of grievance and arbitration procedures and other means to ensure that the terms of

the contract are followed. The average duration of a labor agreement is three years, but both shorter and longer contracts are frequent, depending on what the two parties agree on. As a result, bargaining for a new contract occurs every three years or when the contract expires. Contract enforcement bargaining takes place whenever problems arise in implementing an existing agreement.

Regardless of the type of employer and the legal restrictions that apply, collective bargaining follows the same general process, a sequence of activities that includes preparing, negotiating, and finalizing the agreement. Bargaining takes place under union staff or officers, who represent the workers, and management persons, representing the employer. These representatives, with their respective committees, meet together and conduct the actual negotiating. In the United States, the law regulates the conduct of the parties and how they behave relative to each other, but it does not regulate the outcome or final results of the bargaining. The results depend on the relative economic power of the two parties.

It should be recognized that collective bargaining takes place under a complex set of relationships between employers and managers, on one hand, and the workforce and the union, on the other. While basic relations between employers and employees exist in any enterprise, these relationships take on a special form when the workers have organized into a union. They have a degree of power in dealing with their employers that unorganized workers do not have. One school of thought considers the dynamics between the parties in bargaining as essentially a power struggle. Others, typically in human resource positions, consider the main purpose of bargaining as the maintenance of labor peace and minimization of conflict at the workplace.

The relationships existing between the parties are influenced by the prevailing political and economic conditions outside the business, the state of the overall economy, the employer's competitiveness, and conditions in the local community. The motivations and expectations of each party in the bargaining process are usually quite different. Their positions, in turn, are heavily influenced by each party's interests, that is, what each side thinks is important to its well-being and thus needs to protect and improve. Reaching a compromise that is acceptable to each side can be a difficult task. When this fails to happen, a strike or lockout usually occurs. In recent years, however, over

98 percent of contract negotiations were concluded without strikes or lockouts. Considerable skills are needed for an individual from either party to be an effective bargaining representative.

Workers, and therefore their union representatives, normally focus on bettering wages, maintaining benefits, and improving work conditions. In some situations, the financial condition of the employer exerts unusual pressures for concessions and other undesirable changes in the terms of the contract. Employers historically have been mainly concerned about maximizing profits (in the private sector) and maintaining workforce control (in all sectors). Employers naturally worry about how collective bargaining and the union's power will impact these two objectives. This fuels their natural opposition to unions. Coupled with the enormous economic and political clout of corporations in today's society, this opposition creates a formidable obstacle for unions to successful bargaining.

As this brief discussion of collective bargaining indicates, the representatives from management and the union are by necessity trained professionals who are familiar with labor law, understand the dynamics of interpersonal relations, are experienced in the bargaining process from both their own perspective and that of the other party, and are skilled at the art of negotiating. Either party may choose a labor relations lawyer to represent it in bargaining, but unions often fall back on trained staff, while management frequently uses human resource personnel.

Training for management positions in collective bargaining is commonly part of university-level programs in management, especially in personnel relations and human resource management. However, some companies still rely on on-the-job training for selected managers as preparation for collective bargaining. Preparation for a position as a union representative is considerably more varied. Some unions look to hiring and training college graduates with labor studies or industrial relations degrees. Others hire pro-labor lawyers and integrate them into the union's bargaining philosophy. Still other unions prefer to promote promising members who have been active in their local unions to staff positions and to train them for collective bargaining roles. Finally, law schools offer a wide variety of labor law courses that prepare students for work in labor relations.

As in other careers today, the world of collective bargaining is in transition. Since the 1970s, economic changes such as the shift from manufacturing jobs to

service-providing jobs, deregulation, free trade, and globalization, along with changes in political attitudes and the manner in which the federal government implements the NLRA, have resulted in layoffs, plant closings, and downsizing. This has reduced union membership, especially in the goods-producing industries. Unions that represent workers in retail trade and service industries and public sector unions are holding their own or growing. The net result is fewer and smaller-sized unions in the goods-producing sector. This has even led to the demise of certain unions, usually through mergers into larger unions. As a consequence, fewer companies are unionized, so less bargaining takes place. Thus, the number of job opportunities in collective bargaining has correspondingly declined. Such positions still exist, but they are harder to find. Properly prepared individuals can still find careers in collective bargaining and related fields, but it now takes an intelligent, well-planned effort to do so.

—David R. Cormier

See also Compensation, Employment contracts, National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), Strategic human resource management

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COLLEGE STUDENT CAREER DEVELOPMENT

College student career development refers to the processes involved in making career decisions and the outcomes of those decisions for individuals in college. According to developmental theories of career decision making, traditional-age college students are often attempting to refine their understanding of themselves, learn about the world of work, and discover

how they might make work a part of their lives. Nontraditional-age college students report similar challenges, although they generally have less need to select career goals than do younger students. Not all individuals who pursue a college education do so solely for the purpose of preparing for a career, although for many, career preparation is a significant factor contributing to their decisions to enroll in a college or university. Thus, the primary vocational challenge faced by college students is choosing a major and deciding on career goals. Other important challenges include performing effectively in academic pursuits and learning skills that will enable students to succeed in a desired career.

COLLEGE MAJOR AND CAREER CHOICE

Some students enter college with clearly defined academic and career goals that do not change over their college years. However, many students find that college promotes self-exploration, and many individuals begin to gain specific information about the world of work during the college years. Just as the average adult changes jobs and even career fields multiple times, the average college student changes majors at least one time. Changing majors and/or career goals is a positive event for many students who discover new areas they believe will be highly satisfying. On the other hand, because changing majors may result in delayed graduation, deciding on a satisfying major early can be beneficial. Deciding on a major with which the student will be satisfied represents an early challenge.

The process of deciding on a major differs from student to student. Some students first decide on a career and then seek an academic major that will help prepare them for that career. For example, a college student who wants to become a physician may choose to major in biology. Other students first decide on a major on the basis of their interests or skills and then seek a career for which they are prepared. As an example, a student may major in history because he or she has enjoyed an introductory history course and then search for specific careers or jobs for which a history degree is beneficial.

Students' decisions about majors and careers are often made on the basis of their interests and their perceptions that the major and/or career will allow them to satisfy their interests. The trait-and-factor approach to career decision making suggests that individuals

seek activities that allow them to express their interests and personalities. With respect to choosing a major, for example, a student who enjoys artistic expression would be most likely to choose a major such as dance, creative writing, or theater.

Students also choose a major and career goals on the basis of their expectations about being able to succeed in the field and their expectations of having positive consequences associated with choosing that field. *Self-efficacy* refers to a student's appraisal of his or her likelihood of success. A young woman who doubts her ability to succeed in college math classes, even if she has very good math skills, is considered to have low mathematics self-efficacy, and accordingly, she may be less likely to major in mathematics. Students also make choices on the basis of their beliefs that choosing a given major or career goal will result in positive outcomes, a concept referred to as *outcome expectations*. If becoming an engineer would present benefits in terms of approval from others, for example, then a student would be more likely to choose engineering as a major.

Other influences on a college student's career development include family members, who can have both positive and negative influences. Some students perceive their family members as exerting pressure to pursue particular college majors or careers. As a result, they feel free to choose only from a restricted range of possible majors or careers. Other students perceive their family members as providing support and validation for their decisions and therefore experience greater perceived freedom to pursue goals they believe will lead to satisfaction.

A variety of role models, including influential teachers, academic advisors, and even famous people the student does not know personally, can also influence a student's career decision making by increasing his or her awareness of possible careers and what is involved in attaining them. For example, suppose a memorable grade school teacher has inspired a college student to become an education major. If the student talks to the teacher about how she advanced in her career, the student may learn important information about what it takes to be a successful teacher.

The process of choosing a major and career is also influenced by culture. The socialization of gender roles in Western cultures is such that boys are often encouraged to pursue activities that involve action, whereas girls are encouraged to pursue activities that involve affiliation. For example, in high school, girls

may not be reinforced for achievements in science and math classes, and boys may not be reinforced when they show interest in cooking or caring for youngsters. These influences continue into college, and this may explain why men are less likely to choose a careers in nursing and women are less likely to pursue careers in science, engineering, and technology. Students of color; gay, lesbian, and bisexual students; students with physical disabilities; and nontraditional-age college students may experience additional challenges that affect career decisions made during college. For example, students of color in a predominantly White university may find it difficult to find similar role models from whom they can gather career information that resonates with them. Nontraditional-age college students, as well as some younger students, experience challenges managing multiple roles, such as those of student and worker or student and parent. Multiple-role conflict may also affect students who are not yet parents or spouses but anticipate having families in the future and are trying to select career goals they believe will be compatible with other roles they want to pursue in life.

Some college students simply do not know of majors or careers they would like to pursue. This state of being uncertain about career goals is referred to as *career indecision*. On the other hand, some students are certain that they have chosen an academic or career path that will lead to satisfying learning experiences and employment. The extent to which students have decided on a career is known as *career decidedness*. Many students experience career indecision at one time or another, so in many respects, this is a normal part of the career development process. However, a prolonged period of career indecision is problematic because for many students, being undecided about a career or college major not only delays entry into a field of study but is also associated with psychological distress.

There are many potential reasons why a student may experience career indecision. Some students have difficulty making decisions in many areas of life, perhaps because they believe that it is important to make perfect choices and that choices are irreversible. For other students, the source of career indecision may be low *career decision self-efficacy* (i.e., confidence in one's ability to make a career decision). Students with high levels of career decision self-efficacy have confidence in their abilities to engage in the tasks necessary to make a career decision, and for these students, the

process of making career choices is manageable. Students with low levels of career decision self-efficacy perceive career decision-making tasks to be beyond their abilities, and they may benefit from career counseling or other interventions.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Academic achievement represents an important aspect of a college student's career development. A student must demonstrate adequate academic performance to remain in college, and most college students aspire to a career that requires a college degree. Each year, up to 25 percent of first-year college students leave their colleges or universities before the sophomore year, and the graduation rate for an entering class of freshmen may be only 50 percent. Leaving college before graduating is a positive decision for some students. For example, a student may decide to pursue a career that does not require a college degree. For other students, the decision to leave college is not voluntary, such as when poor grades lead to a student being academically dismissed; in this case, academic difficulties may slow progress toward attaining a satisfying career.

A second reason academic achievement is important is that it increases the likelihood of the student securing a satisfying job after college. In a tight job market, students with the best academic records will have a competitive edge. This achievement extends beyond the classroom to the securing of desirable internships, volunteer experiences, and part-time employment in the student's field of study.

Academic achievement also helps build a student's self-efficacy with respect to his or her area of study. Successfully performing a behavior is one of the key ways in which a student develops the expectation that the behavior can be successfully performed in the future. For example, earning high grades in several sociology classes would increase a student's self-efficacy for completing the tasks necessary to succeed as a sociologist.

Academic achievement in college appears to be facilitated by strong academic skills, good preparation in high school, a motivation to do well, beliefs that one can succeed in college, valuing the process of learning, and integration with the institution. Some barriers to academic achievement in college center on problems with a student's ability to perform well in the classroom. Such problems might include inadequate

preparation in high school, specific learning disabilities that have not been identified, or unrealistic expectations about the amount of work required to do well in college classes. Other barriers to academic achievement in college include low motivation, such as when a student feels pressure to attend college from family members but does not really want to be in college. Finally, social problems may interfere with academic achievement. For example, college students who experience significant homesickness after making the transition from living at home to living at college may simply not do well in their classes until they have become integrated into the campus community.

THE INITIAL JOB SEARCH

Finding a job after college is often a primary goal of a college student. Students in this stage of career development must learn skills such as résumé writing and interviewing. Students often have had experience applying for jobs, but finding the first career job after college is an imposing challenge for many students. Many students are able to find employment in their desired occupation shortly after graduation, but many students do not. Some of these students merely delay entry into a career consistent with their major, but other students find work in completely different areas.

Market forces, such as the unemployment rate, can dramatically affect a student's success in finding a job after graduation. Job market constraints can pose potential barriers, such as when jobs in a student's desired career field are very competitive or scarce. However, characteristics of the job market may also facilitate a student's entry into work from college, such as when that person's academic training allows him or her to fulfill needs in careers for which there is great demand.

Graduation from college does not always correspond to an immediate job search, because many students continue their education beyond the four-year degree. For some career goals selected by college students, a graduate degree or additional professional training is necessary. As graduate students choose areas of specialization for postcollege training, they may experience challenges similar to those encountered by undergraduate students when selecting a major. The career development process for graduate students is not unlike that for undergraduate students, with one exception being a more limited range of career options for graduate students given their more specialized training.

ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION

Most colleges and universities offer career assessment and counseling services to assist students as they encounter developmental challenges associated with career development or when they experience particular career development difficulties. Regarding assessment, it is often desirable to assess a student's interests, skills, values, and self-efficacy with respect to different majors and careers. Assessment in general helps with the process of exploring information about oneself, and an accurate understanding of oneself is a critical component of making career decisions. The assessment of interests provides information about the types of activities the student enjoys and can help a student identify specific careers or areas of study in which he or she might be interested. The identification of skills and self-efficacy helps a student narrow down the types of careers that he or she might be prepared to pursue. Many assessment instruments are administered and interpreted by a counselor, but self-guided computerized assessment procedures also exist. Regardless of the format, the assessment process is often a helpful way to enable a student to identify a specific career path that might lead to success and satisfaction.

Because of the large number of college students who would benefit from career development intervention, many colleges and universities offer courses or brief workshops designed to teach self-exploration and job search skills. In such courses and workshops, students may learn about the career development process, engage in self-assessment, learn about the world of work, and learn skills that will help them as they begin to seek employment.

When individualized treatment is desirable, career counseling may be used to reduce barriers associated with making career decisions. If a student is identified as having low career decision self-efficacy, for example, interventions may be implemented that provide opportunities for success. Sometimes a student is undecided about a major or a career because he or she has been depressed or has experienced a personal emotional upheaval. In these cases, career counseling may focus on the personal issues as a way to reduce their impact on career development.

Most colleges and universities also have career centers or other offices that can aid students with practical job skills. Workshops may help students develop résumés, hone interviewing skills, and find internships, for example. Many colleges and universities

keep databases about current internships and part-time job opportunities that may be available for students. Colleges are also well equipped to help students experiencing academic difficulties.

Whether career intervention takes place in the classroom, at a counseling or career center, or in a job placement office, the goal is typically to help students learn how to make important life and career decisions both during and after college. As such, it is usual for interventions to enhance the student's understanding of how to make effective career decisions, rather than just considering the decision made in college as the final outcome of career intervention.

—Jeffrey H. Kahn and Margaret M. Nauta

See also Crystallization of the vocational self-concept, School-to-work transition

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COMPARABLE WORTH

Comparable worth is a policy implemented by a small number of state, local, and national governments to remedy wage disparities between men and women due to occupational segregation, a situation in which women are more likely to be employed in low-paying occupations and men are more likely to be employed in high-paying occupations. Comparable worth requires "equal pay" for "equal worth," where worth or value is not determined by the market but via a job-rating scheme that assigns point values to different job attributes, such as skill level, responsibility, and working conditions, and aggregates them to a measure of job worth or value. Jobs with equal value would be paid the same wage; jobs with higher value would be paid a higher wage; and jobs with lower value would be paid a lower wage. In addition to raising wages in female-dominated occupations, comparable worth might also lower wages in male-dominated occupations.

Proponents of comparable-worth legislation view the negative relationship between wages and the proportion of females in a given occupation as an undervaluation by society of "women's work" relative to "men's work." For these proponents, such undervaluation of work performed primarily by females is thought to arise from two sources. The first source, *crowding*, refers to the large number of women forced into certain occupations as a result of discrimination. The large supply of women to these occupations depresses wages. The second is society's *devaluation of work* performed by women simply because it is performed by women. Evidence presented for this thesis is that earnings are statistically negatively related to the proportion of women in an occupation, even after controlling for observable and measurable job characteristics. Comparable worth is proposed as a way to raise the wages of women in female-dominated occupations to their "true" higher value.

Some opponents of comparable-worth legislation note that salaries set according to comparable worth do not consider the personal characteristics of workers or the unobservable or unmeasured job attributes that affect pay, such as flexibility and overall family-friendliness, and so this disparity in occupational choice may not be due to discrimination. Women choose to enter these lower-paying occupations because these unmeasured job attributes compensate for the lower pay. In the jargon of economists, women

are willing to pay a compensating-wage differential (that is, accept a preferred working environment for less monetary pay) in order to better combine work and child-rearing responsibilities. These opponents point out that since this is not discrimination, no remedy is needed.

Opponents who accept discrimination as a factor that leads to occupational segregation note that interfering with market wages has negative unintended consequences, even though increasing women's wages to combat discrimination may be a laudable goal. One of these potential unintended consequences is a reduction in the employment of women in female-dominated occupations. Employers faced with paying higher wages in these occupations will substitute other inputs for these workers and decrease production overall in response to the increased cost of labor. Another consequence of interfering with market wages is the creation of unemployment in these female-dominated occupations due to the surplus of women desiring to work at the now-higher wages. Yet another negative consequence is the depression of the wages of men and women in the male-dominated occupations caused by an increase in the supply of workers to these occupations—a result of women who are unable to find employment in the now-higher-paying female-dominated occupations moving into the male-dominated occupations. Finally, if wages are artificially lowered as part of a comparable-worth policy that both increases some wages and decreases others, this will lead to the decreased quality of the workers in the male-dominated occupations.

Finally, even if the negative effects on employment and wages are deemed acceptable, it is difficult to put the concept of comparability into practice, given the subjective nature of the job evaluation process and the need to allow market forces and the efforts of workers to play a role. Evidence has shown that different job evaluation studies assign different points or weights to various skills, leading to different job comparisons and wage adjustments depending on the particular evaluation used. In addition, different localities are subject to different market forces. A private national employer with employees all across the country will need to take these local market forces into account in order to remain profitable. If a firm is not allowed under comparable worth to address such market forces with wage differences, an employer might choose to adjust production in such a way as to employ workers in the female-dominated occupations only in labor

markets where wages are low and employ workers in male-dominated occupations only in labor markets where wages are high. To encourage individual employee productivity, merit bonuses and raises for extra effort may be necessary, while to discourage turnover, seniority may also need to be rewarded. Finally, overtime may be necessary for some workers but not others. These important factors are ignored when computing wages strictly according to the "equal value" principle of comparable-worth policy.

HISTORY OF COMPARABLE WORTH

Early U.S. legislation attempting to address the inequality of pay between men and women included the U.S. Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964. Similar legislation was put in place in the 1970s in other industrialized countries, such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Spain, and France. The focus of this legislation was the provision of "equal pay for equal work" performed by both men and women. However, critics claimed that because of occupational segregation, men and women were rarely performing equal work. As a response to this perceived inequality, comparable-worth policy was first proposed in the United States in the late 1970s to instead promote "equal pay for equal value." In the United States, comparable worth was primarily adopted by state and local governments rather than private employers, as public employers are not subject to profit-maximizing constraints. However, when other industrialized countries followed suit in the early 1980s, some required comparable worth in the private sector as well. Some people believe that unions have the potential to bring comparable worth to the private sector in the United States as a result of the increasing feminization of labor unions.

JOB EVALUATION SCHEMES IN DETERMINING EQUAL WORTH

Job-rating schemes have long been used by employers with internal labor markets, including public employers and large private firms that participate in collective bargaining with unions over wages. These schemes assign points to various characteristics of a job, such as skill level, level of responsibility, working conditions, and physical and mental effort required. The points are then summed (and possibly

weighted) to assign a particular total value to a particular job. The point total is used to compare the particular job to other jobs in determining "equal worth." Equal points mean equal worth and equal pay; higher points mean higher worth and higher pay; and lower points mean lower worth and lower pay.

A problem with this technique of assigning points, however, is that it is quite subjective. Characteristics such as physical strength that are more often associated with male-dominated jobs may be rated more highly than characteristics such as communication skills that are more often associated with female-dominated jobs, leading to lower values for female jobs. However, over the years, several gender-neutral evaluation methods have been developed and used to implement comparable worth.

PAY BASED ON JOB EVALUATION SCHEMES: DETERMINING COMPARABLE-WORTH WAGES

Once each job is assigned a total point value, total points are plotted against wages, and a line is fit to these data using regression analysis, an accepted statistical technique. Once the equation of the line representing the relationship between wages and value is determined in this manner, it is often revealed that most female jobs are below the line, while most male jobs are above the line, where the standard for categorizing an occupation as female dominated is 70 percent or more female workers and the standard for categorizing an occupation as male dominated is 70 percent or more male workers. This suggests that as long as no important job attributes that affect wages have been omitted from the calculation of the total point value, female-dominated jobs are paid less simply because they are performed by females.

The most transparent method of increasing female wages is to directly match female-dominated jobs to male-dominated jobs that are deemed equivalent because they fall within the same range of overall job point values. The wage in the female-dominated occupation is then assigned the wage paid in the matching male occupation. If more than one male-dominated occupation matches a particular female occupation, a rule must be followed in determining which wage will be applied. In practice, however, this can lead to the lowest wage being applied. It can also lead to female-dominated occupations with higher point values being assigned lower wages than female-dominated occupations

with lower point values, given idiosyncrasies in the markets for workers in male-dominated occupations.

There are, however, several other ways to determine female wages under comparable worth that are not subject to these concerns. One method is to estimate a wage equation for male-dominated occupations and use that estimated equation to compute a wage for each female-dominated occupation. Another method is to estimate an earnings equation over all occupations, controlling for total job points and the proportion of females in an occupation, and then add the estimated reduction in wage due to the proportion of females to existing wages in each of the female-dominated occupations. Finally, another way is to estimate an earnings equation using data on wages and job values for all occupations and then use that equation to adjust all workers' wages, both male and female. In this scenario, some individuals, primarily females, would experience an increase in wages, while others, primarily males, would experience a decrease in wages. This is less politically feasible, however, than any of the other methods.

ECONOMIC THEORY AND COMPARABLE-WORTH OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION AND CROWDING

Economic theory predicts a negative effect of comparable worth on women's employment. This is because increased wages in female-dominated occupations would lead employers to make fewer of these jobs available. Employers cut back on production when faced with higher input costs, requiring less of all inputs. In addition, employers substitute other inputs for the now-more-expensive female workers. Theory also predicts an increase in unemployment in female-dominated occupations due to an increase in the number of women looking for work at the now-higher wages at the same time the number of available jobs is declining. Economic theory also predicts that the supply of females to male-dominated occupations where wages are not directly adjusted via comparable-worth policy will increase due to the decline in employment in the female-dominated occupations covered by the policy. This will depress wages in the male-dominated occupations and will possibly even lower wages for the women below those they would have received without comparable worth in the female-dominated occupations.

Finally, if comparable worth not only increases wages in female occupations, as is often proposed, but

also artificially decreases them in male occupations, economic theory predicts there will be a shortage of workers in male-dominated occupations, as fewer individuals will be willing to work at these lower wages. As a result of this shortage of workers in male-dominated occupations, the quality of workers in these occupations could decline, as firms might need to accept lower-quality workers in order to meet staffing requirements. Thus, comparable-worth policy affects not only the employment and unemployment of workers in female-dominated occupations but also the quality of workers hired and hence the quality of the final products or services produced by workers in the male-dominated occupations.

EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE ON COMPARABLE WORTH

Effectiveness of Comparable-worth Policies with Respect to Women's Wages and Employment

Empirical evidence suggests that the benefits of comparable worth in the form of a lowered wage gap between male- and female-dominated occupations are smaller than proponents of comparable-worth legislation expected and that the decline in employment is also much smaller than opponents expected. One potential reason for these small estimated effects is that comparable worth is limited primarily to the public sector. This sector makes up only a small portion of employment in many, if not most, female-dominated occupations. Another reason suggested by empirical research is that male-female pay differences within an occupation are predominantly interfirm and interindustry, not intrafirm, and thus not subject to comparable-worth policy that affects pay differences only within a particular firm or establishment.

Effectiveness of Comparable-worth Policies in Satisfying the Prevailing-Wage Principle

Wages paid by public employers are usually set with the prevailing-wage principle in mind. This principle states that public employees are to receive wages equal to those they would be paid if they were working in an equivalent job in the private sector. If the ratio of public to private wages is equal to 1, then the prevailing wage principle is satisfied. While perfect

correspondence between wages in the public and private sector does not occur in the absence of comparable worth, the estimated ratio is close to 1. Empirical results indicate, however, that when comparable-worth policy requires wage increases for female-dominated occupations but disallows decreases for male-dominated occupations (as is often the case in practice), public sector wages are moved away from this prevailing-wage standard. However, if decreases in the wages paid in male-dominated occupations are allowed, although in practice this is usually not politically feasible, then one would be moved toward the prevailing-wage standard. Hence, both the competing principles of prevailing wage and comparable worth must be considered when designing comparable-worth policy.

A DIFFERENT APPLICATION OF COMPARABLE WORTH

A situation in which the issue of equal pay for equal worth arises outside the context of gender is in the case of university professors. Efforts by unions to organize academic faculty often note the disparity in pay between faculty with similar training (a PhD) and years of experience (a particular rank) but different fields of research and/or teaching. Such disparities arise due to differences in the supply and demand in the markets for different types of professors. For example, economics or finance professors often earn relatively high salaries compared with sociology professors. This may be due to a higher demand for economics classes than for sociology classes, a smaller supply of economics professors due to more lucrative alternative opportunities in the nonacademic market, or a combination of both. However, unions and comparable-worth advocates would argue that the work performed by both types of professors is of equal worth, as both types of professors engage in teaching, research, and service activities, and so both economics and sociology professors should be paid equally. Opponents, however, would point to the negative effects of a decline in the employment of sociology professors, an increase in the unemployment of sociology professors, and the potential shortage of and corresponding decline in the quality of economics professors that would result if the wages of economics professors were set artificially low as a result of comparable-worth policy.

—Charlene Marie Kalenkoski

See also Equal Pay Act, Glass ceiling, Inequality, Sex discrimination, Stereotyping of workers

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COMPENSATION

Compensation encompasses myriad schemes that organizations use for providing their employees money in return for their labor. When designing and implementing a compensation system, organizational decision makers must ask many questions and address many issues. How much should we pay our employees? Should pay be based on the job or on the person? Should employees be paid fixed rates, or should pay vary as a function of seniority or performance? What is the appropriate pay structure across the organization; that is, how much compensation discrepancy should there be between good and poor performers or between new and long-tenured employees? Researchers have studied compensation issues for many years and have generated a wealth of research evidence on some important issues, but other issues remain lightly researched. In this entry, a sample of this evidence is outlined and described. First, issues and evidence regarding base pay levels are addressed. Second, the types of variable pay and incentive plans are outlined.

Third, the evidence and issues concerning the structure of pay in the organization but within and across organizational levels are described.

The issue of how much to pay employees for their work has perplexed compensation decision makers for many years. An influential theoretical approach in economics, the *neoclassical theory approach*, suggests that market forces compel organizations to offer basically the same market rate for work and that any differences in base pay levels across organizations will be short-lived. Research evidence, however, suggests there are large differences in the rates of pay organizations offer for the same work and that these choices have a substantial relationship with important attitudinal and behavioral outcomes in organizations. Other economic viewpoints as well as theory in the fields of organizational behavior and human resource management provide interesting insights into these issues. In recent years, economists developed a theory known as the *efficiency wage theory*, which suggests that organizations may reap substantial benefits from paying higher-than-market rates to their employees. In establishing a very high base pay rate, an organization may garner several advantages over competitor organizations. Offering high pay rates may simplify recruiting processes by attracting a large number of applicants from the marketplace and perhaps a larger number of qualified applicants. Selection processes may also be simplified because it may take less persuasion to entice applicants to accept job offers. The organization may also realize advantages in terms of employee productivity. For example, organizations may be able to insist on or expect higher-than-average effort, efficiency, and performance levels in return for higher pay rates. From the perspective of the individual employee, a person may work harder because he or she realizes the advantages of higher pay in the given organization. Employees may also be more effectively retained in the organization because they realize that they cannot find a similarly paying job in the marketplace. Inducing employees to give more effort as a result of high pay levels is known as the *incentive effect of efficiency wages*, and the attraction of greater numbers of high-quality applicants is known as the *sorting effect of efficiency wages*.

Why do some organizations choose to pay efficiency or higher-than-market pay rates? One reason is that some organizations rely more on their employees to generate revenue. Organizations that require highly skilled or specialized employees to generate income

or those that are structured in unique ways may have a greater need to pay above-market rates. For example, some organizations have very few supervisory employees and make extensive use of self-managed work teams. Under these conditions, it may be necessary to pay employees high pay rates to ensure that they are performing at high levels. Research also suggests that the need to pay employees high rates may also be driven by the business strategy of the organization. Some organizations try to be successful by maintaining very low-cost structures, while other organizations focus on innovation or providing goods and/or services of the utmost quality. Low-cost organizations may pay low rates because employees are not as valuable in terms of creativity or quality, and therefore high effort levels and low turnover rates are minimized in importance. Innovative organizations require workforce stability and high skill levels among employees and often pay high rates as a result. Finally, organizations that have difficulty monitoring the behavior of employees because of the large size of the organization or the geographic dispersion of employees may pay efficiency wages to spur employees to work harder. Research also shows that organizations make several other important decisions about setting pay rates for their employees. For example, many organizations pay rates for jobs that are central to their functioning or core jobs (e.g., a baker in a bakery, a physician in a hospital, a logistics specialist in a freight-moving company) more than other jobs. That is, many organizations pay “efficiency” or special wages to only certain groups of employees, but average or below-market rates for other groups of jobs.

In addition to setting base pay or pay rate levels, organizations must also make decisions about whether or not to provide financial incentives for performance (e.g., merit pay raises, bonus). The use of financial incentives or pay-for-performance schemes continues to be hotly debated in the popular press and also among researchers. On the one hand, some researchers argue that providing financial inducements to individuals in return for good performance can reduce intrinsic motivation levels of employees. This argument is contained in a theory known as *cognitive evaluation theory*. According to this approach, if offered money as an extrinsic motivator, individuals will lose some of their basic interest in performing the tasks that are being rewarded. Perhaps more important, providing financial incentives for high performance may

lead employees to focus only on the tasks that are necessary to receive the reward, while ignoring other tasks that are important but not specifically rewarded. On the other hand, other theories suggest that providing financial incentives for performance is an effective means of increasing performance levels among employees and, in addition, has no negative effect on the intrinsic motivation levels of employees. Researchers pursuing this line of investigation often rely on the psychology models of B. F. Skinner, which suggest that individuals will repeat behaviors that are effectively rewarded. Several cognitive motivation models are also frequently used to explain a positive relationship between the use of financial incentives and employee performance. These models (e.g., the expectancy theory of motivation and goal-setting theory) suggest that individuals make decisions about behavior and effort levels as a function of their beliefs that (a) behaviors will lead to high performance, (b) high performance will be rewarded, and (c) the rewards for high performance are desirable. If financial incentives are properly administered, individuals will link these cognitions and perform at high levels in return for financial rewards.

There is considerable research evidence to support a positive relationship between financial incentives and individual performance, especially in terms of performance quantity, and virtually no evidence that financial incentives reduce intrinsic motivation levels. In a recent study that cumulated research findings across a 40-year time window, there was a strong positive relationship between the use of financial incentives and the quantity or amount of work that individuals produced. The relationship between the use of financial incentives and the quality of employees’ performance (i.e., how well they work), has rarely been studied. The aforementioned study found only six published investigations on this topic over the same 40-year period. While the average relationship in these studies was positive, it was not a strong positive relationship. Much more research needs to be conducted on the issue of financial incentives and performance quality.

It is clear that nearly all organizations in the United States use some kind of financial incentive or pay-for-performance program. Some surveys suggest that more than 90 percent of U.S.-based organizations state that they pay their employees based on performance. The question is this: What type of pay-for-performance program should be used? Clearly, the

most popular pay-for-performance program is merit pay. *Merit pay* is defined as permanent increases to base pay (a permanent pay raise) based on individual performance evaluations. Merit pay is what is known as a *behavior-based financial incentive* program. In these types of programs, a rater (or group of raters) evaluates the behavior of employees, compares and contrasts levels of performance among individuals in the group, and finally assigns pay raises based on the relative levels of performance. These types of programs offer several advantages to individual employees and employers: They can be used for any type of job, they allow for correction of factors beyond the control of employees when evaluating performance (e.g., faulty equipment), and they focus on the behaviors underlying effective performance. They also have several disadvantages. In particular, judgments of performance are often quite subjective, and employees may not believe that their ratings accurately reflect the quality of their behaviors.

Some research suggests that the key factor in the failure of merit pay plans is that employees do not believe that pay raises are accurately linked to performance levels. Another limitation of merit pay is that raters often fail to make clear or adequate distinctions among employees. Performance ratings tend to be biased upward; many decision makers are uncomfortable giving very low performance ratings to individuals who may deserve such ratings. Merit pay plans are also often limited by the small size of pay raises awarded. Some research suggests that pay raises must be as high as 7 percent before individuals will report that the pay raise is meaningful. Given that average pay raises in the United States over the past 15 years were typically less than 4 percent, most awarded merit pay raises are likely not effective in terms of encouraging high performance levels in the future. In general, although merit pay plans are extensively used by organizations, the research evidence concerning their effectiveness can best be described as “mixed.” There is clear evidence that the use of financial incentives relates positively to performance, but error and other failures in the administration of merit pay tend to reduce its overall effectiveness in practice. When administered effectively, merit pay raises tend to be positively related not only to individual performance but also to compensation satisfaction, or happiness with pay raises, and negatively to intentions to quit the organization.

Some organizations use what are known as *results-based financial incentive plans*. These types of plans, sometimes referred to as *piece rate compensation*

plans, provide rewards to individuals for results, rather than the behaviors that may or may not lead to results. Results-based plans are typically used when there is an available objective outcome (e.g., sales volume or units produced) and when behaviors cannot be monitored effectively. The advantages of these types of compensation systems include the clear link between the outcome (sales volume or units produced) and the incentive (e.g., a percentage of the sales volume or a certain amount for each unit produced). Although these advantages are clear, these types of plans are fairly rare in the current business environment, in part because objective outcomes are difficult or impossible to obtain in most modern jobs and because most of today’s work outputs are collectively rather than independently produced.

Although individual incentive plans are the most popular forms of compensation, many organizations also include seniority provisions in compensation packages for employees, use group, unit, or organization-based incentives, and a growing number of organizations use skill-based compensation plans. Research clearly demonstrates that providing pay increases based on tenure or seniority can lower turnover rates. There is consistent and clear evidence that workforces are more stable to the extent that pay is based on seniority, but there is little evidence that these workforces are high performing. Seniority provisions provide rewards for performance only in the broadest sense possible, that is, minimum performance necessary to avoid firing or discharge, and therefore provide primarily retention inducements.

Group- and organization-based incentives (productivity gainsharing, team-based pay, and profit-sharing plans) are gaining in popularity and offer several advantages over individually based incentive plans. These types of plans may encourage teamwork and collaboration across functional units and help develop a spirit of common fate in the organization, each of which may lead to increases in performance. These types of plans may also lead to mutual monitoring behavior among employees such that wasted time, effort, and resources are diminished when employees understand that their pay raises or bonuses are linked. There is consistent evidence that profit-sharing plans (bonuses awarded to employees based on organizational profitability) relate positively to organizational performance. These results, however, are not clear in terms of the causal direction of the relationship; perhaps only highly profitable companies adopt profit-sharing plans. A primary disadvantage of

group-based incentive plans is known as the *line-of-sight problem*. A given employee in an organization may not believe that his or her behaviors are related to the overall performance of the group, unit, or organization. In these cases, group-based incentives may encourage shirking or free riding because the person believes that the same reward will be received regardless of his or her effort level.

Skill-based pay, also called *pay for knowledge*, *pay for skills*, and *multiskilled compensation*, is a relatively new compensation innovation. Regardless of the terminology used, it represents a distinct deviation from traditional compensation systems that pay employees for the jobs, not the skills, they hold. Traditional job-based systems are concerned with the nature of the task, while skill-based pay is concerned with the nature of the attributes possessed by employees. Under these plans, an employee's pay level is set for the skills he or she holds at the current time, and the individual is given additional pay increases when he or she acquires a new skill and demonstrates competency in it. Moreover, pay increases are awarded whether or not individuals actually use the skills in the course of their day-to-day work. Multiskilled employees are desired by organizations because they can increase workforce flexibility and productivity. For example, an organization replete with multiskilled employees can more effectively handle periodic absences and unexpected quits than an organization using job-based pay, because many skills are essentially held in reserve in the workforce. The disadvantages of skill-based pay plans are that they are difficult to administer, involve a complete renovation and integration of the human resource management system, and can sometimes, although rarely, lead to prohibitively high pay levels in the organization. Although these types of plans are still fairly rare, there is evidence that they increase the flexibility and productivity of the workforce in general and that these types of plans are typically received favorably by employees.

The preceding review is but a brief sample of the types of compensation plans available to employers and employees, as well as a synopsis of the implications of adopting any given plan or combination of plans. Because compensation is one of the largest costs that organizations incur in doing business, often more than 70 percent of total costs, organizational decision makers are continually looking for ways to more effectively compensate their employees, and researchers are continuing to develop and test ideas

that may lead to more effective compensation management in the future.

—Jason D. Shaw

See also Merit-based pay, Pay compression, Pay-for-performance reward systems

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COMPUTER-BASED CAREER SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Computer-based career support (CBCS) systems are information and communication technology (ICT)

applications aimed at assisting individuals in their careers through the provision of online career support services. CBCS systems include a mix of career support services that correspond to four general functions of "social support": informational, appraisal, instrumental, and emotional support. Informational CBCS is provided through information on occupational and career-related topics. Appraisal support consists of feedback from personality and skills assessments. Instrumental support includes, for example, e-learning, job vacancies, and career decision-making support. It has also been recently shown that emotional support can be provided through online communication functions, such as e-mail, chat, and discussion forums.

CBCS systems can be either (a) intraorganizational, with a restricted access, or (b) publicly available, Internet-based, or intraorganizational. CBCS can be offered as an independent career management application for employees or as part of an organization-wide e-HRM system. Public Internet-based career support is often associated with independent online recruiting and career counseling sites. Most Internet-based career support services are offered for free or at the cost of basic registration. Although both forms of CBCS are concerned with finding the best possible person-job fit, the key objective of intraorganizational career support is to maximize individuals' performance. The key objective of Internet-based career support is to improve users' careers.

Integrated CBCS systems are a fairly recent development. Thus far, few empirical studies have reported on such systems' usage and effects or on users' and providers' perspectives. The available studies point to an underutilization of integrated or all-inclusive career support systems. CBCS, no matter how sophisticated or integrated it may be, is often merely used as just another online recruiting service. The studies that focus on examining single CBCS functions, such as career counseling, career decision making, recruiting, and so on, however, report quite the opposite results. Some studies, for example, report a high popularity and positive reception of a Web-based career advisor application for medical students. Other empirical studies have demonstrated students' increased career decidedness after the use of an Internet-based interactive career-planning system and computer-based career guidance system. Also, there is evidence of an increase in the quality of selection outcomes and hiring, as well as job search process efficiency. Thus, current key questions in regard to the practice and

research of the integrated CBCS are as follows: Why does the provision of all-in-one career support appear not to be accepted by its intended users? How should the integrated provision of a CBCS be reconceptualized to get the system accepted and used effectively in the future?

Recent literature on the effective provision of interactive professional services, such as CBCS, distinguishes two approaches. One takes a sociotechnical perspective, and the other takes a social perspective. The sociotechnical perspective suggests that career support belongs to a range of professional services that are currently difficult to provide through the Web. Services of this group require high customization of highly advanced technologies that are only emerging. Recent literature notes the importance of gender, age, language, and ethnicity issues in the customization of such services. However, much more research is needed to identify all critical areas for CBCS customization.

The social perspective, however, is not constrained by technological developments and offers vast opportunities for new social science research. For example, studies of online communities suggest that CBCS may be conceptualized as a *virtual social structure* of relations or a virtual community, rather than a mere source of career service provision. From this perspective, the studies of CBCS would need to include the design principles of a traditional community. As several researchers note, virtual communities succeed not because of flashy graphics, but because they contain a number of requisite elements for a successful community, such as identity persistence, a coherent sense of space, and a sophisticated set of rituals. The incorporation of *social network* research on the various ways people operate within social networks may also determine who will use the CBCS and how it can be used effectively.

The social perspective calls for consideration of further study of *social career support processes* for making CBCS usable and effective. Recent empirical investigation of integrated CBCS systems suggests that the current process of virtual career support is quite different from what is provided by career counselors. The current CBCS systems allow selective usage of career support functions, or "cherry-picking," while the process of traditional counseling is more guided and prescribed.

Further research on the effectiveness of CBCS will need to question whether a single source of career support that includes career counseling services, on

the one hand, and recruiting, on the other, does not undermine the trust of users. If so, that could be a reason for poor usage of a CBCS. The basic idea behind this assumption is that very few users would be willing to expose their career uncertainties to a CBCS if it were part of an online recruiting agency's or an employers' e-HRM system and might be a vehicle to new career or job opportunities in the future.

In sum, CBCS is a novel and sprawling phenomenon that, in theory and practice, offers large potential efficiency gains. The efficiency gains to be had from a CBCS (at individual and organizational levels) appear obvious and perhaps, therefore, have not received much serious research attention. In terms of the perceived intrinsic value of the content of the offered support, much more research across both users and those who design and sustain the support will point to new ways of designing more effective and better used systems. Approaching CBCS from multiple and interdisciplinary research perspectives, including both the sociotechnical and social perspectives, would help to make it more accepted and effective.

—Svetlana N. Khapova and Celeste P. M. Wilderom

See also Electronic employment screening, Internet career assessment, Internet recruitment, Job-posting programs, Occupational Information Network (O*NET)

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CONTINGENT EMPLOYMENT

Contingent employment has become pervasive in contemporary society. It is a multifaceted phenomenon with significant implications for career development, occupational and economic opportunity, and employment security. The employment of people on a contingent basis is a trend found in all the advanced industrialized countries of the world. Understanding the many faces of contingent employment, therefore, is crucial to social science theories and empirical analyses of work, employment, and careers. While estimates of the extent of contingent employment vary, there is a consensus that it has expanded notably in the last two decades of the twentieth century and in the early twenty-first century. Estimates depend on how contingent employment is defined. In its broadest definition, contingent employment includes temporary, contracted, seasonal, day labor, and part-time jobs. Using these broad parameters, it is estimated that more than 30 percent of the American workforce is employed on a contingent basis. Excluding part-time jobs (many of which are permanent), the contingent workforce is estimated to be approximately 15 percent.

Part-time Employment

Part-time work has existed for many decades. Historically, employers hired people on a part-time basis to adjust the size of their staffs to shifts in business cycles. Hiring extra restaurant staff to serve customers during a lunch or dinner hour is one example of this type of adjustment. Increasingly, many corporations structure their jobs on a part-time basis to avoid having to pay benefits to workers, discourage workers from developing long-term attachments to firms, and minimize long-term relationships among workers that might lead them to mobilize against employers for better wages and working conditions. Part-time employment is widespread in the service sector, particularly in fast-food and retail service occupations, where training requirements are low and turnover is high. Many people who are able to find only part-time jobs may moonlight as well, holding down multiple part-time positions at any given time.

Temporary Employment

Similarly, temporary employment has existed for many decades, but the dynamics have changed

considerably in recent years, a period that has seen explosive growth in this form of employment. In the post–World War II era, many women took jobs on a temporary basis because it allowed them to adjust their paid work hours around their unpaid family obligations. When a woman worked in a temporary job, typically she filled in for a full-time, permanent worker who was temporarily ill or otherwise off the job for a brief duration. Today, researchers have discovered, many temporary jobs are permanent, continuous positions that managers staff with temporary workers on an ongoing basis. Thus, while a temporary employee in the postwar period might have worked for a few days or weeks to fill in for a permanent worker, today a temporary employee might work for months and, in some cases, years, carrying out job tasks much as a permanent worker does. While women continue to be the majority of temporary workers, this workforce is increasingly staffed by men who are able to find only temporary positions.

Companies use temporary workers for a variety of reasons, including increasing their flexibility to let go of a portion of the workforce when there is an economic downturn, externalizing the costs and complexities of handling the workforce, and cutting back on the size (and thus the costs) of the permanent workforce. Companies using temporary workers, or “temps,” often limit the length of time they can work in order to avoid “temp-initiated” legal actions that might require the company to hire them on as permanent workers or give them benefits. Temporary jobs on average pay lower wages than their permanent counterparts and usually are found in the lower levels of the occupational ladder, including clerical, assembly, and technical. Such jobs offer few, if any, benefits; in this “at will” contract, employers can let go of temporary workers without any advance warning.

For these reasons, social scientists and labor economists who study the spread of temporary employment worry that the institutionalization of this category of employment creates a second tier of workers who are disadvantaged economically, experience continual insecurity, and lack opportunities to develop careers. It can be difficult for temporary workers to develop and pursue careers because they lack the opportunities to acquire skills that would allow them to move up and out of the low-level “temporary ghetto.” Many temporary workers report feeling trapped in the cycle of temporary employment, wherein they must work so hard to survive in and obtain temporary jobs that they can’t

afford the time or the money to develop new skills or advance their educational credentials. At the same time, many workers hope that these jobs serve as a bridge for them to get a foot in the door of good companies and eventually gain permanent positions.

One indication that temporary employment poses a hardship to workers is that the majority who work on a temporary (or part-time) basis do so involuntarily: In other words, they would prefer to hold a permanent or full-time job if they were able to find one. Many observers argue that the growing pervasiveness of involuntary temporary employment is a key factor that undermines the stable-employment contract of the midtwentieth century, which offered workers stable and secure employment, as well as benefits. The explosive growth in temporary employment has been spurred by the symbiotic growth of temporary help and staffing agencies, which we discuss shortly.

Contract Employment

Contract work is another type of contingent employment. Importantly, it reveals the contradictory nature of contingent employment in the contemporary economy. Specifically, the experiences of contract workers reveal how contingent employment cannot be seen simply as a method for cutting back on costs, nor does it uniformly disadvantage workers. Contracting work in some ways resembles temporary employment: Contractors work for delimited periods of time for an employer, carrying out a project or a job only until it is completed. Contractors can be self-employed, or they can be deployed by staffing agencies. Like temporary workers, contract workers experience a great deal of uncertainty in their employment prospects and must absorb fluctuations in the economy and markets. For example, in the Silicon Valley, which has a large contract labor market, employees face intermittent periods of unemployment (“down time”) when high-technology firms experience economic downturns or lose their competitive edge in a product market, or when projects come to an end. Like temporary workers, contract workers usually pay for their own health benefits and design their own retirement packages. Unlike temporary workers, however, many contract workers experience greater advantages.

Contractors typically are highly educated professional and, to an increasing degree, managerial-level employees. Contract workers often earn higher wages

in a contract position than do their permanent counterparts. Researchers have noted with irony that it has become a common practice for firms to lay off their permanent, experienced information and technology workers, only to rehire them on a contract, contingent basis at a higher salary. Contractors possess technological or information management skills that put them in a highly competitive position on the job market and that they can use to leverage high wages. Firms employ these high-level contractors for different reasons than they employ lower-level temporary workers: For example, contractors may have unique technological or administrative skills that a company needs but lacks in its own permanent workforce.

With respect to career development, contractors experience a different set of issues than do temporary workers. Contract workers develop careers in their technological or professional niches, but their careers are not organizationally bound, as might have been more typical in the postwar era. Observers use the term *boundaryless employee* to capture the fact that specialized professional workers move from position to position, across a variety of organizational settings. Thus, their careers are fluid, not confined to one organization, and can even shift across different industrial fields. These skilled, well-paid employees, it is believed, choose to work on unpredictable terms, embrace the opportunity to work in new corporate environments and learn new skills, and eschew long-term relationships with one or a very few employers. In contrast, then, to those who are employed and even trapped in involuntary temporary employment, contractors are believed to work on a temporary basis by choice.

STAFFING AGENCIES: THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Contemporary staffing agencies, once commonly referred to as “temporary-help agencies,” are the dominant type of labor market intermediary that facilitates part-time, contract, and temporary employment relations. Although temporary-help agencies are not new, they have changed and grown dramatically in the last two decades. Today, staffing agencies often work directly with corporate human resource departments to help them manage a host of employment-related functions. And there is growing evidence to suggest that intimate partnerships between firms and staffing agencies are contributing to the outsourcing of significant portions of the human resource function.

Data on industry size and growth by segment indicate that temporary-help service agencies are still the largest segment of the staffing industry. Although revenues from temporary placement dominate the staffing industry, the character and scope of temporary-employment arrangements have changed dramatically as new staffing services have enabled firms to manage contingent labor in unprecedented ways. Whereas in the past temporary-help agencies primarily matched employers with employees, conducting a minimum of prescreening of less skilled workers who could fill the temporary needs of a company, today these agencies have expanded, changing their names and images to reflect the more diverse scope of their businesses.

Staffing agencies vary in both size and the types of services they provide, but most offer employers a range of services, including assistance with recruiting, training, prescreening or testing, and payrolling. They can take over the legal and administrative responsibility of managing a firm’s workforce through new types of employee-leasing arrangements (also known as professional employer services, or PEOs). Staffing agencies offer firms on-site management of their temporary workforces through vendor-on-premises arrangements (VOPs) as well as consulting services related to the development of human resource policies, organization and design, and communication strategy.

Often adapting their strategies to meet local labor market conditions, staffing agencies also provide a number of supplemental services for their client firms, including advertising for specific job openings, transporting workers, 24-hour staffing, and other services specifically designed for individual client needs. Historically, temporary agencies focused on recruitment and placement of temporary clerical and light-industrial workers. More recently, these agencies have expanded their market shares, reaching out to the technical, professional, and managerial workforces.

The staffing industry can enable employers by giving them an opportunity to either outsource functions or externalize the costs of their human resource functions. However, the use of staffing firms may complicate certain aspects of corporate human relations, creating hidden monetary and managerial costs. For example, *coemployment*, the term alluding to the relationship between staffing agencies and their client firms, can be unclear. Coemployment laws vary from state to state, often making the legal aspects of staffing agency involvement very confusing for firms and

workers. Grave uncertainty can arise out of the coemployment relationship, with consequences for both employers and employees. The legal, economic, and ethical obligations to employees on the part of the staffing firm, its customer, or both, depend on numerous complex factors.

Some researchers argue that today's staffing agencies actively shape labor markets rather than simply react to impersonal market supply-and-demand forces. Staffing agencies, through the various services enumerated above, are playing a critical role inside their client firms, becoming, in some cases, institutionalized actors taking on a range of functions that were once reserved for internal human resource departments or unions. They also work on behalf of workers themselves. Although evidence indicates that outcomes vary, it is well-known that employees are turning to staffing agencies for help with job placement, training, and career development as they search for help in navigating the complex terrain of contemporary labor markets. Many workers use these agencies to obtain the temporary positions they believe will be bridge positions into permanent jobs in a company.

NONPROFITS, UNIONS, AND PUBLIC AGENCIES

In addition to the private sector staffing industry, nonprofit, public, and union-sponsored organizations also provide services and/or advocacy programs for contingent workers. Some public sector employment agencies have partnered with private sector staffing agencies, channeling public funds to the private sector to provide workers with training or temporary employment opportunities. A number of researchers have criticized these partnerships because employment through the private sector staffing industry is often associated with low wages, bad working conditions, and lack of health insurance coverage and retirement benefits. There is a belief that public and nonprofit sector programs are by nature more oriented to the needs of employees. In recent years, a number of organizations have arisen to ensure that staffing agencies and corporations are accountable to the needs of the contingent workforce.

For example, Working Today, a New York-based organization, organizes contingent employees and independent contractors. This organization provides programs aimed at collectively solving the problem of health insurance and retirement pensions so that their members can more easily move from job to job while

retaining benefits. Unions themselves have moved beyond their traditional mission of primarily serving the needs of permanent employees and are now advocates on behalf of the contingent workforce. Several unions have extended collective bargaining conditions to temporary, part-time, and contract workers. A number of unions are operating their own staffing/employment agencies, placing temporary workers in positions with higher standards for wages and benefits packages than what the private sector offers.

Labor advocates have long documented the need to organize temporary, part-time, and contract workers to provide them with greater workplace protections, increased wages, better working conditions, and improved opportunities for career advancement. However, researchers have identified many obstacles to collective mobilization of the contingent workforce. In particular, because this workforce is very mobile and because contingent workers span a wide range of occupational groupings, efforts to organize the contingent workforce have been limited. Despite these obstacles, there is evidence that advocates for contingent workers are making progress in changing public policies and influencing corporate practices to better meet the overall needs of today's growing contingent workforce.

Contingent employment, a *mélange* of different corporate practices and lived experiences, shows all signs of remaining a dominant approach to staffing and hiring. Although many researchers worry that the size of the contingent workforce will grow, with deleterious consequences for American workers, the evidence to date suggests that the field is variegated and shifting; thus, the long-term implications remain inconclusive.

—Vicki Smith and Esther B. Neuwirth

See also Boundaryless career, Customized careers, Employment-at-will doctrine, Part-time employment

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CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Continuing professional education (CPE), or continuing education, is the education of professionals in a variety of fields and practice that offers preparation for a particular career or extends the individual's knowledge and learning within a profession. CPE helps learners keep their knowledge current, build competencies, progress through a career, achieve promotions, and even shift into a different field. CPE is increasingly important in a context characterized by a boom in knowledge and technology coupled with public demand for accountability. In turn, these trends have increased the strain on continuing-education resources.

CPE certifies professional knowledge, skills, and abilities applicable to practice, while also addressing the professional's ongoing learning needs. It generally emphasizes the acquisition of individual competency and reflective practice. CPE assumes a continuation of prior training and that the professional has a formal body of knowledge, authority based on this specialized knowledge and expertise, and accountability to clients. Past research has suggested that four factors define quality in CPE: participant readiness to learn, relevance to practice, appropriateness of presentation, and relevance to the professional's needs.

THE HISTORY OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

Continuing education has been practiced throughout history, beginning with apprenticeships and guild systems of the middle ages. The field was named and

claimed by adult education in the 1960s. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the professions, occupations based on discrete information and competencies, began to establish professional organizations and regulatory agencies that monitored continuing-education requirements for becoming licensed, certified, or a practitioner. While required in many career fields, compulsory professional education guarantees neither professional compliance nor competence. The foundations of the field were solidified in the 1980s, with publications such as Cyril Houle's *Continuing Learning in the Professions*, and are grounded in adult-education theory.

In 2001, Ronald Cervero offered an assessment of 20 years of CPE, for the period from 1981 to 2000, noting five trends: (1) the amount of continuing education offered in the workplace dwarfs that offered by any other provider; (2) CPE is increasingly offered via distance education; (3) there are increasing collaborative arrangements among providers (i.e., universities and organizations); (4) the "corporatization" of continuing education has increased dramatically; and (5) continuing education is being used more frequently to regulate professional practice.

CONTROVERSIES IN CONTINUING EDUCATION

Controversies in CPE include compulsory CPE, market-driven CPE, and competency-based CPE. Although whether or not to make continuing education compulsory remains contentious, professionals continue learning throughout their careers. Proponents of compulsory CPE argue that it should be voluntary but believe this is an unrealistic goal. Proponents also argue that compulsory education will result in more efficiency and effectiveness, ensure equal access to a range of educational opportunities, and is a better alternative than periodic examination or review of practice. Opponents of compulsory CPE insist that it violates adult learning principles and that evidence is lacking that demonstrates that compulsory education improves performance, quality control, or practical relevance. It has also been noted that educational opportunities are not readily and equally available.

Other researchers have examined whether continuing-education programs should be market driven. Opponents argue that market-driven programs perpetuate inequality by ignoring the needs of those who can't afford to pay for the program, by meeting individual needs but not societal needs, and creating profit at the expense of educational benefit. The controversy

over market-driven CPE programs rests on three issues: who the market is, whether higher education's mission will change, and how continuing education is viewed within higher education. Some experts in the field advocate a market-driven orientation that is tempered with a socially conscious effort to balance profit with an ethical approach, while others believe that continuing-education programs should be demand driven, make a difference in the big picture, encourage learners to think critically, incorporate multiple perspectives, and change learners.

CPE's ability to maintain and enhance competence is an issue, as are enhancing accountability and relating to the context of practice. Researchers have argued that if CPE is to be effective in the future, educators must shift from a program mentality to developing professional competence. A fallacy of CPE is that participation automatically translates into professional competence. There is increasing pressure on CPE providers to demonstrate the value and impact of their work. Laura Bierema and Michael Eraut have observed that CPE harbors dysfunctional assumptions that diminish its effectiveness, including that CPE fails to pay sufficient attention to more complex representations of personal knowledge, skills, and competencies that have emerged during the past decade. CPE also tends toward the trendy and exaggerates formal learning over the more frequent and rich informal learning that takes place in the workplace independent of CPE. CPE is also individually focused, making it less effective than substantive changes in the collective practices of colleagues, administration, organizational structure, or culture. CPE also needs to better address issues of diversity through increasing self-awareness, examining diversity issues in the CPE teaching relationship (learner and educator), and developing more inclusive research and theory.

THE FUTURE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

In the future, CPE must be regarded not as a program, but as a system of building professional competence. In this regard, Donna Queeney has observed that continuing education must address application of knowledge and skills within a practice context, must go beyond simply providing information and teaching technical procedures, and must help professionals build their collaborative, judgmental, reflective, and integrative capacities.

—Laura L. Bierema

See also Career investments, Knowledge work, Learning organization, Lifelong learning, Occupational professionalization

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COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

Cooperative education is a structured educational model in which students alternate between periods of classroom study on campus and periods of paid work at job sites away from campus. Cooperative education relates to career development because it is a means of career exploration that is a comprehensive intervention, including self-assessment, feedback, general and specific information about work, and career testing for long-term periods in real-world settings. Educational goals in such programs include integrating theory and practice, testing career options, and learning from experience. Although the model has historical roots in feudal apprenticeships, as well as medical and legal clinical programs, the term "cooperative education" was coined by Herman Schneider in 1906 to describe a means for educating engineers at the University of Cincinnati with alternating study and work. At about the same time, a similar idea called a *sandwich educational program* was developed in the United Kingdom. Schneider and other early adopters of the model claimed a common rationale for the innovation: to smooth the transition from school to work for students, a need identified by employers, students, and educators.

Some full models of cooperative, or *co-op*, education exist within the K-12 and postbaccalaureate educational sectors; however, undergraduate programs are the focus of most scholarly materials on the topic. Co-op is a commonly used shorthand term for both the jobs taken by students and the students themselves.

The first half of the twentieth century saw a steady growth in the wider acceptance of the cooperative education model. Some important innovations included the adoption of the model for business students at the University of Cincinnati in 1919 and for students in all majors within a liberal arts program by Arthur Morgan at Antioch College in 1921. One way to cluster co-op programs is to differentiate *vocational* and *environmental* programs. In vocational programs, all co-op jobs taken are closely related to the student's major, with planned and evaluated learning outcomes being career-related. In environmental programs, students are encouraged to take jobs that meet a variety of personal developmental and professional goals, so that some co-op jobs will be major related and some purposefully not. The former type is more common in preprofessional programs, such as in engineering and business schools in the United States and abroad; the latter tends to be used in liberal arts programs primarily in the United States.

During the second half of the twentieth century, the prevalence of cooperative education programs grew in the United States from about 60 colleges and universities to a peak of about 1,000 programs in the mid-1980s. Much of this growth has been attributed to federal funding from 1971 to 1996. Reviewers of this period of co-op history generally surmise that more planful growth, that is, growth with a greater focus on structures to enhance learning rather than a focus on increasing student recruitment, might have allowed the federal funding stimulus to promote more stable programs that might be considered leading-edge educational models today. As it is, the number of programs has diminished to about 500 in the United States, the smaller of which struggle for legitimacy within their academic environments. Internationally, cooperative education is practiced in about 60 countries worldwide, and that number is growing more rapidly than in the United States.

There has been a concomitant growth of various forms of experiential learning since the 1960s. In fact, it would be difficult to find a U.S. undergraduate program that does not require or allow some type of internship, practicum, or service learning experience.

Should all of these models of work-integrated learning be called cooperative education? Some practitioners in the field see the generic use of the term as a negative, a clouding of the definition; others argue that it is useful for cooperative education to be inclusive of diverse models. There is not a strong research base to distinguish among the educational benefits of various amounts and types of work-integrated learning, but there have been several noteworthy attempts to publicize and use attributes that distinguish cooperative education from other models of experiential learning as credentialing criteria. These attributes include how thoroughly co-op is institutionalized (e.g., evident in institutional literature), whether there are productive and effective relationships with faculty and employers, and whether there are clear means of evaluating the work experiences of students and integrating them with their classroom learning.

Organizations that were created in the 1960s to promote cooperative education include the Cooperative Education and Internship Association (CEIA; <http://www.ceiainc.org>) and the National Commission for Cooperative Education (NCCE; <http://www.co-op.edu>), in addition to a variety of regional and state organizations. A more recent addition to the relevant associations includes the World Association for Cooperative Education (WACE; <http://www.waceing.org>), which promotes cooperative education and other forms of work-integrated learning internationally. These organizations promote co-op via professional conferences, research grants, awards, scholarships, and publications.

Although there is no single model of cooperative education programming, many programs share basic steps for job placement and crediting. Students are recruited into the program through internal marketing of the program; screened using GPA, year standing, or other criteria; aided with the development of résumés and other job application materials; advised about possible jobs that match their professional or personal goals; visited or supported in other ways while working; mentored at work by a job supervisor; and evaluated by the employer. The work term is reflected on and/or credited at the home campus through participating in a conference or focus group or submitting required written materials. Many co-op programs that follow the vocational model require students to return to the same employer for multiple terms, often with assignments of increasing sophistication; environmental co-op programs are more likely to encourage

students to take various work assignments to learn a wide range of skills and enhance the development of adaptability and flexibility.

There is a history of research on cooperative education going back to the 1960s, with early research focused on models, structures, enrollment, and earnings. More recent studies tend to focus on learning outcomes, as the field has acknowledged that describing learning outcomes is necessary to ensure that classroom faculty support these programs. Research in the area can be clustered by focus: on outcomes for students, employers, educational institutions, and society in general.

Research on student outcomes from cooperative education is challenging in several regards. In most cases, when a co-op is optional, students self-select into programs, making it difficult to set up quasi-experimental treatment and control groups that are equivalent. Also, a university education entails so many variables designed to impact student development and late adolescence involves such rapid developmental changes that it is challenging to specify what value is added by a co-op program. Research on student variables can be focused on outcomes (what is learned), on processes of learning (how learning happens), or on the linkages between the two (how program structures lead to outcomes). The type focused on linkages is important to the field in order to distinguish it from career services, service learning, and other approaches, and for program improvement. Despite such challenges, researchers have found co-op work to impact classroom performance, such as increased motivation to study, learning how to learn, more disciplined thinking, and persistence to graduation. Work-related student benefits from co-op include an improved work ethic, increased technical knowledge and skill, networking opportunities, organizational problem solving, and job-specific written communications. Personal development outcomes demonstrated in research on co-op include enhanced decision making, maturity, recognizing there are many ways to accomplish tasks, self-confidence, self-efficacy, and value development. Career development has been shown in terms of enhanced career identity, career planning, and postgraduation promotions and salary increases.

Co-op programs also benefit employers. Studies conducted both in and outside the United States have shown higher yield rates and lower costs for employee recruitment; lower training, wage, and benefits costs;

higher retention; and better work performance for employees who participated in co-op programs than those who did not. There is also some indication that employers can make more progress in meeting their affirmative-action hiring goals if they participate in co-op programs than if they do not. Some studies specify the traits of work supervisors that link to positive learning outcomes for students; for example, when supervisors take on the role of field faculty member, student learning is enhanced. Most of the benefits listed for students benefit employers indirectly as well. When the benefits demonstrated to students and employers are reviewed in concert, it appears that Schneider's original rationale for smoothing the transition from school to work has been met by cooperative education. There is an emerging debate within the field about how to balance employer benefits with student benefits, especially with regard to ethical values, creative thinking, social change, and the implications of the demand for global competitiveness for social welfare systems.

The benefits to educational institutions of including a cooperative education program have also been documented, including increased enrollment, aid in meeting institutional performance benchmarks, involvement by employers in curriculum development that is relevant to industry needs, and productive links with institutions overseas from international co-op placements. Benefits listed above to students and employers also benefit educational institutions. For example, when co-op students perform well in local industry, various economic benefits can accrue to the university, such as an enhanced reputation in the community, research collaborations, grants, equipment and other donations, and facilities sharing.

Societal benefits determined by research include less reliance by co-op students than by non-co-op students on government support during school and in postgraduation unemployment benefits due to high employability and increasing productivity via the development of human capital. For emerging economies, important benefits include the opportunity for students to develop technical skills needed by industries, the transfer of technology via international co-op placements, and the opportunity to replicate co-op models broadly due to government control of higher education.

A review of the research on cooperative education suggests that much of the work is atheoretical and may fail to present a coherent picture of the most

important processes and outcomes of work-integrated learning for career and personal development. The learning theory of David Kolb and the philosophy of John Dewey are most frequently invoked, if any theory is invoked at all. One recommendation for future research is to cast a wider net among the various disciplines that relate to cooperative education. For example, there is a long and deep history of research within the vocational counseling profession on *career exploration*. Other disciplines that should be considered include labor economics (e.g., theories of human capital); developmental psychology (e.g., theories about epistemological development); the sociology of education (e.g., theories about cultural capital); and management (e.g., theories about organizational behavior). By focusing only on theories about experiential learning, co-op researchers miss the opportunity for the kind of cross-fertilization that would allow for a broader range of measures, methods, and theoretical interpretations than are currently utilized. Research collaborations with faculty from these disciplines would allow two goals to be achieved: (1) broaden the knowledge about cooperative education and support of it by classroom faculty and (2) broaden the theoretical bases from which hypotheses can be generated and tested.

—Patricia L. Linn

See also Anticipatory socialization, Apprenticeships, Internships

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COPRENEURSHIP

With the growth and evolution of entrepreneurship research in recent decades, new terminology has emerged to describe various types and dimensions of entrepreneurship. *Copreneurship* is one such term. It is a new term for an old pattern of work: husbands and wives or couples with marital or marital-like relationships working together in the same business.

Work relationships between husbands and wives jointly in a business are well documented historically. Not until the late 1980s, however, was this working relationship described specifically in an entrepreneurial context. Frank Barnett and Sharan Barnett, themselves a husband-and-wife team, coined the term *copreneur* in 1988 by blending the words *couple* and *entrepreneur*.

Three basic types of entrepreneurial couples may be distinguished: a solo entrepreneur with a supportive spouse/partner, a dual entrepreneurial couple, and a copreneurial couple. A *solo entrepreneur with a supportive spouse* is a situation in which one person is fully committed to and involved in the operation of the business and the other partner supports that person. Often this support is psychological or emotional support and encouragement, though it might also involve a small degree of "helping out" with the business. The solo entrepreneur makes the running of the enterprise his or her career, and the supportive partner may be employed outside the business pursuing a separate career. *Dual entrepreneurs* are couples in which each partner is committed to and involved in the running of a separate business. In contrast with the former two types of entrepreneurial couples, *copreneurs* are partners who are both involved in a joint business, and neither one pursues a career outside this business.

Although similar, the term *coentrepreneur* is different from copreneur. Copreneurs are a subset of the wider coentrepreneur group. Coentrepreneurs are any combination of two or more parties involved together in the operation of a business irrespective of marital status, gender, and division of work tasks and functions among them. "Involvement" is predominantly taken to mean ownership and management; for instance, two sisters involved together in owning and operating a business would be considered coentrepreneurs, as would a separated or divorced heterosexual couple. The distinguishing characteristic of a copreneur is not only such coinvolvement but also the intimacy and marital or marital-like arrangement of two partners in a business venture. As Kathy Marshack has emphasized, the term copreneur represents more than the simple equation of marital partner plus business partner; it embodies the dynamic interface of the systems of love and work.

Copreneurial couples have chiefly been studied in the field of family business. Broadly and simply defined, a *family business* is owned or managed by one or more family members. Family businesses are regarded as the backbone of the global economic system and are estimated to contribute 50 percent of the U.S. gross national product, and around 67 percent to 90 percent of the world's firms are classified as family firms. Copreneurs are an important subset within this broad grouping. They are often identified as married or common-law couples who are in partnership in the business. In generic terms, copreneurs are couples in family businesses who share personal and work relationships.

Copreneurship is a fast-growing, if not the fastest-growing, segment of the family firm business format. The recent rise of new types of home-based businesses enabled by information and communications technology and the boom in franchising, helping franchisees grow with the help of the parent franchisor, are among the factors responsible for the rapid growth of copreneurship. Another reason for the rapid rise in the incidence of copreneurship is that it affords couples an opportunity for flexibility in their work and nonwork arrangements. Other contributory factors are the "glass ceiling," downsizing, and redundancies in organizations that have made corporate careers more uncertain. Copreneurship should not, however, be thought of solely in terms of small businesses and micro-businesses. It can also extend to the large-business sector. Typically, though, copreneurial businesses are small, and as with many family businesses, some are

structured as sole proprietorships. Nevertheless, a variety of organizational structures, varying degrees of partnership, and differing ownership patterns exist under the copreneur umbrella. This contributes to statistical difficulties in gauging the true extent of copreneurship. It is also often not easy to separate copreneurs from the larger family business data sets.

Today, in the entrepreneurship, family business, and small-business research literature, as well as the popular press, copreneurship has come to be an accepted, commonly used term. Despite this common usage, there is no single operational definition of copreneurship. Margaret Fitzgerald and Glenn Muske have listed the different characteristics that researchers have used to delineate copreneurs. These include various combinations of the following criteria: ownership, commitment, responsibility, sharing of risk and/or management, intertwined worlds of business and home life, egalitarian relationships, running a business together and/or sharing an entrepreneurial venture, and defined areas of work, partnership, and minimum hours of work in the business. Most definitions have a similarity to one another and focus on the business rather than on family connection.

Frequently, copreneurship constitutes couples who share ownership of, commitment to, and responsibility for a venture. Commitment and responsibility are often operationalized in terms of working in the business. This participation could include devoting time to work on business tasks and/or major decision making in the business. Some researchers specify the minimum level of such participation based on hours worked in the business. When Barnett and Barnett initially conceived the copreneurship construct, they specified joint ownership, commitment and responsibility to the business, as well as the blending of work and family worlds as the prerequisites for copreneurship. Work sharing in an egalitarian manner was also a feature of their notion of copreneurship.

When the literature interprets copreneurship in a mainstream manner, namely, couples in a marital and business partnership equitably sharing responsibilities, this might be described as *pure copreneurship*. An example of pure copreneurship is the case of the New Zealand fashion label "workshop" run by married couple Chris and Helen Cherry. Their work approach was described in terms of each of them equally engaging in all the tasks for the business: driving the van, invoicing, and designing. However, such an equal sharing of work is not necessarily what an

egalitarian model with regard to the division of responsibilities is all about. An egalitarian relationship involves nonadherence to a traditional conception of masculinity and femininity to define responsibilities within both spheres of work and home. There is equity, therefore, when an androgynous orientation prevails and tasks are defined according to capabilities and expertise rather than gender. Departures from pure copreneurship arise with other forms of copreneurship that are not based on the standard marital-coupling or egalitarian model.

Despite its growth and significance, the phenomenon of copreneurship remains essentially underresearched. Several possible reasons have been suggested for this relative paucity of empirical research on copreneurs. One explanation is that since there are several types and degrees of partnership, it is difficult to gather separate data on copreneurial partnerships. Another suggestion is that because copreneurs are so widespread, they are not recognized as a distinctive group. The belief that work and family are separate spheres and the invisibility of the contributions of women to businesses are other key reasons given for the lack of acknowledgment of copreneurship.

Recently, however, the presence of copreneurship has been highlighted by a number of in-depth investigations, notably those of Marshack. This has also led to the recognition that copreneurship can effectively be examined through lenses other than that of family business. Indeed, copreneurship investigations from a gender perspective are on the increase. This has stemmed from a twofold recognition. First, not to do so is to perpetuate the male-focused standpoint that has led to the important contribution of women in family ventures being frequently hidden. This androcentric perspective and the hidden dimension of women's involvement have characterized a significant portion of the academic debate on entrepreneurship to date. Second, there is the need to eliminate a cultural myth that views home and work domains as separate.

The emergence of copreneurship as a construct was seen to address many of the dimensions of entrepreneurial experience that were often negative for women. Its potential for sensitivity to egalitarian principles, mainly the division of tasks in the work and home domains not being determined along gender lines, was viewed as an affirmative step in this direction. Nevertheless, as research has pointed out, such equality and equitable division of responsibilities is often more perception than reality. For example,

Marshack's 1994 comparative study between dual-career couples and copreneurial couples found that decision making and responsibilities were not equal. In fact, work was arranged around conventional sex role orientations. Any change in task allocation also tended to be from husband to wife, rather than vice versa. Despite this situation, copreneurial couples expressed a high level of agreement between the actual and the ideal division of responsibilities. This, however, represents an interesting potential paradox in which the tenets of the standard copreneurship construct (e.g., equal sharing of responsibility and power) may be undermined by the actual experiences of copreneurs themselves. Importantly, since it is often the case that copreneurs rely on stereotypical gender roles to construct boundaries between work and home, the valuable and essential contribution of women to the functioning of the business continues to be concealed and underacknowledged.

JOINT CAREERS

There is a need for new career perspectives that can effectively convey the vital contributions of women, which might otherwise remain hidden when encompassed within a copreneurship or family business model. In addition, it may be argued that the copreneurship concept, traditionally grounded as it is in the marital or marital-like relationship, may not to be in keeping with contemporary patterns of intimacy and interfaces of love and work. The varied definitions and interpretations of copreneurship could also lead to inconsistencies, making generalization and comparability of findings on copreneurship difficult once the research in this area expands. There is also the possible confusion arising from the use of alike yet differently interpreted terms, such as coentrepreneurship. There is value, therefore, in extending the current conceptualization and research agenda on copreneurship to explicitly recognize a distinctive career typology for those who share both a similar work relationship, mainly in the entrepreneurial context, and a personal relationship. Such an explicit career focus is also in the interest of better understanding the experiences of the women who constitute half of copreneurial couples. The conceptualization of a *joint career* that has been recently put forward by Anne de Bruin and Kate Lewis is of merit in this connection.

Prior to the delineation of the joint-career idea, the common career classification that copreneurs might

be included in was merely a subset of dual-career couples. Nevertheless, as Marshack highlighted in her 1994 article, copreneurs are more than simply dual-career couples: They are dual-career couples who share business ventures. Inclusion of copreneurs within the dual-career classification is, however, highly misleading. Copreneurs generally do not pursue salient careers that are separate in their own right. Rather, copreneurs have an interdependent career or a unified career path. The less known symbiotic career type might be more meaningful than the dual-career category in portraying such a shared career. Explored in relation to the career of coentrepreneurial brothers of Spanish independent film fame, Pedro and Augustín Almodóvar, the symbiosis metaphor conveys the very close, mutually advantageous career relationship that can prevail between two people. The coentrepreneurial Almodóvar couple is in a committed relationship based on emotional ties and trust, and their united career is characterized by a marked functional division of labor and distinct responsibilities. Pedro focuses on the creative tasks of filmmaking and directing, while Augustín engages in the more humdrum responsibilities of producer and support of the creative talents of his brother.

While the *symbiotic career* usefully captures the nature of familial career interdependency and the compartmentalized division of labor that is possible in a coentrepreneurial context, it does not adequately address the dominant features of the copreneurial relationship. The symbiotic career of the careers literature is gainfully extended by de Bruin and Lewis to create the concept of a joint career and put forward the notion of a split between the primary and auxiliary career. The joint career also better accounts for the career profiles of copreneurs.

The joint-career formulation is based on the couple as a whole, interdependent system, not as two separate individuals. Each of the two (or more) parties in this integrated system is committed to a single career goal and trajectory, which is linked to the entrepreneurial activity in which they are engaged. There is a united (i.e., single) career path, which involves the organization and development of their enterprise, and with it they build a joint career. This joint career, however, progresses in association not only with the work sphere of the business but also through interaction of the personal relationship. There is an overlapping of the realms of work and family in the unfolding of an integrated career.

There is an increasing realization of the permeability of the work and home domains. The associated careers of individuals situated in the copreneurial context as well as other similar forms of familial entrepreneurship are interwoven in professional/work and personal/family relationships. The joint-career construct acknowledges this and suggests a binding of the careers underpinned by mutual interdependencies. It is thus potentially a useful framework within which to explore career trajectories that are not solely individual based but also more collective and cooperative. It is a unified career of two (or more) individuals with strong ties (usually spousal intimacy or familial-based trust and love) that can span the closely intertwined business and family spheres. It is a broader idea than couple-based copreneurship.

The united career trajectory encompassed by the joint career makes no attempt to imply an equal division of labor, as is usually implied by the copreneurship construct. Indeed, its point of difference is its acknowledgment of the possibility of an asymmetry in career contributions. The further division of the joint career into primary and auxiliary careers provides a dedicated recognition of the possibility of an imbalance in the functional division of tasks in the firm as well as in the household. The split into primary and auxiliary careers provides a fruitful avenue for discussion in relation to copreneurship and could usefully be discussed in the context of gender to add more depth to these arguments. It offers a framework for considering the working partnerships in entrepreneurship that neither depends on an equal division of responsibility nor relegates the women to a position of inferiority or subordination. Instead, this construct takes a middle ground that may be more akin to the empirical data being presented that point to the real inequalities of copreneurship experienced by many women than it is to the pure copreneurship ideal suggested by the literature.

When firm-family tasks are unequal, often when stereotypical sex role orientations prevail, the joint career might be subdivided into primary and auxiliary careers. The *primary career* is that linked to the openly acknowledged and visible partner, whose tasks focus on the business domain and its core aspects. The *auxiliary career*, by contrast, is not subordinate or inferior to the primary career, but rather supporting of it and the business as a whole. The auxiliary career could also be one that is simultaneously devoted to the main tasks in the family sphere. Both the primary and auxiliary

careers are a prerequisite for the resilience and success of the business as well as, in many cases, the efficient functioning of the family. The important point to note here also is that while there might be differentiation between the primary and auxiliary careers, together they make up the single entity of the joint career, which is pursued with a collective, cooperative, and committed movement toward shared goals. Indeed, it is feasible that the individuals involved in the joint career path may alternate auxiliary and primary roles dynamically within the career trajectory, perhaps in response to the needs and characteristics of the familial context.

Thus, the joint-career decomposition should not be interpreted as a static pattern. At different stages of the life course, or as a consequence of life events (e.g., sickness), the auxiliary component might merge into the primary, or there could be a switch with the persons occupying one or other of the component careers changing over. It is easy to envisage that once caring responsibilities subside as children grow up, an auxiliary career spouse can become dedicated to pursuing the common business vision of the joint career. This dynamic element of the concept thus can include work role transitions that may change with the altered contexts of work and home.

An important reason for distinguishing between primary and auxiliary components of the joint career is that a common theme in the family business literature from a gender-based viewpoint is the invisibility of the women involved. For instance, as Joanne Gillis-Donovan and Carolyn Moynihan-Bradt have emphasized, the contribution of women to the business and also the power and influence they wield in the business are largely unacknowledged and underestimated by families and even by women themselves. A typical case of a couple cited by these authors demonstrated that even the joint decisions made were presented by the woman as "his"; and though she was the one who had fostered the growth of the business that her husband had started up and she had played an active role in its operations during a 15-year period of his incapacitating ill health, she still remained invisible by being off the payroll and without a title. The invisibility of women in family enterprises, or what has also been described as the "hidden dimension" of women's work in family enterprises, is amplified by many of the typical data collection methods utilized by formal agencies and, indeed, by the nature of the work dynamics being engaged in by such women, thereby creating a self-perpetuating cycle.

A principal research finding in the literature is that careers, especially for women, are family responsive or family centric. Yet, as is often the case, it is usually the woman who plays (or is perceived to play) an ancillary role in the business domain, so much so that it might be reasonable to assert that when the spousal relationship is androgynous, with no gendered division of labor, the distinction between primary and auxiliary careers within a copreneurial joint career will cease to exist. This assertion is also realistic in the light of the findings of Marshack, which confirm the invisibility of copreneurial wives, in contrast to dual-career couples who have moved beyond rigid sex role stereotypes and in whom this androgyny contributes to an equal and an equitable division of responsibilities.

Studies of microbusinesses and self-employed people, as, for instance, the New Zealand data reported from the Labour Market Dynamics Research Programme by Patrick Firkin and colleagues and the United Kingdom's empirical research by Susan Baines and Jane Wheelock, often show women and wives in a typical support capacity for these businesses. Usually, the enterprises clearly have a principal with primary responsibility for the business, and this is in the majority of cases the male spouse or partner within the couple. Wives and partners of self-employed males almost always perform auxiliary roles, such as doing the bookkeeping and administration and answering telephones. Although these duties may appear mundane, they are essential for the viability of the businesses.

In contrast to the fashion label "workshop," which was cited earlier in the discussion of pure copreneurship, is the example of the internationally known New Zealand fashion label "Zambesi" and its creators, Liz and Neville Findlay. Liz concentrates on design and Neville on financial, retail, and marketing aspects. Thus, together they have a joint career path. Neither of them is in an auxiliary role in their joint career, which in their case is inextricably linked to the success and growth of the business. This example further illustrates the worth of grounding the concept of copreneurship in the careers literature as well as the entrepreneurship literature.

CONCLUSION

Copreneurship is a significant and rapidly growing form of enterprise that deserves further research attention. However, given that entrepreneurship and careers

are social constructions, it may be time to question a notion such as copreneurship that is rooted in a standard heterosexual marital relationship. Although marriage is an institution that is withstanding the evolution of society, it is not as relevant for some couples as it once was. Although copreneurship does account for informal life partnerships, other forms of intimacy, such as same-sex partnerships, have not usually been included within the copreneurship label and research agenda. Moreover, given the recognition of socially accepted alternatives, there is value in adopting new theoretical approaches that acknowledge the career trajectory as the main focus (for consideration in terms of entrepreneurship) rather than the relationship itself.

The apparent paradox of the essential contribution yet marginalization of women partners is seemingly reconciled within the construct of copreneurship, with its connotations of equality of opportunity and sharing of responsibilities. The actuality is, however, often not such an egalitarian outcome. Furthermore, perceptions of actual experience may be colored by an ambivalence by women themselves about the true worth of their contributions to the business—"helping out" or doing "odd jobs" often being used as descriptions of their contributions—despite their contributions being vital to the success of the business and the efficient functioning of the home. The copreneurship terminology, focusing as it does more on an egalitarianism in the division of labor and power within the business domain rather than the composite of both business and family domains, remains rather inadequate.

Indeed, the reality of the copreneurship notion may be a perpetuation of the relative invisibility of women—in particular those who are or perceive themselves to be within the periphery of responsibility and power of the business venture but may yet be core to its survival and success within the wider unit of activity of both family and business. Shifting the lens to focus on the nature of the career of entrepreneurial couples may thus represent a springboard that could facilitate greater visibility and recognition of varied family contributions to business ventures from a holistic perspective that encompasses both love and work. It can more accurately reflect the real experiences of partnered entrepreneurial women than the copreneurship concept currently does.

A joint career can apply to entrepreneurial pairs but can also encompass more people than such a dyadic relationship; strong ties may be substituted for marital type ties, and there is no insistence on a compartmentalized division of labor. Decomposition of the joint career

into a primary and auxiliary career provides for the possibility that at a particular time, one party involved in the composite career can play a lesser role in the entrepreneurial venture, yet this role constitutes an integral part of the unified career. Gender need not be at all influential in terms of who occupies the primary and auxiliary-career components respectively. Furthermore, even women in firm-family relationships who occupy the auxiliary position are explicitly acknowledged and have definite career paths and roles that are neither invisible nor inferior. Other partnerships based on strong ties (e.g., between siblings, or parent and offspring) and less traditional copreneurial relationships (e.g., same sex), can also be included within the joint-career framework. It is a gender-neutral, marriage-neutral, and power-neutral construct. Its theoretical newness, however, means that researchers must continue to refine and develop the idea and support it with empirical findings. Similarly, more research on copreneurship, in all its forms, should be undertaken. Only then will the building of cumulative knowledge on the interdependency of careers in a context of copreneurial involvement and other forms of coentrepreneurial intimacy gain momentum.

—Anne de Bruin

See also Entrepreneurship, Gender and careers

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CROSS-TRAINING

Cross-training, also known as *multiskilling* or *multi-skill training*, is a movement in the training industry prompted by the increase in global competition and the need for workforce flexibility. The term cross-training applies to workers who are trained across a broad spectrum of an organization's work. Cross-training typically involves training employees to perform new tasks in addition to their usual duties. After being cross-trained, workers often possess the skills to fill the requirements of more than one position in an organization. In team-based work environments, cross-training refers to a strategy in which each team member is trained on the tasks, duties, and responsibilities of her or his fellow team members. The goal of the training is to provide team members with a clear understanding of the entire team function and how one particular member's tasks and responsibilities interrelate with those of the other team members. Cross-training has been identified as 1 of 10 training trends that are likely to be around for some time. Many cross-training efforts have been found to be highly cost-effective.

Beginning in the mid-1980s, organizations such as General Motors, John Deere, Motorola, Ritz-Carlton, Sheraton Hotels, and the University of North Carolina began cross-training selected groups of workers. The cross-training movement was spawned by environmental changes such as globalization, shorter production schedules, technological innovation, and limited labor availability. Cross-training efforts have often accompanied organization downsizings, mergers, acquisitions,

or other restructuring efforts. The major reasons for cross-training workers include the following: to obtain or sustain a competitive advantage; to increase business functions (speed, quality, efficiency, productivity); to counteract the effects of short-term and long-term labor shortages; to meet a need for a more flexible, multiskilled workforce; to utilize workers more effectively; to enrich jobs; to increase employee job satisfaction; and to enable the desire to embody more of a learning-organization philosophy toward sharing knowledge and continuous development.

While cross-training is often viewed as a strategic initiative relating to competition and business needs, it is also looked at as an effective career development strategy. Cross-training has been found to be advantageous to employee personal career development, increased employee morale and job satisfaction, enhanced job security, reduced job stress, and increased professional confidence. Compared with employees who are not cross-trained, cross-trained workers are reported to be more flexible and less vulnerable to unemployment, to be more likely to receive higher earnings and be promoted into supervisory positions, to have more possibilities for advancement, to be more apt to develop a career path, and to work more hours than their nonmultiskilled counterparts.

There are several steps to creating and implementing a cross-training program. They include the following:

- Checking to see that employees have been trained for their current positions
- Making sure that employees are functioning competently in their regular jobs
- Creating a list of all jobs in an intact work group
- Identifying individuals to serve as "backups" for each job in the work group
- Using current job descriptions or specific task analysis information to prepare a breakdown of job duties, responsibilities, and related skills for each position
- Preparing a training plan for cross-training each designated "backup" participant
- Setting up a training schedule for each designated "backup" worker
- Training employees in on-the-job training (OJT), so they can cross-train their designated "backup" participants
- Using OJT methods to cross-train the "backup" workers
- Having designated "backup" participants evaluate the training they received
- Periodically updating training according to evaluation feedback and revised job descriptions

Several factors are seen as being critical to the successful creation and implementation of a cross-training program. They include the following:

- Identification of organization objectives
- Analysis of the organization/project situation to determine whether cross-training is appropriate
- Assessment of the organization's setting, resources, and culture to ensure compatibility
- An organizational culture that supports cross-training efforts
- Obtaining union approval for training (in some instances)
- Identification of skill clusters (i.e., interrelated skills)
- Evaluation of employee proficiencies
- Supervisor support of trainees' learning process (e.g., time in training and practice)
- Management awareness of the skills possessed by multiskilled employees, so they can be placed in appropriate job functions
- Open lines of communication
- Linking of compensation and/or reward system to cross-training
- Giving sufficient time for trainees to learn, develop, and apply newly learned skills and behaviors

Reported outcomes of cross-training programs include an increase in worker motivation, enhanced employee recruitment and retention efforts, increased production, increased efficiency, improved customer service and support, reduction in overtime hours among workers, quality improvements, increased organizational flexibility and response to change, more effective problem solving, increased levels of interdepartmental cooperation, and improved relationships between job functions and coworkers. Reported drawbacks of cross-training include safety issues, a need for certification and credentials in some occupations, adverse reaction of unions to training programs, information overload of program participants, little opportunity to practice what is learned, and increases in human error.

—James J. Kirk

See also Job rotation, On-the-job training, Retraining, Training and development

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CROSSOVER EFFECT

Recently, researchers have turned their attention to the phenomenon of stress contagion that has been labeled *crossover*, namely, the reaction of individuals to the job stress experienced by those with whom they interact regularly. An influential article by Niall Bolger and colleagues distinguished between two situations in which stress is contagious: *spillover*, when stress experienced in one domain of life results in stress in the other domain for the same individual; and *crossover*, when stress experienced in the workplace by the individual leads to stress being experienced by the individual's spouse at home. Whereas spillover occurs from home to work and from work to home for the same individual, crossover is conceptualized as a process occurring from one individual at the workplace to his or her spouse at home. This indicates that crossover can affect the dyad and the work group.

Crossover research is based on the propositions of the spillover model, recognizing the fluid boundaries between work and family life and noting that spillover is a necessary but not sufficient condition for crossover. The crossover model adds another level of analysis to previous approaches by considering the interindividual level and the dyad as an additional focus of research.

With the accumulated findings of crossover research, it is reasonable to posit that variables reflecting job and family demands are antecedents of the crossover process. Crossover research focuses on the individual's job and family demands that trigger this process.

A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

A recent crossover model developed by Mina Westman integrates crossover research into a job stress model and anchors it in role theory, as outlined by Robert Kahn and colleagues. The usefulness of role theory as a basis for crossover research is that it underscores the interrelations between a focal person and his or her role senders in the work and family settings. Westman's model classifies a selected array of stresses and strains as antecedent influences of the crossover process. Furthermore, it posits personal attributes and interpersonal variables as possible moderators. The core assumption of the model is that one's stress has an impact on others in different settings, indicating a complex causal relationship between stress and strain in the individual arena and between stress and strain of the dyads. This model distinguishes between six dimensions of the crossover process: role stress, life events, strain, personal attributes, coping, and the interaction process.

Westman and Amiram Vinokur specified three main mechanisms that can account for the crossover process:

1. *Direct crossover through empathic reactions.* Accordingly, there is a direct transmission of stress and strain from one partner to the other as a result of empathic reactions. The basis for this view is the finding that crossover effects appear between closely related partners who share the greater part of their lives together. It has been suggested that the effect of the undesirable events one experiences on the significant-other's distress may be the result of empathy expressed as feeling the other's pain as one's own. Thus, when one spouse is depressed, this feeling crosses over to the other spouse because he or she empathizes with the partner.

2. *Common stressors affecting both partners.* The simultaneous effects of the common stressors on increasing both partners' strain result in a positive correlation between partners' strain, which may be erroneously interpreted as a genuine crossover effect. For this reason, Westman and Vinokur suggested viewing the effect of common stressors as a case of spurious crossover; that is, the common stressors merely represent the effect of a third variable (e.g., economic hardship) that independently but simultaneously increases the strain of each spouse.

3. *Indirect crossover of strain.* The crossover is mediated by personal attributes and the interaction between the partners. The explanation of crossover as an indirect process focuses on specific coping strategies and interpersonal transactions, such as social support, social undermining, and communication style. Most crossover research has focused on social undermining as an interpersonal factor. Social undermining consists of behaviors directed toward the target person that express negative affect and convey negative evaluation or criticism. Thus, one's distress may increase social undermining from one spouse to another, and this undermining behavior increases the depression of the other spouse.

The three mechanisms of crossover can operate independently of one another and are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, it is quite possible that some of the proposed mechanisms operate jointly.

Studies have focused on different variables in the crossover process. Some have focused on the crossover of job stress from the individual to the spouse; some have examined the process whereby job stress of the individual affects the strain of the spouse; and others have studied how the psychological strain of one partner affects the strain of the other. Crossover research has focused mostly on five major strains: physical health, burnout, depression, work-family conflict, anxiety, and dissatisfaction.

Westman has suggested broadening the definition of crossover into contagion of positive as well as negative events. If the crossover process operates via empathy, one would expect to find not only negative crossover, but positive crossover as well. Thus, empathy could just as easily involve the sharing of another's positive emotions and the conditions that bring them about. Positive experiences and feelings are not merely the absence of stress; they are qualitatively different experiences. Thus, positive events and emotions may also cross over to the partner and have a positive impact on his or her well-being.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of some crossover studies are based on a conceptual model with explicit pathways and therefore offer an important direction for the design of future interventions for couples experiencing stress and strain. From the organizational perspective, the ripple effect of stress and strain has far-reaching

implications. Some of the findings demonstrate that a distressed wife is likely to generate a process of social undermining that will have an adverse effect on the husband and then later, through the husband, on his team. Findings suggest that efforts to reduce the stress and strain of employees should also target their spouses. It would be advisable for management to provide assistance programs to individuals working in stressful conditions and their spouses.

—Mina Westman

See also Burnout, Stress at work, Two-career relationships

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CRYSTALLIZATION OF THE VOCATIONAL SELF-CONCEPT

People have self-thoughts about many personal attributes that together form a multifaceted self-view (i.e., self-concept). For example, a woman might think of herself as smart, caring, and dependable (her personal self-concept) but also as fiscally conservative and socially liberal (her political self-concept). The *vocational self-concept* refers to the subset of self-beliefs about vocationally relevant attributes. Thoughts about personality characteristics, abilities, and the types of jobs that would be satisfying are essential elements of everyone's vocational self-concepts.

Crystallization refers to the clarity and certainty of a person's self-beliefs. Clarity is the ability to say what "is me" and what "is not me"; certainty is the confidence a person has in those judgments. Clarity generally precedes certainty. Young children's self-beliefs about vocationally relevant attributes, such as interests and abilities, are tentative until additional life experience allows the child to develop certainty.

Self-esteem is a related concept that refers to how well individuals like their self-concepts. Self-efficacy, another related concept, refers to individuals' beliefs about their abilities to perform specific tasks.

In this entry, the major components of the vocational self-concept are identified. Next, the process of vocational self-concept crystallization is described; and the entry concludes with a brief explanation of the influence of the vocational self-concept on vocational behavior.

ELEMENTS OF THE VOCATIONAL SELF-CONCEPT

The self-beliefs that compose the vocational self-concept vary across individuals. For example, body type could be a component of the vocational self-concept for persons contemplating a career as a professional athlete or an actor, but people interested in most occupations might consider their physical appearance to be irrelevant. Nevertheless, at least four attributes are an essential part of everyone's vocational self-concept: personality, interests, values, and abilities.

1. *Personality* is the consistent pattern of mental, emotional, and behavioral attributes that characterize an individual.
2. *Interests* are salient and enduring preferences to engage in specific activities or behaviors.
3. *Values* are emotionally held beliefs, assumptions, and convictions that create expectations regarding moral behavior and provide guiding principles for personal behavior.
4. *Abilities* are talents or skills that enable individuals to perform the behaviors that are necessary for effectiveness in work, family, and community activities.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE VOCATIONAL SELF-CONCEPT

Significant contributions to understanding self-concept development have been made by Eli Ginzberg

and his colleagues in the Conservation of Human Resources Project at Columbia University; Donald Super, also at Columbia University; Harvard University professor David Tiedeman; Southern Illinois University professor Vincent Harren; and University of Delaware professor Linda Gottfredson.

CYCLICAL PROCESS

Although crystallization is sometimes used to refer to the ultimate goal of vocational identity development, the term more commonly refers to the process by which clarity and certainty develop. Crystallization involves a cyclical process in which the range of options under consideration alternately expands and narrows. Throughout the process, individuals seek information about themselves and the available work alternatives. An early task in the crystallization process is gaining an understanding of what self-knowledge will be helpful in making career decisions. Strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes, values, and priorities all must be considered.

Initially, this process expands the range of career options by drawing attention to previously overlooked possibilities. As more and more information becomes available, however, the individual begins to narrow the range of options by establishing priorities and eliminating less desirable alternatives. This process recurs repeatedly; options expand until some consolidation becomes desirable, then narrow until the new information is assimilated.

Gradually, the opportunities for new learning are exhausted, and priorities become well established. The end result of vocational self-concept crystallization is a clear understanding of self (clarity), a set of prioritized values the individual is confident will remain stable over time (certainty), and an understanding of the world of work and the implications of that knowledge for personal behavior. These prioritized values are used as a basis for making career decisions.

STAGE MODELS

Stage models depict development as a sequence of changes that occur during a specific age range; descriptions of vocational self-concept crystallization typically use a stage model. Stage models are useful for gaining a general idea of the developmental process, because biological maturation and universal social experiences (e.g., the educational system) exert

a major influence on development until the late teenage years.

Nevertheless, stage models oversimplify important features of the developmental process. Development is not linear; life experiences sometimes result in a return to a previous stage. Furthermore, the pace of human development is highly variable. Healthy individuals can and do develop at different speeds. Therefore, the broad age ranges specified in stage models are simplifications that are not true for all individuals.

CHILDHOOD

Children begin to express vocational preferences by age four. These early preferences typically ignore the child's potential talents and interests and focus primarily on the child's perception of the pleasure that would be derived from the activity. Pleasures derived as an unavoidable consequence of participating in an activity are intrinsic rewards; the desire to receive these rewards is intrinsic motivation. Firefighter, nurse, and cowboy are common occupational preferences of young children.

During childhood, vocational self-concept development is characterized by generalized exploration. Children are interested in learning more about themselves, but they have no coherent strategy for obtaining vocationally relevant information. Negative choices are absent or nearly absent, leaving the child with a broad range of alternatives.

As they gain life experience, children begin to identify with and emulate adults in hopes of developing their own potency. Adult roles are most clearly defined in the areas of work, leading children to begin internalization of a work orientation and ideas regarding sex-appropriate behaviors. This process results in a gradual increase in a preference for vocational activities that lead to rewards such as approval and money. Rewards that are not integral consequences of the activity are extrinsic rewards. The desire for extrinsic rewards is extrinsic motivation.

INTERESTS

Role-playing (e.g., pretending to be a firefighter or doctor) is one important mechanism children use for elaborating their vocational self-concept. By trying out a variety of adult roles, children gradually gain a clearer understanding of the activities they like and dislike. At about age 10 to 12, children begin to

narrow their range of choices on the basis of their potential to bring intrinsic enjoyment. University of Oregon professor Leona Tyler demonstrated that the early development of vocational interests is characterized primarily by recognition of the things we do not like. Children at this age recognize the tentative nature of their choices and the need for further maturation and experience. Nevertheless, their emerging understanding of their interests and their desire to avoid activities they dislike cause them to begin limiting their choices.

ABILITIES

Although parental influence remains strong, other models begin to exert a stronger influence on the thinking of the child around 12 to 15 years of age. Children at this age begin to form impressions of their abilities: the skills at which they excel and at which they do not. This process continues through the teenage years. Many children do not become clear about the implications of their abilities and talents for their choice of careers until their late teens or early 20s.

VALUES

Numerous changes begin as adolescents enter the second half of their teenage years (14-17 years of age). One important development is an emerging awareness that work offers more than a means of satisfying personal needs. For example, a child who was initially attracted to a career in medicine because of the prestige and financial security enjoyed by physicians may now begin to consider the humanitarian aspects of the medical profession. This expanded view of occupations ultimately leads adolescents to a consideration of their personal values and the implications of those for their vocational choices.

During this time, adolescents also become aware that occupations are associated with differences in the ways people live. People in different occupations tend to pursue different leisure activities, read different types of magazines, and participate in different social groups. This growing awareness of extra-work features associated with occupations leads to a consideration of lifestyles young people desire.

TIME PERSPECTIVE

During their later teenage years, adolescents' time perspective begins to mature. They grow increasingly

aware that a career involves a set of activities that are performed daily across the adult life span. Furthermore, they become more sensitive to the reality that they may be faced with the need to make life-altering decisions in a couple of years. The importance of these decisions and adolescents' lack of independence contribute to the sense of frustration and turmoil characteristic of the teenage years.

Adolescents' emerging sexuality creates additional pressures. Many adolescents experience intense emotional attractions for the first time, but their continued dependence and the necessity to delay commitment until they have established themselves in a career frustrates their desire to act on their attractions.

TAKING CHARGE

The timing of the vocational self-concept crystallization becomes more variable in the late teens and early 20s. Maturation no longer plays such a significant role in self-concept development, and the demands of alternative career paths are so variable that crystallization progresses at greatly differing speeds.

Around age 17 to 18, young people begin to have more independence of action. This allows them to take immediate, concrete steps toward realistic decisions. Whether headed toward college, the military, or jobs, they begin to assume greater responsibility for their career decisions. This lessens their turmoil considerably.

Adolescents' increased freedom allows them to choose new activities that provide opportunities to learn more about their skills and interests. Reality testing in the form of exams and other performance evaluations provides valuable feedback about the range of feasible alternatives. Significant others in their environments take cognizance of these performance-based activities and provide guidance and encouragement. This leads to a better understanding of the suitability of alternative careers and of the preparation that is necessary for the careers they are considering.

EMERGING ADULTHOOD

Young people typically begin to integrate an understanding of their likes, dislikes, and abilities and their own and society's values into a coherent self-view during the late teens and early 20s. They make tentative choices of career paths based on their two or three most strongly held interests and devise tentative plans that allow them to test the wisdom of their choices.

Although their goals are much narrower than in earlier years, they still have considerable flexibility and have not committed themselves irrevocably to the final decision.

Reality does not yet require (and often does not permit) a final decision at this point in the young person's development. Vocational interests begin to emerge around age 15, and a degree of stability is evident after age 20, but vocational interests still undergo substantial change until approximately age 25.

Despite the somewhat general and tentative nature of their commitment to a limited range of goals, this commitment brings feelings of satisfaction and relief. The pessimism of the previous stage is replaced by naive optimism about the future. Individuals begin to focus on aspects of the self that provide confirmation of the appropriateness of their decisions. Many express a singleness of purpose, an unswerving attitude of goal direction, and an eagerness and impatience to reach their career goals.

Despite this, many young persons at this stage have not yet begun detailed planning for realizing their career goals. Many are naive about the specific rewards of an occupation and fearful of a final commitment. Avoiding an unsatisfying occupation is still a powerful motivation. Nevertheless, time pressures are experienced as more acute, and youngsters whose abilities to make tentative career choices are limited by lack of progress in crystallizing their vocational self-concepts often seek the assistance of a psychological counselor at this point.

MAKING A VOCATIONAL CHOICE

Experience, societal pressure to make a decision, and a growing understanding of the occupational tasks they want to avoid all contribute to crystallization of the young person's vocational self-concept. Gradually, the young person moves toward a firmer commitment to a career path and begins planning in detail the actions that need to be taken to follow through on his or her commitment. This process involves an elaboration of the self-concept and of plans to implement it in the future.

DISSONANCE REDUCTION

Commitment is an internal psychological event: a self-statement of intention to follow a designated career path. As this internal decision becomes clearer,

individuals begin to seek additional information. Often this takes the form of telling important others what they are thinking. Positive feedback leads to a greater sense of confidence and strengthening of commitment, while negative feedback leads to doubts and may cause the person to recycle back through the planning stage.

Often the young person must wait until the environment permits implementation of his or her decision (e.g., admission to college or a training program, being hired by an employer). Some postdecisional dissonance (i.e., second thoughts) typically occurs during this time, and the individual becomes actively engaged in dissonance reduction and bolstering. *Dissonance reduction* involves seeking information that is consistent with the decision while discounting information that is inconsistent with the decision. Individuals also exaggerate the positive aspects of their chosen alternatives and minimize or deny the negative aspects. They bolster their decisions by reviewing their resources and assets and developing contingency planning for dealing with setbacks.

As a commitment becomes more and more firm, it begins to be incorporated into individuals' sense of who they are (i.e., self-concept). They begin to act in a manner consistent with their new sense of identity. This may affect external manifestations, such as how they dress and the type of leisure activities they pursue. Most people desire an interpersonal network of people having interests that are similar to theirs, so they may also change the people with whom they associate.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the vocational self-concept brings an individual into contact with a new environment (e.g., classmates or work colleagues). Adjustment to this new environment typically follows a pattern of conformity, reactivity, and integration. This series of experiences leads to further modification and clarification of the vocational self-concept.

Initially, the individual looks to the environment for cues regarding the values, goals, and expectations of the group and reacts primarily by trying to fit in (conformity). Once they begin to feel accepted by the group, they begin an active attempt to change the group's values and goals to bring them into greater congruence with their personal values and goals (reactivity). The resulting change in the group gives the

person a strong sense of self that is somewhat lacking in objectivity. Finally, the group members begin to resist the new member's emphasis on change, and a compromise occurs (integration). Both the group and the new member are changed during the implementation process.

LIFE SPAN DEVELOPMENT

The vocational self-concept continues to evolve across the life span. Vocational experiences (e.g., being promoted or fired, disliking a job one anticipated liking) provide information that is used to modify the vocational self-concept. Other life experiences (e.g., marriage, the birth of a child) also may influence the vocational self-concept. Eventually, everyone confronts the need to prepare for and enter into retirement.

IMPORTANCE OF VOCATIONAL SELF-CONCEPT CRYSTALLIZATION

The clarity and certainty of one's vocationally relevant self-views are critical determinants of one's ability to make satisfying vocational decisions. A body of clear and certain self-knowledge (i.e., a well-crystallized vocational self-concept) is essential to effective career decision making. Well-crystallized individuals are much better able to differentiate between alternatives that are and are not suitable for them.

Lack of a well-crystallized vocational self-concept causes a variety of career difficulties. Some people are troubled by chronic career indecision. Those who push ahead with a decision without gaining the necessary self-knowledge find it difficult to make decisions that lead to satisfactory career outcomes. As a consequence, they may drift from job to job without a clear career direction.

The desire to avoid an unsatisfying career is a strong motive. Individuals who lack well-crystallized vocational self-concepts are fearful that they will be trapped in unsatisfactory careers, and many feel generalized anxiety about their futures. As a consequence, they experience a great deal of stress whenever contemplating career issues. Prolonged stress can lead to physical and psychological problems unless the underlying causes are corrected.

The vocational self-concept is most susceptible to influence during childhood and adolescence. For this reason, it is important for parents and those involved in the educational system to understand the vocational

self-concept crystallization process and help children deal with developmentally appropriate tasks during their formative years.

Vocational experiences influence a person's self-concept across the life span. Vocational problems can create or contribute to psychological problems. Events such as being laid off or fired, failure to secure a desirable position, or job-related stress are only a few of the factors that have negative psychological effects and may cause lasting changes in an individual's self-concept. For this reason, the resolution of career dysfunctions may be instrumental in resolving more general psychological problems.

—Howard E. A. Tinsley

See also Career indecision, Identity, Self-awareness, Self-concept

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CULTURE AND CAREERS

Culture is defined as the beliefs and values that shape the customs, norms, and practices of groups of people that help them solve the problems of everyday living. Thus, culture influences the way groups communicate, the way they take care of and educate their children, how they provide food and shelter, and how they earn a living. *Culture and careers* refers to the way that culture influences the way people work, the way they make decisions about work, and how their career paths

are shaped. In other words, culture shapes individuals' identities and the context in which they work. All individuals have a cultural, ethnic, and/or racial heritage, and in some cases, individuals have multiple cultural identities that shape their contexts. For example, the cultural context for an African American woman who lives in the southern United States will be based on her race, gender, and geographic location. The cultural context in which she lives helps to determine her own and others' career expectations, her preparation for work, and the opportunities open to her.

The terms *culture*, *race*, and *ethnicity* are often used interchangeably, though this has also caused some controversy in the field. Race may be viewed as both a biological concept and as a social construct. Geneticists note that the biological concept is not very useful because although at one point in history it was possible to biologically distinguish individuals based on race, racial groups are no longer biologically distinct from each other. But it is also clear that race has a strong social meaning in the United States, and there are different social and psychological consequences for individuals based on their race. Thus, the term race continues to be used in research to help identify differences between individuals who identify as members of different racial groups. For more than three decades, researchers have examined various factors that contribute to the big differences across racial groups in the types of work chosen and the progress in those careers. Since there are no differences in ability patterns across groups, psychologists have focused on other factors that may lead to differences in occupational choice, such as career dreams, role models, work values, or interests in careers. More recently, researchers have examined possible reasons in the environment that may contribute to those differences, such as racism and discrimination.

In the United States, the largest racial groups are White, African American, Asian American, and Native American. *Ethnic group* refers to individuals who come from a common geographic area and share customs and ways of behaving. Hispanics/Latinos are referred to as an ethnic group and may encompass several different racial groups. The term *racial/ethnic minority group* is used to denote African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanic/Latinos, who are in the numerical minority in the United States. The term *culture* is used to broadly encompass the context for various groups. Cultural identity is considered to be shaped by racial and

ethnic identity; related concepts are gender and careers, sexual orientation and careers, and identity. While much of the following discussion will focus on differences between racial/ethnic groups, it is also critical to note that there are often more differences within a group than there are between groups. Thus, for example, there are often more differences between men and women, and adolescent and adult African Americans than there are between Hispanic, African American, and White men.

Culture influences careers in a number of ways. Since individuals work within a context shaped by the culture of the organization and the individuals within that organization, culture influences the type of work that is done, the rewards for various types of work, and the types of interaction that are valued. In other words, cultural values shape our perspectives of the importance of work and the type of work that is valued. Cultural values shape not only the decisions made by organizations and within the workplace but also the career and work decisions made by individuals. For example, individuals who place a very high value on family and the collective good of their racial or ethnic groups may make different choices than those who place a high value on individual achievement.

In the United States, the cultural context for the majority cultural group includes several assumptions about work. It is assumed, for example, that work decisions are made solely by individuals, without consultation from others. It is also assumed that individuals are affluent enough to have the resources to seek opportunities to prepare for work and that the work opportunities are available and open to everyone. Finally, it is assumed that the career development process is logical and rational and occurs in a linear, step-by-step fashion. However, many of these fundamental assumptions do not apply to individuals who are from racial/ethnic minority groups. In many cultures, the role of family is viewed as being important in decision making, and racial/ethnic groups differ in the availability of resources open to them. Work opportunities are often closed to racial/ethnic minority groups due to racism, and consequently the career development process is often not linear or rational.

Culture very clearly shapes the opportunities available to individuals. A review of the demographic diversity of occupations indicates that members of racial/ethnic minority groups are overrepresented in some occupations and underrepresented in others. Thus, it may be that for some, career and work decisions are a

result of a compromise between occupations available to them and what they really hope or want to do. This suggests that culture may interact with work and career in two ways. First, culture helps to influence individuals' views of what types of work are appropriate and of the role of work in their lives. Second, culture influences the types of work available to individuals, both for positive reasons (e.g., opportunities available to those in a family business) as well as negative reasons (e.g., racism preventing someone from being hired into a work setting). Cultural values, the demographic diversity of work, and the role of interests, dreams, and barriers to work are all explored more fully in the next sections.

CULTURAL VALUES AND WORK

Cultural groups have been found to differ on a number of variables, though most researchers discuss five major dimensions on which differences in cultural values influence career and work. The first dimension is that of individualism versus collectivism. Those who value individualism have a preference for working alone, avoid dependence on others, and prefer accountability as an individual. They tend to place a high value on competition. Their work goal is to maximize material wealth and well-being. Conversely, those who value collectivism have a preference for working as part of a group, subordinate their own goals for achievement to that of the group, and place a high value on group success and cooperation. European Americans tend to be high on individualism, while most members of racial/ethnic minority groups have a preference for collectivism.

Another dimension in which cultures differ is in their views of the purpose of work in individuals' lives. Some cultural groups have a preference for doing and achieving through work, and others prefer to work so that they can do other things. For the latter, who work to live, work is something to be tolerated to get to the "real" or "important" things in life. The former, who live to work, place a high value on work as a worthy end in and of itself; European Americans tend to value living to work. For many members of racial/ethnic minority groups, however, the role of work is less central in life.

A third cultural value is how much people believe they can control or shape their surroundings and how much they believe that life and consequences are predetermined. This has been referred to as *locus of control*: Is the control within the individual (internal

locus of control), or is it shaped by forces outside the individual (external locus of control)? Those with an internal locus of control tend to be more aggressive in achieving their own plans and also tend to be more optimistic about achieving those plans than those with an external locus of control, who tend to be more passive and accepting of fate. Research has found that European Americans tend to be higher in internal locus of control, and racial/ethnic minority group members tend to be higher in external locus of control. It is important to point out that often the circumstances of lives affected by racism and discrimination are, indeed, out of individuals' control.

A fourth dimension is that of avoidance of uncertainty. Cultures differ in how comfortable individuals are with ambiguity and unfamiliar tasks and how much risk is tolerable. Those high in uncertainty avoidance have a preference for highly structured environments and place a high value on individuals' conformance to rules and established norms. When rules are broken, a typical response is a high level of anxiety. Individuals' roles as women or men or as an elder or younger member of society are specified very clearly, and all members of the cultural group know what to expect from the behavior of others. The rules for behavior and relationships are clear, and conflict is avoided when possible. Cultures with low uncertainty avoidance have a much higher tolerance for outside-the-norm ideas and experimentation. Cultural groups with long ties to Catholicism, such as Latinos, tend to be higher in uncertainty avoidance, as are Asian cultures. Native Americans and African Americans tend to be lower in uncertainty avoidance, and European Americans tend to be in the midrange on uncertainty avoidance.

Finally, the fifth dimension focuses on differences across cultural groups in the way that time is perceived. Those who focus on the past place an emphasis on the traditional way of doing things; the future is an extension of the past. Asian Americans tend to have a strong sense of past traditions. Those with present-time orientations place an emphasis on spontaneity and living for the moment, and this orientation is more typical of African Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos. The last orientation, that of emphasizing the future, has a focus on future goals, and individuals with this emphasis are willing to make sacrifices for long-term goals. For those with future orientations, such as European Americans, time is viewed as a commodity to be "earned," "wasted," or "used."

It is important to note that while research has shown differences among racial/ethnic groups in

cultural values, there is no particular value in having a preference for one aspect of the dimension or the other. In other words, while European Americans place a higher value on individualism than collectivism, it does not mean that individualism is superior to collectivism. Cultural values for work, however, influence preferences for working style, and as will be seen in the next section, since European Americans occupy most of the positions of power and authority in the U.S. workplace, their cultural values become the norm on which work is shaped and evaluated.

DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY OF WORK

The workforce in the United States has become increasingly more racially and ethnically diverse, mirroring the increasing diversity of the population of the United States. The 2000 census indicated this increase; in the 1990 census, one out of four individuals (or 25 percent) indicated he or she was a member of a racial/ethnic minority group. In 2000, the percentage of individuals identifying as members of racial/ethnic minority groups had grown to one in three. This was also the first census in which individuals were allowed to indicate more than one racial/ethnic affiliation. Of the third who identified as members of a racial/ethnic minority group, approximately 13 percent indicated they were African American, 1.5 percent identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native, 4.5 percent as Asian/Pacific Islander, 13 percent as Hispanic/Latino, and about 7 percent indicated "Other" race. Of those identifying as more than one racial/ethnic group, a large number were under 18 years of age, suggesting that the United States will become increasingly biracial in the future.

Since the 2000 census, Hispanic/Latinos have surpassed African Americans as the largest racial/ethnic minority group in the United States (13.85 percent vs. 12.9 percent). This increase and the increase in number of individuals identifying as Asian American/Pacific Islander are both due to higher immigration rates and higher rates of fertility. But while in 1990 members of racial/ethnic minority groups were most likely to be found in coastal or border states (e.g., California, New York, Florida, or Texas), the 2000 census showed an increase in diversity across the country in every state.

While there is an increasing number of racial/ethnic group members in the United States, there are marked differences in educational and occupational attainment across groups. The 2003 census, for example, indicated that Asian Americans had the

highest percentage of high school graduates (94 percent) by age 24, followed by Whites (86 percent), Blacks (81 percent), and Hispanics (65 percent). As might be expected, the levels of college graduation by age 29 mirrors this same pattern: 10 percent of Hispanics, 17 percent of Blacks, 28 percent of Whites, and 62 percent of Asian Americans had graduated from college by age 29. While these differences may seem striking, it is important to note that there is less disparity among racial/ethnic groups than ever; in 1940, the rate of high school graduation for African Americans was less than a third of that for Whites (7.7 percent vs. 26 percent), and the college graduation rate was similar (1.3 percent vs. 4.9 percent). Statistics are available only for African Americans and Whites during that time; data on Hispanics were not collected until the 1980s and on Asian Americans until the 1990s.

The differences in educational attainment may be due to a number of factors. Individuals may not have the financial resources available to them to finish high school or to attend and graduate from college. There may also be barriers due to lack of knowledge about educational opportunities, lack of parental support for education, and lack of role models to support higher educational attainment. Racism may also be a barrier for individuals in seeking opportunities for higher levels of education. Racism may play a role in equal access to educational and learning opportunities that are available to students from racial/ethnic minority groups, as well as discrimination in admission to institutions of higher learning. Whatever the cause of the educational disparity, it is clear that differences in education become magnified as employers require higher levels of education prior to employment, and with higher levels of education and employment come greater earnings. This can lead to a vicious cycle in which individuals from higher income levels have access to greater opportunities and resources for education, which leads them to have more occupational opportunities and income. They provide their children with more opportunities for education, and their children, in turn, have more occupational opportunities, and the disparity between groups grows. Recognition of this cycle has led a number of educational institutions to create specific programs to break this cycle and governmental programs to specifically address barriers that exist for racial/ethnic minority group members.

The increases in racial/ethnic diversity in the country discussed earlier have also resulted, as may be expected, in an increasingly racially and ethnically diverse workforce. A study by the National Research

Council showed increases in diversity in almost all occupational groups, though diversity was broadly defined to include gender, race, age, and educational level and did not just specify race or ethnicity. When occupational groups are examined specifically for diversity in race or ethnicity, however, it is clear that racial/ethnic groups are not represented equally.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics collects data from employers, and workers are identified as Black, White, Hispanic, or Asians; data are not collected on Native Americans. Blacks and Hispanics are each 13 percent of the population and would be 13 percent of workers across occupations if they were equally represented. However, they are underrepresented in many professional occupations and overrepresented in less skilled occupations. For example, Blacks and Hispanics are 7.9 percent and 5.1 percent (respectively) of executive, administrative, and managerial specialties; 5.3 percent and 3.5 percent, respectively, of engineers, architects, and surveyors; 4.8 percent and 2.8 percent, respectively, of natural scientists; and 5.0 percent and 4.1 percent, respectively, of physicians, dentists, and veterinarians. However, Blacks are 30 percent of guards, 36 percent of postal workers, 32 percent of licensed practical nurses, and 25 percent of dietitians, social workers, communications workers, correctional institution officers, and shoe sales workers. Hispanics are 38 percent of butchers, textile sewing machine operators, and concrete finishers and 40 percent of house cleaners. The implications of differences in occupational choice become more apparent when considering the differences in wages earned across the occupations. Across all occupational groups, Blacks earned 80 percent and Hispanics earn 68 percent of the median weekly wage earned by Whites. Men in all groups earned more than women in the same group, with the most extreme difference found for Hispanic women, who earned slightly more than half of what White men earned. Unemployment also differs markedly across racial/ethnic groups. In 2000 and 2002, the unemployment rates for Whites were 2.6 percent and 4.2 percent, 5.4 percent and 7.6 percent for Blacks, and 4.4 percent and 6.1 percent for Hispanics.

CULTURE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT THEORIES

The statistics discussed above indicate that the educational and occupational landscapes are not equal.

Culture, or membership in a racial/ethnic minority group, appears to result in different pathways to careers, career choices, earnings, and the opportunity to work. What is less clear, however, is how that disparity occurs. A number of career theories help explain and predict the types of careers individuals will choose (e.g., Holland's theory, social learning theory, social cognitive theory, and Super's career development theory). Most of these, however, were developed to explain the career behavior of the majority culture and do not as adequately explain the career development of racial/ethnic minority individuals.

Most of the theories, for example, have been based on research conducted with White individuals (often the early research focused just on White men). Another criticism of these theories is that they have been based on the type of majority culture assumptions detailed earlier (individuality, centrality of work, open-opportunity structure, and linear process). Many of the theories note the role of interests in occupational choice, assuming a relatively straightforward path from having an interest in an activity to deciding to prepare to enter that occupational area. For example, an adolescent is interested in physics, math, and computers. Her teachers and parents encourage her to become a physicist; she learns about this field and decides to go to college and major in physics. But what if no one is there to encourage her interests? What if she does not know what she could do with an interest in physics or there are no resources available for her to go to college? What if she does not know that people of her race could be physicists and decides it is not a possible field for her? None of the theories explicitly addresses the external realities for many racial/ethnic minority groups. Thus, researchers and scholars have begun to call for theoretical frameworks that incorporate the realistic and perceived barriers experienced by members of racial/ethnic minority groups. These new theoretical frameworks will be based, however, on the research that has been conducted in the past two decades on factors related to career choice for racial/ethnic minority groups, described in more detail in the next two sections.

ASPIRATIONS, INTERESTS, AND CAREER CHOICE

As noted earlier, it is clear that there are differences in the occupations into which different racial/ethnic groups enter, though the reasons for that disparity in

occupational representation are not as clear. Is it possible that there are differences in the dreams or interests that individuals may have? In other words, do the variations in choices made by individuals stem from their aspirations or work interests? Investigators who have examined differences in students' responses to "What do you want your career to be?" have found that there appear to be very few differences between racial/ethnic groups. In fact, most studies showed greater differences between men and women than between ethnic groups. Differences have also been found between those whose parents are of higher social class even within the same racial/ethnic group. Thus, people of different cultures do not necessarily have different career dreams, and we cannot conclude that differences in career choices can be explained by the differences in hopes and dreams for careers.

Researchers have also examined whether differences in career choices can be explained by differences among groups in vocational (or work) interests. Interests may be viewed as a preference for an activity, and studies have been conducted to investigate whether culture affects the activities that different groups prefer. The research on vocational interests, for example, has found big differences between the interests of men and women, which may give a partial explanation for the different careers that men and women pursue. However, most research has found that the differences in interests between cultural groups is relatively small and is much smaller than the differences within the same racial/ethnic group. For example, differences are greater between men and women of the same racial/ethnic group or between older and younger members of the same group than between groups. As another example, one study found that Asian Americans who are less acculturated to the United States (i.e., those whose families are recent immigrants) are much more likely to choose an occupation that is consistent with occupations typically held by Asian Americans (e.g., scientist or engineer) and valued by their families than an occupation that is consistent with their own interests. This is consistent with the cultural value of collectivism discussed earlier, in that individuals chose an occupation that met family obligations rather than their own interests.

Investigators have also found that the structure underlying interests is the same across groups, such that it is clear that the world of work is perceived in the same way across racial/ethnic groups. Studies have also shown that individuals appear to be basing

their decisions on the same type of overall factors, though groups may weight those factors differently. In other words, while individuals from all racial/ethnic groups indicate that family is important in their career decision making, for some groups, family plays a much greater role in their decisions. It appears clear, then, that the differences in the occupational landscape are not a result of the interests expressed by individuals, by their career dreams, or by their incorporating different aspects in their decision making.

BARRIERS AND SUPPORTS

Some researchers have examined the career dreams or interests of individuals, and others have focused more on the effects of racism and discrimination on the choices that are open to individuals. In other words, they have focused less on whether the lack of equal racial/ethnic representation across occupations is due to individuals' choices and more on whether it is due to real (discrimination, racism) or perceived (perception of opportunities) barriers. Similarly, some researchers have also focused on the various factors that help to facilitate the choices of racial/ethnic minority group members.

Some of the same researchers that asked about career dreams also asked students and their parents what careers they expected to enter. They found that although there were no differences in aspirations, there were differences across racial/ethnic groups in careers they expected to enter. Parents from different racial/ethnic groups also did not differ in the types of careers they hoped their children would choose, but when asked what they expected them to eventually do, the responses of parents from different racial/ethnic groups were quite different. Those differences seem to mirror the types of occupations held by racial/ethnic minority group members, suggesting that students expected to do the types of occupations they observed others of their racial/ethnic group doing. Thus, for example, African American students may not feel that the occupation of "engineer" is open to African Americans because they do not have role models of African American engineers, either in their families or in their communities.

The history of racism and oppression for many racial/ethnic minority groups in the United States is long and has had a lasting effect, including the perception that discrimination will occur in the career process. This may help account for differences between

aspirations and expectations. It is clear, for example, that Blacks and Whites have very different perceptions of occupational discrimination, and studies have shown that in the same situation, Blacks will perceive more discrimination against Blacks than Whites perceive occurs against Blacks. Investigators have also shown that Black students' perceptions of discrimination are highly related to their perceptions of occupational opportunities. Further studies have replicated this finding across other racial/ethnic groups. In general, minority students are more likely than Whites to perceive barriers due to race or ethnicity.

Other researchers have examined supports for career and educational choices. In general, their studies have found that coming from a higher-income home, strong support from parents, exposure to programs that help to promote career exploration, and high expectations from parents and teachers facilitate educational and occupational attainment. Over the past two decades, schools have begun to develop programs both within the curriculum and outside the school setting to provide additional support for students. Government policies that emphasize high expectations in education and equal opportunities in employment also serve as support for career and educational opportunities.

CONCLUSION

The role of culture in careers is complex, and researchers have only begun to study various factors that explain differences between groups. Career development theorists are being challenged to be more inclusive in their theories to incorporate the realities of individuals from various racial/ethnic groups. Clearly, something occurs between the dreams that racial/ethnic minority group students and their parents have for their careers and the actual occupations they enter. We know that cultural values may play a role in that difference between aspirations and expectations, but we also know that racial/ethnic groups differ in their perception of barriers to accomplishing their educational and occupational goals. It appears that these barriers are also part of the reality of making career choices and thus are part of the cultural context for many individuals.

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See also Family background and careers, Gender and careers, Occupational choice, Socioeconomic status

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CUSTOMIZED CAREERS

Customized careers are unconventional patterns of workforce engagement by individuals who would

ordinarily be expected to adhere to traditional career paths. Customized careers differ from traditional careers on one or more of the following three dimensions: work time (e.g., working reduced hours rather than full time), timing (e.g., late entry into the workforce or taking time out of the workforce in the middle of one's career rather than maintaining continuous employment), and type of employment relationship (e.g., independent-contracting work as opposed to long-term organizational employment). Related concepts include the boundaryless career and the protean career.

Customized careers are defined by their contrast to the traditional or "orderly" career, a pattern of work involving intense commitment to and continuous engagement with the occupational world, along with a striving for upward mobility and achievement of external markers of success. Traditional careers involve full-time, continuous involvement in the workforce, typically starting in one's 20s following the completion of formal education and ending with total and permanent withdrawal from the workforce some 40 or 50 years later at retirement. The traditional career template rests on the assumption of an "ideal worker," for whom employment forms the basis of identity and work takes priority over other life domains. By contrast, the customized career assumes that personal identities are shaped by multiple life roles, including, but not limited to, work roles.

The customized-careers construct is most appropriately applied to employees who would ordinarily be expected to work on a full-time, highly involved, continuous basis throughout their working lives. Research on customized careers focuses primarily on managerial and professional occupations, which involve individuals for whom the traditional career pattern, with its strong emphasis on significant ongoing work involvement, constitutes a powerful cultural schema. Research on customized careers examines the work lives of individuals who choose to step off the traditional career track and craft careers that respond more precisely to their own and their families' needs and desires, even if this means rejecting the career expectations that are normative for their jobs, occupations, or organizations.

THEMES IN THE CUSTOMIZED-CAREERS LITERATURE

Four themes are central to the literature on customized careers. First, individuals pursuing customized

careers are seen as having and exercising choice and control in career decision making. Research samples are generally drawn from populations of individuals who are not forced to adhere to a traditional career pattern out of economic necessity, but have the option to customize. In other words, individuals with customized careers have the skills and labor marketability to work as intensely and continuously as do people following traditional careers, but they also have the resources and preferences that enable them to reject that pattern. By contrast, individuals who experience unwanted career interruptions or reduce their working hours or engage in nontraditional employment relationships because they are unable to secure traditional career arrangements, as opposed to doing so out of choice, are generally not considered to have customized careers.

Second, the longitudinal quality of careers is central to the study of customized careers. Customized careers are typically punctuated by intervals during which they look very orderly indeed (e.g., intense commitment, long hours, and upward striving during the early career). It is therefore necessary to compare the pattern of an individual's workforce engagement over time to a normative career template in order to classify that career as having been customized.

Third, the customized-careers literature acknowledges the inseparable connection between the work domain and other life domains. The traditional career model assumes near total separation between the work and nonwork spheres of life, with employment given the highest value and priority. In the traditional career, occupational success and advancement through a corporate hierarchy demand a nearly exclusive focus on work and a willingness to make sacrifices such as limiting time spent with friends and family, something that is difficult to do if one has multiple demands on one's time and no nonworking spouse to absorb those demands. Given that the modal U.S. family in the early twenty-first century is one with two working parents, adherence to the traditional career pattern is difficult for many. The desire to achieve a satisfactory integration of work and nonwork is a major factor leading individuals to pursue customized careers. The customized career allows people to forge lives between the two extremes of continuing to meet the normative expectations of traditional careers and dropping out of the workforce entirely.

Fourth, customized careers are less institutionalized than traditional careers. Individuals who pursue

customized careers challenge the prevailing norms of the traditional career path. From the traditional career perspective, striving for career success in the form of prestige, earnings, and upward advancement are both normal and noble. Making a decision to reduce one's working hours or take time away from one's career is often seen as deviant. Thus, persons pursuing customized careers bear the burden of justifying their choices, persuading others as to the feasibility and sensibility of their plans, and negotiating the specific arrangements that will allow them to fit work into their preferred life patterns. Pursuing a customized career means persuading and negotiating—with oneself as well as with one's family, organization, and occupational community.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CUSTOMIZED CAREERS

As indicated at the outset, three key characteristics differentiate the customized career from the traditional career. They have to do with schedules and time: the number of hours worked and the schedule that guides them, the timing of paid work throughout the life cycle, and the employment relationship.

Time. Customized careers often involve a reduction from standard full-time work schedules, either in the form of fewer hours per day on an ongoing basis, fewer days per week, or fewer weeks or months per year. Job sharing and part-time jobs are two vehicles for customizing. The desire to place some sort of boundary on the often seemingly limitless work time norms of the traditional career is one of the most potent forces leading people to seek customized careers. The work schedule modification is not necessarily permanent, and individuals may change their working time periodically over the course of their careers in response to personal preferences and to demands and resources emanating from other areas of their lives.

Timing. Timing refers to “biographical pacing,” or the patterning of work engagement across the span of a person's working career. The customized career is often marked by discontinuities. Women are more likely to participate in alternative timing than men, reflecting the “traditional” division of labor in households. Women are more likely than men to enter the workforce late or leave it temporarily to care for

children. Individuals who make this type of modification may find themselves in entry-level or early career stages when others of their age cohort are in more advanced career stages. Reducing work prior to retirement and/or returning to some form of employment after retirement are two more ways in which people customize their careers.

Employment Relationship. Customized careers may involve a variety of employment relationships that differ from the traditional career arrangement of long-term employment with one or a few employers. Customized careers are more likely to include work that is performed in the context of a temporary employment relationship or as an independent contractor or agency employee, as opposed to a regular organizational employee. For example, when professionals decide to essentially go into business for themselves by performing a variety of assignments for different clients rather than working exclusively for a single employer, they are moving away from the traditional career template into customized careers. The impetus to make this kind of modification may stem from the desire to avoid the politics that often accompany long-term organizational employment, to have more freedom over the conditions of work, or to stay active in one's field following retirement from a traditional job.

MAIN RESEARCH FINDINGS

Rationales for pursuing a customized career can be grouped into two main categories. The first has to do with care work and family or community engagement. For example, an individual (typically a woman) may choose to switch from a full-time schedule to a part-time schedule to care for children or to spend more time volunteering. The second type of rationale, which overlaps somewhat with the first, is the desire of people to bring their work careers into better alignment with their personal values. For instance, a corporate manager may decide to start an independent consulting business because he wants to have the freedom to take on only the projects that interest him most. Or a physician may decide to work a reduced-hours schedule in order to spend more time gardening.

Several factors are associated with the pursuit of a customized career. Having high levels of human capital (e.g., skills, credentials, experience) gives people the labor market power to demand the type of work arrangements that suit them best. (Curiously, however, human

capital is typically accumulated by spending some time in the traditional career mode.) Household-level resources give individuals the freedom to choose customization. For example, it may be possible to take time out of the workforce only if one has a working spouse who has a job with sufficient income and good benefits.

Customized careers are heavily gendered. At this point in time, women are much more likely than men to customize, particularly when it comes to working reduced hours or taking time off from work. These forms of customization are strongly associated with caregiving, which continues to be primarily the responsibility of women. Furthermore, it is seen as more acceptable for women than for men to customize in order to take care of children or to support a spouse's career. These findings highlight the theme of the inter-relatedness of work and family and emphasize the importance of taking the family context into account when examining the decision to pursue a customized career.

Customized careers are also associated with features of the employment context. Some jobs allow for greater flexibility than others. For example, emergency room physicians, who work scheduled shifts, have a greater opportunity to modify their working hours than do surgeons. The nature of an organization affects its employees' ability to customize. It is more difficult to customize in the context of an organization that has downsized its workforce and placed additional work on the remaining employees, for instance, than it is when there is more slack in staffing levels. Supportive supervisors, a flexible and accommodating organizational culture, and the presence of policies that lay out alternative career paths all facilitate customized careers. By contrast, employees have little opportunity to customize when they work in organizations with rigid, traditional cultures and when no alternative career policies have been developed and implemented. In such conditions, employees are often limited to two extreme options: stay on the traditional career path, regardless of the personal cost, or quit entirely.

Customized careers always involve costs and benefits. In general, people who pursue customized careers gain some control over their time and, in many cases, over the conditions of their employment. Individual productivity and satisfaction with work tend to be higher among individuals pursuing customized careers. They are also generally better able to integrate their work and nonwork lives, have less work-family conflict, and have higher levels of life

satisfaction. On the downside, they tend to suffer in terms of traditional markers of career success, including earnings, prestige, and advancement. They receive less support for career development from their employers and have fewer opportunities for promotion. They also frequently feel that they have made career sacrifices and experience some ambivalence about the state of their careers, reflecting the potent normative expectations of the traditional career they have chosen to customize and the extent to which career and identity are intertwined among professionals. The success of customized careers from the point of view of people who craft them appears to depend to a great extent on their own values and identities. For instance, people who are happiest in customized-career arrangements tend to value personal growth and family involvement more highly than pay, promotions, and prestige.

Although people who work part time have traditionally earned less than their full-time counterparts (even when compared on an hourly basis), received few or no fringe benefits, and had little or no opportunity for upward career progression, recent studies of reduced-hours work among professionals provide hopeful evidence of the existence of part-time jobs that are relatively permanent, have career potential, and provide salaries and benefits prorated on the basis of full-time standards. People who leave traditional employment relationships to pursue independent contracting work sometimes make substantially more money, particularly when economic conditions are favorable and there is high demand for their skills. Of course, there is no guarantee of increased earnings, but independent contractors do take on increased financial risk.

In summary, customized careers represent an individual adaptation of a traditional career pattern that does not fit the lives of many highly skilled working people. The increasing prevalence of this form of career is influenced by multiple factors, including demographic shifts (e.g., large numbers of dual-career parents in the workforce), the trend toward less employment security in U.S. corporations, and changes in lifestyles and values, with a decreasing emphasis on climbing the corporate ladder as the ultimate measure of success and greater emphasis on engagement in multiple life roles.

—*P. Monique Valcour*

See also Boundaryless career, Protean career, Work-family balance

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D

DERAILMENT

Derailment refers to the involuntary loss of promotional opportunity due to declining managerial effectiveness over time. In general, managers derail because their skills and perspectives are seen as a poor fit for the challenges they face, either currently, in the near future, or with additional moves to more senior-level jobs. While some derailed managers are fired from their jobs, many remain on the job but are no longer seen as promotable to positions of greater responsibility as a result of a perceived loss of effectiveness and poor performance.

Organizations often invest heavily in the development of individuals believed to have high potential for success at senior levels. For example, high-potential managers often receive special or accelerated job assignments, coaching, mentoring from senior executives, and access to leadership development programs. When an individual begins to lose his or her effectiveness when taking on the challenges of senior roles, much has been lost. While derailment can happen at any level in an organization, it usually represents the greatest loss at senior levels, in terms of an organization's investment in development, and frequently provokes the most questioning of existing selection and development processes. Therefore, the perceived causes of derailment have been studied primarily among senior managers.

Research indicates there are several key reasons why managers derail. One important factor is an individual's inability to adapt to changes in the environment. Many managers who derail do so because they

are unable or unwilling to develop new skills and perspectives as the demands they face change over time. Changing demands can come from added responsibilities in their jobs, promotions, organizational changes (e.g., mergers, globalization), environmental changes (e.g., market, regulatory environment), and the like. When managers are unable or unwilling to see that change is needed in their approaches or in their skill sets, to seek feedback from others on how skills might be improved, or to make the needed adjustments, their effectiveness as leaders can be increasingly compromised over time. Also, the inability to identify when new skills are needed and to develop new skills and perspectives makes it almost certain that an individual will be less likely to address any other derailment factors he or she may have.

Having problems with interpersonal relations is a second major factor leading to derailment. Derailed individuals are often seen by others as abrasive, arrogant, manipulative, demanding, or aloof. Although characteristics like these may be long-standing aspects of a manager's personality, they may not influence one's effectiveness early in career. Prior to being promoted into a management role, a lack of interpersonal skills may be overlooked in performance reviews if one's technical performance is good. As an individual takes on supervisory responsibilities, this characteristic begins to matter more, in that a lack of interpersonal skills can get in the way of motivating and developing others. At lower levels in the organization, despite having poor interpersonal skills, managers are often able to achieve good performance from people over whom they have direct authority. However, as an individual moves up to more senior levels, is responsible

for people who also have more organizational power and authority, and must achieve results from people over whom he or she has no direct authority, poor interpersonal skills can become a major obstacle to achieving high performance.

A third major cause of managerial derailment is the inability to build and lead teams. This factor has to do with poor performance in one or several aspects of team development and leadership, including choosing the right team members, securing adequate resources, and creating structures and processes for team innovation and high performance. The teams often described in the derailment literature are diverse teams, often cross-cultural in membership and geographically dispersed. They are also teams with urgent or high-priority tasks, working in a complex, global environment. The leadership role on such a team is demanding and often ambiguous for a manager and usually requires a significant degree of behavioral flexibility.

Other causes of derailment at senior levels include being seen as too focused on one's own agenda at the expense of organizational goals, not being trusted to follow through or to have high integrity, being too narrow and unable to assume a broader than functional orientation, being authoritarian in leadership style, and being too isolated from other key stakeholders in the organization.

Research shows that managers almost never derail for one reason alone. In fact, the causes of derailment are often closely interrelated in any one derailment event. An individual who is abrasive or manipulative (that is, has poor interpersonal relations skills) will not be one to whom others readily provide useful developmental feedback. So, as conditions change and new skills are needed, that manager is unlikely to get the information needed to develop new skills (and will be seen as unable to adapt to change). Someone with poor interpersonal skills will also be less likely to be able to effectively lead a diverse team of people he or she may rarely see when the team is geographically dispersed. In a rapidly changing world, the inability to adapt will get in the way of effectively leading diverse teams faced with complex or ambiguous tasks.

Finally, research shows that avoiding derailment also involves a strong ability to learn from one's experiences, both positive and negative. The ability to learn from experience has many components, including (a) the ability to recognize when new skills or approaches are needed; (b) the willingness to accept responsibility for one's own development; (c) understanding the

important aspects of one's personality, values, and commitments; (d) the willingness to intentionally try out behaviors and attitudes that do not feel natural or comfortable; (e) reflection on the process of one's learning in day-to-day activities; (f) persisting in the face of mistakes, setbacks, and lowered performance while learning something new; (g) using a variety of tactics for learning rather than approaching learning in one single way (for example, solely through hands-on experience, reading, or accessing others); and (h) the ability and willingness to seek regular feedback from multiple sources (for example, peers, bosses, and direct reports).

—Ellen Van Velsor

See also Career mobility, Career success, Leadership development

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DIFFERENTIAL APTITUDE TESTING

An individual's career development and success are influenced by the attributes that differentiate that person from other people. These individual differences include interests, values, traits, motives, and intelligence. Perhaps the most powerful and pervasive individual difference influencing career development is *aptitude*. A person's aptitude can influence everything

from career choice to entry into a specific career to advancement within that career. This entry outlines what is known about the nature of aptitude, the relationship of aptitude to career development outcomes, and the current uses of aptitude testing in the workplace.

APTITUDE

Aptitude is defined as a person's natural ability or capacity for learning. It is also defined as talent within a specific domain. Aptitude testing uses a standardized test designed to predict an individual's ability to learn certain skills. Aptitude can be theoretically distinguished from the concept of achievement. *Achievement* is a result gained by effort or the quality and quantity of a student's work. Achievement testing involves a standardized test designed to measure an individual's acquired knowledge and skills in a specific domain. However, an individual's aptitude and achievement are highly related to one another. Aptitude predicts achievement, and achievement strongly predicts capacity for further learning. Thus, there is an inherent ambiguity between achievement and aptitude tests. No test can measure pure aptitude, because previous learning facilitates performance on any item type and all achievement tests act as tests of aptitude as well.

Aptitude and achievement are actually ways of describing individual differences in intelligence. *Intelligence* in this context can be understood as the entire repertoire of acquired skills, knowledge, learning sets, and generalization tendencies considered intellectual in nature that are available at any one period in time.

The most thorough understanding of the structure of intelligence is John B. Carroll's hierarchical model. He summarized the large body of intelligence research that spanned the twentieth century. Based on the data available at the time, Carroll applied factor-analytic methods to develop a model of intelligence that incorporated the relationships among the multitude of specific aptitude tests. The resulting model places general intelligence at the top of the hierarchy, with constructs including fluid intelligence, crystallized intelligence, memory, visual perception, auditory perception, retrieval, cognitive speed, and processing speed at the second level. The individual tests of attitude and achievement assess various facets of the third level. This model provides a framework by which the relationships between aptitude tests can be understood.

The presence of a general factor for intelligence has led some to suggest that only general intelligence or general mental ability is useful for predicting performance in most domains. However, highly related constructs can have quite different relationships with other variables. Because of this, different aptitude tests, such as the ones measuring the third-level constructs identified by Carroll, are useful for predicting various career outcomes. The specific aptitudes required in different careers can be discovered through job analysis.

APTITUDE OUTCOMES

Aptitude has been shown to predict a number of important work and career outcomes. These outcomes include career choice, training performance, job performance, and career advancement. Recent work by David Lubinski has revealed interesting trends in the career choices of extremely high-ability children. The area in which high-ability children are most able predicts the careers that they will later choose. This sample is especially interesting, because there are few limits on the careers such individuals can choose, since their aptitude is high in all areas. Philip Ackerman has developed complexes of aptitude, personality, and interests that tend to characterize individuals. These complexes also predict career choice. People tend to enjoy the things they do well and so gravitate toward careers that allow them to use the relative strengths they possess.

The definition of aptitude implies that it should influence an individual's training performance. Having high ability and capacity for learning in the area in which a person is being trained should lead to a faster and more complete knowledge of the area. This result has been consistently shown in the achievement tests that follow many training programs.

The effect of aptitude does not stop at training but extends into an individual's performance on the job. One of the most constant findings in the field of industrial/organizational psychology is that general mental ability (aptitude) predicts job performance. Frank Schmidt and John Hunter conducted a meta-analysis of all the major selection procedures used over an 85-year span, and general mental ability was found to be among the strongest predictors of job performance. The relationship between general aptitude and performance also reliably increases as the complexity of the job increases. The main way that aptitude

influences job performance is through the acquisition of job knowledge. Individuals with high aptitude learn more, and individuals who know more perform better. Recent work on understanding the multidimensional nature of job performance by John Campbell has led to a broader understanding of the nature of performance. The inclusion of various dimensions of job performance allows for differential prediction of those dimensions. Specific aptitudes influence performance in the dimensions of job performance that require the abilities and learning that constitute those aptitudes.

Aptitude also influences career advancement. Aptitude facilitates job performance, which typically leads to career advancement. Aptitude not only contributes to the performance that leads to promotions but also influences success within the new position, which leads to further advancement. Because of evidence showing the powerful effects of aptitude on performance, many organizations across a variety of fields and careers use information from differential aptitude testing as they make human resource decisions.

APTITUDE TESTING IN PRACTICE

Aptitude testing has been used for almost every sort of human resource decision faced by organizations. Many organizations include cognitive-ability tests to screen employees for selection. Even the National Football League uses an aptitude test to provide additional information about possible draft picks. Organizations use aptitude tests to manage their human capital. They identify the most likely candidates for future advancement so that they can invest extra resources into those individuals' development. Aptitude testing is not limited to traditional cognitive-ability testing. Recent development of tests of social or emotional intelligence and situational judgment represent attempts to measure individual differences in aptitude so that organizations can better use their human capital.

CONCLUSION

Aptitude testing has been shown to be effective for identifying individuals who will be successful across a broad spectrum of careers. Because of its power for predicting these vital outcomes in a competitive economic environment, it will most likely continue in its dominant position in human capital decisions and thus in successful career advancement. As our understanding of job performance and the aptitudes that influence it

increases, the form of differential aptitude tests will undergo changes. However, differential aptitude will continue to play a key role in our understanding of career development.

—Fritz Drasgow and Bradley J. Brummel

See also Abilities, Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB)

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DISABILITIES AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

Over the last decade, the enrollment of students with disabilities in postsecondary education has increased dramatically. In 1978, just 3 percent of all incoming, first-time, full-time college freshmen reported having a disability. By 2000, a full 9 percent of incoming full-time freshmen reported having at least one disability. According to the 1995 to 1996 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, the average age of all students with disabilities attending college was higher than that of their nondisabled peers (30 years versus 26 years); those with disabilities were less likely to be enrolled in public four-year colleges and universities

(25 percent versus 32 percent); and students with disabilities were more likely to attend public two-year institutions. The National Center for Education Statistics found that students with disabilities were about as likely as students without disabilities to attend private, not-for-profit, four-year institutions (14 percent and 15 percent, respectively).

Many postsecondary disability service providers believe that the 9 percent enrollment figure is an underestimate, as it includes only incoming freshmen of traditional age (18-22) and does not take into consideration older college students with disabilities, those who attend part-time, those who transfer to four-year institutions from community colleges, or those who discontinue their studies and later resume postsecondary education. Higher college enrollments among students with disabilities can be attributed to increased knowledge and advocacy while students are still in high school, teaching and classroom modifications in secondary education, and advances in adaptive technology, in addition to increased mainstreaming of students with disabilities in K-12 public education.

Despite this increase in enrollment, college students with disabilities persist to graduation in fewer numbers than their nondisabled peers and tend to secure employment in lower numbers. Beyond the routine issues of adjustment to the postsecondary setting, career assessment, and job-search skill development important for all college students, there exists a stigma attached to the disclosure of disabilities. Students still encounter stereotypes and bias when they enter college classrooms, and many students have not yet learned strong self-advocacy skills or developed a basic self-awareness of their own disabilities as well as what accommodations they may need. Despite legislation, students with disabilities still find many college science labs, clinical settings, and engineering facilities inaccessible, thus preventing access to and opportunities for training in higher-paying science, engineering, or other technology-based career fields. In addition, employers as well as internship and cooperative education supervisors remain relatively uneducated about the needs of people with disabilities in the workplace, as well as their legal responsibilities for accommodating applicants and employees with disabilities.

LEGISLATION INVOLVING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 remains the legal cornerstone of the college student

disability accommodation process. Programs receiving federal financial assistance are not allowed to discriminate against people with disabilities. In particular, postsecondary institutions are required to make academic adjustments, modify nonessential academic requirements, and provide auxiliary aids and services to students with disabilities. Examples include priority registration, reduced course load, note takers, sign language interpreters, extended time on testing, alternative formats for printed material, and access to computer software and adaptive technology. Section 508 (Accessibility of Technology) of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act focuses specifically on expanding the access of software, equipment, and other technology for people with disabilities. Section 508 requires federal electronic and information technology to be accessible to people with disabilities, including employees and members of the public.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 was later enacted to expand the 1973 legislation and earlier Civil Rights Act of 1964, which addressed discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, and religion. In particular, Title I of The ADA prohibits employers from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in the job application process, hiring, training, advancement, and other aspects of employment.

In public school settings, the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) and its subsequent reauthorization of 1997 focus on K-12 education. This legislation added mandatory transition of students at age 14, to move students from being merely present in individual education planning (IEP) meetings to being active participants in planning for their needs after high school, in both college and employment settings.

Although these laws have increased protections from discrimination, attitudes and responsiveness to students' needs cannot be legislated. Thus, early career-planning activities for young people with disabilities provide the foundation for educating students regarding their rights and for students' requesting and using accommodations before entering the workforce. It is critical for career services professionals to develop their own awareness of disability needs as they assist students in taking advantage of part-time and summer employment, on-campus recruitment, externships, internships, and cooperative work experiences prior to college graduation. Career service professionals can also serve students by educating employers who recruit students with and without disabilities, so as to prevent

biases and personal stereotypes from adversely impacting their employment practices.

IMPROVEMENTS IN THE EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

As a result of legislation and improved transition from high school to college, students are becoming more knowledgeable about their rights and are more inclined to assert those rights to obtain their accommodations. In 2001, as a result of a physically disabled student's complaint, Duke University entered into an agreement with the Department of Justice to make its campus more accessible to students with disabilities. This landmark case was the first to deal with accessibility improvements on a wide-ranging basis (i.e., modifications of policies, practices, procedures; provision of auxiliary aids and services; and improvements to the accessibility of facilities). Duke went further than the legal requirements and developed a comprehensive campus disability management system, a model for many other universities across the country.

In another milestone for students with disabilities, the College Board has recently agreed to stop identifying students who take the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) under nonstandard conditions. Colleges frequently (and erroneously) perceived such scores as having decreased value in students' applications, assuming that students who took the exam under nonstandard conditions were less likely to succeed in college. The original plaintiff had a physical disability (no hands) and used a computer and trackball to complete the test.

Another substantial improvement in students' experiences in college has been increased faculty awareness over the past five years. Under the Clinton administration, the National Science Foundation's Program for Persons with Disabilities funded over 20 demonstration grants to improve postsecondary education for students with disabilities by promoting accessible pedagogy, inclusive instructional materials, media, and educational technologies. "Universal design" for learning and instruction is a revolutionary concept in the field of disability services in higher education that focuses both on the diverse needs of learners and on ways of creating an accessible teaching environment on college campuses.

Distance education has exploded in the past decade, and adaptive hardware, accessible technologies, and inclusive teaching methods are critical if

students with disabilities are to enroll in online courses. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act also requires accessibility of instructional software, and more universities are stipulating that their faculties learn about access issues prior to teaching online courses. Information technology (IT) professionals are likely to be more aware of inadvertent barriers to students with sensory disabilities caused by college, departmental, and course Web pages, as well as courseware such as WebCT. Adaptive technology and software are increasingly available at institutions so that students no longer have to bear the huge costs of purchasing their own technology. Universities are now able to obtain software that allows students with visual disabilities to understand maps and graphs via tactile format. More colleges are moving to document conversion, where books in print are converted to audio or digital formats (e.g., eText), and some publishers provide printed materials in alternative formats. Medical professions use instruments such as auditory blood pressure machines and talking thermometers. Innovative equipment and technology are being created and improved each year to remove barriers students face in college and the workplace.

BARRIERS IN THE WORKPLACE

Despite many gains within the postsecondary environment, there continues to be a lack of understanding and awareness of disability issues among employers, human resource managers, and postsecondary career planning professionals. Stereotypes against employees with disabilities are still common. Employers are confused about the perceived correlation between ADA provisions and Family Medical Leave Act requirements.

Adults with disabilities continue to report barriers to employment, according to the Urban Institute of Washington, D.C. In a survey of 16,000 people with disabilities, respondents identified several workplace limitations that impacted their abilities to obtain and sustain employment. Respondents noted that barriers to obtaining employment included (a) lack of accessible transportation, (b) lack of appropriate information about jobs, and (c) inadequate training. The highest barriers within the workplace were listed as (a) lack of related experience, (b) lack of required skills, (c) supervisors' lack of knowledge about accommodations, and (d) negative attitudes and stereotypes. Finally, effective strategies needed to reduce employment barriers

included (a) visible top-management commitment, (b) staff training, (c) technical assistance, and (d) special budgets for auxiliary aids.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POSTSECONDARY FACULTY AND STAFF

Essentially, there are four modes of access that will increase the participation of students with disabilities in both college and employment: physical access, programmatic access, informational access, and attitudinal access. Provision of entrance ramps, wider doors, accessible bathrooms, braille elevator buttons, and accessible parking spaces allow for the first and most fundamental *physical access* to buildings, classrooms, offices, and employment facilities. Second, disabled people receive *programmatic access* when they obtain alternative formats of printed material and service animals to get to class or work. *Informational access* includes auxiliary aids and services (e.g., readers, interpreters), videos and films with closed or open captions, and TTY phones for deaf or hearing-impaired individuals.

Finally, the greatest difficulties faced by people with disabilities are perhaps related to *attitudinal access*. Although legislation easily mandates physical accessibility and provides legislative guidance on the technical specifications of accessibility as well as guidance on how to improve access to career programs, services, and information, the law cannot legislate attitudes. Faculty and staff need to carefully consider whether they may be more inclined to discourage students with disabilities from certain careers than students without disabilities; it is illegal to counsel a student out of a career field based merely on the presence of a disability. It is important that faculty and staff recognize their own biases and stereotypes and how these assumptions influence their behavior toward students with disabilities. Career professionals may be invaluable in helping students to accurately assess their strengths as well as weaknesses, the onset and nature of their disabilities, and what (if anything) they may need as accommodations that will equalize their chances to compete for employment.

There are several ways college/university professionals may address outdated attitudes about people with disabilities:

Take initiative in educating career services staff about the experiences of people with disabilities

Attend campus workshops, listen to speakers, and consult with career professionals at other universities to

learn more about different types of disabilities, employment issues for this population, and how staff can become allies of students

Consult with colleagues in the university office of disability services to learn more about the needs of students

Invite employers who utilize on-campus recruiting program to attend meetings with disability services staff to enhance their knowledge regarding disability issues

Provide training for employers (e.g., live and frequently asked questions) regarding how to interact with and hire people with disabilities

To further eliminate bias and stereotypes about people with disabilities, career professionals can provide accurate information to employers about the accomplishments of people with disabilities in different employment settings. For example, there is an increase in qualified students with disabilities who are enrolling and experiencing academic success in health care fields such as nursing and medicine. Unfortunately, many career professionals, medical school faculty, and employers may erroneously believe these professions are not realistic goals for students who have disabilities. Many advances in technology have led to the development of medical equipment that is more accessible to professionals (e.g., talking thermometers, adaptive blood pressure cuffs), thereby allowing qualified people with disabilities the opportunity to train and become employed in health care.

NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE CAREER-PLANNING PROCESS

Students with disabilities struggle with decisions regarding disclosure. Often they are caught between competing desires to be fully independent and to request accommodations that will facilitate their academic and/or job performance. When they meet with disability services professionals, they most likely are not seeking assistance for the job-search process. They are more likely to focus on achieving success in the classroom.

When students with disabilities do come into career services, they are not skilled in asking for specialized assistance regarding one or more disabilities. They may not know whom to ask for help regarding their disabilities and their implications for their career development. For this reason, career professionals must strive to establish a climate of support that will invite students to seek assistance. For example, adding

disability-related events to a Web-based office calendar conveys to students with disabilities that the office is aware of their needs. Similarly, the availability of disability-related material in print and via the office Web page gives much-needed information to a population of students frequently invisible to many campus personnel.

Internships, practica, clinical rotations, and co-ops are opportunities for students with disabilities to establish positive and successful work histories, whether or not they use the accommodations. The more students with disabilities experience positive job searches while in college, the more they will feel at ease when they enter the workforce. While still in college, people with disabilities are likely to benefit from practice conveying their skills, strengths, and aspirations, in addition to discussing their disabilities and requesting workplace accommodations as appropriate.

Career service professionals, on behalf of the students with whom they work, can be instrumental in training employers who come to campus regarding their responsibilities to students under the ADA. In some cases, this means creating partnerships and agreements, for example, regarding who pays for accommodations for a student at an internship or co-op worksite. While the ADA Title I identifies employers as being responsible for the costs of accommodating applicants and employees, sharing costs among the college, the co-op site, and possibly vocational rehabilitation will not only defray the costs of accommodating a student employee but also perhaps reduce the use of stereotypes. Career services professionals optimally will work closely with the campus disability services in coordinating the most effective accommodation(s) for an internship, practicum, or job site. The office of disability services often has the expertise and professional contacts to locate appropriate equipment, hardware, or software the student needs.

There are instances in which careers have essential job duties and/or training requirements that cannot be accommodated. For example, math is typically a necessary requirement for computer science programs and in many cases cannot be substituted or waived for a student with a disability involving mathematics. Similarly, foreign-language skills may be critical to some professions (e.g., translators), and substitutions to meet graduation requirements are not reasonable. Rather than counseling students out of a career field, it is imperative to help them assess their skills and needs in light of the essential nature of the field.

Career offices can actively partner with alumni, employment recruitment offices, study-abroad offices, and disability services to make programs they sponsor as accessible as possible to all students. Such coordination allows for planning ahead and prioritizing efforts before a disability is disclosed and accommodation request arises.

—Robin A. Stokes and Kristina E. Lyhus

See also Disability

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DISABILITY

Providing the necessary information to ensure sound, evidence-based public policy for those with disabilities has been more difficult than for other economically vulnerable populations. To do so, researchers need appropriate data: to identify the population with disabilities, to establish success measures for the public policies targeted on it, and to track outcomes of such policies. The U.S. Bureau of the Census, for instance, has developed criteria based on questions in the Current Population Survey (CPS) to measure the official employment rate, average household income, and poverty rates of the U.S. population by age, sex, race/ethnicity, and education.

The CPS has also been used to track the size, economic success, and government program participation of especially vulnerable populations, such as single mothers. But controversy over the conceptual and operational definition of the working-age population with disabilities has prevented any official counts of this population, its economic vulnerability, and employment outcomes. The failure of the federal government to establish an official measure of the economic outcomes of working-age people with disabilities may to some degree explain why their economic fortunes have languished while the fortunes of single mothers have greatly improved over the last two decades.

Both of these economically vulnerable populations had for many years been treated by policymakers as if they were "not expected to work." While this meant that they were the recipients of substantial federal funds, usually these funds were conditional on their not working. More important, since policymakers did not expect them to work, little was done to assist them to successfully compete in the labor market. Expectations changed for both groups in the 1990s.

The passage of the Welfare Reforms of 1996, along with a more generous Earned Income Tax Credit,

increases in subsidized child care, and better access to subsidized medical insurance and employment services, together with the devolution of greater responsibility for these programs to the states, were all based on the notion that single mothers, like other women, even those with children, were able to work in the marketplace and should not be discouraged from doing so. This change in public policy had a major effect on the behavior of single mothers. It increased their willingness to seek employment by consistently shifting program incentives to favor work over welfare benefits conditioned on not working. The consequences of these policy changes on the employment, income, poverty, and program participation outcomes of this vulnerable population were captured in the CPS and other national data sets. These data have been used to document the major success of these policies as well as what remains to be done to fully integrate single mothers into the labor market and out of poverty.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 marked a major change in disability policy away from the medical model of disability that stressed the role of a person's impairment on an "inability to work" to a model that better recognized that the social environment, including the economic, legal, and public policy environment, could have as much to do as the impairment itself with whether a person with a disability was employed. At the insistence of advocates and others, the government launched a multifaceted effort to more fully integrate working-age people with disabilities into society. While the passage of the ADA epitomizes this change, it is also reflected in other legislation, such as the 1998 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the 1998 Workforce Investment Act, and the 1999 Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Improvement Act. These pro-work policy initiatives focus on increasing investment in the market skills of individuals with disabilities, breaking down institutional and physical barriers to their use.

Unfortunately, the employment, economic well-being, and poverty rates of working-age people with disabilities appear not to have improved despite these changes in policy, although the evidence is controversial. The controversy is on two levels: quality of the data and interpretation of the data. With respect to the first, data quality, neither the U.S. Bureau of the Census nor any other branch of government has established an official measure of the economic success of this population.

Unlike age, sex, and to a lesser extent race/ethnicity, there is no well-established operational measure of the working-age population with disabilities. However, over the past two decades, a growing consensus has concluded that the old medical-based definition of disability is not satisfactory, that is, a model of disability that assumes that an inability to work is a direct consequence of a medically established pathology. For example, exceeding the medical listings of severity for a given diagnostic group (e.g., infectious and parasitic diseases, neoplasms, mental disorders) is still used by the Social Security Administration as sufficient cause for receiving disability benefits in the absence of work. However, there are people who have such conditions, do not apply for benefits, and continue to work. Hence, while disability begins with a pathology that causes a physical or mental impairment that subsequently limits one or more life activities, such as work, the social environments impaired people face can have as much to do with their work outcomes as does the impairment itself. For example, persons who experience deafness but are accommodated at the workplace with a TTY machine that permits them to use the telephone would not be considered work limited despite their impairment.

Unfortunately, no existing data sets fully capture this more general conceptualization of a work disability. Recent and still controversial research has, however, established that the CPS data, while imperfect, can be used to capture a work-limitation-based measure of the working-age population with disabilities and track its economic success both absolutely and relative to the rest of the working-age population with respect to employment, income and poverty outcomes. The results of this research suggest that in contrast to most vulnerable populations, especially single mothers, people with disabilities have not shared in the fruits of economic growth over the last 25 years, especially during the 1990s.

We now know that the United States experienced two major business cycles over the last two decades of the twentieth century: 1979 through 1989 and 1989 through 2000. Based on CPS data and confirmed with National Health Interview Survey and Survey of Income and Program Participation data, the employment rates of working-age people with and without disabilities were pro-cyclical over the first business cycle, falling over the recession years of the early 1980s and rising over the long period of growth from 1982 to 1989. The rise in employment for those with

disabilities, however, was not as great as for those without disabilities, so over the decade, the employment rate of the former fell relative to that of the latter. The case was the same for single mothers.

The relative employment rate of working-age people with disabilities fell even more over the 1990s business cycle. Although employment of those both with and without disabilities fell from the business cycle peak year of 1990 to 1993, during the growth years 1993 to 2000, employment of those without disabilities rose, while employment of those with disabilities continued to fall. The employment rates of those both with and without disabilities fell between 2000 and 2003, but the relative employment rate of those with disabilities continued to fall.

In contrast to working-age people with disabilities, the employment of single mothers grew dramatically over the 1990s, especially after the implementation of the Welfare Reforms of 1996. By the end of the decade, the employment of single mothers was, for the first time, higher than that of married women with children.

Between 1979 and 2000, the household income of working-age people with disabilities remained about the same. Their wage-earning declines were offset by increases in their disability transfers, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and by the greater earnings of other household members. Their overall household income, however, fell relative to those without disabilities, whose income rose significantly over this period of substantial economic growth. In contrast, the income of single mothers, which fell relative to married mothers in the 1980s, grew both absolutely and relative to married mothers over the 1990s, especially after welfare reform. The overall increase in the average income of single mothers rose because their labor earnings and the government subsidies they received based on their work more than made up for the decline in their welfare benefits.

The ability of the average working-age persons with disabilities to at least maintain the same level of economic well-being while the income of the rest of the population was increasing, however, obscures what happened to the most vulnerable part of the working-age population with disabilities. This group has consistently faced a greater risk of poverty than working-age people without disabilities. In 1979, a working-age person with a disability was 3.2 times more likely than one without a disability to be living

in poverty. By 1989, their relative risk had risen to 3.5, and by 2000 to 4.1. Over these two business cycles, the poverty rate of working-age people with disabilities rose from 21.9 percent to 28.1 percent, while the poverty rate of those without disabilities remained about the same, 6.9 to 6.8 percent. In contrast, the poverty rate of single mothers rose during the 1980s but fell both absolutely and relative to married mothers in the 1990s, especially after welfare reform.

But what accounts for the failure of working-age people with disabilities to be more fully integrated into mainstream society? Although there has been controversy over the measures of economic success reported above based on CPS data, the controversy surrounding the interpretation of these data has been greater. To understand what is driving these outcomes, it is first necessary to recognize that most working-age people with disabilities experience the onset of their work limitations after they enter the labor market and remain in the labor force long after this initial onset of a work disability. Research shows that the average length of time before individuals apply for SSDI benefits following onset is 15 years and that only 72 percent of workers with disabilities will ever apply for SSDI benefits. The rest continue in the labor force until they exit onto the Social Security retirement program. The timing of SSDI application is affected (holding the seriousness of the impairment constant) by a worker's characteristics and the economic environment he or she faces. Younger and better-educated workers will delay application longer than older or less educated workers. But accommodation matters, and employees who are accommodated by their employers stay in the labor force longer than those who aren't. This is true across a wide range of accommodations. The most frequent firm accommodations, involving changes in job hours and job responsibilities, are not costly from an accounting perspective, although they may be from a work organization perspective.

Economic incentives also matter. Workers whose future earning streams are higher or who are less likely to be accepted for SSDI will delay applying for benefits and continue in the labor force longer than workers with lower future earning streams and higher likelihood of SSDI acceptance.

The employment experience of working-age people with disabilities is discouraging, especially since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 was meant to usher in a new generation

of pro-work policies that would more fully integrate working-age people with disabilities into the mainstream of American life, including employment. Despite the increased duration in employment that accommodation brings and the likely rise in the percentage of workers with disabilities who were accommodated in the 1990s following the implementation of the ADA, their employment rates fell over the entire 1990s business cycle and has done so, relative to those without disabilities, since the mid-1980s. The causes of this decline in relative employment are controversial, but the preponderance of the evidence suggests that it was not caused by an increase in the severity of workers' impairments; and neither changes in the nature of work nor the availability of employer-provided health insurance were major factors.

The most likely causes of the decline in relative employment were the substantial reduction in the eligibility standards for entry onto the SSDI rolls that occurred in the mid-1980s and the increase in benefits relative to market wages. The unintended consequence of these well-meaning but antiwork policies was to discourage working-age people with disabilities from taking advantage of the strengthening of their legal right to work.

It has also been argued that the increased costs firms must bear to accommodate workers with disabilities have made them less likely to hire such workers and that this unintended consequence of the ADA offsets its positive impact via increased duration on the job for those who are accommodated. The evidence of a negative ADA effect on employment is more controversial and is sensitive to alternative definitions of the population with disabilities.

What is clear is that, as with those without disabilities, the employment of working-age people with disabilities is influenced by market forces. The skills that people with disabilities bring to the job will affect their chances of employment, their duration on the job, and the age at which they leave the labor market. The wage premium that those with more than a high school education can command has dramatically increased over the last two decades. This is true for those with and without disabilities. The best predictor of job market success is one's level of education; in the constantly changing American job market, the long-term rewards to well-educated workers demonstrate its value. Hence, those workers with good job skills and high education levels are the most likely to be retained by their employers during bad times and to

command higher salaries during both good and bad times.

Government policy can also influence the employment of working-age people with disabilities. Historically, the federal government's approach to providing economic security for working-age people with disabilities has been dominated by a caretaker approach, reflecting the outdated view that disability is solely a medical issue.

A glance at the federal budget shows that cash transfers and medical care expenditures (SSDI, SSI, Medicare, and Medicaid) dwarf expenditures for efforts to integrate those with disabilities into the labor force. And the eligibility rules for these programs discourage work and more than likely offset any pro-work effect of the ADA during the 1990s.

The dramatic improvement in the employment, average income, and poverty rates of single mothers after the Welfare Reforms of 1996 show that it is possible for government policy to shift from a caretaker to a pro-work priority and to have a significant impact on a population that was "not expected to work." To successfully integrate working-age people with disabilities into the workforce, however, it will be necessary to first establish an official definition of the working-age population with disabilities based on a currently available data set like the CPS and then use it to monitor the success of policy changes that are consistent with providing support for work, making work pay, and expecting people with disabilities to do what they reasonably can to support themselves. The recent experience of single mothers suggests that reforms with these three features can both improve the lives of many people with disabilities and achieve broad-based political support.

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See also Careers and health, Disabilities among college students, Single parents and careers

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DIVERSITY IN ORGANIZATIONS

Workplace diversity continues to be both an interest and a concern to organizations worldwide. Efforts to provide greater access to corporate careers for groups that have been historically discriminated against is not new. However, what is more modern is the examination of how inherent and subtle biases, as well as privileges, may facilitate the movement of some groups up the corporate ladder—while constructing a glass ceiling for others. Managing diversity efforts that focus on more closely examining the organizational norms, values, and practices that enhance or impede diversity can therefore be met by appreciation as well as resentment and backlash by organizational members and the public at large.

This entry identifies reasons for continued interest in diversity matters and distinguishes workplace diversity initiatives from other organizational efforts to promote workplace equity, such as equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. The discussion then contrasts two different scholarly and

practical approaches to workplace diversity. Next, it focuses on career development and identifies some of the career challenges confronted by minority workers, even within the increasingly diverse workplace. Effective strategies for achieving equal opportunity in career development for organizations are summarized, and the entry concludes with a discussion of the benefits of workplace diversity.

WORKPLACE DIVERSITY: MORE THAN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Workplace diversity is a broad and complex phrase that means many things to many people, perhaps because as a larger society, we are continually challenged by what it means to have a diverse society. For example, changes in the demographic makeup of the American population have accompanied an evolution in how society thinks and even talks about diversity. The diversity metaphor has progressed from talking about the United States as a melting pot to discussing society as being a mosaic. The “melting-pot” metaphor reflected a time in which a large number of immigrants who came to the United States traveled in order to escape persecution and/or to seize the tremendous opportunities offered by the “American dream.” At times, immigrants were willing to shed their ethnic identities in exchange for the opportunity to call themselves Americans. Yet over time, for some groups, such as African Americans, the melting pot came to symbolize the lack of choice in becoming American for many of their ancestors and the sense that to be anything other than White, blond-haired, and blue-eyed was something to be avoided. The melting pot did not represent an equal blending of ethnic identities of both voluntary and forced immigrants; instead, for many citizens, it represented an avoidance and exclusion of their differences and identities.

Today, an alternative diversity metaphor portrays the American society as a mosaic, a picture made up of many different and unique parts that are able to retain their individual identities yet meaningfully contribute to the whole. The setting aside of the melting-pot metaphor in no way represents a dismissal of one’s American-ness, but rather signals the need to have both an American and an ethnic identity.

Given that the United States is largely a country of immigrants, workplace diversity in many ways is nothing new. The workplace has always been diverse, given that it has consisted of individuals with different

nationalities as well as values, personalities, perspectives, and ideas. However, *Workforce 2000* set into motion a growing concern about the future labor force and the roles of women, people of color, and older workers in the future of corporate America.

In 1987, the Hudson Institute released *Workforce 2000*, a major report that described the shifts the labor force was facing—namely, that as the population aged, so would the workforce. In addition, the report concluded that women would make up a greater percentage of new entrants to the workplace, as would racial minorities. Finally, this report also indicated that immigrants would make up the largest share of new workers since World War I.

Workforce 2000 served as a forecast for corporate America of the changes the labor force was undergoing. However, it also signaled to organizations that the old methods of recruiting, selecting, and developing workers might not be as beneficial with this new, more heterogeneous pool of potential workers as they had in the past. For example, the increasing gender diversity of the labor force has expanded ideas about employee benefits. Given many women’s responsibility for child and elder care, many employee benefits now go beyond health and life insurance to also include family and medical leave, as well as flexible working schedules and arrangements. Although these initiatives have been frequently considered by organizations in order to better attract and retain female workers, they benefit all employees as traditional gender roles for men and women (in- and outside the workplace) lessen.

Another example of how *Workforce 2000* challenged conventional notions of human resource practices relates to the increase in linguistic diversity, given the growing numbers of immigrant labor. The influx of immigrant labor has meant that organizations must consider the ways in which they communicate with current and future employees regarding recruitment, selection, and promotion as well as employee rights and responsibilities and, most important, safety. The surge of Spanish-speaking workers has made many organizations consider the relevance and legality of English-only norms and practices that could disadvantage this important and large segment of the workforce. The increase in immigrant labor has also meant that monolingual supervisors and managers who direct linguistic-minority employees must develop a working fluency of a new language as well as develop an understanding of the nuances of a different culture.

At the same time the United States and the world were coming to grips with the changing workforce, the nature of work was likewise changing. For the United States, an economy largely built on manufacturing was becoming increasingly focused on the service sector and the new information market. The workplace itself was becoming more and more streamlined as organizational charts flattened. Increasingly, the work of companies became organized around teams, thus increasing the relevance of the increasingly diverse labor force to the functioning of the workplace. Therefore, a concern of many organizations and researchers was the impact of cross-gendered and cross-racial teams on team cohesiveness and performance, as well as the potential for increased levels of conflict. However, all forms of diversity, not just demographic diversity, can potentially lead to conflict within the workplace. Some conflict may, in fact, lead to more effective team processes and outcomes.

The potential for conflict related to diversity has not been a function solely of group dynamics but also of differences in individuals' understanding of the implications of workplace diversity on their own careers, and these differences in perspectives have promoted both confusion and backlash. For example, most employees can agree on how to resolve *first-order conflict*, the type of conflict that results in overt and visible barriers and discrimination in the workplace, such as employment practices that directly discriminate against hiring members of certain ethnic groups. First-order conflict is easily recognized, yet differences over how it should be resolved may result in second-order conflict.

Second-order conflict represents differences in perspectives within the organization that center on definitions of fairness and achieving equity. These differences are rarely voiced and create heavy burdens for organizations that want to move forward in their diversity efforts. These hidden differences often manifest themselves in resistance and backlash. In large part, this backlash has been brought about by misunderstandings of what managing diversity efforts entail, in particular the relationship of diversity efforts to equal employment opportunity and affirmative action.

As a program or initiative, workplace diversity is often confused with equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. Given the continued backlash against affirmative action, many have considered workplace diversity programs and initiatives as "politically correct" disguises for affirmative action. These initiatives

can complement one another, yet are distinct. In fact, both workplace diversity programs and affirmative action can be considered as part of a larger strategy for accomplishing equal employment opportunity.

Equal employment opportunity comes out of U.S. federal law, and it promotes a goal for organizations so that everyone has an equal chance at employment regardless of race, sex, religion, or nationality. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to monitor and enforce the law that prohibits employment discrimination for the protected groups named.

Whereas equal employment opportunity policy reflects a goal for an organization, affirmative action involves proactive steps on the part of an organization to reflect the diversity of the local labor market. Affirmative action, therefore, is a tool to accomplish equal employment opportunity. Affirmative action came out of Executive Order (11246), signed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965 (and extended in later orders), which required that federal contractors develop plans that would ensure that employment discrimination did not occur based on an individual's race or sex. Many people mistakenly confuse affirmative action with the use of quotas. Also dominant among the misperceptions of affirmative action is that it encourages organizations to hire unqualified women and ethnic minorities. In most circumstances, quotas are illegal. It makes very poor business sense to hire anyone who is unqualified. The only time the government forces organizations to hire anyone of a particular group is when that company (that contracts with the federal government) has egregiously discriminated against protected groups in the past. In fact, affirmative action is not just one program or initiative, but can involve a multitude of actions related to achieving diversity, in areas such as recruitment, training, and human resource development.

Perhaps the misconceptions of affirmative action reflect not only different levels of knowledge about equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, and workplace diversity but also differences in levels of awareness of the relationship of power and privilege to race, gender, and other forms of identity in and outside the workplace. The assumptions implicit within the inaccuracies regarding affirmative action as promoting unfairness and incompetence suggest a belief that discrimination is a thing of the past and that individuals regardless of race and gender have equal access to power and privilege throughout all sectors of

society. Consistently, data from the national census, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the EEOC suggest that minority group members lack the same level of access as majority group members to quality education and jobs and that they continue to confront discrimination (in many different forms) in and out of the workplace. Likewise, identifying any scholarly literature or research that explains the value of hiring any incompetent worker would be extremely difficult. Yet arguments exist to dismantle affirmative action based on these misperceptions. Perhaps, as one noted scholar indicated, affirmative action could be dismantled when *average* women and people of color have the same opportunities for education and employment as average White men.

Like affirmative action, managing diversity programs attempt to create organizational contexts that promote equal employment opportunity. Much of the focus of affirmative action programs has been on creating equity in regard to access to jobs and organizational careers. Although affirmative action is frequently successful in opening doors for qualified women and racial minorities, the organization must still find ways to ensure that support for these groups' performance and career development is available. At a minimum, organizations must strive to eliminate treatment discrimination once new minority workers have been hired. This is where managing-diversity programs come in. Like affirmative action programs, there is not a single defining characteristic of a managing-diversity program. Most are multifaceted and include attempts to not only attract diverse employees but also retain them.

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: APPROACHES TO UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY

As organizations began to grapple with issues of diversity, organizational researchers have sought to understand the implications of the increasingly diverse workplace on organizations, work, and individual performance. Research has also sought to better understand the realities of diverse workers. There are two approaches to considering the relationship of workplace diversity to career development. The *individual-difference approach* takes a broad perspective about diversity and considers every form of difference as equally relevant and important to career development in diverse organizations. Therefore,

differences in personality and cognitive ability are equated to forms of difference that stem from race, culture, gender, or sexual orientation. The individual-difference perspective strives to be inclusive by expanding the criteria by which one falls under the diversity umbrella. The individual-difference approach is important in that it can attract majority group members, like White men, to diversity-related conversations and action planning. Although this approach may decrease resentment and backlash from the majority group, it may also antagonize minority group members, who may feel that their opportunities to be heard and seek justice are being co-opted in order to make majority group members feel comfortable.

In contrast, the *social justice approach* to examining diversity suggests that some differences are more socially significant and relevant to interpersonal dynamics in the workplace. The social justice approach considers the extent to which social and historical legacies have prohibited or denied some groups full participation in organizations and thus stifled opportunities for learning, training, and career development. The assumption guiding this approach is that the realities that minority groups face outside of organizations, such as discrimination, exclusion, stereotyping, and isolation, are transported into organizations through citizens who are also employees. From this perspective, differences based on characteristics such as race and gender are more important than diversity based on characteristics such as personality, because minority status due to demographic characteristics can be stigmatizing. These identities serve as social markers that create opportunities for access and treatment discrimination in organizations. That is why this entry places special emphasis on understanding the challenges for the career development of women and people of color. For members of these groups, a history of overt and modern forms of discrimination, exclusion, and isolation have limited their opportunities for personal career development and also their opportunities to meaningfully contribute to the healthy functioning of their organizations.

Therefore, a review of these challenges is necessary to fully understand how socially marked identities based on race, gender, and sexuality limit opportunities for career development. Organizations have differed in their perspectives regarding how they think and thus react to the challenge of developing a diverse workforce. A conversation regarding different organizational perspectives and actions regarding diversity will therefore follow, along with other

suggestions for successfully developing employees in a diverse workplace.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES FOR MINORITY WORKERS

Despite equal employment opportunity goals, affirmative action, and even managing-diversity programs, minority workers can encounter significant challenges to their career development. Despite the federal laws and organizational policies against discrimination and harassment, these barriers to minority career development continue. Wal-Mart, for example, is currently defending itself against a class action suit that alleges gender discrimination. Female employees and middle managers claim not only that they encountered discrimination in regard to access to opportunities for development and promotion but also that gender discrimination exists in regard to pay. Black employees who work at Georgia Power have faced racial harassment and intimidation in their workplace. Racist graffiti and hangmen's nooses (reminiscent of the lynching of Blacks) have been found in areas occupied by Black workers within the company. These are obviously instances of overt forms of discrimination and harassment, yet minority workers also confront "microaggressions" and "everyday discrimination," which creates hostile work environments and likely interferes with employees' level of investment in their work and identification with their employers.

One way to think about the overt and subtle forms of discrimination that are confronted by minority group members in the workplace is to focus on the glass ceiling. The *glass ceiling* is a broad term that refers to the often subtle and invisible barriers confronted by minority workers as they attempt to develop their careers. Women, people of color, and gay and lesbian workers can confront both overt and covert forms of discrimination that derail their careers. Overt hostility and exclusion and subtle distancing prevent minority workers from forming healthy and developmental relationships at work and create very real barriers to their promotion and further professional development.

The glass ceiling limits opportunities for many minority workers to develop their careers and reach top-management positions in corporate America, an invisible barrier they confront as they attempt to move up the corporate ladder. There are varying explanations for why the glass ceiling exists, and they lead to

varying perspectives on what minority employees can do to overcome it.

A survey of chief executive officers in corporate America indicated that they felt that there are not many women in the upper echelons of corporate America due to the small numbers of women in the leadership pipeline and women's relative lack of experience. The same study also surveyed managerial women on track to upper-management positions. These female respondents provided different explanations for women's lack of visibility within the leadership ranks of many corporations. Rather than talking about the lack of women in the leadership pipeline and women's limited work experiences, these respondents largely pointed to the organizational culture as limiting women's advancement. Accordingly, executive women frequently describe organizational cultures as being highly patriarchal and hostile to women. The respondents suggested that another likely contributor to the glass ceiling is the method by which senior leadership is selected. According to this particular sample, it is likely that male leaders select future leaders based on the extent to which high-potential employees are most similar to themselves. These women felt that men select other men and that issues of equity and fairness in regard to leadership development are not critical when deciding who will and will not climb the corporate ladder.

Women who have broken through the glass ceiling and hold positions of significant leadership in the corporate world report using a variety of strategies to help promote their own career development and visibility. Studies of executive women across racial groups reveal that these women consistently try to exceed others' performance expectations. Exceeding expectations leaves little doubt or ambiguity regarding one's competence and credibility. Many female executives also report that they attempt to develop interpersonal styles that place male managers at ease. In addition, female executives look for stretch opportunities in order to develop new and valuable skill sets but also so that they can be successful in important and visible ways to top decision makers. Finally, they also attempt to gain the support of an influential mentor.

Especially telling about the culture of an organization and its contribution to the glass ceiling are the reported strategies that successful women use to break through the glass ceiling. Strategies that focus on exceeding expectations and using an interpersonal style that makes men comfortable reflect the prevalence of a

culture that privileges men and defines women as “the other” who must adapt to men’s preferences. A race-based privilege is likely also at work, given that Black corporate women make similar suggestions for strategies to break through the glass ceiling; these women recommend an interpersonal style that places White coworkers at ease. Again, this recommendation speaks to the prevalence of a “White racial privilege” in corporate America that defines non-Whites as “others” who must continually prove their worth and make people comfortable with their identity.

Workplace experiences of African Americans suggest that they confront a workplace dynamic similar to that experienced by women. A study of Black and White managers in various organizations found that compared with their White counterparts, Black managers had more negative career-related experiences in their organizations. Black managers felt less accepted by their organizations and saw themselves as having less job discretion than their White peers. In addition, Black managers received lower job performance and promotability ratings by their supervisors, and they expressed lower levels of career satisfaction. Black managers in the sample were also more likely to have reached career plateaus compared with their White counterparts.

A longitudinal study of Black and White managers’ careers revealed that managers identified early in the careers as being on the fast track or having high potential experienced very different career trajectories over time. White managers seemed to have a linear path to the corporate suite. Black managers, however, often experienced career plateaus prior to reaching high executive levels, and they also took longer to get there. Although Black managers experienced more promotions than their White counterparts, these promotions were frequently lateral moves and offered little opportunity for greater visibility and development. Black managers who did become high-level executives did so by moving past their career plateaus (and perhaps proving themselves to their coworkers) and by having an influential and diverse set of mentors.

A CONTEXT FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN A DIVERSE WORKPLACE

Career development for an increasingly diverse workforce builds on older and standard organizational practices, such as career mapping, but must also reflect the unique experiences of minority workers. This section explores how differences in organizational perspectives

and paradigms are reflected in human resource practices that can impede or facilitate career development for a diverse workforce. Discrimination and fairness, access and legitimacy, and learning and effectiveness are three different diversity paradigms that have consequences for minority career development.

Some organizations embrace a *discrimination and fairness paradigm* or way of thinking in regard to diversity. For these organizations, managing diversity is mainly concerned with diversity numbers. Equal employment opportunity compliance and avoiding legal battles over employment discrimination are the primary diversity goals. Therefore, diversity efforts mainly center on the recruitment and subsequent selection of minority workers. Far less attention is paid to the issue of retention. These organizations lack efforts to support and develop minority workers, and so many of these workers will leave due to pressures to assimilate. Minority and majority employees in these organizations lack the opportunities to acknowledge and appreciate each other’s differences as an opportunity for learning.

Organizations following *access and legitimacy paradigms* view employee diversity as an opportunity to explore and serve new markets; the value of diverse workers is in the financial benefits organizations accrue by expanding their markets. From a human resource perspective, organizations with an employee base that reflects the diversity of the consumers they serve can provide better customer service. This is especially important within the marketing function, given that those who work in this area are responsible for understanding their potential market and making sure that new products have wide appeal. A classic pre-*Workforce 2000* example of a time in which an organization did not attend to the diversity of its potential markets relates to the marketing of the Chevy Nova. In the 1970s, the Chevy Nova was a somewhat popular midsized car that had broad appeal in the United States. However, marketing and sales of the Chevy Nova floundered in the Latin American market. Apparently, no one at Chevy had considered the role of cultural differences in the international appeal of the automobile. In Spanish, the word *nova* could actually be understood as “*no va*,” which, translated literally, means “It does not go!”

Although minority workers may feel valued within the access and legitimacy organizational context, they may also feel exploited, especially when they are not afforded opportunities to learn and demonstrate new or

non-identity-related skill sets. There is also a loss for nonminority workers in regard to their own development. Access and legitimacy organizations value the cultural knowledge diverse workers bring to the workplace; however, they fail to create opportunities for the wider dissemination of this knowledge for the organizational good. Nonminority workers therefore lose out on the developmental opportunity to enhance and broaden their knowledge of racial and cultural markets that may differ from their own. When minority workers leave these organizational contexts, the unique knowledge they bring to their jobs departs with them.

Organizations following *learning and effectiveness paradigms* view diversity as a strategic advantage and attempt to create a climate that values and recognizes diversity as an opportunity for learning, and therefore an opportunity for effectiveness. The integration of diversity is an organizational goal, and the appreciation for diversity and its value to organizational learning and effectiveness is a key part of these organizations' cultures. This type of organization creates opportunities for employees to learn from one another. The lack of pressure to assimilate to a defined norm within the organization frees all employees so that they can contribute to the organization in new and unique ways and accomplish their work most effectively.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Diverse workplaces that are able to facilitate the career development of all of their employees share some common mind-sets and practices. This entry concludes with a summary of common strategies used by diverse workplaces that promote career development.

Leadership: Organizations that reap the rewards of diversity have leaders who are committed to diversity and model that commitment. Leaders are accepting of diversity and value the variety of opinions and insights that a diverse workforce and top leadership team may offer. Leaders also recognize that challenges will exist due to the variety of perspectives that a diverse workforce can offer, yet they are committed enough to persevere during the shift in the corporate culture from one that may deny diversity to a culture that celebrates it.

Accountability: Leadership, managers, and all employees must be accountable for upholding the organization's values regarding diversity. This may mean enforcing antidiscrimination and harassment policies as well as ensuring that new employees are recruited, selected, developed, and promoted in ways that do not create systems of

disadvantage for minority workers. Likewise, organizations must monitor the climate for diversity in their organizations periodically to understand the opportunities and barriers that minority workers face.

Diversity training: Diversity training provides all employees with the opportunity to begin the journey toward developing multicultural competence, that is, the awareness, knowledge, and interpersonal skills required to work successfully with others who are different from oneself. For diversity training to be successful, it must have the full support and commitment of leadership, as well as be sensitive to the group dynamics that already exist within the organization. The perspective regarding training is that it is a long-term endeavor that evolves as employees develop in their own sense of identity and multicultural development. Effective training provides employees with a clear message regarding the organization's perspective and goals, as well as its commitment, related to diversity.

Mentoring and networks: Much of the mentoring research suggests that women and people of color confront barriers to accessing workplace networks and in gaining adequate mentoring. Mentoring by more senior personnel provides psychosocial and instrumental support to any employee. Therefore, the denial of mentoring opportunities because of a potential protégé's minority status due to race, gender, or sexuality places that employee at a severe disadvantage for career development. Organizations must create opportunities for mentoring (informal or formal) and reward effective mentoring. Similar strategies must be put in place in regard to networks. One option is to create affinity groups (such as a gay and lesbian caucus) or interest groups that are focused on supporting the organization's diversity goals as a way to enhance diverse networking opportunities for minority and majority group workers.

CONCLUSION

Increasing diversity in the workplace provides a valuable asset for organizational learning and effectiveness. Some research indicates that effectively managing diversity and committing to the development of a diverse labor force can save the money organizations lose when they have to remedy the problems of employee absenteeism and turnover. Committing to the recruitment and retention of diverse workers can also save organizations from the substantial financial costs of defending themselves against allegations of discrimination. Furthermore, organizations with a growth-oriented business strategy have demonstrated that workplace diversity can lead to higher levels of

employee productivity, organizational performance, and financial returns.

—Kecia M. Thomas

See also Affirmative action, Biculturalism, Gender and careers, Glass ceiling, Racial discrimination, Sex discrimination, Sexual orientation and careers

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DOMESTIC-PARTNER BENEFITS

Employers around the globe are increasingly recognizing their employees' domestic partnerships as a basis for extending human resource benefits. The

practice has generated a number of human resource policy implications and has created a variety of legal, economic, and social issues and considerations. These issues and considerations have often created political and social controversy, which is beginning to subside at the beginning of the twenty-first century. This entry presents a brief look at what has now become a complex and broadly implanted practice in business, industry, education, and government.

DEFINITIONS

Domestic Partners. Individuals living in committed relationships but not legally married have recently been classified and recognized as domestic partners by many employers. This status is used to provide the domestic partner of the employee with benefits that historically had been provided only to married spouses or legal dependents of the employee. Companies vary in whom they designate as domestic partners. The domestic partner of an employee may be of the same sex (gay or lesbian) or of the opposite sex (straight), and some employers make this distinction in the granting of benefits. When employers recognize only one of these relationships as a domestic partnership, gay and lesbian domestic partners are usually the ones who are so designated and granted benefits. The rationale for some companies is that straight couples can get married if they so choose but in most states, gay and lesbian couples cannot.

Soft Benefits. When offered to domestic partners, soft benefits include the granting of discounted or free services, official recognition of domestic partners as equivalent to spouses in family and sick leave policies, free or discounted memberships in clubs, free or discounted use of employer facilities, and other similar policies or privileges.

Hard Benefits. Insurance for health, dental, and vision are considered hard benefits, because they involve direct expenditures by the employee for the benefit of a designated individual. They can include the children of a domestic partner as well. Hard benefits also may be granted for tuition coverage or remittance, day care, and retirement or survivor benefits that may designate the domestic partner as the successor beneficiary to retirement or survivor income.

Affidavits. Some employers require domestic partners to sign affidavits of the committed nature of their

relationships. Often these affidavits require proof of indicators of joint commitment, such as a joint account containing a substantial balance, joint ownership of major property, or proof of sharing a residence. Many individuals and civil rights organizations consider this a form of workplace discrimination because married couples often are not required to provide these proofs or affidavits.

BRIEF HISTORY

The first employers to start offering domestic-partner benefits (DPB) in the 1980s were among a small-but-growing group of gay-owned enterprises. In the early 1990s, larger corporations began offering these benefits. Within the span of that decade, there was a rapid rise in the numbers and types of employers that began offering DPB. The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation is one organization that tracks the changes in domestic-partner benefits among employers. The most recent figures reported by the HRC (<http://www.hrc.org>) reveal that nearly half of the Fortune 500 companies, hundreds of state and local governments and colleges and universities, and thousands of private employers now offer some domestic-partner benefits to their employees, usually a mix of soft and hard benefits. When hard benefits are offered to and obtained by an employee, the value of those benefits is now taxed by the federal government as income to the employee. Legislation has been introduced to eliminate this tax, which married couples do not pay when they receive these benefits.

ARGUMENTS FOR DOMESTIC-PARTNER BENEFITS

Economic Development and Diversity. Some have made the argument that respect and tolerance for diversity has benefits for the economic well-being of a region. It can improve the social environment, adding social capital. Diversity is believed to attract highly educated and talented residents who establish a skilled pool of employees for high-tech industries. The employment and consumer activity this generates could provide the foundation for local or regional economic development.

Fairness. A nondiscrimination policy that includes protection against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is often cited as a reason to extend domestic-partner benefits to those who are barred

from legal marriage to their partners. Most policies like this have been established by the employers themselves, some through collective bargaining and some through legislative action. Once in place, they establish a basis for the fair treatment of all employees.

Productivity. Antigay sentiments are increasingly believed to be counterproductive in today's business and social climate. They rob gay and lesbian employees of a sense of security in their employment, which can only dampen productivity. Antigay sentiments can promote a climate of discrimination and/or harassment that can be legally costly and further deprive employees of a safe and productive workplace. Offering domestic-partner benefits is one way that employers can attract the most talented and skilled employees in an increasingly competitive market. It can help retain employees who are the most competitive in that market, reducing recruiting and retraining costs that, in turn, boost productivity.

Changing Cultural Values. Changing social and cultural values that are more tolerant of diversity are partly responsible for the increasing numbers of employers offering domestic-partner benefits. It may be that the public image of a company is enhanced by embracing these social and cultural values, increasing their motivation to offer benefits. Domestic-partner benefits are likely to become more commonplace given legislative attempts by the U.S. House of Representatives at the start of the twenty-first century to establish domestic-partner benefits for federal government employees.

Defense of Marriage. Ironically, one of the driving factors in support of the provision of domestic-partner benefits is that it represents a counterposition to the legalization of same-sex marriages. More precisely, social conservatives, who might ordinarily oppose domestic-partnership benefits, now see these partnerships and the benefits they are now being offered as a possible solution to the constitutional problems raised by denying marriage to same-sex couples.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST DOMESTIC-PARTNER BENEFITS

Costs. When employers first started to consider domestic-partner benefits, one of the first concerns was the cost, largely driven by the fear that insurance costs for providing health care to an increasing

number of victims of AIDS among gay men would prove to be prohibitive. Several studies were conducted, and most revealed that these fears were unfounded. Experience gained over the years demonstrates that costs for offering domestic-partner benefits are low, largely because enrollments are low and actual expenditures constitute a very small percentage of total costs.

Prejudice and Discrimination. Many arguments against domestic-partner benefits are based on attitudes of prejudice that lead to discriminatory behavior. The prejudiced attitudes can be and often are simple extensions of *homophobia*, or the irrational fear of anything associated with anyone who is gay or lesbian. For example, in an early arbitration in which a faculty union sought domestic-partner benefits under its contract based on the nondiscrimination clause, the legal brief written by the employer's attorney relied on phrases such as "perilous trail," "thorny issues," and "administrative nightmare" to describe the impact of offering domestic-partner benefits (*KSU-AAUP v. Kent State University*). These fears were unsupported by evidence then and are recognized by experience today to be unfounded. However, in the early period, ignorance of the nature and fear of the relationships between same-sex couples generated fears that created discriminatory barriers to domestic-partner benefits. Even today, many other arguments against offering domestic-partner benefits (e.g., costs or legal/administrative technicalities) are made as an open opposition to the "homosexual agenda" or offered as a pretext for motivation rooted in homophobia.

Backlash. Some employers cite the imagined backlash from the community and consumers that could occur if they began to offer domestic-partner benefits to their employees. For example, university administrators might fear that state legislatures would withhold funding, donors and alumni would stop giving or terminate planned future gifts, or parents would choose to send their children to more socially conservative institutions. Retailers, manufacturers, or service professionals might fear that consumers would buy products and services from organizations that do not offer their employees domestic-partner benefits.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Prospective employers are increasingly aware that to remain competitive, they must offer domestic-partner

benefits. Experience has shown that employers who offer such benefits are more open to questions from job candidates and more supportive of employees in answering questions or administering benefits. Both job candidates and employees are encouraged by human rights groups to question their current or prospective employers about the availability of these benefits, and handbooks are available online to provide information to both employers and employees on how to implement these benefits.

—Robert Johnson

See also Diversity in organizations, Sexual orientation and careers

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DOWNSIZING

The term *downsizing* represents the broad variety of ways in which organizational leaders reduce employee ranks to achieve business objectives. Downsizing occurs through voluntary programs, such as early retirement packages; involuntary dismissals, such as layoffs; and the displacement of employees through outsourcing. No matter which method is used, the underlying objective of a downsizing is to reduce costs in order to contribute to the achievement of short-term financial objectives and/or long-term strategic shifts in response to the ever-changing global marketplace.

Corporate restructurings and downsizings have become deeply woven into the fabric of contemporary organizational life. What once were infrequent and, in some cases, unheard-of occurrences in most work organizations now have become regularly occurring actions. What once were managerial reactions to difficult market conditions now have become proactive tactics for attaining strategic and financial objectives. And what once were poorly managed events that

eroded the psychological relationship between employer and employee have become, at least in some organizations, opportunities to define or reinforce desired corporate cultures that reflect the realities of today's ever-changing business environment.

Downsizing activities have been implemented in organizations of all sizes, in all industries, and across all geographic areas. Many huge corporations headquartered in the United States have experienced multiple waves of downsizing. Smaller organizations are not immune from downsizing. In recent years, over 500 dot.com start-ups have undergone reductions in force. Practically every industry sector—telecommunications, manufacturing, financial services, education, health care, high technology, and retail, among others—has experienced a major displacement of employees during the past decades.

What initially was an American phenomenon has transcended national borders. Several large European and Asian organizations have experienced layoffs, divestitures, and closings in recent years. These downsizings are especially significant given the labor laws, worker councils, and national cultures that have traditionally supported lifelong relationships between employers and employees. In China, for example, mores were at one time so strong that this type of organizational activity was referred to as “taking away someone's rice bowl.” That is, the company would be removing an individual's means of income.

THE UNINTENDED IMPACT OF DOWNSIZING ON CAREERS

In principle, downsizing should enable an organization to improve its competitiveness without impairing its ability to execute its strategy. In practice, however, a downsizing can exact a heavy toll on organizational effectiveness and the well-being of both survivors and those whose jobs were eliminated. Organizational scholars assert that companies must change today to remain competitive, and they identify a wide array of organizational strategies (such as downsizing) to accomplish this change. Ironically, the term *organizational change* depersonalizes change. It suggests that “organizations” need to change when, in fact, organizations are composed of employees. Employees are the ones who need to change. Employees are the ones who need to bend and flex to the current demands of the work environment. Employees are the ones whose jobs, careers, and lifestyles are directly affected by a downsizing.

In general, downsizing threatens the self-esteem and sense of fair play of all employees. People can rationalize layoffs based on performance, for example, when an employee is repeatedly late to work or fails to meet production standards. However, people cannot rationalize the fact that hardworking fellow employees have lost their jobs because of an economic downturn. Downsizing victims blame themselves for not having seen it coming or not having done something to protect themselves. For victims and survivors alike, a downsizing eats away at the assumption of fairness in the workplace, as they wonder why leadership could not stave off the dreaded event or identify some alternative course of action. Survivors see the human carnage of lost jobs and destroyed careers and wonder, “How could an organization I want to dedicate my life's work to do this to people?”

Some executives believe that downsizing survivors should be grateful just to have a job in tough economic times—that employees should be ready to roll up their sleeves and get down to work. However, the real consequences are very different. Survivors of organizational transitions experience a broad range of psychological and behavioral reactions that begin with rumors of impending events, continue through the weeks and months of transition planning and implementation, and linger long after the dust settles. Downsizings have a lasting impact on employees' perceptions of their workplaces and their career opportunities.

In their research on human responses to major organizational events such as mergers, acquisitions, and downsizings, organizational psychologists Philip Mirvis and Mitchell Marks identified the *transition syndrome*. This process describes the set of expected employee responses to living through a major transition in a company. They found that the transition syndrome arises even when executives have taken some care to devise a downsizing plan designed to minimize upheaval and provide due consideration for its effects on people.

The following six symptoms of the transition syndrome occur in practically every downsizing and have implications for career expectations and progress:

1. *Preoccupation*. When first hearing of a reduction in force, employees become distracted from their work responsibilities and preoccupied with their personal situations. People often feel guilty for having been spared, similar to the psychological reaction of children who lose a playmate or sibling in a fatal

accident. Survivors also may become depressed at their inability to avert future layoffs or disruptions to their careers.

2. *Worst-case scenarios.* Not only do people become distracted, they focus on worst-case scenarios. Dire rumors spread throughout the downsizing organizations.
3. *Psychosomatic reactions.* The stress of living through a downsizing is manifested in a variety of ways. Sick leave increases as many employees are worried and others simply do not want to be around a dismal workplace. Many survivors and victims of downsizings report psychosomatic reactions, ranging from sleeplessness to increased tension and fighting with spouses and children.
4. *Constricted communication.* People often turn inward in a downsizing and restrict their communication. Trust can be eroded in the downsized organization, and people do not know the consequences of speaking up about their careers. Ironically, this occurs at a time when people need to reach out to one another and provide support, both emotionally (e.g., How do we get through this difficult time?) and practically (e.g., How do we minimize the adverse impact on our careers?).
5. *Crisis management.* Many employees lurch into a crisis-management mode. The high level of stress that accompanies every downsizing impairs perception and judgment. People may make rash decisions and jump at what may appear to be decent career moves when, in reality, they have not fully assessed their options.
6. *Loss of control.* What really concerns employees in a downsizing is the sense that they have lost control over their careers. They perceive that no matter how well they do their jobs, they could be hit in the next wave of layoffs. This feeling explains why they may jump at the first opportunity outside the firm or take other actions that initially provide some psychological satisfaction of exerting control but, over the long haul, may prove to be detrimental to their careers.

CAREER MANAGEMENT AND DOWNSIZING

Past research has indicated that employees who have been terminated due to downsizing should keep four perspectives in mind during the period after the job loss. These four perspectives include marketability, composure, standard of living, and attitude. To survive a downsizing experience, indeed, to capitalize on it, individuals will need to manage each of these areas effectively.

Maintaining Marketability

Downsizings have become an integral part of organizational life. The right time to start planning for the impact of a downsizing on one's career is well before it occurs, before the cuts and associated stress hit. This minimizes the likelihood that stress and uncertainty will color one's perceptions and actions. Individuals should develop a contingency plan of what actions would be taken if one's job were suddenly put at risk. A good place to start is with an honest assessment of the current situation. A number of key assessment questions should be asked, including "Do I know what I contribute to my company?" "If my job opened up today, would I get it?" and, finally, "What would I do if my job disappeared tomorrow?" With regard to these questions, it is important for individuals to keep an up-to-date record of achievements, and it is imperative to keep abreast of trends and developments in the field by reading trade publications, joining industry groups, and attending conferences.

In today's economy, whether an employee is laid off often has little to do with job performance and more to do with the turbulence and uncertainty in the global marketplace. It is helpful for individuals to know a few of the signs that a downsizing is likely coming in the organization. For example, is upper-level management having a lot of confidential meetings? Are middle-level managers being questioned more closely or simply turned down when asking for more staff or funding? Is your boss less and less willing to talk to you about the future, or does he or she avoid you as much as possible? Does your boss seem unusually stressed? Has your company's senior-management team changed suddenly? Has your company merged with or acquired another company? Has your company's stock price fallen greatly or its debt rating been substantially downgraded? Has senior management's focus shifted from competing in the marketplace to attempting to cut costs wherever possible? Do Wall Street analysts appear to know more about what's going on in your company than employees do?

It is important for employees to be proactive in this instance. If there is a lack of information coming from leadership, individuals should set up a meeting with immediate supervisors to ask for more details on company plans. If one's supervisor is eliminated in a downsizing, the individual should take the initiative to sit down with the new superior to talk about contributions and get direction for setting new priorities.

Maintaining Composure

When individuals are laid off, it can be a shock, producing feelings of demoralization, fear, frustration, anger, and resentment. Past research has shown that one of the best ways for individuals to effectively cope with job loss is to spend a half hour or so a day writing about the trauma of being terminated. Penning one's thoughts actually can speed up the chances of landing a new job. In a study of 63 men who were laid off by a computer firm, researchers Stefanie Spera, Eric Buhrfeind, and James Pennebaker found that employees who wrote down their thoughts daily found jobs sooner than those who did not. It appears that translating events into words diminished the stress those men experienced and enhanced their understanding of the downsizing process. According to the authors of this study, the writing forced the employees to address their emotions and cognitively reappraise their situations, which prevented negative emotions from resurfacing during job interviews.

Losing one's job is a traumatic event for most people. However, it can be helpful to realize that the typical college graduate today will have several *career* changes during his or her lifetime; a *job* change can be perceived as simply an interlude in one's lifelong employment journey. Maintaining poise and confidence during this unemployment phase will help enable downsized employees to more effectively reposition their skills, talents, and experiences into the next job.

Maintaining Standard of Living

When a downsizing occurs, employees should consider all aspects of the company's actions to be negotiable (e.g., severance pay, outplacement services, medical insurance, stock options). It is important for individuals to know their rights during a downsizing. For instance, although no law requires an employer to provide severance pay, it is a common practice in companies today. A widely used rule of thumb is to offer employees two weeks' pay for every year of employment. If an individual is earning more than \$100,000 a year or is 50 years or older, it may take a little longer to find a comparable new position. A frequently used benchmark for individuals seeking reemployment is to figure one month of job-search time for every \$10,000 in salary earned at the previous position. Consequently, two weeks of pay per year might not be sufficient for many individuals. In this case, individuals should not

hesitate to negotiate a better severance with the direct supervisor or the human resources director. In addition, it may be possible to negotiate a "stay-on bonus" if one commits to remaining on the job until a current project is completed.

Approximately 80 percent of U.S. companies provide outplacement services to downsized employees. Typically, a standard package includes résumé-writing and job-interviewing skills workshops, temporary use of office space, career counseling, and, in some cases, one-on-one coaching sessions. By law, employers must provide COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act) coverage. This provision means that individuals have the option to pay a health insurance premium that is much lower than what they would have to pay on their own. However, an employer is legally required to offer COBRA for only 18 months. If one anticipates that the job search might take longer, it might be appropriate to negotiate an extension. Stock options should be considered as well. Usually, an individual has 90 days after a layoff to exercise vested options before losing them. However, most companies, when asked, will agree to extend that period to as much as a year.

In return for providing the above services to the employee, the company will require the signing of a legal waiver of some sort. This document precludes the individual from suing the employer for unjust termination and often includes a clause that the individual will not "bad-mouth" the company to employees or customers.

Maintaining a Positive Attitude

A downsizing can be a stimulus for revitalizing a dead-end career. Most people avoid change at any cost, even when they are unhappy with the current state of their careers. A downsizing, from the perspective of either a victim or a survivor, can be the impetus required to rethink one's career progress and career strategy. It can be a launching pad for exploring new industries or even new occupations. Employees often get so accustomed to functioning within one company that they cannot see their way to "reinvent" themselves. The loss of a job can be the impetus to finally get that dream job, buy that franchise you have been talking about all these years, or to set up that small business. Furthermore, the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) offers money for many downsized workers to seek retraining (refer to <http://www.doleta.gov>). Besides such retraining funds from the federal

government, many states provide additional money for retraining opportunities.

It is important for downsized individuals to stay busy while seeking new employment. Becoming involved in civic organizations, volunteering for youth sports programs, or becoming more involved at school are all ways to stay active while seeking reemployment. Moreover, individuals should take advantage of the opportunity to spend more time with family.

Overall, downsized individuals must recognize that it is ultimately their own responsibility to manage their careers after a layoff, and they should not forfeit the responsibility to a company or another person. On the positive side, a downsizing can lead to a new career and a brighter future. Downsizing can be the stimulus for a more challenging, more invigorating, and more rewarding career and provide individuals a second chance at victory.

—Kenneth P. De Meuse and Mitchell L. Marks

See also Career interruptions, Churning of jobs, Job loss, Outsourcing and offshoring, Unemployment

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EARLY CAREER STAGE

One of the most important milestones in an individual's life and career is the transition from school to work. Much research has examined how individuals come to understand who they are by the work they perform and the occupations they choose. Early psychological theories examined the importance of work, especially as measured by hierarchical rank and income, to the process by which a child becomes an adult. One of the most influential of these models was developed by Erik Erikson, who proposed that an individual must pass through eight stages, each with its attendant requirements or "dilemmas" determined by age and social demands. Erikson's fifth stage (identity versus role confusion) is the time when young adults (approximately age 19-25) begin to focus on career concerns by contemplating what occupations to prepare for, while creating sexual, religious, and political identities. The formation of an adult identity and separation from one's parents are associated with career decidedness, exploration, confident decision making, and the ability to engage in career-related tasks.

Drawing on the works of psychological life development, Donald Super devised perhaps the best-known model of career stage development. Super suggested that individuals implement their self-concept through vocational choices. This process of choosing an occupation that permits maximum self-expression occurs over time and can be summarized in four career stages: (1) *exploration*, a period of engaging in self-examination, schooling, and the study of different career options; (2) *establishment*, a period of

becoming employed and finding a niche; (3) *maintenance*, a period of holding on to one's position and updating skills; and (4) *disengagement*, a period of phasing into retirement. The exploration and establishment stages constitute the *early career*.

EXPLORATION STAGE

One key developmental task of the exploration stage is choosing an occupation. Career scholar John Holland argued that individual traits, parental preferences, and childhood experiences create natural preferences, which, over time, lead to the development of interests and coping styles as well as occupational preferences. Holland's model of vocational choice suggests that individuals will seek out work environments that match their skills, abilities, attitudes, and values. He identified six personality types: (1) *Realistic*, who prefer to work with objects, tools, machines, and animals and are persistent, practical, and asocial; (2) *Investigative*, who chose to observe, understand, and control the physical and social environment and are curious, independent, and introspective; (3) *Artistic*, who prefer ambiguous, unsystematic tasks that use physical and verbal materials to craft new ideas or products and are expressive, imaginative, and nonconforming; (4) *Social*, who like to inform, teach, and develop others through human relations skills and are friendly, empathic, and understanding; (5) *Enterprising*, who exercise leadership, use persuasion to achieve goals, and are ambitious and self-confident; and (6) *Conventional*, who like to organize and handle data and are conforming, efficient, and practical.

Holland's theory and its related measure, the Holland Vocational Preference Inventory, have been used by career counselors in a variety of settings and, as such, have been the subject of much research scrutiny. Holland's six types, along with the Myers-Briggs personality measure, are often used to assist college students in making early career decisions.

Holland contended that failure to work in a situation with good personality-environment fit would create role conflict, whereas congruence between personality and the environment would result in high satisfaction and performance. The process by which individuals match themselves to organizations was detailed in John Wanous's book *Organizational Entry: Recruitment, Selection, Orientation and Socialization of Newcomers*. During the job search process, individuals seek out firms that will meet their needs, while organizations simultaneously seek out individuals with required qualifications. Once a match is made, the new employee learns the firm's culture and norms through formal organizational methods, such as orientation programs and the employee handbook, as well as informal processes, such as hazing and office gossip.

Wanous suggested the use of "realistic job previews" (RJPs) as a means of reducing the likelihood of a person-organization mismatch and decreasing employee turnover. In contrast to the seduction recruitment method, which creates inflated expectations or false impressions, RJPs provide potential employees with the positive as well as the negative aspects of the organization and job. During the recruitment and selection process, individuals who perceive a mismatch between their needs and values and what the organization has to offer can self-select out of the process, choosing alternative job offers that better fit their needs. Those who are eventually hired by a firm providing an RJP should be aware of—and "vaccinated" against—the potential negatives of the workplace. They should have more realistic expectations that can be more easily met, as well as a better understanding of job requirements. Employees exposed to an RJP are more likely to have developed coping mechanisms for managing the realities of the workplace and to be more committed to the firm after having made a meaningful choice among alternative job offers. Because the highest turnover rates are reported among the newly hired, the use of RJPs, as well as other methods of reducing unrealistic expectations, can help organizations lower replacement costs.

ESTABLISHMENT STAGE

In the early career stage of establishment, individuals become employed and try to discover their niches. Individuals become regulated to the work world, learning how to interact effectively with coworkers and superiors within cultural norms. They develop expertise and responsibility for improving performance and seek to reconcile the desire for independence and the demands of organizations. Being proactive, managing office politics, and finding a mentor or establishing a network of mentors are all means by which newcomers can help increase the effectiveness of the socialization process that occurs during the establishment stage.

As individuals navigate through the establishment and other stages, career anchors, which are internal to the person, act as both driving and constraining forces of career decisions. Edgar Schein defined a *career anchor* as the pattern of an individual's self-perceived talents, values, and motives. If an individual is placed in a situation incongruent with his or her values that fails to meet his or her needs or is unlikely to produce success, that person will be "pulled back" by his or her anchor to a situation more likely to produce success.

During the establishment stage, individuals may also make significant decisions regarding marriage, the fit between work and nonwork, and the achievement of goals. Individuals may differ in the amount of commitment and participation they devote to roles, with some individuals engaging in perhaps only two roles (e.g., homemaker and worker) and others at the same age and stage engaging in many roles. The choices young adults make regarding commitment to these roles can cause various levels of role conflict, stress, and self-fulfillment. Daniel Levinson's well-known model of life development suggests that whereas men develop relationships that complement their career goals (e.g., the special woman and mentor or advisor who support his career), women often struggle with marriage or other relationships that are obstacles to their development. Research has found a number of factors affect men and women differently as they try to build and progress through their careers, including social norms regarding time expectations related to child-rearing and household duties, the importance of job characteristics as they relate to work/family balance, the relative influence of a partner on career saliency and financial rewards, and the impact of organizational cultures that discourage

work/family balance and impede career advancement through discriminatory practices.

EARLY CAREER TASKS IN CHANGING TIMES

The linear career stage models, as exemplified by Donald Super's model, mirror the rise of tall, organizational forms and their related structures and policies. Linear stage theories continue to dominate the research on careers, despite the changes that have occurred in the work environment, including increased globalization, rapid technology advances, increased diversity, and evolving organizational forms (e.g., flatter, more flexible). Some scholars, however, have proposed newer models and theories to recognize these changes. For example, instead of one set of career stages, as depicted by Super's model, Tim Hall and Philip Mirvis have suggested multiple shorter learning cycles over the life span, which are driven by constant learning and mastery rather than by chronological age. Thus, an individual's career will be characterized by a series of ministages of exploration-trial-mastery-exit across functions, organizations, and other work boundaries rather than just one period of exploration or establishment.

Moreover, under the old career models, success was often based on winning "tournament style" (i.e., win a round and advance to the next round; lose a round and out of the game). Early career failures, disruptions, and deviations from the linear career path were thought to have long-term negative effects on the career. Under newer, nonlinear careers models, success is defined by the individual, and focus is placed on continuously learning, intrinsic as well as extrinsic outcomes, and the increased ability to make physical and psychological changes throughout life. For example, Lisa Mainiero and Sherry Sullivan suggested a kaleidoscope model of careers, in which women change the facets of their lives to best match their life situations, even if those choices run counter to typical definitions of success. Moreover, unlike the stage theories, the kaleidoscope career model values gender and context rather than making it invisible in the examination of careers. In sum, these newer career patterns may place less pressure on individuals in the early career stages to make permanent career decisions and avoid early career mistakes at all costs, thus reducing stress and encouraging more entrepreneurial endeavors.

Career counselors and educators should examine new ways to assist individuals in early career stages to

develop the skills and mind-sets necessary for achievement and personal success in these changing times. Such methods for enhanced early career development include high school guidance programs that facilitate public career exploration and the discussion of clear occupational choices; helping young adults set early career goals that provide a framework for making the many decisions they will face; experiential learning and other creative educational experiences, including university-sponsored service learning and entrepreneurial activities; and emphasis on part-time employment, structured internships, and co-op positions that foster the learning of new skills, interactions with more established workers, and meaningful work experiences.

—Sherry E. Sullivan

See also Career exploration, Erikson's theory of development, Gender and careers, Holland's theory of vocational choice, Organizational socialization

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EARLY RETIREMENT

There is no strict legal definition of *early retirement*, as a mandatory retirement age is illegal for most occupations in the United States. Individuals can begin receiving Social Security benefits from 65 to 67 years of age, depending on year of birth. Therefore, early retirement is often defined as choosing to leave the workforce prior to the age at which one is eligible for Social Security benefits. Individuals in their 30s and 40s are considerably less likely to retire early than those who are 50 and older. The concept of early retirement as a transition into unemployment is misleading, since many individuals who “retire” early continue to participate in the labor force, at least part time.

Individuals may choose to retire early for a number of reasons. Obsolete skills, job dissatisfaction, or chronic health problems may contribute to the decision to retire early. People may retire early because they wish to travel, spend more time with family, do volunteer work, or pursue alternate careers. If they are unable to find other jobs, older workers who have been laid off from jobs may retire sooner than they had planned. The choice to retire early is facilitated by having adequate financial reserves or attractive alternatives to work.

Employees may retire early because they have been offered generous financial incentives by their employers to do so. Some employers, in an effort to cut costs, offer employees the opportunity to retire early on a voluntary basis. Although a company’s up-front costs associated with an early-retirement program are high, payroll costs are decreased over time. Because voluntary job cuts are seen as more humane than involuntary cuts, companies sometimes offer early retirements to avoid bad press and negative employee reactions associated with forced layoffs. Early-retirement incentives are generally offered only to employees who meet certain age and length of service requirements, such as a minimum age of 50 years and 10 years of service. Early-retirement incentives, sometimes called “buyout packages,” might consist of lump-sum payments, monthly retirement benefits over a period of several years, full pension payments ahead of schedule, Social Security bridge payments, and health and life insurance.

When offering early-retirement packages, companies must follow guidelines set forth by the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), which prohibits discrimination against employees who are 40 and older.

The Older Workers Benefit Protection Act, an amendment to the ADEA, permits early-retirement incentive plans as long as they are voluntary. The company cannot coerce, threaten, or pressure employees into accepting an early-retirement offer. Eligible employees must be given adequate information about the terms of the offer and a reasonable period in which to make a decision. Early-retirement incentives must be offered to groups of employees rather than an individual employee but can be targeted to specific departments or facilities. A drawback of voluntary early-retirement programs, in comparison with involuntary job cuts, is that the best employees might choose to leave while more poorly performing employees stay.

For individuals, drawbacks to early retirement are largely financial and health related. Because of increases in life expectancy, retirees, especially women (who live longer than men), require significant financial reserves. Health insurance costs may rise dramatically if the retiree’s former company provides less generous benefits or charges higher premiums in comparison with regular employees or drops coverage altogether. Early retirees should seek financial planning to ensure adequate cash reserves and insurance coverage following retirement.

It is important to recognize that early retirement does not always mean going from full-time employment to being unemployed. Increasingly, the trend is for individuals who retire early to seek *bridge employment* and work longer after retiring early. Early retirees may work in part-time or temporary jobs, become self-employed, or be rehired by their former employers as consultants. Retirees may seek bridge employment to provide income to compensate for lower wages in retirement, although bridge employment tends to pay less than the retirees’ previous jobs. Individuals whose identity is strongly tied to work are less likely to retire early, but if they do so, they are more likely to seek bridge employment, which can help smooth the transition from career to retirement and offset social isolation that may occur in retirement. A form of bridge employment is *phased retirement*, in which longer-tenured employees, rather than leaving their companies entirely, are given shorter work hours and less responsibility as they gradually phase into full retirement.

Some experts believe that the trend toward early retirement is ending and that the twenty-first century will be characterized by later, not earlier, retirement. The average retirement age for men in 1950 was 70

and decreased to 62 in 1985. In 1985, the trend toward early retirement began to decrease, and labor force participation for men 60 and older increased significantly more than earlier trends would have predicted. Women's retirement patterns have followed a similar trend. One factor in later retirements is the shift away from a manufacturing economy with jobs requiring heavy physical labor toward a service economy with jobs that can be done by employees with more diverse physical abilities. Another factor in the trend away from early retirement is the increasing use of defined-contribution pension plans, such as the 401(k). Traditionally, employers have offered defined-benefit plans, in which an employer promises to pay retirees a guaranteed amount. In a 401(k) plan, the retirement benefits received depend on the investment performance of the stock market, so that employees cannot accurately predict their retirement incomes. Therefore, employees may be reluctant to retire early if they perceive that their future retirement benefits are less secure and reliable.

Early retirements are less prevalent when the labor market is strong and unemployment is low. Because of this, some experts believe that the trend away from early retirements is temporary, resulting from the rapid economic growth of the 1990s, and that the average age of retirement will again decline in the future.

—Kelly A. Mollica

See also Career transition, Phased retirement, Retirement

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frail or disabled elders, including aging parents, grandparents, spouses, other relatives, or friends. Elder care involves care at the person's home or in a care facility that may be nearby or miles away.

Many informal caregivers to elders have jobs and careers and thus find themselves juggling their work and caregiving. The most common types of assistance provided by working caregivers include helping an elder with instrumental activities of daily living, such as transportation, shopping, making care-related decisions, managing money, housekeeping, and chores.

Some of the work-family issues faced by working caregivers of elders are similar to those of working parents, including the difficulties posed when the elder is sick and other care arrangements must be made or when the elder must be taken to the doctor, dentist, or other appointments that generally must be scheduled during the workday. Often, caregivers of elders must also meet the needs of more than one household, because most do not live with the elders. Also, care must sometimes be coordinated among multiple caregivers of the elder (e.g., several adult children). Moreover, elder care differs from child care emotionally, in that the elder generally will become more, not less, dependent over time. Finally, the power and authority dynamics differ when an adult child is caring for an aging parent or other elder versus when a parent is caring for a dependent child.

Providing elder care can yield a sense of great satisfaction and pride and enhance caregivers' skill sets and sense of competence. At the same time, it can have deleterious effects on caregivers' work performance and careers and also their personal and financial well-being, such as when one must quit work or reduce the number of hours worked, resulting in costs to employers and employees alike.

PREVALENCE OF ELDER CARE

Estimates of the proportion of employees in the U.S. workforce who have informal elder care responsibilities range from 10 percent to 25 percent, and the numbers are increasing. Most working caregivers, especially those who are married, are providing care to more than one aging parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or other elder. Moreover, later child-bearing has meant that more than a third of working caregivers of elders are also caring for dependent children. These caregivers have been called the "sandwiched generation."

ELDER CARE PRACTICES

The term *elder care* describes the unpaid help provided by family members, friends, and/or neighbors to

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT

Employers have developed workplace supports to help employees manage their elder-care duties and reduce work-family conflict, due to growing awareness of the increased numbers of workers providing elder care, management's personal experience with elder care, and research findings concerning the possible negative effects of caregiving on employees, their work performance, and worker retention and recruitment. For example, many working caregivers of elders have been found to experience an increase in time lost from work, including missing days, arriving late or leaving early, and being interrupted during the day by caregiving responsibilities, such as making or receiving telephone calls concerning the elders in their care. Some take unpaid leaves of absence to provide care. Some caregivers experience a decline in their performance or effectiveness at work. Some quit their jobs to provide elder care, or they take early retirement. Others refuse promotions, travel, or training, thus forgoing career advancement opportunities and decreased lifetime earnings. A greater risk of depression among working caregivers of elders also has been found, as have greater stress and fatigue and more health problems.

TYPES OF EMPLOYER SUPPORT

Three basic types of support have been offered by U.S. employers in an attempt to reduce working caregivers' work-family conflicts and maximize employees' abilities to provide informal help to elders while continuing to perform optimally at work: policies, benefits, and direct services or programs. Key caregiver needs that have been addressed through these mechanisms include time to deal with family issues, emotional support, and tangible assistance.

Specifically, policies that maximize flexibility in the scheduling of work hours, the place of work, the number of hours worked, and the ability to take time off from work when needed, including leaves of absence, have been implemented by employers. For employers with 50 or more employees, offering such leave is mandated by the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, which allows an employee to take up to 12 weeks of leave, with the guarantee of being able to return to his or her same or similar job at the same pay and benefits. This leave,

however, is unpaid, except where state law stipulates otherwise (e.g., California). Supervisor support for work-family issues, reinforced through management sensitivity training, is another policy that contributes to perceived flexibility in the workplace and reduces work-family conflict.

In addition to paid time off to deal with family-related needs, other benefits that can be useful to employees with dependent-care needs include full or partial payment for health and long-term care insurance, legal expenses, and dependent-care services. Offering a *cafeteria*, or flexible, benefits plan allows maximum flexibility and can address employee needs across the life span. In such plans, the employer pays a major portion of the costs of the benefits by establishing a "flexible benefit allowance" of a certain dollar amount, and employees choose the benefits that best meet their needs. Flexible spending accounts, such as dependent care assistance plans (DCAPs), are a benefit of particular use to employees with dependents. DCAPs may or may not involve direct employer contributions but are available only when set up by employers for their employees. Another form of assistance is the Dependent Care Tax Credit, which is a federal, and also sometimes a state, tax credit for employment-related dependent care expenses. Employers have no direct role in providing these credits, but they can publicize their availability. Finally, because long-term care is not covered by health insurance plans or by Medicare, some employers have begun offering long-term care insurance at reduced, group rates, generally with no employer subsidy.

Direct services are the last general type of support offered, typically only by large employers, to aid employees with dependent care responsibilities. Some employers establish a library of educational materials, distribute newsletters, and/or provide seminars concerning caregiving, health conditions, and where to turn for help. Some make computers available so that employees can access information electronically through company intranets or the Internet, and some offer caregiving fairs, where local service providers set up tables or booths so that employees may obtain information at one time in one place.

Although there is a wide range of public, nonprofit, and for-profit services in the community, the service system is fragmented and difficult to negotiate. Therefore, some employers offer information and assistance or referral services, and some offer assessment and case management to assess the elder's

needs, determine eligibility and payment options, and then package together the needed services. Psychological counseling and support groups are offered by some employers to help employees deal emotionally with their elder-care responsibilities. Other direct services include take-home dinners from the company's cafeteria, employee convenience centers that handle grocery shopping, laundry, dry cleaning, shoe repair, and so on or provide door-to-door transportation in employee-driven vans. The benefit consists of the time and travel costs saved; employees pay for the actual services. A few U.S. companies provide services for elder care recipients themselves, such as day-care facilities, or offer subsidies, vouchers, or discounts for such services provided in the community. Sometimes services are offered through an employer's employee assistance program; other times, they are provided by a separate contractor (with both venues representing career opportunities for those trained in gerontology).

Finally, some employers have determined that the best way to help their employees is to contribute funds, either solely or jointly with other employers, to expand the supply and improve the quality of elder (and child) care services in the local community.

—Margaret Beth Neal

See also Child care practices, Employee assistance programs, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Family-responsive workplace practices

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ELECTRONIC EMPLOYMENT SCREENING

Electronic employment screening (EES) is preemployment assessment using any electronic hardware or software, including the Internet. EES is typically conducted by employers or others with whom the employer contracts. For practitioners, EES includes electronic applications, résumé scanning and tracking, online interviewing and videoconferencing, and electronic database access for inquiries into applicants' backgrounds. These background assessments include, but are not limited to, identity checks (Social Security number and fingerprint verification), credit and criminal histories, workers' compensation claim history, and specialty database queries, such as antitheft lists.

The use of EES has expanded geometrically primarily due to the widespread availability and increasing number of preemployment services. EES offers speed, thoroughness, efficiency, impartiality, and significantly more information. Human resource screening, electronic or not, is receiving increasing attention in all sectors. Organizations have found that a competitive advantage can be achieved through human resource strategies designed to recruit, select, and hire the best candidates for available positions, while eliminating those that pose potential risk or liability. Global competition ensures that the necessity for thorough screening will continue to offer challenges for practitioners.

Research indicates that many, if not most, applicants provide some degree of false information. In fact, the Society for Human Resource Managers estimated that from 40 percent to 70 percent of job applicants enhance their personal work histories. The experience of September 11, 2001, brought to the forefront the seriousness of screening—and not just for airlines. Traditional, nonelectronic screening for security clearances can take as long as one year. Using electronic systems significantly shortens this time delay and reduces backlogs. All entities involved in transportation plus those traditionally charged with scrutiny, such as security, health care, youth-related, and residential management organizations, are obliged to expand their background investigations of both prospective and current employees. The relatively

recent proliferation of negligent-hiring lawsuits and attendant damages also elevates the value and necessity of thorough screening. Consequently, *credentialing*, the process of screening and evaluating applicant qualifications and credentials, including required education and training, licensure, and certifications, is receiving well-deserved attention.

As more and more organizations develop Web sites, they are increasingly offering—and sometimes require all job seekers to complete—electronic job applications. The purpose of this requirement is twofold. First, paperwork is significantly reduced. Second, integrated human resource software systems can be updated immediately and background investigations begun.

Whether or not résumés are submitted electronically or in hard copy, many organizations are increasingly utilizing résumé scanning and tracking systems. Résumés are scanned into computer databases, which can later be queried for applicants with specific qualifications. That is, organizations are accumulating inventories of résumés that are immediately accessible. Some companies use text searching or artificial intelligence software to track the résumés. Key words from job descriptions can be matched with applicants' scanned résumés, identifying and often even ranking the job candidates. Current descriptions of these processes in the popular press note the advantages of impartiality and reduction in human errors and/or omissions. Job applicants are cautioned to adhere to certain design restrictions in developing their résumés; they can be scanned most accurately on plain white paper, without bolding, italics, or underlining formats.

Although most job applicants' references are checked via telephone or in writing, some organizations do visit the Web sites of companies listed as previous employers to identify and find other sources that might have valuable information about job candidates.

Increasingly, companies are conducting interviews and testing electronically. Work simulations and other tests for both job skills and honesty are often conducted electronically via the computer. Some computerized honesty tests record not only the job applicant's choice but also the time it takes to make that choice (response time). The inference is that if faced with an ethical dilemma, hesitation might indicate dishonest tendencies. There are also national antitheft databases containing names of workers who have been prosecuted for theft or who have admitted to it.

In the last 10 years, organizations have increasingly outsourced background investigations to firms

specializing in preemployment information and/or fraud detection services. These third-party companies conduct background searches for job applicants in varying depth and do so relatively inexpensively and quickly. However, it should be noted that legal liability for accuracy and depth is not alleviated through this outsourcing. Electronic databases are queried regarding workers' compensation claims, credit histories, conviction and traffic records, and identity confirmation. Only government agencies and selected private sector industries such as transportation, banking, brokering, and gambling have access to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Information Center for fingerprints and known terrorists.

Federal and state laws regulate the inquiry into and the use of information regarding criminal histories. Employers should seek information only about the conviction of felonies. The Federal Aviation Administration and the Food and Drug Administration require criminal checks to prevent bioterrorism.

All employers should pay close attention to some caveats about the use of electronic databases in employment screening. Databases are often inaccurate and incomplete. Experts in the field recommend that Web searches be backed up with telephone confirmations. For instance, a person may have been found not guilty of a crime but the court-ordered expunging of the alleged criminal activity failed to take place. Thus, a candidate might improperly receive a negative search report. There is a dearth of reliable national and state criminal databases necessitating access to county court records, many of which are not available electronically. Job applicants often move out of the county in which they encountered difficulty, thus requiring background checks to query multiple counties. In all of these cases, organizations that make decisions based on inaccurate or incomplete information can be held liable.

The recent increase in identity theft makes credit checks of employment candidates suspect at the very least. The Fair Credit Reporting Act requires that applicants be informed as to whether a decision not to hire is made on the basis of a negative credit history, and the applicants must be given the opportunity to dispute the report. Preemployment information service companies vary significantly in their attention to detail. Therefore, some screening tools should be used only postoffer, and it is wise for employers to have knowledge of employment and privacy laws.

—Jane Hass Philbrick, Marcia R. Sparks,
and Steven Arsenault

See also Employability, Handwriting analysis in hiring, Integrity testing, Internet recruitment

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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a concept that has caught the attention of researchers, practitioners, and the general public over the last decade. The idea that career development involves not only a cognitive but also an affective component has been promoted in recent years. Popular books discuss the importance of EI for success in academic and occupational settings, as well as how it determines success in current jobs, promotions, and other important life outcomes. Claims abound that successful negotiation of relationships in a career depends on the perceptions and management of emotions in oneself and others. This entry covers three areas associated EI. First, there is a review of the competing conceptualizations (and associated measurements) of EI. Second, there is an overview of empirical studies that attempt to link EI to successful career development. Finally, there is an identification of some critical future research needs and potential applications.

CONCEPTUALIZING EI

Although *emotional intelligence* as a distinct term has been in use for only a little over a decade in the industrial, work, and organizational (IWO) psychology literature, researchers have been exploring alternate intelligences since the beginning of the twentieth

century. The notion of interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences had previously been put forth. Research on the role of affect in explaining organizational behavior has a lengthy past, and the recent emphasis on EI has built on these traditions.

The current literature on EI can be grouped into two rather distinct camps, based on differing conceptualizations of the construct. The correlation between measures of the two conceptualizations has been in the low .10 range, suggesting that the two assess distinct concepts. That is, an individual who scores high on one conceptualization of EI need not score high on the other. Instead, the assessment of an individual depends on the measure used. For clarity of communications and practical use, it is necessary that the two constructs be separated. In this entry, we will focus on each of the current conceptualizations and their links to career success.

One conceptualization of EI, often termed *trait-based* or *mixed EI*, views it as a conglomeration of personality traits. Emotional stability, agreeableness, sociability, and empathy are among the traits considered to be central aspects of EI. Given that this model places EI close to the domain of personality characteristics, EI is assessed using self-reports similar to those employed in the assessment of personality. It has been argued that since most of the affective processes underlying EI are not observable to outsiders, self-reports may be the most appropriate method for measuring it. The writings of Reuven Bar-On, Daniel Goleman, and others can be broadly grouped in this camp. However, during high-stakes testing (e.g., selection into highly competitive positions, admissions into educational institutions), there is a concern that such self-reports could be distorted by motivated faking. In fact, it could be argued that individuals with good EI skills are the most capable of such distortion. Individuals high on EI are probably better able to perceive what kinds of answers or behaviors are expected of them in a social context and would thus better be able to distort their responses.

The actual dimensions that constitute EI have varied across writers. Furthermore, some authors have shifted the defined content domain of EI over the years. It is in part this lack of consensus among EI researchers that has generated criticism and the perception that EI is a fad instead of a valid psychological construct. For example, Goleman has conceptualized EI as consisting of five dimensions or core competencies described by self-awareness, self-regulation,

self-motivation, social awareness (empathy), and social skills. This model is primarily driven by its relationship with personality-based variables. Others have claimed that self-awareness is the key to EI. *Self-awareness* refers to one's ability to know and monitor one's feelings on a regular basis. This enables one to be aware of one's preferences, internal states, and intuitions. These descriptions mirror the definition of private and public self-consciousness that psychologists have studied in preceding decades. The second core competency in this model refers to self-regulation. *Self-regulation* refers to managing one's internal states and impulses. This competency includes elements of self-control, conscientiousness, adaptability, and so forth.

The third competency, *self-motivation*, is the force behind being goal oriented and taking an optimistic point of view regarding outcomes. To complete work successfully, the individual should experience a feeling of *self-efficacy*. This competency appears to include achievement, drive, commitment, and so forth. Awareness of others' feelings and emotions, *social empathy*, is construed as the fourth basis for EI. This element of EI encompasses empathy, a variable that has been studied extensively by psychologists. Given that careers of the twenty-first century increasingly involve work in teams and thus necessitate interpersonal skills, this component of EI is viewed as a critical aspect in studying career success. The last component of this conceptualization of EI, *social skills*, refers to a person's adeptness in interpersonal relations.

In addition to this five-competency conceptualization of EI, several other trait-based models exist. One of the popular models, developed by Bar-On, conceptualizes EI as consisting of five main factors: intrapersonal, interpersonal, stress management, adaptability, and general mood. The *intrapersonal component* is based on an individual's self-awareness and expression. This requires individuals to be aware of their emotions and effectively express them toward others. The *interpersonal component* involves an individual's social awareness and adeptness at social relationships. A key aspect here is the ability to empathize with how others experience social situations and the feelings they experience, as well as the ability to build and maintain relationships. *Stress management* deals with a person's ability to manage and regulate his or her emotions. Individuals high on this dimension control their emotions instead of allowing emotions to control them. *Adaptability* revolves around a person's capacity

to adjust his or her feelings in order to effectively deal with emotional situations, whether internal or external. The last dimension, *general mood*, is based on a person's degree of happiness or overall feeling of well-being. This dimension has been described as a key facilitator of emotionally intelligent behavior.

These five dimensions are further broken down into 15 components that are said to describe EI. Interestingly, 5 of these components have recently been described as "facilitators" of EI rather than actual subdimensions. The scales assessing this conceptualization of EI generally demonstrate small correlations with cognitive ability and considerably larger correlations with personality as described by the Big 5 factors. It should also be noted that a number of EI scale names have been directly adapted from facets or compound traits of the Big Five personality factors (e.g., well-being).

The second major conceptualization of EI has been termed the *ability-based model* of EI. In this model, EI is described as a set of cognitive abilities involving the perception of emotions in oneself and in others, as well as understanding and using emotions effectively. Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer have popularized this conceptualization and, over the last decade, have developed several measures to assess this model. A characteristic of this conceptualization is the notion that because EI is considered an ability, performance-based measures should be the preferred means of assessment instead of self-reports. It has been known for some time that self-reports of ability do not necessarily correlate with actual performance-based measures of ability. Because the ability-based model of EI is conceptualized as a specific cognitive ability, its measures should correlate positively with those of general mental ability but not so high as to be redundant with it.

According to the ability-based model, there are four dimensions of EI: perception and expression of emotion, assimilating emotion in thought, understanding and analyzing emotion, and reflective regulation of emotion. Salovey and his colleagues have referred to these four components as "branches" of EI. It is not yet clear whether there is a hierarchy among the four dimensions or even some kind of temporal sequence or developmental-age patterns across the four dimensions similar to those found in developmental models of intelligence (i.e., Piagetian notions of concept development). The *perception of emotions* involves the ability to recognize emotions in oneself, other people, and stimuli, such as music, scenery, and art. *Emotional facilitation* of thought allows a person to

use emotions in a rational and adaptive manner to guide judgments and actions. An actress, for instance, may use emotion to enable herself to fully immerse herself in a character she portrays.

As the branch name suggests, *emotional understanding* involves the capability to comprehend emotional information and to realize how emotions can change, whether across situations or people. The final branch, *emotional management*, is proposed as the highest level of emotional functioning. Here, people not only recognize and understand emotions but also know how to properly regulate and utilize emotions effectively in different situations.

Unlike trait-based models, which overlap with personality, the ability-based model manifests greater correlations with cognitive ability. Other researchers have postulated similar models of EI and have designed measures to assess the construct. However, the instruments typically attempt to measure ability-based EI using a self-report methodology, which differs from the performance-based scoring techniques.

Suzy Fox and Paul Spector have conceptualized EI as a set of competencies that could be utilized by individuals to effectively use emotions to attain desirable outcomes. They measured three components of EI, described as empathy, self-regulation of mood, and self-presentation. Fox and Spector have acknowledged a serious weakness in EI measurement because of the lack of a clear operationalization of the construct. *Empathy* consists of several components, including being able to relate to another person's point of view and to experience emotions as others would in a given situation. *Self-regulation* of mood is based on a person's ability to identify his or her feelings and those of others and to use this information effectively. The third component, *self-presentation*, involves a person's ability to create a desired impression, often using non-verbal cues.

The many alternate conceptualizations of EI have generated skepticism about the concept itself. Some argue that if one were to wait long enough or read widely enough, one will come across a conceptualization to one's liking. This hodgepodge of models has also generated the criticism that there is nothing new in the concept of EI. Hans Eysenck, for instance, argued that EI should be dismissed as an amalgamation of emotional stability and intelligence, just as physicists will dismiss the concept of "hot lengths" as a muddled mix of the concepts of temperature and length. At times, these criticisms of the field of EI

have overshadowed recent work that has been empirically grounded and conducted independently from commercially interested parties, such as test developers and publishers.

For clarity and usefulness in research and practice, the following steps should be undertaken to clear these skepticisms. First, factor-analytic studies with representative (large) samples and measures should be undertaken to distill the dimensions that constitute the concept of EI. On a related note, temporal or hierarchical relations among the different dimensions should be clearly delineated. As a result of this process, some of the existing conceptualizations will undoubtedly no longer be considered as EI. Second, the relative independence of this newly distilled EI construct from more traditional constructs, such as personality, interests, and intelligence, needs to be documented. It is true that even decades of research have not resulted in a consensus on what constitutes constructs such as stress or general intelligence. Thus, a quick resolution of these issues should not be expected with EI, but it is hoped that future work will at least clarify the nature of the construct to a significant degree. In a short period of time, EI research has covered a substantial amount of ground, but more remains to be investigated if EI is to be widely accepted as a viable construct.

The popularity of EI in career counseling and other areas depends partly on the expectation that (a) EI is distinct from other traditional predictors, (b) EI adds incremental predictive potential beyond what is provided by traditional predictors, (c) EI is developable through interventions (unlike interests or intelligence, which are more biologically based and inherited), and (d) there are minimal group differences in EI, so that the use of EI measures in selection and personnel decision making results in a more egalitarian society. As will be elaborated on in the final section of this entry, the empirical research base to support these assertions is weak in many areas. The EI bandwagon is fueled by myths that may fail to withstand empirical scrutiny and, if so, may cause the enterprise to come crashing down. Careful research is needed to prevent this occurrence.

COMPONENTS OF EI LINKED TO CAREER OUTCOMES

This section reviews some of the research findings that support the role of various components of EI (e.g., self-control, empathy) in predicting career

success, career commitment, and career satisfaction. Career success can include successful job performance, doing well in academics, and having career commitment and satisfaction with the chosen career. Several theories on effective career counseling have stressed the importance of self-observation and regulation. The concept of self-efficacy has been central in these accounts. EI, with its emphasis on accurate perception and management of emotions, is likely to be a critical component in many career endeavors. For example, in the exploratory stage of Super's model of career development, accurate perceptions of environmental cues are critical for proper career choices. Differential progression of individuals across the developmental career stages is likely a result of individual differences in EI. The theory of work adjustment postulates that people will gravitate to jobs commensurate with their abilities and interests, a pull that might be fueled by the EI levels of individuals (as well as contextual pressures). Social learning theories applied to career counseling emphasize the need for accurate perception of emotions in oneself as well as in others. Thus, EI is likely to be useful in explaining career choices and could serve to enhance the explanatory power of these different approaches.

Before discussing specific empirical findings, some boundary conditions need to be specified. A long tradition of research has linked the components of EI that reflect personality variables to occupational outcomes such as job performance. In fact, multiple quantitative summaries of these empirical studies have amply documented the relationship between certain personality characteristics and job performance. For example, the personality traits of conscientiousness and achievement striving have been linked to successful performance in almost all jobs. Other personality traits, such as emotional stability, have been linked to performance in specific occupations. As an example, emotional stability has been linked to performance in stressful jobs, such as security personnel. Agreeableness has been found to be a determinant of career success in jobs involving teamwork, whereas extraversion has been linked to success in sales and managerial jobs. Similarly, a voluminous literature supports the notion that general mental ability or intelligence is predictive of performance in all jobs.

To the extent that EI is conceptualized as a construct comprising these traditional personality variables and intelligence, any review that links the components of EI to job performance will also have to demonstrate

the added utility of this new construct over those already well established as valid predictors in occupational domains. Thus, the goal here is not to comprehensively review all research linking any component ever conceptualized as constituting part of EI to job performance. Instead, we focus on research that claims to link EI to job performance as an independent predictor of valued outcomes (independent of the traditional and more established predictors, such as personality and intelligence).

Recent studies have stressed the need to combine personality, interests, and abilities when investigating career choice, career commitment, and career success. However, within each of these predictor domains, several competing models have also been provided. For example, books on personality discuss theories postulating as few as 3 personality dimensions to as many as 16 distinct dimensions. Multiple cognitive abilities have also been proposed, and several factor-analytic studies have come up with different clusters and models of these abilities. Although there is a positive correlation across the different abilities, which suggests the presence of a general factor, the career counselor is as likely to be interested in the profile of specific abilities as in the general factor. Given the different interest clusters, it is cumbersome to combine models of personality, interests, and abilities in investigating career choice, career commitment, and career success. The idea is that EI could be a bridge across the domains linking the rational-cognitive and affective as well as conative aspects of career choice, career commitment, and career success.

Although it is possible to summarize the attempts to measure the construct of EI explicitly and link it to career success, it should be noted that a more profitable research approach would be to first develop a theoretical framework that clearly delineates the content domain of EI and how it relates to career success. There is, at present, limited theory-guided research that tests processes that have been hypothesized a priori. Furthermore, the incremental validity that EI components yield over traditional personality and ability measures is seldom assessed. We hope such research will receive more attention in the future.

A recent meta-analytic review of 59 studies found that EI can be useful for predicting performance. In particular, subgroup meta-analyses based on criterion type demonstrated that EI predicted workplace performance and to a much lesser degree could be used to help explain success in academic settings. Since that

time, more studies have begun to review the link between EI and success in the classroom. A study of 372 undergraduate students found that highly successful students scored higher on several components of EI than did their less successful counterparts. In a study of 650 British students, trait EI was found to be related to scholastic achievement. In particular, high EI was associated with improved academic performance across individuals who scored low on cognitive ability. Yet in another study involving 180 students, a different trait-based measure was unrelated to academic success. A youth version of the same trait measure, however, was found to be related to academic performance in a study of 667 high school students. Overall, findings are still equivocal, and more research is needed in this area. Given a stronger cognitive component, ability-based measures of EI appear to have more potential in this area than the more affectively laden trait-based measures.

One theoretical framework that focuses on how EI should relate to career success is the contextualized action theory of career development. Richard Young and his colleagues proposed that emotions play a central role in how individuals develop coherent narratives of their careers. Emotions energize people to take and sustain action, help individuals decode feedback, and so forth. Career management includes appraisal of one's goals, present conditions, strategies for achieving goals, and career exploration. Components of EI such as understanding and managing emotions should therefore be important in the different stages of career management. It has been reported that those who trust and use their feelings effectively achieve success in their careers. In fact, career success can be described either in objective terms (e.g., levels promoted) or, more subjectively, in terms of internal psychological satisfaction. Effective use of EI has been postulated as a precursor for attaining feelings of psychological success. In a study involving 288 college students, it was found that a measure of EI (assessing empathy, utilizing feelings, handling relationships, and self-control) was positively related to career decision-making self-efficacy, career choice commitment, and vocational exploration. Career commitment has been linked, in turn, to successful job performance, promotions, and satisfaction.

EI has also been linked to career choice and satisfaction. A study of 295 business majors showed that individuals scoring low on a measure of EI (assessing self-awareness, self-regulation, and social awareness)

were likely to choose accounting majors. Career satisfaction has been predicted by personality traits such as emotional resilience across different occupational groups. Neuroticism, agreeableness, and conscientiousness have been related to the career satisfaction of executives. In a database involving about 6,000 individuals from 14 different occupations, it was reported that emotional resilience, optimism, and work drive predicted career satisfaction in all the occupational groups assessed (e.g., accounting, clerical, customer service, engineering, human resources). Thus, available empirical research suggests that EI has potential in the arena of career counseling. However, it is likely there are some critical gaps in our knowledge about the viability of EI in career counseling, which must be addressed to enhance our understanding of the construct's utility in this domain.

FUTURE RESEARCH NEEDS

This section addresses the issue of clarifying the concept of EI and the relative independence of EI from traditional predictors (e.g., intelligence, personality traits, interests). Perhaps the foremost research need is conceptual work clarifying the content domain of EI. In this process, it could be argued that some current conceptualizations should be discarded as EI (but perhaps resurface as important determinants of occupational outcomes, albeit under new names). Such clarification will help the advancement of science and practice. One approach is to factor analyze the different measures to identify common factors. Furthermore, multiple measures of the same construct should be developed to allow for the assessment of convergent validity through triangulation. At present, there is really only one measure that is claimed to measure EI as a specific cognitive ability. Other ability-based instruments do exist, but their foci are narrower and do not cover all postulated EI components. Thus, it is currently difficult to infer whether existing research findings are more a reflection of the EI-as-ability construct or of the one specific measure of it. Whereas test developers prosper by developing a unique measure, science progresses by analyzing constructs, not measures. The proprietary nature of most of the measures and their scoring keys is also a problem in that it hinders the free exchange of information between research groups, which makes comparison of results difficult.

Related to the need for conceptual clarification is the issue of measurement. The predominant question here

is the role of self-report methodologies. Self-reports can be used to assess EI whether EI is conceptualized as an ability or as a personality trait. However, self-reports of ability do not necessarily correlate highly with performance-based, objective measures of ability. On the other hand, if EI were to be conceptualized as a personality trait, some aspects would be best assessed by self-reports. When self-reports are used in high-stakes assessments, the potential issue of motivated response distortion needs to be addressed. In personality assessment, there is a voluminous literature on impression management, response distortion, faking, dissimulation, socially desirable responding, lying, and the like. Most personality inventories include scales that detect (or at least flag) potentially distorted responses and invalid test profiles. Several indices have been empirically developed to assess when faking should be a concern. Even though the validity and utility of such indices themselves are still under heavy debate in the scientific community, similar efforts should be considered when using EI inventories employing self-reports. Several of the self-report measures (e.g., the Bar-On EQ-i and the Emotional Judgment Inventory) have already taken this step.

A related measurement issue is the appropriate scoring method employed. The accuracy of individual responses can be determined by comparing them to (a) consensus criteria obtained from responses across a representative sample of respondents, (b) target criteria (self-reports of individuals who created test items or item stimuli of their actual emotions at the time of item generation), or (c) responses generated by experts in the domain of emotions. The use of consensus scoring presents a dilemma: The emotionally intelligent individual could be penalized for choosing a response that is better than that of the majority (which, by definition, should score about average), as his or her response will then most likely deviate from the mean response obtained from the standardization sample. The use of target scoring may not be justifiable, as there is no strong empirical evidence that the creators of stimuli or the so-called targets of EI test items (e.g., the person depicted in a task of emotional facial expressions) have insight into the stimuli they are creating that would constitute a sound criterion allowing for an accurate comparison. The use of experts in generating scoring keys to EI inventories raises multiple concerns, such as how to determine who should constitute the expert group (e.g., are researchers in the domain of emotions necessarily emotionally intelligent?) and the potential of cultural

biases. More important, the scant empirical research that exists to date that has assessed the convergence across the different scoring methods has found little convergence and/or problems of psychometric equivalence of scoring procedures (e.g., differences in distributional properties of scores and levels of reliability). In fact, the convergence between self-reports of EI and peer reports of EI is often lower than the convergence between self-reports of EI and measures of traditional personality variables (e.g., emotional stability).

Although several conceptual links have been made between individuals' EI and their success at the different stages of career development, the actual empirical research supporting these links is primarily restricted to academic and job performance. A recent meta-analysis found support for the hypothesis that EI has validity in predicting performance in both settings. More empirical studies are needed to assess the link between individual differences in EI and outcomes such as leadership emergence, successful handling of stress, and career satisfaction. Furthermore, it is important to demonstrate that EI helps explain career choices and career success beyond traditional variables such as abilities, interests, and personality variables.

Along these lines, future research is needed to assess the boundary conditions associated with these links and the potential moderators influencing these relationships. For example, it is possible that EI is more likely to be a predictor of academic performance in educational settings in which interpersonal skills are important than in those in which hard learning criteria are used to evaluate success. In addition to moderating influences, process mechanisms by which EI contributes to success need to be tested. As an illustration, it is possible that individuals high on EI could handle conflict and stress more effectively, either of which may enhance their performance in certain settings. Such mediational tests necessitate the need for longitudinal data collection and knowledge of the temporal effects of EI on performance. Consider one implication of the inattention that has so far been paid to such effects. At present, we do not know whether the difference in performance (academic or job) between high- and low-scoring individuals on EI measures attenuates over time and whether performance differences dwindle as relative experience increases. Alternately, the difference could magnify over time, in that the initial advantage in EI allows individuals to gain more resources and disproportionately better

their performance over time. Of course, there is also the possibility that performance differences will be stable over time.

One of the appealing features of EI for social policy is the supposed lack of ethnic group differences in EI scores. In the case of mean score differences, the group displaying the lower mean is likely to be underrepresented in the job or position selected for when such selection is done top-down using EI scores. Such disparities could potentially result in adverse impact (legally defined by the four-fifths rule in the United States) when EI is used for selection purposes. This may not be a problem as long as EI is used only for counseling, but given the widespread claims that EI predicts performance, leadership, and other valued criteria, it is imperative to assess ethnic group differences on this construct. Limited empirical research currently exists on this issue.

On a related note, an implicit claim is made in many trade books “selling” EI to the general public that EI can be developed by anyone. The idea that EI can be developed or schooled through interventions raises the hopes that every individual can be successful—a very promising alternative to the view that general mental ability is rather stable throughout one’s life and also highly heritable. However, such hopes at this point remain exactly that: only hopes. There is no cumulative empirical research unequivocally demonstrating that EI can be developed to any level or that the heritability of EI is low. In fact, given the correlations EI demonstrates with ability and personality variables, it is likely that the heritability of EI will prove similar to those found for such constructs, though possibly not to the same extent as with general mental ability.

In summary, although the empirical research base is just beginning to accrue, several models of career development and success suggest an important role for EI. Career counseling researchers and practitioners need to stay tuned for developments in this area. However, at present, the empirical research on the criterion-related validities of EI is limited to selected criteria such as academic and job performance and certain aspects of life success. More research on the validity of EI for predicting diverse criteria such as stress management is still needed. A better differentiation of the criterion domain of interpersonal skills is necessary if there is to be a better understanding of the processes through which EI influences success in this important area of career success. The incremental gains from using EI over traditional predictor variables,

such as abilities and interests, need to be demonstrated. The concept has to be clarified and its theoretical underpinnings more clearly and consistently defined. The moderating and mediating influences have to be empirically tested in more detail, and longitudinal research should be employed. Ethnic group differences and the heritability of EI need to be documented before expectations of successful interventions are encouraged.

The intent here is not to paint a pessimistic picture of EI but, instead, to draw attention to the need for independent and focused work on the construct. Findings have at times been encouraging and at other times nebulous and conflicting. Replication of sound research studies is a necessity, and careful examination at this time is warranted and recommended to provide a more thorough understanding of EI. This would include further clarification of the diverging models as well as the continued assessment of their predictive and incremental validity.

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See also Emotional labor, Intelligence, schooling, and occupational success, Knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), Multiple intelligences, Self-leadership

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EMOTIONAL LABOR

When employees regulate their emotions in order to display the emotions that are expected of them in workplace interactions, they are performing *emotional labor*. They may do this by suppressing or hiding their real feelings and, instead, expressing emotions that they do not actually feel, that is, *surface acting*. Surface acting involves putting on an "emotional mask" and creating a sense of emotional dissonance, a feeling of discrepancy between felt and expressed emotions. Employees may also express the socially expected emotions by working to actually feel the emotions they need to express, that is, *deep acting*. For example, in a customer service situation that requires pleasantness, they might try to generate the necessary emotions by thinking about how they feel when they are with friends. Thus, in contrast with surface acting's focus on external displays, deep acting's focus is primarily on creating inner feelings that are aligned with appropriate external displays. Employees may also simply express their genuine emotions in workplace interactions. If these emotions don't fit with situational requirements and expectations, employees may be engaging in emotional deviance.

Occupations can generally be classified on the basis of their need for physical, mental, and emotional labor. The extent and nature of the emotional labor performed by employees may depend on the norms that exist for emotional expression and suppression in a particular occupation. For example, although grocery store clerks are expected to be friendly and cheerful, funeral directors are expected to be somber and reflective. Also, occupations in which employees express a variety of emotions with high intensity in frequent interpersonal interactions of lengthy duration are most likely to involve high levels of emotional labor. Although

emotional labor tends to be associated with service occupations in which there are frequent interactions with customers, it is likely that employees in all occupations perform some amount of emotional labor. For example, research indicates that workers in a wide range of occupations, such as program managers, secretaries, nurses, and golf course maintenance workers, report that they regulate the emotions they display to others.

In addition to these situational predictors, there may be individual differences in how emotional labor is performed. For example, research indicates that workers who hold collectivist values are more likely than those with individualistic values to perform deep acting and hide their feelings. Also, workers who easily adapt their behaviors according to the demands of the external environment (i.e., high self-monitoring) and workers who tend to experience sadness and low levels of energy (i.e., high negative affectivity) tend to engage in high levels of surface acting. Interestingly, the ability to manage emotions in oneself and others, two elements of emotional intelligence, tend to predict higher levels of surface acting but are unrelated to deep acting.

Since emotional labor has been conceptualized in a variety of ways, a multitude of measures of emotional labor also exist. For example, it has been measured by considering (a) the result of dichotomizing occupational categories into high- and low-emotional-labor jobs; (b) the emotional tone of occupations; (c) the emotional requirements of occupations, such as the frequency of emotional display; (d) the emotional dissonance associated with surface acting; and (e) the emotional regulation involved in surface and deep acting. A growing number of researchers appear to be adopting the emotional regulation perspective of emotional labor.

Initially, researchers assumed that performing emotional labor was universally draining and alienating for employees and a cause of burnout. However, research suggests that the way in which emotional labor is performed influences its effects on employees. Employees who express emotions that they do not really feel (i.e., surface acting) tend to experience a lack of authenticity and, as a result, report high levels of emotional exhaustion. In contrast, employees who try to align their felt and expressed emotions through deep acting tend to feel a sense of authenticity and, consequently, relatively low levels of emotional exhaustion and high levels of personal accomplishment. Surface acting has also been associated with reduced levels of job satisfaction and higher turnover levels. Researchers have found that emotions can be

passed from one person to another, such that, for example, customers feel enthusiastic as a result of being served by enthusiastic salespeople. However, there is still little research that considers the relationship between the way in which emotional labor is performed (i.e., surface or deep acting) and customer emotions, attitudes, and behaviors.

The concept of emotional labor has implications for career development. In particular, when considering alternative career directions, individuals are advised to select occupations that require emotional displays that fit with their emotional temperaments. For example, an individual with a tendency to be bubbly, friendly, and enthusiastic is more likely to be able to express genuine emotions as a flight attendant than as a bill collector. This is important, since a mismatch may require more effort on the part of employees to display the required emotions and result in feelings of emotional exhaustion. Employers should be mindful of applicants' emotional temperaments and other relevant personality characteristics during the process of selecting employees. They should try to hire employees whose emotional temperaments match the job requirements. This means that employers should develop a thorough understanding of the emotional tone and requirements of occupations. Employers may also want to provide employee training and performance feedback that helps employees learn how to perform emotional labor in a way that does not have detrimental effects on their health.

—Céleste M. Brotheridge

See also Emotional intelligence, Self-monitoring, Personality and careers

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EMPLOYABILITY

Historically, the majority of *employability* research and practice pertained to vocational rehabilitation or to the attractiveness and selection of job candidates. Employable individuals are able to demonstrate a fundamental level of functioning or skill to perform a given job, or an employable individual's skills and experience fit some predetermined set of job requirements. Conceptually, both streams emphasize the degree of person-job fit in terms of the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to perform effectively on a job. Employability literature utilizing this fit perspective suggests that necessary KSAs are known and stable, which is incongruent with the highly uncertain employment environment and current employee-employer relationships.

As demands confronting employers rapidly change, their strategies morph, which necessitates that employees continually update their KSAs to execute these strategies. Thus, framing employability in terms of rigid KSAs is a liability to both employers and employees, in that it suggests that employees are valuable only to the extent that their current skill sets match their employers' current strategic objectives. Instead, the new employer-employee relationship requires organizations and the employees that populate them to be flexible and adapt strategies, services, products, knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors as needed to realize organizational and individual goals. In short, both employers and employees must adapt in order to compete successfully and avoid obsolescence. Therefore, rather than maintaining a traditional KSA perspective, it now seems reasonable and appropriate to frame (and measure) employability in terms of individual characteristics that foster active adaptability at work.

Mel Fugate, Angelo Kinicki, and Blake Ashforth's conceptualization of *dispositional employability* follows this lead and provides an interesting alternative to more traditional employability research and practice. They have defined employability as a multi-dimensional constellation of individual characteristics that predispose employees to (pro)actively adapt to

their work and career environments. Employability facilitates the identification and realization of job and career opportunities both within and between organizations. Conceived this way, employability is a disposition that captures individual characteristics that foster adaptive behaviors and positive employment outcomes, and it more accurately describes the action-oriented, proactive, and adaptive qualities that employers now widely espouse and seek. This perspective is also consistent with more current research that views employees as proactive rather than reactive agents. More employees now initiate change and create opportunities, rather than reacting to change after the fact or waiting for opportunities to present themselves. Moreover, conceptualizing employability as a disposition seems appropriate, given the high level of uncertainty inherent in today's career landscape. According to social psychology, highly uncertain situations can be characterized as "weak situations," and thus one can expect individual characteristics to be primary determinants of behavior.

A dispositional perspective of employability also has the added benefit of being explicitly anchored in the work context, which overcomes a prevalent operational (measurement) shortcoming of previous research related to adaptability at work. Recent reviews of literature related to adaptability at work has revealed that researchers typically used broad dispositional measures as indicators of adaptability. For instance, research has shown that various measures of personality are positively related to work adjustment, openness to change, innovation and career initiative, and job satisfaction and performance. Despite the benefits of this research, the generalizability of results is limited because the measures of personality were not anchored to the work context. A greater alignment of context and content between indicators of employability and adaptability at work enhances predictive power, more precisely captures the true essence of employability, and is consistent with Fugate and colleagues' conceptualization of employability. To further highlight the importance of contextualization, the following section briefly explicates the component dimensions that constitute dispositional employability.

COMPONENT DIMENSIONS OF DISPOSITIONAL EMPLOYABILITY

Workers must parlay personal factors to identify and realize opportunities within today's work environment

(i.e., to be employable). Although many individual characteristics potentially support these endeavors, only a few deemed critical and representative of the active and adaptable nature of employability are discussed here: openness to changes at work, work and career resilience, work and career proactivity, career motivation, social and human capital, and career identity. Because dispositional employability subsumes all component dimensions, it represents an overarching construct that contributes to proactive adaptability at work. The individual component dimensions are explained next.

Openness to Changes at Work

Openness to changes at work supports flexibility in uncertain situations and facilitates continuous learning. For example, in the context of organizational change, open individuals exhibit more positive attitudes toward changes, greater job satisfaction, and lower intentions to quit. Open people also are likely to perceive change as a challenge rather than a threat and be receptive to new technologies and processes. Therefore, people who are open to new experiences and change are adaptable in dynamic work and career environments, which enhances their employability.

Work and Career Resilience

Work- and career-resilient individuals tend to have high self-evaluations and be optimistic in their work and careers. Cognitive adaptation theory and research show that these qualities are highly adaptive. Positive self-evaluations precipitate positive and productive attitudes, and optimism fosters positive expectations about future events. Consequently, work and career resilience affords individuals confidence in their abilities to handle the objectives and affective challenges associated with their work and careers. Accordingly, work and career resilience fosters the identification and realization of career opportunities (employability) in turbulent environments.

Work and Career Proactivity

Work and career proactivity is a hallmark of adaptability at work and is similar to proactive coping. Proactive coping consists of individual efforts to identify potential stressors and to acquire the skills and resources necessary for dealing with stressors, should

they occur. In terms of employability, work and career proactivity subsumes the acquisition of information related to possible opportunities and challenges associated with one's current position and future opportunities. It also includes preparatory actions for coping with and/or exploiting said opportunities and challenges, should they occur. This may involve actions such as considering the implications of a possible downsizing or merger or exploring the benefits of taking an international assignment. Moreover, individuals with high employability periodically assess their value in the marketplace, comparing their skills and experience with current job opportunities and requirements. One benefit of this activity is that it may serve as market feedback, per se, informing the individual of the value of his or her current skill set and experience in the eyes of the market. Thus, work and career proactivity has important implications for identifying and realizing opportunities.

Career Motivation

Career motivation relates to career goals, planning, and an orientation toward learning. As such, it draws on the concepts of motivation control and learning goal orientation. Career motivation provides many benefits to workers: enhanced drive for work-related endeavors, persistence during periods of boredom or frustration, and sustained effort in the face of challenges. Individuals with high levels of career motivation are also interested in mastering new skills and approach new situations as opportunities. As a result, career motivation is a critical determinant of continuous learning—a critical aspect of employability.

Social and Human Capital

Social capital and human capital are important elements of employability. Social capital consists of the resources available in social networks that can advance a person's interests. One's ability to identify and realize career opportunities is greatly influenced by such capital. The size and diversity of an individual's social networks are directly related to the amount of information and influence available. Similarly, employability is influenced by human capital. *Human capital* refers to a host of more traditional factors that influence a person's career advancement, such as age and education, work experience and training, job performance, and organization tenure.

Together, investments in these types of capital contribute to employability.

Career Identity

Career identity is the cognitive basis of dispositional employability, as it describes one's self-definition in the career context. Career identity provides direction for future opportunities and behaviors, while at the same time organizing past experiences. It coheres the plethora of career-related elements both for the self and for others. For example, people's career identities are often revealed when they answer the question "What do you do for a living?" The answer to this question often communicates an individual's interpretation of his or her career past, present, and future. As such, career identity assembles past, current, and future career experiences and aspirations into an understandable whole, and it also acts as the cognitive glue that integrates the other dimensions of employability. In a sense, it is the cognitive canvas on which the other dimensions of employability are painted. Moreover, career identity gives employability particular relevance for career development, in that career identities help fashion career trajectories in the absence of traditional career tracks. Now that the dimensions of employability have been explained, the following section explores the influence of employability on career development.

EMPLOYABILITY AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

It is important to illustrate the utility of the new conceptualization of employability, as it is dramatically different from historical perspectives. This section thus briefly describes how a dispositional perspective of employability influences two important career development topics: career exploration and job search.

Career Exploration

Due to substantial changes in the employer-employee relationship, the onus of career management resides increasingly with the employee. In response, some researchers and vocational counselors propose career exploration as a means for employees to manage this responsibility and cope with the increased complexity in careers today. Through career exploration,

employees learn important information about themselves and their career opportunities. Such internal and external information gathering has been linked to increased job search intensity and job search effectiveness. Thus, career exploration has important implications for career choices and experiences. This has led other researchers to examine a wide variety of predictors of career exploration, such as ego identity status, goal directedness, and vocational decision-making style. Unfortunately, however, identification of powerful predictors has been disappointing; that is, those investigated have explained relatively little variance in ultimate career outcomes. A dispositional approach to employability helps fill this void.

It is reasonable to assume that employability is a powerful predictor of career exploration, as it influences the two fundamental foci of information gathering: internal/self and external/environmental. For instance, consider the internally focused activity of inventorying and evaluating one's career interests (i.e., desirable characteristics of a job or career). Those with high employability are likely to have both a broader and a clearer array of interests and possibilities. They are predisposed to identifying more opportunities that are consistent with and motivated by their career identities and supported by social capital. Furthermore, the active orientation inherent in employability means that these individuals are more likely to engage in self-exploration activities in the first place. In addition to the internal influence, employability also has implications for externally directed career exploration and job search.

Job Search

Job search has become an increasingly important and frequent endeavor for workers. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics states that American workers now often make a dozen or more transitions during their working lives. In response, researchers have identified and investigated numerous individual difference factors that influence both job search behaviors and employment outcomes: personality traits (five-factor model), generalized expectancies (locus of control and optimism), self-evaluation (self-esteem and job search self-efficacy), motives, social context, and biological variables (age, gender, education, race, and tenure in the workforce and in one's current job). These nonability individual differences have been shown to affect self-regulatory processes that influence

both job search behaviors and ultimate job search outcomes.

Employability not only subsumes many of the individual differences noted above but also presumably affects the self-regulatory job search process and associated outcomes. Employability makes unique contributions to job search behaviors, job choice, and job search outcomes. For example, individuals with high employability are likely to proactively identify reemployment goals (opportunities) when job loss is anticipated or advance notice provided. Moreover, the opportunities identified are directed and driven by the career identity dimension of employability. Employability also connotes confidence with and the active use of multiple search modalities, and it likely enhances job search self-efficacy. Therefore, employability is likely to influence not only the choice of employment goals and enhance ultimate reemployment outcomes but also the ultimate quality of reemployment, as they both likely align with one's career identities.

CONCLUSION

To be employable, it is important to possess baseline KSAs that fit a given job. However, this traditional approach is inadequate in today's turbulent career landscape. Because competitiveness is a moving target for employers, they must adapt in order to compete and survive—and likewise their employees. Therefore, now it is more accurate and appropriate to expand our perspective of employability beyond KSAs (person-job fit) to include individual characteristics that facilitate individual action, proactivity, and adaptability. The construct of dispositional employability presented here does just that. As such, a dispositional approach to employability has important implications and predictive power for career development and other aspects of organizational behavior.

—Mel Fugate

See also Career exploration, Job search, Knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), Proactivity, Psychological contract

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EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Employee assistance programs (EAPs) function to treat a variety of work- and nonwork-related problems that may interfere with an employee's job performance and/or productivity. EAPs were originally developed in the 1950s to treat employees whose job performance was negatively affected by alcohol abuse, but they have evolved greatly over the past several decades. The scope of the problems addressed by EAPs varies from plan to plan, with some plans covering only issues closely related to work stress and others covering a much broader range of work-life and mental health issues. Some plans offer services solely to employees, and other plans also cover treatment of family members. Although counseling is still the focus of most EAPs, a few progressive plans include financial and legal advice and resources to assist in locating child care or elder care programs. As a result of receiving assistance with these work-life issues, an employee may find that he or she has an increase in time and energy to focus on being productive at work.

Whether offering concrete advice or providing counseling, EAPs strive to address the personal problems of employees so that they can function to their full capacities in both their work and their home lives. EAP counseling services may be provided on-site by an in-house provider or off-site by an external

contracted provider. EAPs offer a certain number of sessions (determined by the plan) to the employee. Typically, if an employee's issues cannot be resolved in the allotted number of sessions, the EAP counselor refers the employee to a counselor through the employee's health plan for continued service.

A growing number of worksites in the United States now offer EAPs to their employees. Most of these are large companies: 100 percent of Fortune 500 companies have EAPs, and 90 percent of Fortune 1000 companies have them. In 2001, 28 percent of companies with 1 to 24 employees and 86.3 percent of companies with 500 or more employees had EAPs, compared with 22.4 percent of small companies and 73.9 percent of large companies in 1993. These statistics not only show the growth in the number of companies with EAPs but also highlight the vast difference in prevalence of EAPs between large and small companies. This may be due in part to the cost involved in offering EAP services.

Despite the cost of maintaining these programs, many companies find that EAPs are mutually beneficial to the company and the employees. Using EAPs, employees are able to benefit from free (or low-cost) services they otherwise may not have chosen to utilize. Employers who offer EAPs send the message to their employees that they care. Employees may feel an increased sense of investment in their companies because they feel that their companies are invested in them. This sense of feeling "cared for" can greatly increase morale in an organization.

It would be neglectful to discuss EAPs without mention of the role of stress in today's society. Stress has become quite common and almost expected in many work environments. Employees work long hours and often feel overwhelmingly pressured to be productive. This, coupled with increasing demands in their personal lives, may leave employees feeling frustrated, anxious, or depressed. Without the appropriate skills to manage these symptoms, people may experience a variety of manifestations of their stress, including physical illness, substance abuse, and marital problems. EAP counseling can provide employees with the skills to cope with stress in both their work and their personal lives. As a result, they can enjoy improved functioning in both arenas.

Clearly, having employees who are efficient at managing their stress is not only a benefit to the employees. Many managers feel that their departments run more smoothly as a result of their EAPs. They feel that it makes good financial sense to support their employees.

One expected result of an EAP is reduced absenteeism. Depression is a leading cause of missed workdays, and undoubtedly, stress-related medical conditions contribute to absenteeism as well. Furthermore, disability claims caused by depression and stress-related illnesses are costly to an organization and may be avoided by addressing these issues before they become debilitating. Studies have shown that substance abusers are more likely to become injured on the job and are more likely than their non-substance-abusing counterparts to file workers' compensation claims. EAPs can even lower health care costs, as they may result in fewer claims being filed. In addition, a company invested in helping its troubled employees realize their full potential will avoid the time-consuming and costly process of hiring and training staff to replace those who would otherwise be terminated.

Theoretically, an EAP sounds as if it would be an asset to any company, but is it really worth the cost? It is first important to note that for an EAP to be effective, it must be utilized by the employees. Employees need to know about it and how to access it. It should be marketed as a useful and substantial benefit. It should also be marketed in such a way that employees do not view accessing these services as a sign of weakness. Employees must feel confident that information discussed with EAP counselors will be kept confidential.

There is not a wealth of information regarding the actual effectiveness of EAPs, and the existing studies show inconsistent results. Self-reports of people who have used their EAPs indicate a high level of satisfaction with the services they received. Other studies note improvements in job performance and attendance as a result of EAPs. Conversely, some studies do not promote EAPs as a valuable commodity. As far as the actual cost-effectiveness of these types of programs is concerned, the numbers vary greatly. Different studies have shown that for every dollar spent on an EAP, the return is as little as \$2 or as much as \$15. Other studies have found EAPs not to be cost-effective at all. Many employers believe that regardless of the dollar-for-dollar return (or lack thereof), EAPs are worthwhile investments. The improvement in morale and productivity among the employees and the generally positive work environment that an EAP achieves are well worth the cost of the program.

—Michele Levine

See also Family-responsive workplace practices, Stress at work

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EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN ORGANIZATIONAL DECISION MAKING

Employee participation in organizational decision making allows employees to have a say in decisions that affect their working lives in some way. Nevertheless, this apparently benign definition masks a number of complexities. The main problem is that different parties in the employment relationship may differ on the procedure by which employee voice is expressed and on the substantive content of the participation. For this reason, the history of employee participation (EP) is long and tortuous, with no simple, uncontested objective.

Many managers see EP as largely job centered, established as a means to offer expanded task discretion to individual employees as a way to enhance their fulfillment and hence job performance. Employees may accept these prescriptions, but under conditions of insecurity or hostility (e.g., following downsizing exercises), they may interpret these initiatives more negatively as being orientated toward satisfying primarily employer, rather than employee, needs. Managers may also adopt EP principally as a means to disclose information of managerial intentions or decisions, which they hope will engender employee trust and goodwill.

Unions, on the other hand, through their representative functions, may seek a broader and more active vision of gaining a voice in organizational decisions, which managers might believe could undermine their authority or subvert optimal corporate performance (e.g., by seeking higher pay awards). While some

economists do point to a negative association between union participation and organizational performance, other authorities contend that the same process of representative EP can actually strengthen employee commitment to the company by providing them with an authoritative collective voice, which also encourages managers to sharpen their performance in dealing with staff. Allied to this, a third perspective suggests that rather than representing conflict over divided interests, employee participation, correctly applied, can benefit the ambitions of all stakeholders. This approach has been reinforced through studies and research by authorities such as Jeffrey Pfeffer and Mark Huselid, who have argued that employees represent the principal source of performance enhancement and that encouraging employees to exercise autonomy and discretion fortifies both their motivation and their performance. There is certainly evidence by these and other authors that the combined use of commitment-focused EP can positively impact employee contributions. These observations are especially relevant for the growing numbers of knowledge workers in advanced economies, whose commitment is vital to organizational success.

What emerges from these different perspectives is that EP can be represented by a host of varied practices, applicable at different levels within the organization. Basically, though, EP can be classified into *direct*, *indirect*, and *financial* forms. Direct forms tend to derive from management instigation and provide for personal involvement for individual employees or work teams with no representative intervention. Involvement by employees in decision making is restricted to task or workgroup issues or to reactive communication exercises. Examples include direct communication between employees and managers through both downward and upward routes. Performance appraisal can be seen as a means of direct EP, requiring upward communication from employees (e.g., factors influencing their performance or requests identified for future development) and downward communication from appraisers about appraisee success in meeting targets, allocating performance-related pay awards and setting future personal objectives. This focus on direct contact between manager and managed can have important implications for managerial and career development. As an assessed part of their performance and indicator of advancement potential, supervisors and managers may need to acquire a range of facilitative and communication

skills as a demonstration of their managerial competence. At the same time, the appraisal process offers opportunities to different ranks of employees to enhance their employability through the acquisition of skills and qualifications.

Personnel skills may also be practiced in facilitating two other prominent approaches to direct EP, namely, employee empowerment and teamworking. Research has indicated that these processes are especially relevant to today's increasingly sophisticated and flexible work regimes and educated workforces. Empowerment, which aims to project greater decision-making autonomy on individual employees and supervisors at the task level, can provide opportunities for career advancement for both managers and the managed that are in contrast to more rigid and hierarchical work regimes. Teamworking, a form of group empowerment, requires competence in communication and facilitative leadership from both team leaders and their supervisors.

Indirect EP through representatives can be demonstrated through collective bargaining (or negotiation) and works councils and, in Europe especially, by worker directors and, more recently, European Works Councils (EWCs). In contrast to direct EP, indirect EP has a regulative function and may actively engage with organizational or corporate issues (such as restructuring), which may require the organization to become more accountable to employees and their representatives. Especially in the more regulated European economies, these approaches can be supported by national or supranational legislation within a social justice framework that acknowledges that in an era of giant and multinational corporations, employees are often at a market disadvantage in negotiating and protecting their terms and conditions of employment. For the same reason, not all companies welcome these interventions into their decision-making powers and may oppose recognition of trade unions and resist, organizationally and politically, the imposition of forms of indirect EP, which are considered inimical to their economic interests.

Collective bargaining is probably the most commonly adopted form of indirect EP and, unlike other forms, requires recognition of an independent trade union by the employer. Collective bargaining involves the joint regulation of terms and conditions of employment between the employer and trade unions acting on behalf of employees. Works councils and EWCs can exist independently of trade unions (and, indeed, may

be regarded by unions with suspicion), and rather than joint regulation assumed by negotiation, they are designed for managers to inform and consult over organizational decisions with representatives of the workforce. The role of EWCs is tightly circumscribed by European legislation to inform and consult about company international issues at formal council meetings held at least annually. Evidence from the operation of EWCs suggests, however, that employers have little to fear from the establishment of these institutions.

Financial participation or employee ownership is most advanced in the market economies of the United States and United Kingdom. In both countries, over a third of employees in the private sector have access to acquiring stock in their companies through employee share ownership plans (ESOPs). Although the intention of ESOPs can be to support retirement incomes, their more general purpose is to create a tangible sense of ownership, which advocates like Joseph Blasi, Douglas Kruse, and Corey Rosen have argued feed into both employee and organizational performance. Although the evidence is mixed, research tends to confirm that the presence of a positive “ownership effect” is directly associated with higher proportions of shareholdings held by employees. The other positive finding is that synergy between employee ownership and other high-commitment human resource policies has been demonstrated.

As organizations attempt to become more competitive, effective deployment of human resources is becoming an essential feature of organizational strategy. The role of employee participation in this process of human resource development is vital. Research will continue to explore the approaches and conditions that can be best associated with enhancing employee capabilities and managerial performance.

—Jeffrey Hyman

See also Collective bargaining, Empowerment, Quality of work life (QWL)

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EMPLOYMENT ADVERTISING

Employment advertising is a medium for posting employment opportunities through ads that appear in public media, most notably newspapers, magazines, and Internet sites. Ads appear in all countries in the Western world and to a lesser extent in other parts of the world, generally in dedicated sections of newspapers, typically in proximity to sections covering business and economic issues. Ads for specific professions sometimes appear in other sections (e.g., employment in medical professions is sometimes posted in newspaper sections dedicated to medicine). Labor economists and labor policymakers often consider the number of employment ads appearing in a country at a given time to be a key indicator of unemployment and the degree of economic vitality of the country.

Ads can be posted and paid for by a potential employer, by a recruiting firm, or by a placement agency and are often designed by marketing or public relations firms as a part of organizational efforts intended to promote the organizational image. The costs of employment advertising vary widely, depending on size (number of square inches), complexity (e.g., with or without color), and status and market reach of the newspaper in which an ad appears. There are many guides to effective product or service-marketing advertisements, but little research has been done on effective employment advertising, perhaps because the cost of employment advertising is typically significantly lower than that of product advertising.

Research on employment advertising has typically compared ads with other sources of employee recruiting, such as college placement, employee referral, or placement agencies. Employment advertising is usually found to be less effective than other sources, most notably employee referral. Advertising is identified as a formal recruitment vehicle (as opposed to an informal vehicle, such as employee walk-in) that relies on

external information (as opposed to relying on internal information, such as employee referral).

Employment ads are strikingly similar in structure, regardless of the newspaper or region of the world in which they appear. Historically, ads were structured as a rectangle with some embedded text; today, they include elaborations in both text and visual elements, such as fonts, logos, color, pictures, or borders. The content of most ads includes a “skeleton,” that is, a job title and contact information. Most include additional information, or “embellishments,” on the skeleton, including marketing information about the organization, the physical or social work environment, or the legal issues pertinent to the posted job or the posting organization. There is significant variation among ads in the content of embellishments, and there seem to be some systematic differences in the nature of embellishments employed in different countries and different professions, but little research has been done on the rationale behind them or their effects.

Employment ads serve functions other than connecting employees and employers. Job seekers and people actively employed are encouraged by career advisors to read ads as a means of learning about the job market, and many report that they read them for reasons other than finding specific jobs. Managers and technical people report that they read ads for the purpose of learning about competitors, about new projects, and about new developments in their fields.

—Anat Rafaeli

See also Organizational staffing, Recruitment

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EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS

Unlike many years ago, when employers and employees began the working relationship with a simple

trusting handshake, today’s employment often begins with lengthy *employment contracts* and careful scrutinizing, discussion, and negotiation. Such contracts are often necessary to reduce the potential for expensive litigation on a multitude of issues, although in many cases, it is advantageous for an employer not to have to deal with the restrictions and obligations that a contract may create. For this reason, not every prospective employee will be successful in obtaining an employment contract. Until recently, employment contracts were used almost solely for executives. Today, many employees, particularly managers and professionals with special expertise, look to employment contracts as a hedge against job loss brought on by mergers and corporate “housecleaning” and as a way to negotiate greater predictability in their work lives.

This entry provides a checklist of some of the more important issues to consider at the time of establishing an employment contract. It is not intended as legal advice. The law pertaining to employment contracts and the enforceability of particular provisions vary substantially from one state to another. Therefore, an individual should seek the advice of a knowledgeable attorney before deciding on the content and language of an employment contract.

A well-drafted employment contract clearly states the agreement between employer and employee and reduces the potential for future litigation. It should start with the basics, such as job title and a description of the level of responsibility the employee will assume. If the employee wants to remain in a particular location or desires to avoid extensive travel, these issues should be addressed in the contract. Generally, employees are hired for an indefinite period of time. However, in many states, a contract is unenforceable if a definite term is not stated. The parties should consider whether extensions to the contract term will be permitted and under what conditions.

The salary and total compensation package should be addressed in an employment contract. This would include the following: base pay, bonus, commissions, cost-of-living salary adjustments, pension, life/medical/dental/disability insurance (address who pays what percentage), 401(k), stock, profit-sharing, incentive pay, expense account, company car, vacation, parking, use of company property, associations/club memberships, mobile phone, tuition (self, dependents), moving costs, low-interest loans, severance pay, tax/legal/financial counseling, child care, and employee discounts. Just

because an employer does not state that a particular item is available as a benefit does not mean that a well-qualified applicant cannot use his or her qualifications as leverage to negotiate for and receive that benefit.

In an individual employment contract, there is often a clause listing the specific reasons that will justify termination. If the contract does not address valid reasons for termination, the employee is generally considered to be an *employee at will*. The doctrine of employment at will holds that unless there is a contract stating otherwise, employers have the legal right to terminate an employee for any reason as long as the basis for termination does not violate state or federal law. This doctrine is generally followed in all states, subject to some exceptions that vary from state to state.

If an employee desires some protection beyond the minimum required by law, the employment contract should state, for example, that the employer cannot terminate the individual unless there is just cause. Also, the parties may wish to specify that termination may occur only after the occurrence of certain specified events. The contract should specify what the consequences would be for the parties in various scenarios. For example, misconduct, particularly gross misconduct, normally does not entitle an employee to severance pay. If the termination is for something less than the agreed-upon standard of misconduct or if the employer breaches the terms, the contract should state how, when, and how much the employee is to be compensated.

One of the most often used provisions in employment contracts is a clause that prohibits the employee from working for a competitor during the term of the contract and after leaving the employer. Noncompetition agreements have long been used in the employment contracts of top executives, sales representatives, and research/technical personnel. As employers have become more competitive and more concerned about trade secrets and other proprietary information getting into the hands of their competitors, covenants not to compete are being included more often in contracts involving employees who will have access to customer lists, business and marketing plans, pricing and financial data, research and development, production methods, product formulas, and any other information that would be of value to a competitor.

A prospective employee should give this issue serious consideration before agreeing to a restriction on future employment. Most states enforce noncompetition

agreements. As with most other matters related to employment contracts, state laws control how these agreements are interpreted and the extent to which they may be enforced. State laws dealing with such agreements vary significantly.

A noncompetition agreement often includes other restrictive covenants, such as a nondisclosure agreement prohibiting the former employee from using or disclosing the employer's confidential or proprietary information. Also, a nonsolicitation agreement may be used to prohibit former employees from soliciting the employer's customers and prospects, and a non-raiding provision can prohibit former employees from hiring the employer's other employees. Employers often include a provision in employment contracts to protect their interest in intellectual property created while the employee is employed. Employees should be careful not to give up ownership of patents or copyrights already obtained prior to joining employers.

Many employers include compulsory arbitration clauses covering all employment-related claims in their employment contracts. Giving up one's right to seek a legal remedy in court is a serious issue and should be given due consideration by the employee.

If the employee will be assigned to work outside the United States, it may be wise to consider such issues as cost-of-living adjustments, minimum number of trips home (at company expense), and travel and moving expenses back to the United States upon termination of the contract.

Many other types of provisions are often used that may place additional restrictions on either the employee or the employer. The parties are limited primarily by their imagination and their particular needs when determining what should be included in the employment contract. Both parties would be well-advised to have knowledgeable employment attorneys assist them in this process to avoid unpleasant surprises in the future.

—Clifford M. Koen Jr.

See also Employment-at-will doctrine, Psychological contract, Retention programs, Wrongful dismissal

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EMPLOYMENT-AT-WILL DOCTRINE

The *employment-at-will doctrine* governs employment contracts of an unspecified duration. The doctrine's classic formulation holds that absent a clear intention to contract for a term or other employment protections, the employee-employer relationship can be severed for any reason. As the Tennessee Supreme Court famously declared in *Payne v. Western Atlantic R.R. Co.* in 1884, an at-will employee may be dismissed for "a good reason, a bad reason, or no reason at all." The rule is of course symmetric: Unless specified otherwise, an employee may leave without liability. The doctrine is a common-law rule, meaning that it was adopted by judges without legislative intervention.

SCOPE OF THE DOCTRINE

Though it is now circumscribed by statutory and judge-made limitations, the rule remains one of the most important legal doctrines in employment law, governing the contractual relationships of almost all nonunion, nongovernment employees (roughly 85 percent of the labor force). The doctrine, which is unique to the United States, emerged in the late nineteenth century and is widely regarded as a legacy of the *laissez-faire* attitudes prevailing at the time. By the early twentieth century, it was adopted in every state with surprisingly little controversy.

The employment-at-will doctrine is a judge-made rule; its purpose is to fill in gaps when the terms of the relationship are unspecified. Courts frequently face contracts with gaps that must be filled in during the course of litigation. The general rule is that courts will read in terms (or "default" to terms) that represent a best guess as to what the contracting parties would have wanted had they thought to contract for it. When faced with an unspecified employment contract, then, courts assume that the parties wanted an at-will relationship and place the burden on the plaintiff (almost always the employee) to show that a contract for term or just-cause protection was intended.

If a term of employment is specified, either in writing or orally, courts presume that the contract contains a promise of employment for the duration specified, provided the employee performs satisfactorily. In some cases, the employer could offer an indefinite-term contract in which dismissal may occur only for just cause, creating just-cause employment for life. Prior to the recent innovations discussed below, these cases were limited almost solely to well-specified contracts for academic tenure. Courts were once unwilling to find that oral assurances or statements in employee handbooks created a just-cause relationship. Since the 1970s, the trend has been toward a more liberal interpretation of assurances and a greater willingness to find just-cause employment.

In the case of a term contract, the employee must show only that the dismissal occurred within the covered term, and then the employer may defend by showing that he or she had a good reason to dismiss the worker. Courts have been careful to note that provisions stating salaries on a yearly or monthly basis do not create a term of employment and are therefore insufficient to rebut the presumption of employment at will. In addition, an employee may also be liable if he or she leaves the relationship prior to the expiration of the term, although courts will require greater clarity in this regard. Litigation in this vein is far less frequent, likely because employers do not wish to retain employees who want to leave and damages may be harder to calculate. Of course, employers can also protect themselves by delaying compensation until the end of the employment term, in the form of a bonus.

Courts did not adopt the at-will rule because no other default was tenable. Indeed, the at-will rule, when adopted, was a rejection of an English rule that held that employment contracts for an unspecified duration would generally be read as a contract for one year of employment. The rule was often justified by the courts with reference to seasonal variations in labor demand and the fear that employers would opportunistically dismiss workers when agricultural conditions were unfavorable. The rule, however, was not limited to farmhands but applied generally, although English courts would impute a shorter term if the situation seemed to call for it.

EROSION OF THE AT-WILL RULE

The first chips at the rule came in the form of statutory limitations on specific "bad reasons" for dismissal.

The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 forbade discharge (and other discriminatory practices) based on an employee's participation in collective action. In addition, it facilitated the creation of explicit labor contracts to govern the employment relationship, and these contracts typically provide a term of employment or just-cause provisions for dismissal and a procedure under which dismissals are to be governed.

The next major limitations on the actions of employers came in the form of antidiscrimination laws, most prominently Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which forbids discrimination in employment on the basis of race, sex, national origin, and religion. Age discrimination (in 1967) and disability discrimination (in 1990) were later prohibited under separate statutes. With the exception of disability discrimination, which requires employers to make accommodations for the disabled, the most common cause of action under these statutes is for wrongful termination, and hence they operate as a check on the at-will rule. Other federal statutes also limit dismissal, and many state statutes offer employment protection along similar lines.

The federal government and the states have provided a cause of action to at-will employees dismissed for specific reasons, but the legislatures have generally not altered the employment-at-will default rule. Only Montana has a statute that mandates a just-cause presumption, and recovery under the statute appears to be fairly limited. Courts, however, have been much more active, and most states now recognize at least one of three exceptions to the at-will rule.

Public Policy Exception

In 1959, California became the first state to recognize a common-law exception to employment at will, in *Petermann v. International Brotherhood of Teamsters*. Petermann, an employee of the Teamster's Union, sued for wrongful termination, alleging that he had been fired because he refused to perjure himself for his employer's benefit. The union claimed that there were no grounds for recovery because Petermann was an at-will employee, and the trial court agreed. The appellate court reversed, declaring that some terminations are limited by public policy considerations. The court relied heavily on the fact that perjury is illegal.

Roughly 42 states have recognized the public policy exception. Most of the claims involve some sort of

illegal action on the part of the employer. Many states require that the public at large be affected by the motive behind the discharge or that the employee was trying to assert a statutory or constitutional right. For example, courts have held that the exception applies when the discharge resulted from the refusal to participate in a price-fixing scheme, the assertion of workmen's compensation claims, or complaints to the employer about inappropriately labeled products. It should be noted that many states have codified at least part of the public policy exception in the form of so-called whistleblower statutes. For example, New York courts reject the public policy exception, but New York has a very narrowly tailored whistle-blower statute.

Because it relies on particularly egregious conduct, the public policy exception is limited in scope. Two much more important exceptions sprang into existence in the 1970s and 1980s: the good-faith exception and the implied-contract exception.

Good-faith Exception

Courts will read a "duty of good faith" into most commercial relationships, mainly as a weapon against opportunistic behavior by one party. It is interesting, then, that only 11 states have accepted good-faith limitations to the doctrine of employment at will.

The paradigmatic case here is one in which an employee is terminated prior to the receipt of a bonus or a commission. For example, in the case of *Fortune vs. National Cash Register* in 1977, the Massachusetts Supreme Court held that it was a violation of an implied agreement of good faith when an at-will salesman was terminated after making a large sale for which he would have received a commission. Thus, the good-faith exception focuses on whether or not the termination was opportunistic—an attempt to prevent the employee from obtaining benefits to which he or she would have been entitled had he or she remained employed. (As a side note, federal statutory claims may exist for a termination motivated by a pension vesting.)

Implied-contract Exception

Perhaps the most important exception to the employment-at-will rule is the implied-contract exception, which is recognized in 42 states to varying degrees. Under the exception, courts will allow the statements in employee handbooks, oral assurances of employment, and even the conduct of the parties, such

as an employee declining other job opportunities, to constitute evidence of a just-cause relationship. Prior to the exception, these factors, even though not in dispute, would have been insufficient to rebut the presumption of employment at will.

Of course, state courts vary in how willing they are to recognize the implied-contract exception. For example, California courts tend to construe the evidence liberally to find an implied contract. On the other hand, New York courts emphasize that the implied-contract exception is narrow, requiring that an employee handbook contain a clear just-cause provision and that the employee relied on that provision in some way, for example, by leaving his or her previous job.

Damages

In general, contract damages are limited to the value of the contract itself (the so-called expectation interest). Thus, under the implied-contract exception, employees may receive the value of back wages and benefits plus interest, as well as the going-forward loss caused by the termination, known as *front pay*. The law requires that the employee mitigate by trying to find comparable employment, and if the employee finds a comparable job, his or her recovery may well be limited to back wages and benefits. Front-pay awards are also subject to attack as being too speculative, and courts have reduced them accordingly.

On the other hand, courts have often characterized the public policy exception as a tort action. A tort is an action that exists independent of a contractual obligation; thus, the characterization of the action as a tort helps the court avoid the at-will designation. In tort, back pay and front pay are available, as well as punitive damages and pain and suffering. In some states, claims under the good-faith exception may proceed in contract or tort, depending on the factual situation. Others, such as California, have limited tort claims to public policy exceptions.

EMPLOYER RESPONSE TO EXCEPTIONS TO THE AT-WILL RULE

Employers are famously sensitive to employment litigation, and the at-will rule provides them with cover. On its face, the implied-contract exception is easiest for employers to get around, because they may simply require workers to sign at-will statements or insert at-will provisions into employee handbooks.

Almost all contract rules are simply default provisions from which the parties may contract out. Survey evidence indicates that over half of all employers insert at-will provisions into handbooks or other writings such as offer letters.

Such alterations do not amount to blanket protection for employers, however, if courts allow later oral assurances or conduct of the parties to trump the handbook provisions. In addition, courts have split over whether an employee hired under a just-cause handbook can later be turned into an at-will employee when the handbook is amended to include an at-will provision. Employers can limit their liability to some extent by providing severance packages in consideration for an employee's waiver of legal claims. Arbitration clauses in employment contracts have also become increasingly popular and are generally enforced.

Employers can also respond by decreasing their use of labor or favoring states that have stronger at-will presumptions. Law and economics scholars have provided evidence that this has, indeed, happened. Among the findings are that in states that adopt at-will exceptions, employers retain current workers longer and offer lower wages to new workers; employers hire more temporary help employees; and there is slower employment growth. These findings are all consistent with the argument that exceptions to the at-will rule make employers less likely to both hire and discharge workers. As with many employment protections, they benefit those currently with jobs; those on the outside are damaged. The implied-contract and good-faith exceptions are the most salient in these studies. The public policy exception is generally found to have little or no effect, which is not surprising given its limited scope.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYEES

Employment at will is widely regarded as a harsh doctrine because it leaves the employee with little recourse in the courts. To escape this doctrine, an employee must have a statutory claim or meet the burden of demonstrating that he or she fits an exception. A few states do not recognize any exceptions, and others have very narrow exceptions. In addition, survey evidence indicates that the rule comes as a surprise to most workers, who have very different understandings of their legal rights. Some have argued that courts should flip the default rule and presume employment for just cause or revert to the old English rule. Employers could

still contract for an at-will labor force; they would just have to place employees on notice by explicitly stating that the relationship is at will.

There is a contrary view, however, that argues that the law is fairly unimportant to the employment relationship. First, employees do not in general rely on legal protections. Indeed, even when employees have well-known statutory protections, as in the case of Title VII, the conventional wisdom is that they are hesitant to assert these rights. Second, the market disciplines employers who dismiss workers (or permit supervisors to dismiss workers) arbitrarily. They lose valuable employees. They face the cost of replacing employees. They demoralize their workforces, making other employees more likely to leave. Third, America's consistently low unemployment rate provides a built-in protection for workers. When they are dismissed unfairly, they are likely to find new work, which makes it harder for employers to replace good workers with those equally qualified.

Whether the market's regulation may be improved on is a tricky issue. For example, there may be times when the benefits to firing an employee for a bad reason are large enough to overcome the market-imposed costs of such an action. Consider again the example case of the dismissal of an employee prior to a large pension or bonus vesting. Even more complicated are cases of so-called implicit labor contracts, in which the employer offers lower wages at the start of employment but high seniority-based pay later on. These contracts are offered in the hopes of retaining workers and encouraging good performance. The extra effort and retention are valuable to the employer, who gets a more productive workforce and saves training and recruiting costs. Even though the employer profits from this deal over time, longtime employees may eventually earn more than they are currently "worth" to the firm (similar to the case of dismissal motivated by a pension vesting). The firm has an incentive to terminate this employment opportunistically. Some have argued that the regulation of such arrangements is a justification for limiting the at-will rule. But any of these benefits must be weighed against the empirical evidence that alterations to the rule make employers less willing to hire, which in the long run is not good for employees.

CONCLUSION

The doctrine of employment at will remains surprisingly intact, even after the creation of many

important statutory and judge-made exceptions. After the revisions to the rule during the 1970s and 1980s, many predicted its demise. In the end, the nineteenth-century doctrine, though modified, appears to have survived into the twenty-first century, and it remains a distinguishing feature of the U.S. labor market.

—Max Schanzenbach

See also Age discrimination, Employment contracts, Wrongful dismissal

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EMPOWERMENT

One of the most frequently discussed topics in contemporary management literature is the notion of employee empowerment. *Empowerment* is generally taken to mean the delegation of decision-making authority and responsibility to lower-level employees

in a process of directed authority. However, this traditional top-down approach to empowerment is no longer viable, as the shift to a knowledge service economy in the United States, as elsewhere, gives rise to the growing transformation of twenty-first-century workplaces. Emerging knowledge services, such as business-to-business services, high-tech, medical/health care, advertising/marketing/public relations, accounting/financial services, engineering services, management consulting, legal services, educational services, and the like constitute the most rapidly expanding segment of the labor force. The movement to knowledge services has had a profound impact on the nature of work and the people who work within these organizations. In a very real way, the shift to a knowledge service economy has given rise to the “professionalization” of workplace and the structural empowerment of people who work within these organizations. Structural empowerment, unlike traditional approaches to empowerment, is customer- and client-centered empowerment in which the decision-making prerogative of employees, along with the discretion to act on their own, is market driven.

The fundamental unit of production in knowledge service organizations is the direct relationship between service employees and their customers or clients through which a product or service is delivered. This is called the *customer alliance*, a partnership or collaboration between knowledge-intensive organizations and their customers for generating problem solutions and mutual gain. Customers have important roles to play in these organizations and have long been recognized as “partial” employees. The notion of worker empowerment is at the core of customer alliances in knowledge-based services because it makes it possible for the organization to more effectively utilize the customer’s contribution and thus increase the quality of services produced.

There is an ongoing dialogue in both academic and popular press concerning the so-called empowerment of employees. This issue is particularly important in knowledge-based services, in which employees in direct encounter with customers are often required to perform as independent decision units in the generation of responses or solutions to customer priorities. The delegation of structural empowerment has traditionally been used to provide frontline employees with the authority for spontaneous, creative activities that are often required in high-involvement customer relationships. Much is known about this type of

formal employee empowerment in organizations. There is increasing recent attention, however, to the nature of empowerment in customer alliances that emerge outside the formal authority structure and how knowledge service employees actually empower themselves to more effectively render quality problem solutions to customers and contribute to organizational effectiveness.

THE NATURE OF CUSTOMER ALLIANCES

The output of knowledge services emerges from transactions or exchanges between customers and service employees, often referred to as *engagement personnel*. These relationships are coordinated efforts by both parties in the exchange of resources to generate solutions to customer problems or strategic priorities. For the customer, an adequate, or better, exchange would include satisfaction with the solutions rendered; for the knowledge worker, a satisfactory exchange might include direct payment, a sense of accomplishment, or the generation of new knowledge to the organization. Since valued resources are being exchanged and allocated between the knowledge worker and the customer for mutual gain, the exchange is anchored in a market context.

Implicit in the exchange of resources between knowledge workers or engagement personnel and customers is a social and psychological contract, which consists of a set of mutual expectations involving the rights and obligations of the participants. From this perspective, customer alliances in knowledge-based services can be meaningfully explored through what are generally called *agency relationships*; that is, customers of knowledge service organizations engage workers in performing deeds on their behalf and also give the workers the right or authority to act on the customers’ behalf.

KNOWLEDGE WORKER EMPOWERMENT

It has long been acknowledged that customers perform salient roles in service operations. In recognition of the important task activities performed by customers in knowledge services, it has been argued that these participants should be included within the boundaries of organizations as “partial” or temporary employees. Such an inclusion within the boundaries of the organization, however, renders customers’ roles essential but subordinate to the knowledge workers or

engagement personnel with whom they directly interact in the alliance.

The customer's subordinate position is primarily based on customer alliances being viewed, as previously noted, as agency relationships, in which clients delegate some decision-making authority to knowledge service workers or engagement personnel. This kind of relationship is a germane and unique feature of knowledge service organizations. Fundamentally, the customer in knowledge-based services hires the service worker or engagement personnel and delegates to the engagement personnel the responsibility for gathering and processing information for generating solutions to customer problems or needs. In so doing, the customer surrenders a delimited set of rights to the knowledge service employee. This process is an important form of employee empowerment because it is thought to provide a framework that encourages employees to exercise initiative, spontaneity, and imagination. Consequently, within knowledge service customer alliances, there is a disparity in status between the customer and the knowledge service employee or engagement personnel based largely on the greater legitimate power or right to make decisions bestowed on the employee by the customer. Further disparity in status may also emerge from the unique body of expertise or knowledge possessed by the empowered worker.

It seems clear that engagement personnel in customer alliances not only are boundary spanners for the firm but also, more important, represent first-line managers for the organization, assisting in the coordination and control of customer activities. Thus, customers enter into the service boundaries as "temporary" members of these organizations and become the responsibility of knowledge service employees.

It is also recognized that knowledge service employees are empowered by an employment contract when they join work organizations. This empowerment is tied to the formal authority structure that would entail, among others things, the governance of customers. As partial members of the organization, however, customers cannot be completely under the jurisdiction of the firm or its representative, the engagement personnel. Exclusive reliance on traditional structural empowerment would restrict the employee's ability to manage customers effectively, because the empowerment of an employee emerging from the employment contract may often be at odds with the "market-based" empowerment provided by the customer. Market- or customer-based authority is a primary

source of employee empowerment in knowledge-based service organizations. The paramount issue for engagement personnel in these services is managing the customer alliance within a market authority: an empowerment structure that is customer provided and thus outside the traditional empowerment structure inherent in the employment contract.

ESSENTIALS OF MARKET-BASED EMPOWERMENT

To a significant degree, knowledge workers in customer alliances are "mini-factories" because they are in a unique position to simultaneously produce and deliver their problem solutions to customers. Engagement personnel in knowledge-based service organizations are thus in possession of resources simply because they occupy formal and informal positions within these organizations. Whereas the traditional structural empowerment in organizations is widely viewed as top-down delegation of decisional power to employees, market- or customer-based empowerment is a bottom-up approach to worker empowerment. In customer-driven empowerment, employees accumulate resources and rights to act in the customer's best interest. In consultation with the customer, employees jointly create services or solutions to problems in order to add value to the organization. Customer-empowered workers, unlike traditionally empowered employees, generally make claims over a unique body of expertise, knowledge, and skills that confers on them the right to develop solutions to problems. Equipped with empowerment from the customer alliance, engagement personnel are capable of interpreting knowledge and rules, as opposed to merely applying them. This is essential for generating creative solutions for customer needs in knowledge-based service organizations. Furthermore, customer-driven empowerment makes it possible for workers to engage in continuous learning and development in service organizations, with specific features for service excellence.

An important component of customer-driven employee empowerment in knowledge services is the potential for workers to engage in laterality. *Laterality* means the lateral interests of the customer, entailing the various aspects of the customer as a total product that have to be addressed by engagement personnel in order to render quality services. For example, teachers may have to take into account students' emotional states and their physical, environmental, and financial

situations because these factors might affect the learning process; brokers in a financial planning organization might need to consider not only the customer's financial status but also factors such as the client's physical health condition, familial situation, desires, consumption patterns, and personal relationships because these factors may affect the quality and effectiveness of long-term investments, insurance, or other services.

As the knowledge service worker's laterality in the customer increases, a greater variety of alternative solutions will be possible. Empowerment bestowed on the employee by the customer suggests that the employee in these services is capable of determining the activities that can be performed legitimately in acting in the customer's interest and modifying the rules when necessary. Worker empowerment within this context represents the acquisition of resources, mainly knowledge, and opportunities required or desired by employees in rendering solutions to customers.

To a great extent, market-based or customer-driven empowerment is a loose understanding of or psychological contract around a set of rights that is bestowed by the customer on engagement personnel in customer alliances. In knowledge-based service organizations, customers are sometimes unable to establish the quality and quantity of solutions. This may lead to reducing contract specificity and providing knowledge service workers with a relatively open contract. The existence of customer authority, as a dimension of customer alliances, transforms engagement personnel activities to sanctioned efforts that are undertaken in the interest of the customer. Customer authority of this kind, therefore, gives rise to empowerment and creates the potential for control gained by the knowledge service worker in a boundary-spanning role. Thus, by right and by the resources possessed, engagement personnel in customer alliances occupy an elevated empowered position in role and in stature relative to other employees in knowledge service organizations.

Customer- or market-based employee empowerment arises out of uncertainty surrounding the generation of solutions to customer needs. Customers' central role in the uncertainty issue of worker empowerment occurs in response to their difficulties in measuring performance outcomes. While empowered knowledge employees may be certain about the appropriateness of their actions in addressing a customer's needs, they may be uncertain as to how that

customer will value their performance. In knowledge-based services, customers might have difficulty evaluating the worth of activities performed by engagement personnel. Under these circumstances, both the employee and the customers implement mechanisms to understand and gauge the effort and performance of others and their intent in the generation of solutions. Customers may invoke their authority, inherent in their hiring rights, to align the interests of empowered workers and reduce potential opportunism in customer alliances. Thus, customer- or market-based authority focuses on the effects of empowerment, not the causes.

CONTROLLING EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT

In customer-based empowerment, knowledge service employees are advantaged as to the potential opportunities and threats in achieving the optimum solutions to customers' priorities. Empowered employees may be certain about efficiency or the appropriateness of their performance or efforts, but they may be uncertain as to how the customer values such performance. An important question is "What control mechanisms are there to maintain the stability of a customer alliance?"

The misuse of empowerment can be tempered by mutual agreement between the participants on certain solutions or outcomes. Clients, for example, may base the effectiveness of their lawyers on contingent arrangements, in which lawyers receive bonuses if the litigation is successful. The lawyer has a vested interest in the outcome and all the consequences ensuing directly or indirectly from the compliance with the client. Given the emphasis on examining the effects of empowerment in customer alliances, this approach of contracting on the outcome establishes a framework for reducing goal incongruence while fostering the accumulation of resources for both the customer and the knowledge service employee. Within this context, both parties would be empowered. By sharing in the outcome, the employee will be motivated because the outcome creates an incentive to be efficient on activities he or she can most efficiently control. Thus, by having a vested interest in the outcome, empowered employees will be less motivated to exploit their advantages.

Several other mechanisms are employed by knowledge services that may serve to temper risks in potential market- or customer-based empowerment: monitoring, bonding, and the normative system. Monitoring

activities are undertaken by customers to reduce the loss of utility. They entail costs as customers attempt to gather and process information about employees' abilities to adhere to expected contractual agreements. As an example, students often seek information on instructors before signing up for a class.

Bonding activities are undertaken by empowered service workers to assure customers of some minimum level of performance and reduce the perception that they are taking advantage of their position. Bonding activities supplant the need for the customer to engage in monitoring engagement personnel. Typical bonding activities include those associated with obtaining credentials (e.g., certification for completing training programs, awards for outstanding performance, advanced degrees) and guarantees. The reputation of the knowledge worker emerges as an important credibility factor and serves as a bonding mechanism. It gives customers some idea of how to evaluate the potential performance of employees and the amount of probable risk that they are assuming.

A third important mechanism that serves to temper customer- or market-based empowerment is the organization's constitution. This is the value system within the organization consisting of a set of rules, which, over time, evolves into an ethical code of acceptable or unacceptable behavior. The organization's constitution serves to monitor and guarantee the integrity of customer alliances.

CONCLUSION

Traditionally, there has been an overemphasis on empowering service employees through formal organization authority. The organization gives the frontline employee in direct encounter with customers a voice in how they believe activities should be performed. Although such formal mechanisms may provide knowledge service workers the autonomy to make decisions that may influence organizational direction and performance, such organizational mechanisms present only a partial or truncated perspective on knowledge service employee empowerment.

This entry has addressed the issue of empowerment of first-line engagement personnel in knowledge-based service organizations from the perspective of how employees empower themselves. A fundamental assumption of the discussion is that an alliance between customers and engagement personnel is crucial to the generation of solutions in knowledge

service organizations. Customer alliances exist to facilitate the exchange and distribution of resources necessary for the development of solutions to customer needs and strategic priorities. Rather than focusing on the empowerment of employees through the delegation of authority from the organization, this analysis has concentrated on the effects of empowerment that emerge from the customer's authority and are outside the formal organization authority structure.

—Peter K. Mills

See also Job challenge, Job design, Job sharing, Knowledge work, Self-leadership

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship is the recognition and exploitation of market opportunities. Recognizing that an opportunity exists is not enough; to be entrepreneurial involves the pursuit of that opportunity. Therefore, being an entrepreneur involves both cognition and behavior. As a state of mind, entrepreneurship is valuable within existing organizations as well as in the

establishment of new ventures. Sometimes referred to as *creative destruction*, entrepreneurship has been viewed as the engine of progress in capitalistic societies and is inseparably linked to innovation and competitive advantage. Evidence of the importance of entrepreneurship exists in public policy initiatives that encourage new business development and also within established organizations that actively encourage the development and pursuit of new opportunities.

Entrepreneurs possess the ability to identify and capitalize on opportunities to start new business ventures, whereas *intrapreneurs* apply these same skills to venture creation within an existing organization. Often when one speaks of entrepreneurs, images of individuals such as Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, and Donald Trump come to mind. Yet in reality, these cases are more the exception than the rule. In fact, research has shown that it is virtually impossible to “stereotype” the typical entrepreneur. What is common to entrepreneurs is their proclivity to recognize and capitalize on market opportunities. Not all entrepreneurs become successful, rich, and famous. What prompts some people but not others to become entrepreneurs and what makes some people but not all successful have intrigued businesspeople and academics alike. The past 10 years have seen a proliferation of research dedicated specifically to understanding entrepreneurs and their careers.

Distinguishing characteristics that separate entrepreneurs from nonentrepreneurs is an important part of gaining an understanding of entrepreneurship as a career. Initially, these efforts included studies of demographic characteristics and personality traits. Demographic characteristics thought to distinguish entrepreneurs from others include socioeconomic indicators, educational background, and influences in an individual’s family of origin (e.g., parents/siblings owned businesses). In general, entrepreneurs tend to come from middle- to upper-class families with one or more parent considered an entrepreneur, self-employed, or owning his or her own business. Educational levels and backgrounds of entrepreneurs vary, and therefore the role that education plays in entrepreneurial career choice is inconclusive.

Other research focused on individual traits, such as need for achievement, need for autonomy, internal locus of control (individuals who believe they have control over their own lives), gender identity (masculinity versus femininity), proactive personality (individuals who take action to influence their environments), risk-taking

propensity, and tolerance for ambiguity. While some entrepreneurs are likely to exhibit some of these personality traits, there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that only entrepreneurs exhibit these traits, and therefore personality traits alone do not seem to distinguish entrepreneurs from others.

More recent research suggests that some people become entrepreneurs not because they have distinct traits but because they perceive situations and opportunities differently than others perceive them. More specifically, cognitive factors for entrepreneurs differ from those of nonentrepreneurs. Although there are many cognitive factors that affect thinking, in particular the perception of risk, several specific cognitive biases have been suggested to influence risk perception as they relate to entrepreneurs: overconfidence, illusion of control, and belief in the law of small numbers.

Overconfidence is the belief that one knows all there is to know about a particular topic. Recent research has shown that entrepreneurs may be more susceptible to overconfidence than are other individuals and are more optimistic in their assessments of business situations. Overconfident individuals are less likely to perceive risk in business situations because they believe they know what they need to know. More specifically, entrepreneurs are more likely than nonentrepreneurs to overestimate the accuracy of their predictions of uncertain events. For example, new competitors surface even in the mature, uncertain environment of the airline industry because entrepreneurs believe they have an inside understanding of how the industry works.

Illusion of control refers to an overestimation of one’s skills in situations and a belief that one’s skills can control outcomes. Like overconfidence, an illusion of control also decreases risk perception. This suggests that individuals starting ventures might not acknowledge that certain factors important to a venture’s success are beyond their control. Individuals who believe that their skills are the primary determinant of the success of their businesses have strong illusions of control.

Belief in the law of small numbers occurs when an individual uses a limited number of informational inputs (a small sample of information) to draw firm conclusions. Some entrepreneurs have a tendency to use limited information in decision making. Entrepreneurs typically find themselves in circumstances of information overload, high uncertainty, novel situations, strong emotions, time pressure, and

fatigue. In dealing with these tense circumstances, entrepreneurs may (a) focus on limited amounts of information to gain support for risky actions and (b) focus on recent success stories or positive outcomes that relate to the situation at hand. Generalizing from a small sample can effectively reduce the perception of risk for a particular opportunity.

In addition to the personal characteristics that help explain why some individuals become entrepreneurs and others do not, a number of career factors also play into this phenomenon. Entrepreneurs prefer to be innovative or to accomplish something new. In addition, they are intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. Intrinsic rewards such as autonomy, personal challenge, learning and growth, and the ability to influence organizations are appealing to entrepreneurs. Extrinsically, financial independence and success, status, and recognition drive individuals to choose entrepreneurial careers.

In general, individuals often choose careers they believe will match their talents, skills, abilities, needs, and preferences. For example, individuals who believe they have strong analytical skills and prefer to work with numbers seek jobs or careers that allow them to do so. Entrepreneurs are no exception. Many entrepreneurs attribute their prior work experience as a major influence on their desire to start new ventures. A major drive for many entrepreneurs is the desire to create something new. Therefore, entrepreneurs are likely to seek opportunities to explore and nurture their preferences for creating new products, services, or businesses.

The image of an entrepreneur as a rugged individualist who forges his or her own path is another myth about entrepreneurship. One key and consistent research finding is that networks are critical to entrepreneurs and to the success of new ventures. Networks and the social capital inherent in them are essential to entrepreneurship. Social capital, sometimes referred to as *network resources*, consists of the goodwill that can be obtained from the web of relationships developed by individuals and can be mobilized to facilitate action. Social capital theory proposes that networks of relationships are a valuable resource for the conduct of social affairs and economic action. It has been applied to individuals, familial relationships, communities, and organizations. Social capital is a resource that brings a higher rate of return on investments and creates an advantage by fostering entrepreneurial opportunities for some and not for others.

Not only do individual, personal, historical, and psychological factors influence the decision to become an entrepreneur, but contextual factors also contribute to this type of career. In the following sections, we describe two categories of entrepreneurship that derive from both individual characteristics and environmental circumstances: *serial entrepreneurs* and *second-career entrepreneurs*.

Although the concept of serial entrepreneurs has come into greater prominence in the past few years, certainly there have always been particular groups of people who are seemingly addicted to starting one business after another. Recently, however, with the prominence of venture capital firms and the popularity of start-ups, particularly in the technology sector, more individuals are getting into business with the idea that they will exit sooner, rather than later, and start other businesses. Serial entrepreneurship is an identifiable occurrence and extends into many different industries. Approximately 43 percent of the chief executives of current Inc. 500 companies indicate their intentions to start other companies after they leave the ones they are running now.

Some make the distinction between serial entrepreneurs and *portfolio entrepreneurs*. The former group of people creates and becomes involved in a business; that is, they manage it, improve it, sell it, and then move on to another business, whereas the latter group operates several businesses simultaneously.

Despite the semantic distinction, both types of entrepreneurs get tremendous personal satisfaction out of taking an idea to market and making it happen. They are more devoted to the creation of something than to the actual business idea. Once they establish a new venture, it is almost as though boredom sets in and they are ready for the next challenge. Serial entrepreneurs focus on the creation of something new. They possess the drive to overcome obstacles, the readiness to take risks, and the need for personal prominence in whatever is accomplished.

Second-career entrepreneurs are sometimes referred to as *older entrepreneurs*, *senior entrepreneurs*, and *third-age entrepreneurs*. All terms refer to individuals who decide to start their own companies after they have been employees for most of their professional lives. Demographic profiles in the United States point to the fact that the number of individuals between the age of 45 and 64 will grow significantly by the year 2006. Many of these people will likely begin new ventures in this life stage. A recent survey

of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) found that 80 percent of this group planned to work beyond retirement age and 17 percent intended to start their own businesses.

Corporate layoffs, shifting values (i.e., flexibility in working hours to pursue family obligations and/or nonwork interests) and rising life expectancy have contributed to this phenomenon. Aside from these specific factors, reaching midlife is historically a time of change for people, and the midlife transition often spurs adults to change careers. Individuals reach midlife and realize that the dreams and passions of youth have been subjugated to economic obligations and early career choices. Facing the reality that they still have half a lifetime to live provides individuals with the courage to venture out on their own and pursue their passions and interests. Many of these individuals launch their ventures from their homes.

Technology has facilitated a proliferation of home-based businesses to accommodate the lifestyles of second-career entrepreneurs. Powerful software applications combined with the Internet technology have allowed home-based businesses to compete with larger firms. Home offices can be furnished and wired for under \$5,000, a relatively small amount for starting a new venture. The Internet allows for reaching a potentially global customer base that brings home-based businesses into a competitive realm. While second-career entrepreneurs (like first-career and serial entrepreneurs) are most often men, the proportion of self-employed women increases from 6 percent among women age 25 to 54, to 9 percent among women age 55 to 64, and 16 percent for employed women 65 and older. Since women are more likely to be primary caretakers of children, they have in the past, been less likely to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities until reaching midlife.

In the United States, this trend seems to be changing. Many younger women, particularly those with school-age children, are giving up corporate jobs to start home-based businesses. These career choices are a response to the “glass ceiling” in the corporate world and the need for more flexible work arrangements. More than likely, many more women will become second-career entrepreneurs much earlier in life than did their older counterparts.

As of 2002, women were responsible for 6.5 million businesses in the United States, a 20 percent increase since 1997. The current state of women’s business ownership in the United States is quite

strong. The number of women-owned businesses continues to grow at twice the rate of all U.S. firms, and these firms are increasing in economic influence. One in 18 women in the United States is a business owner. Prior to 2002, most of the companies started by women were in the service sector, including industries such as health care, professional services, real estate, and finance. Since 2002, women-owned businesses have been expanding into nontraditional industries, such as construction, manufacturing, agriculture, and transportation. Growth rates are higher than average among women-owned firms with \$1 million or more in sales and 100 or more employees. Ongoing studies that focus on the characteristics of women entrepreneurs indicate that women take substantial business risks, use technology to achieve growth, and seek advice from multiple sources.

Despite the remarkable growth in women-owned businesses, most women-owned firms are very small—with no employees or fewer than 10 employees—and continue to face challenges, including access to capital, access to markets, access to training and technical assistance, access to networks, and the need for legitimacy, in other words, to be taken seriously as business owners, employers, and contributors to economic growth.

Minorities are another fast-growing group of U.S. entrepreneurs. Sometimes starting businesses as a response to the glass ceiling encountered in corporate America, minority entrepreneurs account for 3.9 million businesses, or 14 percent of the total number of businesses in the United States. Of this number, 39.5 percent of businesses are Hispanic owned; 30.0 percent are Asian owned; 27.1 percent are African American owned; and 6.5 percent are Native American owned. Most Hispanic-owned businesses are in administration and support, waste management, health care, and construction industries. African American ventures are primarily health care, retail, and other service-type businesses.

Challenges of minority entrepreneurs are similar to those of women, with limited access to financial resources being the number 1 reason for minority business failures. Most minority business owners seek financing through family rather than seeking commercial capital opportunities. With the entrepreneurial landscape changing, women and minority entrepreneurs are more able to rely on role models and mentors who can offer access to financial and market resources. As with the factors that influence second-career entrepreneurs, the Internet, because it tends to be

gender and race neutral, has opened markets and opportunities to minority and women entrepreneurs that were previously closed.

Like the American economy, the economy of the European Union relies heavily on the “creative destruction” of entrepreneurship as it continues to evolve toward more capitalistic principles. Small-and medium-sized enterprises (i.e., employing 10 or fewer employees) constitute 90 percent of the private businesses in Europe (28 countries of the European Economic Area plus candidate countries to the European Union). The challenges of underrepresented populations of entrepreneurs (women, ethnic minorities, and young people) in Europe are similar to those faced by their American counterparts. Government-sponsored programs that help encourage and fund women and minorities with small businesses are in place in Europe, as they are in the United States.

Finally, no discussion of entrepreneurship would be complete without a description of *social entrepreneurs*. A social entrepreneur crafts innovative, long-term solutions to social problems. Just as traditional entrepreneurs create and transform whole industries, social entrepreneurs act as societal change agents, recognizing and exploiting opportunities others miss in order to advance sustainable solutions that create social value. Unlike traditional entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs primarily seek to generate “social value” rather than profits. And unlike the work of the majority of nonprofit organizations, their work targets long-term reform rather than small-scale change.

The concept of social entrepreneurship has been in existence for a long time but has recently reached a new level of prominence as a field of study and career choice. The social sector has increasingly relied on the business skills of entrepreneurs to increase awareness and generate funding. Mission-based businesses have traditionally been nonprofit organizations. The marriage of solid entrepreneurial principles and the need to effect sweeping societal change have resulted in the transformation of many societies, particularly in developing nations. The trend to making money and contributing to the social good continues to increase, and as it does, so will career opportunities for social entrepreneurs.

In sum, entrepreneurship as a career alternative is becoming more and more popular across age, gender, and ethnic origin. Being an entrepreneur is not limited to certain personality types or stereotypes; there is possibly an entrepreneurial spirit in all of us. As the global economy grows and changes, there are more and more opportunities for individuals to become entrepreneurs and

adopt careers that fit their lifestyles. Entrepreneurship is a vital part of any national economy.

—Donna M. DeCarolis and Barrie E. Litzky

See also Copreneurship, Gender and careers, Glass ceiling, Social capital

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ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS

Awareness has been defined as a relatively complete and accurate perception of individuals’ qualities and the characteristics of their environments. It can be of two types: self-awareness and environment awareness. *Self-awareness* refers to the realistic and accurate perception of one’s interests, values, skills, limitations, and lifestyle preferences. *Environment awareness* has been characterized as the accurate and realistic perception of opportunities, constraints, and challenges relevant to the individual’s work and family environment. The two types of awareness are important for successful career development and career decision making.

Both self-awareness and environment awareness are closely interlinked and share a variety of common stimuli that trigger the process of self-exploration and environment exploration. For example, self-assessments

and environment assessments are triggered when individuals experience greater ambiguity about environmental demands, such as those brought on by organizational or job changes or by other evolutionary life changes. Furthermore, the two types of assessment have been identified as important components of the self-regulation process that enable individuals to achieve their personal, organizational, and career goals. In this respect, these assessments may be driven by individuals' curiosity, self-determination, and other volitional processes. Finally, there are a number of barriers to effective exploratory behavior common to both self-assessments and environment assessments. Hence, to get a true picture of the role of environment awareness in career development, it is important to first discuss the relationship between self-awareness and environment awareness.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-AWARENESS AND ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS

It has been suggested that there is a reciprocal relationship between self-awareness and environment awareness. For example, the more individuals understand themselves, the more likely it is that certain insights about jobs, organizations, or occupations will become relevant to them. Similarly, the greater the amount of information gathered about the different facets of one's work environment, the greater the likelihood of its triggering insights about one's values, lifestyle preferences, and personal aspirations. It has been acknowledged that the process of gaining self-insight can often be fragmented and that it may be advisable to engage in environmental exploration before the task of self-analysis can be deemed complete.

Furthermore, it is believed that self-exploratory activities influence the direction of environment exploration, because individuals' careers are embedded in the larger context of jobs, organizations, and occupations. Self-awareness provides the framework for engaging in environment exploration. Thus, individuals' awareness of interests, values, abilities, and lifestyle preferences guides their search for information regarding potential occupations, organizations, and jobs.

IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS IN CAREER DECISION MAKING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Awareness plays a central role in numerous theories of career decision making, career development,

and career management. The study of both self-awareness and environment awareness is rooted in the concept of career exploration. *Career exploration* has been defined as the collection and analysis of information on a variety of career-related issues. Career exploration is oriented toward providing information about oneself, such as values, interests and talents, as well as providing information about different aspects of one's environment, such as occupations, jobs, organizations, and families. Career exploration is oriented toward helping individuals develop a greater awareness of themselves and their environment so they can establish realistic career goals and be prepared for career changes and disruptions whenever they occur. The need to be prepared for and adapt to rapidly changing work conditions is especially critical in managing a "boundaryless" career.

It has been noted that individual careers are increasingly characterized by a variety of transitions, such as involuntary job losses, lateral movement within and across organizational boundaries, and career interruptions. Furthermore, scholars have acknowledged that individual careers are no longer confined or "bounded" to a single organization and instead are characterized by membership and experiences that span across organizational, functional, and job boundaries—hallmarks of a boundaryless career.

Just as the nature of careers has undergone a fundamental paradigm shift, so have the criteria that define career development and success. It has been argued that career development and success in such a competitive, unstable, and volatile work environment calls for increased levels of awareness and skills. Researchers have emphasized that individuals need to continually learn about themselves and their environments and expand their personal identities to succeed in today's rapidly changing workplaces. It has been shown that individuals oriented toward learning are likely to seek additional career-relevant information that helps them become aware of their developmental needs, engage in organizationally sponsored developmental activities, and avoid becoming plateaued in their jobs.

Other researchers have investigated the role of environment awareness in terms of the "knowing why" competencies that individuals need to possess for effective career decision making and management. "Knowing why" competencies refer to individuals' motivational energy for understanding themselves, exploring different possibilities, and adapting to constantly changing work conditions. These competencies have been found to be associated with perceived

career success and individuals' beliefs that they are valuable to their employers.

Awareness has also been identified as a critical component of effective career decision making and career management. Effective career decisions are preceded by thorough exploration of oneself and various facets of one's environment, which is reflected in self-awareness and environment awareness. Likewise, the literature on career indecision suggests that a lack of self-awareness and environment awareness may lead to a state of indecision.

The underlying assumption in career decision-making and development theories has been that the better people understand themselves and their work environments, the more likely they are to make career decisions that are compatible with their needs, values, interests, and talents, that is, decisions that reflect a high level of person-job fit. In other words, people need to be cognizant of their abilities, values, and beliefs as well as the demands, opportunities, and constraints of their environments—the dimensions of self-awareness and environment awareness—to achieve a better fit between themselves and their work environments. Research has also borne out the view that individuals, over the course of their various employment experiences, try to seek out jobs that are compatible with their interests, values, and abilities, that is, jobs that reflect good person-environment fit. Compatibility between the person and the work environment has important implications for individuals' career development. For instance, person-environment fit has been found to be positively associated with job satisfaction, organizational tenure, and career success.

In sum, environment awareness plays a critical role in helping individuals make optimum career decisions and successfully develop and manage their career plans. The next section highlights various facets of one's environment that are particularly important for environmental exploration.

ENVIRONMENT FACETS RELEVANT FOR EXPLORATION

Many facets of an individual's environment need to be explored and understood to develop a comprehensive sense of environment awareness. The specific aspects of the environment that need to be explored depend on individuals' particular life situations, the career development tasks they need to address, and their salient life roles. Combinations of these factors

determine the extent of exploration engaged in and the types of resources that will be helpful in building individuals' environment awareness. In addition, it has been noted that self-insight is critical in directing this exploratory behavior. Unless individuals have sufficient self-insight and ask themselves the right questions, they will not be effective in utilizing various environmental resources to gain the requisite environment awareness.

The literature on career development and career management has identified four facets of an individual's environment as being particularly important for environmental exploration and building environment awareness: occupations, organizations, jobs, and families. These facets are closely interlinked, and learning about one dimension often leads to insights about other dimensions. However, not all facets of one's environment need to be explored to the same degree; the relevance of a facet depends on the type of career decision that the individual has to make. For example, an individual contemplating a midcareer change will need to explore various organizations as well as alternative occupational fields. The following section describes different aspects of an individual's environment and their relevance for enhancing environment awareness.

Occupational Exploration

Scholars have defined an *occupation* as a group of similar jobs found in several organizations. These jobs share a certain set of unique requirements and rewards that serve to distinguish them from other jobs in other occupations. To explore an occupational environment, it is important to understand the nature of tasks and activities that are characteristic of a particular occupation as well as the ability and training requirements necessary to perform those tasks. In addition to task differences, occupations differ in the types of rewards and job security they offer and in the physical and social settings they provide.

Two features of occupational exploration that merit special examination are the occupation's time demands and work-related stresses and strains. Understanding the nature of these occupational demands and stresses has important implications for individuals' lifestyle preferences. An impressive amount of research shows how extensive time commitment to work can interfere with individuals' abilities to meet the demands and obligations of their other life

roles. Similarly, research has shown that extensive work-related stress can produce conflicts between individuals' work and family roles and impair their well-being.

Understanding various facets of an occupational environment also has implications for individuals' self-exploration. That is, individuals need to be aware of their abilities, interests, and values in order to explore different aspects of an occupation and make appropriate occupational choices. Most psychologically oriented theories of occupational choice share a common assumption that people prefer and choose occupations that are compatible with their self-concepts. In other words, it is believed that individuals, consciously or unconsciously, choose occupations that match their skills, abilities, needs, values, and talents. The same view holds for individuals seeking to explore various facets of their jobs. The following section describes environmental exploration as it relates to a job context.

Job Exploration

Over the course of various employment experiences, individuals "gravitate" toward jobs that are compatible with their interests, values, and abilities. This concept of person-job fit also guides individuals' search for information regarding various facets of their job environments. Seeking information about occupations entails learning about the various tasks and activities that constitute that occupational field. Hence, in their pursuit to learn more about various occupational fields, individuals also end up learning a great deal about particular features of specific jobs. For example, in understanding the ability and training requirements for different occupations, an individual gets a general idea about what the requirements are for a particular job within an occupation. However, occupational exploration cannot and should not preclude job exploration.

Jobs within the same occupation may vary substantially from one organization to the other in time demands, financial rewards, job security, and physical and social settings. Jobs may also vary between two units within the same organization, particularly in terms of mobility prospects and autonomy in decision making. Hence, a thorough job exploration entails learning about all these features of the job environment as well as understanding how they fit in with one's lifestyle preferences.

Jobs are embedded not only in occupations but also in organizations. In reality, exploration of jobs and organizations cannot be independent of one another. A thorough search for information about a particular job reveals important features of the organizational environment just as a search for information about an organization inevitably provides information about specific jobs in the organization. The next section discusses how exploration of an organization can affect one's environment awareness.

Organization Exploration

Individuals undertaking exploration of an organization as a potential employer are also, consciously or unconsciously, driven by a desire to achieve a fit with their goals and values. The two prominent models of organizational choice, expectancy theory and unprogrammed decision making, emphasize that individuals choose jobs in organizations that will help them satisfy their important values.

An individual exploring an organization typically seeks information about the organization's job opportunities, culture, strategy, administrative practices, and financial performance as well as different pay and benefits practices. In exploring various facets of an organization, an individual often develops expectations about the organization's capacity to provide valued outcomes. The accuracy of these expectations can have a profound influence on that person's job experiences, job satisfaction, and, ultimately, the decision to continue with or leave his or her employer.

Exploration Related to the Family Environment

Regardless of the extensiveness of individuals' exploration of their work environments, effective environment exploration involves paying attention to one's family environment as well. The literature on both identity formation and career development has emphasized the important role that family relationships play in facilitating career exploration and development. In addition, organizational scholars widely accept the view that individuals' work and nonwork lives are closely and inextricably intertwined. They also recognize that individuals' career decisions are strongly influenced by their family roles, demands, and obligations. Hence, to develop an accurate awareness of one's total environment, it is important to

consider and understand the members of one's family: their emotional and financial needs, their career aspirations, and their desired lifestyles.

Tools and Techniques That Promote Effective Environment Exploration

There are a variety of resources available that facilitate the gathering of information about various facets of one's work environment. Some of the commonly recommended sources of information include industry profiles and summaries, such as those available in standard industrial classification (SIC) guides, organizations' annual reports, the Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, and Occupational Information Network (O*Net). Additional resources are available through career information centers housed in state public libraries. Individuals are also increasingly turning to the World Wide Web in their pursuit of information regarding various aspects of the work environment.

In addition to the above resources, one's family, friends, and former coworkers employed in different organizations can be sources of information regarding specific occupations, organizations, and jobs. Last but not least, individuals' mentors play vital roles in providing not only career-relevant information but also feedback, guidance, and support—which can all serve to enhance individuals' levels of environment awareness.

Extensive exploration does not always produce an enhanced awareness of one's environment. The obstacles to gaining an accurate insight into the various facets of one's environment are very similar to the ones encountered in the process of self-exploration and self-assessment. For example, anxiety, fear, and defensiveness over the exploratory activity can prevent a person from obtaining the right type of information and accurately and constructively processing it. Similarly, interventions that are useful for overcoming the barriers to self-exploration can also help overcome obstacles to successful environment exploration.

In sum, environment awareness in conjunction with self-exploration plays an important role in helping individuals make appropriate career choices and manage their careers. Self-assessments help individuals understand the nature of their preferred work environments, and effective environment assessments help individuals understand the types of jobs, organizations, and occupations that are compatible with their

interests, talents, and lifestyle preferences. Both types of awareness are important for individuals' career development and progress.

—Romila Singh

See also Boundaryless careers, Career exploration, Self-awareness

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EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (EEOC)

The *Equal Employment Opportunity Commission* (EEOC) is a five-member commission appointed by the president of the United States and confirmed by the Senate. The EEOC was created by Congress to be the primary enforcement mechanism of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Title VII prohibits discrimination in hiring, terms or conditions of employment, union membership and representation, and the referral of applicants by employment services. It was passed in June 1964 by

strong bipartisan majorities in both houses, and signed into law by President Johnson on July 2, 1964. Title VII specifically forbids any employer to fail to hire, discharge, or classify employees or discriminate with respect to compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment in any way that would deprive any individual of employment opportunity due to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Title VII also prohibits retaliation against individuals who file charges with the EEOC or participate in EEOC investigations. Title VII applies to private employers, state and local governments, and educational institutions that employ 15 or more employees. The federal government, private and public employment agencies, labor organizations, and joint labor-management committees for apprenticeship and training also must abide by the law.

The primary mission of the EEOC is the elimination of illegal discrimination from the workplace. In addition to enforcement of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the EEOC is charged with enforcing the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), the Equal Pay Act, Section 501 the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, and Title I, the employment provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Under Executive Order 12067, the EEOC is also charged as the lead agency on all the civil rights employment enforcement activity for the federal government. The members of the commission do not decide individual cases, and the primary enforcement operations are carried out through its regional offices and through agreements with state fair employment practices organizations (FEPs). Congress gave the EEOC litigation enforcement authority in 1972, and the General Council to the EEOC is responsible for conducting EEOC enforcement litigation in the courts.

The EEOC uses an integrated approach to remedy allegations of discrimination, including the use of conciliation, education, technical assistance, and litigation. The time limitation for filing charges with the EEOC is 180 days after the occurrence of the alleged discriminatory act. If the charging party is required to file first with a state or local FEP, the time limit for filing charges is increased to 300 days after the occurrence of the discriminatory act or 30 days after receiving notice that the FEP has terminated its processing of the charge, whichever is earlier. After the conclusion of proceedings before the EEOC, an individual claiming a violation of Title VII has 90 days after receipt of a right-to-sue letter from the commission to file a civil lawsuit in a federal district court.

EEOC charge processing begins with the filing of a complaint by an individual alleging violation of one of the statutes the EEOC is responsible for enforcing. The individual filing the charge is interviewed by an equal opportunity specialist, who assists the charging party in writing and filing a charge of discrimination if warranted. The EEOC classifies incoming charges by letter-designated priorities, designating "A" charges as worthy cases for immediate handling, "B" charges as those requiring further investigation, and "C" charges as those that have a low likelihood of success or merit. If the EEOC concludes that discrimination probably occurred (an "A" case), the agency will first undertake efforts at conciliation. This involves the EEOC's working with the employer and employee to try to reach a settlement. If the EEOC's conciliation efforts are unsuccessful, the commission will either issue the employee a reasonable-cause notice of right to sue or sue the employer itself.

In recent years, the EEOC has implemented a strategic plan that emphasizes proactive prevention. The commission has initiated efforts to prevent discrimination from happening in the first place by offering technical assistance seminars to employers, making more effective use of technology and the media, and encouraging both employers and alleged victims of discrimination to make more use of arbitration as an alternative to litigation. On February 1, 2001, President George W. Bush announced his New Freedom Initiative to promote the full integration of people with disabilities into all aspects of American life. EEOC activities associated with this initiative include free workshops on the ADA for small businesses and individuals with disabilities. These workshops, which include information on tax incentives, community resources, and the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees, are aimed at (a) encouraging businesses with 15 to 100 employees to hire individuals with disabilities and (b) assisting individuals entering the workforce in understanding the ADA. Other recent initiatives include special efforts to respond to the sharp increase in the number of complaints alleging employer discrimination against Muslims and people of Middle Eastern descent since the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. In 2004, the EEOC also announced the start of a yearlong campaign to protect teenage workers from discrimination and sexual harassment on the job. Youth at Work is a program designed to educate teenagers about their rights and encourage employers

to voluntarily comply with federal rules forbidding harassment and abuse on the job.

The EEOC's Web site (<http://www.eeoc.gov>) contains a wide range of information, including historical information about the commission, enforcement guidelines, statistical data on charges filed, and litigation initiated by the EEOC under the act. The EEOC continues to update and make its Web site more user-friendly both for individuals attempting to exercise their rights under the laws enforced by the EEOC and for employers attempting to provide workplaces free of discrimination.

—Gerald E. Calvasina

See also Affirmative action, Age discrimination, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Civil Rights Act of 1991, Disability

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EQUAL PAY ACT

The *Equal Pay Act*, which passed into law in the United States in 1963, requires that employers provide female and male employees an equal amount of pay when both perform the same jobs. When a female worker on a job alleges a violation of the act, she must prove that (a) her work was "equal" to the work of the male employee, (b) the work of both the plaintiff and the comparison male employee were performed in the same "establishment," and (c) the complaining female's rate of pay was less than the rate of pay of the comparison male employee's pay. An employer might justify the pay differences by showing that they reflected a valid seniority-based pay system, a merit- or performance-based pay plan, a pay plan that bases pay on the quality or quantity of production, or any pay plan giving different levels of pay to workers doing equal kinds of work where the pay difference is based on *any factor other than sex*.

For several years prior to the 1963, the U.S. Congress had considered versions of a bill that would have prohibited unequal pay for comparable work. *Equal-pay evidence* is primarily based on job descriptions, whereas *comparable-work evidence* requires the much more expensive and complex job evaluation process to quantitatively evaluate the worth to the employer of different jobs. Comparable work requires equal pay for males and females for different jobs of equal worth to the employer. During World War II, the National War Labor Board used the comparable-work standard in its decisions, but the equal-work standard prevailed in the Equal Pay Act, primarily because the Congress did not wish to mandate job evaluation for employers.

Labor Department guidelines for the Equal Pay Act define jobs as being equal on the basis of four required factors: (1) equal skill of the workers, (2) equal mental or physical effort to perform the job, (3) equal responsibility for performance, and (4) equal working conditions, that is, equal hazards and physical surroundings in which the work is performed. When evidence supports the charge of unequal pay, an employer must prove that one of these four factors was actually unequal.

The courts have insisted that the relevant work evidence must be the *actual work performed* and that the work must be *substantially equal*, not exactly equal. However, equal pay for different but comparable jobs is not required.

The courts have decided several cases with the charge of unequal pay between females and males on unequal work. For the most part, these cases have alleged violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, not of the Equal Pay Act. In general, these cases showed that the employer had maintained a general pattern of sex discrimination against females in regard to hiring, placement, or promotion, as well as pay discrimination. The courts did establish that charges of pay discrimination on dissimilar (not equal) jobs could be brought under Title VII, but they did not consider what might constitute pay discrimination in dissimilar jobs. In these EEOC cases, a group of females would need to prove (a) a general employer pattern of discriminatory personnel practices; (b) that the employer improperly used market survey data to justify the lower pay for females than males (though in one case, the court concluded that market disparities were not what Title VII tries to prevent); or (c) that the employer established a comparable-worth plan and

continued to discriminate against females by paying them less than males on comparable jobs and less than the employer's own plan called for.

In essence, the requirements of the Equal Pay Act do not call for comparable-worth pay approaches for men and women. A comparable-worth approach would require comparable pay for jobs that require similar job skills, effort, and responsibilities, even if the exact content of the jobs were different. Various attempts to establish comparable-worth payment laws in the United States have failed, and comparable-worth pay has not become established as the law in the United States.

—Ronald M. Faust

See also Comparable worth, Gender and careers, Glass ceiling

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ERIKSON'S THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT

Erik Erikson set forth a *theory of ego identity development* to account for the interactions between psychological, social, historical, and developmental factors in the formation of personality. Perhaps no single theoretician has had a greater impact on the way we perceive adolescent identity development than E. H. Erikson. His writing seems timeless, and ideas from his classic book *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, published in 1968, are still pertinent to this day.

Originally, Erikson was concerned with the difficulties some World War II veterans encountered upon reentering civilian life, and he became interested in problems associated with acute identity diffusion. Over time and through clinical experience, he came to believe that the pathological difficulties some veterans experienced in leaving one role (soldier) and entering another

(civilian) were psychologically similar to the problems some adolescents experience as they leave childhood and move through the transition of adolescence into adulthood. From this experiential framework, along with observations of Native American populations, he constructed a theory of psychological and social development with a focus on identity formation.

Erikson's academic training was originally based on psychoanalytic theory, but he turned his attention to ego development: the portion of personality that serves the executive function of directing, guiding, and selecting thought and action. In his writings, there are many different definitions of *identity*. At times, he refers to the consistency and sameness that a person uses as a style of individuality and its meaning for significant others in the immediate family and community. He often stated that identity is a form of persistent character one shares with others.

Throughout his many writings, Erikson proposed that self-sameness and continuity are expressed through a conscious sense of individual identity; a coherent and stable, yet evolving, character; and the solidarity one develops with a group's ideals and social identity. He focused most strongly on occupational, religious, and political aspects of identity formation, because each of these emerges from the interaction of the individual with the social institutions that offer a form of ideology. For example, occupational identity emerges within a communist, socialist, or capitalist ideology; religious identity is formulated within Protestant, Catholic, Islamic, or other forms of ideology; and political identity is constructed within party, state, or group ideologies, such as Republican or Democratic ideological platforms in the United States.

LIFE STAGES

Erikson proposed an eight-stage theory of human development. These stages are set by societal expectations to accomplish specific developmental tasks. Each task, when successfully resolved, provides a particular strength to identity development. Erikson referred to each stage as a *crisis*. For each crisis, the individual can take one of two opposing resolutions. However, crisis is not meant to be a calamity or catastrophe. Rather, a crisis refers to a necessary turning point, a critical and crucial moment in development in which the individual moves in one direction or another. In the adolescent stage (Stage 5), this normative crisis stimulates identity consciousness, which

compels the individual to explore life alternatives (with occupational or vocational choices being of great concern) and make a personal ideological or career commitment. However, it is important to restate that all crises associated with the eight stages in the life span make contributions to the nature and quality of identity. A brief description of the eight stages follows.

Erikson proposed that the eight major dilemmas of the life span are universally experienced; that is, in one form or another, an astute observer of culture can find these eight stages. Indeed, he argued that many so-called cultural differences were due to *pseudospecification*: the creation of an illusion that differences exist when, in reality, things are more similar than different. In the first crisis, the infant establishes a sense of basic trust through social and physical care by an effective caregiver. If not, the child will mistrust others. During the toddler years, the child explores the world and is given secure psychological space to find a sense of autonomy. If not, the child will experience shame and doubt. During childhood, the child is supported in his or her initiative to master new learning tasks and develop a sense of initiative. If not, the child will experience guilt. In early adolescence, the child is encouraged to strive toward competence, mastery, and achievement and develop a sense of industry. If not, the adolescent will feel inferior. During adolescence proper, the adolescent must search and explore the question "Who am I?" Failure to answer this question results in role confusion. During youth or emerging adulthood, the individual either finds someone to engage in mutual sharing and trust to develop a sense of intimacy or, if not, feels isolated and alone. In middle and late adulthood, the crisis focuses on generativity versus feelings of stagnation, with the positive resolution of the crisis resulting in the ability to care for others. In the final adult stage of old age, the crisis centers on integrity versus despair and depression, with resolution resulting in wisdom.

EGO STRENGTHS

Each of the eight stages in life provides an opportunity to enhance the psychological outcomes (ego virtues) of identity formation. That is, positive resolution of each stage provides ego strengths that bolster and support a healthy personality in the form of a maturing identity. To develop trust is to provide a sense of hope for life and a positive future. To feel autonomy

and openness to exploration is to promote the virtue of (free) will. To encourage the resolution of initiative is to help internalize a sense of purpose. With a sense of industry, a youth acquires the ego strength of competence. To find an answer to "Who am I?" provides the strength of fidelity. To feel capable of intimacy is to promote the ability to love. During the adult years, generativity promotes the strength of caring, and integrity promotes a feeling of wisdom.

Each virtue reflects either forward or back on the fifth stage of identity formation. Therefore, although identity is stable over relatively short periods of time, it is also transforming and growing stronger with each life stage. However, the fifth stage of life is the one in which the most obvious and visible identity "work" is evident. This is because each society provides a scheduled time period for the completion of an identity. Although he recognized tremendous cultural variations in the duration, intensity, and ritualization of adolescence, Erikson proposed that all societies offer a period of *psychosocial moratorium* wherein the adolescent is expected to make an initial commitment for living and to establish a firmer sense of self-definition. The psychosocial moratorium period focuses heavily on career and occupational choices, educational preparation, and vocational identity formation.

MATTERING

Erikson acknowledged that like all personal knowledge, the self is constructed in a relational context. In particular, he recognized the importance and power of societal institutions, such as religion, culture, work, politics, and family. The ideologies of each institution set the structure around which identity choices are made. His most observant thoughts focused on biographical accounts of individuals such as Gandhi and Martin Luther, in which he discussed the psychological and social processes surrounding their identity formation and the importance of recognition from others about personal choices that are made by the individual. Essentially, Erikson argued that socialization processes that enhance imitation, identification, and internalization of societal values, goals, and directions are the building blocks of identity formation. In addition, socialization processes demonstrate direct feedback to the individual that his or her identity *matters* to others, which provides the "glue" between the individual's identity and social approval. This bond is made up of social recognition for values and goals

selected, institutional support for endorsing particular ideological viewpoints, and daily recognition by family members, teachers, peers, and others that one's identity is a good fit with the community and culture within which one lives.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS OF IDENTITY

Erikson's writing focused on the interconnection between identity and ego mechanisms. In particular, he believed that the ego operated to provide a self-regulatory function in the development of self and the choices in behaviors and actions from moment to moment. Researchers have inspected the writings of Erikson and concluded that he essentially discussed five basic functions of identity and self-regulation. Identity offers the following five self-regulation mechanisms:

1. The structure for understanding who one is
2. Meaning and direction through commitments, values, and goals
3. A sense of personal control, free will, and self-regulatory abilities
4. A consistency, coherence, and harmony between values, beliefs, and commitments
5. The ability to recognize potential in the form of future possibilities and alternative choices

To give operational substance to Erikson's self-regulatory mechanisms, Toni Serafini and Gerald Adams developed a scale to measure each of the mechanisms proposed by Erikson's theory of identity development. In attempting to build scale items that were true to the nature of Erikson's theoretical ideas, the researchers first operationalized the five self-regulatory functions associated with identity. Next, items were constructed that reflect each of the operational definitions. These items were then used to develop what the authors call the "functions of identity scale." Each of the definitions is given below, with three items that measure the nature of each ego mechanism that Erikson proposed in his theoretical writings.

To Provide Structure for Understanding Who One Is

Definition: Identity provides an awareness of the self as an independent and unique individual. It is most apparent

when it is about to transform or change, when change is accompanied by extreme identity consciousness. A sense of understanding "who one is" provides the structure for self-certainty, self-esteem, and a foundation for an emerging and unfolding self.

Items: I have a clear awareness of myself as a unique individual. I am most conscious of my sense of identity when I must face change. I accept who I am.

To Provide Meaning and Direction Through Commitments, Values, and Goals

Definition: Identity is based on the capacity for faith that commitments or chosen values or goals will receive institutional confirmation. The commitments or goals of identity direct or channel behaviors and actions.

Items: The values I have developed influence my behaviors. I set goals and then work toward making them happen. I believe my values and goals are congruent with my actions.

To Provide a Sense of Personal Control, Free Will, and Self-regulation

Definition: Identity is based on the distinctions between passivity or compliance and an active or willful nature. Passive forms of identity are based on compliance, imitation, and identification. Active forms of identity are based on self-expression, independent construction, and a sense of free will and autonomy.

Items: I am an independent and autonomous person. I have actively constructed a strong commitment to my values and goals. My sense of who I am is based on self-expression and a feeling of free will.

To Provide for Consistency, Coherence, and Harmony Between Values, Beliefs, and Commitments

Definition: Identity formation is based on the organizing agency of synthesis or integration at one point and across time. Identity offers a sense of coherence between values, beliefs, and commitments. This sense of coherence is accompanied with harmony and low anxiety and a sense of peace with oneself.

Items: My values and beliefs are consistent with the commitments that I make in my life. I feel a sense of peace with myself and my identity. I believe my values, beliefs, and commitments fit together.

To Provide the Ability to Recognize Potentials in the Form of Future Possibilities and Alternative Choices

Definition: A sense of identity is in part based on self-initiative and a sense of purpose that offers the promise of fulfilling one's range of capacities. Thus, self-initiative, purpose, and capacities offer the promise of a tangible future.

Items: My sense of purpose in life will help guide my future. I have what it takes to make my future a reality. The decisions I make today about myself build the promise of my future sense of self.

Erikson wrote that passive identities based on imitation and identification will result in less strength in the form of these functions. He argued that active identity forms are associated with all five functions and that furthermore, these functions will provide the ego mechanisms that enhance personality and ego strengths.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Erikson viewed human development as being influenced by culture, social and historical events, and economic, religious, and familial forces. In industrial societies, adolescents and emerging adults are allowed a period of psychosocial moratorium to find or construct their identities. As an individual's identity emerges, in either a passive or active form, support from family, friends, and community members determines whether the identity is acceptable to society. In turn, as adolescents are supported by society, they develop a growing sense of fidelity: faith that they matter to people who are significant in their lives. Identity formation enhances the use of ego mechanisms that provide powerful self-regulation systems. These functions of identity, then, enhance the ego virtues of the individual in this stage of life.

The implications for career development are clearly discussed in Erikson's writings on occupational identity. Indeed, Erikson viewed occupational identity as the most central domain of identity formation, followed by religious and political identity. During the psychosocial moratorium, much attention and energy are directed at defining or constructing one's work interests and building skills in the technology of the selected occupational choice.

To summarize, identity formation, such as occupational identity, is constructed within a broad contextual environment of culture, institutions, family, and friends.

As occupational identity emerges, certain important self-regulation mechanisms emerge to direct the individual in regard to values, beliefs, and commitments to work. These mechanisms promote the formation of ego virtues or strengths that enhance one's personality. Furthermore, these factors help an adolescent emerge into adulthood with a commitment to work, occupation, and ego strengths that enhance self-esteem and mental health, and a stable and achieved sense of direction that is supported by society. However, when this important set of events is not encouraged in a psychosocial moratorium or the youth fails to meet the challenge of identity versus role confusion, there will be considerable emotional angst, anxiety, and lack of direction in the youth's life and future.

—Gerald R. Adams

See also Holland's theory of vocational choice, Identity, Super's career development theory

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ETHICS AND CAREERS

Individual and group behavior is governed in part by *ethics*, the moral principles or values on which judgments are made as to whether actions are right or wrong, good or bad. The minimum ethical standards in a society are codified in law, but ethical behavior requires going beyond mere adherence to the letter of the law. The ability to engage in commercial and other types of relationships is dependent on trust and general acceptance that standards or codes of behavior will be upheld. Community agreement regarding acceptable and unacceptable behavior enables transactions to take place with some sense of order and predictability.

This entry first examines the organizational context in which choices about ethical behavior take place and then discusses sources and career effects of ethical values. The stages in development of moral reasoning are then examined and also the types of ethical issues

associated with specific career stages. The special case of organizational whistle-blowers is considered. Finally, the bases for making ethical decisions and opportunities for careers in the field of ethics are discussed.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, a number of highly publicized events concentrated negative attention on ethics in public life and in private and public organizations, such as WorldCom, Enron, Tyco, HealthSouth, and Arthur Andersen. Consequences for individuals held responsible for these legal and ethical failings were career ending in many cases.

A plethora of potential ethical issues faces individuals at all organizational levels: discrimination, sexual harassment, falsifying financial information, insider trading, confidentiality and privacy violations, lying (to managers, colleagues, or customers), stealing, bribery, undercutting coworkers, claiming credit for work done by others, misrepresenting credentials, covering up unsafe working conditions and products—to name just a few types of ethical violations that occur in organizations. Most individuals can expect to face and handle many ethical issues throughout their careers.

As organizational changes accelerate, new situations with uncertain ethical overtones require action: downsizing, outsourcing, employability replacing career ladders, use of contingent workers, technological changes, and the increasingly global nature of competition. These changes impact careers at all organizational levels and present new challenges to those trying to balance their own career development and the needs of the organizations that employ them. The changing nature of workers' psychological contracts introduces new tensions between individual career considerations and obligations to employers. As job security fades and individuals recognize a lack of commitment from their organizations, they reciprocate with less commitment to their employers. The accepted exchange relationship between employer and employee has eroded, and individuals must now take responsibility for maintaining and updating their skills and managing their careers.

SOURCES AND CAREER EFFECTS OF ETHICAL VALUES

Individuals develop ethical standards as a result of socialization in their families, community, religious institutions, and professions. When they join organizations, the contexts in which they work become a

powerful determinant of ethical choices. In fact, organizational context is a stronger determinant of ethical behavior than individual moral reasoning ability or espoused ethical standards. Individuals have been shown to use lower levels of ethical reasoning when making decisions in business settings than they do in nonbusiness contexts. Organizational culture, the presence and strength of a code of behavior, role-modeling by managers, the reward system of the organization, and personal career consequences of ethical choices may override the individual's code of behavior or ability to reason ethically.

Ethics impacts careers in a number of ways. Personal beliefs about work that is valuable to society and consistent with the individuals' values influence the choice of a career. Decisions to join, stay with, or leave a particular career or organization may be made on the basis of congruence between the individual's moral beliefs and those enacted by and required of members of the profession or organization.

One criterion for determining whether a profession exists is the presence of a generally accepted code of ethics for those working in the area. Professions thus socialize their members into the behaviors regarded as ethical by their practitioners; however, these professional ethical standards may come into conflict with expectations for employees of particular organizations. For example, certified public accountants must pass an examination on the ethics of accountancy. If their employers request that they falsify accounting records or violate generally accepted accounting practices, the ethics of their profession will be in conflict with the expectations of their employers—and possibly with their own ethical standards.

DEVELOPMENT OF ETHICAL REASONING ABILITY

Movement through stages of ethical reasoning occurs as individuals mature. At the lowest levels of moral reasoning, *preconventional*, individuals make choices based on hedonistic consequences for themselves: They do what gives them pleasure or what allows them to avoid punishment or pain. At this level of cognitive moral reasoning, individuals are concerned about the consequences of their actions for themselves. As people mature, their ethical choices are influenced by the standards of the groups to which they belong. Conformity to rules and laws of peer groups govern ethical choices at the *conventional* level. At the highest level of moral reasoning,

postconventional or *principled*, individuals' ethical choices are made by reference to principles they have accepted or developed for themselves. Here, the concern is for consequences to society at large, not just to individuals and their reference groups.

ETHICAL ISSUES AND CAREER STAGES

Different types of ethical dilemmas are faced by individuals at different career stages. Using Donald Super's career development framework, researchers have found different types of ethical issues faced by those in the exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement stages of their careers.

In the aptly named *exploration career stage*, individuals focus on acceptance from peers and also may be most vulnerable to pressure from superiors. If achieving performance norms is critical to peer acceptance, this need for acceptance by peers can lead to ethical shortcuts. If the organization rewards goal achievement, the individual in this early career stage may feel pressured to achieve those goals using any means, ethical or unethical. The potential for ethical shortcuts is increased if superiors themselves do not model ethical behavior.

When individuals enter the *establishment stage*, they have made some commitment to a particular profession or career and are increasingly concerned with career advancement. High levels of competition may result in individual ethical compromises to achieve promotion. In individuals with high success drives, this temptation may be intensified. In the establishment stage, the pressure to take ethical shortcuts may be mostly internal, in contrast to the exploration stage, in which pressure comes from peers and superiors.

During the *maintenance* and *disengagement stages*, both external and internal pressures to violate personal ethical standards in pursuit of organizational goals can be expected to lessen. With established track records, decreased competition, and more personal acceptance of one's achievement levels, both internal and external pressures for unethical behavior can be expected to decrease. In addition, as individuals become more focused on their work legacies, they may gain more incentive to help others achieve their life and career potential and also further integrate their own careers into their whole life systems. On the other hand, individuals in the maintenance stage are expected to be at the top of their careers, often in positions that may lead to temptations to encourage

subordinates to use ethically questionable means to achieve organizational goals. Furthermore, individuals who have reached upper-management positions may face external pressure from stockholders as well as from their boards of directors to do whatever it takes to increase share price.

Thus, the nature of the pressure to behave unethically, the types of ethical issues faced, and the motivation for ethical/unethical behavior can be expected to vary over the course of a career, but no career stage immunizes individuals from the necessity of handling ethical issues.

Whistle-blowing

In extreme cases, individuals may choose to become whistle-blowers, even though the consequences of such actions are almost always detrimental to the individual's career. Whistle-blowers speak out about illegal or unethical behavior in organizations. They may blow the whistle internally or, after exhausting internal reporting systems, publicly report organizational wrongdoing. At the other extreme, individuals who remain in positions or organizations that require some violation of their personal ethical standards may disconnect their emotions from the work situation and therefore reduce commitment to the organization and fail to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors. Perceptions of ethical culture are strongly related to both job satisfaction and organizational commitment and thus to organizational citizenship behaviors.

Issues differ in their levels of moral intensity. Moral intensity is higher—and whistle-blowing is more appropriate—when consequences are greater, when there is general social consensus that an action is wrong, when it is highly likely that the harmful consequence will actually occur, when the event is imminent and proximate to the individual, and when the effect is concentrated rather than diffuse. Enron whistle-blowers Sherron Watkins and Maureen Castaneda felt the legal and ethical violations at Enron justified their going public with the company's lapses. In another case, the *Challenger* disaster might have been avoided had the engineer, Alan McDonald, who disagreed with the judgment regarding the safety of the O-rings, taken his concerns outside NASA.

Being a whistle-blower frequently carries heavy career consequences. Most whistle-blowers lose their jobs as a result of their reporting legal or ethical

violations. They may also be unable to find employment in their professions after the event. Most suffer financial and/or personal reverses as they pursue cases, which frequently drag on over a number of years. Nonetheless, whistle-blowers feel a moral imperative to expose organizational actions that endanger others, even at the cost of their own careers.

Integrity, honesty, and a strong work ethic are high on employers' lists of traits and skills they seek in employees. However, many employees fail to see a positive relationship between ethical behavior and career advancement. In fact, they believe they must choose between adhering to their personal ethical standards and their own career progressions. Concerns for organizational profit and/or survival often trump individual concerns about honorable behavior. Ethicists thus recommend that early in their careers, individuals make decisions about the lines they will not cross. If these decisions are not consciously taken when there is time for thoughtful consideration, individuals may find themselves unwittingly compromising their integrity as they respond to the organizational pressures of the moment.

BASES FOR MAKING ETHICAL DECISIONS

Philosophers have suggested prescriptive approaches to ethical thinking. The *utilitarian approach* judges whether an action is ethical by examining its likely consequences. Among the alternatives available, the ethical choice is the one that creates the greatest good or the least harm for the greatest number of people. This approach, with its roots in economics, is embraced by the majority of businesspeople and by many in other fields. Using utilitarian reasoning, for example, management fires some workers in an attempt to improve profits, attract investors, and retain other jobs, or they close a plant in one town because its inefficiencies have a negative impact on profits of more efficient plants in the same organization. Utilitarianism works well for those in the majority, but minorities do not fare well under this philosophical approach to making ethical decisions. That many others benefited from the decision may offer small comfort to those who lost their jobs or to the town whose economy was decimated when the plant closed. In addition, the likely consequences of all alternatives cannot be known with certainty. Information about some consequences or even about some groups or individuals who will be affected by the decision may be unavailable.

A second approach to ethical decision making is the *rights approach*. A decision is considered ethical if it avoids violating the basic human rights of any stakeholders affected by the decision. Difficulties with this approach include the impossibility of getting universal agreement on what basic human rights are. To some, these rights include the right to a livable wage or health care; others recognize fundamental rights to life and freedom, but to little else. Furthermore, rights can conflict, and there are no clear rules for determining which rights take precedence in a particular case.

In the *justice approach* to making ethical choices, decisions are considered ethical if the same procedures apply to all who are affected by the decision (procedural justice) or if those who are similarly placed receive similar outcomes (distributive justice). Thus, those with similar professional qualifications, workloads, and performance levels should receive similar compensation; those with lesser credentials, workloads, and performance levels should be compensated less than those in the first group, but all members of the same performance class should receive similar outcomes.

The *virtue approach* focuses on the integrity of the decision maker or moral actor. Intentions and motives as well as actions themselves are considered in judging whether or not an action is ethical. This approach relies on community standards of behavior. In professions, these standards are encapsulated in codes of behavior accepted by practitioners in the field.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAREERS IN ETHICS

Career opportunities in the field of ethics are increasing. Growth in the demand for ethics officers in corporations is partially a response to changes adopted in 1991 by the U.S. Sentencing Commission. The sentencing guidelines reduce penalties for corporations found guilty of violations if they can demonstrate that they have comprehensive ethics programs in place. Having a high-level executive with direct responsibility for ethical behavior in the organization is a strong signal that companies take ethics seriously. More recently, the passage of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 has reinforced the pressure for compliance officers who are held responsible not only for ensuring compliance to ethics laws but also for the development of an organizational climate and culture that support ethical behavior.

The responsibility for compliance with employment laws, ensuring nondiscrimination in hiring and

treatment of employees, and setting programs in place to prevent sexual harassment is generally housed in human resource management departments. Thus, careers in human resource management also require a thorough grounding in law and ethics.

Ultimate responsibility for ethical behavior in organizations, however, still rests with individual employees. Company titles that include the word *ethics* may be limited, but the necessity of considering the ethical implications of organizational decisions permeates the entire organization and affects careers at all levels.

—Janet S. Adams

See also Antisocial work behaviors, Organizational citizenship behavior, Organizational justice, Super's career development theory

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EXECUTIVE COACHING

Executive coaching involves one-on-one discussions between an executive and a behavioral science professional on topics involving skills and style in a professional setting. Coaching has several advantages over

other types of executive development options, such as class activities, group facilitation, and consulting advice. Convenience, relevance, and the self-directed nature of executive coaching are important advantages that one should consider in deciding to use coaching over other ways of achieving professional growth and greater organizational effectiveness. Central to executive coaching are the notions that the objectives are jointly determined by the executive and the coach, that it involves observation and assessment of behaviors related to these objectives, and that these observations and assessments are shared. Coaching takes place in small increments, often separated by weeks, and must be both intimate and flexible. While coaches may offer perspectives on substantive issues and the coaching agenda, executives must determine learning goals and issues around which they desire to be coached.

Three different perspectives are relevant for an executive coach to consider in conversations regarding executive performance: the individual executive, the work unit, and the organization. An initial consideration is to explore the executive's self-awareness. A first step is to compare the individual's self-perception of his or her relevant strengths, weaknesses, and suggested areas of development with the perceptions of those around him or her. These comparisons provide a context and basis for further dialogue and exploration. The agreement of the executive's self-perception and others' perceptions on strengths and weaknesses capitalizes on an executive's established talent and social/professional network. Examining strengths and weaknesses provides insights into the habits of the executive's business interactions, as most people tend to repeat the patterns of behavior that come most easily to them, leading to both positive and negative outcomes. This repetition is the basis for defining one's style and exploring whether there is a need for more flexibility in approach. For example, an outgoing and verbally fluent executive may be coached to deliberately hold back in discussions to allow less articulate counterparts to expound on their viewpoints.

The second perspective focuses on the interpersonal interactions of the executive within his or her work unit. A coach must look at the quality and impact of an executive's interactions with subordinates, peers, customers or clients, and those in more senior positions. The gap between the executive's intentions and the impact of his or her behavior on others is a key point of analysis. For example, an executive may believe that providing a casual or superficial comment about an issue will

stimulate others to think, whereas those on the receiving end of the communication may view the comment as an inflexible opinion. In this case, the gap between the executive and others would result in fewer challenges to the executive's decision, because others believed that the opinions were less flexible than they were intended to be. Coaches must examine the widely held perceptions about the executive for the purpose of considering the impact of these perceptions on the executive's effectiveness.

The third perspective assumes a broader, longer-term view as the coach and executive examine the executive's relationship with the firm over time. Specifically, the coach should guide the executive in addressing issues of *fit* between the executive and the cultural and political environments within the firm. Differences between the cultural norms and an executive's style provide a basis for possible misperceptions by those within the firm. For example, in a firm with a strong task focus, an executive who openly discusses emotional issues may be judged to be less effective. The coach's role is to help diagnose such situations to stimulate the executive's interest in attending to the issue.

TOPICS OF FOCUS: STYLE AND SKILLS

Two topic areas provide a focus for much of the multilevel analysis suggested above: personal style and strategic management skills. *Personal style* is one's preferred way of interacting with others or pursuing a goal. One's style is rarely inherently good or bad. A style may be advantageous or a hindrance when considered in the context of a firm's cultural environment or the specific expectations and needs of the immediate team of peers, subordinates, and bosses. The norms and values of a firm are reflected in the way business is conducted, and executives are expected to conform to the expected behavioral norms.

One approach to understanding differences in interpersonal styles was developed by Will Schutz, who created the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation Behaviour Questionnaire. The questionnaire, known as FIRO-B, provides measures of the extent to which one expresses and wants from others three interpersonal needs: inclusion, control, and openness. Each interpersonal need is measured on the basis of how likely the respondent is to express this need and how much the respondent wants to have the need expressed toward him or her. The six measures

can be applied to many executive positions and often help to explain differing perspectives in situations involving interpersonal friction.

For example, consider how behaviors demonstrating a low need to express inclusion may be interpreted by others with a high need to be included. The executive with a lower need to express inclusion may avoid interactions with others unless there is a defined need for communication. Others may view this task-driven frequency of contact as a sign of lack of interest or commitment to them or to the team. The executive demonstrating low expressed inclusion may be attempting to respect the time of others by limiting interaction to only the most essential issues. An executive with a low need for inclusion may view the repeated invitations by associates to interact as unnecessary or assess the interactions as superficial if they do not lead to a completed task. In issues relating to style, the role of the coach is to assess the behaviors, challenge the executive to consider alternative patterns of interaction, and help identify and clarify the potential alternative interpretations of personal style.

While style and skills are acknowledged to be distinct and measurable arenas by the research community, the distinctions between style and skill are sometimes not recognized by executives. Identifying the distinction can be an important contribution of the executive coach. The blurred distinction is often a result of attributing skill, or lack of skill, to a preference in style. For example, an executive with a high need to express control may assess another executive who has a lower need in this dimension as lacking "leadership" because of a belief that "leaders provide direction"—when, in fact, the latter executive may think that he or she has already provided direction.

The definition and importance of different skills are determined by the organization with respect to the executive's position. Many firms have defined skills by level and have performance appraisal systems based on these competencies. The role of a coach is to reach agreement on a defined goal of targeted skills, with measurement criteria that are observable and accepted by the relevant players in the work unit. A plan of action includes advisement on creating opportunities to demonstrate the skill and a plan to seek feedback from colleagues so as to determine whether or not the new behaviors are successful.

The six skill sets identified by Stephen Stumpf are relevant to many senior executives: knowing the business and markets, managing subunit rivalry, finding

and overcoming problems, staying on strategy, being an entrepreneurial force, and accommodating adversity. For example, demonstrating the skill set of being an entrepreneur would involve a clear articulation of a vision, communicating the vision with clarity and getting others excited about it, and influencing others to take the desired actions toward execution. The executive and coach would discuss the need for this skill, where it was most needed, and how the executive might proceed to exercise this skill to improve the performance of the unit and organization.

The field of executive coaching is relatively young and just beginning to be broadly accepted as a topic for academic research. Although executives have been “coached” by peers, friends, and mentors for decades, hiring individuals with extensive behavioral science knowledge and experience in working with senior executives is still limited to those firms with substantial resources to fund the effort. One factor that supports the continued growth of this field is that executives want more customized and convenient opportunities for growth. In addition, executive coaching has gained support within executive suites because it is believed to be of significant value by those being coached. Finally, there is a growing body of research to support the relationship between executive coaching and leadership effectiveness.

—*Maria Arnone*

See also Career coaching, FIRO-B, Leadership development

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EXIT INTERVIEW

An *exit interview* is a discussion between a departing employee and a representative of the organization that

occurs in the last days of an employee’s tenure. The interviewer is typically a manager or a human resources professional. The interview usually takes place on company property during work hours. Exit interviews are widely believed to be helpful to organizations that wish to better understand why people leave their jobs. Recent research has found that more than 80 percent of large organizations use exit interviews. More than 90 percent of the executives in firms that use exit interviews believe that they provide useful information.

Exit interviews serve a number of beneficial purposes beyond providing information about why people leave. Some organizations use the interviews to persuade employees to stay (e.g., by offering improved wages, working conditions, transfers, or promotions). Other organizations use the interviews as a public relations exercise to ensure that the parting employee leaves the company on a positive note. The exit interview can serve as a last opportunity to inform employees about their remaining obligations, rights, and benefits packages. It can be used to remind employees of their responsibility to protect the organization’s intellectual property. A final purpose might be to protect the organization from legal proceedings by providing information about incidents of discrimination, sexual harassment, or other inappropriate activities.

Notwithstanding the many perceived benefits of exit interviews, researchers who have studied them are much less enthusiastic. One approach to studying exit interview validity highlights the costs to departing employees of telling the truth. Some of those potential costs include (a) the risk of burning bridges with the former employer, (b) the risk of conflict with individuals in the former organization, (c) the risk of incriminating or otherwise hurting friends and coworkers who remain with the organization, and (d) the risk of repercussions from the former employer (e.g., poor references). Not surprisingly, research shows that employees are more likely in exit interviews than in employee surveys to give non-job-related factors as their reasons for quitting. Another approach to assessing the validity of exit interviews questions the ability of interviewees to accurately recall their reasons for quitting—a problem compounded when the actual time of departure lags significantly behind the time of decision making.

Additional concerns about exit interviews exist. One study suggests that only about 50 percent of organizations that conduct exit interviews actually use the

information. Other studies emphasize the need to use qualified interviewers; however, relatively few firms have qualified interviewers conduct exit interviews, because of cost, timing, or other constraints.

Researchers have identified a number of ways to improve the quality of exit interviews. First, they recommend the use of structured interviews. In short, that means the interviewer uses a set of open-ended questions and a standardized tool for reporting answers (e.g., computer template or tape recorder). Second, researchers advocate the use of neutral, trained interviewers. Such an interviewer would not have had prior contact with the employee, would follow the interview protocol closely (e.g., avoid probing questions that could bias the responses), and would take detailed notes. Third, researchers point to the need to guarantee confidentiality and anonymity to the departing employee. Practically speaking, the interviewer should state that confidentiality will be maintained unless legal obligations prohibit such confidentiality (e.g., Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

Organizations that wish to better understand why some employees stay and others quit have many additional tools available to them. One is the exit questionnaire, which is completed by employees before they leave. Such a questionnaire might be especially helpful in the context of organizations in which there is low trust between employees and their supervisors. *Exit questionnaires* or surveys may also be less costly in time and energy to implement. Furthermore, they may generate more reliable, valid, and specific information. Another tool is the use of *external consultants*. The consultants can use either interview or survey techniques to obtain information from departing employees. The primary advantage of external consultants is their independence from the firm. As an added layer of protection for respondents, the consultants frequently promise to report only aggregate data, thereby protecting individual employees from the costs associated with telling the truth.

An alternative approach to understanding reasons why people stay and why they leave is an *employee morale survey*. Such surveys usually solicit employee attitudes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, perceived job alternatives, and job involvement and then relate them to reported job search behaviors, intent to leave, and actual leaving over an extended period following the survey collection. Such prospective research designs have proven more

reliable and valid than exit interviews. They have the added benefit of providing information for acting immediately on issues to curb turnover, rather than waiting for the turnover to occur and then commencing action, when, for all practical purposes, it is too late. A driving analogy is that employee morale surveys represent a forward-looking approach (i.e., looking through the windshield), whereas exit interviews represent a backward-looking approach (i.e., looking through the rearview window).

Recent research has identified exit surveys as useful means of gathering ethics-related information within an already-existing framework in most organizations. The same research found that organizational members were willing to freely discuss five areas in an ethics exit survey: illegal organizational activities, unfair administrative actions, illegal human resource activities, dishonesty, and mistreatment of organizational constituencies. Such data can be used in ethics training, policy evaluation, assessment of ethical climate, and identification of specific ethical (or legal) issues. Based on these findings, future research is likely to focus on exit interviews as a source of valuable information about ethical issues.

In sum, while the use of exit interviews is pervasive in organizations, human resource professionals and managers concerned about employee retention will use many other tools to complement them. Performance appraisals, counseling, career-planning interviews, and employee morale surveys will help provide perspective on issues of concern to employees as well as actionable ideas for improving the organizational environment. Such activities ideally reduce employee turnover—and the need for exit interviews.

—Brooks C. Holtom

See also Downsizing, Outplacement, Turnover

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EXPATRIATE EXPERIENCE

From ancient times through the colonial era, expatriation was a means of enhancing political and economic influence to dominate new frontiers. Today, business expatriates are performing similar functions. A *business expatriate* is a citizen of the country in which the parent corporation is located but works in a foreign country at a subsidiary or branch office of the parent company. Expatriating parent country nationals has become a significant means for the transfer of the philosophy and strategy of an organization's headquarters from the parent to the foreign operations. By linking the use of expatriates to a corporate strategy of globalization, expatriation could be seen as a way to establish control and coordination, at the same time creating international informal personal networks between managers in the corporate organizational structure. By assigning trusted managers from the parent organization to the foreign operations, greater control is made possible. Through a process of organizational acculturation, the expatriate, who identifies with the policies of the headquarters, transfers the culture of the parent organization to the foreign subsidiary. The parent company greatly benefits from such internationally mobile managers, who have proven themselves successful in handling relationships with the head office, host country relations, and the management of foreign operations.

The development of the careers of expatriate managers is crucial for many organizations. Without world-class managers in the global marketplace, many international firms would not be able to effectively compete against major global competitors. Expatriation leads to a competitive advantage in creating a pool of cosmopolitan executives sensitive to international opportunities and threats, representing an international education that cannot be replicated in any classroom.

Five broad categories of attributes of expatriate success have been identified: job factors, relational dimensions, motivational state, family situation, and language skills. These attributes can be potentially enhanced by career development activities available to international corporations for assisting expatriate careers.

Job factors have traditionally been considered as important components for expatriate success, and an overwhelming majority of firms use technical expertise as their main criterion in selecting expatriates. Although functional competency is a relevant initial requirement,

other job factors such as managerial skills and administrative competence are also important considerations in selection. *Relational dimensions* include a number of factors associated with individual characteristics, such as personality, more-transient socialized value systems, and more-incidental traits and behaviors that might result from an individual's interaction with immediate environmental conditions. This category most often accounts for the expatriate's success or failure. Relational attributes are especially important for expatriates, such as top management and sales executives, who have many contacts with host country nationals. *Motivational states* encompass a number of factors that may operate as expatriation incentives. *Family situations* involve critical characteristics of the expatriate's spouse and children and the nature of the family relationship. A mutually supportive family is necessary for living overseas, and it provides the resilience that the expatriate needs during a time of stress and daily life challenges. Finally, *language skills* include factors essential for effective communication by the expatriate in the host country.

Among the career development activities for expatriates, job postings allow expatriates to remain aware of internal job vacancies elsewhere within the parent company's operations. Corporate online job-posting systems can often be accessed through intranet sites. Career path information provided by the organization offers expatriates the opportunity to assess their own plans against those reflected in the corporate career paths. Annual performance reviews can serve developmental, evaluative, and administrative purposes for the expatriate. It is evident that domestic performance appraisal systems must be customized to become effective for expatriate situations. Fast-track programs make expatriates aware of proposed organizational plans for them, often involving rotation through different divisions or areas of the corporation. Information on career planning provided by the organization simply means the organization reveals its specific plans to the expatriate, which is the general case for fast-trackers. Professional career specialists can help expatriates manage their own careers and also provide individual career counseling. Such services can be offered face-to-face, over the telephone, or online. Career testing might include the use of interest inventories, personality profiles, and aptitude tests. The results of such tests are assumed to help the expatriate understand and articulate important personal determinants of career direction and satisfaction.

Expatriates can often benefit from coaching and/or mentoring. Mentoring can be undertaken by senior peers or superiors or simply a person the expatriate trusts. A good mentor is not there to provide the answers but to assist an individual in developing his or her skills in resolving career-related complications. Assessment centers include multiple independent evaluations, often providing a conclusive indicator of a participant's potential for success in a range of alternative careers and leaving little doubt for the individual as to what future options are available or possible. However, assessment centers could also be used for developmental purposes and are, as such, a very versatile tool in helping expatriates with career management. Career-planning workshops are purposeful learning experiences emphasizing self-assessment and development of planning skills. Effective workshops help expatriates analyze their interests, values, goals, and capabilities; consider their options; make decisions related to their present jobs; and establish personal development plans.

Not much academic research has been undertaken on expatriate career development, but studies suggest that the availability of corporate career development activities seems to be low, indicating little interest on the part of parent organizations to assist in the development of their expatriate managers' careers. As indicated above, this contradicts the best interests of globalizing firms, which are dependent on a pool of cosmopolitan managers for their business expansions.

Large parent organizations with substantial interests in international business operations generally assist their expatriates' career development more than other firms. This is intuitively justifiable and, indeed, serves their best interests. However, it poses a problem with regard to small- and medium-sized enterprises with less resources and little experience to cater to their expatriates' career-development needs.

Experienced expatriate managers generally use more of the available corporate career-development activities than do less experienced managers. Such a tendency might complicate the procurement and

advancement of new generations of expatriate managers. Since expatriate careers could take shape at an early stage, it is most unfortunate if junior managers do not make much use of available means to guide their international careers. Maintaining a sufficient corporate pool of cosmopolitan managers over time helps compensate for resignations and managers choosing to settle down in foreign locations. Developing international expertise this way is a long-term undertaking, and a company must invest substantial resources and efforts to develop such a group of cosmopolitan managers.

Regarding gender differences, corporate career development seems less available to female than to male business expatriates. This may demonstrate a gender bias in corporate support for expatriates. For reasons of talent maximization, international firms cannot afford to limit their pool of talented human resources by excluding particular groups of employees. Business firms may unintentionally create a considerable disadvantage for women in their struggles to internationalize, since women may not be attracted to or motivated for international careers to the same extent as men.

—Jan Selmer

See also Globalization and careers, International careers, Job rotation, Multinational organization, Virtual expatriates

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F

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT (FLSA)

The distinction between *exempt* and *nonexempt* employees, a familiar dichotomy indicating exemption from certain federal labor regulations, was created through the *Fair Labor Standards Act* (FLSA) of 1938. The act instituted many taken-for-granted characteristics of employment in the United States: the five-day workweek, the 40-hour workweek, and overtime pay. The written intent of the act was to guarantee a minimum wage, regulate working hours, establish a premium for overtime pay, and prohibit child labor. Because of prior legal battles regarding the constitutional limits of federal labor legislation, the FLSA was written to cover interstate commerce. Even so, challenges to the authority of the act continued into the 1940s, with a range of industries challenging the new law. The restriction to interstate commerce left ample opportunities for exempting labor in enterprises with predominantly intrastate sales; this and industry-specific exemptions from the law left a considerable number of workers uncovered. The categories of exempt and nonexempt workers are often associated with specific occupations, but they constitute only part of the detailed rules and amendments that have been used to establish coverage.

Historically, four general rationales have been used as the bases of sector and establishment exemptions. For seasonal or irregular work, it was argued that legislation meant for weekly year-round employment presented an undue burden. Second, due to the lack of economic resources (by virtue of economies of scale or the capacity to substitute capital for labor), some firms

(those with sales below a set minimum) and sectors (services) were exempt from the provisions. Third, in some cases, exemptions were based on the characteristics of the workers. It was argued that minimum wages were not needed when the labor force was predominantly young, when the individual workers tended to have other primary employment, and when the earnings were not likely to be the primary household earnings, clearly implying age-based career stages and gender-based careers. Finally, in cases in which wage and hour conditions had already been established by collective bargaining between labor and management (for example, transportation in the late 1930s), coverage by the FLSA was seen as unnecessary.

A lack of need also formed part of the rationale for exempting outside sales, administrative, professional, and executive employees. These occupations are not typically vulnerable to low wages. Furthermore, workers in these occupations tend to have good benefits and opportunities for advancement, which are seen as compensating for longer-than-standard workweeks. Even so, to classify as exempt, these workers must make a minimum salary and be engaged in occupation-specific duties and tasks for most of their time at work, or they must be certified or licensed by the state in order to do their work (e.g., teachers).

The FLSA has been amended many times, not only for the purpose of updating values—such as salary limits and the minimum wage—but also to alter exemptions and coverage. Current debates regarding the act involve recent changes in the criteria used to exempt workers from overtime regulations.

—Joyce Altobelli

See also Collective bargaining, Employment-at-will doctrine, National Labor Relations Act, Sweatshop labor

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FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

Recognizing the difficulties that an increasing number of workers face when they combine job with family responsibilities, many lawmakers and activists fought for and won the passage of *the Family and Medical Leave Act* (FMLA) of 1993. Moving beyond prior legislation that allowed maternity leave, the FMLA mandates that employers provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for a worker's own serious medical condition, maternity disability, care of a newborn or newly adopted child, or care of seriously ill children, parents, or spouses. The act also guarantees the continuation of any existing health insurance coverage during the leave.

More than 35 million women and men have taken job leave under the FMLA since its passage, averaging about 10 days. Although opponents decried mandated leave as potentially costly and harmful to productivity, a bipartisan congressional committee (in both 1996 and 2001) found that 90 percent of companies subject to the FMLA experienced no negative impact on productivity, growth, or revenues.

The passage of the FMLA in 1993, proudly claimed by President Clinton as the first bill he signed into law, was the culmination of more than a decade of political negotiation. It was vetoed twice by President George H. W. Bush and opposed (then and now) by business interests, including the Chamber of Commerce. Advocates of the bill included members of Congress, led by Senator Christopher Dodd (D-Connecticut) and former Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder (D-Colorado), to whom Dodd gives credit

for conceptualizing the act. Unions, such as the AFL-CIO, 9 to 5, and CLUW, provided critical support for the passage of the act by testifying before hearings and lobbying Congress.

The FMLA moved beyond prior federal legislation, specifically, the 1978 Pregnancy Disability Act (PDA), which required only that maternity leave be covered under the provisions of any existing temporary-disability leave policy. The PDA did not require the establishment of any maternity leave in cases in which temporary disability leave was not available, nor did it allow use of such leaves for non-pregnancy-related family needs. Furthermore, there were no provisions for men to take any job leaves for parenting.

In contrast, gender neutrality in family leave taking was a primary goal of the FMLA, as stated by the early sponsors of the bill. In a 2003 Supreme Court ruling, the majority opinion reiterated this initial view.

LIMITATIONS OF THE FMLA

Albeit an important advance over prior policy, the FMLA does not provide universal protection for employees who need leaves to provide care for their family members. Employees are eligible only if they have worked for an eligible employer for at least one year and for at least 1,250 hours in the previous year. Eligible employers are public agencies or private employers with 50 or more employees working within a 75-mile radius. Those who work for small employers are uncovered, and the act also does not provide leaves for temporary workers, whose numbers are growing. Employers excluded from these provisions, about 90 percent of establishments, employ approximately 40 percent of the workforce. Furthermore, as Jane Waldfogel has reported, almost one-fifth of workers for covered employers do not meet eligibility requirements, leaving approximately 53 percent of the workforce ineligible for FMLA leave. The FMLA was clearly a major victory for those interested in promoting family-friendly laws, but a substantial portion of the workers who took leaves after the passage of the FMLA could have taken these leaves before its passage, because of state-level laws or leave policies enacted voluntarily by employers.

Although the FMLA theoretically provides gender-neutral access to leaves, actual leaves taken post-FMLA remain far from gender neutral: Women (especially married) take the overwhelming number

of leaves. A large number of men take leaves, but typically when they themselves get sick or occasionally to care for some other family members (especially a seriously ill wife or newborn child). Women are more likely than men to say they need leaves, to take leaves, and to take longer leaves.

These enduring gender differences suggest that access to unpaid leaves is not enough to counter other influences that shape men and women's leave taking. Why do such gender differences persist? A key problem is that leaves are unpaid. Even though both men and women are now allowed to take leaves to care for their families, men still earn substantially more than women; this means taking an unpaid leave is more expensive for them and their families than it is for women. The FMLA cannot seriously counter the inequalities rooted in the wage gap between men and women, a gap sustained by preexisting policies. Moreover, the FMLA was introduced in the context of existing legislation (the PDA) that provided paid disability leaves for some women. Thus men and women do not have similar access to useful family leaves, at least for infant care, because some women (but certainly not all) have paid leaves, but almost no men do.

Consequently, because leaves mandated by the FMLA are unpaid, such policy exacerbates rather than alleviates certain forms of inequality. At the same time, it helps stabilize the unequal division of family work—where women do far more than men—still so characteristic of families in the United States.

In addition to perpetuating gender inequalities, the provisions of the FMLA result in, or at least bolster, other inequalities among workers—by race, class, marital status, and sexuality. Although the FMLA does not specifically address racial or ethnic inequality, some research suggests that race and ethnicity play a role in the need for and ability to take family leave; that is, African Americans and Latino(a)s, whether because of greater health problems or greater exchanges with relatives, may need leaves more than Whites. At the same time, they are, on average, less able to afford unpaid leaves.

Moreover, race and gender operate jointly in their effect on people's leave taking. Amy Armenia and Naomi Gerstel found that although there are no significant differences in leave taking between White women and women and men of color, White men are significantly less likely than any other group to take family leaves. This intersection of race and gender may be connected to cultural factors, such as the

centrality of children or kinship more generally in men's and women's lives or economic factors such as wage differentials. There is some evidence that African Americans, especially women, are more involved with kin than Whites. Moreover, a larger wage gap exists between White spouses than between African American spouses. Both these differences may lead to more gender equality in leave taking among people of color than among Whites.

Given the provisions of the FMLA, marital status and sexuality also affect leave taking. Having a spouse or partner improves women's and men's financial abilities as well as their need to take family leaves. Because the provisions of the FMLA include spouses but not unmarried partners, lesbian and gay employees, like cohabiters more generally, can legally take leaves to provide care for their children but still in most states cannot take leaves for their partners or their partners' children.

Research to date, although limited, suggests that class position affects both the ability of workers to take family leaves and the length of their leaves. Because leaves are unpaid, the working poor, whose numbers are large and growing, cannot afford to take leaves. And these are the workers most likely to have sick family members or to have no other paid-leave options. Research shows that although women with lower household income are more likely to perceive the need for family leaves, they have less access to family benefits in general and take less time off after childbirth than do women from higher-income households. When they do manage to take leaves to provide care for their families, the loss in income is often enough to push them below the poverty line. Approximately 9 percent of FMLA leave takers report that they go on public assistance to cover lost income. Furthermore, poorer employees also are significantly more likely to face pressure from their employers to return to work.

The FMLA provides a minimal level of benefits for many workers. For many workers, the availability of leaves, however, depends not only on the federal mandate provided by the FMLA but also on the policies and practices of their individual employers. Some research has examined whether different kinds of employers vary in the amount and kind of job leaves they provide. A number of authors contend that relatively privileged workers, especially union members and those working in large organizations with salaries rather than wages, are in better positions to negotiate

with their employers for family leaves. Studies have provided mixed results. Some have found that large employers are more likely to offer leaves, either because of cost-effectiveness or greater social pressure. In contrast, comparing national (Current Population Survey) data from the pre-FMLA (1992-1993) with the post-FMLA (1994-1995) period, Jane Waldfogel found an increase in leave taking concentrated in “medium-sized” firms (100 to 499 employees) among working mothers with children under one year of age.

Inequalities in official provisions of leave taking are increased by organizations’ responses to those who ask for leaves. Employers may discourage family leaves, especially in large firms. Research shows that employers discourage lower-level employees from taking time off to care for their families. They also discourage men employed in the upper reaches of management: Mindy Fried found these men were particularly susceptible to informal pressures to keep working. As a result, many did not take parental leaves even when entitled to them. Many scholars suggest that workplaces that deny the validity or even the existence of family needs may have more influence on employees’ options than does official policy that supports such needs.

Finally, knowledge is crucial, but often lacking: Many workers are simply unaware of possibilities for leaves or other job benefits provided by employers. This is why many union leaders not only worked to get the FMLA passed but also continue to put much effort into telling workers about their legal rights and making sure that employers give workers the family leaves to which they are now legally entitled.

PAID FAMILY LEAVE POLICIES

The limits of the FMLA become especially clear when we look at the policies in other nations. All European countries and Canada provide paid leave benefits to working parents. Most are universal. Most are funded by a variety of methods, including direct state funding and employee contributions to disability insurance funds. Providing not only job protection but also substantial income replacement, generous programs are common throughout Europe (although the length, flexibility, and level of payment they provide vary). In Sweden, for example, parents receive a full year-and-a-half paid parental leaves for each child (including 12 months at 80 percent of prior earnings).

Because so many parents—mostly mothers—use family leaves, fewer than 200 children under one year old in the entire country are in day care. In Norway, employed parents are entitled to leaves of absence of 42 weeks. Furthermore, the “fathers quota” reserves four weeks of this leave for fathers only. If the father does not use them, these four weeks of paid leave are lost to the family. The fathers quota, instituted to change the gendered division of caring labor, is being used by almost 70 percent of the eligible Norwegian fathers. Sweden and Italy have instituted “fathers quotas” as well, creating nontransferable leaves for fathers only. Although the U.S. welfare state clearly differs in many other ways from its European counterparts, these policies can help us understand ways to be responsive to the needs of families and the inequalities maintained by the FMLA.

Many groups in the U.S. are still working hard to introduce and implement policy that covers a broader range of workers and ensures that workers will receive at least some pay when they take time off to care for their families. The National Partnership for Women and Families is currently joining with others around the country to advance family leave insurance plans; they hope to expand current unemployment or disability insurance to provide some pay during periods of unpaid family and medical leave.

In 2004, the state of California enacted the first paid family leave policy in the United States. The California Family Rights Act went into effect in the summer of 2004, making workers eligible for six weeks of partially paid family leave. The leaves are funded by an employee payroll deduction, expected to average \$27 per worker per year, that will go into a fund similar to the one used for unemployment insurance. The law is not a mandate for all companies; businesses with fewer than 50 employees do not have to hold a leave taker’s job open, and managers can deny an employee’s request for leave. Still, many see the law’s passage in California, home to one-tenth of the nation’s workforce, as a watershed; many states now have bills pending that are similar to California’s. Many are now working for the expansion of such paid leaves to the federal level so that more workers who must combine work and family responsibilities will be able to do so.

—Naomi Gerstel and Amy Armenia

See also Family-responsive workplace practices, Work/life litigation

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FAMILY BACKGROUND AND CAREERS

Family background and *careers* are robust constructs, each of which subsumes a complex network of conditions and behaviors. They are interconnected; that is, the definition of one construct in isolation is somewhat limited because it depends on the other construct for complete meaning. The workings of a career are embedded within the workings of the family, and the workings of family are embedded within careers. Definitions of the linked constructs are complex and involve complicated webs of interactions. Family background and careers are applicable to all individuals. Indeed, all persons, notwithstanding their locations within cultures or nations, experience family and career, although the particular manifestations may vary across cultures.

Some authorities believe that families differ from other social units in that new members enter only by birth, adoption, or marriage and leave only by death. Like schools, workplaces, and communities, families have differentiated roles and functions, but they are

unique in the social-emotional importance ascribed to interpersonal relationships. If family members die or depart, others can perform the lost members' roles and functions, but the relationships cannot be duplicated. The emotional intensity of the parent-child relationship has a distinctive influence on a person's life.

The *family background construct* definition herein is limited in scope to the single-generation family of origin, not the intergenerational family of the familiar family tree. Family background is further limited to psychosocial conditions and behaviors within the family and will not include the cross-generational transmissions of psychobiological features through genetic inheritance. The focus is on nurture, not nature. This limiting assumption is typical in social science literature about family and careers, though not always acknowledged.

Family background has a time-extended influence on careers. The family of origin is the principal agent of socialization during childhood and, as such, exerts a pervasive and durable influence on long-term psychosocial development. This influence extends to experiences associated with the transformation from a dependent, nonworking child into an independent, working adult.

A general definition of *careers* was chosen from among many used in the social sciences because it has acceptance in most disciplines: A career is the evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time. The definition's essential features are (a) its focus on work experiences rather than simply employment, thus including homemaking and other productive efforts; (b) limitation of experiences to those of one person; and (c) dimension of time required to encompass an "evolving sequence" of work experiences and thus necessitating historical or longitudinal conceptualizations. Careers thus defined are essentially *occupational careers*: literally, the work that occupies a person's time and efforts, whether remunerated or not.

Careers, as sequences of work experiences, can be thought of as one strand in life span development that is interwoven with, among things, social experiences, cognitive experiences, and emotional experiences to form a person's psychosocial life history. Careers are described as behavior patterns and sequences rather than single acts (e.g., choice or entry into an occupation).

Careers are most strongly connected with family background during the first decade of life, and therefore emphasis will be given to the early emergence of

two broad activity patterns: habits of industry and occupational aspirations. Both activity patterns are recognized in psychology and sociology; both are multidimensional constructs; and both are believed to be shaped through social interactions within the family unit.

Habits of industry are the attitudes and behaviors that are exhibited on jobs required within a social system, whether it is the family, school, or workplace. For example, the nonworking child develops habits for organizing time and energy to complete tasks. Some theorists add that the child learns to habitually manage aggression and frustration, to put work ahead of play, to meet externally imposed standards for achievement, and to follow verbal instructions. Taken together, these behaviors form a pattern acceptable to community and employer norms. The family is instrumental in inculcating and shaping habits of industry.

Occupational aspirations refers to a broad construct that has multiple meanings in social science theory and research. Aspirations relate to several psychosocial functions:

- Goals, intentions, or orientations
- Manifestations of personality traits, such as interests, values, abilities
- Cognitive interactions among values and expectancies
- Reflections of past social experiences
- Representations of the self, self-concept, or identity

For purposes of this discussion, occupational aspirations will subsume all these functions. The content of occupational aspirations is often analyzed along three dimensions: (1) a status hierarchy, (2) an array of fields of work, and (3) role typing (occupations peopled by gender or racial/ethnic groups). Aspirations are dynamic, and the content changes frequently over time; that is, people aspire to a certain occupation at one time and another occupation at some other time.

Occupational aspirations are first formed within family social interactions and are clearly associated with the quality of interpersonal support and perceived societal norms, both of which may emanate from the family background. Aspirations formed at an early age shape later educational and occupational attainments. Some have argued that a feature of aspirations critical to their fulfillment is that they be “realistic,” that is, “aligned” with the education planned. Families are also instrumental in fostering the values and expectancies that are central elements in independent, self-directed choices among occupational roles.

Habits of industry and occupational aspirations also represent forms of coping with social system demands peculiar to an age/stage in the life cycle, that is, following society’s timetable for growing up. These age-graded social expectations are called *developmental tasks* and capture the predictable, socially impinged adaptive challenges within each stage. The major career developmental tasks to be mastered in childhood are often depicted as the acquisition of habits of industry and forming an identity as a worker, commonly expressed through occupational aspirations. The family is the primary setting in which children are first introduced to the demands of career development tasks and then taught how to cope with these tasks.

The complex mechanisms for transmitting the influences of family background experiences on a person’s early career are generally grouped by two dominant family characteristics: (1) family structure, the internal organization of the family unit, and (2) family functions, the intrafamily unit relations and interactional processes required to carry out normal family responsibilities and duties. These two characteristics will be considered both separately and jointly.

Family structure characteristics linked to careers can be explained by describing three publicly observable differences among family units. The first difference occurs in *family composition*. Examples are the number of siblings and caretakers (i.e., family size), whether or not members are biologically related, and children’s birth order and spacing. The second difference occurs in the *physical surroundings*. Examples include domicile space considerations, such as shared bedrooms, noise level, and the family-related circumstance of geographic location. Third are *material differences* among families, including conditions such as family wealth, prestige of caretakers’ education and occupations, and number and type of media in the home. In summary, family structure characteristics set the parameters for children and youth to broaden and deepen experiences essential to careers.

Some would argue that the examples of material differences are simply indicators of the venerable sociological construct *socioeconomic status* (SES). The influence of family-of-origin SES on the offspring’s entering high-status occupations, especially when educational achievement is controlled, has been demonstrated in several large-scale longitudinal research studies. In brief, more material and social resources enable families to provide opportunities for

education, skill development, and social “contacts” that influence hiring. Conversely, less material and social resources can result in biases and barriers that reduce these opportunities.

Family functions are fulfilled through family interactions, and are the overt and covert communication processes both within dyads of family members and within the family unit as a whole. For example, family members communicate work habits and attitudes to a child, which, in turn, the child generalizes to school and job settings. Consequently, these communications are sometimes called the *initial social learning mechanisms* for socialization into work roles.

These communications are further clarified by differentiating three family interactions in which they commonly occur: (1) activities that are taught, encouraged, or disciplined; (2) interpersonal relations among family members; and (3) social roles as taught directly and conveyed through models. These three opportunities for children’s socialization experiences have obvious parallels with three adult experiences in occupational careers: work tasks and duties, worker relationships with bosses, coworkers and customers, and differentiated roles within work organizations.

Family activities, such as intrafamily games and household chores, allow children to learn about family social norms such as competition and cooperation, rewards and penalties, and the general “rules of the game”: attitudes that serve as important foundations for a socialized worker. As children grow up, they engage in more complex activities that teach advanced lessons about worker roles and attitudes as preparation for the habits of industry.

The family also directs activities at the person, such as parental child-rearing practices that train children both overtly and covertly in work habits and values. Some research evidence supports the proposition that parent child-rearing orientation and behaviors, for example, the kind of activities parents reward, influence children’s developing interests and values and thus indirectly influence their occupational aspirations and the directions their careers take later in life.

Familial interpersonal relations are the fundamental qualities of the parent-child dyad, parent-parent relationships, and sibling relationships. Family conversations are important to the child’s developing ideas and attitudes about careers. Some theorists argue that security and safety in relations with others as first experienced in the family are essential for coping with later developmental tasks. The content of these communications has been

classified as either *supportive* (i.e., affective enabling) or *challenging* (i.e., cognitive enabling). Parental support and encouragement are manifested through showing appreciation, respect, and special attention. Such communication, sometimes portrayed as parental affirmation, strengthens the connectedness or emotional bond between parent and offspring. Support may also convey positive attitudes about the child’s aspirations. High familial support has been shown to be critical for young women and lower-SES offspring who are forming and realizing nonnormative occupational aspirations. Conversely, low support and low challenge may impede the learning of habits of industry and occupational aspirations.

Parental challenges directed toward the child usually occur in purposeful, self-conscious, and goal-directed activities and take the form of stimulation, discipline, or training. Challenge is communicated through competitive games and expectations of achievement, effort, and efficiency.

There has been considerable debate about the place of separation and individuation of offspring from parents in relation to careers. *Separation* is a part of the child’s self-reflective processes, particularly how the child sees himself or herself as separate and distinct in the parent-child relationship. Some believe that adequate separation from parents is a necessary condition for adult independence and self-direction, which are the hallmarks of careers in Western societies. Some believe that separation is valued only in particular cultures and that it can be the source of tension in families and in offspring growing up in dual cultures. Parental attachment, or close contact with parents, also seems to be associated with enhanced development. Although the evidence is mixed and largely retrospective and correlational, thus making the direction of causation unclear, there is a tendency for both separation/individuation and connectedness/attachment to be associated with mastery of adolescent and adult career-development tasks.

Sibling relationships are likely to be instrumental in careers, although there is little research or theory about these relationships. Commonly accepted examples are that older siblings may provide younger siblings with challenges and support much as parents do, and younger siblings may offer opportunities for older siblings to practice nurturing skills.

Social roles and role expectations are communicated through family power relationships, family “rules,” and family traditions. Roles are learned within the family

setting directly through instruction and vicariously through work role and sex role models. Some authorities suggest that parents'/caregivers' workplace conditions have an indirect influence on their children's career development. Their argument is that the conditions of parents' jobs (e.g., degree of self-direction) shape parents' personalities and values (e.g., value of independence), which, in turn, influence parenting behaviors (e.g., arranging and rewarding independence). Whether or not the female caregiver works outside the home has been shown to influence daughters' aspirations and subsequent career directions.

Although often studied in isolation, family structure characteristics and family functions interact in everyday life to produce the essence of family background experiences that are linked with career experiences. For example, family material wealth distributed according to family size (two structural qualities) may set constraints on the transmission of occupational aspirations and habits of industry that takes place through family functions such as child-rearing practices and role models.

Empirically validated relationships between and among family background variables and career variables are extremely complex owing to several conditions. First, many family-career links are indirect; that is, family influences on career are mediated by a third set of factors. For example, the influence of family structure on an individual's career is not direct, but rather is enhanced or limited by the amount of education the individual attains. Second, the purported causation is not always unidirectional; that is, the child influences the family, and the family influences the child. For example, the influence of parents' activity interests on children's interests may be reciprocated by adaptation of parental activities to accommodate the child's interests. Third, the sheer number of variables involved makes data gathering and analyses complicated. When the necessity of longitudinal designs is added to study "experiences over time," research on family background and careers becomes an expensive and formidable venture.

Two specific examples of frequently studied family occupational socialization mechanisms that influence careers are called occupational inheritance and occupational linkage. *Occupational inheritance* is the general notion that a parent's occupation "begets" the child's occupations. Social scientists refer to occupational inheritance as the social induction mechanism by which offspring are prepared to enter the particular

occupation of the parent. Families are believed to be instrumental in shaping the direction of the child's occupational aspirations. For example, professional entertainers provide their offspring with performance models, training, and "personal contacts" that prepare the child for work in the entertainment field. Evidence suggests that relatively few children enter the specific occupation of either parent; for example, in general, entertainers' children seldom become entertainers, though children tend toward broad fields of work similar to their parents'; for example, entertainers' children are more likely than other children to enter occupations in the arts.

Occupational linkage is a social induction mechanism for explaining the perpetuation of the occupational value structure across generations. Parental work values, such as valuing achievement or material wealth, are transferred to children through social learning experiences and, as a consequence, influence children's choices of occupations. The evidence is mixed; some studies have revealed a tendency for children to reflect their parents' occupational values and to apply these values in selecting occupations, but evidence from other studies is equivocal.

In summary, family background is linked with careers in powerful ways that are not completely explicated by theories or by research evidence. Families and careers each demonstrate wide-ranging interconnected qualities that, in turn, are linked with the other construct in a tangled, complicated fashion, analogous to the convergence of two nets. What seems irrefutable is that each touches the other to shape human and societal development.

—David A. Jepsen

See also Culture and careers, Customized careers, Nepotism, Socioeconomic status

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FAMILY-RESPONSIVE WORKPLACE PRACTICES

Family-responsive workplace practices are employer-sponsored programs and practices designed to help employees manage the demands of work and personal life. Such practices are intended to help organizations in their recruiting efforts, enhance their employees' work-related attitudes and job performance, and encourage their employees to remain with the organization, all of which can ultimately improve an organization's productivity. In other words, both employees and their employing organizations experience a "win-win" situation in offering and using these practices. Perhaps because of their greater resources, large employers are more likely than small ones to offer family-supportive practices, and because of their desire to improve their recruiting effectiveness, firms in industries with a high percentage of women in the labor pool also tend to offer family-supportive programs.

Family-responsive workplace practices include programs such as dependent care support (including child

care and elder care), flexible work schedules (such as flextime and four-day workweeks), and other forms of flexible work arrangements, such as part-time schedules, job sharing, and telecommuting. Jeffrey H. Greenhaus and Sharon Foley have observed a number of trends in the way that researchers have classified the type of family-supportive practice, the ways in which family-responsive practices are measured, and the type of employee most likely to use such practices.

For example, the practices may be formal or informal, and they may attempt to fit an employee's family responsibilities around a strong focus on work (segmentative) or focus on integrating an employee's work and family life (integrative). In addition, whereas some studies examining the effectiveness of family-responsive practices focus on the presence or absence of a practice or the number of practices offered by an employer, other studies examine the actual use of a practice or the employee's level of satisfaction with the practice. Moreover, it is not surprising that employees most likely to use family-responsive practices believe that the practice can meet their needs (e.g., women, employees who place importance on spending time with their families) and that their supervisors and their organizations are supportive of their family and personal lives. Although some employees may be hesitant to take advantage of family-responsive practices because they believe that their coworkers will resent them, employees generally seem to react favorably to family-responsive workplaces even if they do not personally benefit from the practices.

Do family-responsive practices accomplish their aims? Comprehensive reviews of the research, by Sharon Lobel in 1998 and by Jennifer Glass and Ashley Finley in 2002, have reported generally positive results. The availability and/or utilization of such practices has been associated with enhanced recruitment, positive work-related attitudes (such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment), low work-family conflict, and reduced withdrawal tendencies (that is, low levels of absenteeism, lateness, turnover intentions, and turnover behavior). Family-responsive practices have also been associated, although not as consistently, with improved individual and team performance. In addition, bundles (or groupings) of family-responsive workplace practices may be a source of sustained competitive advantage for organizations that offer them.

Despite the positive trends noted above, the effectiveness of family-responsive practices has not always

been observed. Moreover, specific practices may be effective in some respects (e.g., reducing absenteeism) but not others (e.g., improving job performance). Further research is needed to determine the conditions under which particular family-responsive practices improve specific individual and organizational outcomes. Research along this line has shown, for example, that flexible work schedule policies and practices are more likely to enhance work attitudes (e.g., organizational commitment, job satisfaction, feelings of loyalty to the employer) for employees of childbearing ages and those with dependent children. However, additional research is required to understand when certain types of practices have their most potent effects on employee and organizational well-being.

A partial answer as to the effectiveness of family-responsive practices may rest with the family supportiveness of an organization's culture. Family-supportive work environments not only provide family-friendly practices but also encourage supervisors to be supportive of their employees' family and personal lives by being understanding and flexible when their subordinates face challenges in juggling their work and family lives. Moreover, supportive supervisors enable their employees to use the family-responsive practices provided by the organization. It is probably due to these reasons that individuals who report to supportive supervisors tend to be loyal and committed employees who experience relatively little work-family conflict and stress and intend to remain with the organization.

A concept similar to a family-supportive work culture is what Tammy D. Allen has called "family-supportive organization perceptions" (FSOPs). These refer to overall perceptions that employees hold about the extent to which their organizations support employees' participation in their family lives. Employees who perceive their organizations as supportive tend to use the family-responsive practices their employers provide, experience relatively low levels of work-family conflict, and hold positive attitudes toward their jobs and their organizations. Therefore, although the provision of family-responsive practices is certainly important, they are most likely to be used, and therefore useful, when the overall culture of the organization is supportive of employees' lives outside of work and when the supervisors who work in the organization are supportive of their subordinates' family and personal lives. In fact, research indicates that a supportive culture promotes positive

work attitudes above and beyond the effects of the family-responsive practices provided by an organization.

It is reasonable to ask whether men and women differ in the utilization of family-responsive workplace practices. There is evidence that women react more positively than men to such practices and are more likely than men to use them. Although it is possible that men, as a group, have less need than women for the assistance provided by these practices, men's reluctance to take advantage of the practices may also be due to their fear of being stigmatized as uncommitted to their careers if they seek help from their organizations to meet family responsibilities. Men also have been found to make informal arrangements with their managers to juggle work and family responsibilities rather than rely on more formal organizationally sponsored practices.

Because much of the research on work-family issues in general and family-responsive workplace practices in particular has been conducted in the United States, the role of national culture in work and family life has emerged as an important topic in recent studies. A number of these studies have examined similarities and differences between countries in the extensiveness of government policies provided to help employees juggle work and family responsibilities. Although a high proportion of women in the workforce is associated with extensive family-supportive practices and legislation, national culture, in particular the availability of extended kinship systems, seems to determine who is thought to be responsible for helping employees balance work and family responsibilities. For example, in countries in which the extended family is expected to provide care for children and elders, dependent care is seen as a private responsibility, and there is little government support. Other countries rely more heavily on legal solutions to dependent care, as witnessed by the European Union's Parental Leave Directive and the 1993 Family and Medical Leave Act in the United States. Additional research is required for understanding how culture affects the extent to which families, governments, and employers assist employees in balancing work and family responsibilities.

In summary, the literature indicates that family-responsive workplace practices can help employees meet the challenges of managing their work and family responsibilities and can help employers become more productive as well. However, further research is necessary for understanding the mechanisms that explain why and when different family-responsive

workplace practices promote individual and organizational well-being across a variety of national cultures. One useful concept studied by Susan Eaton is the “perceived usability” of family-responsive workplace practices, which refers to employees’ belief that they can use formal or informal practices without damaging their careers. The provision of family-responsive practices will be of little help if employees fear that using these practices will contribute to “career suicide.” It is likely that the culture of an organization and the supportiveness of its supervisors enable employees to take advantage of the practices that the organization offers—and become satisfied and committed employees in the process.

—Sharon Foley

See also Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Flexible work arrangements, Two-career relationship, Work-family balance, Work-family conflict

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FAST-TRACK CAREER

A *fast-track career* offers advancement opportunities to top-level positions based on a series of developmental experiences provided by the organization. Stated differently, high-potential individuals are given accelerated development opportunities, with the idea of their reaching senior-management levels more quickly than those who are not on such a track. There are individual (e.g., needs, personality, education) and organizational (e.g., staffing, structure) characteristics and processes associated with the “fast track.” High achievement-motivated individuals seek environments in which a path to the top echelons of the organization is explicit, with identifiable career benchmarks. This is the traditional upwardly mobile career path, also known as the *linear career*. Related concepts include upward mobility and high-potential managers.

Fast-track career paths are widely accepted in organizations as a means of attracting and retaining a pool of highly capable future leaders. Such programs are typically called *leadership development* or *leadership continuity programs* and provide the requisite experiences deemed necessary to prepare the participants for top-management positions. The underlying assumption is the competitive advantage an organization achieves by investing in leaders who will ensure the continued success of the organization. In reality, there is no single path that will lead to success, and the contemporary organizational environment characterized by mergers and acquisitions, reduction in organizational levels, global competition, and outsourcing have significantly increased the complexity of routes to top management. Organizations are rethinking “succession planning” models, and individuals have no guarantees that top management is attainable even when they appear to have such potential.

The literature has identified two types of fast-track individuals: the *apparent fast track* (AF-T) and *real fast track* (RF-T). To an observer, both types would look pretty much the same in the early career stages: highly energetic, bright individuals who know how to get things done. There would be also be differences,

although they may not be observed as easily. The AF-T is characterized by rapid promotions and salary increases, with a lesser emphasis on developing the skills and relationships that are needed to make the executive transition (i.e., from middle to top management). Such individuals have a higher probability of derailing from the fast track because of their inability to handle the interdependence and diversity of higher-level management. RF-T individuals progress a bit more slowly, but they invest the time in honing the requisite skills and cultivating long-term relationships that increase the likelihood of reaching top-management positions. Such individuals understand that quick promotions are not the ultimate goal and that lateral moves can also be an effective path to the top.

Derailment from the fast track has become a major issue because of the resultant personal and organizational consequences. Individuals can become disillusioned and bitter because additional promotions are denied them as others continue to progress. The major factors associated with derailment include interpersonal relationships, team leadership, performance, and coping with change. Some managers find it difficult to make the transition from being task-based managers, the key to earlier successes, to becoming relationship leaders, which is required at higher levels. Such managers can be seen as manipulative by others. Performance issues often center on being overly ambitious with a lack of follow-through on promised results. Team leadership has become a critical aspect of top management. Building, developing, and leading an effective team may be difficult for managers who are individualistic, primarily concerned with task performance, and insensitive to the participative aspects underlying team dynamics. Finally, the inability to deal with change can manifest itself though unwillingness to learn new skills, work effectively with a new boss, or, more broadly, change as the business evolves.

The literature suggests a new psychological contract that emphasizes employability rather than vertical movement (promotions). In essence, organizations assist employees with development (rather than a path to the top), while individuals enhance their market value as a result of such opportunities. However, research also indicates that few organizations have modified their fast-track philosophies or behavior. This is a testimony to the importance of top leaders to organizational success. From a retention perspective, one of the true organizational shortcomings is clearly communicating

expectations to individuals about their career progress. Some highly capable managers leave because they are unsure about their value to the organization.

Concerns have also been advanced that current fast-track models do not include sufficient diversity in the high-potential equation. The current cadre of primarily White male CEOs may be more comfortable promoting and encouraging White males on the fast track. Minorities and women may have to work harder to achieve equivalent levels of recognition regarding promotional opportunities to top management. The literature suggests that line managers be rewarded for achieving diversity in their staffing plans.

The fast track continues to generate significant interest from individuals and organizations. Much of the literature centers on the organizational perspective, with significantly less research on the individual perspective. Nevertheless, recent research has reexamined the role of an individual's personality matching a fast-track career path and the role of work in the individual's life space, particularly with reference to family and activities outside of work. It is also important to understand the paradoxical situation in which early career behaviors that were recognized and rewarded (e.g., AF-T) may, indeed, be the very same behaviors that ultimately prevent some fast-track individuals from attaining top-management leadership positions. Enhancing fast-track opportunities for women and minorities continues to be a concern in the literature. Organizations need to remain focused on recruiting, motivating, and retaining top leadership talent, while realistically communicating expectations and opportunities to the leaders of the future.

—Nicholas J. Beutell

See also Career mobility, Career success, Derailment, Leadership development, Succession planning

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FIRO-B

FIRO-B (rhymes with “Cairo”) is an acronym for Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation-Behavior, a psychological instrument developed by William C. Schutz and fully described in 1958. The *FIRO-B* was originally developed to support the use of interpersonal compatibility as the basis for work group design in military settings. Since its original development, the *FIRO-B* has been widely used in the United States, Europe, and Japan for team development, leadership training, executive coaching, career counseling, and relationship/family therapy. Career-development professionals have predominantly used the *FIRO-B* to facilitate self-awareness, explore incompatibility with particular work settings, stimulate effective performance management, and assess interpersonal coping strategies during job transitions (e.g., networking, support groups).

The *FIRO-B* instrument focuses on only one aspect of Schutz’s broader *FIRO* theory, but it is the most recognized and popularly used element. Drawing on the work of psychologists Mortimer Adler, Erich Fromm, and T. W. Adorno, Schutz proposed that interpersonal behavior can be understood by examining three interpersonal needs: inclusion, control, and affection. Like biological needs, these three interpersonal needs represent a condition that if not satisfied leads to a state of discomfort or anxiety.

Given that these needs are likely to operate outside of daily consciousness, the purpose of the *FIRO-B* is to bring clients into sharper awareness of their needs and to guide them in selecting and managing behaviors used to satisfy their needs.

The realm of Inclusion (I) represents the need to seek out and sustain interactions with others, including the extent to which one seeks communality, belonging, participation, involvement, and prominence in social interactions. In the workplace, a person with high levels of Inclusion would enjoy the recognition, contact, and attention provided by interacting with others. The realm of Control (C) represents the need for structure and purposeful direction with others, including the extent to which one seeks responsibility, consistency, and decision making in social interactions. Individuals with high levels of Control would be oriented in their work to the nature of influencing, leadership, dominance, and competitiveness when interacting with others. The realm of

Affection (A) represents the need for closeness and supportiveness in social interactions, including the extent to which social interactions provide intimacy, openness, warmth, and encouragement. A person with high levels of Affection would enjoy working with others who show a high degree of concern for each other, expect and reward loyalty, and function with each other like a “second family.” Each need area can also be associated with characteristics that define low levels of the need. For example, a person with low levels of Affection would be comfortable in work environments characterized by cool and businesslike relations, little interaction outside of work, and more open, direct expressions of disagreement and conflict.

The *FIRO-B* provides measurement of these three interpersonal needs along two dimensions. For each need, the first dimension is called the Expressed Need. Expressed Needs are the extent to which a person actively initiates toward others those behaviors associated with the need area. For example, a high level of the Expressed Need for Control could be demonstrated by a person’s need to try to influence others, take a leadership role, and direct others on tasks. A low level of the Expressed Need for Control could be demonstrated by an aversion or passivity toward those same behaviors.

The second dimension is called the Wanted Need, which also can be manifested in each of three need areas. Wanted Needs represent the extent to which a person will be comfortable receiving another person’s Expressed Needs. It is difficult to observe Wanted Needs as a passive dimension. For example, if supervised by a person with high levels of Expressed Control, a person with low levels of the Wanted Control may exhibit resistance, insubordination, and avoidance. Absent the presence of such a supervisor, the same person may simply seek out ways to work autonomously. Conversely, a person with high levels of Wanted Control may ask many questions and seek guidance and feedback from others. Absent a person to provide such direction, the same person may become demanding and highly frustrated.

Table 1 shows the resultant six-cell framework used by the *FIRO-B* to understand interpersonal behavior. Using 54 items (9 per cell), the *FIRO-B* asks individuals to report the frequency and selectivity of interpersonal behaviors. Individuals receive six numerical results between 0 and 9 indicating the level of their interpersonal needs, with the 0 to 2 range considered “low,” 3 to 6 considered “medium,” and 7 to

Table 1. The FIRO-B Framework

	<i>Inclusion</i>	<i>Control</i>	<i>Affection</i>
Expressed Behavior Wanted	<i>Expressed Inclusion (eI)</i>	<i>Expressed Control (eC)</i>	<i>Expressed Affection (eA)</i>
Behavior	<i>Wanted Inclusion (wI)</i>	<i>Wanted Control (wC)</i>	<i>Wanted Affection (wA)</i>

SOURCE: Schnell (1993).

9 considered “high.” Client interpretive materials elaborate on the meaning of each result and provide explanations for additional results obtained by adding together different variations of the six cells.

Administration of the FIRO-B (approximately 15 minutes) is much briefer than for other instruments, with the same psychometric strength and interpretive flexibility. The psychometric properties of the FIRO-B indicate that it is reliable and valid. Norms for age, race, educational level, and organizational level, as well as for several countries, are available. The FIRO-B has convergent validity with other instruments commonly used in career-development settings, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), California Psychological Inventory (CPI), and Strong Interest Inventory. Understanding these relationships can improve interpretive clarity. For example, there appears to be an association between the extroversion preference and higher levels overall on all FIRO-B results. Other relationships may prove useful to the career-development professional, such as a finding that individuals with higher levels of Wanted Control will rely more on religious beliefs when facing problems and transitions.

Research on the FIRO-B has included findings about occupational groupings and preferred workplace characteristics. Interesting findings include an association between high levels of Expressed Inclusion and a preference for diversity in the workplace, between high levels of Expressed Control and a preference for greater opportunities for advancement and high pay (even if job security is lower), and between high levels of Wanted Affection and a preference for workplaces that emphasize workplace loyalty and offering a job for life.

—Eugene R. Schnell

See also California Psychological Inventory, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Personality and careers, Strong Interest Inventory

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FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Flexible work arrangements refer to employer policies or managerial practices designed to give employees greater flexibility in influencing the time (duration), timing (when), or location (place) of work. Typically, these practices permit greater individual autonomy in self-managing work-role enactment in relation to family and other nonwork demands. Flexible work arrangements can be based on formal corporate policies and also on informal use permitted by the immediate supervisor or work group peers. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics National Compensation Survey conducted in 2000, which includes employers of all sizes in the United States, 5 percent of U.S. employers provide flexible workplace schedules. Most research on flexible work schedules has been conducted in large employer organization.

Time flexibility (duration of work) policies and practices permit employees to have control over the number of hours they work. *Reduced-hours or*

part-time work is an example of time flexibility practices that allow individuals to work less than full time with a commensurate decrease in salary or workload. Such practices allow individuals increased flexibility in the amount of time that is allocated between work and nonwork. Another example of time flexibility is the *leave of absence*, in which employees are allowed time off for maternity and paternity leave military service, education, elder and child care, and other life pursuits and are able to return to their jobs or similar jobs when they come back to work. *Job sharing* involves two employees working part time to share a full-time job.

Timing flexibility (scheduling of work hours) refers to policies offering temporal flexibility or freedom to influence the time at which work occurs. Under *flex-time*, employees can vary their beginning and ending times (often within a given flex range and established core hours) but generally work full time. Under a *compressed workweek*, employees typically work a full-time week of work but are allowed to work longer or extra hours on some days of the week in order to have part of a day or a whole day off at another time. Under *compensatory time*, employees working long hours are allowed subsequent time off to recoup.

Policies and practices offering *place flexibility* (location of work) allow employees to choose to work outside of the office or main worksite (all or some of the time). Employees may *telework*, working part time or full time at an off-site location, using technology (e.g., e-mail, fax, mobile phone) to communicate with others. Some avoid long commutes by teleworking, and others may obtain blocks of time without interruptions from coworkers.

Although more well-designed research is needed on the outcomes associated with different forms of

flexibility, studies suggest that employee use of flexible work practices can result in lower turnover intentions, less work-family conflict, and greater organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and attraction. More research is needed on how different types of flexibility are linked to different work and family outcomes. Studies on work-family policies also need to examine relationships between policy use and the supportiveness of supervisors and the climate of the organization.

—Ellen Ernst Kossek and Brenda A. Lautsch

See also Family-responsive workplace practices, Part-time employment, Telecommuting, Work-family balance

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G

GENDER AND CAREERS

Gender influences a wide range of career-related attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes. This includes career choice, career experiences, occupational health, work attitudes, other people's perceptions, and career outcomes. Therefore, to understand individuals' careers, it is important to consider gender.

GENDER AND CAREER CHOICE

Men and women differ considerably in their career choices, and many factors contribute to these differences. *Socialization experiences*, which refer to the lifelong social learning experiences that people have when interacting with others, play a major role here. Parents, siblings, teachers, school guidance counselors, other adult role models, peers, the media, and many other sources greatly influence how individuals view themselves based on their gender.

From an early age, parents tend to treat boys and girls differently and encourage children to engage in gender-appropriate play (e.g., boys play with trucks; girls play with dolls) and extracurricular activities (e.g., football for boys, dance for girls). Teachers and other adult role models such as guidance counselors, extended family members, and family friends also act differently toward boys and girls and hold different expectations for children based on their gender. Boys are expected to be more rambunctious and physically active, whereas girls are expected to be more sensitive and sociable. Thus, people in children's social environments reinforce and send

consistent messages as to what is expected of them according to their gender.

Materials used in primary educational settings also contribute to the socialization experience. For instance, textbooks often depict men and women in stereotypical occupations (e.g., men as doctors and women as nurses) and social roles (e.g., working fathers and stay-at-home mothers). Furthermore, children's stories are more likely to use men than women as story characters. The media plays a role in its portrayal of men and women in sex-typed occupational and societal roles, television shows, movies, and advertisements. Peers also exert considerable influence and contribute to the socialization process, particularly during adolescence. Because adolescents want to fit in with their peers, the decision to pursue activities that are not consistent with sex-role expectations is a difficult one. This might include choosing to participate in activities that are gender typed (e.g., a boy choosing to pursue art, a girl choosing to join the wrestling team) or expressing vocational interests that are viewed as less appropriate for one's gender (e.g., a boy interested in nursing, a girl interested in auto repair).

Although such socialization experience influences both genders, it is presumed to have greater negative effects on girls because it tends to limit and restrict their options and achievements more so than boys'. For example, healthy adult men are expected to work, but the decision to enter the labor force is presented as a choice for girls. In this way, gender influences the initial decision of whether or not to pursue paid work outside the home. Likewise, socialization experiences strongly influence vocational interests and career

choices. Both adolescent boys and adult men report greater interest in scientific, technical, and mechanical pursuits. Adolescent girls and adult women indicate greater interest in social and artistic endeavors. Thus, it is not surprising that men are generally encouraged to pursue careers in engineering, business, and science, whereas women are encouraged to pursue careers in social and helping occupations. It is also noteworthy that male-typed careers tend to offer higher status and pay than female-typed careers, contributing to the observed gender inequities in pay.

The availability of same-sex role models also influences vocational interests and subsequent career choice. Due to the differential representation of men and women in various occupations, girls are less likely to have female role models in male-dominated occupations, such as engineering, police and detective work, and construction trades. Girls are more likely to have role models in traditionally female occupations, such as education, nursing, and social work. The opposite is true for boys. Parental role modeling also influences occupational preference and career choice, since children tend to identify most with their same-sex parents and working adults are also segregated occupationally to some extent. Maternal employment also relates to career choice. In particular, working mothers can facilitate their daughters' career aspirations by providing female models of career pursuits and by demonstrating how women can successfully integrate work and family roles.

Another reason for male-female differences in career choice relates to career-related self-efficacy perceptions, or beliefs in one's ability to be successful in a wide range of career pursuits. Women have less access to the types of experience necessary for developing strong beliefs in their abilities to master career-related tasks, particularly tasks in male-dominated occupations and majors (e.g., math, science). Individuals develop career-related self-efficacy through vicarious experience (role models), verbal persuasion (encouragement from others), and actual experience (having opportunities to master tasks). Women tend to have less opportunity for these experiences and therefore tend to report lower career-related self-efficacy than men. These lower self-expectations can lead to further occupational sex segregation, as individuals are less likely to pursue certain jobs and/or careers if they believe that they will not be successful. Interestingly, there are few consistent differences in actual ability between men and women, and when differences are

found, they tend to be small in magnitude. Moreover, there is greater within-gender than between-gender variability in abilities such as overall intelligence, verbal ability, mathematical ability, and visual-spatial ability.

GENDER AND CAREER EXPERIENCES

Gender also influences individuals' career experiences. Women face unique barriers in the workplace, which, in turn, shapes their work and organizational experiences. One barrier consists of practices that intentionally or unintentionally exclude women from jobs and developmental experiences based on gender. This includes overt sex discrimination in hiring, being overlooked for high-visibility or high-stakes job assignments, and not being targeted for domestic or international relocation opportunities. Gender differences are also found in developmental assignments after individuals are hired by organizations. Women are more likely to be hired into staff positions and have less access to line experience, which is often a steppingstone to higher-level management positions. Women tend to report that their initial job assignments are less challenging than men's assignments. In addition, unlike jobs that tend to be held by women, jobs held by men tend to exist in job ladders that lead to positions of greater power and influence. Gender also influences access to information within organizations. Men tend to be more politically connected and have access to more powerful organizational members than do women. This is important since managers develop impressions about an individual's career potential through both formal and informal interactions. There is also some evidence that men receive more favorable performance feedback than do women and that the quality of such feedback provided varies by gender (e.g., more specific and developmental feedback tends to be provided to men). All of these factors can influence the availability and quality of career opportunities in an organization.

Another way in which men's and women's career experiences differ is that women are more likely to experience career interruptions, and gaps in employment can slow down their career progress. Men and women also tend to interrupt their careers for different reasons, with women being more likely to temporarily leave the workforce for family reasons and men being more likely to do so for job-related reasons (e.g., inability to find suitable employment). Interestingly,

career interruptions for family-related reasons have less negative impact on one's career progress than interruptions that occur for other reasons, such as gaps in employment due to temporary unemployment. The explanation for this is that women are expected to leave the workforce temporarily after childbirth, and by doing so, they are actually conforming to gender-based societal norms. Compared with men, women are also more likely to go from school to a full-time family role, and then return to school or enter the workforce for the first time after starting a family. Therefore, some women get a later start in their careers than do men. There are also gender differences in full-time versus part-time work, with married women being more likely than men to opt for the flexibility afforded by part-time work. Unfortunately, part-time work provides individuals with less visibility and exposure in organizations, which has been offered as one reason that women's careers often do not progress as quickly as men's careers.

A more permanent career interruption is job loss, and gender differences exist here as well. Women are less likely to occupy jobs that are revenue generating, and this makes them somewhat more susceptible to job loss than are men. However, there are few gender differences in individuals' emotional reactions to job loss (e.g., depression, reduced self-esteem), even though women tend to fare less well than men upon reemployment in terms of both extrinsic (e.g., pay) and intrinsic (e.g., quality of work life, job satisfaction) job characteristics. Women do respond to job loss with different behaviors. They are less likely to use problem-focused coping strategies (e.g., job search, relocation) and more likely to use symptom-focused coping strategies (e.g., talking to friends, getting involved in group activities). The opposite holds for men.

GENDER AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Individuals' career choices and experiences also influence a wide range of occupational health outcomes, and some gender differences are notable here. There is some evidence that professional women report greater overall stress than men and that they have a harder time unwinding from work. There are also consistent gender differences with respect to one specific type of organizational stressor: sexual harassment. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors,

and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Women are the typical targets of sexual harassment, and those experiencing harassment are more likely to report less favorable work attitudes, greater disengagement from work, lower psychological well-being, and greater physical health symptoms.

Another specific stressor with career implications is work-family conflict. *Work-family conflict* is a specific form of interrole conflict in which the demands of work and family are mutually incompatible in some way. It affects individuals' careers because greater work-family conflict is associated with lower job satisfaction, less career satisfaction, stronger intentions to leave one's organization, and poorer psychological and physical health. Although men and women both experience work-family conflict, there is some evidence that women report higher levels of work-family conflict than do men, presumably due to women's greater responsibilities for their families. The factors that contribute to work-family conflict differ somewhat among the genders. For instance, there is some evidence that work involvement has a stronger negative effect on work-family conflict for women and that family involvement has a stronger negative effect on work-family conflict for men. Regarding gender differences in outcomes of work-family conflict, there is some evidence that work-family conflict has a more negative effect on overall quality of work life for women and that work-family conflict has a more negative effect on overall quality of family life for men.

Although work-family conflict assumes that individuals have difficulty juggling multiple roles, multiple role membership has potential benefits as well. Membership in life roles can serve to buffer stress, be a source of satisfaction, increase opportunities to experience success, and provide opportunities for enriching interpersonal relationships. This is particularly likely if the roles that one occupies are satisfying (i.e., high role quality). While both men and women can benefit from multiple roles, women tend to occupy more life roles than do men. Furthermore, when imagining how men and women might enhance their role membership, people tend to think about men expanding their participation in the family role and women expanding their participation in the work role.

GENDER AND WORK ATTITUDES

Gender differences in work attitudes are also important, since how satisfied, involved, committed,

and motivated at work one is can influence a wide range of work behaviors, which, in turn, can impact career outcomes. For example, individuals who are more satisfied with their jobs and report greater attachment or loyalty to their organizations (i.e., have higher organizational commitment) are less likely to quit their jobs or be absent from work. Likewise, job involvement (the extent to which one identifies with his or her job) and work motivation are associated with career-related behaviors such as working longer hours and demonstrating stronger commitment to one's career, both of which can lead to greater career success. Interestingly, few differences have been found between men and women in job satisfaction and job involvement, although men may report higher organizational commitment than do women.

Gender differences in motivation have a long and controversial history. Initial conceptualization of motivation focused on *achievement motivation*, which is the desire to master tasks, excel and surpass others, and accomplish things as well as possible. Early studies of achievement motivation indicated that achievement motivation in women was distinct from that in men and, more important, that women's responses did not conform to the way scholars thought about achievement motivation. Thus, women were largely excluded from early research on achievement motivation, and assumptions were made that women do not desire achievement the same way men do. Later research dispelled this idea by finding that women actually have a stronger desire than men to work hard and do a good job, even when they are not likely to be recognized for their efforts, whereas men prefer challenging, competitive tasks that allow for individual recognition of task accomplishment. Although women are just as motivated as men to work hard (and perhaps more so), there are differences in what men and women find rewarding at work. Men value advancement, pay, and status and tend to judge their career success using these standards. In contrast, women have a broader conceptualization of career success by also considering factors such as personal growth, job accomplishments, challenge, and interpersonal relationships. Women are also more likely to define life success in terms of both work and family achievements, whereas men tend to focus more on the work domain.

Another work attitude of interest to understanding individual careers is *turnover intentions*. This work attitude reflects the extent to which one is thinking

about quitting one's job and is a strong predictor of the actual decision to quit. There is mixed evidence as to whether gender differences exist in turnover intentions, although some research finds that women are more likely than men to leave their organizations. Many of these studies have been conducted on managerial and professional women, and explanations for differential turnover rates often rest on women's disillusionment with corporate life, perceived barriers to career advancement, and unwillingness to engage in the political behavior often required to advance within the organization. Contrary to popular belief, women do not frequently report leaving their employers for family-related reasons. Furthermore, when one distinguishes between voluntary turnover (i.e., leaving by choice) and involuntary turnover (i.e., being let go), it appears that women tend to report slightly lower voluntary-turnover rates than do men.

GENDER AND PERCEPTIONS

As mentioned previously, men and women have different socialization experiences. Based on gender, they are treated differently and held to different standards by teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and others in their social environments. This, in turn, influences both career decisions and career opportunities. Of particular relevance here is the finding that people often view men and women in stereotypical ways. Generally speaking, women are believed to be more nurturing and sensitive, whereas men are viewed as more assertive and directive. These perceptions can influence perceptions of person-job "fit" in the job selection and promotion process (e.g., women may be viewed as less appropriate choices for male-typed jobs, and vice versa). Moreover, while general attitudes toward women have become more favorable over the years, sexist attitudes persist. Some individuals hold stereotyped attitudes about women's "place" in society in general or, more specifically, hold negative attitudes toward women in management positions. As an example, women are typically viewed as being less similar than men to the prototype of a successful manager. Women are also viewed as less appropriate candidates for jobs requiring heavy travel or relocation. These perceptions can influence women's career opportunities for being selected for transfers and relocation assignments, placement in high-risk internal job assignments, and receiving promotions. Others' perceptions can also undermine the

self-confidence of women in pursuing nontraditional jobs and careers.

Women report greater barriers in how they are viewed and treated by others in organizations. Women are more likely to report being excluded from informal organizational networks, which can restrict career opportunities. They are more likely to feel as though they do not “fit in” with the organization culture, which may lead some women to self-select out of high-level jobs or leave their organizations and pursue work elsewhere. Greater perceived barriers to developing mentoring relationships are also reported by women, as well as less contact and support from managers and peers. Finally, women in nontraditional jobs and occupations often experience tokenism at work, and the salience of their gender can encourage sex-based attributions for their behavior and result in higher performance expectations from managers. In addition, women in various family arrangements may face unique barriers resulting from the perceptions of others. For example, managers may believe that women in dual-earner marriages (i.e., where both partners work outside the home) are more likely to subordinate their own careers to their husbands’ careers. This may lead managers not to consider women when making high-level promotion or relocation decisions. Likewise, working mothers may be viewed as less committed to their careers by virtue of their parental status.

GENDER AND CAREER OUTCOMES

A substantial body of literature exists on the role of gender in understanding career outcomes such as pay, promotions, and career satisfaction. As a group, women earn less money than men. This gender gap in earning persists even after considering a wide range of factors that might explain the disparity, such as sex segregation by industry (i.e., men tend to work in higher-paying industries than women); variation in educational experiences; differences in the type and quality of job experiences; unequal family power between the genders (i.e., women tend to contribute less to the family’s income than men, which typically means less decision-making influence within the family); differences in family structure (e.g., married women are more likely to be married to a working spouse than vice versa); and self-selection (e.g., women may be more likely to withdraw from relocation offers or promotions). This discrepancy in earnings

is often attributed to the presence of a “glass ceiling” for women, which prevents them from attaining high-level, high-paying positions within organizations. Gender differences in earnings exist, but there is conflicting evidence as to whether or not there are gender differences in promotion rates. Some research suggests that women managers are promoted more swiftly than men, whereas other studies find no difference or faster promotion rates for men.

Notwithstanding these discrepant findings, men and women appear to take different paths to achieving career success. Men tend to progress within their careers in a traditional, hierarchical manner, whereby they have few gaps in employment and move into positions of increasing authority and status. In contrast, women are more likely to follow a sequential career path, whereby they experience a series of promotions, followed by career interruptions or a reduction in workforce participation, followed by a resumption of their careers. Furthermore, although there are probably more similarities than differences in terms of what predicts career success for men and women, some distinctions exist. Engaging in more training and development, working longer hours, minimizing employment gaps, remaining employed at the same organization, having greater home and family commitments, and displaying independence are more highly related to career success for men than for women. In contrast, obtaining a higher level of education, displaying more masculine personality characteristics, and having fewer home and family commitments appear more important to career success for women.

Self-reported satisfaction with one’s career represents another career outcome of interest. Interestingly, despite differences in objective indicators of career success, such as pay and job stature, men and women do not differ significantly in their self-perceptions of career success. Some argue that this is because women hold lower expectations for success than do men or that women compare themselves to other women when judging career success, rather than making comparisons to their male counterparts.

GENDER, FAMILY STRUCTURE, AND CAREERS

Family structure influences individuals’ careers, and gender differences are observed here. Family structure characteristics include parental status, marital status (married, single); marital type (single-earner

marriage, dual-earner marriage); and combinations of these characteristics. Parents report greater work-family conflict than do nonparents, and parenting can take time and energy away from some work pursuits. Being married also entails additional role responsibilities and makes career decision making more complicated, since one person's career decision influences his or her partner as well. For example, one person's decision to accept a promotion requiring relocation may mean uprooting a stay-at-home spouse from his or her community or lead to job loss for a working spouse. Finally, individuals in dual-earner marriages report higher stress than those in single-earner marriages, as well as unique stressors such as deciding whose career is most important and juggling both household and work-related responsibilities.

The influence of parental status, marital status, and marital type on individuals' careers varies somewhat between men and women. For women, the timing of parenthood influences the career paths chosen, as well as the extent to which career interruptions are experienced. Parenthood has less effect on men's career experiences. Furthermore, although men are much more involved in parenthood today than ever before, women are still primarily responsible for dependent care. This can put women at a disadvantage when competing with men for higher-level jobs, since they may have less time to invest in work or believe that they will not be able to successfully balance work and family obligations. Furthermore, significant dependent-care responsibilities can make it difficult for some women to maintain their career momentum. In fact, career-oriented women tend to have fewer children and are less likely to want children. Moreover, women in nontraditional occupations are less likely to have children than women in traditionally female occupations. No such differences are found among men.

Marital status and marital type have different effects on men's and women's careers. Marriage is associated with greater career success for men, whereas a comparable "marriage bonus" does not exist for women. In fact, for women, remaining single is associated with greater educational attainment and greater pursuit of nontraditional occupations. Being single is not associated with educational attainment or occupational choice for men. The typical family arrangement among male and female executives is also striking; executive men are more likely to be married to a stay-at-home spouses and have children, whereas executive

women are more likely to be single and without children. In terms of marital type, women in dual-earner marriages are much more likely to be "trailing spouses," following their husbands in job-related geographic moves. This can have negative career effects, as trailing spouses tend to report that they move into new jobs that offer less salary, benefits, and advancement opportunities than their previous jobs. In addition, dual-earner parenting can place greater stress and strain on women than on men. For instance, dual-earner mothers report greater perceived time pressure than dual-earner fathers. Men and women in dual-earner marriages also handle work-family conflicts differently, with women being more likely than men to restructure their work to accommodate family demands. Given these differences in how family structure relates to career outcomes for men and women, it is not surprising that women engage in more future role planning than men with respect to how they might integrate and balance work and family roles.

Family structure is believed to have different career effects for men and women for several reasons. As noted previously, even in egalitarian marriages, women have greater responsibilities for dependent care and household chores than do men. These additional responsibilities can restrict women's career opportunities. Another explanation is that as a group, women place greater emphasis on family than on work. If this is the case, it may lead some women to self-select out of jobs and careers that they believe will not allow them to accommodate their family responsibilities. Finally, societal stereotypes likely play a role as well, such that individuals in more "traditional" marriages (e.g., working husband with a stay-at-home wife and children) are viewed more favorably by organizational decision makers than those in other family arrangements (e.g., female parent in a dual-earner marriage).

—Lillian T. Eby

See also Career interruptions, Career success, Glass ceiling, Occupational choice, Sexual harassment, Tokenism, Work-family conflict

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GENERAL APTITUDE TEST BATTERY (GATB)

The *General Aptitude Test Battery* (GATB) is a work-related multiple-ability assessment developed by the U.S. Employment Service (USES), a division of the Department of Labor. The following sections review the historical development of the GATB; the primary characteristics of the most recent measure, the Ability Profiler; and the current usage and availability of the Ability Profiler.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE GATB

In the mid-1930s, the USES initiated a program of aptitude test research, resulting in approximately 100 ability tests designed to predict success across a wide variety of occupations representative of the U.S. labor force at the time. The USES then examined a set of these tests through a series of factor analyses, ultimately identifying 12 tests measuring nine aptitudes. GATB edition B-1002 comprised these 12 tests and was published in 1947 in two forms (A and B). Two

additional forms (C and D) were subsequently published in 1983. State employment service offices used the GATB for vocational counseling and applicant referral, and high schools, technical schools, universities, labor union apprenticeship programs, vocational rehabilitation agencies, and other authorized agencies used the battery for vocational and career counseling.

In the late 1980s, a review of the GATB by the U.S. National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academy of Sciences raised a number of concerns, and, subsequently, the battery went through several important changes in development. The concerns of the NRC included aesthetics, speed of completion, scoring, and susceptibility to coaching. The result of the revision process comprised GATB Forms E and F, now referred to as Ability Profiler Forms 1 and 2, respectively. These forms represent the current operational versions of the battery and are designed exclusively for vocational counseling, occupational exploration, and career planning.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ABILITY PROFILER

The Ability Profiler, comprising 11 separately timed tests (see Table 1), measures nine work-related abilities:

Verbal Ability: ability to understand the meaning of words and use them effectively in good communication when you listen, speak, or write

Arithmetic Reasoning: ability to use several math skills and logical thinking to solve problems in everyday situations

Computation: ability to use arithmetic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division to solve everyday problems involving numbers

Spatial Ability: ability to form pictures of objects in your mind

Form Perception: ability to quickly and accurately see details in objects, pictures, or drawings

Clerical Perception: ability to quickly and accurately see differences in detail in printed material

Motor Coordination: ability to quickly and accurately coordinate eyes with hands or fingers when making precise hand movements

Manual Dexterity: ability to quickly and accurately move hands easily and skillfully

Finger Dexterity: ability to move fingers skillfully and easily

Table 1. The Ability Profiler Tests

<i>Test</i>	<i>Ability Measured</i>	<i>Test Time^a</i>	<i>Format</i>
Arithmetic reasoning	Arithmetic reasoning	20 minutes	Paper and pencil
Vocabulary	Verbal	8 minutes	Paper and pencil
Three-dimensional space	Spatial	8 minutes	Paper and pencil
Computation	Computation	6 minutes	Paper and pencil
Name comparison	Clerical perception	6 minutes	Paper and pencil
Object matching	Form perception	5 minutes	Paper and pencil
Mark making	Motor coordination	60 seconds	Paper and pencil
Place	Manual dexterity	45 seconds	Apparatus
Turn	Manual dexterity	1.5 minutes	Apparatus
Assemble	Finger dexterity	1.5 minutes	Apparatus
Disassemble	Finger dexterity	1 minute	Apparatus

SOURCE: Adapted from U.S. Department of Labor (2002).

^aAn additional 5-10 minutes per test are required for administration.

There are three options for administering the Ability Profiler. First, all 11 tests can be administered in approximately 2.5 hours. This option is preferable for individuals exploring all occupations, including those requiring psychomotor abilities. Second, the 7 paper-and-pencil tests can be administered in approximately 1.5 to 2 hours. This option is preferable when individuals are not exploring occupations requiring manual or finger dexterity. Third, the 6 nonpsychomotor tests can be administered in approximately 1.5 to 2 hours. This option is preferable when individuals are not exploring occupations requiring psychomotor abilities. For all options, examinees must (a) be at least 16 years old, (b) read English at a sixth-grade level or higher, and (c) not have taken any form of the Ability Profiler or GATB within the prior six months.

Extensive research generally supports the reliability and validity of earlier GATB forms. For instance, numerous studies indicate the GATB instruments demonstrate acceptable test-retest reliability (most estimates are greater than .70), convergent validity, and at least modest correlations with ratings of job performance, although the evidence is often stronger for the cognitive aptitudes (e.g., Verbal Ability) than for the perceptual (e.g., Form Perception) or psychomotor (e.g., Finger Dexterity) aptitudes. Although there is less evidence to date for Ability Profiler Forms 1 and 2, reliability and construct validity analyses also support the use of these forms.

CURRENT USAGE AND AVAILABILITY OF THE ABILITY PROFILER

The Ability Profiler is currently in use as part of the Department of Labor's Occupational Information Network (O*NET) Career Exploration Tools. The O*NET is an extensive computerized occupational database of both job and worker characteristics. The O*NET Career Exploration Tools consist of a set of instruments designed to help individuals identify their work-related abilities, interests, and values, as well as to find the occupations that best correspond to individuals' attributes. The Ability Profiler instrument compares the individual's profile of abilities obtained from the Ability Profiler tests to similar ability requirement profiles of each O*NET occupation. Occupations with profiles closely matching the individual's profile (as reflected in the correlation between profiles) are suggested as promising areas for further career exploration.

The Ability Profiler and supporting documents (e.g., score reports, user's guide) can be purchased from the U.S. Government Printing Office or downloaded from the O*NET Resource Center Web site. Although certification is not required to administer the Ability Profiler, training should be given; the O*NET Resource Center Web site also provides training materials. Furthermore, users are allowed to modify or extend the Ability Profiler tool to develop customized products, but they must do so in

accordance with the terms of the O*NET Developer's Agreement.

—Patrick D. Converse and Frederick L. Oswald

See also Abilities, Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB); Differential aptitude testing; Intelligence, schooling, and occupational success; Multiple intelligences

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GLASS CEILING

In recent decades, women and people of color have made considerable progress in moving into management jobs, but they tend to be concentrated in lower and middle levels in the management hierarchy. Particularly at large, private sector companies, the majority of key senior-management positions are still held by Caucasian men. The term *glass ceiling* is a metaphor that has been used to describe this situation. It refers to an invisible but impenetrable barrier that prevents qualified women and people of color from advancing to senior-management jobs.

The possible existence of a glass ceiling is important from the perspectives of both individuals and their organizations. For example, women and members of minority racial or ethnic groups may find that regardless of their qualifications and talent, artificial glass-ceiling barriers sometimes limit their career

advancement opportunities. Moreover, when organizations allow the glass ceiling to exist for women and people of color, these organizations are deprived of the diverse talents and perspectives that women and people of color could bring to critical leadership and decision-making positions. Furthermore, managers who realize that their career advancement is blocked by glass-ceiling barriers may become frustrated and leave their companies to seek better career opportunities elsewhere. This entry begins with a historical perspective on the glass ceiling, followed by the current status, and examples of theoretical explanations and research into whether or why a glass ceiling might exist.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The glass ceiling was not widely discussed until the mid-1980s, when two *Wall Street Journal* reporters used the term in an article about women managers who couldn't seem to break through a "glass ceiling" that blocked them from advancing to senior-management jobs. In addition, these reporters pointed out that women managers tended to receive lower pay and have less authority than male managers. Thus, the term was originally introduced in connection with women's careers, but other authors pointed out that members of minority racial and ethnic groups faced similar barriers that prevented them from advancing to executive-level jobs.

Glass-ceiling issues received even more public attention when the U.S. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1991 and required the president and members of Congress to appoint a Glass Ceiling Commission, chaired by the Secretary of Labor. The commission was created to investigate glass-ceiling barriers and make recommendations about how to eliminate these barriers and increase opportunities for women and people of color to advance into organizational management and decision-making positions.

The Federal Glass Ceiling Commission issued a report summarizing its findings in 1995 and confirmed that there did appear to be a glass ceiling blocking advancement of women and people of color in U.S. businesses. For example, 97 percent of the senior managers in Fortune 1000 industrial companies were White, and 95 percent were men, despite the fact that approximately 57 percent of the workforce was made up of females or members of minority racial or ethnic groups. The report identified three levels of glass-ceiling barriers: (1) societal barriers, such as stereotypes and

prejudice associated with gender, race, and ethnicity; (2) structural barriers in organizations, including failure to recruit women and people of color; organizational climates that could alienate these groups; and barriers that could limit their opportunities to advance; and (3) governmental barriers, including inadequate monitoring and law enforcement. Based on examples of companies that had made progress in addressing these barriers, the commission also pointed out characteristics of successful glass-ceiling initiatives, such as having top-management support, linking initiatives to the organization's strategic plan, addressing stereotypes, tracking progress, and holding key managers accountable.

CURRENT STATUS

In recent years, women and people of color have made some progress in attaining senior-management positions. For example, research by the Catalyst organization found that in 1995, only 8.7 percent of the corporate officers of Fortune 500 companies were women, but in 2002, women's representation had increased to 15.7 percent, and 1.6 percent of the corporate officers were women of color. However, women and people of color tend to be better represented at higher management levels in the public sector (i.e., government jobs) than in the private sector. Thus, recent research suggests that the glass ceiling has not yet gone away, but women and people of color may find better career advancement opportunities in some types of organizations than in others.

THEORIES AND RESEARCH

A number of different theories have been developed to explain whether or why the glass ceiling exists. Some explanations for the underrepresentation of women and people of color in senior management focus on characteristics of individuals, and other explanations focus on various types of organizational barriers to career advancement of women and members of minority racial and ethnic groups. Examples of each approach are described in the sections that follow.

Glass-ceiling Explanations Based on Individual Characteristics

Theories that focus on individual characteristics propose that women and people of color are underrepresented in senior management not because of their

gender or race but because they lack experience, skills, motivation, personal characteristics, or other qualifications that are needed to perform these jobs successfully. For example, a woman may be considered less qualified for a promotion than a man of similar age if she has fewer years of managerial experience; thus, in this case, the man may be promoted because of his greater experience rather than his gender. Examples of explanations based on individual characteristics include the human capital theory and self-selection.

The *human capital theory*, developed by economists such as Gary S. Becker, is a well-known theory that focuses on individual characteristics to explain differences in career outcomes, such as advancement and compensation. According to this theory, individuals with better qualifications, such as more education, job training, and relevant work experience, receive better jobs and organizational rewards because they have more to offer their organizations than do individuals who are less qualified. Although research has shown that differences in human capital can explain a portion of the gender or racial gap in career success, most studies also find that some portion of the gap cannot be explained by human capital variables. In addition, organizational research has found that comparable human capital qualifications do not always ensure that men and women managers will be equally successful in career advancement. While less research has compared minority and majority group managers, there is some evidence that human capital qualifications have a greater payoff in career advancement for Caucasian managers than for African American managers. Thus, human capital appears to be important in explaining career advancement but does not fully explain why there are relatively few numbers of women and people of color in senior management.

Another perspective is that group differences in corporate advancement can be explained by *self-selection*. According to this explanation, women and people of color may be less likely to hold senior-management positions because they have less interest or are less willing to do what is required to attain these types of positions. For example, gender differences in corporate advancement are sometimes attributed to women's involvement with family and household responsibilities that interfere with the long work hours, travel, or relocations required for succeeding in a demanding managerial career. However, this explanation does not hold for many women and people of

color who encounter glass-ceiling barriers to their advancement but either do not have family responsibilities or are willing to meet the requirements of demanding managerial jobs regardless of family and personal responsibilities.

A different explanation for self-selection is provided by Robert Lent, Steven Brown, and Gail Hackett's social cognitive theory, which suggests that self-selection is sometimes based on awareness of external barriers rather than a lack of interest on the part of the individual. According to this theory, women and people of color may be less confident than Caucasian men about their ability to succeed in managerial careers because they expect to encounter organizational barriers and lack of support that will limit their opportunities. Moreover, because of these external barriers, women and people of color may decide to lower their career expectations or pursue other types of careers in which they expect to encounter fewer barriers.

Glass-ceiling Explanations Based on Organizational Barriers

A number of explanations for the glass ceiling focus on various types of organizational barriers that make it more difficult for women and people of color than for their Caucasian male counterparts to advance to senior management. Examples of these barriers include gender and racial bias in organizational selection and promotion decisions, exclusion from interpersonal networks that can facilitate career advancement, and occupational segregation.

A great deal of research indicates that there are widely shared stereotypes or beliefs about the characteristics of various groups, including gender and racial groups, and that these stereotypical characteristics are often assumed to apply to individual members of a particular group. For example, based on traditional stereotypes, women might be assumed to be nurturing, and men might be assumed to be assertive. Moreover, jobs may become *gender typed*, which means that they are believed to be more appropriate for men or for women, based on either the gender of typical incumbents or the perception that successful performance requires stereotypic gender-related attributes. For example, management jobs, particularly at senior levels, are generally believed to be male gender typed because these jobs are usually held by men and are perceived to require stereotypical male attributes, such as assertiveness and achievement

orientation. According to Madeline E. Heilman's lack-of-fit model, men are more likely to be chosen for male-gender-typed jobs, such as senior-management jobs, because men's stereotypical attributes are perceived to be a better fit with requirements of these positions than are women's stereotypical attributes. Thus, there may be gender bias against women when organizational decision makers select people to fill these positions.

Although more research has been conducted about gender bias than about racial bias in managerial selection decisions, some research suggests that group stereotypes can make it more difficult for members of minority racial and ethnic groups to be chosen for senior-management positions. Research has found that stereotypical attributes associated with specific racial groups differ; for example, Asian Americans have been described as technically oriented but not good at supervising other people; Latinos have been described as unassertive; and African Americans have been described as incompetent. Although the specific stereotypes differ across groups, none of these attributes is consistent with requirements for success in senior-management positions, suggesting that there is also likely to be a perceived lack of fit for members of these racial groups with senior-job requirements, making it less likely that they would be selected for these types of jobs.

A make it more difficult for women and people of color to be promoted to senior management, but research has also shown that these groups report difficulty obtaining developmental assignments that would help them learn new skills needed for promotion to higher-level positions. In addition, perhaps because women and people of color are not always viewed as having the potential to advance, research has shown that they are less likely to receive assignments that give them visibility and contact with senior managers. Thus, to the extent that subtle selection bias and stereotypes make it more difficult for women and people of color to obtain critical developmental assignments, these individuals become less competitive for future advancement opportunities.

Research has also shown that *social capital*, which refers to the number and quality of an individual's relationships with other people, is related to organizational advancement. However, Rosabeth M. Kanter's groundbreaking research found that when there were very few women in an organizational unit, they were often excluded from informal interactions with their

male counterparts. Similarly, other research has shown that network relationships are more common among demographically similar individuals. Thus, to the extent that there are few women or people of color at a particular managerial level, it is more difficult for these individuals to form extensive networks. When these individuals are excluded from informal networks with Caucasian male managers, they miss out on critical information about career opportunities as well as support and sponsorship from other managers.

Research has also shown that having mentors, especially Caucasian male mentors, is associated with career advancement for managers but that women and people of color are less likely than Caucasian males to have Caucasian male mentors. Because there are relatively few women and people of color in senior management at many organizations, managers from these groups have few successful role models to emulate.

Another explanation for the glass ceiling is that within organizations there may be occupational segregation, or “glass walls,” with the most desirable jobs held by Caucasian men rather than by women and people of color. For example, women and people of color are more likely to hold staff support jobs in areas such as human resources or public relations rather than the more critical line positions that involve managing business functions, such as manufacturing or selling products or services. Occupational segregation has important career consequences because lack of line management experience is often cited as one of the key reasons that women and people of color fail to be promoted to top management.

Finally, some theorists note that because men have traditionally held the most powerful organizational jobs, organizations often have “male” cultures and value systems. Research has found, for example, that both women and people of color who want to advance in the corporate hierarchy may have to modify their behavior to fit the corporate culture. In addition, organizational cultures that embrace traditional male values may not recognize employees’ needs to balance work with family or other personal responsibilities or interests. Because women continue to devote more time to family responsibilities than do men, women may have difficulty advancing in an organization in which employees’ needs to balance work with family and personal responsibilities are not recognized and supported. Although many organizations offer family-friendly benefits, such as flexible work

arrangements or leaves of absence to care for family members, research has shown that without a supportive culture, employees may be reluctant to utilize these programs. Also, there is research evidence that employees who take advantage of benefits such as leaves of absence may be penalized with fewer subsequent promotions.

CONCLUSION

Although the situation has improved in recent years, women and people of color are still not well represented in the senior-management ranks of large, private sector companies, suggesting that the glass ceiling may persist. As the review of various explanations for the glass ceiling indicates, these barriers are often complex and difficult to tackle.

On the other hand, in recent years, some encouraging research has highlighted strategies that successful women and people of color have used to overcome these barriers and rise to the executive suite. For example, studies of these executives have found that key advancement strategies include finding opportunities to prove their competence and developing relationships with powerful mentors and sponsors. Other research has found that companies with strong senior-management commitment to workforce diversity can dismantle glass-ceiling barriers and that women and people of color are more likely to advance in organizations with systematic human resource processes to help prevent selection bias and in organizations that emphasize internal development and promotion of employees. Thus, although glass-ceiling barriers have not been eliminated, recent research suggests that some progress is being made.

—Karen S. Lyness

See also Career mobility, Career success, Diversity in organizations, Human capital, Social capital

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GLOBALIZATION AND CAREERS

The term *career development* represents a large body of theory and research that seeks to explain the structure and the development of career behavior, personal identity in work and other life roles, and factors that influence career decision making. Even though such a perspective on the functions of career development is accurate, it oversimplifies the complexity and the magnitude of the psychological and sociological content relevant to how individuals "construct" their careers across the life span. In particular, this perspective blurs the importance of the various political, economic, social, family, and other contextual factors that create the environments in which people choose, prepare for, and negotiate their work roles. *Globalization* is a contextual factor that is rapidly emerging in its power to shape the organization of work, how it is done, who does it, and where it is done.

Globalization tends to be at the center of what many scholars and journalists perceive to be a major shift in the

nature of work and individual reactions to it. Indeed, globalization has spurred related language, including *internationalization, international competition, global economy, and free trade zones* (e.g., The European Union, the North American Free Trade Agreement), which are all relevant terms. They collectively signal that most of the nations of the world are in transition—politically, economically, and socially—and that the factors that underlie these transitions have placed education, jobs, employment and unemployment, careers, and interventions in career development high on the policy agendas of many nations, including the United States. These terms are growing rapidly in international importance because the citizens of nations in transition are typically subjected to increased stress; deficits in information about their options, underemployment, and productivity; unemployment; inadequate education; decreased productivity; anxiety; and uncertainty and sometimes dread and apprehension. Edwin Herr, Stanley Cramer, and Spencer Niles wrote in 2004 that although the specific factors that affect the career development of persons differ from nation to nation, they tend to share some commonalities, as unemployment rates remain very high in many nations; many persons across the world are denied basic rights to jobs, education, or independent decision making because of gender, racial, ageism, and other forms of discrimination; and changes in access and adjustment to work processes and expectations are occurring in many settings around the world.

Among many other observers, Alvin Toffler, in his trilogy of books, *Future Shock, The Third Wave, and PowerShift: Knowledge, Wealth, and Violence at the Edge of the 21st Century*, has consistently addressed the acceleration of change as a function of new economic structures created by the emergence of information-rich knowledge societies, replacing agricultural and industrial societies in the United States and in many other parts of the world. A parallel period of change drove the rise of vocational guidance and vocational counseling at the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, as the United States moved from the agricultural era to the rapid changes spawned by the Industrial Revolution. Rapid changes are now spurring the refinement of and the search for new paradigms of career guidance, career counseling, and career services as a function of the transition from the industrial and manufacturing-dominated twentieth century to the "new economy" under way in the information-rich knowledge- and service-based global economic structure of the twenty-first century.

DYNAMICS OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

Advanced Technology

The *global economy* is not just a new catchphrase; it is made possible because of a variety of other changes that have direct effects on careers. Perhaps the most significant is advanced technology. The popular press now talks about e-commerce, cyber society, the wired world, the global village, and other metaphors that essentially reinforce the axiom that a global economy could not be possible without computers, telecommunications, the Internet and the World Wide Web, fiber optics, digitization, satellites, and related technologies that advance national interdependence, global transactions, and communications. The outputs of advanced technologies flow around the world, unfettered by national political boundaries; electronic transfers can move more currency overnight to support business transactions of multinational corporations than many nations have as their total capital reserves; management of work, movement of inventories of products, and adjustments to customized production can be done 24 hours a day without regard to the time or space of the originating workplace; individuals in one worksite can use computers to monitor and manage the work being done at worksites thousands of miles away; through digitization and satellites, work that originates in the United States can be sent to Ireland, India, or other offshore locations to be downloaded, processed, uploaded, and returned to the originating site; and workers in one geographical site can plan, design, and troubleshoot the machines that are being computer directed at other sites around the world.

Such processes have many implications for careers. One is that computers, the Internet, telecommunications, and other advanced technological processes are functions of the interaction of science and technology. Given the intense competition for international markets and corporate economic rivalry, industry in the United States and in many other countries is committed to translating new scientific ideas as rapidly as possible into products or forms of technology that can be applied and exploited commercially. Through the use of advanced technologies, the historical time lags between scientific discoveries and their translation into new products, new tools, and new technologies have decreased in virtually all fields, from architecture to airplane design, construction, health care and medicine, financial management, and manufacturing.

Knowledge Workers

Although the effects of globalization stimulate the continuous interaction of science and technology, such interactions can occur only if there are *knowledge workers* available who are able to adapt to the rapid changes in work processes and problems and apply new knowledge. It has become increasingly clear across nations that the primary asset of nations is not raw materials or even wealth but the quality of the workforce as defined by its literacy, numeracy, computer and communication skills, flexibility, and teachability. Peter Drucker, the international scholar of work organization and management, in conjunction with other scholars, contended that knowledge has replaced experience as the principal requisite for employment in most of the emerging occupations in the world. It has become clear that as more workplaces are seen as "learning organizations," more jobs and organizations must be staffed by knowledge workers who know not only how to perform work tasks but also why. Currently, more than 60 percent of the United States workforce is made up of knowledge workers. Knowledge work is different from the patterns of repetitive actions that are present in traditional jobs; it is much more clearly described as a sequence of figurative dialogues between workers and the data they are using, whether monitoring and troubleshooting a computer-driven lathe or a robot, engaging in computer-aided design, diagnosing which computer module is not functioning in a automobile, or scanning the human body for evidence of disease.

Lifelong Learning

Embedded in the growth of knowledge workers is the growing importance of lifelong learning and the reality that the skills of schooling and learning and the skills of the workplace are increasingly complementary and overlapping. In a knowledge economy, basic academic skills serve as the foundation knowledge for technical and occupational skills. Educational abilities and achievements become major elements of individual career development. This reality puts those who lack motivation for learning, minimal training, and a high school diploma at the risk of being permanently dislocated or constantly on the verge of being unemployed. In analyses of emerging occupations, it has become increasingly clear that few jobs are being created that do not require reading, the ability to use

mathematics, and strong interpersonal skills. In this sense, mastery of basic academic skills has become a prerequisite for employability, for having personal flexibility in the workplace, and for lifelong learning.

In response to the implications that globalization accents knowledge and new ideas, the World Bank has argued that a global society requires workers who have mastered technical, interpersonal, and methodological skills. These skills encompass formal disciplines (e.g., foreign language, literacy, mathematics, and science); the ability to communicate, lead, and work with others; and the ability to participate in lifelong learning and to function within a context of risk and change.

The World Bank has further suggested that these forms of learning are teachable and that functioning in the knowledge economy requires three categories of competencies: acting autonomously, using tools interactively, and functioning in socially heterogeneous groups.

Other observers have suggested that the new status quo for workers is characterized by continuous learning and feeling “on the edge” or off-balance, as one is constantly expected to be prepared to adjust and adapt to the frequent transformations in the workplace, which are ongoing in the lives of workers immersed in a global knowledge economy.

Changing Language of Work

In this context, knowledge work is much more difficult than physical labor to classify and divide into small segments of action. As globalization spawns learning organizations and knowledge workers as major elements of the ability to compete internationally, scholars have argued that jobs as a way of organizing work are social artifacts that have outlived their usefulness. In this view, there will continue to be many types of work, but they will be organized differently than has been true during the past 100 years or so. Jobs as discrete packages of tasks or rigid position descriptions will likely be less frequent in the future than more flexible organizations of work.

These ideas have been transformed into current terms such as *boundaryless careers* and *multitasking*. Thus, jobs as clearly defined fixed sets of tasks, which have been central to the organization and language of work for approximately the past 100 years, are giving way to the effects of expectations by employers that workers should be able to engage in multitasking; get

the work done that needs to be done regardless of the artificial boundaries of a specified set of tasks; be personally flexible and adaptable to change; and be comfortable with the hybridization of work (e.g., bionics, or the wedding of biology and electronics; geophysics, or geology and physics) in which the problems are so complex as to require knowledge of more than one discipline.

Changes in the Organization of Work

The perspectives associated with the global impact of how work is performed, the importance of learning, the pervasiveness of advanced technology in the workplace, multitasking, and related phenomena have led to a variety of important changes in the nature of work organizations, career paths, and workers' responsibility to be their own career managers. It is important to acknowledge that individual development in most nations and in many organizations is no longer linear, predictable, long-term, or secure. The availability of lifelong employment in one firm, one corporation, one occupation, or one job is very unlikely for most people, even though a generation ago, many workers expected such a career pattern. They hoped to obtain employment in an organization, advance through its ranks, and retire. The phases of such a pattern—exploration, preparation, induction, consolidation, advancement, and retirement—were age related, understood, and anticipated. The goals of many workers were to successfully advance up an organizational chart as far as their talents and luck would take them. That view of career development is significantly less likely to occur in a rapidly changing global economy.

New Conceptions of Careers

In essence, the rapidity and intensity of change in the language and organization of work reflected in emerging career paths suggest new realities in the relationships between globalization and careers. For example, Michael Arthur, a British scholar, has suggested that a fundamental challenge for career theorists and practitioners is the need to affirm new career realities. He has argued that models of career development need to (a) be more dynamic in their accommodation of rapid change in the career paths available to individuals and (b) integrate career mobility rather than neglect it.

Underlying so many of the current conceptualizations of globalization and careers is the belief that new patterns of careers are taking place that are qualitatively different from those of the past. For example, researchers have argued that the changes in the way work is organized and structured have affected how notions of “new careers” need to be conceived in many nations, including the United States. They contend these new careers will be reflected in a much larger array of career patterns that will be less linear and more fragmented, with more frequent transitions than in the twentieth century.

Other scholars have suggested that people’s career paths will become a succession of ministages and short learning cycles, comprising sequential stages of exploration-trial-mastery-exit as they make transitions from one type of work to another. For example, the concept of *protean careers* accents the importance of individuals being able to constantly adapt to change, being personally flexible, and taking personal responsibility for their careers. Embedded in these perspectives is the view that although constancy and stability, or homeostasis, have frequently been cited in the psychological literature as desirable traits for individual growth and development, career planning and choice in the future are likely to be more spontaneous, more values oriented, and more influenced by environmental and organizational flux, unpredictability, and turbulence.

Another view of the effects of the global economy on the organization of work as it plays out in many nations is what Charles Handy has described as the “Shamrock organization.” This perspective speaks of a vast reconfiguration of the world of work. Heightened competition in the global marketplace is forcing companies to downsize their personnel to only those who represent the core tasks of the company: those whose skills are essential to the management, the provision of technical support, and the performance of the fundamental processes that produce the products or the services of the company.

The Shamrock organization discussed by Handy can be conceived of as three leaves, or rings, that begin with an inner and relatively small core, or circle of permanent workers. These workers with essential core skills are the ones who keep corporations functioning. They are paid well; have long-term identity with the company; receive health, educational, and retirement benefits; and receive training or support for lifelong learning.

The second ring of the workforce is occupied by temporary, part-time, or contingent workers whose

time and skills are purchased as needed or on a seasonal basis. Handy calls these workers a “portfolio class,” persons who document and sell their skills in episodes to firms that need their services for specific projects or periods of time, rather than remaining in continuing relationships with the same organization. Such persons may have to work several part-time jobs simultaneously to have sufficient income or purchase the health and other benefits that their temporary employers do not supply.

The third ring is made up of persons employed by an outsourcing company that specializes in particular services, for example, custodial and maintenance, customized goods production, marketing, food-service catering, advertising, accounting, law, data entry, security, outplacement counseling, or transportation. These specialist firms can be contracted to provide workers prepared to perform specific tasks. Thus, the original corporation does not have to employ and pay the overhead rates to get these tasks done. The outsourcing company does all of that and delivers the end product, such as catered food, security, training, or advertising.

Offshoring/Outsourcing

One of the newest perspectives on outsourcing is that such activity is not confined to transferring jobs within the United States. Rather, outsourcing and offshoring are being combined. Outsourcing of jobs has become a global issue. European nations, Japan, and the United States are now engaged in job transfer to other nations. It has been widely chronicled that companies in the United States have shed large numbers of information-technology staffers, with many of these jobs being transferred to technology-rich facilities in Bangalore, Delhi, and other locations in India, where millions of world-class engineers, business and medical graduates, and other educated and competent persons are now participating in the U.S. new economy. These persons are having a major economic impact by developing new software applications for finance, digital appliances, and industrial plants; consulting on information technology, managing information technology networks, and reengineering business processes; handling customer service complaints and processing insurance claims, loans, bookings, credit card bills, and airline reservations for U.S. employers; engaging in research and development for microprocessors and multimedia chips; doing research, U.S. tax returns, financial analysis, and

accounting for U.S. investment banks, brokerages, and major accounting firms; doing research and development for U.S. manufacturers; and many other tasks. While China has acquired many of the offshore manufacturing jobs from U.S. companies, India has emphasized knowledge work and services work that will soon employ two-thirds of its workers.

It is currently estimated that 1 or 2 million U.S. jobs have been transferred offshore. This number represents a relatively small percentage of the total American workforce of nearly 140 million persons over 16 years of age. However, projections are that another 3 to 5 million jobs will be transferred offshore between 2004 and 2009 and that this trend will be an important issue for decades to come. This may be a conservative estimate, since, in addition to the visibility of outsourcing of jobs to China and India is the fact that many Caribbean nations, Ireland, Malaysia, the Philippines, and the West African nations of Ghana and Senegal are creating technology-rich facilities and educated populations capable of serving as outsource recipients for U.S. jobs.

The net effect of a three-ring configuration of the workforce is to remove what had been permanent jobs in many corporations and reassign them to part-time status or to other firms in the United States or overseas that subcontract to do specific tasks. Such processes literally force many U.S. workers, who would in earlier decades have been employed in large organizations functioning in various support roles, to become essentially self-employed managers of their own careers. They must constantly adapt to change and develop new skills that corporations are willing to purchase on a temporary basis or that outsourcing firms can purchase to subcontract to other organizations.

Labor Surplus and Skill Shortages

Globalization effects have another, less discussed impact on careers. Across the world, there is a surplus of labor, consisting of many well-educated and well-trained persons for whom there are not adequate opportunities to work in their own nations. At the same time, the United States is experiencing both skill shortages and an unemployment rate of about 5 percent. Within the global labor surplus, there is almost an unlimited supply of industrious and educated individuals working or willing to work at a fraction of U.S. wages. These persons naturally gravitate to the economic opportunities available in the United States, intensifying immigration at a level, even with visa controls, similar to the one that

occurred 100 years ago at the height of the Industrial Revolution in the United States. These immigrants are more likely to come from Asia, Central America, or South America than from Europe; they are welcomed by employers because they bring skills that are in short supply in the U.S. population. Because of either lack of interest or information, workers in the United States have not chosen to explore many jobs in service, craft, or technical industries, which are often well paid and are essential to the production of goods and services. Government predictions are that these sectors will be the leaders in creating new jobs over the next 10 to 15 years.

Within this context, if qualified applicants are not available in the United States, the choice is to transfer jobs offshore or try to import immigrants with the skills needed. In recent years, U.S. corporations, health systems, and academic institutions have imported workers from other nations to work as tool-and-die makers, machinists, tractor-trailer drivers, nurses, physicians, mathematics and science teachers, scientists, and workers in other areas of skill shortages.

In both direct and indirect ways, globalization has affected the career paths available and the organization of work in the United States and in most other nations, has intensified international competition and encouraged employers to find ways to decrease their costs of production of goods and services, and has adopted advanced technology to increase productivity and decrease the number of workers necessary to perform the tasks essential to a particular workplace. In broad terms, the new work environments being created are shifting from preordained and linear, orderly structures, with clear guides for employee action and well-formed career paths, to perpetually changing career paths and possibilities in which uncertainty and flexibility are the order of the day and employees must make sense of their environments and plan their skill development and career paths accordingly.

CONCLUSION

A variety of implications for careers are embedded in the effects of globalization. They include the following:

Globalization has intensified the competition for jobs in many countries. Transferring jobs to other nations and immigration of well-trained persons affect which jobs are available and the competition for those jobs—and this, in turn, changes the career pathways available to

citizens in the country from which the jobs were removed and also in the country that receives the jobs.

As specific jobs move offshore, the occupational structures are changed in the receiving country and in the country from which the jobs were transferred. In many instances, educational requirements in both nations rise, accelerating the importance of knowledge and skill, as opposed to experience, as requisites for employability.

Nations engaged in the global economy are constantly seeking comparative economic advantages by transforming their work organizations and processes through the use of advanced technologies, mergers, and consolidation of organizations; by expecting workers to constantly improve their skills; and by placing workforces in other nations with markets for products and services. From a career standpoint, these trends suggest that workers at almost every level of skill and in every industry must be familiar with and able to work with computers, telecommunications, and other advanced technologies; be strong communicators; be able to work with others in teams; have effective interpersonal skills, be willing to constantly develop new skills to enhance their employability, and, in many cases, be available for international assignments. Even though the primary language of the global economy is English, bilingual or multilingual skills are prized abilities for workers in multinational and many governmental organizations.

Work organizations are taking less responsibility for the careers of their workers. While many firms provide information about position vacancies, anticipated changes in work processes, and important skills, the expectation is that workers will be their own career managers, analyzing trends that will affect them, participating in lifelong learning, and committing themselves to engaging in the processes that will keep them employable.

Career paths are likely to become more horizontal than vertical in the future. As greater responsibility is given to workers or worker teams to manage quality control, make decisions about work processes, and share electronically transmitted information relevant to tasks for which they are responsible, it is likely that positions in middle management or senior management will be reduced in number. As more management tasks are invested in workers, the ability to problem-solve, to work with others, and to take responsibility for performing work that goes beyond one's job description (multitask) will be important.

Career pathways will be more diversified and less institutionally based. A contingent workforce is rising around the world that includes temporary employees whose skills are purchased for limited periods of time and do not have long-term institutional identification. Such

employment may involve part-time or self-employment or involvement with specialized outsourcing firms that supply employees to workplaces for limited periods of time to complete particular projects or sets of tasks.

—Edwin L. Herr

See also Expatriate experience, International careers, Multinational organization, Outsourcing and offshoring

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H

HALL OCCUPATIONAL ORIENTATION INVENTORY

The *Hall Occupational Orientation Inventory* (HALL), first published in 1968, was developed by Lacy G. Hall to provide a more complete assessment of work-related personality variables than do the extant standardized interest inventories. Hall based the development of this inventory on the humanistic personality need theory elaborated by Abraham Maslow and adapted by Anne Roe, and on occupational-interest research. Since 1968, HALL has been revised four times (fourth revision published 1989). HALL was developed to expand the domain of the traditional trait factor interest inventories by assessing other domains in addition to interests: personal values, psychological needs, job characteristics, abilities, and choice style. This 175-item instrument is a vocational counseling inventory designed to be self-administered, self-scored, and self-interpreted. There are several forms of HALL, designed for different populations and age groups: Intermediate, Young Adult/College/Adult, Adult Basic, and Form II. HALL can be used with the *Guide for Occupational Exploration*, published by the U.S. Department of Labor in 1979.

The 175 items of HALL are grouped into 35 scales of 5 items each. There are 9 Needs-Values scales (e.g., Creativity-Independence, Self-Actualization, Routine-Dependence); 6 Career Interest scales with 6 corresponding Ability scales (e.g., People-Social-Accommodating, Things-Physical, People-Business-Influencing); 8 Job Characteristics scales (e.g., Coworkers, Time, Risk); and 6 Choice Style scales (e.g., Subjective External Authority, Interdependent,

Procrastination). The response formats vary depending on the type of scale. The Needs-Values scales, Career Interest scales, and Job Characteristics scales are assessed on a five-point scale ranging from *most desirable* to *very undesirable*. The Choice Style scales use a three-point scale ranging from *not like me* to *very much like me*. Last, the Ability scales employ a four-point response continuum ranging from *weak* to *strong*.

HALL is designed to be self-administered, self-scored, self-profiled, and self-interpreted. The intent is to provide individuals with an organizational scheme for rating, prioritizing, and evaluating a variety of personal factors known to be related to successful career choice and satisfaction. The scoring system uses raw scores to evaluate the relative importance of the personal characteristics to the individual taking the inventory, rather than comparing the individual's scores with those of a normative sample of other people. The goal of this type of scoring system is to facilitate exploration rather than result in prediction.

Items on this instrument present only one variable at a time to the individual. No specific occupation is identified by any of the items, so a respondent is evaluating only a single need or interest dimension as he or she considers a response to each item. Similarly, all the items on each scale are logically related to the scale. No empirical, predictive occupational scales are used, because Hall believes that empirical scales do not facilitate exploration or interpretation. In addition, since the instrument is based on Maslow's humanistic dynamic developmental theory of personality, it is not expected to exhibit long-term temporal stability but only to provide a snapshot of evolving personality variables at a given moment in time. The argument is

that people no longer choose one occupation that will last a lifetime. Most workers change occupations several times during their careers, and the priorities and values of a 20-year-old college student or entry-level worker may not resemble the priorities and values of that same individual in 10 or 20 years' time. HALL was intentionally designed to aid individuals in searching for new directions as they change and develop as people.

—Carrie H. Robinson

See also Interests, Personality and careers

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HANDWRITING ANALYSIS IN HIRING

Handwriting analysis, or *graphology*, as it is otherwise called, is the study of an individual's handwriting sample done in order to make judgments about the individual's personality traits or his or her tendency to behave in certain ways. The major use of contemporary handwriting analysis is as a staffing tool by business organizations. Job applicants submit handwriting samples to trained graphologists, who examine characteristics of each applicant's handwriting and provide a summary of personality traits suggested by characteristics of the writing sample. The graphologist's conclusions may indicate the degree to which applicants possess certain personality traits and may be accompanied by a summary statement of the degree to which each individual is likely to be successful in the job for which he or she is applying. Handwriting analysis in personnel selection is very common in Western Europe, where perhaps as many as 75 percent to 80 percent of companies use it in hiring. It is less common in the United States, but some estimates have suggested that more than 2,500

American companies may use handwriting analysis for at least some portion of their workforces.

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF HANDWRITING ANALYSIS

Published work in handwriting analysis dates as far back as the seventeenth century. The modern science of graphology, however, originated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Three separate schools of handwriting analysis are commonly identified by experts. Two of these schools are from late-nineteenth-century Europe, one from France and the other from Germany. A French priest, Michon, originally coined the term "graphology" to describe a science of "fixed signs" in which every handwriting feature, such as slants, loops, and spacing of letters, was associated on a one-to-one basis with a specific personality trait.

The classic school of graphology originated with the late-nineteenth-century work of Germans Wilhelm Preyer and Ludwig Klages. They and others transformed handwriting analysis into a "scientific" form, based on the premise that all motor activity, including handwriting, is performed without conscious thought or by habit and reflects specific stable drives, traits, or tendencies that capture the writer's personality. The German school does not embrace the "fixed sign" approach of the French graphologists, but proposes that handwriting must be interpreted within the context of individual "rhythms" and that specific handwriting features must be interpreted differently based on the rhythm of the writing sample as a whole and on the analyst's experience. The German school saw handwriting as an expressive movement similar to commonly used projective techniques in psychology, such as the Rorschach ink blot test.

The third school of handwriting analysis was founded by American M. N. Bunker in the late 1920s and is called *graphoanalysis*. The graphoanalysis school is widely thought to represent a compromise between the French and German schools. While it relies on the interpretation of unique writing features, the method is based on Gestalt psychology and involves establishing a consistent pattern within the specific writing characteristics to establish an overall pattern of personality. The work of all handwriting analysts is based on many of the same general principles involving the size of letters, words, or numbers, spacing between words and lines, slant of letters, margin size, and pressure on the writing instrument. In graphoanalysis, for

example, slant is an indicator of emotional responsiveness. However, different analysts, particularly those trained in different schools of graphology, weigh factors differently, and standards for evaluating handwriting vary.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY IN HANDWRITING ANALYSIS

The major focus in employee selection is on the ability of selection instruments to predict one or more aspect of job performance. To be able to predict job performance, all selection devices must be able to demonstrate that they are both reliable and valid measures. *Reliability* refers to the property of a test that allows it to produce consistent results. Where handwriting analysis is concerned, this means that if one's handwriting sample were evaluated at different points in time or by different evaluators, the results would all be roughly the same. The evidence on the reliability of handwriting analysis is mixed. There is some evidence that graphologists with similar training (such as those trained at the Graphoanalysis Society in Chicago) are somewhat consistent in their interpretations of samples. Other experts question the reliability of handwriting analysis, suggesting considerable variation in interpretations across both schools of handwriting analysis and interpretations of different analysts.

A selection test is useful only to the extent that it has demonstrated *validity*, defined as the ability to infer or predict some aspect of job performance based on scores on the test. For handwriting analysis, there are two separate but related validity issues. First, handwriting analysis must be shown to be able to validly predict personality *clusters*, or sets of personality traits. Second, these clusters of general personality traits must be associated with better fit for specific positions or better job performance. The validity of handwriting analysis is determined by both the extent to which graphology accurately measures the personality traits in question and how well those traits relate to some measure of job performance.

Research on handwriting analysis is not as extensive as research on other selection instruments, such as cognitive ability or personality testing, and it suffers from small sample sizes and some lack of rigor. What research does exist, however, suggests that handwriting analysis does not validly predict either personality traits or job performance. In most attempts to demonstrate its validity in predicting personality

traits by comparing graphology results to established measures of personality, analysts have not been able to replicate independent measures of personality produced with other personality measures. The ability to predict job performance has been even more disappointing. In virtually all cases, trained handwriting analysts do no better at predicting job performance than do untrained students, nor are their predictions any better than those expected by chance.

CONCLUSION

Research on graphology suggests that at best, it has only low-to-moderate reliability, and there is little evidence that graphology is accurate in predicting personality traits or that the narrow traits that many analysts infer from handwriting samples correlate with job performance. Despite the lack of evidence of a direct link between handwriting analysis and various measures of job performance, many companies continue to persist in its use. In fact, there is some evidence that the use of handwriting analysis in selection is actually increasing, perhaps because handwriting analysis has face validity to many people. It "makes sense" to them and seems as though it should work. One clearly positive aspect of graphology that is not true of many other devices is that it is not prone to faking, since handwriting samples can be solicited with veiled purpose. Certainly, graphology appears to be more art than science, and there may be some graphologists who through better training, advanced skills, or better intuition may be able to make more accurate predictions than other analysts. The research that does exist, however, provides no support for the hypothesis that handwriting analysis works. For the practicing manager, it appears that the scientific evidence suggests that handwriting analysis should have little, if any, role in the staffing process and that managers should rely on other measures of personality, such as contemporary measures of the Big Five personality instruments.

—Steven L. Thomas

See also Organizational staffing, Personality and careers, Personnel selection

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HISTORY OF CAREER STUDIES

This entry outlines the main schools within the broad area of career theory, which here have been defined as (a) a sociological perspective focusing on the structural influences over one's working life and the interplay between individuals and institutions, (b) an "individual differences" or vocational perspective concentrating on fitting round pegs into round career holes, and (c) a developmental or life cycle perspective examining the way people develop and change over the course of their lives. This is not to say that additional perspectives are not relevant to theorizing about careers, only that the main areas of theoretical interest within the careers area have been dominated by these perspectives. Since it is impossible to do justice to the diversity and number of specific career theories in this brief space, we concentrate on the most important influences in the field and on general themes and tensions that have persisted throughout career theory.

CAREER THEORY FROM A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Historical Influences

The sociological perspective on careers focuses on the social structures, cultural norms, and institutions that define, direct, and constrain people's actions at the societal level, as well as how those structural forces shape individuals' behavior as they navigate through institutions, professions, and occupations. Careers work on occupational and professional boundary definition, mobility, status assignment, and constraints on occupational choice has roots in early sociology. Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) and Max Weber (1864-1920) contributed to some of the most

seminal early theoretical work in careers, most notably that of Everett Hughes.

Durkheim's contribution to the careers literature focused on the nature of the relationship between the individual and societal structure, the importance of the division of labor to collective and individual identity, and the importance of occupational identity and association to the organization and integration of society. *The Division of Labor in Society* posited that individuals tend toward increasing functional specialization as society becomes increasingly industrialized, and these shifts change the foundation of social solidarity from individuals sharing similar functions within a community to individuals dependent on one another within a highly organized division of labor. This division of labor strongly determines individuals' occupational lives and identities.

Karl Marx and Adam Smith were also preoccupied with the division of labor in industrial society. However, Durkheim did not argue that its effect on workers necessarily implied class conflict, as did Marx, and he was more concerned with its effects on social cohesion than was Smith (though Smith was more ambivalent about the societal effects of capitalism than one would assume given contemporary memory). The main concern with division of labor was how it leads to excessive specialization, dangerous in particular when accompanied by social inequality. Division of labor supports social integration only when specialization is not accompanied by an unjust division of status. When people are required to narrow the scope of their everyday professional activities to atomistic proportions, individuals begin to suffer from *anomie*, or alienation from their social collective, which undermines the stability of the collective. Durkheim's work on the division of labor translates well from the societal to the organizational level, what he terms the "corporative" level, which he sees as an important secondary source of social cohesion, mediating between the societal level and the individual level. His work reminds organizational theorists to pay attention to how career boundaries and job scope within organizations play an important part in determining the cohesiveness of organizational groups and in developing organizational norms.

Occupational groups also play an important role in Durkheim's work, in particular for their capacity for moral influence, rivaling the influence of the family as a source of collective morality and group identity and as protection against the alienating aspects of postindustrial life. As professional life has overtaken other

sources of individual identity, Durkheim's work on occupational groups has been reflected in career theory on professional identity, occupational attachment, and professional ethics.

In addition to remaining the most elegant theorist on the value of (and dangers inherent within) bureaucratic organizing, Max Weber was also the first theorist to describe the characteristics and stages of the administrative or bureaucratic career, newly emerging within early industrialized commerce and the movement in the nineteenth century toward a public service. Along with Durkheim, Weber was also concerned with a central tension within society between the need for individual freedom and the need for social control. Yet while Durkheim prioritized the maintenance of social integration and social order, Weber was more concerned with the value of individual freedom and humanity, which could be silenced within the efficient but depersonalized "iron cage" of bureaucratic organization.

As is well-known, Weber defined a number of characteristics of the modern bureaucracy, including the following: (a) fixed and continuous offices (b) governed by rules and/or laws within (c) an organizational hierarchy, managed by (d) officials with fixed sets of duties and (e) predetermined qualifications for office, including (f) specific training for that office. Weber was profoundly ambivalent about bureaucracy and the rationalization of processes that it requires. It has been claimed that Talcott Parsons tempered this ambivalence in his early translations of Weber's work, which stressed the positive aspects of Weberian descriptions of bureaucracy over negative ones, whereas later translations of Weber's work by Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills highlighted this ambivalence. Weber's ideas about bureaucratization in the modern state and corporation speak to the career theory on career paths, job scope, occupational and organizational socialization, and occupational and organizational identification. His ideas on the tension between (a) the gains of efficiency, stability, and fairness provided by bureaucracy and (b) the dangers to individual freedom and growth extended by the same process translate into theory on the relationship between an individual's need for growth and development and the organization's need for stability, reliability, and continuity.

Weber has also been credited with developing an early analysis of social hierarchy that separated out *class hierarchy*, the classification of individuals based

on economic advantage, from *status hierarchy*, the classification of individuals based on honor or occupation. Distinguishing status and class allows one to conceptualize occupational attachment from both economic and prestige perspectives and informs career theory on occupational identity formation and attachment, echoed in Everett Hughes's (see below) understanding of the creation of "professions." Group identity can serve both to separate one group from another (economically or via prestige) and to help a group cohere internally (through commonalities in economic advantage or prestige).

Everett Hughes occupies a unique space in the history of career theory, since he is often designated as one of the founders of the field and was writing about the sociology of occupations as early as 1928. Using the institution as the central level of analysis allowed Hughes to continue to focus (in a Durkheimian sense) on the structural forces that constrain and shape human behavior, while remaining attuned to how individuals continually create meaning and norms within those institutions. For Hughes, institutions serve both as a regulatory or moral function for individuals, providing a source of collective identity and therefore mitigating against anomie in postindustrial society, and as an efficient way to organize resources. Hughes took on the division of labor and its importance to social relationships and its danger of undermining social stability. Framing the division of labor as a social phenomenon with implications beyond simple economic results allowed Hughes to frame work as a crux between the individual and society and point out that no profession can be understood without placing it within the context of a social matrix or system.

Weber's influence on Hughes is also evident throughout his work. In "Institutional Office and the Person," first published in 1937, Hughes wrote about the characteristics of formally held offices in much the same way that Weber wrote about characteristics of bureaucracy, including how offices define and prescribe one's role and, in so doing, confer status on an individual. He echoes Weber's understanding of status assignments by pointing out how offices can be communicated through ritual, such as taking a vow (like the Hippocratic oath), which defines office holders against others. Hughes was also interested in how professions are defined and circumscribed, repeating concerns about how professions maintain problematic boundaries, protecting themselves from outside intervention at the occasional expense of transparency and accountability.

Hughes's students at the University of Chicago conducted some of the most important ethnographic studies of professions and occupations, including Becker and colleagues' *Boys in White*, a classic study of the indoctrination of medical students into the profession of medicine, as well as studies of the careers of the taxi hall dancer, the professional thief, and the tubercular patient. Strains of Hughes and the concern for the effect of bureaucratization on individuals can be seen directly in some of the dystopias described in sociological investigations of the "modern corporation," such as *White Collar*, by C. Wright Mills, or William Whyte's *Organization Man*.

In the second half of the twentieth century, sociological career theories tended to focus on the social-structural determinants of occupational choice and attainment or, more ethnographically, on individuals' experiences of career navigation through social structures.

A great deal of empirical work has studied the effects of class background and parental occupational attainment on the outcomes of individuals. Classic work in this area includes labor market theory, which speculates about the importance of both external and internal labor market features to individual work outcomes: Delbert C. Miller and William H. Form's industrial sociology; and Peter M. Blau and Otis Dudley Duncan's status attainment theory, which posited (and demonstrated empirically) that individual occupational status is heavily influenced by parental attainment. The second trend draws more heavily on the ethnographic work of the Chicago school sociologists, conducting inductive investigations of individuals' navigations through careers and the interactions between the micro- and macrolevels of analysis.

Edgar Schein is the most obvious representative of this second sociological trend. Using a firmly interactionist approach, Schein examined both how the organization serves the acculturation and socialization needs of the individual and how the individual serves the innovation needs of the organization. His work on *career anchors*—the individual self-concept with which individuals approach their working lives and that could be based on technical competence, managerial competence, security, creativity, or autonomy—drew attention to the nature of the subjective career and the notion that organizations would be better served if they could accommodate individuals' changing self-concepts. In terms of how individuals navigate through organizations, Schein conceptualized the organization

as a cone, containing multiple classes of boundaries representing different types of status passages: external/internal boundaries, vertical boundaries (promotion), and horizontal boundaries (movement toward the "inner circle" of organizations). Michael Driver's directional pattern model of careers, driven partially by the individual and partially by the organization, recalls Schein's understanding of unique individuals navigating unique paths through organizations.

The desire to capture what a *career* is, both for the individual and within an organizational context, continues to receive a great deal of theoretical attention. The general trends have been to expand earlier understandings or metaphors of career, generally more static, predetermined, and organizationally and objectively defined, to be more dynamic and broadly, individually, and subjectively defined. Douglas Hall's theory of the protean career and Michael Arthur's theory of the boundaryless career represent keys to this trend.

CAREER THEORY FROM A VOCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Historical Influences

The idea that an occupation exists that will best match or fit any individual was particularly attractive after industrialization undermined the traditional artisan- and guild-based organization of labor and after migration to cities (together with waves of immigration to the New World) made the placement of new arrivals into productive positions in society more urgent. This challenge was approached both by early psychologists, who believed that testing individuals' abilities or aptitudes could be used to effectively place individuals in a societally productive way, and by civic reformers, who developed theories more concerned with individuals determining career choices that would prove individually "fit." Though both strains were concerned with "fitting" people to jobs, psychologists tended to prioritize what was best for the organization, while civic reformers tended to focus on the needs of the individual. However, all of these theories generally imply a static understanding of human nature: Once a correct choice is discovered, whether by expert testing or journeys of self-awareness, the peg would have found an appropriately shaped hole.

Psychology as a scientific discipline was in its nascent stages in the nineteenth century. Psychologists

such as Francis Galton (1822-1911), James McKeen Cattell (1860-1944), and Charles Spearman (1863-1945) were optimistic about the ability to measure and quantify individual abilities and potential, avidly devising tests to determine the nature and extent of individual differences and using those differences to predict various outcomes. Historically, the advancement of these types of early intelligence tests became useful as enlistment in World War I ballooned, which gave the military a tight timeline for figuring out how to most effectively place hundreds of thousands of personnel. The U.S. Committee on Classification of Personnel in the Army conducted one of the largest applications of intelligence and aptitude testing ever testing 1.7 million men and critically influencing the deployment of those military personnel.

It was, however, the development of personality and interest tests—such as the Strong Vocational Interest Blank and the Kuder Preference Record—which provided a boon to career theorists looking to develop propositions about what kinds of individuals would choose and excel in different jobs. The theories behind interest testing were conceptually different from the theories behind intelligence or aptitude testing, for they assumed that volition would determine performance at least as much as inherited ability would. Though vocational testing has moved beyond static understanding of human ability and the idea that scores on tests are alone enough to understand in what occupations individuals will thrive, these early theories and tests continue to maintain some authority in the field.

Moral and educational concerns motivated the second stream of vocational theorists. Instead of being primarily concerned with how organizations could most effectively gain productively from their human resources, early vocational guidance theorists were propelled by an interest in understanding the “person side” of the peg-in-hole metaphor: In what type of employment would an individual find the greatest satisfaction?

The reformist and theorist Frank Parsons (1854-1908) played as seminal and catalytic a role as the one played by Hughes within the sociological tradition of career theory. A lawyer by training, Parsons became concerned in the later stages of his career about the effects of industrialization on workers, especially among those most vulnerable (the young, the poor, and new immigrants). At Civic Service House in Boston, Parsons developed an experience-based theory: If individuals had accurate and thorough

self-understanding and had accurate and adequate understandings of different professions and the connections between those two sets of beliefs, a solid vocational choice could result. His motivation was to encourage vocational discovery as a process of self-actualization. Though Parsons’s theory of vocational choice was not new (similar ideas about vocational choice had been circulating since the 1700s), it remains most credited to him to this day.

It is possible to see the influence of both the individual-differences tradition and the vocational-education tradition in some of the earliest works of the career theory canon. In the 1950s, Anne Roe’s personality theory of career choice made predictions about career choice based on a combination of factors, including childhood experiences, our personal needs and need strengths (taken from Abraham Maslow), and our genetic predispositions (i.e., abilities). Though incorporating ideas from more developmental theories, such as attending to the importance of one’s childhood environment in later career choice, her theory remained primarily vocational in perspective, interested in the prediction of adult vocational interest patterns and choice based on a combination of individual-level factors. In an effort that enlarged the “fit” notion to include both individual and environmental factors, Lloyd Lofquist and Rene Dawis developed the concept of work adjustment. *Work adjustment* represents the continuing effort of individuals to ensure that their own needs are met within the work environment in ways that are commensurate with the requirements of their jobs; this correspondence then predicts satisfaction, effectiveness, and turnover. The inherent tension in the vocational guidance tradition within career theory involves the twin desire to predict people’s “best fit” profession, while acknowledging that prediction is, at best, probabilistic and that person-environment fit involves many interacting variables, which can all potentially change.

John Holland’s theory of vocational choice is perhaps the most representative “career” theory that tentatively explores the tension between knowing that individuals continually develop and prioritizing the notion that the goal of vocational guidance is to “fit” individuals to jobs. The theory proposes that vocational choice and behavior are driven by individuals’ attempts to best fit their personal orientations to their occupational environments. Individuals have patterns of personal orientations (Holland defines six: Realistic, Investigative, Social, Conventional, Enterprising, and

Artistic) that drive vocational choice. Congruence between individuals' personal orientations and the demands of their occupational environments then drive satisfaction and performance outcomes. The theory has taken on added complexity since first proposed in the early 1960s, for example with regard to emphasizing contextual factors. Although it does try to take into account how people may change and require adaptation to different environments (a position helped through the use of longitudinal research into the stability of vocational choice), it remains a more complex and nuanced restatement of older "peg-in-hole" theories. Linda Gottfredson's later theory of circumspection and compromise echoed Holland's interest in fitting individual preferences with occupational requirements, though from a lens of childhood psychology. She posited that individuals' vocational choices are made on the basis of narrowing occupational options (circumspection eliminates unwanted options, while compromise replaces unrealistic desired alternatives with more realistic ones) through an ongoing process of mapping one's self-concepts to held images of occupation.

CAREER THEORY FROM A DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

In contrast to most vocational theory, the developmental perspective focuses on careers as a dynamic and maturing process that evolves over time. The key theorists usually identified with this perspective have traditionally built stage-based models of career.

Historical Influences

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and Carl Jung (1865-1961), as well as Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) and Erik Erikson (1902-1994), contributed different visions of dynamic individual change and growth over the life cycle.

Freud's legacy is perhaps both underrepresented and diffused in the career theory canon. Freud did claim that life's twofold foundation is "the compulsion to work, the power to love." In particular, the key role that work plays in a well-adjusted personality and the unhealthy role it can likewise play in a less well-adjusted personality are persistent themes throughout his writing. Strains of this can be seen in Clayton Alderfer's work, which points out how Freud's work on transference is relevant to understanding how needs from other realms

could be sublimated through work. Work can represent the most positive achievement in individual life, but it also may represent attempts to avoid negotiating the unconscious. Freud's continued priority of childhood influences over the potential for seminal experiences in adult life and the frustrating untestability of his theories left him with less to contribute to career theory than other developmental theorists.

In contrast, Jung presented himself as one of the first theorists of midlife. Jung's own "midlife crisis," in 1913 at the age of 38, triggered a new understanding of the period between age 35 and 50 as a phase of life during which important changes in the psyche take place. During this phase, individuals tend to shift from a primary focus on the external world to a more internal, reflective state, opening the possibility for profound growth—as well as potential for withdrawal from the second half of life if the tasks one is confronted with at midlife prove too intimidating.

Following Freud and Jung, both Maslow and Erikson presented hierarchical stage-based models that are highly attractive and transportable to theorizing about careers (though they remain frustratingly uncooperative in empirical testing). Maslow's theory of motivation rests on a five-step hierarchy of needs, beginning with physiological needs; progressing through safety needs, affiliation needs, and achievement and esteem needs; and finally culminating in the need for self-actualization. Individuals are motivated by whatever set of needs is most personally salient and unmet at the time. Once a set of needs has been met, the next-higher level of needs assumes greater salience. Self-actualization has remained a popular construct representing an important career "success" outcome. However, empirical analysis has had little success confirming his theories; instead, Maslow's work has been reinterpreted by career theorists as speaking to a series of sequential career stages, representing status passages rather than sets of need gratification.

Erikson's eight-stage developmental theory contains a number of progressive tasks that directly influence career theory. The stage of *industry versus inferiority* requires that the school-age child integrate an understanding of the importance of work and accomplishment, while mitigating against a sense of inadequacy as he or she grapples with learning new technologies. This stage gives way to the stage of *identity versus role confusion*, during which the main task is to ensure the development of a strong sense of self, a key piece

in developing a strong vocational identity: Erikson claimed that the inability to resolve an occupational identity is a primary cause of disturbance in youth. The *intimacy-versus-isolation* stage, which occurs in early adulthood, requires individuals to commit both to intimate relationships and to stable employment or career (toward midlife) and builds toward the final two stages of life (both after midlife). During the stage of *generativity versus stagnation*, individuals are to guide and teach the next generation, while the final stage, *ego integrity versus despair*, represents the culmination of a life's journey toward maturity, during which one has accepted the limitations of one's individual life but remains an enlightened leader and legacy builder.

Traditional life span developmental psychology examines human development throughout life, with the perspective that developmental processes are best understood in a context that incorporates individuals' entire life courses. Clayton Alderfer's Existence, Relatedness and Growth (ERG) theory represents a fusion of theories from a number of different disciplines, though the work is most seriously indebted to Maslow's theory of motivation. Alderfer posed his theory as a more parsimonious, less rigid, and more career-focused alternative to Maslow's. ERG theory posits that individual needs can be characterized by "existence," or the importance of finding equilibrium in the satisfaction of human needs; "relatedness," or the importance of human interactions in social environments; and "growth," or the need of any system to increase in order and differentiation over time.

George Vaillant's study of successful adult adaptation also represents a theoretical stepping-stone between Freud, Jung, and career theory. In a 35-year-long cohort study of "people who are well and do well," Vaillant took Freud's work on the ego mechanisms of defense and arranged them in an evolutionary process, to range from the least- to most-adaptive defense mechanisms. His study demonstrated that individuals who are most successful are able to change their needs and priorities as they navigate the life cycle and demonstrate growth over time. Vaillant believed his longitudinal study also supported the theories of Erikson, finding that subjects at early midlife are more interested in their own careers (conforming to Erikson's stages of industry and identity), while by their 50s, they are more interested in their colleagues and staff (conforming to Erikson's stages of intimacy and generativity). He also noted that individuals could get stuck,

living their adult lives as if they were teenagers, harkening back to Jung's concerns about unsuccessfully meeting the challenge of complete individuation that meets one at midlife.

Seeing his study *The Seasons of a Man's Life* as a parallel to *Adaptation to Life*, Daniel Levinson focused on the midlife decade, which had caught the imagination of Erikson and Jung, because at 40, individuals must make the transition from wondering what one will be to coping with what one has become. Levinson distinguished himself from the more purely intraindividual theorists by stressing the interaction between the individual and his or her environment. Levinson posited universal stages through which most individuals pass, each of which is connected to either structure-building or structure-changing periods. The midlife transition, the point at which individuals become disillusioned with their current realities, involves confronting and reintegrating the polarities that define life, and it represents the most important structure-changing phase of life. Erikson referred to this as the "stage of generativity"; Jung first proposed it as the turning point between the first and second half of life.

From the 1950s on, Donald Super distinguished between occupational and career theory—the former representing the static theories of the vocational psychologists and the latter representing the more dynamic theories covered in this section. Influenced by both life stage theorists and social role theorists, Super built a staged model of careers positing that career development occurs along a set of phases during which individuals continually implement and then revise self-concepts. Super's "life-span, life-space" approach to careers charges that individuals' developmental tasks and requirements change over time, as do their social roles, and that both influence career development recursively. Work and life satisfaction depend on the ability of individuals to implement their self-concepts in a fulfilling way, appropriate to their life stages and social roles at the time. Like Schein, Super believed the driving self-concept became more stable as individuals matured.

Though Super's developmental theory has withstood the test of time, a number of similar career theories echoed many of the same ideas, such as Eli Ginzberg and his colleagues' theory of occupational choice, based heavily on developmental psychology, and David Tiedeman and Robert O'Hara's theory of career development. Super's attention to social roles has also withstood the test of time, becoming all the

more important as theorists grapple with issues of dual careers, women's unique career issues, and the work/life and work/family interface.

There have been serious criticisms of these life course theorists that highlight the need for any theorist of adult development to attend to both intraindividual processes and processes of individual-society interaction. The main criticism of life stage models is their persistent though restrictive tendency for developmental models to make the assumption that developmental stages are sequential, unidirectional, teleological, irreversible, and universal.

CONCLUSION

We close by identifying three themes that have remained relevant to career theory over time. First, running through the entire literature on careers is the tension between *individual agency*, the notion that we are what we make of ourselves (present most fully in vocational theory), and *social determinism*, in which individual behavior is determined by structural constraints (present most fully in sociological theory). Second, the tension between career as a dynamic process and career as a choice or fit phenomenon has been continuously apparent throughout the history of career theory. Though current trends are toward dynamic models, the bulk of empirical work in career theory remains tied to static models, which are easier to design, operationalize, and model statistically. And third, level-of-analysis issues continue as an ongoing tension in career theory. Sociologists have historically emphasized the importance of careers in the stable reproduction of the social order; vocational theorists have emphasized person-job fit as a mutual goal of both individuals and organizations; and developmental theorists have privileged the goal of personal self-expression and/or growth. This tension also speaks to the central fascination with careers as objects of study. They intersect with society at every conceivable level of analysis, from people living their careers to the societies that are formed and reformed in the process.

—Celia Moore, Hugh P. Gunz, and Douglas T. Hall

See also Career, Metaphors for careers, Vocational psychology

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HOLLAND'S THEORY OF VOCATIONAL CHOICE

The *theory of vocational choice* developed by John L. Holland is one of the most widely researched and applied theories of career development. Based on the premise that personality factors underlie career choices, his theory postulates that people project self- and world-of-work views onto occupational titles and make career decisions that satisfy their preferred personal orientations. The theory incorporates several constructs from personality psychology, vocational behavior, and social psychology, including self-perception theory and social stereotyping.

Applications of Holland's theory involve assessing individuals in terms of two or three prominent personality types and then matching the respective types with the environmental aspects of potential careers. The theory predicts that the higher the degree of congruence between individual and occupational characteristics, the better the potential for positive career-related outcomes, including satisfaction, persistence, and achievement.

THEORY OVERVIEW

The typology inherent in Holland's theory organizes the voluminous data about people in different jobs and the data about different work environments to suggest how people make vocational choices and explain how job satisfaction and vocational achievement occur. Seven assumptions underlie the typology:

1. Most people possess one of six modal personality types: Realistic (R), Investigative (I), Artistic (A), Social (S), Enterprising (E), or Conventional (C). Table 1 summarizes each of the six "RIASEC" types and gives examples of occupations associated with them.
2. Six modal occupational environments correspond to the six modal personality types: Realistic (R), Investigative (I), Artistic (A), Social (S), Enterprising (E), and Conventional (C). Each environment is dominated by a given type of personality and is typified by physical settings posing special circumstances.
3. People search for environments that allow them to exercise their skills and abilities, express their attitudes and values, and assume agreeable circumstances and roles.
4. A person's behavior is determined by an interaction between his or her personality and the characteristics of the environment. Based on an individual's personality pattern and the pattern of the environment, some outcomes of such a pairing can, in principle, be forecast using knowledge of personality types and environmental models. Such outcomes include choice of vocation, job changes, vocational achievement, personal competence, and educational and social behavior.
5. The degree of congruence (or agreement) between a person and an occupation (environment) can be estimated by a hexagonal model (see Figure 1). The shorter the distance between the personality type and the occupational type, the closer the relationship.
6. The degree of consistency within a person or an environment is also defined using the hexagonal model. Adjacent types on the hexagon are most consistent, or have compatible interests, personal dispositions, or job duties. Opposite types on the hexagon are most inconsistent, or combine personal characteristics or job functions that are usually unrelated.
7. The degree of differentiation of a person or an environment modifies predictions made from a person's typology, from an occupational code, or from the interaction of both. Some persons or environments are more closely defined than others; for instance, a person may closely resemble a single type and show little resemblance to other types, or an environment may be dominated largely by a single type. In contrast, a person who resembles many types or an environment characterized by about equal numbers of workers in each of the six types would be labeled *undifferentiated* or *poorly defined*.

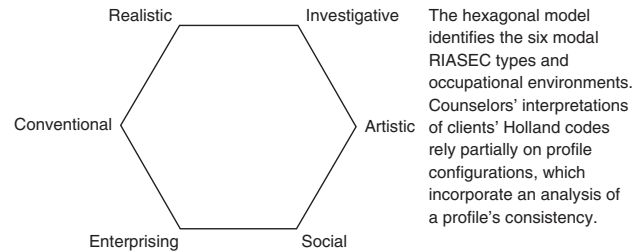


Figure 1. The Holland Hexagon

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Career development professionals who use Holland's theory of vocational choice typically assess individuals' interest profiles from three primary perspectives: coherence, consistency, and differentiation. Holland has maintained that these factors correlate with the clarity and focus of individuals' vocational personalities. An analysis of a profile in this way is customarily a prelude to a career development professional's subsequent application of the theory, which involves translating an individual's Holland profile into occupational alternatives for further consideration. Print, computer, and Internet-based sources are available to facilitate this latter process.

Coherence relates to the degree to which the Holland codes associated with an individual's vocational aspirations or occupational daydreams conform to the Holland occupational themes (i.e., Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, Conventional). The *consistency* concept involves analyzing the proximity of the individual's two dominant Holland types with respect to the hexagonal scheme. Adjacent types on the hexagon (e.g., Social and Enterprising) reflect high interest consistency; opposite types (e.g., Artistic and Conventional) reflect low consistency. The concept of *differentiation* relates to the variance between an individual's highest and lowest types, typically computed by subtracting the extreme scale scores as assessed by a measure such as the Self-Directed Search. The larger the difference, the more highly differentiated the individual's occupational interests.

Table 1. Description of Holland Types

<i>Holland Type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Examples of Occupations</i>
Realistic	Interest in activities requiring motor coordination, skill, physical strength, and masculinity. People oriented toward the Realistic type prefer acting out problems or being physically involved in performing work tasks; they typically avoid tasks involving interpersonal and verbal skills and seek concrete rather than abstract problem situations.	Automobile mechanic Aircraft controller Electrician Surveyor Farmer
Investigative	Main characteristics include thinking rather than acting, organizing and understanding rather than dominating or persuading, and asociality rather than sociability. Investigative types prefer to avoid close interpersonal contact, though the quality of their avoidance seems different from that of their Realistic colleagues.	Biologist Chemist Physicist Anthropologist Medical technologist Geologist
Artistic	Manifestations of strong self-expression and relations with people indirectly through artistic expression are central to Artistic types. They tend to dislike structure and prefer tasks emphasizing physical skills or interpersonal interactions. They tend to be introspective and a social much in the manner of the Investigatives, but differ in that their interests are more stereotypically feminine than masculine, and they often display relatively little self-control and express emotion more readily than most people.	Composer Musician Stage director Writer Actor/Actress Interior decorator
Social	Social types generally gravitate to activities that involve promoting the health, education, or well-being of others. Unlike Realistic and Investigative types, Social types tend to seek close relationships. They are apt to be socially skilled and often averse to isolative activities, as well as to activities that require extensive physical functioning or intellectual problem solving.	Teacher Social religious counselor Clinical psychologist Case worker Speech therapist
Enterprising	Although often verbally skilled, Enterprising types tend to use these skills for self-gain rather than to support others, as do Social types. They frequently are concerned about power and status, as are Conventional types, but differ in that they usually aspire to attain power and status, while the Conventional types honor others for it.	Salesperson Manager Business executive Television producer Sports promoter Buyer
Conventional	Typified by great concern for rules and regulations, great self-control, subordination of personal needs, and strong identification with power and status. Conventional types prefer structure and order and thus seek interpersonal and work situations where structure abounds.	Bookkeeper Court reporter Financial analyst Banker Cost estimator Tax expert

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Career development professionals' primary uses of Holland's theory of vocational choice pertain to orienting clients to the world of work, providing a systematic means for career exploration, and, ultimately, facilitating career decision making and planning. Many clients find the theory's basic tenets pragmatic

and easy to grasp. In addition, many career-related resources incorporate Holland's theory. These factors, in addition to its longevity, substantial research base, and renown among career-development professionals, have contributed to the theory's popularity and utility.

A complex workplace, numerous known and unknown career decisions, personal and workplace uncertainties, and many uncontrollable factors pose

daunting concerns to many people who confront career decisions. By imposing order and structure, Holland's theory offers a means of helping both career counselors and clients make career decisions that promise fulfillment. Awareness of a proven, practical method for easing the process can be empowering. The theory's research and applied bases, along with its structure and inherent systematic processes, offer clients assurance as they acquire a better understanding of themselves and their options.

Holland's theory has also served as a basis for classifying and organizing occupations. The U.S. Department of Labor, for example, has integrated Holland codes into the Occupational Information Network (O*NET), a national database of occupational interest areas, education and training requirements, earnings, growth projections, and anticipated openings. *The Dictionary of Holland Occupational Codes* provided an earlier compendium of occupations listed by respective Holland codes.

A host of Holland-based products incorporate elements of Holland's theory of vocational choice. The Holland theory is, for instance, integrated into some of the most well-known career assessment measures currently published, including the Self-Directed Search, Strong Interest Inventory, Vocational Preference Inventory, and the Career Assessment Inventory. Clients can take career tests integrating the Holland theory through traditional paper-and-pencil formats and via personal computers and the Internet.

The wide variety and availability of assessment measures that incorporate Holland's theory have contributed to both ease of access and administration, which, in turn, have also indirectly contributed to the theory's popularity. A variety of card sorts, self-directed career-planning books, and multimedia resources based in whole or in part on Holland's theory are also available.

While most research and published material related to Holland's theory of vocational choice have addressed career decision-making issues confronting youth and individuals early in their career development, the theory has been implemented well beyond these groups. Business and public organizations, for instance, have used Holland's theory of vocational choice in human resource matters ranging from employee selection and staffing decisions to developing mentoring and succession-planning programs. The theory is also used in litigation involving disputes about earning capacity. A career counselor serving as an expert witness in a dissolution-of-marriage case,

for example, could apply Holland's theory as a partial basis for proposing a plan to help a spouse's reintegration into the workplace after a period of absence or underemployment. Holland's theory is also widely used among vocational-rehabilitation counselors who assist persons with disabilities in reexamining their objectives and career development after acquired disabling problems interfere with or otherwise alter how they can proceed.

Like all theories, Holland's theory of vocational choice has had its detractors. Recent challenges to the theory's applicability include assertions that research has failed to find a strong link between congruence and outcomes, such as satisfaction and performance. Other reviews of Holland's theory have cited limitations that include problems inherent in trait factor theories, including the possibility that people can change themselves and their environments. Of course, the occupational and individual traits the theory attempts to match are variable and subject to modification. If an individual is dissatisfied with her job as an insurance claims examiner, for example, she has the option of attempting to change features of the job without changing its title. Job incumbents lacking career fulfillment quite often initiate these efforts before they seek job or occupational changes. Evaluations of Holland's theory of vocational choice and comparisons with other theories have been proffered since the theory's inception (see "Further Readings and References" section at the end of this entry).

CONCLUSION

Holland's theory of vocational choice is a staple among contemporary career-development professionals' thinking about the world of work and methods of promoting clients' career aims. It is among the most widely researched and applied vocational choice theories. Its longevity and appeal likely relate to its parsimony, its validation through scores of research studies, and the availability of multiple Holland-based resources that facilitate the theory's implementation. Challenges to the theory's validity will undoubtedly recur, and its continued viability will rest on its ability to assure its primary consumers, career-development professionals, that it meets the standards to which clients' career guidance can be entrusted.

—Michael Shahnasarian

See also Interests, Person-environment fit (P-E fit), Self-awareness, Self-Directed Search, Vocational psychology

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HOSTILE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

A *hostile working environment* is an evolving theory of discrimination that derives from various federal antidiscrimination statutes that prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, disability, or age (for persons 40 years and older). This theory recognizes that it is discriminatory for an employer to subject an employee to working terms or conditions that are hostile or abusive to him or her because of one (or more) of these characteristics. As a developing area of law, courts continue to refine the legal principles that shape our understanding of hostile work environment claims. In response to the guidance offered by the

courts, employers are increasingly making efforts to educate their employees about the kinds of behaviors that may create a hostile or abusive work environment and the measures that can be taken to prevent and address such claims. Indeed, an employer who tolerates a hostile work environment can be held liable for compensatory and punitive damages, and there are other remedies available under the respective federal statutes for this form of discrimination.

Most notably, the concept of a hostile work environment as a form of discrimination garnered national attention in 1991 during the U.S. Senate confirmation hearings for Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Clarence Thomas. At those hearings, Anita Hill testified about sexually harassing conduct allegedly engaged in by nominee Thomas during the time they had worked together at two federal agencies. Although Justice Thomas was ultimately confirmed to the Court, the hearings spawned an almost immediate rise in the number of sex discrimination complaints filed against employers, based on claims of sexual harassment in its myriad forms, including claims of a hostile work environment.

From a legal perspective, hostile work environment claims based on sex have received significant attention by the federal judiciary in recent years, prompting a spate of decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court that address issues raised by this developing theory of discrimination. The standards established by the Court in these decisions apply to hostile work environment claims based not only on sex but also on other characteristics protected from discrimination by federal statutes, including race, religion, color, national origin, disability, or age (for persons 40 years and older). Because of the influence and prevalence of sex-based hostile work environment claims, the following discussion will focus on this category of claims for purposes of illustrating the concepts essential to understanding this form of workplace discrimination.

As most commonly invoked and understood, a hostile work environment based on sex discrimination is an unlawful form of discrimination, rooted in the broad prohibition against sex discrimination in employment Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Specifically, Title VII makes it "an unlawful employment practice for an employer . . . to discriminate against any individual with respect to his [or her] *terms, conditions, or privileges* of employment, because of such individual's *sex*." The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal administrative agency responsible for implementing and

enforcing Title VII, has long held that sexually harassing conduct violates an individual's right to working terms and conditions free from sex discrimination. Consistent with this position, the EEOC conceptualizes sexual harassment as a form of sex discrimination in one of two ways: quid pro quo sexual harassment or hostile work environment sexual harassment. *Quid pro quo* (literally meaning "this for that") *sexual harassment* exists when a subordinate employee suffers a tangible employment action for refusing to submit to a supervisory employee's sexual demands or proves that an employment decision itself changed the terms or conditions of employment. For example, quid pro quo harassment arises when an employee is fired or denied a promotion for rebuffing a supervisor's request for sexual favors. Most of the early sexual harassment cases were framed and analyzed by the courts as quid pro quo claims.

By contrast, *hostile work environment sexual harassment* arises when an employee's working conditions are altered discriminatorily because of that employee's sex without resulting in a tangible job detriment. For example, a hostile work environment exists when a workplace is permeated with discriminatory intimidation or ridicule or insult perpetuated by a supervisor or coworkers that makes it more difficult for an employee to do his or her job. In 1986, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Meritor Savings Bank, FSB v. Vinson*, recognized that a hostile work environment based on sex perpetuates inequality in the workplace and violates Title VII. Since *Meritor*, an evolving body of law has emerged from Supreme Court decisions as well as decisions from lower federal courts. These decisions attempt to provide guidance to employers who are committed to creating discrimination-free workplaces and avoiding lawsuits based on claims of a hostile work environment.

Consistent with Congress's intent to eradicate the entire spectrum of sex discrimination in employment, Title VII's protection against a hostile work environment extends both to women and to men. Courts now recognize that a hostile work environment, initially the subject of dispute, can result from discriminatory conduct perpetrated by members of the same sex as well as by members of the opposite sex. In its 1998 decision in *Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Services, Inc.*, the Supreme Court held that a male employee could state a claim for a hostile work environment created by male supervisors and coworkers in his workplace. Offering further guidance, the Court explained

that a woman could conceivably create a discriminatorily hostile or abusive work environment for another woman through conduct that makes it clear that the alleged harasser is motivated by hostility toward the presence of other women in the workplace. The Court emphasized the importance of the context and impact of the conduct on the employee who is experiencing the behavior, rather than the sexual identity of the alleged perpetrator.

Because each work environment is unique and human behavior is as varied as the employees in a particular workplace, courts have not attempted to provide an exhaustive list of behaviors that would automatically create a hostile environment. Instead, courts have crafted some guiding principles that can inform an employer's understanding of the circumstances that are likely to be recognized as creating a hostile work environment in violation of Title VII. These principles are intended to help distinguish between the sort of inappropriate or uncivil workplace conduct that from time to time occurs (and does not give an employee the right to sue for discrimination) and conduct that is "sufficiently severe or pervasive" so as to alter an employee's working conditions because of his or her sex. Emphasizing this distinction, the Supreme Court has made it clear that conduct that is "merely offensive" does not violate Title VII (or, by inference, any other antidiscrimination statute). On the other hand, an employee does not need to prove psychological harm resulting from exposure to the hostile or abusive workplace.

To ensure a degree of objectivity, the alleged discriminatory conduct must be viewed through the prism of a reasonable person. In other words, an employee who alleges a hostile work environment must prove that he or she perceives the environment to be hostile or abusive and that a reasonable person also would perceive the environment to be hostile or abusive. In *Harris v. Forklift Systems, Inc.* (1993), the Supreme Court noted that some relevant factors to consider include the frequency of the discriminatory conduct, the severity of the conduct, whether the conduct contains a physical component, and whether the conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's ability to do his or her job. Overarching this inquiry is the need to take account of "all the circumstances," including the broader social context in which the behaviors are occurring.

An example given by the Supreme Court in *Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Services, Inc.*, highlights the critical role that context plays in evaluating

hostile-work-environment claims. Rather than emphasize the conduct itself, the Court focuses on the context in which the conduct occurs. It suggests, for example, that a reasonable person would understand that a distinction exists between the coach smacking a football player on the buttocks as he runs onto the football field before a game and the coach smacking his assistant on the buttocks back at the office. The inference is that the former action would be perceived as one of competence and confidence building (and would not be experienced as sex discrimination), whereas the latter action, in an office setting, would be perceived as demeaning and competence and confidence undermining (and would be experienced as sex discrimination). The contextual distinction in which the same conduct occurs makes all the difference.

As a practical matter, hostile-work-environment claims typically are based on a collection of behaviors and incidents that alter the workplace because of the employee's sex. Although the Supreme Court has indicated that one incident, in general, will not be sufficiently "severe or pervasive" to create a hostile work environment, it is possible to state a successful claim in which an employee alleges one incident that involves physical conduct or conduct that makes it virtually impossible for the employee to demonstrate competence and carry out the job requirements effectively in the future. In its narrowest construct, courts generally recognize the following kinds of overt sexual actions when "severe or pervasive" as sufficient to create a hostile workplace: sexist jokes or epithets, sexually explicit photographs or images, sexual gestures, and other conduct of a sexual nature. In addition, a growing number of courts are recognizing that nonsexual conduct that undermines an employee's competence or makes it more difficult for an employee to perform the job or to advance in the company because of the employee's sex also may create a discriminatorily hostile work environment. The courts are acknowledging that Title VII's goal of workplace equality can be undermined by nonsexual as well as sexually overt actions that reinforce gender stereotypes or have the effect of differentiating the workforce along gender lines.

Employers who tolerate hostile workplaces created by supervisory employees can be held vicariously liable for the actions of the supervisors. An employee who wins a hostile-work-environment claim may be awarded equitable relief as well as compensatory and punitive damages under Title VII (subject to a

maximum cap of \$300,000, depending on the size of the company). To motivate each employer to guard against a hostile work environment, the U.S. Supreme Court has recognized an affirmative defense to allow an employer to avoid vicarious liability when it shows that (a) the employer has taken reasonable care to prevent and promptly correct any sexually harassing conduct and (b) the employee unreasonably failed to take advantage of any preventive or corrective opportunities provided by the employer or to avoid harm otherwise. In response, employers are increasingly making efforts to educate their employees about the kinds of behaviors that may create a hostile or abusive work environment and the mechanisms internal to the company for addressing such claims. Case law provides some insight into the practical and proactive steps an employer might take to meet its duty and avail itself of the defense. Because an employer can also be held liable under a negligence standard for hostile work environments created by coworkers, these same preventive measures likely will serve an employer well if it is sued under these circumstances.

As an initial matter, an employer should publish and communicate to its employees a specific policy against sexual harassment (including claims based on a hostile work environment). Many companies provide training or other opportunities for employees to become more familiar with the concept of sexual harassment, the company's policy against sexual harassment, and the company's process for reporting and handling complaints or concerns about sexual harassment. In addition, to ensure that the policy is effective, an employer should implement a process for receiving and promptly investigating claims of sexual harassment. It is critically important that the process be designed in a way that encourages employees to report their complaints. Toward that end, the process must be accessible to employees and designed to lead to a resolution. Employers often create structures that authorize several alternative personnel to receive internal complaints alleging sexual harassment. This approach serves two purposes. It minimizes the likelihood that an employee will choose not to report the claim because he or she is uncomfortable sharing potentially sensitive and intimate behaviors with a particular member of management. It also prevents a situation in which the only person designated to receive complaints is the very individual alleged to be the perpetrator of the discriminatory conduct, such as the employee's supervisor.

During the course of the investigation, the company needs to protect the rights and interests of all parties, including the alleged harasser. If the investigation is not conducted with the appropriate level of confidentiality, the company could face a defamation lawsuit by the alleged harasser. Finally, based on the results of the investigation, an employer must remedy the situation promptly and effectively. At a minimum, the employer must stop the harassing conduct and minimize the risk of the behavior recurring. Here again, no specific guidelines exist except to recognize that any discipline imposed should not punish the alleged victim and should ensure that the discriminatory conduct has ceased and will not be repeated.

In recent years, employers have increasingly begun to adopt a zero-tolerance approach toward incidents of sexual harassment. Although no uniform definition exists, the concept of a zero-tolerance policy seems to imply a certain degree of rigidity with respect to the tolerance for incidents of sexual harassment and the consequences to individuals involved in the harassing conduct that has created the hostile work environment. Further empirical research, however, needs to be conducted to determine the overall effectiveness of zero-tolerance policies in light of the goals of Title VII.

Like any new legal theory, the standards applicable to claims of discrimination based on a hostile work environment will continue to evolve as courts develop more experience with these kinds of cases. Similarly, employers likely will continue to develop policies and practices designed to eradicate behaviors and climates that can create working environments that employees might experience as hostile or abusive on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, disability, or age (for persons 40 years and older). In the end, the overall goal of these developments must be to ensure that all employees enjoy the statutory right to pursue employment opportunities in workplaces free from discrimination.

—Sandra M. Tomkowicz

See also Age discrimination, Antisocial work behaviors, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Civil Rights Act of 1991, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Sex discrimination, Sexual harassment

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HUMAN CAPITAL

Human capital consists of the knowledge, skills, general intelligence, educational attainments, and personality characteristics of an individual and covers all strengths and assets of a person. The concept is rooted in two different fields, economics and psychology, thus resulting in two somewhat different perspectives.

HUMAN CAPITAL IN ECONOMICS

Economists as well as industrial and organizational psychologists see human capital as the sum of all abilities that enable an individual to undertake a certain job, thereby ensuring the success of a company. In this vein, human capital consists of work-related skills and information representing specific knowledge. Such information is referred to as "know what" and "know why." "Know what" entails knowledge about "facts" and is thus close to what is conventionally called information. "Know why" refers to knowledge about principles and theories in relation to the organization and functioning of the natural world, society, and the human mind. Whereas the first type of knowledge can be communicated relatively easily, the second requires more insight and at times practical experience, which is more difficult to establish in individuals. Both types of knowledge relate directly to certain capabilities.

Even if human capital is successfully implemented in an individual, it does not automatically result in economic growth or other positive outcomes in and of itself. Rather, it must be incorporated into the production of goods and services. As a first step, educated and skilled individuals must be formed via educational and training systems. Then, in a second step, ways must be found to place these individuals in positions that match their abilities and skills, organize their work in ways to ensure the utilization of their competencies, and motivate them to use their knowledge and their skills in the work setting. When this set of prerequisites and conditions does not exist, investment in human capital will not pay off for the state, the company, or the individual. The effectiveness of any investment in human capital relates both to the conditions of the labor market and to the organization inside a specific firm.

Although fostering the success of a company through the systematic increase of each individual's level of human capital and by ensuring its utilization through the appropriate placement of employees and the provision of excellent working conditions may seem like a new idea, as early as the last decade of the nineteenth century, leading economists had already recognized mechanisms that relate human capital to productivity and the well-being of an enterprise. The German physicist Ernst Abbe (1840-1905), owner and managing director of the Zeiss company (maker of optical instruments in Jena, Germany), saw the success of a business as being fueled mainly by two sources: the capabilities of the workers and the scientific basis of the firm's technology. Abbe coined the term "human capital" to describe the set of experience, knowledge, and skills contributed by every employee that enables an enterprise to be competitive in the long term and to accumulate resources. His aim was to maximize human capital and firm-specific resources in the workers to ensure lasting prosperity of the company. In accordance with many of today's management theories, Abbe saw human capital as being of strategic value to a firm and thus undertook efforts to increase human capital in his workers and tie them to the firm for longer periods of time. The means of reaching this goal were manifold. He offered housing benefits, profit-sharing, health insurance, pensions, holiday pay, and recreational programs for the workers, all very unusual concepts in the 1890s.

Abbe's guiding philosophy in the management of the company was not rooted in philanthropy. Rather,

he strived to guarantee the prosperity and long-term survival of the business, and he succeeded in doing so. Human capital as defined by Abbe and many others was, indeed, shown to be relevant to work performance. The more skills a worker has, the better the results of his or her work. Thus, a company has a primary interest in building up human capital in its employees and a secondary interest in persuading its workers to stay with the respective firm once it has invested in their knowledge and skills. Indeed, companies constantly face the threat of losing the most skilled of their workers to competitors once those workers have accumulated substantial knowledge and built up their own networks of contacts within the industry. More than a century after Abbe's views were implemented in his company, employee ownership and stock option programs are being discussed as useful strategies with which to tie key employees to the firm. In times of increasing specialization and worldwide competition, the importance of human capital for venture success is growing. Thus, companies invest in their employees' skills and abilities and do more to create attractive working conditions, especially for young, talented, high-performing individuals.

HUMAN CAPITAL IN PSYCHOLOGY

Through *industrial and organizational (I/O) psychology*, the term human capital found its way into psychological research. In I/O psychology, human capital was seen in much the same way as in economics, with the exception that I/O psychology considers factors beyond simply work-related skills and knowledge. With this perspective, human capital was used more broadly, assessing psychological variables such as an individual's general intelligence, personality traits, and so-called soft skills, such as problem-solving abilities or leadership skills. Typical outcomes studied in this field were work performance, firm formation rates, and entrepreneurial success. Depending on the outcome measure, however, different assets and traits were identified as being related to positive results. Work performance, for instance, was shown to be predicted by different personality traits, depending on the job in question. Even in jobs that stem from related areas, the profiles of successful employees may show significant differences. Sales managers' work was shown to have the best outcomes if the individuals were extraverted (i.e., outgoing, social), conscientious (i.e., prudent, planful, diligent), and

agreeable (i.e., friendly, indulgent) personality types. Entrepreneurs, however, were shown to be more successful if they were not only extraverted and conscientious but also open to new experiences and, interestingly, if they were *not* agreeable. In comparing personalities of successful social workers with those of creative engineers, differences are likely to be even more obvious.

Researchers in developmental psychology picked up on the term human capital more or less in a similar vein. Individuals who are intelligent, physically attractive, knowledgeable, and have a number of favorable personality traits, such as a strong achievement orientation (i.e., are high in human capital), are likely to attain higher educational and career levels, show less problematic behaviors, reach higher ages in good health, and report better well-being. Longevity, for instance, was shown to relate to higher levels of conscientiousness in the childhood personality. Accidents and injury deaths were shown to be less likely among conscientious individuals. They were also found to show healthier behavior throughout their lives and have more stable careers and relationships. Very much in line with these findings, adolescents with more human capital were found to be less prone to showing risky behavior. In this sense, higher human capital may increase the ability to foresee possible outcomes of one's behaviors. If an individual has invested substantial time and energy to obtain a certain educational goal, he or she may think twice when it comes to behavior that might endanger earlier success. In this sense, human capital has been found to be a protective factor, especially in the face of adversity. Children who grow up in unfavorable environments may be less vulnerable to any maladaptive effects if they can face difficulties with sufficient resources, that is, human capital.

In cultural psychology and acculturation research, human capital has been used to describe the skills and experiences that are protective of the individual, especially in an immigrant situation. An individual who has acquired knowledge about another country's cultural values and the associated behaviors and attitudes of that culture can adjust to the new host country more easily. Such skills, which have been called *cultural knowledge*, can support access to information and social contact and can contribute to less anxiety and better coping. In addition to cultural knowledge, many other variables have been found to contribute to good adaptation of immigrants, although not necessarily

under the heading of human capital. Optimistic, sociable, highly educated individuals have been shown to blend into a new culture more easily than their less advantaged counterparts.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF HUMAN CAPITAL

The role of human capital is seen as twofold. There are direct effects, in that the more human capital an individual can draw on, the better the outcomes in all areas listed. There are also indirect effects. Human capital enables utilization of social capital, allowing the pursuit of interests and the subsequent development of self-efficacy. Thus, sociable, friendly, and easygoing people who are intelligent, creative, and open to new experiences are successful in establishing significant social relationships, pursuing interests, and maintaining high levels of self-efficacy—factors that contribute to healthy development, successful educational attainment, and excellent career outcomes. Consequently, human capital, although not explicit in most cases, has played a role in areas of career development and career counseling. The fit between the requirements of a position and characteristics of the person are known to direct outcomes in both work satisfaction and performance. The higher the congruence between individuals' traits and their work environments, the more satisfied respondents are with their work, the better their work output, and the higher the stability in jobs over time.

INTERVENTIONS FOR FOSTERING THE UTILIZATION OF HUMAN CAPITAL

Three general principles in interventions address human capital. One is to strengthen the human capital of an individual by fostering work-related skills or knowledge. Such programs are run as part of promotion initiatives in companies or on a private basis, and most of them are not evaluated scientifically. They are tailored specifically to fit the needs either of a certain firm or branch or of individuals wanting to qualify in specific areas. Target groups are employed and unemployed adults. The second principle also addresses the acquisition of individual assets but is directed to more general characteristics of a person, such as self-efficacy, problem-solving skills, and other broader abilities. Programs in this category are often institution based, and many are evaluated by psychologists or

related groups. They usually aim to increase the employability of individuals or lower their current and future problem behaviors. Programs of this category usually target adolescents or young adults. The third principle in programs on human capital can be seen in the promotion of individual self-exploration. Exploring one's traits, abilities, interests, and skills (i.e., one's human capital) may help one gain insight into careers that would match a personal profile of assets. There are no specific target groups for programs aiming at exploration, though most research on such programs is conducted with adolescent groups.

At first sight, research on the acquisition of human capital appears to have been done almost exclusively in the second category of programs. However, a significant amount of work has centered on the positive effects of a thorough exploration of traits and skills, and yet another body of literature deals with the relationships of certain traits and skills and career outcomes. Both the research on exploration and the work on career-related assets usually do not specify the keyword of human capital, even though they are clearly related to the concept.

CRITICISM OF THE CONCEPT

In Germany, *human capital* was designated as the "worst word of the year for 2004." The jury making this judgment consisted of artists, journalists, and linguists. Their primary reason for the decision was "the increasing economization of all aspects of human life" and the fact that the term "degrades not only employees but the human being as such to an economic variable." Although this criticism may seem somewhat unjust and was thus rejected by major economic leaders and consultant companies, researchers had earlier put forward similar arguments. The concept of human capital was criticized because of its strong notion of individual responsibility. In line with neo-classical economic models, a lack of human capital has often been seen as a personal failure to achieve goals—and thus as an issue of choice and rationality rather than the result of unfavorable social backgrounds or lack of learning opportunities. According to such models, individuals make voluntary decisions to invest in human capital. Following this line, one would have to assume, for instance, that individual disparities are simply a result of choice. However, given socioeconomic and institutional barriers as well as problems of individual discrimination, it is obvious that there is more to the acquisition of human capital

than just individual initiative. Individuals have very different opportunities to learn, according to their social and personal backgrounds and characteristics (i.e., gender, family background, disability, age, socioeconomic status of the family of origin, and so forth). The results of individual learning, as mirrored in academic achievement following initial and post-compulsory education, as well as the extent to which a person can make use of other individual resources and assets are clearly related to the educational and economic opportunities afforded that individual.

—Eva Schmitt-Rodermund

See also Employability; Internal labor market; Knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs)

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HUMAN RESOURCE INFORMATION SYSTEMS (HRIS)

A *human resource information system* (HRIS) is a means of acquiring, storing, manipulating, analyzing, retrieving, and distributing pertinent information regarding an organization's human resources. It may

be as simple as a box of index cards or a file cabinet full of manila folders or as complex as an interactive, Web-based computer application with role-based portals (an integrated and personalized interface to information, applications, and collaborative services). Regardless of whether one thumbs through a box of index cards or uses a computer to search data stored on a server, the purpose of an HRIS is to make information about the human resources in an organization available to organizational decision makers.

With the introduction of information technology, computers, and the Internet, today's HRIS really is a sociotechnical system. A *sociotechnical system* is a combination of technology and people with inputs, transformations, and outputs. An HRIS sociotechnical system based on computers and information technology consists of *hardware* (mainframes, workstations, peripherals, and connecting networks); *software* (operating systems, utilities, application programs, and specialized codes); *physical surroundings* (building structures and working environments); *people* (individuals, groups, roles); *procedures* (management models, reporting relationships, documentation requirements, data flow, rules, and norms); *laws and regulations* (equal employment opportunity, privacy, etc.); and *data and data structures* (how data are collected and archived and to whom they are made available). Consequently, to be effective, an HRIS must blend the technical expertise of information technology professionals with the people-management expertise of human resource professionals. A technologically sophisticated HRIS will not yield desired benefits if it is used incorrectly or if it is ignored when it could make a difference. Likewise, sophisticated employees and managers will not be able to make their maximum contributions to organizational performance if the HRIS does not have the capabilities to provide them with the information they need in a timely fashion.

Three major types of information are contained in an HRIS: organizational information, job information, and employee information. *Organizational information* may include policies, procedures, and processes. *Job information* may include position title, number of current vacancies, qualifications needed, place in career ladder, salary range, replacement candidates, and turnover rate. *Employee information* may include biographical data, equal employment opportunity classification, education, date of hire, position held with company, salary history, performance ratings, training, prior work experience, developmental needs,

career interests/objectives, specialized skills, honors and awards, benefits, licenses and certifications, payroll information, attendance data, tax deduction information, pension contributions, and turnover. One issue of concern regarding employee information is how long to keep it. State laws and practices vary, but record retention periods can range from 1 year for hiring records not related to hired employees to 30 years for some medical records.

Information about human resources is collected when individuals apply for jobs (e.g., completing an application form) and then added to or modified throughout an employee's tenure with an organization (e.g., updating an employee's education qualifications in a personnel file). In the past, changes in employee information were made manually on paper entirely by administrative staff in the human resource (HR) department. Today, much information can be collected and input—by those outside of the HR department—online through Web sites, workstations, interactive voice response (telephonic), or freestanding kiosks. In addition, many organizations make it possible for employees to “own” their information and maintain it themselves online. Thus, when something changes in their lives, such as the birth of a child, employees can update their own HR information directly.

Information about jobs, work processes, and other organizational issues is collected from managers and subject-matter experts for input into the HRIS. Organizational information is also modified and updated to reflect changes, for example, in job descriptions or business strategies.

Within the present business environment, even the smallest organizations are likely to keep human resource records in some type of computer file. Commonly available software programs, such as Microsoft's Access and Excel, can be used to create a rudimentary HRIS. Larger organizations are more likely to use specialized applications, such as ABRA, that provide greater data integration and HR functionality. Larger organizations also are more likely to use enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, such as SAP, which integrate HR information with financial, operational, and strategic information.

An HRIS relies on *relational database* technology for storing and retrieving information. Rather than duplicating information (e.g., name, age, address, job title, and pay rate) in each of several separate files (e.g., payroll file, benefits file, employee records file), a relational database shows information only once in

an appropriate table (e.g., a table of demographics, a table of benefits, a table of employee skills). The relational database software can then link the tables together and locate and combine information from many tables for analysis or report generation. Consequently, both inputting and processing times can be reduced greatly.

Increasingly, HR departments are relying on networking applications that enable centralized data storage with decentralized access to information. A client-server system has a server that provides the centralized storage of information, while the client allows end users access to the portions of the data they need. Client software makes it possible to tailor data access depending on different organizational roles (e.g., managers have access to different information than do employees).

The Internet has increased the flexibility of developing client-server systems. Organizations can maintain their own servers or “lease” servers from other providers for centralized data storage. Then, through browser-capable device access, such as personal computers, personal data assistants, cellular telephones, and computer kiosks, clients can obtain needed information from the server.

Analysis of information in an HRIS can range from the tailored and self-generated processes needed by the small-business owner using office software applications to the workforce analytics and real-time “management dashboards” that provide users of sophisticated HRIS software with an array of automatically generated assessments. These analyses can be used to create reports for internal and external stakeholders, who may then use them for making decisions or determining compliance.

An HRIS is composed of several subsystems: a transaction-processing system, a workflow system, a reporting system, a decision support system, and an executive support system. The *transaction-processing system* contains records of employee activities, such as tracking time and attendance or enrollment in various benefits. This record-keeping repository feeds into other subsystems, such as the workflow subsystem and the reporting subsystem. The *workflow subsystem* facilitates the routing and transfer of forms or other work process information from person to person or department to department. Work processes, such as recruiting, selecting, and orienting new employees, are captured in this subsystem. The *reporting subsystem* generates two types of reports: (1) predetermined,

regularly generated reports, such as payroll and equal employment/affirmative action, and (2) ad hoc inquiries, such as the number of employees with specific skills, the number of employees who chose a particular benefit option, and so on. The *decision support subsystem* uses transaction data but makes it possible to go beyond simple report generation. These subsystems typically incorporate rules, formulae, or specialized displays designed to help end users make specific decisions, such as how to allocate merit increases. The *executive support subsystem* provides support for firm-level or strategic decision making. This subsystem draws on multiple sources of data for decisions, such as choosing a site for a new plant. The number of subsystems in any particular HRIS will vary depending on the size of the organization, the hardware and software used, and the needs of the end users.

Organizations that want computerized human resource information systems have several alternatives available to them. They can create their own HRISs in-house, or they can buy the software from a vendor. The HRIS software may be a stand-alone system with only HR functionality, or it may be part of an integrated ERP system. The HRIS can be installed on in-house computer systems or reside on servers owned by the software vendor. Today, many systems that once were available and affordable only to large organizations are also available and affordable to smaller organizations.

Early uses of the HRIS focused on supporting transaction processing; however, today, these systems increasingly are being used for process improvement and strategic purposes. Process-based uses focus on solving a specific problem, usually with a tangible cost impact inside the organization. For example, costs are reduced and accuracy is improved when employees are allowed to enter and monitor their own administrative data using self-service HR applications. A strategic focus goes beyond transactions and processes and seeks to connect HR activities with improvements in revenue generation. For example, one large retailer used data from its HRIS to demonstrate that a 5-unit increase in employee attitude led to a 1.3-unit increase in customer impression, which, in turn, led to a 0.5 percent increase in revenue growth.

A human resource information system can be used for assessing past performance or for future planning. Through the calculation of workforce analytics or key performance indicators, progress toward achieving goals can be examined from multiple levels: individual,

group, department, and organization. In addition, variables can be examined to determine cause-and-effect relationships. For example, turnover data aggregated at the department level may indicate a human resource problem that can be investigated further by looking at variables that may be related, such as pay satisfaction. In addition, the internal data can be benchmarked against external standards for still further analysis. Through modeling alternative business strategies, organizations with an HRIS can, for example, predict relevant costs of hiring new employees, retrain existing team members, or obtain new skills through a company acquisition. This human capital management perspective focuses on acquiring, retaining, and leveraging an organization's employee asset base.

An HRIS can be used in all functional areas of HR. Equal employment opportunity and affirmative action monitoring and reporting are enhanced with an HRIS that is able to track the dynamic employee flows (hires, promotions, demotions, transfers, voluntary and involuntary exits, etc.) in an organization. The recruiting function can use an HRIS for applicant tracking and correspondence, internal job posting and job-bidding processes, and the identification of internal candidates when no job posting is used. Collecting and assessing information about job applicants can be linked directly to the HRIS, and the HRIS, in turn, can be used to match applicants with available jobs. Performance appraisal results (e.g., 360-degree appraisals) can be input directly into the HRIS, enabling rapid feedback and decision making. In addition, performance-rating distributions can be monitored within and between departments to maintain consistency of standards. Compensation and benefits can be managed more effectively with an HRIS. The HRIS can be used to maintain compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, track executive compensation, conduct job evaluation studies, build wage structures, link internal data to market wage surveys, and determine bonus and incentive pay (e.g., from gain-sharing plans). Health and safety uses of an HRIS include tracking occupational diseases and injuries, providing reports for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, monitoring employee safety training completion, and preparing reports for workers' compensation claims. Labor relations uses of an HRIS include tracking disciplinary actions and grievances, identifying trends in union activity and membership across locations and job types, and assessing alternative contract proposals.

An HRIS is particularly useful for human resource development and career planning for the benefit of both the employees and the organization. The quantity, utility, and accessibility of training and development information made available through an HRIS can allow employees to pinpoint and accurately assess their own interests, strengths, and weaknesses and tailor development plans to enhance their own human capital and value to the organization. Moreover, much training and development coursework can be delivered effectively and cost-efficiently when integrated with an HRIS. From an organization's perspective, an HRIS enables it to determine essential competencies needed to implement a chosen strategy, identify the distribution of those competencies currently available, and then assess competency gaps. Furthermore, once the competency gaps have been identified, an HRIS can enable decision makers to assess alternative means for closing the gaps, such as hiring employees from outside, retraining current employees, or acquiring another organization with the needed competencies.

An HRIS can increase both the efficiency and effectiveness of the HR function. Efficiency is enhanced because a greater number of HR transactions can be processed with fewer fixed resources, and many processes can be simplified. Effectiveness is enhanced through increased timeliness due to processing power and increased accuracy, precision, and completeness of data used for decision making. As a consequence, HR functions in organizations can shift their emphasis from administrative to more strategic concerns.

The HRIS is changing the roles of HR professionals. With fewer needs for administrative personnel in the HR function, those HR professionals remaining can be deployed more productively as consultants aiding managers and employees in solving problems and improving organizational processes. Helping managers and employees interpret and use the information available in an HRIS plays a more dominant role in the HR professional's activities. At the executive level, the role of the HR professional is that of strategic partner, weighing in on organizational decisions such as mergers and acquisitions, changes in business strategy, and so on. With a sound HRIS and the ability to identify and analyze relevant information, HR professionals can play a vital role in ensuring that the "people side" of the equation is seriously considered in major organizational decisions.

The HRIS is also changing the roles of employees and managers. For example, a Web-based HRIS with

role-based portal access places more HR services under direct control of end users. Managers can view their departmental HR data, conduct “what if” scenario analyses, consult decision “wizards” that guide them through decision-making processes, and implement actions that previously would have taken place over longer periods of time (as paper forms passed through many hands) and involved training and back-and-forth consultation with representatives from the HR department to ensure compliance with organizational rules and policies. Likewise, employees can view their own HR data, make changes in their personal information, conduct “what if” scenario analyses on, for example, different retirement options, assess their own career plans, enroll in training online, and do all of this without ever physically going to the HR department.

The potential for HR information systems to improve and facilitate career planning and development as well as other HR functions is only now beginning to be realized. Future advances will likely make it possible for both employees and organizations to jointly achieve their separate goals. However, as human resource information systems become more widely accessible and more advanced technologically, organizations will confront many challenges.

—Mark Lewis Lengnick-Hall

See also Computer-based career support systems, Human resource planning, Human resource support systems, Strategic human resource management

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HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

Human resource (HR) planning is a combination of forecasting staffing needs and strategic planning. It involves planning, developing, implementing, administering, and performing ongoing evaluation and assessment of recruiting, hiring, orientation, and organizational exit to ensure that the workforce will meet the organization’s goals and objectives. The typical role of an HR professional performing the staffing function is selecting appropriate employees to meet the needs of the organization, training them for future needs, developing their careers, and retaining them as staff so the organization will not spend time and money replacing them. In essence, HR planning results in strategies for staffing to ensure that both short- and long-term organizational objectives are met.

Strategic HR management refers to an organization’s use of employees to obtain a competitive advantage over competitors in the marketplace. Through formally contributing to companywide strategic planning efforts or by being knowledgeable about concerns facing the organization, an HR professional can be strategic about HR planning. When an HR professional hires a productive employee, that action in itself is contributing to the organization’s bottom line. High productivity leads to higher competitive advantage and profitability. Other HR activities that add value to an organization’s competitive advantage are compensation, benefits, performance management systems, and job design. Yet many in HR perform these tasks without ever tying them to the organization’s competitive advantage.

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) believes that there are three major roles in HR—strategic, operational, and administrative—and that strategic HR activities include change management, organizational culture and structure management, and performance management system development. Strategic HR includes HR planning, and part of that is forecasting. *Forecasting* involves identifying expected future staffing conditions based on information about the past and the present. Forecasting staffing needs is a

four-step process: demand analysis, supply analysis, reconciliation of the budget, and strategic analysis.

Demand analysis consists of obtaining or creating a forecast for the organization's demand for future employees. This can be accomplished simply by requesting future staff estimates from managers within the organization. For this type of forecasting to be effective, an organization must consider all the various conditions and issues that might arise. When forecasting their future staffing needs, managers should consider any new or different skill sets required, structure changes in the organization, contract labor (temporary workers) needed, and identify any positions that can be eliminated, combined, or changed. The organization's size and budget should also be considered when conducting a demand analysis. Another method for forecasting is to conduct a statistical analysis of the potential need for the organization's products and/or services (normally, a greater demand for the product or service means more need for staff). This type of analysis should be conducted in conjunction with formal strategic planning.

Supply analysis includes a review of the current workforce, the future demographic makeup of the labor force, current and future productivity needs, and the organizational structure. An organization should also consider issues such as internal promotions, diversity of the workforce, transfers, retirements, layoffs, training and retraining, voluntary and involuntary separations, health care costs, and many other factors. It is also important to review corporate trends such as sales and productivity over time to forecast future staffing needs.

Reconciliation of the budget is vital in this process as well. The forecast should be presented in dollars and should include how much the staffing forecast will cost the organization.

Last is *strategic analysis*. Not only should HR professionals review current supply and demand when forecasting staffing needs, but they should also consider replacement planning and succession planning.

SUCCESSION PLANNING AS PART OF HR PLANNING

The horrific events of September 11, 2001, actually caused organizations to place more emphasis on succession planning. A *succession plan* allows an organization to fill open leadership positions with internal candidates who have been developed and prepared for those roles. Succession planning is a systematic way

of planning for the replacement of key leaders in an organization. However, limiting a succession plan to the replacement of only the "chief officers" would not constitute sound business. Ideally, a succession plan should cover several layers of leadership, down to at least the supervisory levels. The organization should determine which positions should be included in the succession plan. Potential leaders must then be identified and prepared, through career development activities, to take on those roles. It is not enough to select people in the organization who seem "right" for the job. Not only should the experience and duties be considered, but also the personality, leadership skills, and readiness for taking on key leadership roles.

Several "hopefuls" should be identified for each position to be filled. This allows the potential leaders to be groomed, trained, and mentored for the possibility of filling the positions the organization has identified as key. When the time comes for these positions to be filled, there will be several people from which to choose, all of whom have had time to develop and prepare for the new role.

To prepare these potential leaders, the gap must be determined between their current performance levels and skills and what preparation they need to be ready for the new role when it is available. This is called a *gap analysis*. This information can help determine what training, experience, and mentoring are needed. Once the potential leaders have been identified, a career-development plan for each person should be designed that will close or narrow the gap.

ROLE OF TRAINING IN HR PLANNING

Training activities are important in the HR planning process. All employees should have a career-development plan—even those in entry-level positions. No one wants to feel that promotion is not possible. All employees should receive training with respect to their current jobs, potential future jobs, customer service, roles in the organization, and the organization's role in the market. All employees must understand how they fit into the "big picture" as well as how the organization fits into the marketplace.

FORECASTING METHODS

An HR forecast is a guess or estimate and can be based on simple assumptions of what the future may hold or on complex computer statistical models. On the

simple end, a forecast may be based on asking all supervisors or managers how many employees they expect to hire in the next year or so. This is called a *managerial estimate*. Another method is the *Delphi technique*, in which each member of a group of experts, without ever having met in person, individually provides forecasts until all members of the group agree on one model forecast. A similar method is known as the *nominal group technique*, but in this situation, the group of experts meets face-to-face to recommend the best forecast. There are several statistical or mathematical methods of forecasting. Statistical forecasting is completed through either regression analysis or simulation. Simulations are “what if” scenarios allowing the organization to speculate on the future. On the complex end, a forecast may be based on statistical regression analysis. Regression analysis is used to project future needs on a comparison of employment level and one or more variables related to employment, such as gross sales.

An HR forecast should cover three time periods: short-term, intermediate, and long-term. A short-term forecast would cover a period of less than or up to one year. An intermediate forecast would cover one to five years, and a long-term forecast would cover beyond five years. Forecasting, however, is not strategic planning. Forecasting is a way to predict, by reviewing current and past business trends (such as sales), what the future trends will be. Strategic planning is much more—it is a plan to prepare an organization for the future. Part of strategic planning, however, is HR planning.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning is an essential activity for any successful organization, and one in which HR should be involved, since employees are an essential part of any business. If the HR professional expects to develop a meaningful staffing plan, then this involvement is a must. Sometimes, the HR professional is also the organization’s strategic planning leader, bringing all of the planning together into a substantial whole.

An organization does not have to go through the entire strategic-planning process to conduct human resource planning, but it is a good idea. As part of the strategic planning process, an environmental scan is conducted to monitor four environments: macro, industry, competitive, and internal/organizational. Issues to consider when conducting an environmental scan are demographics, technology, economics, political factors such as government regulations, and competition in the marketplace.

During the environmental scan, an organization should look specifically at the following:

- Government regulations related to HR; local, state, and federal tax legislation; pension regulations; tax benefits for training programs; and tax credit programs for employee benefits
- Economic issues related to HR, such as labor economics (unemployment rate, local skill shortages, employability)
- Local and regional competition and other geographic concerns related to HR, such as migration into or out of the area, new local companies that could recruit the organization’s employees, and competitors’ pay rates and benefits
- Demographic and social conditions related to HR, such as the local availability of diverse candidates; the number of temporary, seasonal, or part-time candidates; the flexibility of the local workforce (ability to perform shift work, etc.); basic and special skills; corporate social responsibility; ethics; unions; turnover trends; immigration and migration; and shifts in occupational trends
- Technological factors related to HR, such as the ability to telecommute, technological skills of potential and current employees, and use of new technology and machines in the workplace

When conducting the internal assessment of an organization’s workforce, the HR professional should perform a job audit to determine the jobs that currently exist, how many employees are needed to do those jobs, how essential those jobs are, and the positions needed by the organization to perform future work.

This information should be stored in the HR information system (HRIS), which is a database of employee names, jobs, competencies, skills, reporting structure, pay, benefits, training, and any other information that would aid in determining future staffing needs. Other information should also be housed in the HRIS: employee data, such as age, gender, length of service, equal employment opportunity information, promotions and positions held, awards, potential retirement dates, and so on. All of this information used together can be of great importance when trying to determine staffing gaps in the organization or future organization. It can also be used for succession planning and career development.

EVALUATING HR PLANNING

An organization’s HR plan will be successful if and when the personnel decisions made align with the

business needs. Once an organization has executed a human resource plan, the evaluation stage begins. Questions to ask during the evaluation phase are as follows: What worked about the plan? What did not? What can be changed so that the plan is more effective? Did the plan allow the organization's leaders to better understand why HR planning is vital to the business? Did the plan help lower the organization's costs? Did the plan assist the organization in identifying talent, skill gaps, and career-development opportunities? These types of questions and others relevant to the organization should be answered during the evaluation phase, and changes to the plan should be made accordingly.

CONCLUSION

Human resource planning is essential to any organization, regardless of size. An HR plan is an important way for a company to prepare for the future and is one of the most important elements HR professionals should have in their toolkits. An HR plan should aid the organization in filling its needs for talent in an effective and efficient way and should be directly linked to the business strategy.

—Shelly Prochaska

See also Human resource information systems (HRIS), Human resource support systems, Personnel selection, Strategic human resource management, Succession planning

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HUMAN RESOURCE SUPPORT SYSTEMS

As the term implies, *human resource support systems* are the various activities, programs, and initiatives used by organizations to assist in the development of human resources. In general, these systems, which are typically operated by an organization's human resource department, include training and development, performance appraisal and feedback, career management, formal mentoring, and various types of employee services and assistance programs. The primary goal of these activities is to assist in the growth of the employee as a means of improving individual and organizational performance. Secondly, these activities are intended to enhance employee work attitudes and increase employee commitment to the organization.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Usually viewed as the most important of the human resource support systems, *training and development* includes various categories of formal and informal mechanisms to create a better-performing workforce. Training programs are intended to allow employees to learn new skills or adapt to new work processes. Remedial training is designed to help employees correct deficiencies in performance. Training can be provided by an organization's internal training staff, the employee's departmental management, or an external training organization.

Compared with training, development programs are more future oriented, representing an organization's long-term investment in its employees. In essence, these programs attempt to help employees "develop" the abilities that the organization will require in the future. Depending on the company, these programs could include job rotations, seminars and university-based educational programs, mentoring, behavior modeling, three-hundred-sixty-degree feedback, and individual coaching.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND FEEDBACK

Another major category of human resource support systems is the appraisal or evaluation of each

employee's performance and the related task of discussing or "feeding back" the contents of the appraisal to the employee. The *performance appraisal and feedback* process serves a number of purposes within organizations. From an administrative standpoint, appraisal allows for the ranking of employees based on job performance, which then drives compensation and promotion decisions. From a developmental perspective, performance appraisal and feedback provides information to the employer and the employees regarding activities necessary to improve individual and organizational performance. These activities might include attendance at a particular training session, movement to a new job or operating department, or honing of a certain skill.

CAREER MANAGEMENT

Modern organizations recognize that they have a responsibility to assist their employees in managing their careers. The basis for the provision of this career management assistance is the concept of person-environment (P-E) fit, or the idea that employees are more satisfied with their jobs, are more committed to the organization, and perform better when their job requirements and working conditions are consistent with their personalities and talents. Thus, it is incumbent on organizations to help employees manage their careers so as to optimize the potential for achieving P-E fit and ensure a ready supply of human resources to fill critical positions.

Organizations have a number of programs that can be utilized to help employees manage their careers at various stages of development. Typical career management programs can include realistic recruitment, orientation, job postings, assessment and counseling centers, mentoring, performance feedback and coaching, job rotations, and other developmental initiatives.

MENTORING PROGRAMS

Research on individual career development has consistently recognized the positive benefits that *mentoring programs* can produce in terms of employee socialization and development. Mentoring involves an interpersonal relationship at work between an experienced organizational associate (the mentor) and a less experienced colleague (the protégé). The more experienced mentor provides the protégé with ongoing advice, support, and sponsorship within the organization. Research has shown that mentoring is related to

a number of positive outcomes, including higher degrees of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and compensation on the part of the protégé. Employees who become mentors also experience positive outcomes, including a higher degree of engagement in the organization and greater feelings of self-worth. Given the positive outcomes, many large organizations have implemented formal mentoring programs, whereby a newer employee is paired with a senior colleague to create a formal mentor-protégé relationship.

EMPLOYEE PERSONAL SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Most large organizations provide various services to help their employees balance time between work and nonwork commitments, allow for personal development, and cope with personal issues. Personal services offered to employees can include financial and banking options, such as access to a credit union or an on-site ATM; legal assistance; an on-site or near-site child care facility; social or recreational activities, such as an on-site health club; and many other amenities, such as an on-site laundry or meal service. Beyond these employee programs, organizations often provide assistance services to help employees cope with personal problems, such as substance abuse or addictions, stress, or depression. In most cases, this type of service involves the use of a phone line that the troubled employee can call to receive counseling or a referral to a professional for treatment in a confidential fashion.

—Gerard A. Callanan

See also Employee assistance programs, Mentoring, Organizational career management, Performance appraisal and feedback, Training and development

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IDENTITY

A person's *identity* develops as a consequence of the interplay between biological, psychological, sociological, and historical influences. At its core, it emerges out of the individual's efforts to maintain a sense of personal uniqueness and continuity in the face of changing developmental tasks and life circumstances—and at the same time feel a sense of solidarity with a group. Another way to conceptualize identity is to describe the attributes of individuals who have achieved a firm sense of personal identity. They would in all likelihood be described as people who know who they are, and others would be likely to view them in a manner that is generally consistent with how they view themselves.

An important feature of identity is that a person's overall sense of identity is a composite of identity in a number of domains. Although there is some disagreement about the number and definition of these domains, there is general agreement that the vocational, sexual, and ideological (e.g., religious and political) domains are among the core components of a person's identity. More recent research has produced evidence to suggest that ethnic identity, which is derived from a person's membership in an ethnic group, may also be an important identity domain that impacts the perceptions and behaviors of individuals in their social and occupational contexts. Ethnic identity, however, appears to be more salient to individuals who are members of minority groups in their societies than to individuals who represent the majority group or individuals who live in a culture with little ethnic diversity.

The vocational domain of identity has been described as the most critical component of the young person's quest for identity, in part because it appears to temporally "lead" identity development in other domains. Indeed, everyday experience confirms that at least in Western societies, adults are more likely to identify themselves by saying, "I am a contractor" or "I am a psychologist" than by saying, "I am heterosexual" or "I am Caucasian" or "I am Catholic." In short, occupation is often the primary determinant of a person's social status and economic well-being, and it is most influential in how one spends one's leisure time and with whom. Chances are high that one's spouse will be selected from among the people with whom one works. Thus, who we become and who we are in our own perceptions and in the views of others are often determined to a greater extent by our vocational identities than by anything else.

Developing a self-chosen identity is viewed as a not only necessary but also very desirable accomplishment that signifies the successful transition to adulthood in Western industrialized societies. Western ideals of independence and autonomy are reflected in the identity pursuits of Western adolescents, but they are clearly not universal. In Japanese culture, for example, autonomy is deemphasized, and cooperative behavior and social subordination are emphasized as the means of fostering a sense of belonging and harmony within the group. Clearly, this has implications for the development of vocational identity, as illustrated by the contrasting images of the "self-made man" in American society versus the "company man" in Japanese society.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL IDENTITY

Current thinking about vocational identity has been shaped primarily by Erik H. Erikson's theory of psychosexual development. All of Erikson's eight stages of life span development have implications for career development, as demonstrated by his many references to the central importance he assigned to the individual's ability to create a successful work role within the opportunities and limitations imposed by the interpersonal and sociocultural context. Nevertheless, career researchers have focused their attention on the stage of identity formation and on its immediate precursor, which is the stage during which children develop a *sense of industry*. Children who successfully establish a sense of industry have the beginnings of the capacity to feel useful; they begin to feel confident in their abilities to make things (and to make them well); and they gain confidence in their abilities to learn what it takes to be a well-functioning and productive member of society. It should thus not be surprising that developing a firm sense of industry in childhood is a necessary condition for developing a self-chosen identity during adolescence and young adulthood, particularly for developing a firm vocational identity.

Although thinking about the career development implications of children's behaviors and experiences may require an expansion of much of the current theorizing about career development, there is a growing body of research that supports the idea that children learn about the world of work quite early in life and that they formulate ideas about what they want to be when they grow up and, perhaps even more important, about what they don't want to be (and do). There is also growing evidence that children who experience success and recognition as a consequence of their efforts and achievements have a good chance to succeed in acquiring a sense of industry, which not only is a precondition for the development of identity but has also been shown to benefit their school performance and protect them from various forms of deviancy.

The successful acquisition of a sense of industry thus serves as a springboard for a process that is absolutely essential for the development of a vocational identity, namely, exploration of the world of work and occupations. This may start out as relatively random and fortuitous and then progress to include more systematic and sophisticated exploratory activities. Gradually, adolescents are able to focus their

explorations not only on the pertinent dimensions of likely occupations but also on their perceptions of how their own interests, abilities, and values correspond to both the demands and the rewards that various occupations have to offer.

Individuals are assumed to start out, as they emerge from childhood, lacking a well-defined identity. This is referred to as *identity diffusion*. For many young adolescents, this is followed by *identity foreclosure*, which occurs as they adopt the beliefs, goals, and values of significant others. Because young adolescents do not have the necessary experience (i.e., they have not engaged in sufficient exploration) to have a self-chosen identity, foreclosure identity is considered to be a premature commitment to an identity, and often adolescents eventually relinquish their foreclosed identity in favor of a period of moratorium or active (re)exploration. If successful, they can then emerge with a self-chosen identity, which is referred to as *identity achievement*. Although this developmental course is normative, it is not invariant. Some individuals do not foreclose, some may go back to diffusion following a moratorium period, and some never achieve a self-chosen identity.

Although it is generally accepted that adolescence and early adulthood are the periods of life in which identity development represents a primary developmental task, it is also clear that especially in the vocational domain, identity development does not stop there. Changing economic conditions and advances in technology have eliminated whole occupational categories (e.g., telephone operator) and, concurrently, have forced countless individuals to abandon their vocational identities, explore alternative occupations, and develop new vocational identities. Even within broad occupational categories, advancement or promotion may also lead to changes in vocational identity. As more individuals pursue midlife career changes or serial careers, their views of who they are and what they do (i.e., their vocational identities) invariably change as well. Thus, it is clear that the task of vocational identity formation should never be considered finished once and for all. Individuals have the capacity to reinvent themselves and their careers from early adolescence through old age.

Adolescence has been identified as the period when most of the "work" of identity formation takes place, but questions have been raised regarding the significance of achieving a firm sense of vocational identity (i.e., making a firm commitment following a period of

exploration) during adolescence. One line of reasoning is that because many adolescents spend most of their time in school and school-related activities, they may be relatively ignorant of the world of work and thus may be unable to make an informed commitment, even if they have engaged in a period of exploration. Countering that view is research that has demonstrated that part-time work involving moderate hours, which is experienced by the majority of adolescents in the United States, has a positive impact on adolescents' realism about work and vocational choice, thus facilitating the achievement of a vocational identity. Moreover, some researchers have demonstrated that a significant number of adults developed rather firm ideas when they were quite young about the type of work they wanted to do and their current occupations are consistent with these early ideas.

RESEARCH ON VOCATIONAL IDENTITY

James E. Marcia's identity status framework has stimulated a great deal of research on identity. Marcia introduced the concept of *identity statuses* to operationalize the four possible outcomes (diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, achievement) of what Erikson called the "quest for identity": Marcia reasoned that since the four identity statuses represent a complete and exhaustive conceptualization of identity development outcomes, any adolescent should be categorizable into one of the four statuses. To accomplish this, Marcia developed a semistructured interview procedure. Other researchers subsequently developed self-report questionnaires to facilitate the classification of research participants into the identity statuses. In each case, the principal objective was to assess a global construct of identity, although the assessment of various identity domains, including vocational identity, can also be accomplished.

In using the identity status paradigm, a basic underlying assumption has been that the *identity achievement status* is the most advanced of the statuses, resulting from a period of exploration of alternatives and a subsequent well-defined commitment. The *moratorium status* precedes identity achievement primarily because the individual's focus is on exploration of alternatives, and commitments tend to be tentative and vaguely formed. In the *foreclosure status*, the individual is assumed to have done very little exploration but remains firmly committed to childhood-based values. The *identity diffusion status* is the

least developmentally advanced status, consisting of a lack of commitment and usually only haphazard exploration. Although this categorization of the identity statuses from most to least developmentally advanced has been generally accepted, some researchers have offered evidence to suggest that for a significant number of adolescents, the progression is not a smooth one. In other words, it is likely that some adolescents make several changes into and out of the moratorium status.

Throughout the process of exploration, contextual factors (most notably peers, school, media, and family) play important roles in channeling the vocational explorations of children and adolescents. One line of research on the development of vocational identity development has focused on gaining a better understanding of how contextual influences operate to (often inadvertently) limit the exploration (and consideration) of male-dominated occupations by female adolescents, as well as the exploration of female-dominated occupations by male adolescents. A number of reasons have been offered to account for this apparent sex bias, but most researchers agree that more research is needed on the impact of the media on the vocational exploration of children and adolescents and on the relationship between vocational identity development and the early formation of vocational aspirations, goals, and commitments.

Another line of research has examined the relationship between advancement in identity status, on the one hand, and a variety of positive psychological and psychosocial outcomes, on the other. Findings have been quite consistent: Adolescents who have attained the more advanced vocational identity statuses (moratorium and achievement) score higher on these positive indicators than do adolescents who place in the less advanced identity statuses (diffusion and foreclosure). Adolescents in the least advanced group (especially those in diffusion status) have been found to be more likely to be involved with drugs and alcohol, to have lower scores on measures ranging from autonomy to independence, and to be less likely to accept personal responsibility for their own lives. Adolescents in the most advanced group (especially those in achievement status) been found to have more positive feelings about school and about their teachers, to have better grades and higher educational aspirations, to have higher levels of self-esteem, and to be more involved and active within their various contexts (e.g., school and community).

Using the identity status framework with a focus on vocational identity, researchers have examined how adolescents feel about work. Interestingly, nearly all adolescents classified as *identity achieved* have been found to be enthusiastic about work (and their future work roles) and committed to being productive members of the workforce. In contrast, two-thirds of the adolescents classified as *identity diffused* have been found to be comfortable with avoiding work or have extremely negative views about the worker role in general and about their future as workers in particular. Researchers have also found that adolescents had clearer vocational goals and scored higher on measures of career maturity as they advanced from identity diffusion toward identity achievement. Consistent with these findings is research that documented predictable differences in career indecision, on the one hand, and membership in one of the identity status groups, on the other. Invariably, adolescents classified as identity achieved no longer experienced any significant career indecision. They apparently knew what career they wanted to pursue, and they felt relatively comfortable with their decisions. Adolescents in all of the other identity statuses, including foreclosure, still experienced significant indecision.

The identity status framework has been productive in the study of vocational identity, but it is not the only framework for studying identity. Michael D. Berzonsky has introduced the notion that individuals within the various identity statuses also differ in how they think, solve problems, and make decisions. Accordingly, he proposed that these differences amount to differing identity-processing styles, which he referred to as “informational,” “normative,” and “diffuse/avoidant.” Individuals tend to use one of these identity-processing styles to deal with identity questions and situations in which they are called on to make decisions. Although there has not been a lot of research using identity-processing style in examining vocational identity, it is likely that the joint consideration of identity status and identity-processing style can yield the best insight into the role played by identity in the vocational development of individuals and their behaviors at work and in other important contexts.

How individuals construct their vocational identities has important implications not only for them but also for their families and for the communities and organizations within which they function. After all, people who “have their act together,” who know who they are and what they want, and whose perceptions

of themselves match the perceptions of those who know them also tend to be the people who set goals and then do what it takes to achieve them. They tend to be the most productive and self-confident members of a society that relies on them and rewards them. Clearly, more research is needed to identify what it takes to achieve a firm sense of vocational identity and to understand the conditions that facilitate this desirable outcome.

—Fred W. Vondracek

See also Career exploration, Crystallization of the vocational self-concept, Environment awareness, Erikson's theory of development, Occupational choice, Self-awareness, Self-concept

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IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

Impression management (IM) is the process by which people attempt to influence the images that others have of them. That is, IM describes the many strategies that individuals use in an attempt to be seen in a certain way

or to create a particular impression in others' minds. Related concepts include self-presentation, influence tactics, organizational politics, and the careerist orientation to work. In studying IM, researchers typically label those who seek to influence others' impressions of them as *actors* and label those whose impressions are being influenced as *targets*.

Most researchers argue that IM is a common phenomenon and a fundamental part of human interaction. IM behaviors often reflect a basic human motive to be viewed favorably (and to avoid being viewed unfavorably) by others. However, in some instances, IM is not used in an effort to be perceived positively per se, but to influence others to view one in a specific way or to influence others to respond in a certain way (e.g., through the use of intimidation). There is some disagreement among IM researchers regarding the authenticity of the impressions that people convey. In what has been labeled the *restrictive view of IM*, a few researchers have narrowly defined the construct as an attempt at interpersonal manipulation through the creation of a false or untrue image of oneself. By and large, though, most scholars subscribe to what has been labeled the *expansive view of IM*. According to this viewpoint, while the impressions that individuals seek to create can be false, most often they are not. The expansive view of IM suggests that individuals typically use IM to portray their characteristics in the most positive light (e.g., during an interview) or in attempt to have others view them as they view themselves (e.g., in accordance with their self-concepts). Thus, an actor who uses IM to be viewed as an attractive job candidate may, indeed, be smart and conscientious, or an actor who wishes to be seen as likable may, in fact, be a nice person.

Not all IM behaviors are consciously executed. That is, some IM behavior occurs subconsciously or is performed so habitually that individuals are not fully aware of their actions. IM theorists have argued, though that when IM is the result of a conscious process, the motive to manage impressions is a function of three factors: the goal relevance of the impression, the value of the desired outcomes, and the perceived discrepancy between an individual's desired and current image. *Goal relevance* means that the motivation to manage impressions is especially high when the impression one makes is critical for attaining social outcomes (e.g., approval, friendship, assistance) and/or material outcomes (e.g., better jobs, higher salaries). For example, an individual's motivation to

manage impressions tends to increase when his or her behavior is public (rather than private) and when he or she is dependent on a target (e.g., the target is the person's supervisor). The value of desired outcomes suggests that the more people want certain outcomes, the more likely they are to manage impressions in an effort to obtain them. Thus, it is not surprising that job applicants and those seeking promotions typically engage in IM behavior. Finally, the discrepancy between the desired and current image means that individuals are particularly motivated to engage in IM when they believe that others see them in ways that are inconsistent with how they would like to be seen. So, individuals who realize that they are viewed negatively are often eager to use IM behaviors to change the minds of those who view them unfavorably.

Broadly speaking, IM tactics are described as being either assertive or defensive. *Assertive tactics* of IM are initiated by people to create or reinforce a certain impression to a target. In contrast, *defensive strategies* of IM are more reactive and are typically employed when individuals are faced with situations in which they are likely to be viewed negatively.

ASSERTIVE IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

Although a number of assertive IM behaviors have been identified, the five tactics that have most often been discussed are (1) *ingratiation*, whereby individuals seek to be viewed as likable by doing favors for others, agreeing with others, or flattering others; (2) *exemplification*, whereby people seek to be viewed as dedicated by acting like a good role model and going beyond the call of duty; (3) *intimidation*, whereby individuals seek to appear dangerous by making threats or signaling their power to punish or create pain and discomfort; (4) *self-promotion*, whereby individuals hope to be seen as competent by playing up their abilities and accomplishments; and (5) *supplication*, whereby people seek to be viewed as needy or in need of assistance by "playing dumb" or advertising their shortcomings and weaknesses.

Although IM tactics are used in the effort to create desired images, attempts at IM also carry the risk of being perceived negatively. Indeed, for every desired image sought by individuals using IM, there is a corresponding undesired image that is risked. For instance, individuals use self-promotion in order to be perceived as competent; however, they risk being perceived as conceited instead. Thus, while IM is often

used in an attempt to advance one's career interests, it sometimes backfires such that individuals end up creating unfavorable impressions instead. Along these lines, research suggests that some individuals are more adept at using impression management than others. In particular, not only do high self-monitors use IM more frequently than low self-monitors, but high self-monitors who use IM are also more likely to achieve the desired image (and avoid the undesired image) than are low self-monitors who use IM.

From among the five IM strategies identified above, most studies have focused on the tactic of ingratiation. Researchers have identified three distinct forms of ingratiation. *Opinion conformity* occurs when actors express agreement with the opinions and views of a target. *Favor-doing* describes instances in which an actor does something for the benefit of the target. Last, *other-enhancement* (or flattery) occurs when actors make positive statements about a target. Generally speaking, investigations of ingratiation reveal that such tactics are positively related to performance evaluation ratings, judgments of liking, and indicators of career success. Of the three ingratiation strategies, though, other-enhancement seems to be the most effective tactic.

The *ingratiator's dilemma* describes the idea that the more dependent individuals are on the target's approval, the more transparent their motives for engaging in such behavior become, and, as a result, the more unlikely it is that their attempts at ingratiation will succeed. Consistent with this notion, studies in this area suggest that ingratiation behaviors tend to backfire when targets question the motives of actors who engage in ingratiatory behavior. In general, however, women appear to be less inclined than men to question the motives of those who ingratiate.

Self-promotion is another IM tactic that has received a significant amount of research attention. According to the *self-promoter's paradox*, individuals who are exceptional workers rarely need to promote their competence, as they are likely to be viewed favorably by others. As a result, engaging in self-promotion is sometimes taken as evidence that individuals are not really as competent as they are making themselves out to be. Thus, the individuals who need to self-promote the most are the ones least likely to benefit from its use. Self-promotion, then, often entails significant risks to an actor, as targets may either discount the claims of those who self-promote or simply view such individuals as conceited and arrogant rather than as competent and accomplished.

Indeed, in contrast to the research on ingratiation, studies of self-promotion indicate that such behavior is often ineffective. For example, whereas some studies indicate that self-promotion may be helpful to individuals who are interviewing for jobs, other studies have typically found that self-promotion is negatively related to performance evaluation ratings, judgments of liking, and indicators of career success. Research also suggests that self-promotion may be especially harmful to women. Specifically, women who use self-promotion are often seen as more competent but, at the same time, are seen as less likable and less hireable than men who employ this behavior.

Relatively speaking, the IM strategies of exemplification, intimidation, and supplication have received less research attention. With regard to exemplification tactics, the research findings are somewhat mixed. In some studies, those who attempt to project an image of dedication or commitment seem to be evaluated more favorably than those who do not make such efforts; however, in other investigations, the use of exemplification seems to have very little impact on how one is viewed by others. With regard to intimidation, studies suggest that those who seek to be seen as tough or intimidating also tend to come across as bossy, pushy blusterers. Similar to the research on self-promotion, there is some evidence that the use of intimidation may have positive consequences for men (e.g., in terms of performance appraisal ratings) but have negative consequences for women. Studies suggest that supplication is sometimes used by individuals who want assistance with a task or who want to avoid doing an unpleasant assignment. In addition, research suggests that people who use supplication are frequently successful in projecting an image of neediness but often also tend to come across as lazy and less competent. In general, intimidation and supplication tend to be used less often within organizations than the other forms of impression management. Moreover, intimidation and supplication appear to be fairly risky IM strategies. That is, although an individual who uses intimidation or supplication may be able to coerce others into engaging in certain behaviors, doing so almost always comes at some cost to the individual's reputation and interpersonal relationships.

DEFENSIVE IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

In contrast to assertive IM, defensive IM is utilized in an attempt to protect individuals' reputations from further harm or to restore individuals' reputations in

circumstances in which they are likely to be perceived negatively. Thus, defensive IM tends to be more reactive than assertive IM. Although a number of defensive IM behaviors have been identified, three tactics that have been addressed most often are (1) *self-handicapping*, whereby people make excuses in advance of performing a task so that if they do poorly, they will already have a justification for their weak performance (and will look even better if they actually do well at the task); (2) *excuses and justifications*, whereby individuals seek protect their images by dissociating themselves from certain events, by denying their involvement or responsibility, or by explaining the circumstances that caused them to behave in a certain way; and (3) *apologies*, whereby individuals express that their past actions were wrong and indicate that they will behave more appropriately in the future. The key issue is not the use of defensive IM per se, but whether the IM tactic has the desired effect on the target. In general, three characteristics influence how successful a defensive IM tactic is likely to be: the perceived adequacy of the explanation, how normative the particular explanation is (i.e., the extent to which the explanation provided is generally accepted within a particular context), and the perceived sincerity of the actor in providing the explanation.

OTHER APPLICATIONS OF IM THEORY

Whereas most research on IM has focused on the ways in which individuals utilize certain tactics and the outcomes associated with the use of those tactics, more recent research has focused on how individuals' IM concerns may affect their behavior more indirectly. In particular, scholars have explored the ways in which IM motives and concerns may make employees more likely to manipulate information, less likely to ask for assistance, less willing to ask for feedback regarding their performance, and less inclined to support controversial causes in their organizations. Leadership scholars have argued that charismatic leaders use IM in order to be seen as trustworthy, credible, morally worthy, esteemed, and powerful. Studies of organizational citizenship behavior have sought to better understand how IM motives might explain employees' willingness to go the extra mile for organizations by helping out their colleagues, taking on extra assignments, working weekends, and so on. For example, this research suggests that individuals may be especially willing to go beyond the call of duty when they believe it will enhance their

images at work. In the area of organizational justice, some researchers have argued that projecting an image of fairness (i.e., looking fair) is often just as important as actually treating employees fairly (i.e., being fair). Some scholars have also explored the ways in which people can create the image that they have "paid their dues" or have earned what they have. Finally, at a more macro level, researchers have also examined the ways in which organizations use a variety of IM tactics to create an organizational image or identity in the eyes of employees, customers, shareholders, regulatory agencies, and other stakeholders.

MEASURING IM BEHAVIOR

IM tactics have typically been assessed using observation (under experimental or real conditions) or surveys distributed to employees and/or their supervisors. For example, some scholars have evaluated the use and effectiveness of the IM tactics individuals use when interviewing for real jobs. Other scholars have put subjects into certain (manipulated) situations and then observed their use of IM. The principal strength of this type of measure is that it does not rely on self-reported IM behavior, which reduces concerns regarding social desirability bias. A number of other studies, though, use surveys to obtain a large number of responses about a variety of IM behaviors. The most popular measure was developed by Wayne and Ferris and focuses on the extent to which employees use supervisor-focused, job-focused, and self-focused tactics of IM. These types of IM are very similar to the strategies of ingratiation, self-promotion, and exemplification, respectively. Researchers who have focused specifically on ingratiation in organizational contexts have often relied on Kumar and Beyerlein's Measure of Ingratiation Behaviors in Organizational Settings (MIBOS), although some scholars have raised questions about the dimensionality and validity of this measure. More recently, Bolino and Turnley have developed an impression management measure designed to tap ingratiation, self-promotion, exemplification, intimidation, and supplication in work contexts.

—William H. Turnley and Mark C. Bolino

See also Career investments, Self-monitoring, Social capital

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INDIVIDUAL CAREER MANAGEMENT

Individual career management is the process by which a person can make reasoned, appropriate decisions about his or her work life as well as the relationship between the work and nonwork domains. This process of career management takes place over the course of a person’s lifetime and is based on the idea that individuals constantly seek jobs and work environments that match their personalities, talents, and lifestyle preferences. People are more fulfilled and more productive when their work and life experiences are compatible with their own desires and aspirations. Research supports the notion that people are more satisfied with their career choices and jobs when

their work experiences are consistent with personal qualities such as needs, values, and preferences. Similarly, performance in a career is enhanced when the job requires the application of skills and abilities that the individual possesses.

The emerging concept of the *boundaryless career*, whereby employees are faced with an ever-changing work landscape, mandates that individuals take individualistic, proactive approaches to managing their careers. Indeed, changes in technologies, corporate reorganizations and contractions, and internal leadership can all affect an individual’s career within a particular organization. Employees who are not sensitive to the implications of such changes in the environment in the management of their careers might be ignorant of their career options or might make inappropriate career decisions.

Past research on individual career management sees it as a series of distinct steps or phases through which a person passes as he or she arrives at and implements appropriate career decisions. In general, these ongoing steps include the gathering of information to develop or increase awareness of oneself and the work environment, establishing career goals and strategies, and obtaining feedback to help appraise progress against established goals.

CAREER EXPLORATION: DEVELOPING INDIVIDUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

The first step in the individual career-management process requires the person to engage in career exploration. *Career exploration* is the collection and analysis of information regarding career-related issues. Most people need to gather information so they can become more aware of their own values, interests, and talents as well as the opportunities and obstacles in their environments. It is assumed that the more extensive their career exploration, the more likely people are to become aware of different aspects of themselves and the world of work. If conducted properly, career exploration should enable the person to become more fully aware of himself or herself and the work environment.

Two types of career exploration can be differentiated on the basis of the type of information that is sought. One type, *self-exploration*, provides a greater awareness of one’s personal qualities, including interests, the degree of job challenge one desires, strengths and

weaknesses, talents, and limitations. Self-exploration can also provide a better understanding of the balance of work, family, and leisure activities that best suit a preferred lifestyle. The other type, *environmental exploration*, involves learning more about the work environment, including seeking information on alternative occupations, organizations, and industries. Environmental exploration can also provide useful information on a family's needs and aspirations, a spouse's career values, and the relationship between one's work life and family life.

Research suggests that career exploration has a beneficial effect on career management. The most immediate consequence of career exploration is an enhanced awareness of self and environment. Indeed, the more career exploration individuals engage in, the more aware they are about their work values and the more knowledge they report about their chosen careers. *Awareness* can be defined as a relatively complete and accurate perception of one's own qualities and the characteristics of one's relevant environment. An awareness of self and environment enables a person to set appropriate career goals and to develop appropriate career strategies.

ESTABLISHING CAREER GOALS AND STRATEGIES

A greater awareness of oneself and the work environment can help individuals choose a career goal or goals toward which to strive. Goals are likely to be more appropriate and more realistic when they are based on an accurate picture of self and environment. A *career goal* is a desired career-related outcome that a person intends to attain. The advantage of establishing a career goal is that a person can direct his or her efforts in a relatively focused manner.

The establishment of a realistic goal or set of goals can facilitate the development and implementation of a career strategy. A *career strategy* is a sequence of activities designed to help an individual attain a career goal. Past research identifies several general categories of career strategies that can be used to enhance an individual's chances of career goal fulfillment. These broad strategies include attaining competence in the current job, putting in extended work hours, developing new skills, developing new opportunities at work, attaining a mentor, building one's image and reputation, and engaging in organizational politics. The usefulness of a particular career strategy is

dependent on a number of factors, including the nature of the job, the type of the industry, and the culture and norms of the particular organization. Indeed, a career strategy that may be successful in one case may not work in another.

CAREER APPRAISAL

Whether or not one is making progress toward a goal, the implementation of a career strategy can provide useful feedback to the person. This feedback, in conjunction with feedback from other work and non-work sources, can enable a person to appraise his or her career. *Career appraisal* is the process by which people acquire and use career-related feedback to determine whether their goals and strategies are appropriate. The information derived from career appraisal becomes a vehicle for career exploration that continues the process of individual career management.

The career-appraisal process may lead to a reexamination of career goals. More precisely, the feedback one obtains from work or nonwork sources can reinforce or lead to the modification of a goal. Career appraisal can also affect strategic behavior, since feedback might indicate that one type of career strategy is effective and should be maintained while another strategy is ineffective in achieving a career goal and should therefore not be pursued in the future. Regardless of its particular source, the information derived from career appraisal completes the individual career-management cycle by becoming another source of exploratory information that can enhance one's awareness of self and environment.

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUAL CAREER MANAGEMENT

Contemporary organizations provide a number of programs and human resource practices intended to help their employees manage their careers. Organizations provide this assistance based on the belief that employees will have more positive work attitudes and will perform at higher levels when their jobs and work environments match individual characteristics and desires. In addition, by helping employees manage their careers, organizations are attempting to ensure a committed workforce that will stay loyal to the company and be ready and able to move, either laterally or hierarchically, into new and more challenging assignments.

Organizations can offer their employees a number of specific programs to assist in the career-management process, including the provision of a job-posting program; formal and informal mentoring; job rotation and lateral transfers; formal education, training, and development initiatives; career-assessment centers and workshops; performance appraisal and feedback systems; and employee and executive coaching. Each activity and program is intended, in whole or in part, to support employee development and improve individual career management and decision making.

CONCLUSION

Individual career management is a process by which individuals develop, implement, and monitor career goals and strategies. It is an ongoing process in which an individual gathers relevant information about himself or herself and the world of work; develops an accurate picture of his or her talents, interests, values, and lifestyle preferences as well as alternative occupations, jobs, and organizations; develops realistic career goals based on this information; develops and implements strategies designed to achieve these goals; and obtains feedback regarding the effectiveness of the strategy. Organizations can help their employees in the career-management process by providing various activities and programs that support employee development and individual awareness.

—Gerard A. Callanan

See also Boundaryless career, Career as a calling, Career construction theory, Organizational career management, Protean career

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INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The *Industrial Revolution* refers to a societal shift that occurred when agricultural economies changed to economies driven by industry. The Industrial Revolution began in Britain in the eighteenth century and by the turn of the twentieth century had swept many regions of Europe and the United States. The significant and rapid changes brought about by industrialization altered every aspect of American life, including where people lived, their leisure pursuits, and the nature of work. The changes brought by the Industrial Revolution provided the social, political, and economic foundations for the emergence of vocational guidance, vocational psychology, and career development.

Three aspects of the Industrial Revolution had a significant impact on career development: (1) rapid industrialization, which led to a reorganization of the workforce; (2) rapid urbanization due to migration to urban industrial centers; and (3) the birth of reform movements that developed as a response to deteriorating living and working conditions.

RAPID INDUSTRIALIZATION

Between 1880 and 1920, city centers grew dramatically. Propelling this dynamic growth were railroads, which connected cities across the expanding landscape of America. Oil and steel manufacturing provided economic strength, which sustained technological progress. In a 1999 article, Howard Zinn pointedly observed that during the Industrial Revolution, steam power and electricity took the place of human muscle and more permanent and sturdier materials were used in construction and in the products that were manufactured. He also noted that oil was used to lubricate machines and to light homes, streets, and factories and that people and goods had newfound mobility through the railroad. Products that were previously made by simple machines or by hand were being manufactured in great quantity by technologically advanced equipment. As a result, home-based or workshop-based production declined, and large factories were constructed to accommodate the new manufacturing base. Improved methods for producing goods required new ways of organizing the workforce, including the specialization and division of labor.

The rapid pace of industrialization transformed the nature of work, which began to rely on precise and

efficient use of skills. The consequential restructuring of the workforce was intimately related to the emergence of vocational psychology. Fredrick W. Taylor facilitated this process with his idea of *scientific management*. Taylor analyzed jobs and converted skilled crafts into a series of simplified tasks that unskilled workers could be easily trained to perform with machinery. Next, production was systematically planned, and job tasks were directed through various stages of the manufacturing process. As a result, large industries and assembly lines produced significant quantities of refined goods at improving rates. To handle increased production, more specialists were hired to operate a growing number of distinct machines. In addition, skilled technicians, engineers, and machinists were needed to design and construct new equipment and maintain and repair existing equipment. Many people performed the mechanical work and labor, and others were needed to supervise and direct it. The results were greater divisions of labor, including management, administration, research, sales, accounting, and several others. As divisions in labor grew, equally important changes in the organization of social class divisions emerged.

The disparity between the rich and the poor continued to increase. The wealthy owned the major institutions of the industrial age, including factories, railroads, and banks. In the course of the Industrial Revolution, many members of the traditional middle class became factory owners, supervisors, managers, and clerks. Simultaneously, a new professional middle class emerged, consisting of doctors, lawyers, scientists, teachers, and engineers. Finally, there was the working class, which was divided into skilled and unskilled labor. Often, members of the working class migrated in large numbers to urban industrial cities in search of a better life.

RAPID URBANIZATION AND IMMIGRATION

The overwhelming economic growth brought by the Industrial Revolution was highly dependent on an abundant supply of labor. Because people were tempted to urban areas by new employment opportunities and prosperity, the Industrial Revolution brought intense growth to cities. In 1860, there were 9 American cities with a population of more than 100,000; by 1900, this number had grown to 38 cities. Although technological progress increased agriculture productivity throughout the nineteenth century, many small farms in rural areas

struggled to keep pace with large commercial farms. Several farmers went bankrupt; others sold out to larger farms and went to look for work in the burgeoning industrial cities. An analysis of the first federal census demonstrates that from 1790 to the end of the nineteenth century, the percentage of employment dependent on agriculture consistently decreased. For example, in 1790, 75 percent of the workforce consisted of farm laborers, and this rate dropped to about 40 percent near the turn of the twentieth century. Another cause of urbanization during the Industrial Revolution was immigration. Between 1870 and 1920, almost 25 million immigrants came to America, mainly settling in cities in the Midwest and Northeast.

For those relocating to the new urban centers, life could, indeed, be hard. Industrialization created wealth, but mostly for factory owners, not for the working class. Immigrants and displaced farm laborers found themselves in crowded housing with inadequate ventilation and poor sanitation. Many neighborhoods quickly deteriorated into industrial slums. Although there were employment opportunities, members of the working class had few rights. Factory owners could exert considerable control over workers because labor was readily available, replaceable, and cheap. If workers' wages were too low, their hours too long, or their working conditions too dangerous, they had no legal recourse. In addition, many factory machines could be operated by women and children, making the pool of workers larger and wages lower.

REFORM AND VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE CONVERGE

Federal policy regarding the rights of workers did not keep up with the rapid pace of industrialization and urbanization. Workers found their greatest ally in a rising social consciousness that gave animation to a reform movement that, among other things, allowed for the emergence of *vocational guidance*.

The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) was founded in 1844 as an evangelical reaction to society's urban problems. Throughout the Industrial Revolution, the YMCA provided social and educational resources aimed at character building and employment. The YMCA operated libraries, reading rooms, and employment bureaus. They offered education and training through vocational and trade schools, and correspondence courses.

Public education was another venue in which reform was beginning to take shape. The public education movement was responsible for enacting new compulsory education laws that kept children in school and tried to end child labor exploitation. Many scholars credit Jesse B. Davis, a school administrator in Detroit between 1898 and 1907, with having introduced systematic vocational guidance into the school system. Having seen the vocational and social problems faced by his students, Davis created a specific guidance curriculum that would reach large numbers of students where they were, in the classroom. Other social scientists, such as Helen Thompson Woolly, studied school dropouts and developed programs of in-school vocational guidance to improve graduation rates. Clearly, educational and social reforms were providing a solid foundation from which vocational programs would develop.

In the 1890s and early 1900s, political progressives instigated many social reform efforts. The results were greater government regulation of industry and an attempt to limit governmental corruption. In 1881, Jane Addams, a philanthropic social reformer, opened Hull-House, a settlement home on Chicago's Near West Side. The settlement home was a new social phenomenon. In cities across America, social progressives were taking up residence in working-class neighborhoods. They provided working families a place to learn English, complete high school, and discover their civic interests, rights, and duties. One of these settlement homes, The Civic Service House in Boston, Massachusetts, was the setting for the birth of vocational guidance.

ADVANCEMENT OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

Parsons and the Vocation Bureau

In 1908, Boston attorney and political progressive Frank Parsons opened the vocational bureau as a part of The Civic Service House. Parsons saw a tremendous waste of human potential and industrial inefficiency in the random selection of workers for jobs. To remedy this, he advocated a system of vocational choice based on scientific methods. He set forth an individualized program of vocational counseling using a tripartite model of self-knowledge, occupational knowledge, and matching self to job using "true reason." This model came to be known as *trait-and-factor guidance* and earned Parsons the moniker of "father of vocational guidance" (as well as father of career development, vocational psychology, career guidance, etc.). Parsons's work significantly advanced

job-description literature and promoted the psychological measurement of individual differences in aptitudes, abilities, and interests.

The Measurement Movement

In Parsons's time, the study of individual differences was of interest to psychology. Early applied psychologists developed mental tests to assess individual traits and became skilled at constructing the objective measures of abilities, interests, and aptitudes that provided vocational guidance with a measure of scientific respectability.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, French psychologist Alfred Binet and his colleague Theodore Simon published an intelligence test to identify developmentally delayed children who needed supplementary aid in school. The test measured a variety of functions, including judgment, comprehension, and reasoning. It marked the beginning of intelligence testing as we know it today. The ability to use paper-and-pencil tests to sort and classify children based on intellectual ability soon found its way into group measures of intelligence. The testing movement in America gained popular appeal after the U.S. Army used group-administered tests of intelligence and aptitude to screen recruits for service during World War I. After the war, interest in testing and classification led to significant advances in the principles and practices of personnel selection, vocational guidance, and career development.

CONCLUSION

Modern career development can trace its beginnings to the Industrial Revolution of early-twentieth-century America. Industrialization created changes in the nature of work, impacted population demographics, and created new calls for social justice. The shift brought with it a need for efficiency and differentiation of function of both workers and machines. The applied psychology of individual differences provided the scientific support for the establishment of assessment tools that became the cornerstone of vocational guidance. Theories of career development continue to evolve, yet they remain committed to the tradition of matching people to the world of work that began with the Industrial Revolution.

—David B. Baker and Colleen P. Maguire

See also Blue-collar workers, Churning of jobs, Sweatshop labor, Technology and careers

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INEQUALITY

It is no secret that jobs vary widely with respect to the pay, benefits, security of employment, and intrinsic rewards they offer. What is less well-known is that many of these disparities have been growing in recent decades, reversing a trend toward equalization that dates back to the Great Depression. This entry describes *inequality* in wage income and other characteristics of labor-market careers, with particular attention to trends in the United States during the last three decades of the twentieth century. Some of the micro- and macrolevel processes by which persons may be allocated to qualitatively different jobs are briefly considered.

WAGE INEQUALITY IN THE UNITED STATES

Historical data show two peaks in income inequality during the twentieth century, the first occurring

just prior to World War I and the second occurring prior to the Great Depression. These peaks were followed by what economic historians have dubbed the "Great Compression" during the New Deal and World War II eras, when President Franklin Roosevelt introduced social and economic policy measures aimed at reducing income gaps. In the quarter century following World War II, the American economy enjoyed rising wages, low unemployment rates, and sustained economic growth. Wages of the median earner doubled between 1950 and 1970, and those further down in the income distribution made even greater progress. Since the early 1970s, these trends have undergone a dramatic reversal, as median wages have stagnated and income disparities have grown. Earnings polarization has increased within all large demographic groups—even among employed White men working full time.

One way of measuring the degree of inequality in wage income is to divide the population into equally sized groups and compare the percentage of total wage income earned by different groups. Analyses of this sort show that top-tier earners control a large and growing share of the economic pie. In 2000, for instance, the top 10 percent of wage earners alone accounted for 36 percent of wage income earned in the United States. This share increased from 26 percent in 1970. Analyses by economists Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez have revealed that most of the gains made by this top decile have accrued to the top 1 percent of earners, whose share of national wage income increased from 5 percent in 1970 to 13 percent in 2000. The above figures take into account only the portion of individual income derived from wages and salaries. The distribution of income derived from capital and financial investments is much more strongly skewed.

The growing concentration of income at the top of the economic ladder has coincided with corresponding declines in the shares of wage income earned by the average worker. Real wages of median workers stagnated through most of the 1970s and 1980s and then fell sharply in the 1990s. The federal minimum wage, which is not indexed to inflation, is no higher today in constant dollars than it was in the 1950s, according to recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau. Stagnation of median wages and a decreasingly progressive tax structure have meant that increasing numbers of American families require two incomes to sustain a middle-class lifestyle.

Trends in income inequality are also commonly assessed with reference to changes in the ratio of a

company's top salary brackets to amounts paid to workers at the bottom. Plato once maintained that no one should earn more than five times the pay of his lowest worker. In 1965, CEOs in major American companies earned 24 times more than the average worker. In 2003, this ratio was 185 to 1 (having fallen from 300 to 1 in 2000). A recent analysis by *Fortune Magazine* found CEO pay in the nation's top 100 corporations at the turn of the twenty-first century to be more than 1,000 times that of the average worker (\$37.5 million in 1999, compared with \$1.3 million in 1970). Although income inequality has grown in other wealthy industrialized countries, the trend has been especially pronounced in the United States.

WHY THE GROWING WAGE DISPARITIES?

Numerous explanations have been offered for increasing wage polarization and inequality. Some focus on demographic shifts (i.e., changes in the supply of available workers), and others emphasize changes in the socioeconomic and ideological contexts of employment.

Some of the most important changes in the demographic profile of the labor force since World War II include growing rates of female labor-force participation, increased immigration, and the entry of a large cohort of baby boomers into the labor force. By expanding the labor supply, these demographic shifts have likely contributed to downward pressure on wages for many types of work. They may have also contributed to a growing polarization of the labor force in terms of skills and other human-capital assets.

Among the most commonly invoked structural explanations for growing income inequality are deindustrialization and expansion of the service industry, trends that both increase the demand for a highly skilled workforce and reduce the market value of a high school education (because well-paid manufacturing jobs are replaced with poorly paid retail trade and service jobs). Other relevant factors include declining unionization, labor-saving technological changes, effects on market wages of a stagnant minimum wage, the rise of flexible employment relations (i.e., decline in lifetime employment and decreasing reliance on firm-internal labor markets), and economic globalization (i.e., growing imports from low-wage countries and job outsourcing). In addition, the dramatic growth in executive compensation has been attributed to changing corporate and social norms regarding the acceptability of high levels of inequality, including an

increasing emphasis on the growth-enhancing powers of individual and corporate "greed" since the 1980s.

OTHER WAGE GAPS: GENDER AND RACE/ETHNICITY

Although women's wages have increased relative to men's since the 1970s in the United States, women working full time, year-round in 2003 still earned only about 76 cents to every dollar earned by the comparable group of men. The gender gap in earnings varies by age and is much larger among older workers. According to data from the 2000 U.S. census, the average 25-year-old woman earned 90 percent of what her male counterpart earned, while the corresponding figure for 55-year-olds was only 65 percent.

The overall pay disparities between men and women are largely attributable to the lower wages associated with female-typed work. Despite strong female inroads into prestigious professional and managerial occupations over the past three or four decades, women remain heavily concentrated in a relatively small number of poorly paid "occupational ghettos," most notably in clerical, personal service, and retail sales work. Most analysts agree that the persistent segregation of men and women into different occupations, industries, economic sectors, subspecialties, and firm types accounts for the lion's share of the gender pay gap in the contemporary United States. There is less agreement, however, regarding the causal mechanisms underlying this relationship. For example: Do female-dominated jobs pay poorly because they involve stereotypically "female" work? Are jobs female-dominated because of their historically poor pay? Does the pay gap reflect differences in the skill, training, or labor force experience required for male- and female-typed jobs?

Wages also vary strongly by race, ethnicity, and immigration status. In 2003, the median income of non-Hispanic White households (many that included more than a single wage earner) was about \$48,000. The median for Black households was 62 percent of that for White households; for Hispanic and Native American households, it was about 69 percent; for Asian households, it was 117 percent. According to data published by the U.S. Census Bureau, households with U.S.-born heads had a real median income in 2003 of about \$44,000, compared with \$37,000 for households in which the householder was born outside the United States and its territories. As with the gender gap, these disparities are partly attributable

to the concentration of minorities and immigrants in low-wage occupations and industries (as opposed to differential pay rates for the same job). Direct discrimination (i.e., different pay for the same job) undoubtedly occurs as well, but the prevalence of this problem is difficult to assess for a variety of reasons.

The *comparable-worth movement* represents an effort to overcome the wage effects of occupational segregation by requiring that wages be commensurate with jobs' skill requirements. As noted above, however, researchers disagree regarding the extent to which the low pay associated with female, minority, and immigrant work reflects these groups' lower average levels of human capital (e.g., education, skills, job experience), as opposed to a lesser average payoff to such human-capital assets.

OTHER DIMENSIONS OF LABOR MARKET INEQUALITY

The current state of knowledge concerning some other highly consequential forms of labor-market inequality is summarized below.

Health Insurance and Other Benefits

Unlike most other wealthy democracies, the United States has no comprehensive system of national health care. As a result, Americans rely heavily on employer-provided health insurance. Such plans have been declining in both quality and availability in recent years, with 5 million fewer workers covered in 2004 than in 2001. Those who do enjoy coverage are bearing a growing share of the total cost.

Declining coverage can be attributed in part to skyrocketing premiums, which have increased nearly 60 percent since 2001. In 2004, the \$10,000 average annual premium for family coverage approached the gross annual earnings of a worker employed full time at the federal minimum wage. Given the soaring overall costs, it is not surprising that workers have seen their annual contributions rise rapidly (by 10 percent in 2003), along with their deductibles and copayments.

Overall, more than 45 million Americans, including 8.4 million children, have no medical insurance today. The vast majority of uninsured children live in families with at least one employed adult. Those hardest hit by declining employer-provided health insurance include temporary and part-time employees, workers with little education, and those employed in blue-collar and low-wage service jobs. U.S. Census

Bureau data show that the uninsured are disproportionately racial minorities: Among Whites, 11.1 percent are uninsured, compared with 19.5 percent of Blacks, 18.7 percent of Asians, 32.7 percent of Hispanics, and 27.5 percent of Native Americans. Noninsurance and underinsurance represent significant social and economic problems, since individuals without health coverage often do not seek or receive the type of preventative and prenatal care that can save lives and prevent costly emergency interventions.

Job Security

Since the recession of the early 1980s, American firms have been downsizing their workforces and relying more on nonstandard work arrangements, such as employment of temporary and contract workers. The number of employees involuntarily working part time (i.e., working part time because they could not find full-time work) grew during the 1980s and stabilized during the 1990s. According to estimates by Neil Fligstein and Taek-Jin Shin, temporary part-time workers made up about 2.5 percent of the labor force in 2000, and involuntarily part-time workers made up about 4.5 percent of the workforce. Other relevant changes include the growing practice of outsourcing jobs to countries with lower labor costs and the declining use of firm-internal promotion (i.e., "internal labor markets") to tie workers to firms and provide lifetime employment opportunities.

Growing insecurity at work can be assessed by considering trends in average job tenure (i.e., the length of time that individuals stay with the same employer). Due to scholarly disagreements about how best to measure tenure and the meaning of observed trends, there is no consensus on whether tenure rates have decreased for all types of workers. There is agreement, however, that average job tenure has declined more for younger, less educated, blue-collar, and service workers. Attitudinal surveys indicate that fear of job loss increased in the United States during the last decades of the twentieth century, especially among blue-collar workers in the 1980s and among managers and professionals in the 1990s.

Working Conditions

Jobs vary a great deal in their working conditions, including workplace autonomy, intellectual rewards, physical and emotional demands, work hours, scheduling flexibility, and exposure to danger. Many of

these job characteristics vary with income. Available evidence suggests a growing bifurcation of the workforce since the 1980s and 1990s, with differences in the working conditions faced by high- and low-wage workers increasing over time.

Job Satisfaction

Attitudinal data from the U.S. General Social Survey show that low-income workers report lower levels of job satisfaction than do high-income workers and that inequality in job satisfaction increased during the last two decades of the twentieth century. The percentage of workers at the bottom quintile of the income distribution reporting that they were “very satisfied” with their work decreased from 46 to 39 between 1978 and 1998, whereas the percentage among those in the top quintile increased from 57 to 62.

Unemployment and Underemployment

Unemployment rates are strongly linked to the overall health of the economy. They increase during economic downturns and decrease during periods of economic growth and prosperity. At the time of this writing, the official unemployment rate is approximately 5.4 percent. In addition, a significant fraction of people belonging to the employed labor force work in part-time jobs because they cannot find full-time work.

The United States enjoys lower levels of unemployment than do other rich industrialized countries. Although this is generally attributed to the relatively low wages and benefits paid to American blue-collar and service workers, sociologist Bruce Western and colleagues have suggested that high incarceration rates of American males (especially African Americans) may account for some of the difference between U.S. and European unemployment rates.

Unemployment rates have historically varied by race/ethnicity and sex. Since 1970, the African American rate has been approximately double the White rate. The unemployment rate for Hispanics is higher than that of Whites but lower than that of African Americans. Differences by gender are less pronounced. Between 1970 and 1990, women were slightly more likely to be officially unemployed than were men, but the gender gap all but disappeared after 1990. The latest figures for 2004 show a slightly higher unemployment rate among men than women. Convergence of the male and female unemployment rates is likely due to the expansion of female-labeled

service and clerical jobs and the contraction of male-dominated manufacturing occupations in many metropolitan labor markets.

Official unemployment statistics do not take into account so-called discouraged workers (i.e., individuals who would like to work but have given up looking for jobs). There are few reliable estimates on the size of this population.

Who Gets a Good Job?

Much sociological and economic research has been devoted to studying how individuals are sorted across qualitatively different labor market positions. This work can be divided into two categories: micro- and macrolevel studies.

Microlevel accounts of labor market inequality focus on characteristics of the workers themselves. The most comprehensive accounts are human capital theory (from economics) and functional theory (from sociology). By these arguments, high-quality workers (i.e., those with high levels of education, experience, or other productivity-relevant traits) are allocated to the best-paid and most functionally important jobs, because this is the most economically and socially efficient arrangement in competitive market economies.

Human capital theory has often been applied to explain inequalities between men and women in the labor market. The core premise underlying this line of analysis, advanced, most notably, by economist Gary Becker, is that women have a competitive advantage in domestic work and therefore expect to be discontinuously employed. They rationally choose female-dominated occupations because wage penalties for labor force withdrawal are lower in these occupations.

Sociologists have long disputed the power of such microlevel accounts to explain observed patterns of labor market inequality. They question, in particular, neoclassical economists' assumptions of perfect information, individual rationality, and nondiscrimination, pointing instead to the cultural and structural processes that influence the allocation of persons to jobs (see especially work by Paula England questioning the economic rationality of gender-typed employment for women).

Macrolevel accounts of inequality focus on understanding the social and cultural contexts in which individuals and groups are sorted across qualitatively different labor-market positions. Researchers in this tradition point to institutional, organizational, and ideological constraints that prevent members of

historically underprivileged groups (especially women, persons of color, and individuals growing up in lower-class families or impoverished neighborhoods) from developing the human-capital assets, network ties, and personal dispositions that are rewarded, sometimes arbitrarily, in the labor market.

By treating wages as characteristics of jobs rather than persons, “new structuralists” have, moreover, directed attention to the processes by which certain occupations and jobs come to pay “above-market” wages (i.e., wages higher than would obtain in a perfectly competitive labor market). These processes include the imposition of licensing and credentialing requirements by professional groups and reliance on informal recruitment networks or firm-internal labor markets to fill job openings. Such “closure” practices tend to inflate wages by restricting the supply of individuals who can effectively compete for particular positions.

Taken-for-granted cultural norms concerning the appropriate gender or ethnic identity of particular job incumbents (as well as norms concerning the appropriate jobs for individuals with particular gender or ethnic identities) have also been identified as powerful macrolevel mechanisms in the generation and maintenance of occupational segregation and labor market inequality.

—*Maria Charles*

See also Comparable worth, Low-income workers and careers, Racial discrimination, Sex discrimination, Socioeconomic status

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INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

To find the best employees, companies and organizations conduct time-intensive and costly recruiting activities resulting in numerous interviews with multiple candidates to fill just one vacancy. The interview process, from the employer’s perspective, is to find the best-qualified candidate who has the right match for the job and the company. The job seeker, on the other hand, sees the interview strictly as an invitation that has to be extended by the employer before he or she can step inside the company. What if an individual does not wait to be invited for an interview, but instead, requests an interview? Is this allowed? Yes it is, in the form of what is called an *informational interview*.

An informational interview is a meeting with a person that one arranges to gain information on a career, a company, its employment opportunities, and any other company items relevant to his or her career exploration. Because the individual is not a job applicant, the informational interview does not require the person to sell himself or herself to an employer. Therefore, an informational interview allows one to circumvent the formal interview process and have valuable face-to-face time with a person who can provide career advice and who could potentially extend a job offer.

Although most job seekers may use an informational interview as a way to audition for an actual job interview by gaining experience and confidence talking about themselves with business professionals, a key objective of the informational interview is to become more informed as to whether or not a company is truly a good fit. Fit can come in the form of location, company size, company culture, opportunities for career advancement, or style of management. Informational interviews can provide insight on these company aspects and help one to decide whether or not to pursue employment opportunities with the company.

ARRANGING INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

How are informational interviews obtained? First, individuals should identify a target list of 5 to 10 companies, which, based on research (size, location, type

of business, etc.) seem most interesting. The next step is for individuals to identify persons they want to meet with through informational interviews at any of those target companies.

One can identify people by reading annual reports of target companies or visiting the companies' Web sites to find a person's name whose title is closest to the type of career one is interested in discussing. For example, a person who is thinking of a marketing career may want to find the director of marketing, a marketing manager, or a market researcher. Also, individuals should keep in mind the network of people they already know. Friends, fellow students, present or former coworkers, supervisors, or neighbors can be good sources for contacts.

After obtaining the name of a person he or she would like to interview, an individual must decide whether to request the interview by writing a letter or a making a phone call. In either case, an individual should simply introduce himself or herself, indicate the source for the person's name, and ask whether the person would be available for a brief meeting to discuss his or her occupation. Because individuals seeking informational interviews are not asking for jobs, they should convey a genuine interest in simply learning more about a particular person's career and the company. Last, individuals should never send résumés when requesting an informational interview via email or regular correspondence, because that signals an intention to change the meeting into a job interview.

PREPARING FOR THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

The key to a successful meeting is to have a list of questions prepared in advance to ask the interviewee. Be sure to read about the career area related to the interviewee and develop questions that are specific to the interviewee's background, experience, and challenges in his or her career. Some sample questions to ask are as follows:

Tell me what made you decide to enter this career.

What do you find most rewarding about your work?

What is the toughest part of your job?

Where do you see yourself in a few years, such as long-term goals you wish to achieve related to this career or starting a new one?

The types of questions to ask about the company are just as critical. Therefore, it will be necessary to complete some research on the company's history, its senior management team, its products, and the type of industry it is associated with. Here are some sample questions:

What trends do you see for this industry that will positively or negatively affect your company?

How would you describe the company culture?

Which other companies would you consider your company's primary competitors, and why?

Aside from profit increases, how does your company measure success?

CONDUCTING INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

Once an informational interview has been scheduled, there are some basic guidelines to follow for conducting the interview. First, interviewers should arrive 10 minutes early and keep the interview within the time frame agreed upon. It is important to not exceed the requested time, as a sign of courtesy and professionalism.

Second, individuals should dress in formal business attire as if the meeting were an actual job interview. The first impression one makes with a prospective employer is very important no matter what the circumstances may be.

Third, individuals should take the initiative with the questions they ask throughout the interview so that they obtain the information they need but also engage the interviewee in a discussion that allows both parties to have a conversational tone. Finally, be sure to observe the working environment and notice any aspects of the workers in terms of the way they dress or how they communicate. Individuals should also take notice of the offices and other facilities of the company that might enhance or detract from their working experience.

Follow-up Etiquette

On completion of each informational interview, individuals should ask themselves whether they feel more or less enthusiastic about the company. If they like what they learned about the company and believe it could provide a good fit, they should follow up with the interviewee by sending a thank-you card stating

their appreciation for his or her time and declaring their interest in being considered for employment opportunities at the company. An individual might visit the company's Web site once a month and as he or she comes across a job that is appealing should apply for it as instructed but also send a résumé and a copy of the job description to the interviewee requesting a referral to the hiring manager of the position.

An individual who is not interested in working for the company but enjoyed speaking with the interviewee should still send a thank-you note and express appreciation for having learned more about the company and the person's career background.

CONCLUSION

Informational interviews can be an invaluable tool in a job search campaign. Instead of waiting to apply for jobs that are listed on company Web sites or job boards, individuals can be more proactive and introduce themselves to potential employers through informational interviews. After conducting several informational interviews, individuals will have become more familiar with the hiring process, strengthened their interview skills, and developed positive job-hunting techniques that make them more competitive and effective job seekers.

—Pedro Gonzalez

See also Career exploration, Job search, Networking, Résumé

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INTEGRITY TESTING

Integrity testing refers to the task of assessing an individual's integrity, usually within a preemployment

assessment situation, for the purposes of determining whether that person might be considered suitable for employment in a specific job role. Until recently, *integrity* was viewed as synonymous with the term *honesty*, and thus integrity testing originally referred to the assessment of an individual's honesty, an attribute defining someone as being sincere and genuine and not prone to stealing, lying, or cheating. This assessment could be undertaken by a self-report questionnaire, as in the famous London House psychometric tests, or perhaps by structured interview or even by measurement of autonomic nervous system functions, such as respiration rate, heart rate, skin conductance, pupil dilation, and muscle tension. These latter measures were usually undertaken by a trained assessor using a polygraph.

The use of self-report integrity testing specifically as an assessment of an individual's honesty is mostly associated with retail, transient storage, and warehouse work situations. For example, this form of integrity testing has been used for occupations such as retail and supplies warehouse staff, airline baggage handlers, and checkout operators in supermarkets. These are the kinds of jobs in which the opportunities for theft and cheating are readily available to staff. Likewise, security workers, law enforcement officials, and workers who may be handling sensitive corporate, government, or military information would be likely to undergo a structured interview or some form of biologically based preemployment integrity screening. These latter kinds of tests are more expensive in time and expertise to administer but have the advantage of not relying solely on the "honesty" of individuals to self-report their responses to probe questions. Furthermore, such tests may be applied throughout employment as part of a periodic security clearance check.

More recently, two other terms have come into use to describe workplace integrity in employees: *employee reliability* and *counterproductive behavior*. The two terms reflect the broadening of the meaning of honesty and integrity from the relatively narrow conceptualization of theft, lying, and cheating that first defined the integrity tests of the early 1980s to a range of employee behaviors, attitudes, and dispositions considered not conducive to efficient and effective work practices or counterproductive to organizational "health." In this widening of the definition, the use of personality tests as integrity tests has become more prevalent in preemployment testing.

Attributes such as conscientiousness, self-control, and agreeableness are now considered the primary characteristics associated with well-adjusted, productive employees. Individuals who display less of these characteristics are seen as potentially counterproductive or unreliable employees. Recent research evidence, compiled and averaged over hundreds of studies, has confirmed that integrity and counterproductive personality attributes are highly valid predictors of successful job performance and training success, alongside general mental ability.

—Paul T. Barrett

See also Electronic employment screening, Ethics and careers, Handwriting analysis in hiring, Personnel selection

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INTELLIGENCE, SCHOOLING, AND OCCUPATIONAL SUCCESS

Research relating educational attainment to earnings has consistently found dramatic benefits for employees with increased schooling. Over their lifetimes, high school graduates will earn \$212,000 more than nongraduates, and each additional year of school attainment beyond high school is associated with increasing income. For example, college graduates will, over their lifetimes, earn \$812,000 more than high school dropouts, and graduate students with professional degrees will earn nearly \$1,600,000 more than college graduates.

The correlation between school attainment and earnings is likely due to a combination of an indirect effect and a direct effect. First, schooling has an

indirect effect because schooling affects intelligence, which, in turn, affects economic outcomes. That is, individuals who attain more schooling are more intelligent, and intelligent workers are rewarded for the skills they display in training and in doing their jobs. Second, schooling has a *direct effect* because of minimum entry-level educational standards required for acquiring certain higher-paying jobs. For example, many civil service jobs require minimum educational credentials, and higher earnings are associated with jobs requiring more schooling.

The reasons for the indirect effects of schooling on intelligence are less clear. It could be that staying in school is related to later earnings because individuals who were more intelligent before they entered school stay in school longer. Thus, when employers hire based on high educational attainment, they may be selecting individuals who were simply smarter to begin with.

Alternatively, it could be that the very act of attending school makes one smarter regardless of one's initial level of intelligence and this acquired intelligence produces workers that are more effective. Even the least intelligent student is bound to pick up some of the instruction, and this instruction is helpful when it comes to taking intelligence tests as well as performing jobs. Consider that IQ tests ask about information and events that may have been covered in school, such as "Who wrote *Hamlet*?" or "What country are the Great Pyramids in?" While one can come across such information outside of school, most individuals acquire such knowledge through explicit schooling and school-related activities (e.g., participating in plays).

To support the notion that schooling increases intelligence, one has only to compare two types of individuals who were comparable in intelligence in eighth grade. One type continued to attend school until graduation from high school, while the other type dropped out of school sometime between 9th and 12th grade. When these two groups are retested at age 18, they no longer have comparable intelligence. The dropouts lose, on average, nearly two IQ points for every year short of high school completion. Because the two groups had equivalent intelligence before the latter group began dropping out, we cannot attribute the IQ differences at age 18 to anything other than differences in schooling. Thus, when employers choose individuals based on their educational attainment, they are likely to be choosing employees who have acquired higher levels of intellectual ability.

Over two decades ago, researchers demonstrated that so-called general intelligence was far more predictive of occupational success than were specific ability factors such as arithmetical reasoning, vocabulary, spatial skills, and memory. These findings clearly explain why employers want to hire individuals with increased educational attainment. Given that these individuals would likely have higher general intelligence because of increased schooling, they are likely to be more productive and successful employees. Furthermore, these findings suggest to some that training individuals with low general intelligence in specific skills is not likely to be as effective as hiring someone with higher general intelligence.

It is important to note that at each level of schooling completed—finishing high school, finishing junior college, finishing a four-year college, and so on—there are pronounced differences in intellectual ability among students at the same level of schooling. Figure 1 shows the probability of an individual holding a white-collar job as a function of level of schooling completed as well as intellectual level—in this case, a reading comprehension score on the International Adult Literacy Scale. As can be seen, there is enormous disparity in intellectual level within any given level of educational attainment, with the highest-scoring individuals being far higher than the lowest-scoring ones. No school-induced increase in IQ or general intelligence can fully explain the substantial differences in intelligence that exist among students at the same level of education; there will always be individual differences in intelligence. Even though dropping out of school can be shown to cause IQ to drop, it is nevertheless true that among those who stay in school, there are large differences in IQ.

The available evidence thus suggests that schooling and intelligence make independent contributions to job success and lifetime earnings. Consider that even among those with comparable levels of schooling, the higher a person's level of intellectual ability, the higher that person's weekly earnings will be. As shown in other studies, there is a linear trend for a rise in earnings to be associated with increasing intellectual ability. Workers with the lowest levels of intellectual

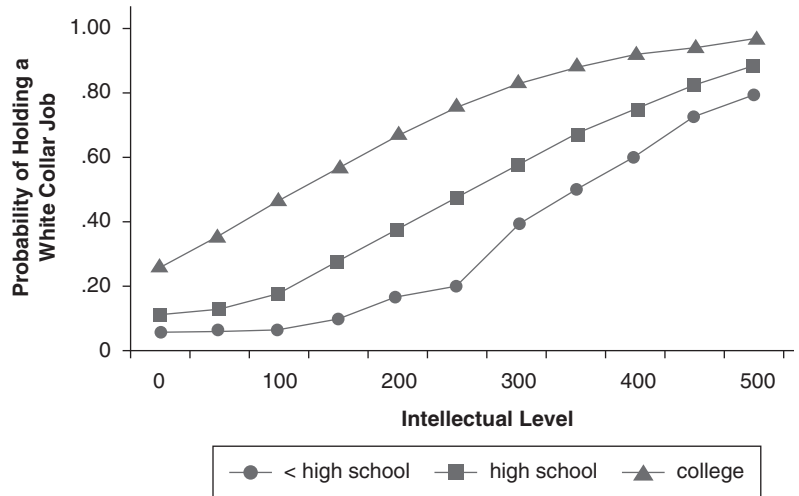


Figure 1. Probability of Holding a White-collar Job Among 26- to 35-year-olds as a Function of Educational Attainment and Literacy

SOURCE: Adapted from data collected at Statistics Canada Web site, <http://www.statcan.ca/>.

ability earn only two-thirds of what workers at the highest level earn. Because differences in schooling are statistically controlled in such studies, the source of the rise in earnings must be due to other factors, such as variations in intellectual ability. Thus, intelligence conveys significant advantages in lifetime income.

Data provided by the U.S. Department of Labor show a significant statistical relationship between measures of general intelligence and job-related aptitudes such as manual dexterity, spatial ability, and so on. In addition, a composite of nine different aptitudes, including a measure of general intelligence, significantly predicts performance in over 400 different jobs. Although the prediction of job performance is far from perfect, it is strong enough to suggest employers can save some money by hiring persons with more intelligence. Furthermore, the IQ measure by itself also significantly predicts job performance.

Another study found that the ability of a measure of general intelligence to predict job performance (that is, its predictive validity) was stronger as the job demands became more complex. In this study, IQ (and related measures) predicted occupational success almost as well as IQ has been shown to predict school grades. Although selection based solely on general intelligence is certainly not perfectly accurate, including a measure of general intelligence in a selection

battery holds great promise because it can be combined with other measures (e.g., grades, letters of reference) to still further increase the predictive validity of the selection battery.

The value of using a measure of general intelligence as part of the hiring process depends on several factors: how many qualified applicants are in the pool, how intellectually demanding the job is, and how substantial the differences are between good and poor performance on the job. Earl Hunt commented in his 1995 book *Will We Be Smart Enough?* that it doesn't pay to use tests to select someone for a job that almost anyone can do, such as cutting your lawn. However, a testing program can be useful when relatively few people can perform the job effectively, when not many people are needed to do the job, and when the costs of making a hiring mistake are substantial. In other words, testing for general intelligence can be useful to an employer, but only under certain conditions.

Because intelligence may be one of the best predictors of occupational success and because there is substantial variability in intelligence within groups of individuals with the same educational attainment, employers may also opt to use standard IQ tests in addition to level of schooling in choosing employees. To outsiders, the use of intelligence to select workers or trainees is fraught with problems. Regardless of any statistical relationship between measures of intelligence and job performance, there will inevitably be applicants who are mispredicted. This is also true of using Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores to predict who will succeed in college or Medical College Admission Tests (MCATs) to determine who will be successful in medical school; the future performance of some applicants will be underpredicted (i.e., they will achieve better grades than would be expected on the basis of their SAT scores), whereas the performance of others will be overpredicted (they will never live up to their high scores). No prediction based on intelligence is ever perfect or even close to it.

Given the fact that intelligence tests are imperfect predictors of employee performance, one may wonder why they should ever be used for selecting employees. Despite the fact that intelligence tests may be only moderately predictive of employee performance, mathematical models show that even a modest predictive value can lead to large economic benefits for employers. Increasing the probability that new hires may be more qualified for the job decreases the likelihood of attrition, lowers the amount of money that

employers need to spend on training programs, and increases productivity. Thus, from the standpoint of employers, utilizing intelligence tests for the screening of applicants makes good economic sense under the conditions described above. Indeed, "utility analyses" that estimate the financial benefits of using tests in hiring decisions suggest that utilizing IQ tests to select employees translates into economic savings in the range of millions to billions of dollars.

In sum, both level of educational attainment and level of general intelligence (IQ) are related to employee earnings. The increases in employee earnings associated with increased educational attainment are likely the result of both the increased ability of employees with higher levels of education and the fact that higher-paying jobs have higher minimum-education requirements. Because intelligence predicts job performance and better performance is likely to be rewarded with increased salary, individuals with higher intelligence (and more schooling) are likely to earn more than those with lower intelligence (and less schooling). In addition, because performance on standard IQ tests also predicts employee performance, employers may opt to use IQ tests to select job applicants. Although these tests may not be perfect predictors of job performance, utilizing them can lead to significant economic benefits for employers, particularly in highly skilled fields where the applicant-to-openings ratio is large and the costs of poor hires are extreme.

—Sarah Kulkofsky and Stephen J. Ceci

See also Abilities, Multiple intelligences, Personnel selection

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INTERESTS

The term *interests* refers to what an individual likes and dislikes, as associated with specific tasks, activities, or objects. Interests are a function of factors such as values, family background and experiences, social class, culture, and environment. For 80 years, interests have been one of the most useful and most enduring constructs in career development. E. K. Strong Jr. and Frederic Kuder were the early trailblazers in interest measurement. More recently, the theory and classification scheme of John Holland has dominated the field. Strong is famous for his resolute empiricism and for creating occupational scales with the method of contrasted groups. Kuder was both a pioneer in psychometrics and a leader in measuring interests with homogeneous content scales. Holland systematized Strong and Kuder's contributions into a simple, user-friendly, and popular theory and classification. Today, millions of interest inventories are completed each year by young people beginning careers and by older adults considering career changes. The five prominent inventories featured in this entry are well researched, with demonstrated psychometric robustness and distinctive utility for career assessment.

Early interest measurement, notably the leading edge forged by Strong, was largely empiricism devoid of theory. Only more recently, led especially by the theoretical work of Holland, has interest measurement been anchored in theories that explicate interests as constructs with meaning within a theoretical network. Nonetheless, the full understanding of interests within a nomological and causal network is still elementary. We have propositions within social cognitive career theory that suggest interests develop from self-efficacy, but such causal links are still debatable and subject to continuing research.

TWO TYPES OF SCALES

Strong is best known for creating the occupational scale with the method of contrasted groups. Such scales require intense empiricism to collect data about diverse and contemporary occupations. The Strong Interest Inventory has been routinely revised by collecting samples of men and women in diverse occupations. In the latest revision, David Donnay and his colleagues followed the procedures Strong created for constructing occupational scales. Separate occupational

scales were created for women and men, based on the somewhat different interests of women and men in general, and sometimes within specific occupations. Thus, Donnay and his colleagues created a new occupational scale for female rehabilitation counselors and a new scale for male rehabilitation counselors. The steps can be described using female rehabilitation counselors as an example. The rationale for an occupational scale is to differentiate people in that occupation from a general sample of workers representing a broad cross section of the workforce. High scores on a scale indicate that the person shares the likes and dislikes that differentiate people employed in that occupation from people in general. Thus, in this contrasted-group method, the responses of 254 female rehabilitation counselors were compared with other women on each of the 291 items in the newly revised Strong inventory. Items on which they differed in either the *like* or the *dislike* direction by 19 percent or more became the 38 items in the female rehabilitation counselor occupational scale. Some things that female rehabilitation counselor like more than other women are not surprising, such as psychology, career counseling, and motivating other people. Female rehabilitation counselors are differentiated more by their likes than their dislikes; however, they tend to dislike making computer databases and diagnosing computer problems more than do women in general.

It could be said that interest measurement has been hindered by its own success. Strong's creation of the empirical occupational scale was hailed as such a success in academic circles that conceptual progress in interest measurement was perhaps delayed. The occupational scale, actuarially defined by the items empirically distinguishing the people in that occupation, was an apt metaphor for the "dustbowl empiricism" of the 1930s and 1940s. But this kind of contrasted-groups scale has conceptual limitations. An occupational scale is not readily interpretable other than by the actuarial locution "You have the interests of X." A high score on, for example, the physicist scale, does not directly tell the interpreter that it means the person loves science, math, and mechanics but abhors selling, entrepreneurship, and marketing. Interpretation of such a scale becomes inscrutable. This problem led to the development of homogeneous content scales.

The Kuder Preference Record, developed in the 1930s, was the first popular interest inventory to use homogeneous content scales. In contrast to Strong's occupational scales, Kuder designed a content scale to

be directly interpretable because its items reflected similar content. Such items tend to correlate with each other, and thus such a scale has internal consistency. Today, content scales are present in nearly all major interest inventories. Many use content scales to measure the six broad Holland RIASEC (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional) domains. Others, such as the Campbell and Strong inventories, also have specific content scales, called Basic Interest Scales (BISs). For example, the newest Strong revision has 30 BISs, measuring such specific dimensions as interest in protective services or entrepreneurship.

MAJOR CURRENT INTEREST INVENTORIES

The five most widely used interest inventories are the Campbell Interest and Skill Survey (CISS), the Kuder Career Search with Person Match (KCS), the Self-Directed Search (SDS), the Strong Interest Inventory (SII), and the Unisex Edition of the ACT (UNIACT) Interest Inventory. The SDS and UNIACT inventories are the least complex of these inventories; they primarily measure the six Holland RIASEC dimensions. Because of their large number and kinds of scales, the most complex inventories are the Strong and the Campbell inventories. The Kuder inventory uses fewer scales, but it is also currently the most innovative of the inventories because of the way it is being used for an online career-assessment system. The utility of these inventories has been extensively supported by research. Interest scales effectively differentiate and predict important career behaviors such as career choice and persistence, college major, and educational aspirations.

The Campbell Interest and Skill Survey (CISS) is one of the more recent interest inventories. It has quickly become popular because it has many of the assets of the Strong inventory but also because Campbell added innovative measures of self-rated skills that parallel the interest measures. The CISS is the latest of these inventories. Campbell brought many key advances to the Strong inventory during the 1960s and 1970s. In his CISS, he replicated many of the valued attributes of the Strong inventory. Using a Holland-like organizational structure, the CISS contains broad scales similar to the Holland dimensions, basic interest scales, and occupational scales. Campbell chose to rename the Holland RIASEC dimensions in more common language; for example, the Enterprising

dimension became "Influencing." He also added a seventh general scale called "Adventuring." The notable innovation of the CISS is the addition of self-rated skills that match the interest scales. Skills and interests in the same domain are plotted together so that their matches or mismatches are evident. This leads to a qualitative shift in how an interest inventory might be used, especially when interest for an activity is high and the parallel skill is low (or conversely). Such mismatches lead to a counseling dialogue about how the person might seek experiences to gain interest or skill. Campbell's addition of skill ratings stimulated the Strong and Kuder publishers to add similar skill self-ratings as companions to their interest measures.

The Kuder Career Search with Person Match (KCS) was originally developed by Frederic Kuder. Kuder is recognized as one of the most important early figures in interest measurement. The Kuder legacy is now carried on by Donald Zytowski, who has infused Kuder's work into a leading comprehensive online career assessment and exploration system. This system is called the Kuder Career Planning System, under the auspices of the National Career Assessment CAP System, Inc. (<http://www.NCASI.com>). Its interest inventory is now called the Kuder Career Search with Person Match, and it has many of the features of what was previously called the Kuder Occupational Interest Survey. Kuder's approach heavily focuses on interests as rank ordered. Interest items are presented in triads, and the respondent selects the most-liked and the least-liked activity in the triad. The KCS inventory is scored for six dimensions that are similar to Holland's RIASEC but with different names. These scores are then ranked to give a three-point code, very similar to the Holland system, which then permits the Kuder system to link to rich sets of educational and occupational databases, such as the Occupational Information Network (O*NET). The individual's interest results are scored by "person matching" to an archive of personal occupational vignettes of people with similar interests. The online interactive system also includes assessments in self-rated skills (Kuder Skills Assessment) and in values.

Following John Holland's goal for simplicity and utility, the Self-Directed Search (SDS) is one of the simplest interest inventories, yet it is widely used. In a self-scored format, it assesses the six RIASEC dimensions of Holland's theory. It contains four different kinds of items in separate sections of the inventory: Activities, Competencies, Occupations, and Self-Estimates. The

Competencies and Self-Estimates items are more like indicators of self-efficacy. Adding these kinds of items to the more interest-like items of activities and occupations yields RIASEC Summary Scores, tapping a mix of interests and self-rated competence. Thus, these scores are different from those for inventories such as the Strong and the Campbell, which assess those domains separately. From the ranking of the six summary scores, a three-point code (or type) is derived to denote the person's highest RIASEC scores. Such codes are widely used to identify occupations and college majors with similar Holland codes. There are many published studies on the SDS showing its reliability, validity, and utility for stimulating career explorations.

The Strong Interest Inventory (SII) is typically revised each decade to keep it current with career trends and to update its occupational scales, the hallmark of the SII since the 1920s. The SII is the most data-driven interest inventory, given its occupational scales, its large national norm groups, and the number of articles about it appearing in the literature. Over the years since the 1960s, SII revisions have successively incorporated several sets of content scales: first, the Basic Interest Scales, then the Holland General Occupational Theme Scales, and more recently, the Personal Style Scales. In the newly revised version, the SII contains 244 occupational scales, representing the same 122 job titles for women and men, marking the first time since its inception that the inventory includes the entire set of occupational scales for both genders. The SII can also be used with the companion Skills Confidence Inventory, which measures confidence in each of the six Holland RIASEC dimensions.

The UNIACT Interest Inventory (UNIACT) is available to American high schools, colleges, and many others as a component of ACT's educational and career development programs, such as the ACT assessment and PLAN. Used by nearly 5 million people each year, the UNIACT inventory is the world's most frequently used interest inventory. First published in 1977, this inventory contains 90 items, 15 per each of six scales, corresponding to the six RIASEC interest types. Items emphasize work-relevant activities that are familiar to people, through either participation or observation. Occupational titles and job duties are not used. The full name of UNIACT, the Unisex Edition of the ACT Interest Inventory, reflects special efforts to identify interest items that assess basic interests while minimizing gender differences. Individuals' scale scores are used

to plot their location on the World-of-Work Map, an extension of Holland's hexagon. The UNIACT inventory is a core component of DISCOVER, ACT's Internet-based computerized comprehensive career guidance and planning system.

QUALITY AND UTILITY OF INTEREST MEASURES

Individual differences in vocational interests are huge in most general groups of people. The consequences are manifold. For test developers, it means most people can readily express their passions and aversions by responding to simple, straightforward inventories. Interest scales built from such inventories have potent psychometric properties. They have high reliability of several kinds, notably internal consistency and temporal stability. Such interest scales also exhibit some of the best validity indicators in psychology. There is a large and venerable literature on the validity of vocational interests for differentiating occupational and educational groups and for predicting career outcomes. Many of the suggested readings at the end of this entry address such issues.

Especially in the hands of a skilled career counselor, interest inventories can be useful in several ways. The best use will help clients better understand themselves and their vocational options and stimulate directions for action. Best practices in vocational assessment blend subjective information from counseling with objective information, such as interest inventories, to reveal the client's career story.

Broad scales, such as Holland's RIASEC scales, and specific scales, such as basic content scales, have different roles to play in counseling and in self-understanding. The broad scales are readily understood and readily organize broad career options. They are the best place to start the process of formulating a career story and charting directions for exploration. The specific scales then supplement this broad information when clients start refining their career stories and more precise paths for exploration. A broad Enterprising scale points to a broad venue of influencing, yet more precise scales such as Merchandising and Public Speaking relate distinctively to the options of retail sales versus politics. The specific scales are especially useful in identifying client strengths because there are a larger number of them, and therefore they are more likely to show some high scores indicating areas of interest.

By young adulthood, the passions and aversions of most people are clear and affect the choices they make. The likes and dislikes of people in different educational and occupational venues are often sharply different. For example, in the norm group for the 1994 version of the Strong inventory, 148 of 200 women airline attendants liked “looking at things in a clothing store” versus just 66 of 200 women physicists. For these same women, 131 of the flight attendants disliked calculus as a school subject versus none of the physicists.

The fact that individual differences in interests are very wide and deep also has positive consequences for a complex society. Whatever activities are needed to make a society function, there is a likely a group of people eager to tackle that task. Fortunately, there are some people who variously love computer programming, cleaning teeth, harvesting a field of wheat, diagnosing diseases, comforting the distraught, or making sales calls to reluctant customers.

Vocational interests have been the cornerstone of career assessment and counseling for 80 years. Interests deeply tap enduring and important individual differences and play a key role in defining a person’s identity. What a person variously likes or dislikes—math, public speaking, using a torque wrench, reading about DNA, trading stocks, or bungee jumping—does much to define that person. This distinctive individuality is powerfully related to life activities such as learning, working, playing, and relating to other people.

—Fred H. Borgen

See also Abilities, Holland’s theory of vocational choice, Leisure interests, Self-awareness, Strong Interest Inventory

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INTERNAL LABOR MARKETS

Organizations have always been faced with the dilemma of using external or *internal labor markets*. Hiring and promotion practices vary depending on whether firms use internal or external labor markets. External-labor-market firms concentrate on recruiting from the outside, while internal-labor-market firms concentrate on promotions from within.

Organizations that depend on an internal labor market make hiring decisions with a long-term outlook and hire individuals with the idea that these individuals will stay with the company for a long time. These organizations are very concerned with promoting from within, obtaining commitments from their employees, and rewarding seniority.

Early organizational theorists believed that internal labor markets would be advantageous to organizations because they would allow employers to develop a motivated and specialized workforce. Management efficiency arguments also support the use of internal labor markets. Managers can create greater efficiency by reducing their dependence on the external labor market. This independence reduces their need for information about future external labor markets. Managers and workers may both benefit from internal labor markets. Management will have reduced transaction costs and greater loyalty, whereas workers will have greater security and stability.

Internal labor market models demonstrate distinct job ladders that employees follow. There may be multiple internal labor markets within one firm. Job ladders allow entry only at the bottom, and movement up

the ladder is believed to be associated with an increase in skill. A person's future career path is primarily determined by the job ladder on which he or she enters the firm. An employee's entering job determines future advancement probabilities. The internal labor market job ladder model hypothesizes that once an individual is on a career ladder, his or her career options are limited by the ladder.

Within internal labor markets, potential employees encounter barriers to entry into the firm's workforce and are restricted to a number of low-level positions from which they must work their way up. People within the organization enjoy job security and anticipate future advancement, reducing the probability of turnover and increasing their commitment to the organization. In an internal-labor-market organization, an employee's job assignment, tenure, and hierarchical level are the direct outcomes of managerial decisions, in contrast to an external-labor-market organization, where outside labor forces affect who fills the top positions in the firm. Managerial decisions in internal-labor-market firms constitute the enacted promotion policies of an organization. Firms using external labor markets are not as dependent on their recruiting and promotion practices as are internal-labor-market firms.

Internal labor markets are believed to reduce turnover and keep the transaction costs associated with turnover to a minimum, while at the same time helping the firm obtain greater employee loyalty. Firms that invest in their employees to develop company-specific knowledge tend to have internal labor markets and work to develop and retain their workforces.

Organizations may use different labor markets depending on the degree of professionalization or specialization a firm requires. If a worker's skills are highly portable, that employee is easily replaced, leading to use of an external labor market. If a firm requires a high degree of specialization, employees with these skills are not easily replaced. Therefore, the organization must attempt to retain the employee and may use an internal labor market.

The subject of external versus internal labor markets is often looked at cross-culturally. The United States is portrayed as having a short-term perspective and using external labor markets, while Japan is portrayed as having a long-term perspective and using internal labor markets. Japanese firms' high productivity is often attributed to their strong culture. Nonetheless, many firms in the United States do maintain a long-term perspective in their hiring and

promotion decisions and utilize internal labor markets.

To select and retain the best employees, managers must be aware of the determinants of career attainment in their firms. Such an understanding is especially important in internal labor markets, because outsiders are not allowed access to high-level positions in the firm. Therefore, market forces do not ensure that the best employees attain top slots. These top slots will be filled by those already employed by the firm. Therefore, it is imperative in internal labor markets that the determinants of career attainment in the firm are consistent with their intended promotion policies; a misalignment between policy and practice may lead to firms' not promoting and retaining the most-talented individuals.

It is also important to consider that firms limited to an internal labor market may not be getting the best talent available. Internal labor markets rely on their existing employees and do not look to the external market to replace their employees with the most-talented individuals available in the market.

Employees in internal labor markets also need to be aware of the career attainment determinants in their organizations. Recent literature has highlighted the effects of unethical behavior in internal labor markets. Employees or managers who are perceived as performing unethical practices, such as earnings management, are often passed over for promotions in internal labor markets. This appears to occur whether or not the company approves of the unethical behavior.

Attempts by firms to partially utilize internal labor markets are usually unsuccessful. Research has shown that when an internal-labor-market firm does hire employees from the external market, these external hires have a quicker promotion rate than existing employees. Current employees may notice the hires from the external labor market being promoted faster than they are and make plans to exit the firm.

While the benefits and costs of internal and external labor markets will continue to be examined for years to come, it is essential that both employees and employers be aware of these benefits and costs. Organizations and individuals must make informed decisions based on their own needs and their perceptions of how these needs can be met.

—Amy E. Hurley-Hanson

See also Organizational staffing, Personnel selection, Recruitment, Strategic human resource management

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INTERNATIONAL CAREERS

Most employees used to have chiefly domestic careers in which, in the main, they did not carry out international, across-country work. The exceptions were the small number of employees, or "expatriates," deployed by their organizations on assignments abroad. By contrast, many employees now carry out international work in their jobs, and their careers are more international in scope than they were previously. Examples include those who self-initiate relocating abroad for long-term work to develop careers abroad and those who carry out jobs at home that include substantial international work, including "global" managers who work from the home country overseeing work abroad.

WHY HAS THERE BEEN AN INCREASE IN INTERNATIONAL CAREERS?

Due to the globalization of industry, organizations now operate in an international environment that is highly competitive. To be competitive, organizations need to develop products and services for markets abroad in order to survive and prosper, or else they may fail or be taken over, perhaps by companies from abroad. The multinational enterprise (MNE) is the norm, and employees need to see their careers as international in scope. Organizations often have operations abroad to produce their own products and services, and there are also truly global companies that function as integrated or networked operations with global markets.

WHAT IS AN INTERNATIONAL CAREER?

What has this contemporary international work environment meant for individuals' careers? A *career* is a pattern or sequence of jobs over a lengthy period of an employee's life. An *international career* is one in which the employee performs a series of international jobs, or jobs including international work, over a long period of time. Because of the globalization of industry, an individual may have an international career chiefly with one organization or be mobile across organizations (a "boundaryless" international career), have a career that arises through organizational deployment or is self-initiated, or have a career that is domestically based or based abroad or both.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF INTERNATIONAL CAREERS?

Employees are involved in international careers in a number of different ways. First, employees can be deployed abroad by their organization to transfer the company culture and develop the organization, to transfer skills and fill positions abroad, to transfer knowledge, and to develop a cadre of international managers for the organization. The assignments may be short-term (a few months to up to a year), medium-term (e.g., one to three years), or long-term (over three years). The employee may carry out one assignment and return home or move from one international assignment to the next over the long term. Expatriates/assignees are usually parent-country nationals who reside abroad and are often the senior managers of the organizations' operations abroad.

Second, organizations use host-country nationals (HCNs), citizens of the host country, in their operations abroad. Few HCNs run MNE operations abroad, though organizations at high international levels (e.g., global or transnational organizations) are more likely to use HCNs as senior managers than are organizations at low international levels.

Third, companies may use inpatriates who are host-country nationals and are moved to the parent company permanently or semipermanently for management and career development; to transfer the parent-company culture, expertise, and capability back to operations abroad on their return to senior-management roles abroad; or to bring international or global expertise, technologies, and perspectives into the parent company. Organizations seek to develop HCNs to manage their operations abroad by inpatriating managers and

professionals to the parent country to develop their managerial skills and learn the parent-company and country culture.

Fourth, third-country nationals are from countries other than the parent-company country or the host country who are deployed to run operations abroad or to provide expertise and capability. They may form part of an expatriate pool of managers and professionals available worldwide or may work only for the company.

Fifth, domestic international jobs are jobs in the parent company that include international, across-country work. Much international work is performed from an international company's domestic base. The manager or professional resides at home performing across-country work, often from headquarters. Domestic international work is performed at lower levels (e.g., professionals working in consulting firms, university lecturers using online materials to teach students abroad) through to the highest levels of the top-management team (TMT) and the chief executive officer (CEO). The across-country work is performed by travel (e.g., frequent flying), technology (phone, fax, e-mail, videoconferencing), visits (e.g., business trips of a week up to a month), and short residential stints abroad (e.g., for a month up to three months). The use of technology may be very high, resulting in virtual assignments in which the manager runs the operations abroad remotely by advanced technologies. Travel can be extensive as domestic international managers may be frequent fliers who are rarely at home. They may commute weekly or monthly to work abroad in their firm's operations, reside abroad for regular intervals (e.g., during the week or the month), and come home at the end of the interval (on weekends, at the end of the month for a period) to reside with their families at home. Often the commute replaces expatriation to dangerous locations or occurs when the country is close to the home country or when the employee's family will not relocate.

Sixth, there is a special group of domestic international jobs called *global* or *transnational managers*. Global managers work in MNEs, where they manage the work of an organization across the globe, often from headquarters. These individuals may be (a) global business managers developing work abroad and implementing the organization's strategy across the globe in an integrated way, (b) worldwide functional managers operating in specialist areas to provide integration and consistency across the firm (e.g., in human resources, law, finance, accounting, information technology), or

(c) country managers who run operations abroad in single countries from headquarters. The three types of managers are managed by the TMT.

Finally, there are skilled individuals who self-initiate relocating abroad for work, either having found jobs abroad before leaving or becoming employed once abroad. Many are young, recently graduated professionals. They are considered part of a country's diaspora or population abroad, may leave to reside abroad long-term (e.g., over a year), and often intend to return home. They are not migrants relocating to other countries permanently based on economic hardship in their home countries, or refugees or asylum seekers or other groups escaping persecution or political problems. Individuals who self-initiate international careers are often a country's skilled workers (e.g., professionals, tradespersons). They seek international work to test themselves against the best in the world, to advance their careers and succeed at an international level, to develop international expertise, and to experience adventure, excitement, and other cultures. Their home countries are often concerned at this "brain drain" and develop considerable initiatives to return their skilled nationals home (called "brain circulation").

The seven types of international work are often related and can result in an employee developing an international career over the long term that combines these different types. For example, some employees, originally abroad for one assignment, pursue a series of company-deployed assignments abroad or self-initiate a series of jobs abroad, in one country, a region, or across regions. Some host-country nationals or parent-country nationals relocate to other countries to work as third-country nationals and become part of the expatriate labor pool used by MNEs worldwide. Managers and professionals who have gained high-level skills in international, across-country work early in their careers return home to move into domestic international jobs because of their international expertise and perspectives. International experience leads to career advancement in MNEs that require global and transnational expertise and perspectives for their operations at higher management levels and that find the expertise to be in short supply.

WHAT LEADS INDIVIDUALS TO DEVELOP INTERNATIONAL CAREERS?

Taking the globalization of business and trade as the starting point that provides the opportunities, the

factors that lead individuals to develop international careers are from both the individual, in terms of his or her predispositions, attitudes, cognitions, human capital, and demographic and life stage issues, and from the environment, in terms of the organization, the family, and the country of destination.

The influence of individual and environmental characteristics varies according to the type of international work. Some individuals self-initiate jobs abroad or international work in their domestic jobs and gain international careers through their own initiative. Others develop international careers at home or abroad because their organizations deploy them on assignments. Organizational factors have a major influence on an employee's developing a domestic international career, because an individual's acceptance of that type of position is easier to obtain than for an expatriate position where relocation is involved. By contrast, individual influences may be great when employees develop international careers by working abroad, because even when expatriation is at the employer's behest, individuals and their families must agree to relocate.

Individual Influences

Characteristics of individuals in terms of their predispositions, international attitudes, cognitions, human capital, and demographic and life stage factors affect their seeking or accepting careers abroad.

Predisposition plays a major role. Some individuals are willing movers with respect to relocating geographically for work. Employees who have positive attitudes to moving in general and are willing to relocate domestically for jobs are also more willing to relocate abroad for work. Employees who have a high willingness to relocate abroad for work long-term seek and actively search for work abroad and accept opportunities offered to them. The earlier willingness to relocate abroad for work explains later willingness and actual relocation abroad.

Employees' international attitudes (i.e., their international orientation) can be relevant. Employees with high international orientations have positive attitudes toward other countries and cultures and seek cross-cultural experiences and development, and thus seek or accept jobs and careers abroad.

Cognitions, in terms of high self-efficacy and high outcome expectancies of international work, are proposed by social cognitive career theory (SCCT) to inform individuals' decision making with respect to

taking up international careers. SCCT proposes that the personal agency for living and working abroad, and thus the exercise of control, helps develop interest in an international career. Self-efficacy ("Can I do it?") and outcome expectancies ("If I do it, what will happen?") jointly give rise to interest in international careers. SCCT uses self-efficacy theory to explain its influence on the development of the individual's career interests. People form enduring interests in activities in which they view themselves as self-efficacious and in which they anticipate positive outcomes, and the interests lead to career choice goals and actions, such as searching for a job abroad. Some individuals have high self-efficacy or confidence that they can work and live in countries with cultures different from their own or have a low preference for country ease, being more willing to work with, or in, culturally dissimilar or difficult countries than individuals with low self-efficacy or high preference for country ease.

If individuals do not believe there are positive outcomes from international work, they are not likely to take it up. SCCT uses expectancy theory to explain the influence of outcome expectancies on the development of an individual's career interests. When individuals have high expectancies that they can gain positive outcomes from relocating abroad for work or carrying out international work in their domestic jobs, they are more willing to develop international careers abroad or at home, respectively. Individuals expect to gain cross-cultural experiences, personal and professional development, and particularly pay and career advancement and opportunities by taking up international work abroad or at home.

Human capital also helps individuals develop international careers. Based on human capital theory and the links of human capital investments to career development, human capital investments through gaining international experience and expertise pay off in gaining international careers (e.g., future international assignments or domestic international jobs). There are various ways of investing in human capital for international work, through (a) prior assignments abroad, trips abroad, or having lived abroad; (b) fluency in a foreign language(s); and (c) having a degree, including an international major. Individuals who have invested in such human capital are more likely to seek international work at home or abroad or be selected because of their ability and competencies for international work.

Demographic and life stage factors are also linked to taking up international careers. Younger employees

are more willing than older employees to take up work abroad and to seek and accept opportunities, partly because they expect more positive outcomes and have fewer family barriers to relocating abroad for their careers.

By contrast, gender may not affect the development of international careers. On the whole, women are not less willing than men to relocate abroad for long-term work. Nonetheless, women are slightly less willing than men to relocate abroad long-term to culturally dissimilar countries. Moreover, some women may be reluctant to take up international careers because they have male partners with careers who exert the major power in family relocation decisions and are unwilling to relocate abroad for their partners' work.

Organizational Influences

Environment affects the development of interests in international work, including the work and family environments. SCCT emphasizes that individuals' environments provide opportunities, support, and barriers that affect the development of their career interests. Characteristics of their employing organizations (international level, international focus, management preferences) affect individuals' developing an interest in international work abroad or at home, perhaps providing opportunities for employees to carry out international work and the human resource (HR) support to do so.

With respect to organizations' international levels, MNEs need their parent company managers and professionals to accept deployment abroad to run the organization's operations, manage start-ups, develop new business and partners abroad, and provide and transfer capability and specialized technical expertise. When organizations are starting up operations abroad, they are more likely to deploy parent-company expatriates to run the operations than to use HCNs. They train host country managers to take over operations once the operations are well established. Organizations at high international levels also provide opportunities to carry out international work in domestic jobs more than do organizations at low international levels.

Organizations that are increasing their international focus, seeking to expand globally to meet their business objectives, may encourage an interest in their employees in international work abroad or at home through providing opportunities, HR support, norms, and role models. Organizations seeking to increase their international focus provide the opportunity for

their employees to carry out international work in their domestic jobs in order to grow the international business and for employees to relocate abroad once the organization has operations abroad.

During international relocation, HR support (e.g., training, relocation assistance, family assistance) can be more important to spouses/partners—who are concerned about securing a new job—than to employees themselves. HR support is also needed for employees to carry out domestic international jobs because of substantial barriers and difficulties (e.g., constant travel, time away from home, lack of integration with host-country nationals in the foreign operation, communication and cross-cultural difficulties, stress).

Management preferences affect how organizations staff international work. Managements with ethnocentric preferences use parent-country nationals (e.g., expatriates, domestic international managers) to run operations abroad and make little use of HCN managers except at lower levels. When management has geocentric preferences, carrying out international work is not based on nationality. Thus, parent-, host-, or third-country nationals can develop international careers by being selected for positions throughout the organization. Host- and third-country nationals can work in the parent country and so develop truly international careers.

Family Influences

The family is a major influence on relocating abroad and may provide another type of barrier. The family may also affect whether an individual takes up international work in a domestic job because of the disruption to family life caused by constant travel and the out-of-hours works necessitated by different time zones.

With respect to careers abroad, a partner/spouse, children (especially teenage children), a partner with a career, and a partner less willing to relocate abroad for the other person's job reduce an individual's willingness to take up work abroad. Family structural theory emphasizes that the family is a system in a state of equilibrium. Considering taking or actually relocating on an international assignment causes pressures and forces within the family (e.g., the effects on children) and external to the family (e.g., the availability of employment for the spouse) that disrupts its equilibrium and thus affects the decision to relocate abroad.

The family system provides a barrier to relocating abroad in many instances, for those younger or older and with or without an immediate family involved in

the relocation. However, employees are most likely to be influenced by family factors when they have children and when they have partners, especially when the partner has a career and is unwilling to relocate. There is greater anticipated disruption and actual disruption to the equilibrium of the family system from the employee's relocating, usually reducing an individual's interest in a career abroad.

The spouse has a particularly important effect. The lack of adjustment of the spouse is the largest contributor to the lack of adjustment of the employee when on assignment abroad. Moreover, when the spouse has a career, the employee is less interested in and is less likely to go abroad for work than when his or her partner does not have a career. Family power theory explains that the partner who makes the greatest financial contribution to the family's resources has the greatest power over family relocation decisions. Hence, partners with careers have greater influence over family relocation decisions through their financial contributions than do partners without careers, resulting in less likelihood of the development of international careers by their spouses.

The family system is also a barrier to carrying out domestic international work, though less so than for expatriation abroad, due to time away from the family and the stress incurred. Domestic international jobs disrupt family and nonwork life, reducing the employee's interest and participation in a domestic international career.

Country of the International Work

Finally, the destination country has an impact on relocating abroad for work. Employees are less willing to relocate abroad for work to developing or culturally dissimilar countries than to developed or culturally similar countries. From uncertainty reduction theory, we know there is greater disruption to established routines and thus greater uncertainty from considering or actually relocating to developing or culturally dissimilar countries, resulting in less interest in such locations.

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF INTERNATIONAL WORK?

The consequences of international work vary according to the type of international work, for example, whether the individual is a company-deployed

expatriate, a host-country national or an inpatriate, or a domestic international worker. There are positive and negative consequences for individuals.

Positive Consequences

Because managers and professionals skilled in international work are in short supply, international experience can lead to an employee's developing an international career. International experience leads to career advancement in MNEs, as they require global and transnational expertise and perspectives for their operations.

With respect to positive effects on career advancement, because there is a shortage of managers skilled in international work, having international experience results in managers' gaining career opportunities and advancement, especially if they are willing to move between companies and adopt boundaryless careers. Expatriates gain advancement by relocating abroad to take up new international roles for their organizations. Once there, expatriates can be "poached" by competitors abroad, resulting in career opportunities and advancement. "Expatriate pools" exist abroad, and other organizations take advantage of them.

Expatriates on return home may rise in rank to become domestic international executives because they have international experience, expertise, and perspective. Having prior international assignments predicts holding a senior domestic international manager position, though not necessarily in the same company. Moreover, individuals who self-initiate relocation abroad to work are often sought by governments and employers to return home to senior roles because of their international experience and advanced expertise.

There are also opportunities for career advancement for HCN managers. Some organizations avoid expatriating their employees because of the substantial costs (e.g., allowances, relocation expenses, repatriation home) and problems (e.g., personal and family adjustment) involved. Instead, they run their operations abroad using HCN managers, third-country nationals, parent-country nationals already abroad in an expatriate pool, and domestic international managers from home. There are therefore opportunities for career advancement by HCN managers. HCNs may be inpatriated to headquarters for management development to take on more senior roles on their return abroad or to bring in needed global or international perspective or expertise, or

they may be expatriated as third-country nationals to manage the organization's operations in another country.

There are positive consequences of undertaking domestic international work because it can lead to advancement to senior levels in the company. Domestic international work enables the learning of international skills and expertise, which executives and CEOs of companies require in the global environment.

Negative Consequences

There are also negative effects from participation in international work, especially for mid- and long-term company-deployed expatriates, on pay and advancement, on premature return, and on labor turnover. On the negative side, companies localize the pay and conditions of expatriates to avoid the costs and problems of expatriation. Companies may deploy expatriates with no opportunity of return to the home host country. Because of the lack of support and unmet expectations, expatriates may prematurely return from their assignments or leave their employers while abroad.

There may also be negative effects of expatriation on career advancement within the organization. Expatriates are usually "out of sight, out of mind" and may be passed over for promotion. The largest career problem for company-deployed expatriates is repatriation. There is usually no job to come back to, or there is one at a lower level than the job abroad. The result is dissatisfaction and a lack of organizational commitment by expatriates and their families and the feeling that their international experience is not valued, resulting in intentions to leave the organization or actually leaving. However, the turnover may be to a higher-level job in another company because of the shortage of skilled international managers and executives.

Self-initiated expatriates abroad also find it difficult to gain positions on their return home that take advantage of their international expertise and perspectives. Hence, repatriates may again expatriate abroad after a short time to gain career opportunities.

Being a woman appears to be a disadvantage for career advancement through international work. A very low proportion of company-assigned international assignees are women. The reason may be that senior managers and executives are attracted to people similar to themselves. Because there are more men in these top-level decision-making positions, they may therefore select men more often than women for

international assignments and domestic international jobs.

Such similarity attraction effects may also mean that parent-country executives are more likely to select parent-country nationals than HCNs to run their operations abroad. Host-country managers are unlikely to be selected outside of their countries or regions for more senior roles in an organization. Companies favor parent-company nationals or those from culturally similar countries for advancement to the most senior levels of the organization.

There are also negative consequences of participation in domestic international work. Employees in domestic international jobs often incur substantial stress through frequent travel; being away from the family, friends, and social life; working out-of-hours to match time zones abroad; not being integrated with host-country nationals abroad; and needing cross-cultural and communication skills, often for several cultures at once. Hence, those working in international domestic jobs may seek purely domestic jobs to avoid the stress incurred from the working conditions described.

CONCLUSION

Individuals are now more likely than ever to have international careers rather than purely domestic careers. International careers may occur domestically or abroad, may be bounded within one organization or boundaryless through mobility across organizations, or may be voluntarily developed by individuals who take advantage of opportunities that arise through the deployment by organizations of their own employees.

International careers may be developed in a number of ways: (a) through a series of assignments abroad, (b) through switching between assignments abroad and international work at home, (c) through carrying out a series of domestic international jobs, (d) through being part of an expatriate pool of workers from which MNEs recruit, and (e) through self-initiating relocation abroad for work and return home to capitalize on the experience and expertise gained abroad.

Challenges arise in international careers chiefly from the lack of jobs on return home; the adjustment and stress inherent in international work, including for the family; the labor turnover of internationally skilled employees; and the brain drain when skilled nationals relocate abroad for long-term work and do

not return home. By contrast, there are also substantial advantages for career advancement from international work and for exciting, adventurous lives.

—Phyllis Tharenou

See also Expatriate experience, Globalization and careers, Multinational organizations, Virtual expatriates

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it is under continuous development. This relatively new approach, which has emerged along with the rise of the Internet as an alternative communication tool, is still characterized by limited investigations. Thus, its use, though becoming gradually pervasive, is generally based on users' experience rather than on validity research. Specific methods employed for Internet career assessment are influenced in part by the purpose of the evaluation, the variety of Internet communication channels and modalities, and the technological tools available. Continuous technical development, as well as initiatory research in the area, implies that current procedures relate to limited possibilities but that future procedures will be quite revolutionary.

The most developed, frequently used Internet application exploited for career assessment is online testing, mostly psychological in nature. *Online testing* refers to a general procedure by which an individual take tests of various types using a personal computer connected to a Web site that presents a test, provides instructions for filling it out, and usually scores and provides interpretation for it. Although online tests generally reflect the variety of test types and formats available offline, quite a few variations of this general procedure have been used, with differences in questioning sophistication, responding formats, scoring methods, and ways and depth of interpreting the test results. In addition, because publishing on the Internet is easy, generally rewarding, and essentially costless, online tests differ greatly from one another in terms of their levels of professionalism. This means that numerous tests published online and offering assessment to the public in various domains have been created by nonprofessionals for various reasons and do not fulfill accepted standards of test construction. This creates a major problem, as most Internet users cannot distinguish between "good" and "bad" tests and thus might be misguided in their serious attempts to gain help by means of Internet resources and make wise career-related decisions.

Parallel to offline (paper-and-pencil) testing, online tests differ in their focus of measurement, whether intelligence, specific aptitudes, attitudes, personality, or the like. Also parallel to offline testing, there are various formats for online tests: multiple choice, rating scales, and open-ended questions. However, because of the advantage of computerized scoring, online tests employ the first two formats; open-ended tests, which need human involvement, are rare. Usually, too, an online test is designed in such a way

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Career assessment through the Internet is an emerging though complex endeavor based on multiple methods;

that the user can respond easily through mouse clicks and the scoring procedure is automatically conducted. Online tests take advantage not only of computerized scoring (and preplanned interpretation) but also of the convenient capability of integrating multimedia-enhanced components (e.g., use of color and animation, audio, and video), automatic time watching, and more. A special advantage of online tests is the ability to tailor tests to test takers according to preestablished individual characteristics. Likewise, adaptive testing (in which an individual's success on an earlier test item determines the difficulty of the subsequent item) can easily be integrated into the system.

Research in a variety of assessment areas has typically found much support for the validity and reliability of measurement through online tests; they are, in fact, very similar to their offline counterparts. This has encouraged the use of such tests for a number of career-assessment purposes, including school guidance, career counseling, and employee selection. Online testing in each of these activities can provide specific and partial information for the test taker and/or assessor to be integrated in a broader assessment process. For instance, a client involved in career decision making may go through face-to-face counseling sessions while, in between these sessions, also taking online tests suggested by a counselor. Such integration of different channels of communication and interaction is cost-effective and convenient for many, as tests may be taken individually by clients at optimal timing without exploiting other resources. Other advantages include (a) centrally executed, easy, and quick modification of tests for editing of items and instructions and updating scoring procedures; (b) convenience in time and place of testing; (c) rapid and accurate scoring and interpretation according to preassigned theoretically and empirically grounded algorithms; and (d) the possibility of quick, detailed feedback.

Disadvantages and problems should not be overlooked, however. These include (a) publishing of countless unsupervised, nonprofessional tests that, in many cases, look like professional tests; (b) direct and immediate conversion of an offline test to an online version without the necessary adjustments, which might damage valid measurement; (c) use of test norms based on offline test-taker populations, which is known to be erroneous (online raw scores, in many tests, are elevated relative to the offline scores of the same test); (d) lack of a close human being to support the client's acceptance of disappointing results;

(e) use of online assessment that supports social injustice in providing testing opportunities to wealthier people (related to the "digital divide"); and (f) difficulties in identifying and verifying test takers and surveilling their conduct.

Another vehicle that the Internet makes possible for use in career assessment is online interviewing. Similar to telephone interviews, online communication—synchronously via Instant Messaging (e.g., ICQ, Windows Messenger), chat (e.g., LivePerson), and webcam and asynchronously via e-mail—enables interviewing from a distance. Although this procedure has several obvious advantages (e.g., cost, convenience, storage of written dialogues, augmented interviewee openness caused by the online disinhibition effect), it also has disadvantages (uneasiness for some interviewees owing to the lack of eye contact, loss of important physical and nonverbal communication cues, and difficulties in identifying the interviewee). This approach might therefore be used for initial screening or for career counseling by specifically trained interviewers.

An emerging online assessment approach that has recently been proposed adopts ethnographic and anthropological methods in observing people's behavior in Internet-enhanced environments (e.g., forums, chat rooms) while interacting in group situations or individually in any number of possible virtual stimulations. Although validity research is still lacking, this approach is promising in light of recent technological developments (e.g., enriched multimedia, sophisticated 3-D virtual reality, integrated video-audio tools) and growing research. This way, observation and appraisal of individual behavior in cyberspace could either complement face-to-face evaluations in an integrated assessment center or serve as preliminary screening of job applicants.

Online career assessment is still in an embryonic stage. Much research and development ought to be put into this area to make it routinely available for use in assessments for career counseling or employee selection.

—Azy Barak

See also Personnel selection, Technology and careers

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INTERNET RECRUITMENT

Since the early 1990s, there has been a dramatic change in the process of employee recruitment due to the emergence of the Internet as a significant means of exchanging employment information. The Internet is used today around the world by organizations of all sizes and in every industry. Job seekers can leverage the Internet using a variety of online avenues to pursue almost any kind of job, from entry level to senior executive, from trade work to professional services. The emergence of the Internet has spawned a new industry intent on helping organizations find and select candidates for available jobs using various Web-enabled methodologies. At the same time, substantial research efforts have tried to better understand how job seekers use the Internet to search for jobs and the value of such endeavors in actually finding employment. At the intersection of business practice and research lies significant debate around defining the value of the Internet for attracting and ultimately selecting the right kinds of candidates.

The Internet has emerged as a significant mechanism for employee recruitment because it offers unparalleled promise for facilitating applicant flow to employment opportunities and subsequent decisions regarding the fit between a job candidate, an employer, and an available job. *Internet recruitment* has enhanced the abilities of organizations to advertise employment opportunities to a global audience. Within the World Wide Web, there are a number of sources for finding available jobs. Job seekers can

search online job boards that contain millions of job advertisements, utilize Web sites of professional organizations or niche job boards that may contain more targeted opportunities based on professional interest, or visit the employment Web pages of almost any organization, where information about a company, its people, and its job opportunities can be reviewed and applications can be submitted. The ease with which job opportunities can be found on the Internet has expanded the conceptual definition of a job seeker to include both active and passive candidates. Active job seekers are those who are currently unemployed or employed in positions from which they wish to depart. This concept of the job seeker is consistent with traditional notions of job applicants. Passive job seekers are those who are currently employed, not engaged in active job search, and might not even be thinking about changing their current employment. However, the Internet has provided passive job seekers with a more time-efficient mechanism for exploring job opportunities and has empower organizations with new tools for finding and communicating with this kind of individual.

Because the Internet presents so many options for employment search, research on Internet recruitment has focused on two primary areas. The first area has evaluated the impact of the Internet on the job seeker's search and the subsequent quality of an organization's selection decisions. This perspective most closely maps to the interest of employers trying to determine how best to invest their employment-marketing budgets. The second area focuses on analyzing how job seekers experience and use the Internet to find jobs. This perspective blends the interests of job seekers and employers in the hopes of creating a better online employment search experience.

EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF THE INTERNET

The demand for demonstrating the value of the Internet as a recruitment source has increased with the size of organizational investments in online recruitment. From an employer's perspective, there are several major sources of online candidates, including Mega Job Boards, Niche Job Boards, Company Web Sites, and Virtual Networking Communities. A challenge for companies is determining the right investment strategy so that sources can be leveraged for maximum return with regard to the quality of applicants, performance of

new hires, retention of new hires, and efficiency of the candidate selection process.

Mega Job Boards offer job seekers thousands of job opportunities, provide employers with access to millions of résumés, and represent the primary exchange for employment information on the Internet. The nature of the postings on these sources reflects a focus on basic job information and the minimum requirements for jobs. The cost to an employer of posting to such Web sites is relatively modest compared with more traditional recruitment sources (e.g., newspaper classifieds), and applicants are drawn to these sites because of the number of job opportunities available for review as well as job-seeker support services available, such as résumé coaching. The popularity of these Web sites may also be their main drawback for employers interested in more targeted groups of job seekers. Niche Job Boards are typically structured in much the same way as their larger counterparts but offer opportunities and career information targeted at specific types of professional groups such as information technology workers, marketing professionals, medical workers, or engineers. The focus of niche sites toward the professional concerns of specific kinds of job seekers make them popular destinations of both active and passive job-seeking professionals and generates brand loyalty not typically affiliated with the use of Mega Job Boards.

The popularity of the Internet for employment search purposes has been clearly demonstrated by the integration of employment advertising into company employment Web sites. Almost every company in the Fortune 500 has pages on its Web site specifically designed for employment purposes. Within these Web pages, job seekers have access not only to the postings of available job opportunities but also to specific information about an organization, its people, and information regarding the benefits of employment with the organization and insights about how their careers may develop within the organization's structure and through use of its developmental resources. A fourth category of online recruitment sources is interactive communities that increasingly allow job seekers direct access to employees of firms with whom they seek employment. Such communities allow both employers and job seekers to more effectively leverage social networks in the hiring process and not only learn about employment opportunities but also gain firsthand testimonials about the employment experience available at potential employers.

The variety of ways the Internet can be used in the employment process makes it a dynamic area of study and professional debate. As organizations attempt to find the right kinds of applicants in more efficient ways, comparisons are made not only between the Internet and more traditional sources of employee recruitment, such as newspaper advertisements and job fairs, but also between the different sources that can be utilized for finding candidates. The advantages of job boards for attracting a wide variety of applicants can be somewhat mitigated by the number of nonqualified applicants who apply for positions. On the other hand, employment Web pages on company Web sites typically provide job seekers with more information about an organization and its employment opportunities as well as application mechanisms for filtering candidates tailored to the specific needs of an employer. However, these Web pages can require intensive resource investment to develop and are only as effective as the ability of the organization to drive applicant traffic to the page.

JOB-SEEKER EXPERIENCE

The Internet has made the job-search experience more similar to a consumer experience. On the Internet, hundreds of thousands of job listings from thousands of employers are available for individuals to review. Therefore, attracting and engaging the attention of the right kind of applicant audience has become an increasing concern for corporate recruiters. This shift in paradigm toward treatment of job seekers as consumers of employment-related information has turned research attention toward gaining a better understanding of how job seekers experience and use the Internet to find employment. It is not just the generation of an applicant pool that interests companies and researchers but also how to initially attract job seekers who match the employer's requirements and "fit" with the corporate culture and working environment.

On the Internet, job seekers are more heavily interested in ancillary characteristics of employment advertising than in traditional recruitment sources (e.g., newspaper classifieds). Certainly, the messages contained in an online job advertisement or organizational employment Web site will have a significant impact on job-pursuit behaviors. However, a number of additional characteristics of the employment-advertising mechanisms, such as the aesthetics of a

Web site, ease of use in obtaining information and using application tools, perceived credibility of the information source, and trust in the application mechanism, have a significant impact on job-seeker attraction toward a job and the likelihood of pursuing an employment opportunity.

The Internet provides companies with flexibility in how they can present employment-advertising messages on their corporate Web sites. Some organizations choose to present information on these pages in a rather static fashion, providing basic information about the organization with a limited number of supporting Web pages. Other organizations provide detailed information about corporate history, the kinds of people who make up its workforce, developmental opportunities available to employees, and benefits that employees receive as part of an employment package. Best-practice organizations go even further, offering unique insights into an organization's culture through virtual tours of company headquarters, profiles of employees in popular occupations, information that provides a realistic preview of what someone might expect when taking the job (e.g., an employee's typical work day), and inventories that job seekers can take to assess whether their personalities match the profile of a successful employee within an organization.

The Internet allows organizations to unleash the creative powers of its marketing department on the job-seeking public. However, the effectiveness of online employment advertising is contingent on the receipt of information by the job-seeking public and subsequent actions in which they engage (e.g., application, recommendation of the company to job-seeking friend). As means of employment advertising become more advanced and tools become more interactive, the sophistication of users required to effectively receive employment-marketing messages and successfully apply for jobs increases. To this end, employers and researchers have attempted to consider how different types of users experience and use the Internet as a tool for job search. The characteristics that most impact online job-search experience include age, race, gender, past computer experience, and current employment status. Older job seekers tend to be more concerned about the security of their personal information when using online job search tools. The demographic makeup of individuals featured on a Web site may have an impact on the way minority members or females perceive the company's perspective on diversity. Passive job seekers may be more

sensitive to the ease with which they can find information on an employment Web site or within a job-search engine, as their time for job search may be limited while at work or while searching for jobs after hours.

Employers at the cutting edge of online recruiting consider the possible experiences of different kinds of job seekers when designing employment Web sites or job advertisements to be used on job-search engines, so that the information communicated and means of application can be optimally facilitated. Based on the type and number of employees an organization is trying to attract, an employer may design a Web site to have more of a recruiting, selection, or mixed orientation. Employers who design employment Web pages primarily for attracting applicants are likely to provide more marketing-oriented information that casts the organization in a positive light, so that a maximum number of potential employees might be attracted to the job opportunities. Employers who are more concerned about finding the right kinds of applicants as efficiently as possible design their Web sites with a greater selection orientation. To this end, job seekers might be able to view information about an organization, but the focus of information would be to encourage use of an online screening tool that will either formally filter applicants or promote self-selection into or out of an applicant pool. Job-search engines are typically more selection oriented, as they allow job seekers to view information about available job opportunities and provide a mechanism for efficient application but allow little opportunity for job seekers to learn about any one employer. Many larger organizations have the luxury of blending these orientations together so that a job seeker can learn about an employer and then submit an application using some sort of automated mechanism.

FUTURE ISSUES

The Internet will continue to change the way job seekers find and apply for jobs. Traditionally, networking with friends and professional connections has been the most effective way for a job seeker to obtain high-probability employment leads. Virtual networking promises to affect the way job seekers find and gain access to high-probability employment opportunities. Such networking takes place on Web sites specifically designed to facilitate such connections and also through some of the larger job boards,

whose members number in the hundreds of thousands. Acquisition of information through such channels may supplant the value of certain information provided by employers through their Web sites, such as employee testimonials. Future research in the area of Internet recruitment will certainly examine the impact of virtual networking on job-seeker perceptions and subsequent applicant pools. In addition, future research will likely focus on testing models of job-seeker perceptions to better understand how Web sites can be designed to optimize the job-seeker experience and maximize corporate return on investment. Although the Internet has enabled organizations to realize tremendous gains in efficiency with regard to the recruitment process, it has also changed the standards by which recruiting and hiring are measured. Research and practice must continue to converge on the areas of Internet recruiting that lead to smarter and faster hiring of employees. Nevertheless, Internet recruiting has forever changed the way employers and job seekers find each other, and it will continue to be a powerful force in shaping the workforce of twenty-first-century organizations.

—Richard T. Cober

See also Computer-based career support systems, Electronic employment screening, Human resource information systems (HRIS), Internet career assessment, Recruitment

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INTERNSHIPS

An *internship* is a short-term work experience that provides the opportunity to explore an area of career interest, an occupation, or an industry. Typically, internships last for a semester, but they can last up to a year. Internships are designed to reinforce academic theory with real-life experience. The internship activity is supervised and is concurrent with coursework, and school credit is frequently awarded. Internships can be found outside of the intern's home country and can yield global work experience, sometimes with a total-immersion language-training opportunity. Intern work may include special projects, a sampling of activities in many disciplines required by the sponsoring organization (employer), or, in some cases, intense activity within a particular discipline or department. Internships are commonly, but not necessarily, paid positions. Both for-profit and not-for-profit corporations as well as government agencies provide internship opportunities. An internship is sometimes called a *practicum*.

Although the goals are similar, it is important to distinguish internships from *cooperative education*, or *co-ops*. Cooperative education features the toggling of full-time academic work with full-time paid work experience in blocks of time, commonly six months. The co-op position is closely related to the student's major and is considered a formal part of the education process. Co-op positions are typically used in applied fields of study, such as engineering or the sciences. With a co-op job, there is more emphasis on the compensation as a major feature of the relationship. Frequently, co-op positions provide essential tuition money. Also, there is a clearer connection between a successful co-op experience and full-time employment at graduation.

An internship is a supervised work experience with many objectives and great opportunity if managed correctly. As such, each intern has a supervisor at the academic institution who builds a strong rapport with both the intern and the sponsoring organization. The internship supervisor can be a professor or a staff

member specializing in industry relations. Commonly, the internship supervisor is responsible for finding, selecting, and maintaining a relationship with employers. The internship supervisor will match the intern to the employer that meets his or her needs in terms of career interest and schedule. Employers interview prospective interns to ensure a good interpersonal and career match.

Internships offer benefits to the intern, the sponsoring organization, and the academic institution. The intern gains valuable work experience that reinforces classroom training, usually earns money, and can earn school credit at the same time. The work experience imparts knowledge of the industry: the specific terminology and work atmosphere. The intern gains confidence in his or her social skills, critical-thinking skills, and specific work-related skills. The experience provides the intern with an enhanced knowledge of self and the potential to achieve career aspirations. The internship experience helps the intern determine genuine interest in a particular career path. Most important, the capable intern is in a strong position for future full-time employment with the sponsoring organization, clearly ahead of other candidates for available job openings.

The sponsoring organization gains an opportunity to build rapport with the school while getting a close look at specific job candidates. Internships offer the employer an opportunity to develop a pool of talented individuals in its own industry. If the intern is properly supervised, the employer will get real work accomplished at reasonable expense. Interns can bring a refreshing level of enthusiasm to an organization.

Internships provide schools with an opportunity to enrich academic programs with practical applications to theoretical concepts. Strong relationships between sponsoring organizations and schools serve to improve curricula by keeping academic programs in sync with industry changes, and sponsoring organizations can provide fertile soil for ongoing academic research at the university or college.

To achieve optimum results for all concerned, both the sponsoring organization and the intern need to be prepared. The internship supervisor should manage this preparation. The preparation includes writing an internship agreement, briefing coworkers, preparing the intern, and creating intern-specific evaluation criteria.

The internship agreement delineates the responsibilities of the intern, the sponsoring organization (as represented by the workplace supervisor), and the

school (as represented by the internship supervisor). The agreement also specifies what is to be accomplished by all of the parties: work to be completed by the intern plus interpersonal and technical skills to be introduced and/or improved. The agreement clarifies behavioral requirements of the intern, including personal demeanor and business dress requirements.

Coworkers and the immediate supervisor(s) need to be apprised of the internship, including its goals and duration. Work assignments must be able to be completed within the time frame of the internship and must be in support of the educational goals established in the internship agreement.

The intern should research the sponsoring organization, the work discipline, and the industry within which he or she will be working. This research enhances the educational effect of the internship, helps set realistic expectations, and highlights required job skills to be learned in preparation for the experience.

Evaluation criteria should be established to help ensure that the objectives of the sponsoring organization and the intern are met. A formal evaluation should be completed at the end of the intern experience to provide feedback to all parties. Intermediate evaluations are useful to keep the intern and the sponsoring organization on track and allow for suggested course corrections as required. The evaluation criteria should comprise a mix of objective observable milestones and an analysis of interpersonal characteristics.

The key to successful career management is the development of a clear self-identity supported by career strategies and goals. If properly supported by high-quality sponsoring organizations and internship supervisors, internships have proven to be an invaluable career-management tool for college students in the development of both a clear self-identity and the setting of career goals. Furthermore, internships deliver tangible results because they provide the intern with an advantage in securing employment at the time of graduation in the chosen discipline and industry. Supporting organizations should continue to offer internships to ensure a steady flow of qualified and interested future employees. Schools should encourage and support internship programs in light of their practical and educational value. Students should avail themselves of such opportunities to gain a better self-understanding and a distinct advantage in the work world.

—David Perri

See also Anticipatory socialization, Apprenticeships, Cooperative education, Vocational education

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JOB CHALLENGE

Job challenge can be described as the extent to which a job is stimulating and interesting. Challenging jobs provide an opportunity to strengthen, develop, and learn skills applicable to the work world. A common theme in the research literature is that employees desire work experiences that include challenging jobs and that such jobs increase employee and organizational effectiveness.

Job challenge highlights the importance of considering job factors or job characteristics in understanding many aspects of organizational life. A focus on job factors enables organizations to develop and design practices and programs that will enhance employee performance. Job factors include a number of dimensions, some of which (such as a high level of variety and substantial autonomy on the job) combine to produce job challenge. Job challenge is a powerful characteristic that is closely linked to career development, intrinsic job satisfaction, organizational commitment, motivation, empowerment, and personal goal achievement.

The career-development programs of some organizations include recruiting college student interns who upon graduation become employed by the organization. For both parties to benefit from the work relationship, organizations need to design jobs that allow interns to develop, strengthen, learn, and apply new skills. Job challenge is among the key variables that have contributed to successful work experiences among undergraduate college interns. In fact, interns who are given challenging jobs report higher organizational commitment when they join their respective organizations

upon graduation and continue with challenging assignments. Researchers suggest that the confirmation of the interns' preentry expectations contributes to their commitment and loyalty to the organizations within the first six months of their employment.

Newcomers into an organization, especially recent college graduates, desire challenging jobs. One study of how recent graduates view their jobs revealed that the graduates' highest initial expectations were for on-the-job challenge and diversity, as well as opportunities for technical or managerial career advancement. Job challenge has long been established as particularly important for employees at the early stages of their careers. Organizations should be cognizant of the fact that providing employees with challenging jobs at the early career stage can be critical to achieving later career success.

It is also important to recognize that recent trends such as globalization and advances in information technology have contributed to an uncertain and mobile labor market, wherein employees may experience several entry stages into various organizations during their work lives. In the current work environment, individuals bear the primary responsibility for managing their careers and seeking challenging jobs during their entry into different organizations. Some organizations' career-development programs reflect this changing work landscape by focusing on activities that allow employees to continually add to their skills, abilities, and knowledge. Hence, career-development responsibilities of organizations include providing employees with opportunities to acquire new, interesting, and professionally challenging work experiences.

Job design has contributed to our understanding of motivation. Job design directs attention to the job itself, matching job factors with employees' skills and interests. Studies have found that incorporating varying degrees of five core job dimensions—skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—into employees' work will enhance the achievement of personal and organizational outcomes. Creating jobs that require employees to use a wider variety of skills will result in more challenging work assignments that subsequently serve to motivate employees.

The way jobs are structured contributes to employees' intrinsic motivation and creative performance at work. Employees are more likely to break cognitive mind-sets and develop creative responses to job demands if they have challenging work. Research has found that individuals who perceive their jobs as challenging are intrinsically satisfied with their jobs, work harder and smarter, and enhance their performance on the job.

Job challenge has been studied both by itself and in combination with other job factors. For example, job challenge and job significance are major factors in producing job satisfaction and in motivating an individual to learn on the job. In a similar vein, research-and-development professionals who have challenging jobs and freedom to determine how to do their work have been found to increase their creativity.

Practices that promote job challenge have been linked to employee empowerment and the achievement of personal goals. When organizations incorporate or adopt policies that increase job challenge, employees build self-confidence as they learn and utilize new skills to accomplish a task, choose among alternative ways of accomplishing the task, and alleviate feelings of helplessness. Possessing challenging jobs and receiving training to perform them successfully empower employees toward satisfying both individual needs and organizational goals. Having empowered employees can translate into multiple benefits for both parties.

In light of recent developments in the work of work (e.g., globalization, information technology, reorganization, transition to a knowledge economy), a focus on work experience is becoming inevitable. This has increased interest in job factors such as job challenge, which has recently been considered to be a dimension of an organization's culture. Moreover, for organizations to fulfill their career-development responsibilities to employees in the changing work world (e.g., encouraging self-reliance and continuous learning), a focus on employees' work assignments and job experience is essential.

We should note that although job challenge is rarely studied in isolation, research suggests that challenging jobs or work experiences are fundamental to achieving a number of positive individual and organizational outcomes. We also need to acknowledge that individuals may differ in their responses to challenging jobs (that is, not every employee thrives on challenging work) and to be aware of individual differences in discussing the benefits of a challenging job.

—Uzo P. Anakwe

See also Empowerment, Job design, Motivation and career development

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JOB DESIGN

Job design, or *work design*, refers to a process of dividing an organization's total work into various jobs and assigning tasks to those jobs. It may also involve examining the goals and interdependence of tasks as well as the interpersonal relationships involved in

accomplishing work. Because the tasks involved in doing a job and how these tasks are performed can change, managers need to know how to design and redesign jobs to make them as meaningful and productive as possible. Thus, a good job design is one that meets organizational requirements for high performance, offers a good fit with individuals' skills and needs, provides workers with challenging goals and meaningful work, and provides opportunities for job satisfaction and career advancement.

The implications of job design for employee career development are considerable. For example, organizations today are becoming "learning organizations" that value not only financial capital but also intellectual capital. Organizations must have the capacity to acquire, share, and use knowledge effectively. This includes providing workers with opportunities to learn and develop. To accomplish this, the right systems and structures need to be in place to support the management of knowledge.

The way a job is designed can also affect a worker's level of activity. For example, research evidence suggests that oversimplified jobs can lead to apathy and reduced drive and motivation. This indifference can often be reversed through increased complexity and autonomy. Other studies have demonstrated that autonomy and control can positively affect cognitive development and intellectual flexibility. Equally important is the effect job design could have on employee well-being. It is well documented that autonomy, or having control over various aspects of work, has a positive effect on health and well-being. That is, job-design factors can eliminate or minimize the negative effects that stressful job demands have on mental and physical health. Similarly, a well-designed job can actually foster learning and a feeling of mastery over time. This acts as a type of coping mechanism for workers in stressful work situations and leads to a greater capacity to learn and grow.

Another career implication concerns the opportunities for personal advancement. Many organizations have structures with reduced hierarchical levels. Instead of the traditional, rigid chain of command, employees or teams of employees are empowered to take responsibility for and control over their work. As decision-making discretion is delegated downward, there is less need for supervisors and managers. This, in turn, limits the promotional opportunities in a given organization and creates a need for new career-development choices, such as horizontal learning

options (e.g., another department's job, additional or new technical skills, short-term projects). The challenge for organizations is to provide these types of learning opportunities and create reward systems that recognize them.

Historically, the focus of job-design efforts can be traced back to what has become known as the philosophy of *job simplification* or *job specialization*, whereby complex tasks are broken down into a series of simpler tasks to enhance performance. In more recent years, however, the nature of work has changed dramatically. A number of job-redesign strategies have been adopted by organizations to counter the negative psychological effects of specialization, including job enlargement, job enrichment, and autonomous work groups. These ideas were popular during the 1960s and 1970s, and various aspects of these designs can be seen today in the form of high-performance teams, empowerment, learning organizations, and total quality production.

Information technology has also changed many jobs in the last 20 years. In some cases, workers experience increased responsibility and control through immediate access to information and resources. In other cases, however, employees perform routine work, face time pressures, are constantly monitored, and have little control over their work because of the use of computer information systems. In any event, whether the changing nature of work is brought about through technology or through increased efficiency or flexibility, there are often conflicts between an employee's motivation to work and the pressures to maximize productivity and sales.

JOB SPECIALIZATION AND WORK EFFICIENCY

Job specialization occurs when the work required to complete a product or service is divided into smaller tasks. This is often referred to as *horizontal division of labor*, whereby employees actually perform fewer tasks. The economic benefits of dividing work into specialized jobs have been described for centuries and include improved work efficiency. For example, in 1776, Adam Smith argued that work specialization leads to greater efficiency because employees have fewer tasks to complete and spend less time changing from one task to another. In addition, new machines were invented to help facilitate and automate work so that one individual could perform the work of many. Finally, workers could

practice their tasks more frequently, and thus fewer resources and less training were required.

Frederick W. Taylor, an industrial engineer, was one of the strongest supporters of job specialization and established the foundation for modern industrial engineering. In 1911, he presented his principles of scientific management. In essence, they are as follows: (a) replace rule-of-thumb work methods with methods based on scientific study; (b) scientifically select, develop, and train each worker; (c) work closely with workers and cooperate with them to ensure the scientific methods are followed; and (d) divide the work so that managers apply scientific principles to planning the work, while workers actually perform the tasks. Additional elements of scientific management include time studies, specialized supervision, standardization of work methods, standardization of tools and equipment, and a separate planning function. Taylor argued that management and workers needed a complete revolution in their attitudes toward work. He asserted that there was “one best method” of doing every job so that efficiency was maximized. Today, many of the methods used by Taylor are commonplace in many organizations and include providing incentives for workers, examining the interdependencies between people and machines, setting performance standards, setting goals, and providing employee training.

Job specialization often increases work efficiency; however, it doesn't necessarily improve job performance or employee well-being. Early research into the practice of work specialization focused on the consequences of performing low-skill, repetitive jobs for long hours. Generally speaking, this research confirmed the notion that too much specialization produces negative work attitudes, such as job dissatisfaction, fatigue, and boredom. Furthermore, psychological health and well-being can also be negatively affected if a job doesn't offer a worker the opportunity to use a variety of skills and provide a sense of accomplishment and personal growth. As a result, several work design alternatives to job simplification emerged in the workplace and are still popular today.

WORK MOTIVATION AND JOB DESIGN

Job Rotation

Job rotation involves workers moving at regular intervals from one job to another to reduce fatigue and boredom. Many organizations introduce job rotation

as part of a larger redesign effort to increase the flexibility and skills of the workforce so that there are few disruptions when a worker is absent from the job or staff shortages occur. As traditionally used, job rotation may not always have the desired effect of improving efficiency or job satisfaction, because employees often move from one routine job to another. Nevertheless, employees can benefit from job rotation because they are able to use different motions and muscles, thereby reducing repetitive stress injuries.

Job Enlargement

To counteract oversimplification, another design method commonly used in organizations is *job enlargement*. Rather than rotating employees from one job to another, job enlargement boosts the complexity of work by increasing job range or the number of tasks employees perform within their jobs. This can be accomplished by combining two or more jobs into one or by adding tasks to a given job. Either way, this approach is based on the notion that increasing skill variety will reduce the repetitive nature of the job and help reduce boredom. Job enlargement can improve efficiency and flexibility. However, it can be viewed by workers as merely adding more routine tasks to their already boring jobs. Research suggests that simply adding tasks to a job doesn't necessarily affect employee job satisfaction, motivation, or performance. To achieve these benefits, employees should have the opportunity to use a variety of skills combined with the opportunity to increase job knowledge, while having some discretion in how work is structured. These characteristics are central to job enrichment.

Job Enrichment

In general, *job enrichment* refers to the empowerment of workers to assume more responsibility for scheduling, coordinating, and planning their work. In addition, employees should be recognized for their achievements and have the opportunity to advance and grow as they perform their jobs. During the period between 1950 and 1980, there were major theoretical developments in the field of job design that continue to exert considerable influence today. One of these developments, *vertical job enrichment*, was based on the work of Frederick Herzberg, an industrial psychologist who studied the various sources of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work. Herzberg and his

colleagues began their research in the mid- to late 1950s by interviewing 200 accountants and engineers. Herzberg's main proposition was that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction were independent concepts and not opposite ends on a single continuum.

Herzberg's interview data revealed that certain work characteristics seemed to influence employee satisfaction, whereas other characteristics appeared to affect worker dissatisfaction. Factors that increased satisfaction were achievement, advancement opportunities, recognition, responsibility, and the nature of the work itself. He labeled these work characteristics "motivators" and argued that they were more intrinsic to the work itself. In contrast, factors that were related to job dissatisfaction were working conditions, company policies and administration, interpersonal relations, and employees' relationships with their supervisors. Herzberg labeled these characteristics "hygiene factors," because they were believed to be extrinsic to the performance of work and could help maintain motivation but more often contributed to a decrease in motivation. Herzberg suggested that for managers to motivate employees, they should pay less attention to work conditions, company policies, and salary and instead try to design jobs that include opportunities for recognition, growth, and achievement.

During the late 1960s, Herzberg's notion of separate determinants of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction generated more empirical research than any other job-design strategy and was embraced by many practitioners. Over the years, however, many critics have questioned Herzberg's theory and methodology because other research studies failed to replicate his findings. Not surprisingly, Herzberg's two-factor theory lost credibility and has not proved to be a useful guide for practicing managers. Nonetheless, the notion of job enrichment—designing jobs that satisfy higher-order needs for responsibility, recognition, achievement, and growth—continues to influence job-design efforts and stimulate interest in motivation and job satisfaction.

Another major development in the field of job design that is one of the best-known approaches to job enrichment is the *job characteristics model*. In 1975 and 1976, J. Richard Hackman and Greg Oldham identified five core job dimensions: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback.

These five core job characteristics influence the extent to which workers experience three critical psychological states. The first of these is *experienced meaningfulness*: the belief that one's work is worthwhile or

important. Skill variety, task identity, and task significance combine to influence the experienced meaningfulness of work. The second psychological state is *experienced responsibility*: the degree to which workers feel personally accountable and responsible for the results of their work. Autonomy contributes to the worker's experienced responsibility for work outcomes. Employees must have the opportunity to control their work environments in order to feel responsible for their successes and shortcomings. The final psychological state is *knowledge of results*: the degree to which employees are aware of the effectiveness of their work or understand how they are performing. Feedback from actually doing the job determines whether a worker will have knowledge of the results of his or her work. This type of feedback comes from performing the job itself, not from a manager's performance appraisal. The critical psychological states, in turn, promote work motivation, job satisfaction, performance, and reduced absenteeism and turnover. The model assumes that autonomy and feedback are more important than the other three work characteristics and that employees with higher growth needs (e.g., desire for learning, development, challenge) will respond more favorably to enriching jobs than will employees with lower growth needs.

To date, the job characteristics model has proved to be the most widely used theoretical model for job-redesign efforts ever conceptualized. Interestingly, though, many of the specific predictions of the model have not been supported by two decades of empirical research. For example, the core job characteristics are better predictors of affective outcomes, such as motivation and satisfaction, than they are of behavioral or objective outcomes, such as performance, absenteeism, and turnover. Second, the core job characteristics don't necessarily work through the critical psychological states to predict the various outcomes. In other words, they directly predict many of the outcomes. Finally, the identified job characteristics have not always been found to be separate aspects of jobs. Nevertheless, the model continues to be a useful and valuable tool.

The job characteristics model hasn't changed much from its original theoretical development. In 1996, Hackman and Oldham omitted absenteeism and turnover as potential outcomes and added growth satisfaction. Competencies and satisfaction with contextual factors are now included with the strength of growth needs as potential individual differences.

SOCIOTECHNICAL SYSTEMS APPROACH

The models of job enrichment discussed previously have primarily focused on the individual and individual work units. They are not always appropriate for group or team-based structures. The sociotechnical systems approach to enrichment originated in the early 1950s at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations in London and provided a foundation for group designs. Studies of coal-mining processes in Great Britain found that productivity can suffer when either technical or social factors are allowed to dictate work processes. In essence, the model advocates designing work that integrates people and technology to optimize the relationships between social systems and technology. That is, if frequent interaction is required by the production technology being used, workers should work in groups that allow them to communicate as they perform their job duties. This would enhance employee job satisfaction and performance in the workplace. The Tavistock researchers identified some general principles or requirements that are central to employee motivation and satisfaction. These requirements are similar to the work of Hackman and Oldham but were developed independently in England. They are as follows:

Workers should be able to see an identifiable product as a result of their work.

Workers should be able to see how their products affect others.

Workers should have some decision-making discretion.

Workers should be able to continuously learn while on the job.

Workers should be trained and have their work recognized by others.

The more contemporary concept of semiautonomous work groups evolved from this innovative research. In essence, work groups are given decision-making discretion over various aspects of their work, such as what methods to use and how to solve problems and allocate resources. More recently, we've seen labels such as *self-managed teams*, *self-directed work groups*, or *flexible work groups* to describe this type of work design. Without question, the sociotechnical approach to enrichment has had a major impact on group research and practice. There has been an increase in team-effectiveness models, which make

more precise propositions and specifications about how group processes and group design factors affect outcomes. In addition, the potential advantages and disadvantages of group-based designs have been studied and documented. For example, group workers often experience increased job satisfaction and commitment and are able to produce more at reduced costs. Furthermore, there are often fewer accidents, lower turnover, and improved mental health when employees are involved in group-based work.

The sociotechnical systems model has been criticized for focusing too much on production and manufacturing settings and for advocating that "groups" are the answer to most organizational problems. This approach has also neglected to recognize the effects that individual differences and organizational culture could have on employees' attitudes and behavior. Nevertheless, using this type of design does strengthen motivation, satisfaction, and similar work attitudes, and it has proved to be of great value to practitioners.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN JOB DESIGN

The job characteristics model and the sociotechnical systems approach to designing jobs remain the most popular, and there have been additional developments and extensions to both. One such development that draws on the job characteristics model is Robert Karasek's job demands-job decision latitude (i.e., control) model of stress, proposed in 1979. Essentially, the model proposes that jobs high in demands (i.e., workload) have harmful effects on mental and physical health. However, the effects of those demands are even greater when a job is simultaneously high in demands and low in control (e.g., autonomy). Karasek referred to this as a "high-strain job" because it is the most stressful. His theoretical approach has dominated job stress research for the last 30 years.

An extension to the job characteristics model was suggested by Gerald Salancik and Jeffrey Pfeffer in 1978. The social information processing perspective suggests that employees' perceptions of job characteristics are often influenced by social information provided by coworkers, managers, suppliers, customers, and even family members. Social information can include comments made during conversations, meetings, and observations. It is important to note that employees don't always respond in an accurate, reasonable manner when

asked about characteristics of their jobs. Rather, actual job characteristics and social information cues tend to interact to affect employees' perceptions of and reactions to their jobs.

At present, a popular job-design perspective is the concept of *psychological empowerment*. The concept of empowerment is defined as a psychological or motivational state in which a worker experiences more choice or self-determination, meaning, competence, and impact regarding his or her role in an organization. While job characteristics such as autonomy and feedback clearly influence psychological empowerment, the main focus is whether or not individuals perceive themselves as empowered. A worker's personality type, cues from coworkers or customers, and the work environment can affect these perceptions. Interestingly, empowerment draws from both the job characteristics model and social information processing. Individuals' assessments of self-determination, meaning, and so on are very similar to the critical psychological states in Hackman and Oldham's theory, but the state of empowerment can also be influenced by the actions and behaviors of other people in the organization. Empowerment allows employees more discretion to use their skills and knowledge to solve problems directly. Thus, in an organization that values learning and initiative, empowerment can have an impact on employee motivation, commitment, satisfaction, and performance.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF WORK

Since traditional job-design approaches were developed, there has been considerable change in the composition of the workforce as well as the way work is done in many organizations. For example, the majority of new employees will be older, more educated, women, non-Caucasian, and from ethnically diverse groups. Employees are no longer spending their entire careers with one or two organizations. Factors such as downsizing and a worker's need to be challenged mean that most employees expect to change jobs and organizations much more often. Another important change is a shift away from manufacturing and a move toward service- and knowledge-based work. Specifically, call centers have become increasingly common across a variety of industries worldwide, including telecommunications, retail, insurance, travel, mail order, and utilities. They tend to employ low-to-semiskilled workers who must

perform rather routine, stressful work under time constraints, with constant monitoring from supervision.

This has given rise to the *contingent* or *flexible workforce*. Many organizations no longer employ individuals on a full-time basis with a consistent working schedule. Instead, they employ workers on a part-time or temporary basis, and these individuals often work irregular hours. Another rapidly growing segment is referred to as the *knowledge worker*. Unlike the semiskilled jobs in customer-based call center work, the knowledge worker is a highly educated, high-level employee, who is often found performing analytical and technical work in information systems, new product development, or forecasting future business needs. Many of these employees don't work at the actual physical site of the organization; they work at home and telecommute or are part of a virtual team that assists core employees on various assignments and projects. The development of technology is a major factor in all of these movements. Work is no longer restricted by time or place. As a result, organizations can be much more flexible in their working arrangements.

Although many of the traditional approaches to job design should be applied to these new forms of work, clearly there is room for additional considerations. For example, telecommuters often have more autonomy and control, especially over the time and pacing of their work. However, there is also the potential for increased work-family conflict, particularly for women, when the demands at home interfere with getting work done. Many organizations value the knowledge that older workers possess and are redesigning jobs to include less physically demanding work—and more autonomy over how work is done and how frequently break periods occur. Without question, the introduction of technology has had a major impact on how organizations are structured. Traditional departments are disappearing; organizations are more integrated; and there is an increasing number of strategic partnerships among organizations. Furthermore, technology has helped to remove typical barriers and provide easy access to information and knowledge transfer.

Another consideration is that work designs should be expanded to include more professional occupations, such as doctors, lawyers, counselors, social workers, and some managerial positions. While these jobs contain characteristics similar to those already identified in work-design theory, they also contain

characteristics, such as emotional and ethical demands, that have received little attention in studies of job design.

To conclude, job design continues to be at the core of the work experience. Since work contexts are changing and becoming more diverse, companies are building on traditional forms of design and introducing new design options. The opportunity to create more flexible, fulfilling work in which employees can use a variety of skills and knowledge is considerable. The challenge to organizations is to maintain a motivated and committed workforce while achieving superior quality and performance.

—Marilyn L. Fox

See also Empowerment, Job challenge, Job rotation, Knowledge

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JOB FAIRS

Job fairs serve as one of the primary connections between employers and prospective job candidates. They provide an opportunity for both the employer and potential employee to diversify their search strategies. There are many types of job fairs, but all serve a dual purpose of enabling hiring organizations to meet and screen a large number of potential job or internship candidates and simultaneously providing job or internship seekers the opportunity to meet and screen a large number of employers. Job fairs occur throughout the year and remain a popular recruiting mechanism for employers regardless of economic conditions. Job fairs can be categorized broadly into six major types, including campus based, commercial entry level, commercial professional, commercial specialty, community based, and company specific. There are also virtual job fairs, which can accommodate any of these six major types.

The *campus-based job fair* is the most popular type for college students and is normally sponsored by the college or university's career center. Employers who attend are often familiar with the college or university, and they might use the job fair as their only campus visit, or they might use it as a promotional tool in advance of their on-campus recruiting programs. Students find the campus fair a convenient method for meeting with employers who are equipped to screen and interview the potentially large number of students attending. Campus job fairs also provide an easy method for students to practice meeting face-to-face with an employer. A recent trend among career-services professionals, especially at smaller educational

institutions within close proximity to one another, is to hold a consortium job fair at a central location as a means of efficiently deploying limited resources.

Commercial entry-level job fairs are run by independent contractors and are hosted in centralized locations throughout the country. These highly advertised events typically draw large numbers of students and other job seekers from a geographical radius of at least 300 miles. *Commercial professional job fairs* are intended to attract candidates with practical work experience to fill a wide range of professional occupations. *Commercial specialty fairs* are geared toward filling openings within specific occupational groups, such as computer programmers, technical/engineering, sales, or education. Oftentimes, job seekers use these fairs as a way to gather information for later direct contact with the prospective employer.

Community job fairs are hosted by a particular town, community, or broader region, with the intent of giving interested job seekers in a specific geographic area the opportunity to meet with employers who are recruiting in that labor market. *Company-specific job fairs* are a mechanism for any given business (or industry) to offer on-site recruitment as a means of assisting in securing appropriate human capital necessary for that organization's staffing needs.

Regardless of who is sponsoring the event, job fairs provide participants an opportunity for high-visibility, efficient information gathering, alternative resource-seeking strategies, and networking. For employers, it is a low-cost method for securing a pool of candidates whose résumés and other related materials can be maintained in the human resource database. Costs and fees for running a job fair are generally borne by the hosting party or the participating employing organization participants, although in some cases candidates must pay a fee to register. Facilities housing job fairs can vary in size and venue and can include locations such as university/college unions, hotel ballrooms or conference centers, convention or expo centers, company cafeterias, community centers, gymnasiums, entertainment complexes, or any other spacious facilities with appropriate utilities and infrastructure.

Various job-seeking strategies are used by employment candidates. For example, some use the process for "window-shopping" the participating employers to see what types of jobs or career paths are available. Some candidates use a structured approach by identifying and targeting a specific number of employers for interviews. Other candidates use such unsophisticated

methods as simply visiting with the participating company that has the shortest waiting line.

The individuals representing the employers at job fairs normally are not the hiring managers. Rather, hiring companies typically use recruiters or professional screeners to identify individuals who will be tapped for future consideration by the organization and to "screen out" individuals who do not fit the profile for their organizations. Usually, the prospective employer bases the decision concerning the next step for the candidate on a brief introduction and interview that could last anywhere from a few minutes up to 20 minutes.

Some job fairs also include workshops or seminars centered on various topics surrounding the job-search process. Sample topics of these related sessions might include the art of networking, interviewing skills and techniques, résumé development, creating a job-search plan, and approaches to researching an organization. These workshops are usually offered at set times during the job fair so that job candidates can attend particular sessions while also scheduling visits or interviews with specific companies. Typically, local consultants present the workshops as a way to showcase their skills, while at the same time offering a valuable service to fair participants.

—Elizabeth A. Giangliulio

See also Organizational staffing, Personnel selection, Realistic recruitment, Recruitment

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JOB INTERVIEWS

The *job interview* is one of the most popular selection techniques, and it is typically defined as an exchange

of information between interviewers and applicants. Interviewers are interested in determining whether an applicant has the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to do the job. They are looking for a *person-job fit*, the match between the person and the job. The applicant collects information about the organization, such as its values, culture, and policies. The interview can also be used to determine whether there is a *person-organization fit*, a good match between the personality and values of the candidate and the culture of the organization. A good fit should increase employee satisfaction, commitment, and longevity with the organization.

Job interviews can also be found as part of the recruitment or screening process. In these *initial interviews*, candidates are sought for their qualifications, and those with proper qualifications are then asked to apply for jobs. This initial interview serves as a screening process to weed out mismatches or applicants who do not have the critical knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the job. These initial interviews with an organization are generally unstructured. Initial interviews are also used to attract applicants to apply for jobs. Thus, they serve as a public relations tool for attracting applicants to the organization. These interviews can be important in providing a positive image of the organization and may be the deciding factor when applicants make choices among various organizations. Initial interviews can be held via remote video access, whereby interviewer and applicant see each other on a monitor or through the use of the computer. This latter form uses software that asks the applicant pertinent questions, and the responses are then sent to the organization to be scored and assessed. These interviews can offer a cost saving to the organization.

STRUCTURE OF THE INTERVIEW

Job interviews are typically distinguished by their structures. This means that interviews are classified as either unstructured or structured. *Structured interviews* are standardized and based on a job analysis. This means that all applicants receive the same planned questions. The questions are based on the required knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) necessary for the job. Also, many of the structured interviews contain a scoring key. This means that an applicant's response to an interview question can be compared with the answer key and then given a score

on a specific interview dimension or KSA. Structured interviews can be thought of as a test, since they can be reliably scored from the scoring key. Structured interviews have been found to have more validity in predicting future job performance than unstructured interviews. Overall, the structured interview has validity comparable to some of the best selection techniques.

There are two primary types of structured interviews, based on the kinds of questions that are asked: the *situational interview* and *behavior description interview*, or *behavioral interview*, and both have demonstrated high validity. The situational interview is based on the critical-incident technique. This is a job analysis technique in which incidents related to the job that distinguish between excellent and poor performance are used to develop hypothetical situations. When the applicant responds to these hypothetical situations, the response is supposed to indicate the applicant's future intentions. A scoring guide is developed for each question, and each question is associated with an interview dimension or KSA. The first step involves stating the hypothetical situation, such as the following: A customer comes into the store to pick up an item that was to be completed several days ago. The customer finds out that the item is still not repaired, and he becomes angry. The question is: How would you handle this situation? The best response is that you will try to calm the customer down and call the repair shop. A poor response is to tell the customer that it is not fixed and that he should contact you in a couple of days.

The behavioral description interview evaluates past behavior in job or job-related situations. In this case, the interview examines what has already happened, rather than what is intended or likely to happen in a future situation. The behavioral interview does not contain questions related to technical knowledge and skills. The questions are used to assess a range of abilities, such as interpersonal relations, conflict resolution, judgment, planning, and organization as well as other qualities, such as motivation, punctuality, and commitment. Probing questions are used after the initial question to find out exactly how the applicant behaved and what the consequences of that behavior were. Even when an applicant has not encountered the specific situation, probing questions may ascertain what the applicant has done in similar situations. A key provides a score for each quality that is assessed (e.g., judgment) rather than for each question that is asked.

INTERVIEW BIAS

Much of the interview research is related to the problems or biases associated with the unstructured or conversational interview. Since these traditional unstructured interviews are more likely to be unplanned conversations, they may not always focus on job-relevant factors. However, they are generally preferred by both the interviewer and the applicant. Many interviewers feel that the structured format is too limiting because they are unable to assess various aspects of the person. They believe that they can better evaluate the applicant if they can probe or challenge the applicant. Applicants, on the other hand, prefer the unstructured format because they feel they are able to give a better impression of themselves in a conversational format. Still, unstructured interviews are less valid and seem to provide poorer judgments based on factors that are not job relevant.

Evaluations of applicants tend to be biased favorably when the applicants are more physically attractive, are of normal weight, and are well groomed. Nonverbal behaviors also seem to influence the interviewer's decision. This includes the applicant's eye contact, smile, and general body posture. These behaviors are part of one's impression management and can alter the interview. Another bias is related to the weight given to information. More weight is given to negative than to positive information. For example, one negative attribute can result in a rejection even though the applicant displayed numerous positive behaviors. This is probably related to the idea that interviewers seem to be searching for reasons to reject rather than accept an applicant.

One of the major biases is called the *first-impression error*. Probably the two most important sources of this bias are information known about the applicant prior to the interview and the physical appearance of the applicant. Information prior to the interview includes résumés, references, test scores, work experience, and scholastic standing. Although some of this information is important in evaluating the applicant, the problem is that many interviewers use this information and the relative attractiveness of the applicant to register first impressions that are very subjective and sometimes not very accurate in predicting future job performance. Furthermore, the first impression will bias subsequent information so that information gleaned later in the interview could be ignored if it is inconsistent with the first impression. This is likely to

create inconsistencies among interviewers, as different interviewers are likely to place more importance on some types of information than on others. For example, if a particular interviewer believes that the applicant's handshake and attractiveness are important while another believes that the applicant's grade point average is important, there are likely to be different first impressions regarding the same applicant. It is also likely that the first impression will dictate how the interview will be conducted and will change the types of questions given to the applicant. That is, applicants who convey a favorable first impression are more likely to be given easier questions than those given to seemingly less favorable applicants. In this way, interviewers conduct the interview to confirm their first impressions.

Research also indicates that interviewers tend to like applicants who are more similar to themselves, especially those with similar interests, attitudes, and demographics. This is likely to have implications for interviewers who may discriminate against those who are not similar to them. Although research findings are not very clear about discrimination with regard to race, gender, age, and disability, some bias has been found, for example, against women applying for jobs that are traditionally male dominated.

DISCRIMINATION AND THE LAW

Interview questioning practices play an important role in discrimination cases. Although there are only a few questions that are prohibited by federal equal employment law, interviewers' inquiries related to age, sex, religion, marital status, nationality, and ethnicity that can be shown to discriminate can be a liability for the employer. There are questions regarding disability and specific health inquiries that are prohibited by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. There are also state fair employment practice laws that explicitly prohibit questions concerning the applicant's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

In most cases, the standard for discrimination in the interview is based on *disparate-treatment theory*. This means that the party discriminated against must show that he or she was treated differently than persons of the majority or another group and that the reason for the discrimination was group membership. To prove disparate treatment, the key element is whether an employer intended to discriminate. For example, if evidence were found that women were

asked different questions than were asked of men regarding employment, this would be evidence that the employer intended to discriminate.

MULTIPLE INTERVIEWERS

Although most interviews involve a single interviewer, there can be multiple interviewers. The most popular form is the *panel interview*. In most situations, the panel interview is similar to a structured interview; members of the panel ask the same questions to all the applicants. It is thought that having a panel of interviewers may enhance the reliability of the interview because the questions are usually very structured and job related. Furthermore, the use of multiple interviewers is more likely to reduce the impact of idiosyncratic biases described previously. It also means that the information recalled by the interviewers is likely to contribute to more accurate evaluations and predictions. Validity evidence indicates that panel interviews tend to be more valid than unstructured interviews but may not always be more valid than good structured interviews. The negative side to the panel interview is the cost of using multiple interviewers.

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

To better understand the process by which interviewers make decisions, it is important to describe Robert Dipboye's cognitive model of decision making. Interviewers rely on knowledge structures, which take the form of categories, stereotypes, and implicit personality theories that constitute the interviewer's beliefs about the requirements of the job and the characteristics of the applicants. In the preinterview phase, the interviewer uses information about the candidate and these knowledge structures to form initial impressions. Then, the interviewer is likely to compare these initial impressions with his or her stereotype of the ideal candidate. During the interview, the interviewer continues to evaluate and reevaluate the applicant based on the interviewer's knowledge structures and initial impressions of the applicant, and tends to seek information to confirm the initial impressions.

Interviewers also make attributions about the causes of the applicant's behavior during the interview. The interviewer may initially attribute an applicant's behavior to a trait (e.g., the applicant's anxiety or extraversion) or to a situational factor, such as the interviewer's conduct during the session. A large

amount of information is presented to the interviewer, and an interpretation of this information may be biased because it is based on his or her knowledge structures and initial impressions or on the way the interview was conducted, rather than on the applicant's qualities. Later in the interview, the interviewer uses all the information to make an evaluation of the applicant, and even at this stage, the interviewer's knowledge structures are used to assist in the evaluation, especially when the information regarding the applicant is not clear.

CONCLUSION

A number of suggestions could improve the interview and make it more reliable, valid, and legally defensible. First, much of the interview process should be structured and standardized. This likely means the use of job-related questions, more specifically the use of either situational or behavioral questions or both. Since these questions are derived from a job analysis, they are likely to be job related—and more valid and legally defensible.

Second, the interviewer should determine which knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics should be assessed during the interview. Much of the research has shown that interviewers try to assess too many characteristics. Thus, instead of using the interview as a general measurement device, only those characteristics measured accurately by the interview should be considered for evaluation. Furthermore, multiple questions should be asked concerning each characteristic. The characteristics that should be measured are sociability or interpersonal skills, verbal fluency or oral communication skills, dependability, conscientiousness, and other citizenship skills. Some job knowledge may also be assessed with an interview in those situations in which a test of job knowledge is difficult to develop. Moreover, as described previously in the context of the situational interview, interviews are not well suited to assessing technical skills.

Third, the responses to the questions should be formally scored. This can be done for each question or for each characteristic that is evaluated. Scoring systems are preferable in terms of reliability, validity, and legal defensibility. An interview guide can be used to assist in the scoring and for assistance in the questioning. Finally, it is suggested that the interviewers be trained in the proper procedures for conducting the interview, including techniques such as role-playing

exercises, practice in scoring, or instruction in pointing out decision errors and methods for overcoming them.

—Ronald J. Karren

See also Knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), Person-environment fit (P-E fit), Recruitment

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JOB INVOLVEMENT

Throughout the research literature of the past four decades, a number of different terms have been used to describe an employee's level of involvement in his or her job; among these are *work as a central life interest*, *occupational involvement*, *work role involvement*, *ego involvement*, *morale*, *job commitment*, and, of course, *job involvement*. Furthermore, in the discussion of the extreme ends of an individual's relationship (or lack of relationship) to his or her job and work, one may find discussions focusing on workaholism or alienation. This entry briefly reviews the historical, conceptual, and methodological issues related to job involvement and presents various profiles of the job-involved person. Finally, several suggestions are offered for further exploration of this concept.

CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

Thomas Lodahl and Mathilde Kejner introduced the construct of job involvement in their seminal article on the definition and measurement of job involvement. This work presented two conceptualizations of job involvement:

The extent to which an individual's self-esteem is affected by his or her level of job performance

The degree to which an individual identifies psychologically with his or her work, or the importance of work in an individual's total self-image

The researchers' belief that job involvement has two different aspects or dimensions (job performance/self-esteem connection and psychological identification with work) justified the presentation of both definitions in their article, which set the tone for decades' worth of criticism and research on this concept.

Samuel Rabinowitz and Douglas T. Hall offered perhaps the first systematic review of the job-involvement literature. Within this review, they observed that the literature continued to describe job involvement as the two different concepts presented in Lodahl and Kejner's pioneering work. This conceptual ambiguity (is job involvement the connection between job performance and self-esteem, is it one's psychological identification with work, or is it both?) likely contributed to research that presented three different theoretical perspectives on how job involvement develops: (1) as a stable characteristic of a person, (2) as a reaction to the work situation, or (3) as an interaction between the person and the situation.

Rabindra Kanungo's work identified a number of concerns raised by scholars (including himself) conducting research on job involvement. He noted that the precise meaning of job involvement lacked consensus among the researchers. This conceptual ambiguity started with the question of whether job involvement represents a psychological identification with work versus a connection between job performance and self-esteem. It continued with the confusion between job involvement and intrinsic motivation on the job; between viewing job involvement as a cognitive belief versus an affective, that is, emotional, state; and between seeing job involvement with reference to a generalized work context as opposed to one's specific job context. Kanungo's work ultimately led to a refinement in the way that

job involvement was measured, a topic described in the next section.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

In addition to introducing the concept of job involvement, Lodahl and Kejner presented both a 20-item and a 6-item short form of a job-involvement scale. The use of this scale or a variation of it has generated similar criticisms to those expressed regarding the conceptual issues discussed earlier. Kanungo evaluated the measure developed by Lodahl and Kejner, identified problems with it, and developed new scales designed to overcome his methodological concerns. For example, he noted that the words *work* and *job* were used rather loosely and interchangeably, thus leading to separate scale development for “job involvement” and “work involvement.” In addition, his scale clearly measured job involvement as a cognitive state of psychological identification with the job, while avoiding items tapping concepts outside of this definition as well as separating job involvement itself from other factors (e.g., job satisfaction) that either cause or result from job involvement. A quantitative review of the literature by Steven Brown in 1966 concluded that although there were a small number of substantive differences between the findings of studies using Lodahl and Kejner’s measure and Kanungo’s measure, the latter offered greater conceptual clarity and was preferable for future use.

PROFILE OF THE JOB-INVOLVED PERSON

A number of different profiles of the *job-involved person* have been presented in the literature. Based on their initial research on several samples, Lodahl and Kejner presented a hypothetical profile of a job-involved person as one who (a) is older; (b) is less considerate as a leader, with a preference for administrative or coordinating activities; (c) identifies with good supervisors and scores high on initiative and intelligence; (d) has more highly interdependent (team-type) jobs, while seeing a large number of people during the day; (e) expresses satisfaction with the work itself, promotional opportunities, supervisors, and coworkers; (f) feels his or her supervisor is technically proficient; (g) believes he or she has a good chance of getting two or more promotions; and (h) went to high school elsewhere than in the Eastern portion of the United States.

In the decade that followed, a considerable number of studies attempted to determine the factors that are correlated with job involvement. This led Rabinowitz and Hall to present a newer profile of the job-involved person as one who (a) is a believer in the Protestant work ethic; (b) is relatively old; (c) has an internal (versus external) locus of control; (d) has strong psychological growth needs (e.g., need for achievement); (e) has a stimulating, “enriched” job; (f) participates in decisions affecting him or her; (g) is satisfied with the job; (h) has a history of success; and (i) is less likely to leave the organization.

Some two decades passed before two additional studies applied more quantitative, meta-analytical techniques to the body of research conducted on job involvement and updated the profile of the job-involved person. In one such study, Brown concluded that the job-involved person displays the personal characteristics of a strong work ethic endorsement, a high level of internal motivation, and high self-esteem. In addition, the job characteristics and supervisory behaviors desired by the job-involved person (especially one with high growth needs) were meaningful, challenging, complex, and varied work (i.e., an enriched job) containing opportunities for participation in setting performance standards and a good relationship with an immediate supervisor who provided considerable feedback. The job-involved person is committed not only to the specific job but also to work in general, his or her career, and the organization itself. Turnover intentions are less likely to occur with the job-involved person. The job-involved individual is generally satisfied with the job situation, particularly the content of the work itself.

The other quantitative review of the literature by David Allen and Rodger Griffeth portrayed the job-involved person as being satisfied with the job in general and specifically with the work itself, promotions, the supervisor and the coworkers. The job-involved person also participates in work-related decisions, desires a job with autonomy and feedback, and is at a higher level in the organization. Finally, the job-involved person believes in the Protestant work ethic and is less likely to voluntarily quit the job.

CONCLUSION

The conceptual and methodological concerns expressed in the earlier stages of the research on job involvement appear to have lessened with the more

consistent use of the “psychological identification” definition and the Kanungo measure of job involvement. The profiles of the job-involved person do not reflect a significant relationship between job involvement and demographic variables but do continue to show, as Rabinowitz and Hall and Brown had indicated relationships between job involvement and personal/individual difference variables (e.g., work ethic endorsement); situational factors (e.g., enriching job characteristics); and correlates/outcomes (e.g., satisfaction with various job components, commitment on multiple levels, turnover intentions). Most recently, Aaron Cohen spoke of the need to integrate the study of multiple commitments (e.g., job involvement, work involvement, career commitment, and organizational commitment) rather than study any one of these variables without considering the larger picture. Further avenues of potentially interesting research might lie in understanding the distinctions between high levels of job involvement and the addictive (and negative) aspects of workaholism.

—Samuel Rabinowitz

See also Career as a calling, Career salience, Work ethic, Workaholism

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JOB LOSS

Outsourcing, offshoring, downsizing, rightsizing, and reorganizing: Every day, local and national headlines proclaim events that mean just one thing to workers—their jobs are at risk. *Job loss*, as discussed here, is the

involuntary removal of paid employment from an individual. Those who experience job loss are known by many different names: they are “laid off,” “redundant,” “dislocated,” or “displaced” workers. Regardless of the label, experiencing job loss is a stressful event, on par with the death of a spouse in terms of potential life impact. Moreover, not only does job loss affect individual workers, but its impacts also through relationships with spouses and children and into the communities affected by the precipitating events.

In the United States, as around the globe, a declining unemployment rate signals a recovering economy. The unemployment rate, the ratio between the number of people looking for work and total employment, underestimates the impact of job loss in two ways: First, only those actively looking for work are included in the computation. The unemployment rate does not include “discouraged” workers, those who have stopped looking for work because they think that their chances of success are slim. Second, the unemployment rate fails to account for the number of lost jobs that are offset by the creation of new jobs—jobs that tend to be lower-paying service jobs. Hence, while the overall economy experiences a net gain, people continue to experience displacement in an expanding economy. Such broad-scale trends of economic recovery thus mean little to the individual who has to bring home a pink slip instead of a paycheck. The ever-increasing competitive pressure within the global marketplace shows no sign of abating, suggesting that workers around the globe will continue to lose their jobs and face the challenge of looking for a new job. The risk of layoffs now extends to all sectors, affecting unskilled manufacturing workers and white-collar professional employees alike.

The remainder of this overview is organized around five sections: Section 1 includes an outline of the potential negative effects of job loss. Section 2 focuses on how displaced workers cope with losing their jobs, and Section 3 identifies some individual differences that may account for the differential impact of job loss by looking at the importance of identifying the “personal meaning” of job loss. Section 4 summarizes interventions targeted at getting employees back to work and minimizing the detrimental effects of job loss and identifies resources and benefits that may be available to unemployed workers. Section 5 looks briefly at issues related to downsizing. The entry ends with a conclusion and summary.

EFFECTS OF JOB LOSS

Financial

The most obvious and pervasive effect of job loss is the loss of income. Highly paid executives may have lucrative layoff packages that provide a financial cushion, but many displaced workers find themselves without adequate income to cover the necessities: rent or mortgage, utilities, food and clothing, transportation, health insurance, and the like. Financial resources—in the form of a monthly income, savings, retirement accounts, credit cards, and friends or family from whom to borrow money, for example—may provide a protective resource from the negative impacts of job loss. These resources vary in terms of accessibility, however, and a more important consideration seems to be the degree of financial strain or worry that the worker experiences. That is to say it is not just having or not having money available, but the perception of money problems that affects the displaced worker. Financial strain tends to become more severe over time. As unemployment duration extends, unemployment insurance benefits or severance packages run out, savings are spent, and reserves are depleted. Finally, those who experience acute financial stress are often more likely to take the first job they are offered, which may not be the best long-term strategy.

Career

There are also effects on the displaced worker's career. This section discusses the effects of job loss on employee wages and career trajectories, the subtle but important differences between reemployment and quality of reemployment and underemployment, and the importance of career stage in the impact of displacement.

First, economics research consistently demonstrates post-job loss wage reductions. Laid-off workers' salaries at their new jobs tend to be lower than in their previous positions. In declining or cyclical industries in which employees are likely to face repeated downsizings and layoffs, these wage reductions can significantly diminish an employee's lifetime earning potential. Along with salaries come other intangibles, such as position titles and prestige, leading to an additional impact on the employee's career trajectory coupled with the financial implications.

Traditional unemployment research focused on the outcome of finding a new job or reemployment.

Research is accumulating, however, that suggests that it is not just finding a job that is important but also the quality of the new job. The distinction thus is made between *reemployment* and *quality of reemployment*. Some workers may take jobs that pay less, that are at a lower level in the organization, that are less prestigious or are outside the employee's area of expertise and training, that require working during nontraditional hours or shift work, that are part time or of limited duration, or that do not require the use of the worker's full skill set. These workers rejoin the ranks of the employed, but their jobs are of low quality, leaving them dissatisfied with their *underemployment*. Such employees do not realize the psychological and practical benefits of employment that their fully employed counterparts experience, causing them to continue coping with the stresses of their displacement by continuing to look for another job or experiencing negative psychological states such as dissatisfaction, anxiety, and depression. Workers who experience acute financial stress are more likely to take the first job that is offered to them, regardless of quality, and thus are more at risk for the effects of underemployment.

The impact of a layoff differs according to the basis of the individual's career stage. For example, middle management often bears the major brunt in a downsizing event as the company seeks to flatten its organizational structure. These employees are likely to have been in their jobs or careers for several years, with significant investments in their professions and careers and correspondingly high salaries. These employees may also have company-specific skill sets that are not easily transferable to another company and command higher salaries. As a group, this set of employees also tends to be at midlife, with large mortgages and children either in the home or in college, and they may be at an age where they begin to experience subtle age discrimination (which is exceedingly difficult to prove). This combination of factors may explain the U-shaped relationship between psychological health and career stage that has been found in unemployment research, whereby workers at midcareer are "harder hit" by unemployment than those who are earlier or later in their careers. Although early-career employees face an additional burden of establishing their career and professional identities, they are also less likely to have significant financial obligations and thus have greater flexibility. For example, this group is less likely to have constraints on relocation.

At the other end of the spectrum, those who are near retirement may also have additional options, such as taking an early retirement or voluntary severance package. Of course, these broad trends do not apply to every individual within the classification, but they do provide insight into the differing effects of displacement at various life and career stages.

Psychological and Physical Health

Job loss also takes a toll on a person's sense of well-being, affecting both psychological and physical health. Compared with fully employed workers, displaced workers experience anxiety, depression, distress, emotional withdrawal, and illness or health complaints, as well as reduced self-esteem, satisfaction with life, and physical health. Job loss has also been linked to high-risk health behavior, such as smoking and substance abuse. Some workers exhibit a grieflike response to unemployment, shame from being out of work, or threatened identity following job loss. When workers are subjected to repeated layoffs, the stress appears to accumulate, rather than building a protective effect or resiliency for facing future layoffs. Despite the well-documented differences in mental health and unemployment, some controversy remains over the causal direction between unemployment and reduced well-being. That is to say, does unemployment cause poor psychological health (the social causation effect), or are those with poor health more likely to experience displacement (a social selection effect)? Evidence exists for both explanations, so the jury is still out on this question. Population studies have linked higher unemployment rates to increased mental health hospital admissions and suicide rates.

Spouse, Family, and Social Networks

The person who has lost a job is not the only one in a household affected by the layoff. Family members also bear the brunt. For example, a working spouse or partner may buffer the financial burden of job loss because a steady income continues to come into the household. However, this shift in financial responsibility may play out in unanticipated changes in the power structure or in domestic responsibilities within the household. As couples adjust to restructured roles, other detrimental effects of job loss can include domestic violence, partner depression and

physical health symptoms, children's problems at school, reduced relationship quality and satisfaction, and even divorce. The social support provided by a close family or a network of friends can provide an important resource on which to draw when faced with displacement. Unfortunately, those same families and friends may "undermine" displaced workers or place undue pressure on them to find new jobs. Social networks may also shrink following job loss, leading to less contact with others.

In sum, the negative outcomes associated with job loss are pervasive and well documented. These outcomes range from the obvious loss of income, to the psychological well-being and physical health, to the relationships within families and into the community. The next section looks at how displaced workers cope with unemployment.

COPING WITH JOB LOSS

One way to examine the effects of job loss is to examine it as a stressful event with which the displaced worker must cope. The coping process begins with a perception or an appraisal that the situation requires more resources than the individual has available. Some workers possess coping resources such as an optimistic outlook, a supportive spouse, or financial reserves that make them less likely to form a strong negative appraisal to displacement, while others' lack of resources puts them more at risk. Those who fall into this latter category are more likely to appraise displacement as a harm (damage has already been done) or a threat (damage is likely to occur) rather than as a challenge (which can be used for good). Once the appraisal has been made, efforts to cope begin.

Displaced workers must deal with the fact that they are now unemployed and with the accompanying psychological and emotional responses to being without work. Research on coping with job loss focuses simultaneously on attempts to manage both components, typically by examining the dimensions of problem-focused or control-focused coping directed at rectifying the source of the problem, in this case unemployment, and emotion-focused, symptom-focused, or escape-focused coping aimed at managing the emotional response to the stressor. *Problem-focused coping* entails efforts to alter the source of the problem, such as enrolling in a retraining program, relocating somewhere with greater employment opportunities, or cognitive reappraisal to change one's thinking about being

unemployed. It also includes job search. *Emotion-focused coping* encompasses thoughts and behaviors focused on decreasing the isolation or hardship from being unemployed and making oneself feel better, including activities such as seeking support from one's social network and getting involved in community activism to create more awareness and services for unemployed workers, as well as escape-oriented strategies such as devaluing the importance of holding a job or distancing oneself from job loss.

An active job search is a critical factor in becoming reemployed following displacement, and thus looking for a job is the most obvious form of coping with job loss. Job search behavior includes activities such as preparing a résumé, filling out job applications, reading the want ads or searching online job postings, visiting a career counselor, and participating in mock interviews. Those with high self-esteem, an internal locus of control, high job-search self-efficacy and greater financial need, employment commitment, and social support are more likely to engage in job-search behaviors; and a significant relationship exists between job search and reemployment. Job-search intention and job-search behavior appear to be important intervening variables between individual differences and attitudes (as antecedents) and reemployment (as an outcome).

There is a somewhat counterintuitive negative relationship between job search and well-being, given the strong relationship between job search and employment. Looking for a job is a stressful process, often filled with rejection that can lead to self-doubt and frustration. Indeed, job search takes a greater toll on well-being for the most motivated and engaged searchers, leading some to experience job-search burnout and others to become discouraged and stop looking. There is also some evidence that looking for a job too soon is detrimental to the displaced worker, highlighting the need to examine a broader range of behaviors for coping with job loss.

THE PERSONAL MEANING OF JOB LOSS TO THE INDIVIDUAL

Unemployment research has typically focused on identifying broad trends related to how displaced workers react to unemployment. As summarized in the previous section, there are a variety of ways to cope with job loss, and no two displaced workers react identically to job loss. For example, as mentioned previously, research indicates that workers who lose their

jobs at midlife tend to be impacted more negatively than those just beginning their careers or nearing retirement. Several alternative scenarios provide potential explanations for this trend. Perhaps the impact comes from the financial implications of job loss: As mentioned previously, workers at midlife are more likely to have children in the home or attending college, with large mortgage payments and high living expenses. As such, they may have larger expenses than new entrants and fewer investments and savings than those near the end of their careers. Alternatively, it could be that the impact of unemployment stems from strongly identifying one's sense of personal identity with one's occupation or career. The worker may not be able to secure a new job that is similar to the one he or she lost in terms of prestige, level in the organization, or salary and compensation. Thus, the layoff may be seen as a "slip" down the corporate ladder. Another plausible explanation centers on the development of company-specific skills that are not transferable. Midcareer workers, given their likelihood of having longer tenure with a company, may have skill sets that are not marketable to other companies or across industries. Moreover, losing one's job at midlife could impact the family and the roles within the family. Perhaps the displaced worker was the primary wage earner, and his or her job loss means that the other spouse must return to the workforce. This change could send shockwaves through the family as new daily routines emerge, household responsibilities shift, and interpersonal dynamics adjust.

Any one of these scenarios could alternatively explain the relatively stronger impact of displacement on midcareer employees, or it could be that these issues accumulate in an additive or multiplicative way. Research to date has been unable to test complex models that would be suggested here, but recent attention focuses on explaining the variation within groups of unemployed workers. More research is needed to develop more complex and highly individual models that account for this variability of dislocated workers' responses to unemployment.

INTERVENTIONS AND RESOURCES FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

Job Loss Interventions

Job loss interventions typically focus on (a) facilitating reemployment, (b) diminishing the negative emotional and psychological effects of displacement, or (c) both.

These programs include components such as providing resources (e.g., help writing résumés, computers to type résumés and for e-mail access), enhancing job-search skills, aiding participants in identifying their own transferable skills and setting job-search goals, having realistic job-search expectations, improving the self-efficacy and motivation of job seekers, and providing a social support network of career counselors or trainers as well as other displaced workers who empathize with the job seeker. Participants typically experience positive outcomes from these interventions, including higher rates of reemployment, higher salaries, shorter unemployment duration, and better psychological well-being. Finally, interventions tend to disproportionately benefit those who are most at risk for the negative outcomes of job loss, such as those with low self-efficacy or high levels of depression, suggesting that interventions should be specifically targeted to at-risk groups of displaced workers to maximize effectiveness.

Resources for the Unemployed

Severance packages and unemployment insurance or unemployment compensation are designed to provide replacement income for a short time while the displaced worker seeks replacement employment. Benefits vary by country and state, and not all workers are eligible to receive assistance. Those who receive unemployment benefits may also be eligible for additional resources, such as retraining and wage subsidies if the layoff was certified for Trade Adjustment Assistance because jobs were lost due to import competition or to offshoring, for example.

Higher-level and professional employees are also likely to have access to outplacement services. Outplacement programs serve to help displaced workers regain a sense of well-being, plan for their careers and the future, and find new jobs. These programs vary in their comprehensiveness and support and include resources such as help writing résumés, training modules, career counseling, networking, negotiating job offers, and the like. Outplacement programs are not used by all to whom they are available, suggesting that this avenue should be added to coping-strategy research.

DOWNSIZING AND REORGANIZING

The detrimental effects of downsizing are not limited to laid-off workers. Those who manage to keep

their jobs face increased workloads and responsibilities, compounded by the uncertainty and fear that surround layoffs and guilt that they kept their jobs while friends and colleagues were let go. This combination of factors causes some remaining workers to exhibit symptoms of “survivor syndrome” or “survivor sickness.” Among other detrimental outcomes, survivors may have low levels of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and trust in management, along with high levels of stress, hostility, and intention to quit.

A great deal of prescriptive advice is available for those required to implement layoffs in their companies due to downsizing or reorganization. In general, following this advice provides benefits to both those who are laid off from the organization and the survivors who remain employed with the company. Recommendations to managers include ensuring a procedurally fair and transparent process; providing timely, complete, and accurate information; giving advance notice when possible; and making resources available to deal with the practical and psychological issues brought about by the event, such as providing survivors opportunities to air their concerns in a safe environment and supplying displaced workers with severance packages and outplacement services. Additional resources to dislocated workers may be available through governmental services provided under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notice (WARN) Act or through Trade Adjustment Assistance, but the services and eligible populations vary by state, industry, and the cause of the downsizing event.

CONCLUSION

Millions of workers face involuntary job loss every year in the United States and around the globe. These workers are laid off, downsized, rightsized, reengineered, dislocated, or redundant. The negative effects of job loss and unemployment are pervasive and well documented and intensify over time as unemployment persists. Beyond the immediate economic impact of the loss of income, displaced workers also potentially experience detrimental career effects, such as lower wages or underemployment, or employment in a job that does not utilize all of the individual’s education, skills, and experience. Psychological troubles such as anxiety, depression, reduced self-esteem, and threatened identity may also manifest following displacement, along with physiological symptoms such as trouble sleeping, substance abuse, weight gain or loss, headaches, or other illness.

Job loss also affects the spouse, family, and community of the dislocated worker.

Given the potential life disruption from job loss, displacement has been identified as one of the most stressful life events an individual can face. The process of coping with job loss begins with the individual's perception or appraisal of the event. This entails taking mental stock of one's resources in relation to the demands of the situation. Those who possess coping resources such as a healthy self-concept, a supportive spouse, and financial resources are less likely to perceive job loss in harmful or threatening terms and thus tend to fare better than those who lack resources. Displaced workers face two sets of issues with their unemployment: the lack of a job and the emotions and psychological reactions that goes along with it. Coping with job loss includes both problem-focused coping, such as looking for a job or relocating, and emotion-focused coping, such as seeking social support or distancing oneself from unemployment. Both strategies can be helpful at different times following job loss, and the coping process changes over time. A counterintuitive relationship exists between job search and well-being, on the one hand, and reemployment, on the other. The process of looking for a job is stressful and full of rejection, resulting in a negative relationship between searching and well-being. At the same time, research consistently shows a positive link between engaging in active job search and reemployment. These seemingly incongruous results highlight the importance of simultaneously examining the dual outcomes of (a) personal well-being and the quality of reemployment and (b) testing complex models that account for individual variability in response to job loss and unemployment.

Interventions designed to diminish the detrimental effects of job loss have shown promise, particularly when used in at-risk populations such as those who lack coping resources. These interventions typically focus on speeding reemployment or managing the psychological effects of displacement. Unemployment insurance and severance packages provide a financial cushion following job loss. Companies can also provide outplacement services for dislocated workers as an additional resource. Organizations conducting layoffs must also be mindful of the effects of a layoff on the employees remaining with the company and guard against survivor sickness. In general, clear, effective, and open communication and implementing a fair, transparent process are important components of ensuring effectiveness in the postdownsizing organization.

In conclusion, the current competitive environment suggests that employees and companies alike need to prepare and plan for the potential of employee displacement. Employees are advised to focus on their employability and maintaining a current portfolio of transferable skills.

—Frances M. McKee-Ryan

See also Careers and health, Stress at work, Underemployment, Unemployment

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JOB-POSTING PROGRAMS

Organizational initiatives focused on supporting employees' careers, also referred to as "organizationally supported career management practices," are geared toward career planning and development. Using *job-posting programs*, organizations can play a critical role in their employees' career-development efforts by providing accurate and updated information about promotion and growth opportunities within the organization. Organizations can proactively focus on their employees' careers by using job-posting programs and, in some cases, by selectively making these programs available to specific individuals.

Job-posting programs serve as an information service in assisting organizational employees in career-development endeavors and in generating a pool of internal candidates. Job-posting programs were initiated in the early stages of affirmative action, when organizations began publicizing available jobs internally. These programs offered organizations the possibility of providing equal opportunities for women and minorities to compete for existing job openings and were viewed as measures for circumventing the traditional "old-boy" networks existing in organizations.

Organizations can post job openings on bulletin boards, in organizational newsletters, through recorded phone messages, by e-mail messages, or, increasingly, using organizational intranets. Job openings are published, and interested employees are expected to respond within a stipulated time period. Some job postings apply to specific organizational locations or offices, whereas other postings are organizationwide openings applicable to multiple locations or offices. Increasingly in a virtual world, organizations are connecting their intranets to external job-search engines to cast a wider net for their job-posting programs.

CHARACTERISTICS OF WELL-CONSTRUCTED JOB-POSTING PROGRAMS

A well-constructed job posting, critical to the success of the program, should delineate the competencies required for the position, information about compensation, performance standards, the supervisory structure, the work schedule, and the job-selection criteria. If possible, a well-constructed job posting is framed within the larger context of the organizational goals and objectives, enabling employees to determine whether they are qualified for the position and to assess the "fit" between their goals and the organization's goals. Sometimes employees are skeptical about whether the recruitment efforts resulting from the job posting are political processes or genuine searches for the best internal candidates. When a posting clarifies how the open position will be filled and what the job selection criteria are, it is likely to alleviate employees' apprehension concerning the credibility of the recruitment process.

In addition to its comprehensiveness, the success of well-constructed job postings is determined by its scope or reach. No matter how the job-related information is disseminated, it is important for information in any job-posting program to be available to all employees who are eligible for the position. Some unions require that job postings reach their members first for any new positions opening up within the organization. Job postings are an excellent idea even for nonunionized organizations, as they assist organizations in employees' career development by transferring and/or promoting suitable internal candidates to appropriate positions.

OUTCOMES OF JOB-POSTING PROGRAMS

Well-designed job-posting programs are a tremendous asset to organizations as they reinforce the notion that the organization promotes from within and is focused on developing employees' careers. This notion enhances employee retention and boosts employee morale because it signals to the employees that they do not need to go elsewhere to find opportunities for career development. Posting jobs also creates an open-recruitment process, which helps give all employees equal opportunity for advancement and helps in recruiting for jobs from a pool of existing employees with proven track records.

Job-posting programs are also advantageous with reference to employees' career development, as astute

employees observing postings over time soon learn a great deal about their organizations. They realize that following job postings yields information about turnover rates in different departments and information about skills and competencies in high demand within their organizations. Equipped with these data, employees are likely to be able to better shape their careers by getting additional and relevant training and/or experience to advance their careers.

Not all job-posting programs' outcomes are positive, however, as mismanaged programs are likely to have more detrimental effects. A critical threat plaguing internal recruitment from job-posting programs originates from supervisors' or managers' reluctance to allow their employees to be interviewed for potential promotions and/or transfers. This reluctance stems from the fact that supervisors and managers have invested tremendous resources in training their employees for their current positions. When trained employees apply for other positions, their supervisors/managers are encumbered with the predicament of selecting and training new employees to replace their existing employees. To assist and prompt supervisors/managers to overcome this reluctance, organizational policies allowing and encouraging employees to seriously contemplate internal job opportunities must have top-management support. Job-posting programs that have not overcome this managerial reluctance are likely to result in political selection decisions and distrust in the employees applying for internal jobs.

Job-posting programs may also be vulnerable as some employees, to gain a better job title or salary, try to outsmart the organizational system by transferring to new positions that do not necessitate any varied or incremental skills beyond what their current jobs require. This temptation may be counterbalanced by organizations establishing consistent compensation structures and policies across varying jobs and in different locations. Job-posting programs can also be expensive in terms of additional administrative costs unless organizations have rules and policies about applying for jobs posted. For example, some organizations do not accept applications from employees who have been in the organization for less than a year and/or in their current positions for less than six months. Finally, the outcomes of job-posting programs are critically dependent on the postselection follow-up and feedback process in place. Unless organizations provide employees with honest, precise, and factual

feedback about their applicant screening and selection, unselected employees may feel slighted and distrust the organization in the future. In summary, well-constructed job-posting programs enhance employees' careers and organizations' abilities to retain good employees.

—Yasmin S. Purohit

See also Internal labor market, Recruitment

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JOB ROTATION

In recent times, a number of fundamental changes have taken place in production technologies, the nature of physical and human capital, and ideas about how to organize firms. The precise nature of the reorganization process naturally varies from firm to firm, but the evidence is now sufficiently clear to recognize some prominent features of ongoing reorganizations. These include an increased role for *job rotation* and *teamwork*, a reduction in the number of management levels, continuous learning and the development of complementary skills, decentralization of responsibility within firms, and direct participation of employees in decision making on multiple fronts. It appears that the various features of this process have a common thread: emphasis on learning multiple tasks, the blurring of occupational barriers, and the use of experience gained at one task to enhance performance at another.

A number of interrelated forces have driven these changes. One of these forces is the introduction of

computerized information and communication systems. This has provided employees with greater access to information about other employees' work within the organization and made it easier to communicate with others. Teamwork and job rotation have become important ways to respond to customers' changing needs.

A second force is the introduction of flexible machine tools and programmable equipment. This has made the capital stock more versatile, capable of performing a wide variety of tasks. A third force has been the steady growth of human capital per worker. This has been generated by education systems, vocational training programs, and on-the-job training.

As workers have acquired better general education and a wider variety of skills, they have come to prefer jobs that permit the exercise of diverse skills. More and more employees have come to resent the monotonous fragmented jobs of traditional organizations and prefer more varied, multifaceted work. Greater emphasis is now placed on continuous learning and skill development, all-round knowledge, the potential to acquire multiple skills, and the ability to learn how the experience gained from one skill enhances another skill. Multitasking, job rotation, and the blurring of occupational barriers are not the only consequences of the ongoing reorganization of work. Of particular note is the expansion of the scope for learning and the returns from it in the new organizational environment.

One definition of *job rotation* suggests that it is a systematic movement of employees from job to job or project to project within an organization, as a way to achieve certain human resource objectives, such as employee orientation, retention, training, and preventing burnout. Traditionally, job rotations move people between distinct business units in order for them to explore a wider range of experiences. For example, a technical engineer who moves to a business position, can get a better sense of a customer's need. By being situated in the actual work environment, job-rotation programs increase the employee's interest in learning. In addition, employees who have worked with so many diverse people through a job-rotation program about may become more flexible and agile in their job assignments.

Some argue that the job-rotation process is better framed in the context of organizational learning. The multiplication of economic networks worldwide assures the individual that many paths for testing and accumulating new learning can be pursued simultaneously. The greater the number of paths and the more

sharing of knowledge, the more progress worldwide. It has also been noticed that on-the-job learning is much more effective than traditional instructor-based learning. Companies need to be aware that people have different ways of learning. Some learn by doing, some by seeing, and some by hearing. As many companies transition from products to services to outcomes, learning is at the heart of a successful transition. Employees who internalize effective practices in the workplace will lead the business to productivity and profit and gain satisfaction.

When people move between geographic regions or countries, they obtain an increased understanding of different cultures and business strategies. From the beginning, however, the organization needs to recognize that the rotation process generally creates more generalists than specialists.

A close look at the global economy indicates that success is based on the ability to understand and utilize loosely connected economic and social processes. The dynamic of economic progress in the new economy is based on learning. Innovation is at the heart of this process. It accounts for the bulk of improvements in productivity, and quality is at the heart of the flexibility that allows for variety, customization, convenience, and speed. Agile, multitasking individuals are needed to serve on cross-functional teams to direct this process. Some hold the opinion that increased wage dispersion is a result of technological change, education, and training. It seems, however, that in countries in which real wages respond flexibly to changes in labor demands and supplies, the move from job specificity to a more holistic view of work may lead to a widening of the wage dispersion within groups that vary by job education, occupation, and job tenure.

Job rotation is a mechanism that makes it possible for the firm to observe employees in action in different positions and thus learn which job is the best fit for each employee. This implies that human capital theory is at least partly job specific. It could be argued that only through job rotation can the firm get the information necessary to create the most efficient job assignments. The organization must make sure its skill needs correspond to those likely to be learned through job rotation.

The advantage of a rotation policy over a job-specialization policy increases when there is some uncertainty regarding employees and the activities in which they are or may be engaged. On a micro level, it is better for a firm to rotate new employees among

different jobs, because the firm can find out how well suited different persons are to different activities. On a macro level, it is more profitable for an innovative firm to rotate employees because this will induce more innovative learning among employees. In this view, job rotation helps a firm focus on improvement and on the future, rather than looking at the past and placing blame. Since individuals who rotate jobs associate in new work groups, job rotation may promote team-based management.

Learning provided by the organization helps the team members achieve at the level sought by management. Teams carry the responsibility, authority, and accountability for the performance of their members. Teams can then create, acquire, and transfer new knowledge. Today, much employee training has been transferred to electronic learning, or *e-learning*. Companies today that rely on e-learning enhance the opportunity for employees to interact through chat rooms and with mentors. In this model, teams become the “resource persons,” and clerical, production, and service employees develop a sense of self-worth, ownership, and satisfaction in their work. This employee development is considered the heart of organizational development.

—Normandie Gaitley

See also Learning organization, Team-based work

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JOB SATISFACTION

Job satisfaction (JS) is one of the most widely discussed and studied dimensions of employees’ work lives, with research dating back to the dawn of the twentieth century. Early definitions conceived of JS as a global affective or emotional reaction to one’s job.

More recently, JS has been defined as comprising two distinct yet related components: an individual’s *affective* orientation toward the job (e.g., I enjoy my job; I look forward to going to work each day) and an individual’s *cognitive* evaluation of the job and how well it meets personal needs (e.g., I think that I am adequately compensated for the work I do; this job provides me with the recognition I deserve). A large number of job facets (or dimensions) have been identified as underlying these cognitive evaluations, including social aspects of the job (e.g., appreciation or recognition by the supervisor or organization); compensation and benefits; working conditions (e.g., safety); and opportunities for personal growth (e.g., promotion). Thus, many measures of JS ask specifically about these various facets.

The relevance of JS attitudes to career-development issues lies in the fact that JS is an important (arguably the most important) outcome for assessing the effectiveness of career-development activities and decisions. That is, the ultimate goal of most career-development activities is to ensure that individuals end up in careers and jobs that they find maximally satisfying. Thus, it is important to understand how JS is measured, the determinants of JS (both individual and situational), and outcomes typically associated with higher levels of JS. Each topic is reviewed in the following sections.

MEASURING JOB SATISFACTION

There are a number of different scales and techniques available for measuring one’s level of JS. Most involve eliciting responses on a self-report questionnaire or in an interview (with the former being much more common). For example, to understand how satisfied individuals are with their jobs or with a particular aspect of their jobs (e.g., benefits), employers can ask them to complete a survey (or participate in an interview) that directly asks them the extent of their satisfaction. These scales have a number of benefits, including high reliability (i.e., consistency of responses across time and different items); face validity (i.e., they appear to measure what they are measuring, which is important for employees’ willingness to complete such measures); and practicality (i.e., questionnaires are relatively quick to complete and inexpensive to create or obtain). Limitations to this assessment method include variability in individuals’ motivation to report how they truly feel and think and their ability to accurately describe what they are feeling or thinking.

The various scales designed to measure JS can be sorted according to the following distinctions: (a) verbal versus pictorial, (b) global versus facets, and (c) cognitive versus affective (or a combination of both). With regard to the first distinction, the vast majority of JS scales ask participants to respond to a series of items on a Likert-type scale, usually ranging from *very dissatisfied* to *very satisfied* (or *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*). However, the Faces Scale forgoes this verbal response system in favor of a series of faces depicting varying levels of satisfaction. Employees are then asked to choose the face that most closely reflects how they feel about their jobs. In general, the Faces Scale has been shown to be as good a measure of JS as scales that rely on Likert-type response formats.

Regarding the second distinction among JS scales, global (or general) measures of JS are characterized by their relatively small number of items (sometimes as few as one item) and their avoidance of asking about specific aspects of a job. Usually, global measures of JS include items such as “Overall, I am satisfied with my job” or “In general, I enjoy working here.” These types of scales offer a number of advantages, including their relative practicality (it may take only a minute or two to complete the measure) and strong relationships with multidimensional JS scales (i.e., those including several facets). JS scales that assess multiple facets of an individual’s JS are commonplace and vary widely in their length and the number of distinct facets assessed. These JS measures offer the advantage of greater specificity in the assessment of JS, which can be useful for gaining a greater understanding of employees’ satisfaction regarding specific aspects of their jobs. For example, although an employee may be generally satisfied with a job, examination of facet-level JS may reveal that he or she is dissatisfied with the supervisor, a situation that could potentially lead to performance problems or even result in the employee’s leaving the organization. Thus, both global and facet measures of JS have unique advantages and limitations that should be balanced with the purpose(s) for collecting the JS information.

The third distinction among JS scales involves that between cognitive and affective components of JS (previously defined). The vast majority of extant JS measures are more cognitive in nature, asking employees what they *think* about various facets of their jobs. However, a few JS measures are more affective in nature, asking employees how they *feel* about their jobs. Although these two types of measures

do not tend to differ much in terms of their reliability or validity (i.e., their relations with other variables), recent JS research building on basic attitude theory has demonstrated the importance of measuring and considering both components of JS. That is, job incumbents have been shown to have distinct affective and cognitive perceptions of JS that may be quite different. For example, individuals may cognitively understand that for the work done, they are well compensated, yet at the same time not like the type of work they are doing (thus, a cognitively focused measure of JS might show them to be satisfied, whereas an affectively oriented measure might show the opposite). In addition, it is known that when cognitive and affective components of attitudes align, they are much more useful as indicators of subsequent behavior and attitudes (and this has recently been shown in the JS research specifically).

More recently, there have been some “new directions” in JS attitude measurement, using some techniques that are qualitatively different from verbal reports on JS scales. The first involves a more “interpretive” approach, an emphasis on employees’ reports of their JS and its important components (using the employees’ language) rather than reliance on predetermined facets of JS (using the researcher’s language). This approach involves asking employees to write unstructured accounts of satisfying and dissatisfying job experiences, and research using this approach has found that the language employees use to describe such experiences largely converges with the facets reflected in the more traditional JS scales.

Second, an interesting new methodology has developed that can be used for measuring employees’ job satisfaction, particularly its affective component. This methodology, referred to alternatively as *experience sampling methods* or *ecological momentary assessment*, allows researchers to capture momentary behaviors and psychological states in context and then track those behaviors and states over time. For example, an employee whose job satisfaction would be measured in this way would most likely receive a personal digital assistant (PDA) to carry for several days or weeks. This employee would be periodically cued throughout the day from the PDA and asked to report on his or her affective state. This very new approach to measuring JS has the advantage of being able to assess JS at a very detailed level and in “real time,” allowing for examination of changes in JS over time.

DETERMINANTS OF JOB SATISFACTION

Given that JS is believed to be an important outcome of career-related actions, it is particularly relevant to review what factors contribute to an individual's level of JS. These factors can be grouped into three categories: the individual, characteristics of the job and organization, and the intersection of the two.

Individual Determinants

Although it may seem intuitive that JS is primarily a function of the job, there are, in fact, a number of characteristics of individuals that, independent of the jobs they hold, will influence their general levels of JS. Among these factors are relatively stable personality traits, such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, and positive/negative affectivity, with research suggesting that people with greater self-esteem, greater self-efficacy, greater positive affectivity, and lower negative affectivity tend to report higher levels of JS. Investigation of the relationship between JS and personality traits has also focused on the five-factor model of personality, which comprises five traits: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. Of these five traits, Neuroticism has the strongest relationship. Perhaps not surprisingly, this relationship shows that the more neurotic individuals are, the less likely they are to be satisfied with their jobs; thus, this is characterized as a *negative* relationship. Extraversion and Conscientiousness, on the other hand, are both related *positively* to JS; more extraverted and more conscientious employees tend to report higher JS.

From this evidence, it is clear that individuals' perceptions of JS are reflective of not only their jobs but also who they are as people. In fact, levels of JS may even have a genetic component to them. Specifically, research based on identical twins shows that up to 30 percent of JS may be heritable, and identical twins reared apart have been shown to have very similar levels of JS as adults, even though they may hold very different jobs. In essence, research on the individual determinants of JS suggests that some people are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs regardless of their actual employment conditions (and therefore, across the career span). This is not to say, however, that employment conditions do not play any role at all, and those effects are reviewed next.

Situational Determinants

The examination of the effects of job characteristics on JS perceptions is, historically, perhaps the most studied aspect of JS. At the core of this idea is the belief that different working conditions will cause individuals to feel motivated and satisfied with their work or unmotivated and dissatisfied. Support for the doctrines of empowering workers, redesigning jobs, and building variety into task work arose from the assumption that employees would not be satisfied if they felt they were in boring and highly repetitive jobs. Decades of research in this area have reported mixed findings. In general, improving job characteristics such as autonomy, feedback, and skill variety does result in increased levels of JS. However, these relationships depend in large part on the personality of the individual employee, with some employees enjoying added flexibility and responsibility and others disliking it. This dependence on the characteristics of the individual employee brings us to perhaps the most recently and widely agreed-upon important determinant of JS: *fit*.

Fit Determinants

Fit between an individual and the employment situation can be conceptualized at both the job level, *person-job (P-J) fit*, and organizational level, *person-environmental (P-E)* or *person-organizational (P-O) fit*. Fit can be assessed in terms of demographic, personality, or values characteristics, and, in general, it is believed that persons who fit with the job and organization should experience more positive work outcomes, including higher levels of JS. For example, a highly competitive employee should be more satisfied in (a) a job that requires little cooperation and much intergroup competition and (b) an organization characterized by a highly competitive culture that rewards individual performance and tends to attract other competitive individuals. In general, research has supported these predictions regarding the important role of fit in determining JS.

OUTCOMES OF JOB SATISFACTION

Over the course of nearly 100 years of research, JS has been linked to a number of important workplace outcomes, including job performance, withdrawal behaviors, burnout, and health.

Job Performance

Intuitively, the relationship between JS and job performance makes sense (that is, a happy worker should be a productive worker). However, the majority of research has not borne out this relationship, with studies generally finding only weak to moderate relations between JS and job performance. These findings are being continually revisited, however, with claims that (a) the older reviews of this relationship have been misinterpreted and (b) either JS or job performance has been conceptualized and/or measured in ways that do not expose this relationship. For example, recent research has shown that when JS attitudes are “strong” (i.e., an alignment between the cognitive and affective components), the relationship between JS and job performance increases significantly. Findings such as these, as well as the continued expansion of the definition of job performance to include contextual performance and organizational citizenship behaviors (i.e., employees going above and beyond the call of duty) have led to a renewed interest in understanding the role of JS in determining job performance.

In addition, it appears that the relationship between JS and job performance or career success may change somewhat over the course of an individual’s career. Careers are often identified using a three-stage approach: establishment, maintenance, and decline. During the *establishment stage*, there is little relationship between JS and job success, as JS can change as a person explores his or her career options (likewise, career success is generally low, but rises as the person finds the career in which they will remain). In the *maintenance stage*, JS and career success begin to align more closely, and both reach career high points. The *decline stage* is also marked with high consistency between JS and career success, with both levels slowly declining until retirement.

Employee Withdrawal

Withdrawal attitudes and behaviors such as commitment, absenteeism, intention to quit, and turnover have long been linked both empirically and theoretically to JS. The rationale behind these relationships is the commonsense notion that if you are dissatisfied with your job, you will (a) be less committed to your organization, (b) seek to avoid your job whenever possible (increased levels of absenteeism), and (c) possibly, if your dissatisfaction is strong enough, intend to or actually leave your job. In many models of employee turnover, JS is

considered to be a primary determinant of employees’ forming the intention to quit their jobs, thus setting into motion a process that will result in their eventually leaving the organization. This is an important distinction, as research has shown that although JS is a weak predictor of actual turnover, it is a strong predictor of *intention to turnover* (i.e., quit). Thus, organizations interested in retaining their employees are well-advised to consider their employees’ JS.

Psychological Burnout and Health

In recent years, burnout and emotional exhaustion have been identified as important problems in the workplace, and research has shown that both stressful job conditions and employees’ low levels of JS can lead to an increased risk of burnout or emotional exhaustion (this type of research has focused almost exclusively on careers involving medical services or direct care, so additional research needs to be done on these relationships in other occupations). Interestingly, in many models of the burnout process, low JS is not by itself a direct cause of burnout; rather, it is a factor that can amplify the effects of a stressful or highly emotionally demanding job and/or workplace. In this context, therefore, low JS can be seen as an indicator of which individuals may be more susceptible to burnout. These established links between JS and burnout and experienced stress on the job become especially problematic when considered in conjunction with findings that levels of JS can “spill over” to affect general life satisfaction.

—Deidra J. Schleicher and Kevin E. Fox

See also Career satisfaction, Job involvement, Morale, Organizational commitment, Work ethic

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JOB SEARCH

Job search is a process that consists of gathering information about potential job opportunities, generating and evaluating job alternatives, and choosing a job from the alternatives. It is a self-regulatory process that begins with the identification and commitment to pursuing an employment goal and ends when the employment goal has been achieved or is abandoned.

The job-search process involves a logical sequence of activities that consists of two phases: (a) planning job search and (b) job search and choice. Job search begins with an extensive search to gather information and identify job opportunities, followed by a more intensive search that involves the acquisition of specific information about jobs and organizations. Job search has also been described as consisting of preparatory and active phases. Preparatory job-search behavior involves information gathering about job opportunities, and active job-search behavior involves applying for positions.

Models of job search include the antecedents and consequences of job search behaviors. Job-search behaviors include (a) job information sources, (b) job-search intensity, and (c) job-search effort. *Job information sources* refer to the means by which job seekers learn about job opportunities. Formal sources

involve the use of public intermediaries, such as advertisements, employment agencies, and campus placement offices. Informal sources are private intermediaries, such as friends, relatives, or persons who are already employed in an organization.

Job-search intensity refers to the frequency with which job seekers, during a set period of time, engage in specific job-search behaviors or activities, such as preparing résumés or contacting employment agencies. *Job-search effort* refers to the amount of energy, time, and persistence that a job seeker devotes to his or her job search. Unlike measures of job-search intensity, job-search effort does not focus on particular job-search behaviors, but rather, refers to the time and effort one devotes to the search.

Two more specific types of job-search behavior are assertive job seeking and networking. *Assertive job seeking* applies the concept of assertiveness to job search and refers to the ability to identify one's rights and choices during job search and to act on them. *Networking* involves contacting friends, acquaintances, and referrals to obtain information and leads about job opportunities.

The antecedents of job search include (a) biographical/demographic variables, (b) individual-difference variables, (c) employment and job-search attitudes, and (d) situational variables. With respect to biographical/demographic variables, older, non-White, female, less-educated, and more-tenured individuals have been found to conduct less intense job searches than younger, White, male, more-educated, and less-tenured individuals. In addition, younger, more-educated, and male job seekers are more likely to find employment, and more-educated and White job seekers experience a shorter period of unemployment. Grade average has also been found to positively relate to job-search behavior and job-finding success. In general, biographical variables tend to be only weakly related to job-search behavior and to a lesser extent than the other antecedents.

Individual-difference variables that are important for job search include personality variables, motivational variables, and affective variables. Among the personality variables, self-esteem has been found to relate positively to job-search intensity and assertive job-seeking behavior and to a shorter period of unemployment, more job offers, and a greater likelihood of obtaining employment. Dimensions of the five-factor model of personality such as Extraversion and Conscientiousness have been found to be strong

predictors of job-search behavior, followed by Openness to Experience and Agreeableness. In contrast, Neuroticism is negatively related to job-search behavior. Extroversion, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience, and Agreeableness are associated with a shorter period of unemployment, and Conscientiousness also predicts employment success.

Attitudes have also been found to predict job search. *Employment commitment* refers to the importance or centrality to the job seeker of employment beyond its financial return. It has been found to positively relate to job search intensity. *Job-search attitude*, or the extent to which a person has a positive or negative evaluation of job search behavior, has been found to predict job-search intention.

A motivational variable that is especially important is *job-search self-efficacy*, or the confidence one has in his or her ability to perform specific job-search tasks and activities. Job-search self-efficacy has been found to predict job-search intensity, assertive job-search behavior, and job source usage, as well as search duration, number of job offers, and employment success. Another motivational variable is job-seekers' *perceived control* over job search outcomes. Perceived control is positively related to job-search intensity and finding employment.

Recent research has examined whether affective traits are related to job-search behaviors. This research suggests that individuals who tend to experience positive emotions set employment goals that, in turn, lead to high job-search intensity. Individuals who tend to experience negative emotions, however, are less successful in their job search because they have lower self-efficacy than their counterparts. Another study found that emotionally intelligent job seekers start employment more quickly than individuals with low emotional intelligence. Taken together, these studies reveal that the way job seekers feel, and their abilities to process emotional information have important effects on job-search behaviors and job-search success.

Situational variables that are important for job search include financial need and social support. *Financial need* is the extent to which a job seeker is experiencing economic hardship. Job seekers who have a greater financial need tend to be more intense in their search for employment. In addition, those with higher benefit levels or a longer duration of benefits tend to remain unemployed for longer periods. *Social support* refers to the network of friends and family

who provide counseling, assistance, and encouragement to job seekers. It predicts job-search behavior and employment success and is particularly important in assisting individuals following job loss.

The consequences of job search include (a) job-search outcomes (outcomes that occur during the search process), (b) employment outcomes (outcomes that are a result of one's job search), and (c) employment quality (outcomes that occur on the job).

Job-search outcomes include the number of job interviews and job offers that a job seeker receives and the speed with which one obtains employment. Job-search intensity is positively related to the number of job interviews and offers received and is negatively related to search duration.

Employment outcomes assess the result of one's job search and refer to whether or not a job seeker obtains employment and the nature of that employment. The most common outcome measure of job search is *employment status*, or whether or not the job seeker has found a job. Job-search intensity, effort, and the use of informal information sources (i.e., friends and personal acquaintances) predict employment status. Other employment outcomes predicted by search intensity include person-job fit, person-organization fit, and initial compensation.

Employment quality refers to job-search outcomes that occur once the job seeker assumes a position and begins work (e.g., job satisfaction). Job seekers who find employment through informal sources tend to have more positive job attitudes and lower turnover. There is also some evidence that job-search intensity leads to more positive job and organization attitudes because of its positive effect on perceptions of job and organization fit.

In summary, individual differences and situational variables predict job search behaviors, and job-search behavior is related to the probability, speed, and quality of employment that one obtains.

—Alan M. Saks and Stéphane Côté

See also Career exploration, Networking, Organizational entry, Organizational image, Self-efficacy

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JOB SECURITY

Job security is the stability and continuance of one's current employment as one knows it to be. An appraisal of one's job security involves an assessment of both one's position and one's employment within an organization. In other words, job security can be affected by the potential loss of employment and/or the potential loss of valued aspects of one's position within an organization. Related concepts include economic stress, job insecurity, job stability, underemployment, and unemployment.

Job security is closely related to the issue of career development. It is estimated that the average employee will follow approximately seven different career paths during a typical 30-year span of employment. Analyses of *Current Population Survey* data suggest that the average tenure in a job in the United States is 7.4 years, among the lowest in industrialized nations. Often, career changes can be a direct result of involuntary turnover, layoffs, outsourcing, or shifts in the national economy. During the 1990s, there were over 15 million layoffs. A comparison of 21 industrialized nations found that the United States ranked among the lowest in employee perceptions of job security.

CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF JOB SECURITY

Job security can be thought of as a subjective experience or an objective state. Objectively, the Bureau of Labor Statistics within the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) provides biennial estimates of the job outlook

for hundreds of occupations within the United States. The job outlook for these occupations is based on whether employment opportunities within these occupations are growing, stable, or declining over the next decade. Occupations with declining employment can be objectively categorized as having less job security than those with growing employment. Organizations can also objectively identify positions within the company as being more or less likely to be outsourced, eliminated, retained, or expanded on in the future. Often, this assessment can be made by upper-level management based on annual strategic planning and company economic forecasts.

While job security can be described objectively, it is more commonly conceptualized and measured as a subjective perception on the part of the employee. Using this methodology, a job can be defined as *insecure* if an employee perceives his or her job to be unstable or at risk regardless of any actual objective level of job security. Thus, it is possible to have a job that is objectively considered to be secure but is subjectively perceived to be insecure by the employee holding that position. The reverse situation may also occur, whereby an individual perceives his or her job to be secure but organizational or DOL estimates would categorize that position or occupation as having a poor job outlook.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches of conceptualizing and measuring job security. The objective approach removes individual perceptions from the equation and relies on government or organizational forecasts of job security. This can be advantageous if one's purpose is to accurately categorize a position or occupation as having (or lacking) job security. On the other hand, the subjective approach explicitly relies on individual perceptions of job security, which can be colored by economic, social, organizational, and individual characteristics. However, many outcomes of job security are best predicted by such subjective individual perceptions rather than more objective assessments. Thus, if one's purpose is to predict individual outcomes, assessing job security subjectively may be more informative.

ANTECEDENTS OF JOB SECURITY

There are many known antecedents and consequences of having a secure or, conversely, insecure position at work. The predictors of job security can be summarized into four categories: organizational

change characteristics, worker characteristics, employment characteristics, and economic factors.

Formal announcement of layoffs, an upcoming merger or acquisition, organizational restructuring, and/or downsizing are all potential *organizational change characteristics* that may decrease employee job security. Annually, over 1 million U.S. workers can expect to lose their jobs as a result of these transitions. In addition to actual job loss, organizational change characteristics have also been shown to predict employee reports of job loss fears, perceived psychological contract violations, and lowered expectations regarding job security, compensation, and opportunities for advancement.

An additional antecedent of job security may be related to changing organizational technology. A change in the technological systems of an organization can have a profound effect on the security of positions experiencing the technology change. As the level of technological complexity required in an organization changes, so do the worker requirements, which can, in turn, affect the security of individuals who cannot adapt to the change or whose skills are no longer required (i.e., obsolescence). Thus, technological change can decrease job security and eventually lead to job loss for workers whose skills and/or positions are obsolete.

Worker characteristics refer to a variety of individual-difference variables that can affect an individual's perception of job security. These variables include employee gender and race, absenteeism rates, grievance filing, organizational tenure, career history, and education level. Government data provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that the rate of unemployment is traditionally higher among racial minorities than among Whites. Although the actual rates of unemployment for women are not higher than for men, research indicates that women tend to suffer from greater downward mobility than do men. Workers who are frequently absent are less likely to be secure in their positions and are more likely to face involuntary turnover than workers who do not absent themselves as often. Research has also shown that workers who file grievances are less likely to be promoted, receive lower performance evaluations following the grievance activity, have higher voluntary and involuntary turnover rates, and have lower job-security perceptions than workers who do not file grievances.

Job longevity or organizational seniority often provokes feelings of security; in particular, due to seniority protections, older workers are less likely to be laid

off than their younger counterparts. An employee's career history may also be related to job security. Employees who have been laid off in the past, have been laid off for longer periods of time, or are at career plateaus are more likely to face underemployment and job insecurity, perhaps due to a marketplace stigma associated with having been laid off. Finally, workers with more education tend to experience fewer layoffs than their less educated counterparts. Thus, education appears to provide some protection against job insecurity.

Employment characteristics refer to the contractual relationship that an employee has with his or her organization. This includes whether the worker is employed on a temporary or contingent basis versus a permanent one, whether the worker is employed part time versus full time, and whether the job falls under union jurisdiction. Nonbinding, temporary, or part-time contracts typically result in lower job security, because these characteristics implicitly suggest a briefer tenure with the organization than would a binding, permanent, full-time contract. In addition, these types of contractual arrangement also tend to pay less and offer fewer employee benefits, such as retirement and health benefits, than permanent or full-time arrangements.

Economic factors are the last set of antecedents of job security. When the state of the economy is poor, rates of unemployment and underemployment increase. As news of mass layoffs, low levels of job creation, and a scarcity of high-wage jobs loom large in the public eye, employee perceptions of job security typically decline. Research suggests a link between media reports of mass layoffs and employee perceptions of job insecurity. Thus, regardless of any planned layoffs in one's organization, exposure to media accounts of mass layoffs occurring in other organizations can stimulate anxiety regarding one's own job security.

Although organizational change characteristics, worker characteristics, employment contractual arrangements, and economic factors can serve as useful predictors of employee job security, far more research attention has been paid to the individual, organizational, and societal consequences.

CONSEQUENCES OF JOB INSECURITY

According to the "vitamin model" of work and unemployment, individuals require nine environmental "vitamins" to maintain their psychological health:

opportunity for control, opportunity for skill use, externally generated goals, variety, environmental clarity, availability of money, physical security, opportunity for interpersonal contact, and valued social position. Many of these aspects are threatened or compromised under conditions of job insecurity. For example, a loss of control over one's employment security, low environmental clarity, and an anticipation of a loss of income often accompany employee job insecurity. Based on this model, one would expect that the consequences of job insecurity would be negative as a result of these "vitamin" needs being compromised, and, indeed, research has borne this out.

Research from as early as the 1970s suggests that concerns about job security can have a detrimental effect on employee health outcomes. Employees with low job security report a greater incidence of physical health conditions, elevated levels of blood serum cholesterol, elevated blood pressure, and elevated levels of stress hormones. Job insecurity has also been associated with higher levels of general psychological distress, increased medical consultations for psychological distress, and increases in depression, somatization, anxiety, and hostility.

Research suggests that in addition to affecting the workers themselves, concerns over job security may have implications for the families of affected employees and society at large. Work and family research suggests that these two spheres of life do not operate independently of each other. Therefore, it is perhaps not surprising that the economic worries of one member of a couple cross over to predict the job security of the other partner. In addition, in couples who experience job insecurity, the individuals display more negative affect, evaluation, and behaviors toward one another. Children of parents who are experiencing job insecurity at work are also not immune from its negative effects. Children's perceptions of work, work beliefs, and work attitudes are influenced by their parents' job insecurity. In addition, student grades are related to parental perceptions of job security.

Extensive research has also focused on the job-related outcomes associated with job-security concerns. A recent meta-analysis reported that insecure employees experience decreased job satisfaction, are less involved in their jobs, are less committed to the organization and more likely to quit their jobs, place less trust in management, and have lower levels of performance than do workers with more job security. Other studies report significantly higher levels of

job-related stress; more work withdrawal behaviors, such as absenteeism, tardiness, and work task avoidance; lower levels of creativity; and more work-related accidents and injuries among less secure workers.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE OUTCOMES OF JOB SECURITY

Despite the evidence indicating that concerns over job security have negative implications for individuals, organizations, and society, certain variables can serve to moderate (or influence) the effects of job insecurity by either mitigating or exacerbating its consequences. These moderators fall into two categories: individual-difference moderators and organizational-level moderators. *Individual-difference moderators* refer to characteristics that vary from person to person, whereas *organizational-level moderators* refer to differences within or between organizations.

One individual-difference moderator, cultural values, may influence the extent to which employees react negatively to perceived job insecurity. Individuals with collectivist cultural orientations or from collectivist cultures appear to be more likely than their individualistic counterparts to report lowered job satisfaction, more job stress, and more turnover intentions as a function of job insecurity.

Workplace control (i.e., the ability to protect oneself from negative events at work) may also be an important moderator of the stress associated with job insecurity. Research has found that employees who perceive they have little control over their workplaces exhibit more somatic symptoms and higher blood pressure in response to job insecurity, whereas employees who perceive they exert greater control over their workplaces do not experience these outcomes. Thus, individuals who perceive that they are able to protect themselves from negative events at work may be less vulnerable to the effects of job insecurity.

Another variable that has been theorized to buffer the effects of job insecurity on employee outcomes is emotional intelligence. Because emotional intelligence regulates the way in which individuals manage emotions, it is argued that emotional IQ will moderate the effects of job insecurity on emotional reactions and behaviors. Specifically, high-emotional-intelligence employees should be less likely to experience negative emotional reactions to job insecurity or use negative coping strategies than low-emotional-intelligence employees.

Finally, job involvement has also been shown to moderate the effects of job insecurity on employee outcomes. Employees who are highly invested in their jobs appear to be more adversely affected by job insecurity than their less involved counterparts, reporting more negative job attitudes, more health problems, and higher levels of psychological distress when they perceived their jobs to be threatened. This implies that individuals who consider their jobs to be quite important and whose jobs may be significant to their self-identity or financial security are more at risk for negative outcomes as a result of job insecurity than are individuals who are relatively indifferent to their jobs.

Although the individual-difference moderators may explain who is most likely to negatively react to job insecurity, these variables are not easily modified. For example, one cannot change an employee's cultural values or level of job involvement in an effort to ward off the negative effects of job insecurity. However, research has shown that a number of organizational interventions may be effectively utilized toward this end.

One of the major sources of stress during times of organizational change is the uncertainty associated with such events. Whether an organization is restructuring, merging with another organization, or downsizing, research has shown that employees face concerns regarding their job security during those periods. In addition, during times of organizational transition, the "rumor mill" often plays a large role in employee perceptions. Reliance on the rumor mill and the absence of factual information can exacerbate employee anxiety. On the other hand, increased organizational communication may reduce the consequences of such uncertainty. Offering "realistic merger previews," "realistic downsizing previews," and increasing upward and downward communication may counter the negative effects associated with job insecurity. These types of interventions may be more attractive when one considers that providing increased communication within an organization is a relatively low-cost endeavor.

A slightly more involved organizational intervention found to reduce the negative effects of job insecurity is to increase employee participative decision making. Whereas job insecurity is associated with a lack of control perceived by employees, participative decision making has been found to be effective within organizations precisely because it allows employees to have a substantial voice in job-related decisions.

Organizations that provide their employees with participative decision-making opportunities may offer their employees the chance to regain control over important aspects of their jobs, which is otherwise lost under conditions of job insecurity.

A final organizational intervention that shows promise in attenuating some of the safety-related effects of job insecurity involves the organizational safety climate under which employees work. As noted earlier, research suggests that job insecurity has a detrimental effect on employee safety attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes. However, the effects of job insecurity on safety appear to be moderated by the extent to which the organization is seen as valuing and emphasizing safety. Thus, during times of organizational transition and employee economic stress, it may be wise for organizations to consistently send a strong message regarding the importance of safety to their employees.

—Tahira M. Probst

See also Churning of jobs, Downsizing, Outsourcing and offshoring

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JOB SHARING

Job sharing is a flexible working arrangement in which two or more individuals voluntarily share the responsibilities, pay, and benefits of a full-time position. In essence, job sharers convert one full-time job into two permanent part-time positions by coordinating task responsibilities while sharing the full-time equivalent of pay and fringe benefits. Job sharers may work split days, split or alternate weeks, or their hours may overlap. Pay and benefits are typically divided proportionately to the hours worked. Other similar yet distinct flexible working arrangements include regular part-time work, flextime, V-time, and work sharing.

Research has suggested that successful job-sharing arrangements have beneficial effects for both employees and organizations. Job sharing is believed to broaden the depth of organizational knowledge, facilitate the achievement of human resource management objectives, and enhance organizational flexibility. Moreover, job sharing has implications for individual careers, as it has been found to reduce stress associated with juggling work and family demands and increase job satisfaction. In addition, because job-sharing employees perceive their organizations as recognizing and accommodating their personal lives, the practice has been found to increase organizational commitment and loyalty and reduce turnover and absenteeism.

Job sharing originated in the 1970s as a creative solution for career-minded individuals balancing work and life responsibilities. Job sharing permits part-time opportunities in career-oriented jobs that are not conducive to reduced hours or traditional part-time employment. An employee seeking to spend less time at work yet maintain status within a career can remain in the workforce by splitting his or her workload with a job-sharing partner. This arrangement allows individuals to work reduced-hour schedules yet maintain job skills, preserve job status, and remain eligible for advancement within their careers.

Job sharing is increasingly being offered by employers as part of a package of family-friendly or work-life balance policies geared primarily toward parents. In fact, approximately 90 percent of job-share partners are women with parental or elder care responsibilities. However, more frequently, individuals are requesting job-share arrangements for reasons other than family responsibilities, such as to continue education or to phase into retirement.

A job-sharing arrangement is typically initiated by employees who make a written proposal to management. This proposal may include issues such as the advantages to the employer if the job is restructured; the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed job-sharing team; the specifics of the work plan, including how the responsibilities and work time will be divided; and the proposed communication techniques. The success of the job-sharing arrangement is dependent on gaining supervisory support and maintaining open lines of communication, not only between job share partners but also between the partners and management. In addition, it is critical for the division of responsibilities to be seamless and for balance to be maintained in the sharers' partnership.

Empirical research with respect to job sharing is limited; however, a number of organizational benefits have been identified. For example, organizations offering job-sharing arrangements have the ability to recruit and retain highly skilled and valuable employees who may be unable or unwilling to work on a full-time basis. In addition, job sharing has been found to increase organizational flexibility and continuity by allowing sharing partners and management to develop work schedules that satisfy both parties, thereby providing continuity when one partner is unavailable or unable to work. Successful job-sharing arrangements are further said to broaden organizational knowledge by bringing two or more diverse sets of skills, experiences, and perspectives to a position that would traditionally be occupied by only one person. Moreover, it has been suggested that the creative pairing of job-sharing partners can help in the achievement of human resource management objectives, such as training, phased retirement, and upward mobility.

In addition to allowing employees to gain flexibility in balancing their work and personal commitments, job sharing has other beneficial effects for individuals. Research indicates that the heightened control over one's working life can reduce stress and anxiety levels and lead to more highly motivated and satisfied

employees. Moreover, individuals involved in job-sharing arrangements have been found to be more committed and loyal to their organizations than their coworkers, presumably because they feel that their personal needs are being recognized by their employers.

Despite the potential benefits, job sharing remains the least utilized flexible working arrangement. Research has suggested that the most common organizational concerns include increased administrative and training costs and extra time requirements for supervision and communication. Additional concerns include the impact of job sharing on other employees, the difficulty in hiring a replacement if one partner leaves the organization, and an overall change in organizational culture.

Advocates argue that organizations view job sharing as more difficult than it really is. It is suggested that the success or failure of the arrangement is dependent on the people who compose the team and on management's willingness to accept and foster the arrangement. With commitment, compromise, and open communication, job-sharing arrangements can benefit

both the organization and the job-sharing partners. Employees gain flexibility to balance their work and personal lives, and organizations benefit from highly satisfied and motivated employees, lower absenteeism, and reduced turnover.

—Christy H. Weer

See also Family-responsive workplace practices, Flexible work arrangements, Part-time employment, Work-family balance

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KNOWLEDGE WORK

The term *knowledge work* refers to a profession that utilizes intellectual capital to create, teach, and problem solve. Knowledge work requires significant cognitive activity and dedication to continuous learning on behalf of the practitioner. Day-to-day knowledge work consists of nonroutine and nonrepetitive activities. Examples of knowledge workers include, but are not limited to, doctors, lawyers, researchers, engineers, and consultants. Knowledge workers have expertise in their fields, and they stay current on theoretical and practical applications in their fields. They add value to their professions and to others through the creation of new theories, information, services, and products. Knowledge work requires formal education and incorporates theoretical knowledge in the creation of new information. Knowledge work is not solely applied tacit knowledge. For example, an experienced waitperson is not a knowledge worker even though he or she may know the menu and the customers at the restaurant very well.

Knowledge work is part of a larger economic shift. The transition from the industrial age to the information age has caused a shift in the labor market from the production of material goods to the production and management of services, many of which are based on the acquisition, transformation, or application of information. This economic shift has increased the number of knowledge workers and has also highlighted issues specific to knowledge work and knowledge workers.

Some of the issues being addressed include how to manage knowledge workers individually and in teams and how to better prepare students for work of the future. The increase in knowledge-work professionals and knowledge-based organizations has also raised issues about the measurement and management of intellectual capital. For example, in the past, many businesses owned buildings, equipment, and inventories of goods. A knowledge-based company, for example a consulting firm, may not own any buildings, equipment, or tangible goods. Instead, its assets lie in the intellectual capital held by its professionals, who provide consulting services to clients. Because managing human capital is different from managing other capital assets, knowledge-based companies face managerial challenges different from those that confront industrial companies.

—Krista Norden

See also Human capital

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KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES (KSAS)

Knowledge, skills, and abilities are often referred to as “KSAs.” They are part of many methods used to analyze jobs and work for purposes such as staffing and vocational counseling. All three terms concern human attributes needed to complete work tasks successfully. In other words, KSAs are cognitive and psychomotor informational digests and processes stored in memory that people need to succeed at work. The first two of these, knowledge and skills, are largely developed through life experiences, often through hard work. The third, abilities, are thought to be relatively enduring capacities of an individual that are helpful in developing knowledge and skills. The acquisition of knowledge and skills is the main goal of education and training. Abilities typically predict who will benefit most from a certain kind of training. Measures of all three factors are often used by employers to inform decisions about whom to hire, because employers are looking to hire the people who know the most, can do the best job, and can be most easily trained to do the work.

Knowledge is mostly concerned with the “what” of a task. Things that one learns from books, structured demonstrations, trial and error, and classrooms are most often knowledge. Knowledge is commonly thought of as factual and procedural information as well as action sequences kept in the head mainly for brain work but also to execute skilled activities. For example, most people reading this already know the meaning of a large number of words in English and the names of the capitals of most states in the United States. The knowledge that is most commonly associated with careers usually belongs to a specific discipline, such as chemistry, forestry, music, cooking, or graphic design. Knowledge that is helpful for a career comes from both general education and specific vocational preparation. Many jobs, for example, require one to read and write (general education). To be able to read and write, however, one must know the meaning of many commonly used words. Most jobs also require additional specific knowledge (e.g., cell biology). Thus, in addition to general knowledge, one would need specific knowledge of, for example, cell biology to read a technical report on cloning and write an evaluation of the report.

Skills are more closely associated with using the body than with using the head. Motor skills allow one to do things quickly and relatively effortlessly, such as shifting gears or using the steering wheel while

driving a car, truck, or forklift. Other examples include operating a sewing machine, tying a knot, or properly serving a tennis ball into the court. Perceptual skills may also be developed. Examples of visual perception include color perception used for picking custom colors for interior design, and contrast and brightness perception needed for video camera operation. Sound perception is used for tasks such as analyzing the performance of an orchestra. Many heavy equipment jobs require both motor skills and perceptual skills (especially depth perception), such as moving pallets with a forklift or landing an aircraft.

Most skills are very specific to a job or occupation. Experience in landing an airplane, for example, is not particularly helpful in using a forklift to load a truck, nor is such experience particularly helpful in docking a ship. Such is the case even though all the previously mentioned tasks involve using the hands and feet to cause large machines to move in certain ways. For a rather different example, skill in rolling cigars will not prove terribly helpful in playing the piccolo, even though both tasks involve skilled movements of the fingers. Skill acquisition is typically rather slow in developing, especially for difficult tasks such as playing the violin or figure skating. For this reason, highly skilled performance is usually found in people who have practiced the skill in question for months or years.

Abilities are relatively enduring, mainly intellectual capacities that distinguish one person from another. An ability long studied by psychologists is *cognitive ability*, which is related to how quickly and how well people learn new material. The two most commonly assessed distinct cognitive abilities are verbal and mathematical (quantitative) abilities. There are other, more specialized cognitive abilities, such as space relations and the ability to solve anagrams. Other abilities may be thought of as talents, such as musical ability, artistic ability (ability to draw or paint), and the ability to dance. There are several different systems for describing and analyzing different human abilities. Abilities are special characteristics that allow people to become good at tasks quickly compared with other people. Some people show particular facility in reading and understanding a book on philosophy, while others can quickly learn to play the piano, others to paint well, and still others to figure-skate gracefully. People with special ability are said to be “naturals” at some tasks. Unlike skills and specialized knowledge, the same ability can often be used for different tasks. For example, someone gifted in verbal ability might be

a good poet or a good lawyer. Someone with musical talent might become a good speech pathologist, orchestral soloist, or acoustical engineer.

KSAs are sometimes called KSAOs because people want to refer to “knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics.” “Other characteristics” can be thought of as capacities or work habits. For example, one might imagine the capacity to resist monotony. In a very repetitive task, such as putting golf balls into packages or loading boxes onto trucks, many people become bored and fatigued. Others are resistant to monotony and do not seem to mind doing the same thing over and over (musicians also need some of this capacity because they have to practice the same piece many times). “Other characteristics” include personality traits (e.g., punctual, persistent, courageous, unconventional) and describe how people typically behave. However, like abilities, “other characteristics” are thought to be relatively enduring individual-difference characteristics; that is, they meaningfully distinguish people in ways that are useful to know when one is considering the fit of an individual for a job or for a career.

—Michael T. Brannick and Edward L. Levine

See also Abilities, Organizational staffing, Personnel selection

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KUDER CAREER ASSESSMENTS

Frederic Kuder published his first career interest assessment in 1939. The Kuder Preference Record was different from the other vocational assessments of the day in that it asked respondents to indicate their

preferences for everyday activities rather than their occupational preferences. The 1943 version became the standard career assessment used to assist World War II veterans with their educational planning under the GI Bill. The next generation of Kuder career interest assessments began in 1966, with the Kuder Occupational Interest Survey. This version contained 10 interest scales and provided test takers with scores that indicated their similarity to workers in 100 occupations and 40 college majors.

In the late 1990s, the latest version of Kuder brought the most change to the assessment since its conception. The name of the interest assessment was changed to the Kuder Career Search with Person Match, and the approach to matching test takers with employed others also changed. The publisher now offers two additional career assessments, the Kuder Skills Assessment and Super’s Work Values Inventory, Revised. In keeping with the times, all three Kuder assessments are available online at <http://www.kuder.com>. From the Kuder Web site, individual or group test takers can obtain and print their assessment results in seconds. Yet another innovation is the Kuder Electronic Career Portfolio, which offers the option of loading results from the Kuder assessments, along with the demographic information and résumés required by most prospective employers.

The Kuder Career Search with Person Match (KCS), the Kuder interest assessment, contains three sections. The first section depicts the test taker’s interests in each of the six Kuder Clusters (Arts/Communication, Business Operations, Outdoor/Mechanical, Sales/Management, Science/Technology, and Social/Personal Services). Results on each cluster are depicted on the profile in a bar graph format from highest similarity to lowest. The second section of the KCS assists individuals in exploring careers by educational levels, making it possible for the test taker to consider exploration of careers requiring post-high school training through college degrees. The third and newest section, Person Match, is based on a matching system first introduced by Kuder in 1980 as person-to-people matching. This approach matches individuals to people in jobs, rather than the traditional approach of matching people to job titles. To select the most similar matches, a modification of Spearman’s rank order correlation is used to compare the test taker’s KCS responses with the KCS profiles of more than 2,500 individuals in the Person Match reference pool.

The Person Match scale is depicted as a list of the top matches. As the test taker clicks the mouse on each

person in the list, they obtain a mini-autobiography written by that individual. Donald Zytowski, principal KCS researcher and developer, suggested explaining these matches to clients by stating that each identified match has preferences highly similar to their own preferences and that those listed as person matches may be in a variety of jobs or occupations worth further exploration. The actual job titles of the top person matches may not immediately appeal to the test taker, but the similarities may be found in the details contained in the autobiographical sketches. The mini-autobiographies easily lend themselves to the use of stories during the assessment interpretation process. In 1993, Mark Savickas explained that twenty-first-century career counseling will be about stories, not scores, and the Person Match scale of the KCS can help clients with the formation of their own career stories. The variety of job titles represented by the person matches also promotes the notion of *multipotentiality*, or the idea that all workers have the potential for job satisfaction in many work environments.

The Kuder Skills Assessment profile depicts the test taker's self-reported skill levels (low, medium, high) for the same six Kuder Clusters contained in the KCS. The second section, Exploring Careers by Educational Level, matches the second section of the KCS. The results of the Kuder Skills Assessment and the Kuder Career Search with Person Match can be depicted on a combined profile for comparison of skill and interest levels. Online career exploration is facilitated via links to middle school, high school, college, and adult levels of the Kuder College and Career Planning site. Other links provide access to occupational information (O*Net), job search opportunities (America's Job Bank), Résumé Builder, and information about colleges (College Search). The test taker has all the materials of a career resource library available online.

The third Kuder assessment, Super's Work Values Inventory, Revised, assesses the test taker's preference for 12 work-related values: achievement, coworkers,

creativity, income, independence, lifestyle, mental challenge, prestige, security, supervision, variety, and work environment. Results are listed in order of preference. A definition of each value is provided.

Results from the three Kuder assessments are available to administrators (such as the school counselor, career counselor, or advisor) in an administrative database. The database can be arranged in a variety of useful ways, such as by name, age, gender, or Kuder Career Cluster. Administrators can easily identify groups of test takers for special programs, guest speakers, college visits, or career guidance sessions. These recent innovations have made the Kuder career assessments readily accessible to administrators and test takers all around the world.

Donald Zytowski has published extensively on the various versions of the Kuder interest assessments. He is currently responsible for further research and development of the Kuder Career Search with Person Match, the Kuder Skills Assessment, and the Super's Work Values Inventory, Revised, for their publisher, National Career Assessment Services, Inc.

—Sarah Toman

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LATE CAREER STAGE

As individuals age, the possibilities for age and career stage to be asynchronous are numerous. Many workers over age 50 are about to graduate from school to start new careers, and many individuals in their late 40s are retiring after 30 years of service. Following common usage in the area, the general boundaries of this entry are career issues that typically affect individuals who are over age 50 or who have been in the workforce 30 years or longer.

SATISFACTION WITH JOBS AND CAREERS

Research suggests that both older workers and late-career employees have more positive attitudes toward their jobs (e.g., job satisfaction and job involvement). One explanation for this finding is that late-career workers have more realistic expectations for their jobs than do their younger, less experienced peers. As a result, they experience a smaller discrepancy between what they hope to get from their jobs (in terms of both tangible rewards and intrinsic satisfaction) and what they actually receive from them. They are old enough to have gotten over the “entry shock” of the world of work and senior enough to be less troubled by minor psychological contract violations.

Another potential explanation of these results is that late-career employees and older workers have jobs that pay more and provide more exciting work duties. Often as a consequence of increased seniority, older workers accrue jobs that provide greater job security and pay higher fringe benefits (e.g., pension

benefits, vacation, and sick leave), particularly since many organizations distribute such benefits on the basis of years of service. Using this rationale, then, older workers are more satisfied with their jobs than are younger employees not because of the aging process per se but because older workers have fundamentally more rewarding work situations than their younger colleagues.

Whether late-career employees are happier with their *careers* (as opposed to their *jobs*) is less clear. Certainly, consistent with the logic described above, there are multiple reasons why senior people would have more positive attitudes toward their careers than their younger, less experienced colleagues. Being a partner of a major law firm or accounting firm is typically a more satisfying experience, in terms of both salary and hours worked, than being an associate. In addition, cognitive dissonance may play an important role in the higher career satisfaction of later-career employees. Thirty-year veterans in one career may have internal pressure to self-justify their professional investments as being more worthwhile than do early-career individuals.

Nonetheless, there is at least some indirect evidence that satisfaction with careers tapers off in late career. For example, when older people retire and then come back into the workforce in some type of “bridge employment,” more than 25 percent choose a new career altogether. There are several potential explanations for this phenomenon.

Part of the explanation may rest with the issue of burnout; after 30 years in a vocation, individuals may experience boredom and lack of emotional involvement in their daily activities and psychologically distance themselves from their occupations. Another potential

explanation is that older workers may start devaluing their careers as a means of adjusting to retirement. As workers become more aware of impending retirement, they may start devaluing their vocations to reduce the amount of cognitive dissonance they might experience when they leave them—for example, “I’m not leaving such great a career after all.” Third, career paths can change dramatically over the course of a 30-year period, and individuals may look backward and find the changes in their career paths unappealing.

PERCEIVED AGE DISCRIMINATION AND WORK-RELATED SELF-ESTEEM

A particularly important job attitude to consider here is *perceived age discrimination*. In trying to explain this phenomenon, researchers have drawn a distinction between *normative age* and *chronological age*. This research suggests that it is not only chronological age that can create bias but also an individual’s age relative to expectations of others. Thus, even within a cohort of individuals at the same chronological age, some can be described as being ahead of schedule, on track, or falling behind—and this last group is the most vulnerable to age discrimination.

Along similar lines, the research of organizational demographers suggests that the more discrepant an individual’s age with the dominant coalition in a group, the more likely he or she is to be discriminated against. Thus, late-career individuals working primarily with other older employees are less likely to be subjected to bias than those working primarily with young employees.

As a result of perceived age discrimination, organizationally based self-esteem tends to decline over time as well. As the result of negative comments from coworkers and supervisors about the value of older workers, senior employees often experience lower life satisfaction, more frequent feelings of depression and learned helplessness, and less sense of being valued by the organization. These feelings of lower self-worth frequently appear in reaction to performance appraisals from supervisors, whose subjective evaluations of older workers tend to be harsher than objective performance indicators might suggest.

ABSENTEEISM AND TURNOVER

In light of the evidence presented above, it is not surprising that older workers, as a group, have lower

levels of absenteeism than their younger colleagues. Although negative stereotypes of older workers suggest they would have more illnesses that require absences from work, older workers are, in fact, less likely to take days off. One explanation for this finding is that older workers, because they are more highly paid and may have more responsible jobs, are less likely to take days off except when absolutely necessary. Another explanation is that younger workers, particularly those with school-age children, are more susceptible to getting sick or having to miss work to care for sick children. There is yet another potential explanation for this relationship, namely, that older workers with significant health problems are more likely to exit the workforce altogether via retirement. Consequently, older workers with the worst health problems are less likely to be included in studies of age differences in absenteeism because they are no longer in the labor market.

Similarly, previous research has found that older workers have lower levels of voluntary turnover. Again, because late-career workers may be more likely to have jobs that pay well and have higher levels of job responsibility, they may be less likely to seek out alternative employment. In addition, many firms distribute benefits such as pension contributions and vacation days on the basis of organizational tenure, further enhancing the financial inducements to stay. Furthermore, many older workers fear age discrimination in the labor market and worry that they wouldn’t be able to get good replacement jobs if they quit their current employment. Thus, late-career employees often have fewer “push” factors to get them to leave their present employers and fewer “pull” factors that impel them to enter the open job market.

JOB LOSS, REEMPLOYMENT, AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT

The preponderance of research on turnover among older workers has focused on voluntary exits from current positions. Some recent research on involuntary turnover caused by downsizings highlights the particular problems older workers face in the job market. In many ways, the experiences of laid-off older workers are similar to those of their younger colleagues. That is, older workers, too, typically experience feelings of depression, anxiety, irritability, and hopelessness.

However, their probability of losing their jobs via layoff and their success in finding new employment

are quite different. In the case of blue-collar workers, workers with high seniority are actually less likely to lose their jobs. Blue-collar workers who are members of unions typically enjoy some seniority-based protections, and even in the case of nonunionized workers, companies may be more willing to use seniority as grounds for layoffs than subjective performance ratings, which may not hold up well in litigation for wrongful discharge. The situation is largely opposite in the case of “exempt” white-collar workers. With the push to eliminate whole levels of management to save money, organizations have been disproportionately eliminating middle- and upper-middle-level management positions that are not readily seen as adding tangible value. The impact of this management strategy clearly negatively impacts older and late-career employees, who hold the majority of such positions.

Whether they are blue-collar or white-collar, though, the evidence is fairly strong that older workers have a more difficult time finding reemployment. As noted above, many supervisors have negative stereotypes of older workers anyway, and hiring older workers who have been let go by another firm is an even less appetizing proposition to them. In still other cases, older workers are so embedded in their communities (by virtue of home ownership, family responsibilities for parents, or a spouse’s job) that geographical relocation to obtain new employment is seen as an unacceptable option.

Older workers also seem to be more vulnerable to becoming underemployed in their replacement jobs—and for many of the same reasons that make it harder for older workers to get new jobs at all. That is, even when older workers become reemployed, they often have to take positions that pay much less money than their last jobs paid, provide substantially poorer benefits, or entail far less challenging or less responsible job duties. While generic outplacement services tend to have little impact on older workers’ abilities to become reemployed, some recent research suggests that individualized career planning is particularly instrumental in sustaining older workers’ energy for job hunting and in identifying the most appropriate replacement jobs for them.

JOB PERFORMANCE

The topic of job performance of older workers has been attacked from two different perspectives. The first examines whether late-career employees are

more likely to receive lower “subjective” performance appraisal ratings from supervisors than are their younger colleagues. The second examines whether the “objective” skills of older workers tend to decay over time; here, the research has traditionally examined the degree of decline in “cognitive” skills (such as memory) and “physical” skills (such as gross strength or fine-motor control) over time. We discuss each of these issues in more detail below.

SUBJECTIVE PERFORMANCE RATINGS

A major review of studies that looked at the relationship between age and job performance in the 1980s found approximately equal numbers of studies reporting that job performance increases with age, decreases with age, and remains the same. These results suggested that the relationship between age and job performance may very well depend on other factors, such as the type of work late-career employees perform and the reliability of performance appraisal instruments. Reexamining these qualitative assessments with a statistical meta-analysis, subsequent researchers have discovered some interesting patterns of results. When employees are evaluated on objective indices of productivity, older workers actually significantly outperform younger workers. However, when older workers are evaluated by supervisors with global rating scales, they receive significantly lower evaluations than do younger workers.

Thus, rater bias and age discrimination, rather than older workers’ productivity levels themselves, seem to account for the widespread belief that job performance declines with age. Older workers whose jobs are primarily managerial in nature, whose job outcomes tend to be less tangible, and whose job duties tend to be less visible may be particularly vulnerable to this kind of age discrimination. In such cases, superiors have more latitude to discriminate against older workers in their evaluations because there is less objective, observable data with which to refute superiors’ assertions.

Labor economists have used an *implicit-contract model* to explain another potential reason for age bias in subjective performance ratings. Younger workers are often paid below their marginal rates of productivity, while older workers are often paid above their marginal productivity. Labor economists hypothesize that this compensation practice evolved to motivate younger workers to put more effort into their jobs and

to be more loyal organizational citizens, with the hope that, they, too, will be able to cash in when they get older. However, when faced with the reality of paying older workers wages that are above their marginal productivity, managers want to change the deal in order to cut costs.

In more recent work on the political nature of performance appraisals, several other potential explanations for this divergence in ratings have become evident. First, supervisors may be giving late-career employees lower evaluations in order to give young employees higher pay raises. Thus, the primary motivation for giving late-career employees lower evaluations may not necessarily be discrimination, but rather to justify distributing scarce pay raise dollars to younger workers who might otherwise leave the firm. Alternatively, supervisors of late-career employees may give low evaluations to older workers to block potential rivals from being promoted over them or from being promoted into their own jobs.

OBJECTIVE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Aging can negatively impact the information-processing capabilities of older workers in two ways. First, there is some evidence that older workers process new information less speedily than their younger colleagues and, consequently, can't make decisions as quickly. Second, there is some evidence that older workers have smaller working memories than younger people. That is, older workers cannot keep track of as many variables at the same time and, consequently, have more trouble making complex decisions under time pressure.

While these age-related effects have been found quite consistently, the magnitude and consequences of these deficits may not be as severe as widely believed. Many of the experimental tasks used in these kinds of studies have been rote-memory tasks (e.g., recalling paired-word associations). Whereas memorizing rote lists is a common task for younger people, it is a much less frequent activity for older workers, and it may not be the most appropriate way to test their working memories. When the new knowledge to be acquired is linked to existing knowledge, age differences in memory are quite small and frequently inconsequential.

In terms of physical skills, the literature on gerontology suggests that older workers do experience declines in gross motor strength, fine-motor control, visual acuity, and auditory acuity. However, declines

in these capabilities are quite modest and occur after age 70, when most older workers have already left the workforce.

What is much harder to get a handle on is how less visible deficits in physical well-being (such as arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, chronic pain) impact job performance. Certainly, these physical conditions are both more common and more likely to be severe with older workers, but tightly controlled studies measuring their impact on performance are rare. Research from the retirement literature, though, does suggest that workers with severe health problems are more likely to retire "early" (before reaching 30 years of service), so the main effect of poor physical health may be on workforce exit rather than on workforce performance.

Another issue that comes into play is the objective performance criteria on which older workers are being evaluated. Several researchers suggest that age-based differences in performance are attenuated when quality is taken into consideration as an outcome variable. Taken collectively, their results indicate that older workers have a propensity to pursue quality in performance tasks and may be more willing to sacrifice quantity to achieve that goal. There is little evidence to date on the relationship between age and extra-role or citizenship behavior, and what evidence does exist suggests a nonsignificant age effect.

In sum, then, the global relationship between age and performance is quite modest in magnitude. Moreover, it is highly dependent on which tasks are being performed, how performance is measured, and who measures it.

—Daniel C. Feldman

See also Age discrimination, Job loss, Middle career stage

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LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Careers unfold over time. Leadership also develops over time and often over an entire career. For these reasons, when discussing *leadership development* (as with careers), there is an inherent longitudinal focus. Development implies change and growth. Leadership development is mainly concerned with the intrapersonal change and growth of individual leaders, as well as the relational aspects associated with interpersonal leadership processes. Compared with the disciplines of work careers and leadership, the field of leadership development is weak on theory. There are no recognized theories of leadership development, but a great deal has been published on various practices. Thus, a primary focus has been on using and, to a much lesser extent, evaluating different ways of developing leadership.

CONCEPTUAL ISSUES AND DEFINITIONS

Leadership has proved impossible to define in a way that is universally accepted. Different leadership approaches emphasize specific behaviors (e.g., initiating structure, providing support); aggregate leadership styles (e.g., task- and relationship-oriented); trait like characteristics (e.g., charisma); the relationship between a leader and a follower (e.g., leader-member exchange quality); and so on. Leadership can include any of these emphases but is most holistically characterized as a process involving leaders, followers, and

situations. Thus, contemporary approaches view leadership as a dynamic process, not as a static formal position.

Leadership development can be described as the longitudinal process of expanding the capacities of individuals, groups, and organizations to increase their effectiveness in leadership roles and processes. Increased effectiveness from this perspective pertains to anything that would improve the ability for groups of people to work together in productive and meaningful ways. Thus, leadership development is inherently multilevel in that the developmental focus can be on the individual, group or team, or the entire organization—or some combination of all three levels. Taking into account group and organizational levels is important to the goal of building a sustainable leadership-development system that supports continuous and ongoing individual self-development processes.

Although the best leadership-development processes include multiple levels, there is a long-standing confusion between *leader development* and *leadership development*. What is typically called leadership development is usually more accurately conceptualized as leader development, as it is targeted at developing individual leaders. This distinction goes beyond mere semantics, because it gets at the core of the important role that social context plays in leadership. A social context is necessary in that no leadership can occur without at least one other person (i.e., “follower”) who is influenced, directed, supported, or otherwise affected by the leadership process. Nonetheless, most so-called leadership-development efforts are focused entirely on enhancing individual leaders’ knowledge, skills, and abilities (or broader competencies) in ways that are expected to improve their overall individual leadership capabilities. Developing individual or intrapersonal capabilities (i.e., human capital) can enhance the potential for effective leadership at some future point, but it does not ensure more effective leadership without attention to the social context. The broader concept of leadership emerges through social interaction and is based on the pattern and quality of networked interpersonal relationships in an organization (i.e., social capital).

Effective leadership development requires attention to both human and social capital concerns. Developing individual capabilities without any attention to the social context ignores the fundamental tenet that leadership is based on interactions among leaders, followers, and the social environment. Attempting to develop the pattern and quality of networked

relationships that defines the social capital component of leadership without preparing individual leaders with the requisite skills to communicate, influence, inspire, and otherwise participate effectively in leadership processes could risk putting people into situations in which they are unprepared individually to lead effectively. Critical to developing effective leadership is designing and implementing developmental systems that link intrapersonal leader development with networked interpersonal leadership development in ways that build both the human and social capital components of leadership.

DEVELOPMENTAL PRACTICES

Many different types of interventions have been used to facilitate leadership development. They vary in degree of intensity, organizational embeddedness, and temporal scope. An important distinction across various interventions is the extent to which they emphasize the development of intrapersonal skills (e.g., self-awareness, self-regulation, or other individual skills), interpersonal skills (e.g., social skills, social awareness, or other relational skills), or both. An especially important but often overlooked aspect of successful leadership development is linking the development of intrapersonal skills (human capital) with the development of interpersonal skills (social capital).

Formal Classroom Programs

The most common approach to leadership development is the formal classroom program in which basic principles of leadership are presented, discussed, and reflected on. It has been estimated that approximately 85 percent of companies engaged in leadership-development efforts use some version of classroom programs. Frequently, these programs are designed to promote self-insight and enhance self-awareness through the application of leadership principles to participants' personal experiences. Another version is the assessment-for-development approach that was pioneered by the Center for Creative Leadership, in which participants complete self-assessment (e.g., personality) inventories and receive feedback about their personal characteristics and behavioral profiles. Often, formal programs occur over the course of several days and are held off-site. *Open-enrollment programs* are classroom courses in which participation is open to all qualified participants (usually determined

by job level) regardless of their organization affiliation. *Custom programs* are specifically designed for a particular organization to enhance the relevance of the course with regard to the business objectives of the client firm.

Although popular, formal classroom programs are limited by high development costs (especially in custom work) and issues with the transfer of knowledge from the classroom to the job (especially in open-enrollment programs). Thus, many organizations are coming to realize that formal classroom programs are valuable but not completely adequate for effective leadership development. As leadership tends to be most effectively developed through the enactment of leadership, a majority of the more cutting-edge approaches emphasize the role of hands-on experiences in development. In particular, experiences that occur in the context of ongoing work may provide the most meaningful development and are often used as follow-up efforts to formal classroom programs.

Multisource Feedback

Also known as *360-degree feedback*, *multisource feedback* seeks to enhance self-knowledge of leadership ability and one's impact on others by providing leaders with multiple assessments of their performance from different role perspectives. In this method, ratings of a target's performance are systematically collected from multiple sources—including supervisors, peers, subordinates, and self-perceptions—in order to compile a comprehensive, "360-degree" picture of a target's ability and behaviors. The underlying philosophy of multisource feedback is that people in different reporting roles in relation to a target may experience different aspects of that person's personality and behavior. Widening the lens to include perspectives other than one's boss is thought to develop a more complete understanding of the impact of one's behavior on others across different role relationships. Multisource feedback can help leaders enhance the intrapersonal skill of self-awareness by illustrating the effects they have on others and by highlighting any discrepancies between various perceptions of performance. But simply providing feedback does not necessarily translate into enhanced leadership. In many cases, other elements are added to the process to help someone make better sense of the feedback and to use it to create and implement a developmental plan. An *executive coach* is often used for this purpose.

Mentoring

Whereas executive coaches are often hired as external consultants to help people develop necessary leadership competencies or address specific leadership challenges, developmental relationships (i.e., mentoring) can also be fostered formally or informally within organizations. Mentoring usually occurs as a more senior member interacts with a more junior protégé (typically at least two organizational levels below the mentor) to advise, share lessons learned, and enhance career development and advancement. Through observing and interacting with mentors, developing leaders can expand their perceptions of key organizational challenges and strategies as well as enhance more microlevel interpersonal skills. Mentoring relations run the risk of failure, however, if the protégé becomes too dependent on the mentor. A Other important components of effective mentoring are the quality of the mentor and the mentoring experiences. Only recently have researchers begun to examine the effects of “marginal mentoring” (that is, mentors limited in terms of effectiveness but who still have value) on the performance and development of protégés.

Networking

To facilitate communication among functional areas and to build better social capital, organizations have implemented initiatives to foster the development and maintenance of work-related relationships. Initiatives such as regular lunches, electronic dialogue, and other social events at work can help individuals build their networks. Broad social networks are advantageous to leaders in expanding their resources with regard to knowing who has expertise in which particular domains (called *transactive memory*). Individuals can also develop broader and more complex ways of viewing problems and ways of working with others and can challenge basic assumptions through network relationships.

Outdoor Challenges

Outdoor challenges or wilderness training include challenging experiences, such as high- and low-ropes courses, orienteering, rappelling, and whitewater rafting. These experiences are designed to require collaboration, trust, and participation for successful performance and are aimed at encouraging individuals to

overcome risk-taking fears (intrapersonal) while enhancing teamwork skills (interpersonal). As such, they have a heavy affective component in terms of their effects on participants. While these initiatives are popular, little empirical evidence exists of the effectiveness of enhanced leadership on the job. One important obstacle to successful transfer is the difference between a wilderness setting and typical business environments.

Challenging Job Assignments

Challenging assignments within one’s current role as well as expatriate assignments, job rotation, and cross-unit rotation encourage the development of new skills, such as team building, strategic thinking, and social-influence skills. Complex cognitive and social skills can be developed when individuals are challenged or pushed beyond their comfort zones. These “stretch assignments” can facilitate self-awareness that can challenge how an individual learns, thinks, and interacts. Challenging job assignments are effective for development only when they are intentionally developmental and learning oriented, rather than solely focused on performance. An important consideration is to avoid potentially putting people “in over their heads,” resulting in feelings of helplessness, rather than encouraging development. Some attention should be given to the developmental readiness of the person to take on a new and significantly challenging job assignment, as well as helping the incumbent learn and develop from the challenge.

Action Learning

Often used in conjunction with challenging job assignments, action learning involves development through work-related organizational experiences. The approach is grounded in the assumption that people learn most effectively when dealing with work-related issues in real time, which heightens the relevance of the learning. Action learning is best described as a structured, continuous process of learning and reflection that also addresses a complex challenge of strategic importance to an organization. It is typically group or team based, includes aspects of coaching and mentoring, and has a specific focus on learning. The overall spirit of action learning is to help people learn and develop from their work, rather than taking them away from work to learn and develop. Techniques such as

journaling are often used in conjunction with action learning to facilitate reflection and keep the learning process intentional.

Because leadership is a complex interaction between the individual leaders and their social and organizational contexts, comprehensive developmental efforts need to be directed at (a) developing individual leaders, (b) developing broader interpersonal leadership capacity, and (c) linking the two. Leadership development practices also are generally more successful when linked to key strategic business imperatives. Effective development is less dependent on which specific practices are employed relative to how tightly tied the efforts are to intentional and consistent implementation. To implement effective developmental programs, organizations must overcome a tendency to allow development to become a haphazard process. This haphazard tendency can be addressed through intentionality, evaluation, accountability, and adopting a long-term focus.

INFLUENCING FACTORS

It is presumptuous to assume that the rate or nature of change will be the same for all leaders for any given developmental experience, and it certainly cannot be expected to be identical across entire careers. *Developmental readiness*, or how prepared an individual is to benefit from developmental experiences, provides a preliminary point for understanding development. Factors such as cognitive ability, motivation, and maturity influence an individual's preparedness. Some researchers suggest that developmental readiness may be related to a person's moral reasoning. More complex moral reasoning is associated with a greater reflexive capacity through which leaders are better able to "step back" to perceive how their actions affect others. In this sense, developmental readiness is related to one's capacity for self-awareness. Given individual differences in developmental readiness and existing abilities, some experiences or interventions might be better suited only to certain individuals. To maximize success of a leader developmental practice, a match may be required between an individual's readiness and existing abilities and specific experiences.

Environmental factors, within both the formal training context and work environment, are also important for facilitating the *transfer of training*, or the degree to which trainees apply to their jobs the knowledge, skills,

behaviors, and attitudes gained in training. Developmental experiences in the context of ongoing work provide an advantage over classroom programs because what is learned more readily transfers to the job. A supportive environment, in which individuals are encouraged to apply learned leadership skills, allowed to reflect on and adopt various leadership styles, and supported to continue their development, is critical for success. A recipe for failure includes sending a changed individual into an inflexible and unchangeable environment. Similarly, leadership is best developed in an environment characterized by safety and trust, support for learning and change, and a sense of purpose in which members are encouraged to work closely with each other.

CONCLUSION

A key to the effective development of leaders and leadership depends a great deal on implementation. All of the various developmental practices have some evidence of effectiveness. What is of utmost importance in making them work is how they are implemented. One consideration is how consistently and broadly the developmental initiatives are practiced. Instead of limiting development to top levels or "high-potential" executives, a more effective implementation strategy may be to introduce versions of the focal practices throughout all levels of an organization as a means of developing deeper leadership capacity. Another key to effective implementation is to link initiatives so that leadership development builds on leader development. Grounding developmental initiatives in an overall purpose tied to key strategic business challenges is one way to heighten the relevance of leadership development for better organizational performance. One caution is that development is a relatively long-term investment in the human and social capital of an organization. There are no proven shortcuts to leadership development, but the potential payoffs from a well-designed initiative with consistent implementation across organizational levels can provide a key for better overall individual, team, and organizational effectiveness.

—David V. Day and Michelle M. Harrison

See also Center for Creative Leadership, Human capital, Job challenge, Mentoring, Performance appraisal and feedback, Social capital, Three-hundred-sixty-degree (360°) evaluation

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LEARNING ORGANIZATION

The *learning organization* is a concept describing organizations in which learning and work are integrated in an ongoing and systematic fashion to sustain continuous improvement of the organization at three levels: individuals, work groups or teams, and the organization. A learning organization has the capacity to continuously learn and develop toward a collective vision. Learning is viewed as a strategic process that is embedded in the organization's system.

The concept of the learning organization has gained an increasing popularity since the early 1990s. There are many reasons explaining why it has attracted so much attention by both organizational scholars and practitioners. The first reason is the ever-changing environment faced by most organizations. Modern organizations operate in a world of growing technology, increased knowledge and skills, and global competition. They must continuously learn in order to survive and grow in this dynamic and competitive environment. Learning organization thus

describes an organization that has the capability to develop and renew itself on the basis of learning.

The second reason for the popularity of the concept of the learning organization relates to a changing economy. It has been widely recognized that society has entered into a "knowledge economy" in which the most sustainable competitive advantage for organizations comes from learning-related assets such as innovation and intellectual capital. Organizations previously relied on tangible assets, such as land, machinery, and financial capital, to compete in the marketplace. Although these tangible assets remain necessary resources in a knowledge economy, intangible assets such as innovations and new technologies have become increasingly valuable. Organizations must effectively utilize and develop human resources and make them more valuable than the traditionally valued physical and financial resources. Organizations have realized that acquiring and generating knowledge is a major means of enhancing competitive capability, as important to organizational performance as acquiring physical and financial resources. Meanwhile, many societies have embraced the concept of the learning organization, seeing it as essential in the transformation from a traditional labor-intensive economy to one that is based more on knowledge work.

The third reason that the learning organization has gained popularity has to do with the changing view of organizations. At one time, organizations were viewed as machinelike entities, with few tangible and fixed goals. For example, it was once thought that the ultimate goal for a manufacturer was to maximize profit for the owners by producing quality commodities, with little attention paid to the interests of other stakeholders, including consumers, the local community, and the broader society. In today's environment, organizations have multiple and even competing goals and interests and are properly viewed as organisms with different life cycles. Organizations with strong learning capabilities are more likely to survive in a fierce competitive environment and to fully develop themselves to meet their missions. Consequently, the concepts of learning and development become a key to better understanding organizations.

Closely related to the concept of learning organization is the notion of *organizational learning*. Although both of these concepts share the same terminology—learning and organization—they are used for different purposes and thus have different implications. Learning organization normally refers to specific

characteristics for an ideal organization, while organizational learning describes the processes or activities that are part of organizational change. Organizational learning occurs in all organizations, and it indicates how individuals, teams, and organizations learn and transform. In a learning organization, there is an enhanced capacity to adapt, learn, and develop. The learning organization is effective in managing, analyzing, developing, and strategically aligning with the goals of improvement and innovation. In addition, these two concepts can also be differentiated by their perspectives of organizations. The learning organization tends to be prescriptive, as it focuses on building an ideal organization with certain characteristics, whereas organizational learning tends to be descriptive. While organizational learning may merely require individuals in an organization to engage in continuous-learning activities, the learning organization demands a conscious effort of the organization to facilitate learning activities and build the capabilities of adaptation and development.

EVOLUTION OF THE LEARNING ORGANIZATION

The concept of the learning organization evolved from the tradition of organizational learning. The latter concept can be traced back to the early 1900s, when modern management theory started to establish its foundation. Frederick Taylor's theory of scientific management suggested that learning can be transferred to employees and subsequently improve the efficiency of the organization. Systematic research on organizational learning started as early as 1936, when researchers began studying organizational learning curves. The concept of a learning curve has demonstrated the value of learning for organizations.

In 1978, Chris Argyris, of Harvard University, and Donald Schön, of MIT, published the seminal *Organizational Learning*, which marked a new era in this field of study. These authors argued that organizations are not simple collections of individuals. Organizations are best viewed as systems of collective agents. Argyris and Schön suggested that learning involves the detection and correction of errors. When people face a situation in which something has gone wrong, their common initial reaction is to look for another strategy that can solve the problem. They tend to identify the solution within the governing framework. The problem-solving process can be characterized as

discovering the error source, inventing new strategies and problem-solving methods, and generalizing the new approach to other situations. This problem-solving process is called *single-loop learning*, in which people work within given goals, values, plans, and rules, and their task is to operationalize within a given governing framework rather than challenge or change it. An alternative approach is to question the governing framework, to subject it to critical scrutiny. This approach is described as *double-loop learning*. Such learning may then change the organization's existing culture, values, and norms and typically involves a transformative change of employees' frame of reference for their daily work.

During the early 1980s, studies on organizational learning focused on the types of learning and the behavioral changes resulting from the learning. Various studies were conducted, and models were proposed to explain the outcomes of learning. It was recognized that the outcomes of learning are highly associated with both the content and level of learning. In the mid-1980s, a new concept of lower- and higher-level learning was proposed, similar to the concept of single- and double-loop learning. It was recognized that behavioral change can occur without any cognitive influence. Similarly, employees can gain knowledge without any behavioral changes occurring. Higher-level learning involves the changes of cultures, values, and social norms within the organization. It has been revealed that long-term changes can be brought about only by higher-level or double-loop learning.

The concept of the learning organization really began to flourish in the late 1980s. Peter Senge added to the momentum with a widely read book, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, published in 1990. Senge defined the learning organization as one in which individuals' capacities to create desired results continually expand, new patterns of thinking are nurtured, and people learn together. By applying systems theory to the learning process in organizations, Senge formulated the core disciplines of building a learning organization: (a) team learning: emphasis on the learning activities of the group rather than the development of team process; (2) shared visions: the skill of finding shared "pictures of the future" that foster genuine commitment and enrollment, rather than compliance; (c) mental models: the deeply held internal images of how the world works; (d) personal mastery: the discipline of continually clarifying and deepening personal

vision, focusing energies, developing patience, and seeing reality objectively; and (e) system thinking: the ability to see interrelationships rather than linear cause-effect chains. The study of the learning organization has since received escalating attention in both business and academic fields.

The dawn of the twenty-first century has marked a new era in the study of the learning organization concept. A number of scientific studies have been conducted to operationalize, measure, and validate the concept; to examine its associations with other important organizational variables; and to incorporate this idea systematically into organizational change and development. Early on, many practitioners in organizations immediately grasped the idea of the learning organization and applied the concept in a pragmatic way. Such applications by and large tended to rely on intuitive approaches that lacked empirical evidence supporting their effectiveness. Over a decade later, a handful of empirical studies have suggested positive relationships between the learning organization and desirable outcomes, including financial performance, innovation, employees' job satisfaction, motivation to transfer learning, and less likelihood of employee turnover.

The new century also witnessed a significant conceptual advancement in understanding learning in organizations. Learning is no longer viewed as some simple behavioral or cognitive change taking place in isolated domains. The literature on organizational learning and learning organization traditionally covered two distinct streams, cognitive learning and behavioral learning, but paid little attention to the role of affect and emotion in learning. More recent research has given attention to affect and spiritual aspects of learning. This more holistic perspective posits that learning involves three interrelated learning domains—*affect, cognitive, and behavior*—driven by three distinctive forces—*liberty, rationality, and reality*. Learning as one kind of human action serves as a function of maintaining equilibrium among these driving forces. A learning organization is a dynamic system that involves different domains of learning and diverse types of knowledge. This perspective views organizations not only as information-processing and decision-making systems but also as social and political entities. Organizations are established on certain values, and they strive for specific visions and aspirations. Holistic theory identifies three key dimensions for organizational knowledge: the critical dimension

(as reflected in value and vision), the technical dimension (as indicated by formal system and strategy), and the practical dimension (as embedded in practice and process). It points out that it is more important to facilitate the dynamic interactions among the dimensions to foster a change in isolated domains. A learning organization is capable of integrating different domains of knowledge across the multiple of levels of the individual, the team, and the organization.

BUILDING A LEARNING ORGANIZATION

What does an organization have to do to become a learning organization? There are numerous writings on the process and strategies for building one. Research has identified seven distinct features of a learning organization at the individual, team, and organizational levels. These features and their implication are described in the following paragraphs.

First, a learning organization strives to create continuous learning opportunities for all members. Organizations wanting to embrace the learning organization ideals need to structure learning as part of the work so that employees can learn on the job. They also need to provide opportunities for ongoing education and growth. Learning organizations have a culture that values continuous learning and development and encourages people to discuss mistakes openly in order to learn from them. Employees not only help each other but also identify skills and knowledge needed for future work. In addition, the organization supports learning by providing time and rewards for it. Under a strong culture of learning, people view problems in their work as opportunities to learn, instead of as obstacles.

Second, a learning organization promotes inquiry and dialogue and thus creates a culture of questioning, feedback, and experimentation, in which people give open and honest feedback to each other. They listen to others' views and different perspectives. They are encouraged to ask "why?" regardless of their rank in the organization. A culture of respect and trust is needed to build a learning organization.

Third, a learning organization encourages collaboration and team learning. To build a learning culture, organizations must design work using a team or group structure to access different models of thinking. Teams and groups are expected to learn and work together. A learning culture values and rewards collaboration and uses a team approach to problem solving. Teams and

groups can revise their thinking as a result of group discussion or information collection. They also have the freedom to adapt their goals as needed.

Fourth, a learning organization empowers people toward a collective vision. The organization is strongly motivated to create and share a collective vision and to obtain feedback from its members about the gap between the current status and the new vision, and its members are involved in setting, owning, and implementing the common vision. The organization recognizes individuals for taking initiative and supports employees who take calculated risks. Employees have control over resources they need to accomplish their tasks, and they are willing to contribute to the organization's vision.

Fifth, a learning organization establishes appropriate systems to capture and share learning and gather and share information. To nurture a learning culture, the organization must make the lessons it has learned available to all its members. It creates systems for measuring the gap between current and expected performance and transfers that gap into learning.

Sixth, a learning organization connects well to its internal and external environments. It works with the outside community to meet mutual needs and helps its members scan the environment and use information to adjust work practices. A learning organization encourages people to see the effects of the environment on the entire organization.

Last, a learning organization provides strategic leadership for learning. Leaders model, champion, and support a strong culture of learning. Leadership of the organization uses learning strategically to fulfill its mission.

To summarize, a learning organization has a strong capacity for integrating people and structures in order to move toward continuous learning and development for a shared vision.

—Baiyin Yang

See also Knowledge work, Team-based work

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LEARNING STYLES

The term *learning styles* refers to the preferences that an individual has regarding the organization of information. How people actually learn is a question that is best answered by considering a particular person's preferred learning style. There are many instruments available that can guide individuals in identifying their preferred learning styles. Furthermore, research with those instruments has potential for identifying some "best practices" for teaching students with specific learning preferences.

Learning-style research has its roots in the work of Carl Jung and David Kolb. Both psychologists developed models useful for classifying learning styles; however, much of the contemporary work on learning styles developed from Kolb's 1983 study of "Learning supports learning" as a cyclical process. He described a process through which concrete experience is followed by reflection and observation, which then leads to the formulation of abstract concepts and generalizations, the implications of which are tested in new situations through active experimentation.

Kolb identified four main styles of learner and developed his Learning Style Inventory (LSI) to establish an individual's relative emphasis on each of the four styles. Kolb's LSI is based on the work of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget. John Dewey emphasized the need for learning to be

grounded in experience. Kurt Lewin stressed the importance of active learning, and Jean Piaget articulated a theory of intelligence as the result of the interaction of a person and his or her environment.

Kolb's learning style model separated learners on the basis of four steps of learning defined from a two-dimensional model. The first dimension is based on task, and the second dimension is based on the soul or ego. The dimension based on task ranges from performing tasks to observing tasks. The soul or ego dimension ranges from logical (left brain) to creative and emotional (right brain). The model is usually shown with the task dimension displayed horizontally and the soul dimension displayed vertically. The four resulting quadrants are labeled with four steps to learning and four personal learning styles. The four steps to learning are labeled (1) concrete experience, (2) reflective observation, (3) abstract conceptualization, and (4) active experimentation. The four personal learning styles are (1) theorists, (2) pragmatists, (3) activists, and (4) reflectors.

An LSI high score on *concrete experience* represents an open, experience-based approach to learning that relies on feeling-based judgments. These learners generally find theoretical approaches to be unhelpful and prefer to treat each situation as a unique case. They learn best from specific examples. The instructor serves as a coach/helper for this self-directed autonomous learner. Students scoring high on *reflective observation* indicate an impartial and reflective approach to learning. They prefer lectures and look for an instructor who is both a taskmaster and a guide. A high score on *abstract conceptualization* indicates an analytical, conceptual approach to learning relying on logical thinking and rational evaluation. These learners prefer authority-directed, impersonal learning situations that focus on theory and systematic analysis. Case studies, theoretical readings, and reflective-thinking exercises are the best vehicles to use with these learners. Finally, a high score on *active experimentation* indicates an active "doing" orientation relying heavily on experimentation for learning. These learners prefer projects, homework, and group discussions and show a clear dislike for lectures.

The personal learning style labeled *theorist* represents a person who likes to learn using abstract conceptualization and reflective observation. Theorists' strength lies in the ability to create theoretical models. They prefer case studies, theory readings, and thinking alone. This learning style is characteristic of those

gravitating toward basic science and mathematics. The theorist adapts and integrates observations into complex but logically sound theories. They think problems through in a vertical, step-by-step, logical way and assimilate disparate facts into coherent theories. They tend to be perfectionists who won't rest until things are tidy and fit into a rational scheme. They like to analyze and synthesize and are keen on basic assumptions, principles, theories, models, and systems of thinking. Their philosophy prizes rationality and logic. Questions they frequently ask are "Does it make sense?" "How does this fit with that?" and "What are the basic assumptions?" They tend to be detached, analytical, and dedicated to rational objectivity rather than anything subjective or ambiguous. Their approach to problems is consistently logical. This is their "mental set," and they rigidly reject anything that doesn't fit with it. They prefer to maximize certainty and feel uncomfortable with subjective judgments, lateral thinking, and anything flippant.

Pragmatists like to learn using abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. Their strength lies in the practical application of ideas. They prefer laboratories, fieldwork, and observation. This learning style is characteristic of individuals specializing in the physical sciences. The pragmatist is keen on trying out ideas, theories, and techniques to see whether they work in practice. They positively search out new ideas and take the first opportunity to experiment with applications. Within organizations, pragmatists are the people who return from management courses brimming with new ideas that they want to try out in practice. They like to get on with things and act quickly and confidently on ideas that attract them. They tend to be impatient with ruminating and open-ended discussions. They are essentially practical, down-to-earth people who like making practical decisions and solving problems. They respond to problems and opportunities "as a challenge." The pragmatist's philosophy says, "There is always a better way," and "If it works, it's good."

Individuals with an *activist* personal learning style use concrete experimentation and active experimentation. Their strength lies in doing things and involving themselves in new experiences. They prefer practicing a skill, problem solving, small-group discussions, and peer feedback. This learning style is characteristic of individuals who choose technical or practical fields, such as business. Activist learners involve themselves fully and without bias in new experiences. They enjoy

the “here and now” and are happy to be dominated by immediate experiences. They are open-minded and not skeptical, and this tends to make them enthusiastic about anything new. Their philosophy is, “I’ll try anything once.” They tend to act first and consider the consequences afterward, and they tackle problems by brainstorming. As soon as the excitement from one activity has died down, they are busy looking for the next. They tend to thrive on the challenge of new experiences but are bored with implementation and longer-term consolidation. Activist learners are gregarious people constantly involving themselves with others, but in doing so, they seek to center all activities on themselves.

Reflectors use reflective observation and concrete experience. Their strength lies in their ability to imagine. They prefer lectures with much reflection time and an instructor who provides expert interpretation. This learning style is characteristic of individuals who choose humanities and liberal arts. Reflectors like to stand back to ponder experiences and observe them from many different perspectives. They collect data both firsthand and from others and prefer to think about information thoroughly before coming to any conclusion. The thorough collection and analysis of data about experiences and events are what counts, so they tend to postpone reaching definitive conclusions for as long as possible. Their philosophy is to be cautious. They are thoughtful people who like to consider all possible angles and implications before making their own points. They tend to adopt a low profile and have a slightly distant, tolerant, unruffled air about them. When they act, it is part of a wide picture that includes the past as well as the present and others’ observations as well as their own.

Although many specific recommendations can be derived from the work on learning styles, the most important factor to consider in designing and delivering education is to provide products that tap multiple learning dimensions for a particular content area. The following represent some of the most utilized instruments for assessing and understanding individual differences in learning. Components of Kolb’s work can be identified in most of the instrument descriptions that follow.

The Gregorc Differentiator is designed specifically for adult use. It was developed as a self-analysis tool to aid individuals in recognizing and identifying the channels through which they receive and express information effectively and efficiently. Anthony Gregorc’s model uses a Concrete-Abstract continuum, representing

perception, as well as a Sequential-Random continuum, representing ordering, which results in four identified learning style preferences: (1) Concrete/Sequential, CS; (2) Concrete/Random, CR; (3) Abstract/Sequential, AS; and (4) Abstract/Random, AR.

CS individuals see themselves as objective, persistent, careful with detail, realistic, thorough, and logical. They tend to be perfectionists and choose order and seek proof or multisolutions. The CS is product oriented rather than person oriented. Hands-on learning and accredited experts are helpful to learning.

CR individuals see themselves as intuitive, experimenting, creative, troubleshooting, and risk taking. They are concerned with multisolutions and innovation. Demonstrations and personal proof, rather than outside authority, are helpful to learning.

AS individuals see themselves as evaluative, analytical, logical, concerned with ideas, and oriented to research rather than perfectionism. They are concerned with quality and see themselves as judges. Knowledge facts and documentation are helpful to learning.

AR individuals see themselves as sensitive, evaluative, intuitive, aware, not careful with detail, and spontaneous. They are concerned with research and risk taking. They are person oriented rather than product oriented. AR individuals appreciate self-directed learning.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is another tool for measuring personal learning preferences. The first of the four preference scales measured through the MBTI is Extraversion (E) versus Introversion (I). This preference indicates how people “charge their batteries.” *Introverts* find energy in the inner world of ideas, concepts, and abstractions. They can be sociable but need quiet to recharge their batteries. *Introverts* want to understand the world. *Introverts* are concentrators and reflective thinkers. For the introvert, there is no impression without reflection. *Extroverts* find energy in things and people. They prefer interactions with others and are action oriented. *Extroverts* are interactors and “on-the-fly” thinkers.

The second scale is Sensing (S) versus Intuition (N). *Sensing people* are detail oriented, want facts, and trust them. *Intuitive people* seek out patterns and relationships among the facts they have gathered. They trust hunches and their intuitions and look for the “big picture.” They see patterns where others see randomness or chaos.

The third scale is Thinking (T) versus Feeling (F). *Thinking individuals* value fairness. They choose to

make decisions impersonally based on analysis, logic, and principle. *Feeling individuals* value harmony, and they focus on human values and needs as they make decisions or arrive at judgments. They tend to be good at persuasion and facilitating differences among group members.

The final MBTI scale is Judging (J) versus Perceptive (P). *Judging people* tend to be decisive, planful, and self-regimented. They focus on completing the task, want to know only the essentials, and take action quickly. *Perceptive people* are curious, adaptable, and spontaneous. They start many tasks, want to know everything about each task, and often find it difficult to complete a task.

An instrument helpful to studying learning in a college-student environment is the Grasha and Reichmann Student Learning Style Scales. Anthony Grasha and Sheryl Reichmann developed the Grasha-Reichmann Learning Style Scales (GRSLSS) in 1974 to determine college students' styles of classroom participation. Their model focuses on student attitudes toward learning, classroom activities, teachers, and peers. Six styles are identified: (1) *avoidant students* tend to have high absenteeism, organize their work poorly, receive grades at the lower end of the grade distribution, and take little responsibility for their learning; (2) *participative students* are characterized as willing to accept responsibility for self-learning, and they relate well to their peers; (3) *competitive students* can be described as suspicious of their peers, leading to competition for rewards and recognition; (4) *collaborative students* enjoy working harmoniously with their peers; (5) *dependent students* typically become frustrated when facing new challenges not directly addressed in the classroom; and (6) *independent students* prefer to work alone and require little direction from the instructor. There are two forms of the instrument; one for general class responses and one for use with a specific course. Each instrument has 90 questions, 15 questions per style. Subjects respond to each statement on a 5-point *disagree-agree* scale, with *agreement* being 5. Scale scores range from 15 to 75, where the highest score is considered to be the preference for a student. As with most scales, it is noted that anyone can demonstrate any style given an appropriate environment. Nonetheless, the scale identifies a preference for classroom behavior.

Howard Gardner provided a framework that recognizes several intelligences and suggested that people use one or two to maximize their personal learning. The U.S. culture teaches to, tests, and rewards primarily two

kinds of intelligence: verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical. However, Gardner asserts that there are at least six other kinds of intelligence that are equally important. The full list includes verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist.

Verbal-linguistic intelligence is marked by individuals, such as poets, being sensitive to the meaning and order of words. *Logical-mathematical intelligence* is defined as the ability to handle chains of reasoning and recognize patterns and orders, as scientists do. *Musical intelligence* is recognized as sensitivity to pitch, melody, rhythm, and tone, as composers do. *Spatial intelligence* is defined as the ability to perceive the world accurately and to trying to re-create or transform aspects of that world, as do sculptors and airline pilots. *Bodily kinesthetic intelligence* reflects the ability to use the body skillfully and handle objects adroitly, as do athletes and dancers. *Interpersonal intelligence* reflects an understanding of people and relationships, as salespersons or teachers have. *Intrapersonal intelligence* is demonstrated by those who possess access to their emotional lives as a means of understanding themselves and others, exhibited by individuals with accurate views of themselves. Finally, *naturalist intelligence* is connected to the intricacies and subtleties in nature.

According to Gardner's multiple intelligences theory, the intelligences are not necessarily dependent on each other, but they rarely operate in isolation. According to Gardner, all normal individuals possess varying degrees of each of these intelligences. However, the ways in which intelligences combine and blend are as varied as the personalities of individuals.

Putting learning styles together, it must be noted that no single measurement of style ensures that a learner's needs will be met. Those who wish to teach with student learning as their goal need to build an adaptable learning environment that presents material in a variety of methods.

—Debra Arvanites

See also Continuing professional education; Intelligence, schooling, and occupational success; Learning organization; Lifelong learning

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LEISURE INTERESTS

Generally, the study of *leisure interests*, unlike the decades of work with vocational interests, has been confounded by the way in which such interests are measured. Instruments designed to assess vocational interests (e.g., Strong Interest Inventory, Self-Directed Search, Campbell Interest and Skill Survey) ask respondents to indicate the extent to which they like or do not like work-related activities. The instructions for these instruments encourage respondents not to worry about (a) their ability to do the activity, (b) how often they have done the activity in the past, or (c) how often they expect to engage in the activity in the future. The study of leisure, on the other hand, often focuses on the assessment of leisure needs and leisure participation, which, in turn, are used to infer leisure interests.

The stream of research related to leisure needs typically asks people why they participate in or why they enjoy various leisure activities. Responses then are used to identify clusters or factors of needs. These studies show that different types of activities meet different needs. Leisure needs that frequently emerge in these analyses include social interaction, altruism, status, excitement, achievement, and independence. The Leisure Activity Questionnaire (LAQ), a 334-item instrument that measures 45 need-satisfier dimensions,

has been shown to have potential as a measure of leisure needs.

Certainly, the need-gratifying property of leisure activities is an important component of understanding the impact of leisure participation on well-being and life satisfaction. However, research in vocational psychology has shown that interests and needs make a unique contribution to differentiating among people even though they are moderately related constructs.

Another stream of leisure research has relied heavily on cluster or factor analyses of self-reports of leisure participation to develop a classification system for leisure activities. These studies typically have been limited by the presentation of a relatively restricted number of activities. Nonetheless, some common themes do emerge from this line of research. For example, a factor representing artistic, intellectual, and cultural activities usually emerges. Likewise, sports and outdoor activities often are identified as a factor. Other factors, such as social/affiliative interests, replicate less often across studies, perhaps because of deficiencies in the initial pool of activities to which individuals respond or because actual participation in activities is used as a stand-in for the construct of leisure interests. The Leisure Activities Blank (LAB) is an example of an instrument that measures past participation as well as expectations for future participation in leisure and recreational activities.

More recently, efforts have been made to assess leisure interests in the same manner used to measure vocational interests. In this approach, participants are instructed to indicate the degree to which they like, are indifferent to, or dislike a wide variety of leisure activities. The leisure interest scales were constructed first using a series of cluster analyses to reduce the initial large-item pool and then using factor analyses to identify the underlying structure of the item pool. The resulting inventory, the Leisure Interest Questionnaire (LIQ), has 20 leisure scales derived from 250 items.

STABILITY OF LEISURE INTERESTS

One of the well-known characteristics of vocational interests is their stability over long periods of time. One might expect, then, that leisure interests also will be stable over long periods and that these interests, analogous to vocational interests, will represent a component of an individual's psychological identity. Stability in the leisure context has been examined in several ways, including studies that

assess the extent to which leisure participation is stable over seasons of the year or the degree of stability of leisure participation across settings. A few studies also have looked at the stability of leisure interests of individuals over various time intervals. The stability coefficients vary depending on the specific leisure interest. For example, the most stable leisure interests (test-retest correlation over a 2-year interval of about .70) center on individual and team sports, camping and outdoor activities, hunting and fishing, dancing, partying, cultural arts, and shopping. Modest stability ($r = .50$) over the same time period is found for socializing, community activities, culinary pursuits, adventure sports, and cards and games. Vocational interests, in contrast, show relatively uniform stability across the domain, and over a three-year period of time, test-retest coefficients hover around .80. This suggests that leisure interests may be more age related than vocational interests and that leisure interests may be affected more by circumstances (e.g., financial resources or physical health).

STRUCTURE OF LEISURE INTERESTS

Factor analyses of leisure scale scores generally identify four underlying factors: (1) artistic and intellectual (e.g., cultural arts, arts and crafts, culinary pursuits, gardening and nature, literature and writing, dancing, and community involvement); (2) competition and sports (e.g., cards and games, team sports, individual sports); (3) social (e.g., socializing, partying, and shopping); and (4) outdoors (e.g., hunting and fishing, camping, and adventure sports). These factors seem to capture some but not all leisure needs (e.g., intellectual aestheticism, companionship, physical exercise).

Research that has examined the relation between leisure interests and Holland's six vocational personality types generally finds convergence of leisure interests on three of the six types (i.e., correlations of .40 to .75): Realistic (outdoor and mechanical activities), related to building and hunting and fishing; Artistic (aesthetic activities), related to cultural arts, literature and writing, arts and crafts, and dancing; and Social (helping others), related to community involvement and socializing. Leisure interests that have modest correlations (i.e., correlations of .30 to .35) with Holland's vocational types include gardening and nature and cards and games, related to Investigative (science and research); individual and

team sports and partying, related to Enterprising (business); and Conventional (attention to detail), related to computer activities.

Research using multidimensional-scaling analysis to map the pattern of relationships among leisure activities suggests a two-dimensional solution. One very robust dimension reflects expressive versus instrumental activities. The interpretation of the second dimension suggests either social affiliative versus nonaffiliative activities or active versus sedentary activities.

LEISURE, CAREERS, AND LIFE SATISFACTION

Over time, theorists such as Donald Super, whose work is in the vocational domain, and Douglas Kleiber and John Kelly, whose work is in the leisure domain, have viewed leisure as an important component in their developmental models. More recently, vocational and occupational health psychologists have come to understand the importance of leisure for well-being and life satisfaction and the role that leisure counseling can play in career counseling. The assessment of leisure interests can play an important role in this counseling process, providing the tools necessary for clients to better understand themselves and their own proclivities for recreation.

—Jo-Ida C. Hansen

See also Interests, Lifestyle preferences

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LIFE STYLE INVENTORY

The Level I: *Life Style Inventory* (LSI) was originally developed by J. Clayton Lafferty in 1973. The Level I: LSI is described as a self-assessment of 12 different thinking and behavioral styles of interest to members of work organizations. This form of the LSI has a total of 240 items, with 20 items assessing each of the 12 thinking and behavioral styles. The responses range from 0 (*essentially unlike you*) to 2 (*strongly like you—most of the time*). This inventory has been used by career counselors to assess the relative emphasis a client places on work-related cognitive and behavioral styles. This instrument is also employed by management consultants to enhance the performance of groups by providing a method of assessing and selecting leaders based on their interpersonal orientations. Furthermore, the Level I: LSI has been used to perform a longitudinal assessment of beneficial attitudinal change in students enrolled in a professional master's program in managerial leadership.

Lafferty theorized that there are 12 lifestyles and based the development of his instrument on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs as well as on the views of other needs theorists and psychologists. Instead of using Maslow's proposal that needs are organized hierarchically, Lafferty theorized that his 12 lifestyles formed a circumplex; thus, the hypothetical structure could be construed as a circular ordering of the variables, similar to the way in which hours are positioned on a clock. The variables were ordered as follows: Humanistic/Helpful was found at 1 o'clock, followed by Affiliative, Approval, Conventional, Dependence, Apprehension, Oppositional, Power, Competitive, Perfectionist, Achievement, and, finally, Self-Actualization at the 12 o'clock position. The lifestyles placed adjacent to each other are considered to be highly related. More recent studies have demonstrated that the 12 scales load on three factors: people/security, satisfaction, and task/security orientations.

In 1976, Lafferty developed the Level II version of the LSI: *Description by Others*, a parallel inventory allowing four to five other individuals to assess the individual of interest with reference to the same 12 thinking and behavioral styles. Lafferty developed this second inventory to respond to findings that people may confound self-perceptions with an idealized style of thinking and behaviors; in other words, people tend to report that they act in the way that they feel they

“should” act, rather than report their actual behavior. The Level II: LSI allows for the individual of interest to receive feedback from others, making available to the individual information about how his or her behavior is perceived by others. As a result, the individual can compare his or her intentions with the perceptions of others. When used for the purpose of management training and development, feedback generated from the Level II form adds an important dimension to the information provided by the Level I form. This feedback from coworkers and subordinates can provide individuals with insights regarding the inferences made by others pertaining to their thinking and behavioral styles.

—Carrie H. Robinson

See also FIRO-B, Three-hundred-sixty-degree (360°) evaluation

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LIFE-CAREER RAINBOW

Career-development theorists tend to ignore one of the most basic facts of life—that while people are busy making a living, they are living a life. The result is that many theorists describe career development as if it occurred in isolation from human development. Isolating life roles creates a false scenario that does not reflect life as people live it. Career interventions emanating from false scenarios have limited usefulness as clients leave career counseling and attempt to implement their work-related decisions within a complex web of life-role activities. When career counselors ignore their clients' multiple life-role activities, they also ignore the fact that life roles can interact in ways that are supportive, supplementary, complementary, or conflicting. Life roles can enrich life or overburden it. Donald Super noted that for each person, the social

elements that constitute a life are arranged in a pattern of core and peripheral roles. This pattern is defined as the *life structure*. The life structure organizes and channels the person's engagement in society. To understand an individual's career, it is important to know and appreciate the web of life roles that embeds that individual and her or his career concerns.

Increasingly, career-counseling clients, especially adult clients, present for career counseling due to life structure concerns. For example, in career counseling, an adult client may come to understand that her conflict regarding selecting a more satisfying career option is connected to the pressure she experiences as a parent of young children. Similarly, the young adult college student may desperately desire to switch her academic major from engineering to education but is afraid to do so because she does not want to disappoint her parents, who seem intent on their daughter's becoming an engineer. Rarely do decisions about work occur in isolation from other life-role experiences.

Life-structure concerns can involve normal developmental processes (such as the college student attempting to sort out career decisions within the individuation process), but they can also involve unexpected and traumatic life events (e.g., unexpected job loss). Developmental life-structure concerns are predictable (e.g., the graduating college student must prepare for "life after college") and therefore can be addressed via career counselors constructing developmental career-intervention programs. Professional counselors in the schools take this approach when they offer evening programs for parents and students regarding topics such as financial aid for postsecondary education, college planning, and career fairs. Counselors in higher education do the same when they offer workshops on selecting a major for first- and second-year university students and job-search workshops for fourth-year students. Career interventions such as these seek to address the predictable career-development tasks Super outlined in his life stage theory segment.

Life-structure concerns can also be unpredictable, as when a partner or parent dies unexpectedly, a serious illness arises, an unplanned job loss occurs, or an injury requires a substantial shift in life-role activities (although these examples are not necessarily equal in the trauma they generate, they each require adjustments to one's life structure). Interventions at these times tend to be more therapeutic (than what is typically required to address developmental concerns) and

often require individual career-counseling interventions. Collectively, developmental and traumatic events influence the life structure throughout the life span, making life-role choices and adjustment to choices continuous processes.

In describing the life structure, Super identified nine primary life roles: child, student, worker, partner, parent, citizen, homemaker, leisurite, and pensioner. He also noted that each life role tends to be played in a particular theater, such as the home, school, work, or community. In today's environment, life roles are often played in multiple theaters. For example, laptop computers make it possible to work in a park or at home. The role of student can be played at school or at home, as in the case of Web-based training courses. Thus, the fluidity of life-role activities has increased to the point where individual theaters commonly contain multiple roles. This fluidity makes balancing life-role activity an even greater challenge.

The blurring of boundaries between roles and theaters also requires us to be intentional in our life-role behavior and, at times, to communicate our intentions to others. For example, engaging in conversation with a friend may be acceptable when we are enjoying a leisurely latté in a coffee shop, but not acceptable when we have chosen the coffee shop as the location for completing a business report in a timely manner. It may be difficult for one's friends to know the life role (worker or leisurite) one is engaging in unless they are told. The blurring of boundaries between roles and theaters requires a greater emphasis on communicating our activities to others.

USING THE LIFE-CAREER RAINBOW

As implied, life roles influence each other, so the same job will hold different meanings for two individuals who live in different situations. Career counselors help their clients clarify and articulate the interests, abilities, and values they seek to express in the life roles that are important or salient to them. Role salience comprises cognitive, behavioral, and affective dimensions. Salience is strongest when we have knowledge about a life role (cognitive), participate in it (behavioral), and feel that the role is important (affective). When one dimension is weak, the implication is that salience is weaker. For example, if it is stated that a life role is important (e.g., leisure) but we know little about it and spend little time participating in it, the implication is that salience for that

role is weak. When the three dimensions of role salience hold similar levels of importance for a particular role, career interventions often focus on helping clients identify outlets for engaging in that life role. When any of the dimensions of role salience are discordant, career interventions often address the reasons for this discordance. For example, if the affective dimension is strong but the behavioral dimension is weak (i.e., the client says that he feels the role is important to him but does not spend time in that life role), career counseling focuses on factors underlying this discrepancy. Solutions for the client may lie in adjusting one dimension or the other (e.g., the role is not as important as he thought, or the role is important and he needs to find opportunities for greater engagement in the role).

To address such issues related to the life structure, Super devised the *Life-Career Rainbow*. The Rainbow provides a graphic device that merges Super's "life-span, life-space" theory segments. There are multiple dimensions to the Rainbow. The outer band of the Rainbow depicts the longitudinal dimension (i.e., life span) of career development. It begins in the lower left, with birth, and proceeds to move left to right across the Rainbow chronologically, often extending three to five years into the person's future. This reflects what Super labeled as the *maxicycle* of career development. Although this dimension of the Rainbow was initially connected to the career-development stages of Growth (childhood), Exploration (adolescence), Establishment (young adulthood), Maintenance (middle adulthood), and Disengagement (late adulthood), it is now acknowledged that career development in adulthood rarely proceeds in a linear fashion and that the stages tend to be a reflection, regardless of age, of the multiple career-development tasks confronting people (sometimes concurrently) as they attempt to manage their careers throughout the life span. Thus, age becomes more relevant than stage within the Life-Career Rainbow activity, and career-development tasks provide indications of the career resources clients need to effectively cope with the challenges they confront.

Above the Rainbow, and at the center, Super identifies the situational determinants (e.g., history, socioeconomic status, family of origin, country of residence) that influence our life-role self-concepts and life-role activities. Below the Rainbow, and at the center, Super identifies the personal determinants that influence our development (e.g., psychological and biological

factors). Collectively, personal and situational determinants remind us that context influences careers. Personal and situational factors interact to shape our life-role self-concepts and to present us with career-development tasks, with which we must successfully cope to manage our career development effectively.

Career counselors use the Rainbow in individual and group career counseling. The starting point involves asking clients to construct their personal Rainbows. Beginning with birth, clients construct individual strands for each life role in which they have participated. Clients proceed to construct the strands of their Rainbow from the past to the present. The size of a strand increases or decreases at any point in time to reflect the person's degree of involvement in the role at specific points in time (e.g., leisure may decrease as work involvement increases and parenting becomes a part of a person's life structure).

Career counselors often focus on exploring clients' experiences of their current life structures as reflected in their Life-Career Rainbows. Exploring what clients find satisfying or dissatisfying about their current life structures often provides important information as to how clients would like to move forward in their lives. Introducing interests, abilities, and values into the process can occur when the career counselor asks the client to consider the interests, abilities, and values reflected in the life-role activities depicted in the client's Rainbow. When life-role activities restrict the expression of these core client characteristics, the client is encouraged to identify outlets for increasing the expression of core interests, abilities, and values in current and future life-role activities.

Projecting the Rainbow three to five years into the future also stimulates goal-related discussions in career counseling that seek to identify opportunities for engaging in life-role activities that provide outlets for interests, abilities, and values expression. Providing the client with stimulus questions related to life-role activities the client would prefer to increase and/or decrease is an important activity for constructing the future Rainbow. Then, the counselor and client identify strategies for increasing the probability of the future Rainbow occurring. Short-term and long-term steps are identified.

Additional career-counseling questions for clients to consider when reviewing their Life-Career Rainbow include the following:

How do you spend your time during a typical week?

How important are the different roles of life to you?

What activities do you engage in to learn more about the life roles that are important to you?

What do you like about participating in each of the life roles?

What life roles do you think will be important to you in the future?

What do you hope to accomplish in each life role that will be important to you in the future?

What life roles do members of your family play?

What do your family members expect you to accomplish in each life role you play?

CONCLUSION

Effective life-role participation is difficult to achieve. Conflicting life-role demands make effective life-role participation seem like a moving target. Life is best when life roles nurture each other and offer opportunities for people to express their core interests, abilities, and values. Life becomes stressful when life roles collide and provide little opportunity for expressing core characteristics. Super contended that the life structure, once designed, is not static; it runs a developmental course and then needs redesign. The Life-Career Rainbow embraces this fact by providing a vehicle for focusing on how clients structure the basic roles of work, play, friendship, and family into a life.

—Spencer G. Niles

See also Crystallization of the vocational self-concept, Personal Globe Inventory, Self-awareness, Self-concept, Super's career development theory

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LIFELONG LEARNING

Lifelong learning is the facilitation of learning, growth, and development across the life span. It has also been referred to as *lifelong education*, and it is typically seen as reflective of a "learning society" or a "knowledge society." Examples of lifelong learning include retraining adults for new jobs and new industries, informal and nonformal learning, leisure learning, activism, and continuing education. Lifelong learning is a concept embraced by most educators based on the belief that learning and growth will continue across the life span as a hallmark of adulthood; its goal is to make education accessible and involve individuals throughout the life span.

The concept of lifelong learning is at least three decades old, becoming a popular concept in the 1960s and 1970s and reemerging the 1990s. As John Field observed, lifelong learning in the 1960s and 1970s was a humanistic and even radical concept, but since the 1990s, it has become increasingly based on economic needs and conservative in its implications. Since the 1960s, many industrialized countries have seen a continued increase in adult participation in lifelong education, and in some cases, the participation has increased faster than participation in formal education programs.

Although the first major work on lifelong education was Basil Yeaxlee's *Lifelong Education*, published in 1929, it was not until the 1970s that international organizations began to advocate the ideas of lifelong learning and the learning society. And only since the 1990s have these concepts received attention in national policy.

Lifelong learning is the notion that all adults should have access to ongoing education. Researchers have long advocated the value of lifelong learning as important in professional and vocational accomplishment in an age of increasing complexity. It is viewed as a mechanism to assist individuals in obtaining the capabilities and knowledge that allows adaptation to different work situations and career and life stages. In this sense, adult and continuing-education programs form an essential link in the overall framework of lifelong learning. As William Maehl observed, lifelong learning is a functioning system of values, policies, organizations, and processes intended to provide individuals with access, opportunities, and services to support their learning from infancy to old age. Lifelong learning is viewed as

broader than adult education because of its “cradle-to-grave” focus, which incorporates both public schooling and adult and continuing education.

The objective of lifelong learning is to help adults build the skills and knowledge to help them adapt to life stages and changes. Adult continuing education is an essential and popular part of lifelong learning; indeed, adult and continuing-education enroll more individuals than K-12 and higher education combined in the United States. Although lifelong learning is often thought of as an adult enterprise, its advocates recommend that lifelong learning begin early in the public schools.

Malcom Tigh outlined Arthur Cropley’s concepts underlying lifelong education that facilitate lifelong learning:

Lifelong learning would last the whole life of each individual.

Lifelong learning would lead to the systematic acquisition, renewal, upgrading, and completion of knowledge, skills and attitudes, as became necessary in response to the constantly changing conditions of modern life, with the ultimate goal of promoting the self-fulfillment of each individual.

Lifelong learning would be dependent for its successful implementation on people’s increasing ability and motivation to engage in self-directed learning activities.

Lifelong learning would acknowledge the contribution of all available educational influences, including formal, nonformal, and informal.

Tigh noted that these concepts suggest key features about lifelong learning, including that lifelong learning is justified by keeping pace with change, linked to economic and social requirements, dependent on individuals taking charge of their learning, oriented toward self-fulfillment, and reliant on the involvement of educational providers.

D. W. Livingstone identified three dimensions of lifelong learning, including formal schooling, continuing education, and informal learning. Livingstone also noted that there are different approaches to lifelong learning, including instrumentalist, transformative, and inclusive facilitative. *Instrumentalist learning* is usually designed and controlled by groups with power. For instance, organizational management dictates much of the formal learning that occurs in the workplace. Knowledge sharing in this context serves the productivity needs of the organization but might

ignore the needs of the individual. *Transformative* approaches are initiated by the less powerful to initiate social change. For instance, labor unions might organize training programs to help workers resist management activities. The third approach, *inclusive facilitative*, designs educational programs that are representative of groups or cater to individual adult learners, such as joint labor-management education or self-directed learning.

The quest for lifelong learning is characteristic of advanced capitalist societies, and although it may have begun with a more humanistic and emancipating intent, lifelong learning today has shifted more toward the vocational in a knowledge economy. The very shift from the more traditional term *lifelong education* to *lifelong learning* indicates a move toward a more work- or worker-based view and away from the humanistic perspective.

THE GLOBAL LEARNING SOCIETY

A *learning society* is defined as one in which nearly all social institutions have a learning dimension and a responsibility for individual growth and development. The “information age” has made continuous learning more important than ever. In the United States, the Lifelong Learning Act was intended to provide hope to those who are in economically difficult or disadvantaged circumstances, including people who are unemployed or workers whose jobs are becoming obsolete. Lifelong learning is a necessary step toward making the lives of all people more rewarding and more productive.

The Devors Commission in 1996 called for the creation of a global “learning community,” with lifelong learning as a key concept. Lifelong learning is becoming more important to policymakers concerned with globalizing economies. The importance of a learning society is evident given the pace of technological and social change that must be kept up with in order to function effectively in life.

Lifelong learning helps individuals, and the global economy depends on it. Indeed, employers’ investments in lifelong learning, particularly the instrumental form, have increased dramatically. As reported by Livingstone in 1983, approximately 25 percent of U.S. employees reported receiving training after being hired. In 1991, over 50 percent reported having received training during the prior two years. By 1993, over 70 percent of employers were offering some type

of training. Today, at the start of the twenty-first century, nearly all major employers must invest in employee learning and development to stay competitive in the global economy.

Livingstone considers the interest in lifelong learning in advanced capitalist societies to have taken a “quantum leap” since the 1970s, based on the increasingly pervasive general assumption that people will have to intensify their learning efforts to keep up with the rapidly growing knowledge requirements of a new “knowledge economy.” John Holford and Peter Jarvis suggested that adult educators have become seduced by the fact that many policy documents and much of the academic literature convey a sense of inevitability that there is no alternative to lifelong learning because societies that do not become learning societies have no future. They argue that seduction into the inevitability of a learning society may prevent educators from being critical and constructive and urge that lifelong learning must incorporate the wisdom of adult and continuing education.

Although lifelong learning is widely advocated for economic goals, many advocates believe that it should involve more than strictly instrumental purposes. Some lament that learning has become more of an economic activity than a life activity. Lifelong learning continues to be a fundamental process for adults. It is imperative for educators to ensure that it honors the learning and wisdom of adult education in a fast-paced, technology-driven world that can easily lose its focus on humanistic learning goals in favor of more instrumentalist ones.

—Laura L. Bierema

See also Career investments, Continuing professional education, Knowledge work, Learning organization

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LIFESTYLE PREFERENCES

Throughout history, people’s positions in society, status, work, and worldview were dictated virtually from birth by the social class/socioeconomic status and other characteristics of their families of origin. Furthermore, men and women were ascribed different roles in society and in the family. Sex differences in lifestyle and careers were profound and largely immutable in any given society, though they varied greatly between societies and across time.

In the late twentieth century, sex differences began to erode, and women gained genuine choices as to how to live their lives—arguably for the first time in history. Two social changes were especially important.

First, the “contraceptive revolution,” from the 1960s onward, gave sexually active women reliable and independent control over their own fertility for the first time in history. This allowed women a real choice as to whether they would devote their entire lives to child-bearing and child rearing and prompted a rise in voluntary childlessness, up to 20 percent in some countries.

Second, the equal-opportunity revolution of the late twentieth century ensured that women would realize equal rights to access all positions, occupations, and careers in the labor market. Sometimes the access was extended to posts in the public sphere, including political representation. In some countries, legislation prohibiting sex discrimination goes beyond the labor market, giving women equal access to housing, financial services, and other public services.

These two fundamental social changes were complemented by other changes in society and in labor markets, which have given women in liberal modern societies new choices in careers and lifestyles. As a result, men have also acquired some flexibility, because the primary-earner role no longer invariably falls on their shoulders.

A taken-for-granted assumption in recent feminist theory was that all women would choose permanent full-time employment and careers in the market economy as soon as sex discrimination ceased to be the main barrier to women's activities in the public sphere and career success. It was assumed that given the choice, women would willingly swap a domestic role in the home for waged work in the market economy and that it was patriarchal male strategies of exclusion and segregation that had kept women out of paid work. Catherine Hakim's review of research on women's lifestyle choices in the late twentieth century in modern societies showed that this was mistaken; only a minority of women, around 10 percent to 20 percent, pursued competitive careers in the market economy in the same way as men, suggesting that only one-fifth of women preferred this lifestyle. Building on this empirical research evidence, preference theory states that women, as well as men, display heterogeneous lifestyle preferences even after social and economic changes in modern societies offer them genuine choices. Three dominant lifestyle preference groups occur among men and women, albeit in different proportions.

Work-centered women are a minority, despite the massive influx of women into higher education and into professional and managerial occupations in the last three decades. Work-centered people (men and women) focus on competitive activities in the public sphere, in employment careers, sports, politics, or the arts. Family life is fitted around their work, and many women remain childless, even when married. Qualifications and training are obtained as a career investment rather than as an insurance policy, as in other groups. A majority of men are work centered, compared with only a minority of women, even women in professional occupations.

The second group, *home-centered* or *family-centered women*, is also a minority, and a relatively invisible one in the Western world, given the current political and media focus on working women and high achievers. Home-centered women prefer to give priority to private life and family life after they marry. They are most inclined to have larger families, and they avoid paid work after marriage unless the family is experiencing financial problems. They do not necessarily invest less in qualifications, because the educational system functions as a "marriage market" as well as a training institution. Despite the elimination of the sex differential in educational attainment, an increasing proportion of wives in the United States and

Europe are now marrying men with substantially better qualifications, and the likelihood of marrying a graduate spouse is hugely increased if the woman herself has obtained a degree. Very few men currently fall into the home-centered category.

Between these two extreme groups, each with one dominant priority in life, is a large and diverse middle group labeled *adaptives* by Hakim. These women prefer to combine employment and family work without giving a fixed priority to either. They want to enjoy the best of both worlds. Adaptive women are found in substantial numbers in most occupations. Certain occupations, such as schoolteaching, are attractive to women because they facilitate a more even work-family balance. The great majority of women who transfer to long-term part-time work after they have children are adaptive women who seek to devote as much time and effort to their family work as to their paid jobs. Recent surveys in Europe suggest that two-fifths of men also fall into this group, a larger number than popular stereotypes suggest. At present, there is less latitude for men than for women to pursue adaptive lifestyles.

Lifestyle preference groups differ in values as well as preferred activities. Work-centered people have marketplace values, with an emphasis on competitive rivalry, achievement orientation, and individualism. Family-centered people emphasize sharing, caring, noncompetitive, collectivist values. Adaptive people must juggle two competing value systems.

This diversity in female and male lifestyle preferences has possibly always existed. But in the past, economic necessity was generally the primary determinant of women's employment choices. Typically, wives and children had to work in order for families to survive. Today, in prosperous liberal societies, women can choose to enter the workforce or not, and they can usually choose between part-time and full-time employment. Modern societies reveal female heterogeneity and the beginnings of male heterogeneity to their fullest extent, and lifestyle preferences are becoming a much more important factor in career and job choices.

—Catherine Hakim

See also Gender and careers, Life Styles Inventory, Life-Career Rainbow, Work-family balance

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LOCKSTEP CAREER PROGRESSION

Karl Ulrich Mayer describes institutional careers as the orderly flow of persons through segmented institutions. A number of scholars have pointed to occupational careers as providing the organizational blueprint for the adult life course, which begins with a period of education, followed by years of productive work (often in a series of related jobs) and then retirement.

Most age-graded labor-market policies and practices developed in the middle of the twentieth century reified a *lockstep occupational career path*. The lockstep imagery fostered a career mystique, touting hard work, long hours, and continuous employment as the ticket to occupational mobility and success. It also fostered a retirement mystique, “golden” years of continuous, full-time leisure as an end in itself. The resulting age-graded life course clockwork and culture legitimized the occurrence, timing, and sequencing of transitions around education, employment, and retirement, reflected in work, pension, and education policies but also in social welfare policies more broadly (Social Security and Medicare in the United States, but more forms of welfare support in Europe). Such institutionalization in the latter half of the twentieth century effectively standardized individuals’ biographical pacing, that is, the nature, timing, and sequencing of their social roles. Consider the age-graded institutionalization of education. In the United States, virtually everyone from age 6 to 16 (and increasingly to 18) is a student, enrolled in, and, ideally, attending school. This student role permeates young people’s identities, the ways others respond to them, their social location in society, and the organization of their days, weeks, and years.

Similarly, employment came to represent the quintessential adult role, providing individuals and their families with the income, status, security, and other resources (such as health insurance and pensions) essential for “the good life.” Jobs also shaped the clockwork of business, family, and social life through structured routines and timetables (for promotion,

retirement, etc.), social relationships, and opportunities for productive engagement. The hierarchical structure of business and occupation paths reinforced the notion of a lockstep career progression.

In the post–World War II economic boom, retirement from paid work was similarly institutionalized. Most U.S. workers eligible for Social Security at 65 retired if they could afford to do so, rendering retirement a “natural” component of contemporary life.

This “expected” lockstep life course is so embedded in American institutions and ways of thinking that it is hard to see it as an only relatively recent, twentieth-century invention. Scholars, as well as society at large, take as “given” the idea of career paths as part of a lockstep march from (full-time) education (as preparation for one’s career) through (full-time) employment (as career progression) to (full-time) retirement (the culmination of a lifetime of hard work). The culture that developed around the lockstep clockwork considers each of these activity domains (education, employment, and retirement) to be “naturally” segmented by age, as well as separated in time and space. Americans, along with many Europeans and Asians, have come to hold a shared definition about both what the adult life course and career progression consist of and how they should unfold.

The lockstep passage from education through continuous full-time employment in a sequence of related jobs to the continuous full-time leisure of retirement—Harold Wilensky’s concept of orderly career—has become the yardstick against which occupational expectations and accomplishments are gauged. This lockstep imagery is closely aligned with the American dream of rugged individualism, of people pulling themselves up by their bootstraps, of hard work “paying off” in financial success and job security, and of movement up ladders in particular occupational or organizational hierarchies or “ladder hopping” across occupations or organizations.

But the lockstep career path developed as very much a gendered path, effectively leaving out half the adult population. These taken-for-granted expectations captured the experiences only of mostly White, mostly middle-class, mostly married men in the middle of the twentieth century. They have never reflected women’s occupational and educational pathways (typically more contingent than lockstep), much less the occupational experiences of workers with little education or otherwise on the margins of the labor market. Still, in the post–World War II economic boom years,

most Americans aspired to this vision of the good life, buying into the lockstep career mystique for men and the feminine mystique for women as cultural ideals, twin paths to fulfillment, even if they themselves could achieve neither. In the 1950s, most Americans had finished school, found jobs, gotten married, and become parents before age 30. The cultural template—on television, in middle-class suburbs, and in grade school readers—was the breadwinner/homemaker family, with gender dividing family and career, even as age divided the lockstep career course and commutes divided paid work from the home life. Ideas about and policies developed around the conventional lockstep career shaped the life chances and life quality of (typically male) breadwinners and their families as well as those outside this favored pathway. But note that unfettered pursuit of the lockstep career mystique was dependent on having someone else—a homemaker—manage all the nonwork details of daily living.

In the 1950s, the career mystique meshed well with the feminine mystique: Men in middle-class white-collar and unionized blue-collar jobs could focus on breadwinning because their wives did the homemaking. Then, more than 40 years ago, in *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan debunked the myth that full-time homemaking offered the only road to women's fulfillment. Over the ensuing years, the women's movement opened up opportunities for women to also pursue lockstep career ladders. Many of the growing numbers of women pursuing college degrees felt they could have it all, success at home and at work. Many set about trying to follow the career mystique, not instead of, but in addition to, their obligations on the domestic front.

Today, career patterns in the United States remain one-size-fits-all, with the lockstep of continuous, full-time employment taken for granted for those "serious" about their work. The clockwork of paid work still shapes the (work) day and the (work) week, as well as the lockstep career path. Workers today are expected to work long hours (often including mandatory overtime and the "choices" of professionals to work evenings and weekends), to travel, and to relocate if their employers require it, as if they had no responsibilities outside their jobs. But most workers, men and women, no longer have the luxury of a full-time homemaker to free them from family care, and most workers are married to someone who is also in the workforce. The very diverse twenty-first-century

workforce is having to operate under lockstep rules designed for mostly married, middle-class, white-collar and unionized blue-collar men in the middle of the twentieth century. Doing so exacerbates employees' stress, along with their time overloads, work-family strains, and conflicting loyalties and pressures. Most workers—men and women of all ages and life stages—report this sense of overwork and overload.

Lockstep imagery and policies are also out of step with changing skill requirements in light of new communication and information technologies and the dislocations brought about by the mergers, bankruptcies, and layoffs endemic to a competitive global labor market. In conjunction with a global economy characterized by outsourcing and downsizing, the traditional (and typically implicit) contract between U.S. employers and their employees, rewarding hard work and commitment with advancement (or at least security), has disappeared.

Still, although it is more myth than reality, the lockstep career mystique remains in taken-for-granted polices and practices, "glass corridors" that effectively limit the options around work, education, and retirement. Almost all aspects of life in twenty-first-century America remain tied to a regime of often invisible age- and gender-graded roles, rules, and regulations fashioned from the lockstep myth. Consider how various policies—health insurance, Social Security, unemployment insurance, pensions, vacations—are all predicated on full-time, continuous employment.

The lockstep patterning of lives—education, paid work, and retirement—remains embedded in the culture of adulthood throughout Europe and Asia as well as the United States. This blueprint both shapes and is shaped by social policies still geared to (a) full-time, continuous, paid work as the key to economic and occupational stability and success and (b) the image of retirement as a one-way, one-time, irreversible exit from the workforce. The myth of orderly career progression remains the yardstick against which all workers'—men's and women's—experiences are gauged, even though it reflects the experiences of ever-fewer employees. Contemporary Americans are finding themselves increasingly vulnerable to the vicissitudes of a global economy, with its global workforce and informational technologies. While Canada, Sweden, Germany, and other countries in the European community experience high unemployment rates, they also maintain "safety nets." Still, the trends toward early retirement, corporate restructuring, women's employment, and the

changing employer/employee contract are widespread. For example, state socialism in China used to mean secure state jobs (a situation termed the “iron rice bowl”); with the introduction of capital markets, however, such state jobs are now neither as prevalent nor as secure as in the past.

Cultural expectations about the lockstep career mystique are changing at a glacial pace. Employers, men, women, and even children take for granted that regular, paid work means spending five days, 40 or more hours a week, on the job (a standard enacted in the United States in 1938 by the Fair Labor Standards Act); that education is for children and young people; that retirement is a one-way, one-time, irreversible exit; and that family care work is women’s responsibility. This sense of “the way things are” creates, perpetuates, and exacerbates inequalities—financial and emotional—between men and women. It also pressures workers struggling to start families, raise children, manage dual careers, and/or care for aging or infirm relatives. And, even as the workforce ages (with the progression of the large baby boom cohort, born 1946-1964), existing, taken-for-granted arrangements around paid work and aging foster the “rolelessness” of retirement.

The lockstep myth of career progression only reinforces gender divides. When men earn more than women and have a greater chance of moving ahead in their jobs, it makes sense for couples to invest in husbands’ occupational careers, even if it means short-changing wives’ own prospects. Thus, the weight of coordinating work and family responsibilities rests, for the most part, on the shoulders of employed wives, mothers, female single parents, and the daughters of ailing parents. Having one “good” job (with benefits) and one part-time or less demanding second job per family perpetuates gender differences in both salary and advancement prospects.

Life—and work—in the twentieth century is definitely not lockstep. Americans’ transitions into and out of school, marriage, parenting, paid work, and care work are both more contingent and more varied than ever. People today are changing not only their jobs but also their occupations; returning to school at all ages or staying in school longer; marrying later, divorcing, or staying single; delaying childbearing or having no children; and retiring early, late, not at all, or several times. The United States and, indeed, nations around the world stand in a whirlwind of demographic, economic, technological, and social

change. But policies and practices remain caught in a time warp.

The lockstep career mystique fosters a false divide between the two most fundamental life dimensions, job and family, as they play out over the life course. Americans try to follow the rules of the “career” game but on their own terms, well aware that such rules no longer guarantee achievement, autonomy, or even security. Most contemporary men and women want it all, including gender equality, but accommodate outdated and conflicting institutions through hybrid strategies, with one foot in twentieth-century practices and the other tentatively in the twenty-first, to deal with the risks and realities of twenty-first-century lives. This means that women, wives, and single mothers still do most of society’s care work without pay, even as they try simultaneously to maintain ties to the paid workforce. Men, husbands, and fathers put in long hours in paid work, even as many try to help out at home. Most Americans believe in equal opportunities for men and women but simply can’t make it happen, even in their own families.

The lockstep career mystique and the corollary policy regimes built around it also foster age divides. Most Americans in their 50s, 60s, and 70s want to remain engaged in some form of productive activity, but not without some schedule flexibility. Neither do these growing ranks of older Americans want to put in the long hours most jobs require. Conventional employment and retirement patterns make it difficult for older workers to fashion the type of arrangements they want.

The lockstep career mystique developed during very different times, for a very different workforce, in a very different economy. Yet most Americans—men and women—continue to embrace the lockstep education-career-retirement path, even though it is out of date and out of place in twenty-first-century America. This myth of the lockstep career is interwoven into the very fabric of the American way of life, making it hard to envision any alternatives in the arrangements of either work or retirement. And yet most Americans confront job or income insecurity and stress as they contend with the moving platform of change characterizing life thus far in the twenty-first century. And most older workers now moving toward retirement experience uncertainty, ambivalence, and ambiguity as they consider their future possibilities. Although lifelong education and returning to school at various ages and stages are increasingly common, most institutions of higher education cater to a clientele of young people.

While myths are important, providing a vision of what is possible, Phyllis Moen and Patricia Roehling conclude that the lockstep career and retirement mystiques are “false myths” standing in the way of creating new, alternative workplace, retirement, and career policies, flexibilities, and opportunities. Creating this alternative scenario requires putting lives and institutions back together, developing institutional arrangements that widen the circle of career options at all ages and life stages. The costs of sustaining the outdated lockstep regime—to individual and family health and well-being, to gender equality, to lifelong occupational opportunity, and to a sense of community—may well be unacceptably high.

The latter part of the lockstep life course is already in the process of being reformulated, in light of increased longevity, the aging of the large baby boom cohort, forced or encouraged (with buyouts) early retirements, and concerns about health insurance, pensions, and Social Security. Retirement is becoming a blurred transition, with considerable heterogeneity in its timing and in how lives are lived after retirement. These changes are establishing the groundwork for differentiating an emerging “third age” from the second age of “prime” adulthood and the fourth age of old age.

Most crucial are multiple exit and entry career “portals.” Existing lockstep “glass corridors” shaping occupational and career paths offer ways to get off the career train but no way to get back on, with few options between full-time (or more) employment throughout adulthood and quitting one’s job entirely. The current lockstep career path is a forked road: Follow the yellow-brick, orderly career mystique or else move “off track” to part-time, contingent, or intermittent work. The policies and practices sustaining this forked road, however, could be reformulated in ways more compatible with the multiple demands on and preferences of members of the twenty-first-century workforce. Flexible opportunities, together with alternative scaling back and “re” entry possibilities, would permit Americans to pace their occupational careers in ways that would not be at odds with their family “careers.” Older employees, burnt out or bored with one career, could begin “second acts” or revert back to an original “first-act” career at different ages and stages. Experienced and energetic employees and retirees could fashion hybrid arrangements, phasing out of or into employment and retirement—part-week, part-year, or both. Such innovative flexibility options could provide corporations and nonprofit organizations with a willing and able workforce of people of all ages

wanting flexible jobs that fit their lives and values, not ones blindly following the lockstep clockwork. True gender equality, work-family sustainability, and age integration will be possible only when the clockwork of careers becomes flexible enough to be compatible with the clockwork of the rest of life for all employees, regardless of their gender, their age, or their family responsibilities. Such innovations are feasible, once employers, unions, and governments, along with employees themselves, begin to rethink the lockstep clockwork.

—Phyllis Moen

See also Boundaryless career, Career success, Gender and careers, Retirement, Workforce 2020

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LOCUS OF CONTROL

The term *locus of control* originated in the social learning approach to behavior change in the early 1960s, and

the first publication that explicitly examined this topic appeared in 1962. As originally proposed by Julian Rotter, a clinical and social psychologist, locus of control (LOC) refers to a dispositional tendency to perceive events and outcomes in one's life as being under one's own control or as being controlled by sources over which the person has little or no control, such as luck, fate, or other people. Initially, Rotter conceived LOC as being either internal or external. That is, the individuals feel either that they can control events and outcomes in their lives or that they have little control over these occurrences, which are determined more by external circumstances. In the mid-1970s, a further differentiation of external control was proposed by Hanna Levenson, between external control due to luck or fate (e.g., the individual has secured a good job simply because he or she was in the right place at the right time) and external control due to powerful other people (e.g., the job was obtained because the individual was acquainted with important people in the organization). Nevertheless, the primary distinction is still between a generalized tendency to view outcomes as being contingent on one's own efforts and abilities (internal LOC) versus factors outside one's control (external LOC).

FUNCTIONS OF LOCUS OF CONTROL

Locus of control has been implicated as playing an important role in a variety of areas in people's lives, including their health, general well-being and happiness, satisfaction with their jobs and lives overall, and (to some extent) their careers and vocational aspirations and choices. For instance, research has illustrated that people with higher internal-control beliefs tend to take more behavioral control over their health (e.g., engaging in "healthy" lifestyle behaviors), which, in turn, can lead to better health outcomes. In contrast, those with higher external-control beliefs may feel that their efforts to remain fit and healthy are somewhat futile, as their health status is more determined by luck or fate; hence, they may not persist in health-related behaviors, such as diet and exercise. Similarly, as will be discussed later, high internal control has been associated with more effort to succeed educationally and with greater career aspirations, ultimately resulting in the achievement of higher-level occupations that are more satisfying and fulfilling.

One of the reasons believing that one has a high degree of personal control over life's events is beneficial is that it is related to high levels of optimism,

self-efficacy, and self-esteem. In fact, some researchers have commented that there is sometimes little distinction between high internal control and *self-efficacy*, which is defined as a belief in one's abilities to master the environment. Nevertheless, internal control does differ from self-efficacy in that a person with high internal control may not necessarily feel mastery and in some situations may attribute failure to achieve a goal (e.g., being successful in a career) to personal limitations or lack of effort, whereas a high-external-control individual in the same situation may blame other people or just bad luck. Overall, however, research has illustrated that people who are high on internal control often exhibit higher motivation and hence performance (e.g., on the job) and that internal control is frequently associated with overall better adaptation. High-internal-control individuals are more likely to change their behavior and seem to be more adaptive. Similarly, internal control has been linked with greater persistence, which can enable the individual to persevere in the face of adversity.

MEASUREMENT OF LOCUS OF CONTROL

Several questionnaire measures of locus of control have been developed and tested in research. Rotter's Internal-External (I-E) Scale asks respondents to read two statements at a time and choose the one with which they agree more. In each case, one statement expresses internal control, while the other reflects external control over an event or situation. As mentioned above, however, other researchers have reasoned that external-control beliefs may be based on control by other people in one's environment or luck/fate; hence, other measures have distinguished between these forms of external control. Research comparing various measures of LOC has, unfortunately, found that they do not always converge, and some investigators have concluded that measurement of LOC may sometimes be confounded with two other factors: (1) the desire for control and (2) a perceived ability to exert control (competence or mastery). These problems have constrained understanding of how locus of control independently relates to variables such as motivation and performance (e.g., in a work context).

LOCUS OF CONTROL AND CAREERS

Despite its intuitive appeal and the wealth of research that has been conducted on LOC generally,

its application to vocational choice and development has been relatively sparse. Nevertheless, there is some evidence that LOC can influence individuals' career choices and, to some extent, their career progression. As noted above, individuals with high-internal-control beliefs are likely to believe that their careers are in their own hands and that occupational success will be founded on their own efforts and capabilities. Such individuals tend to pursue higher levels of education, which leads to the acquisition of more challenging, complex (and highly paid) occupations. Furthermore, if work conditions or the job itself are not satisfying, high-internal-control workers are more likely to leave their jobs or organizations, whereas high-external-control individuals seem to be less likely to search out better alternatives when they are dissatisfied with their current positions. There is insufficient research evidence at this point to conclude whether or not individuals who are high on internal control are actually better performers on the job than those who score high on external control, although this might be anticipated if, as mentioned above, there is a positive relationship between internal control and self-efficacy or mastery.

To conclude, the concept of locus of control has attracted the attention of researchers and practitioners for over 40 years, and its relevance to a broad array of life domains has been explored. Despite concerns over its measurement, researchers continue to investigate the role of LOC in areas such as health and well-being, educational performance, and career choice and success. Additional research needs to be conducted to fully elucidate the conditions under which high internal (personal) control leads to more adaptive functioning and whether there are any circumstances under which a belief in external control may be more functional.

—Michael O'Driscoll

See also Self-efficacy, Social cognitive career theory

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LOW-INCOME WORKERS AND CAREERS

Employed persons living close to or below the poverty line can be considered *low-income workers*. Some examples of occupations characterized by low income are food service, retail, secretarial work, and cleaning jobs. Low-income workers face many challenges in the workplace, and traditional vocational interventions often do not meet the needs of this population. There is little theory or research that addresses the vocational development of low-income individuals. However, innovative interventions are being proposed to enable individuals to move toward greater economic self-sufficiency.

Historically, career-development theories have not focused on the experiences of low-income individuals. Several tenets of career theory that appear inconsistent with the experiences of many low-income workers include the assertions that individuals make autonomous choices regarding careers, that the goal of work is self-actualization, that work is a central component of meaning in one's life, and that all people can achieve whatever they work hard to accomplish. Pursuit of a career implies choice and a progression in one's occupation. For some low-income workers, however, economic survival (not career advancement) may be the primary goal of employment.

Within the United States, people living below the poverty line tend to include large numbers of women and people of color. Factors contributing to the high prevalence of women and minorities in low-income jobs include educational attainment disparity, racism, sexism, divorce, domestic violence, discrimination against low-income people, and responsibility for children and aging relatives. Individuals struggling with physical and mental illnesses may also be found in low-income occupations.

Low-income workers are at risk for chronic unemployment and underemployment due to obstacles at home, in the workplace, and in society at large.

Low-income workers may lack the nutritional foundation needed to perform their jobs well. Their physical health also may be compromised due to stressors encountered at home and strenuous conditions at work. Higher rates of psychological problems have been found among low-income workers, including depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and substance abuse. Some workers cannot afford to pay for health insurance and thus lack access to adequate medical, dental, and psychological care.

In addition, minimum-wage and low-paying jobs often do not provide enough income to allow individuals to find affordable and safe housing. The neighborhoods in which low-income families live may not be safe, and the schools in these neighborhoods are often deficient. Low-income workers commonly must work multiple jobs to support themselves and their families. Working many hours may affect their ability to prepare and consume healthy meals, to parent effectively, and to be involved in the academic and social development of their children. Many low-income workers may not have access to safe child care and reliable transportation.

In the workplace and in society, low-income workers may encounter prejudice in the form of sexism, racism, and classism. Their jobs also may involve physically demanding tasks, difficult hours, and little flexibility in schedule. The structure of many low-income jobs does not promote advancement and higher wages. Low-income workers and their children may feel trapped in a cycle of poverty that is difficult to escape.

Recently, vocational interventions have been developed for welfare recipients, high school students, and children in at-risk environments to promote job readiness and employment attainment. As a result of legislative changes limiting the amount of time that individuals may receive welfare assistance, several programs focus on attaining economic self-sufficiency prior to the cessation of financial assistance from the government. The purpose of most of these programs is to promote long-term economic self-sufficiency, and most of the programs utilize an interdisciplinary approach to providing comprehensive services to all family members. Individual case management, job training, job transition, and access to education are included. In addition, assistance in obtaining supportive services is provided (e.g., quality child care, affordable and safe housing, and reliable transportation).

The school-to-work transition movement attempts to minimize the barriers that many low-income youth encounter when they leave high school and enter the labor market. In 1994, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act was enacted, with the goal of facilitating the transition from high school graduation to employment for non-college-bound youth. Federally funded programs enable students in public school systems to access community-based organizations through joint ventures of educators, parents, and labor unions. Such programs typically involve career counseling and the integration of school- and work-based learning. Students are given the option of preparing for technical-preparatory and college career paths and have the opportunity to learn outside the classroom through internships or apprenticeships in the community. These programs are especially encouraging for non-college-bound youth, who receive training in high school and, if deemed necessary, in the workplace, community colleges, or other vocational schools.

Several school interventions aim to facilitate the academic and vocational success of children living in at-risk environments. Notably, school-to-career interventions in Boston public schools address students' uncertainty about their education and career options, while helping them access resources for achieving their goals. For instance, interventions often engage students in self-exploration, identifying resources and barriers, connecting school and work, and enhancing personal strengths. In collaboration with parents, psychologists, administrators, teachers, and the community, such programs empower students to effectively cope with economic, academic, and social hardships they may encounter.

To conclude, economic struggles adversely affect the quality of life among low-income workers. Recently, scholars have proposed that additional attention be directed to the vocational experiences of low-income workers. Socioeconomic class is beginning to be examined in research studies, and career counselors are starting to address how their biases might influence their work with low-income clients. Additional work is needed to ensure that all individuals have access to educational and occupational opportunities.

—Karen M. O'Brien and Marianne G. Dunn

See also Inequality, Single parents and careers, Socioeconomic status, Stereotyping of workers

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MACHIAVELLIANISM

The notion of *Machiavellianism* is based on the writings of the sixteenth-century writer Niccolò Machiavelli. In his most famous work, *The Prince*, Machiavelli describes an Italian prince who is willing to do anything, no matter how unscrupulous, to gain and maintain political power. Furthermore, in his writings, Machiavelli argued that successful leaders need to be cold and calculating and must never be bound by feelings of guilt or shame. Building on this idea, Richard Christie and Florence Geis introduced the construct of Machiavellianism and conceptualized it as a measurable, individual-difference variable. In their work, these researchers made a distinction between high “Machs,” who tend to agree with the ideas that “the best way to handle people is to tell them what they want to hear,” “anyone who completely trusts anyone else is asking for trouble,” “sometimes you have to cheat a little to get what you want,” and “it hurts more to lose money than to lose a friend,” and low Machs, who tend to disagree with such assertions.

In short, Machiavellianism is the extent to which individuals are willing to behave in ways that are manipulative, believe that the ends justify the means, are emotionally detached from others, view others as dishonest and untrustworthy, and have disregard for traditional moral standards and ethics. Since its introduction in the late 1960s, a great deal of research has sought to learn more about this trait.

Given that Machiavellianism is associated with a lack of concern for conventional morality, several studies have sought to understand how this trait might

relate to unethical behavior. The findings of such investigations seem to suggest that high Machs tend to behave less ethically than low Machs but only in certain situations. For example, researchers have found that Machiavellianism is not associated with cheating in general but that high Machs are more likely (than low Machs) to cheat when there is a low probability of being caught. Along the same lines, research suggests that the tendency for low Machs to steal from others is influenced by their affect for those from whom they are stealing; in contrast, high Machs seem to be less discriminating in their stealing behavior. Also, while Machiavellianism appears to be unrelated to the actual frequency of lying, high Machs tend to be more convincing liars than low Machs. Surprisingly, perhaps, high Machs and low Machs do not seem to differ in the frequency or degree to which they engage in impression management. Relative to low Machs, though, those with Machiavellian personalities do seem more willing to engage in more deceptive and self-serving forms of impression management and have the ability to project an image of confidence even when they might lack certainty or resolve. Moreover, high Machs are more likely to advocate the use of ingratiation in organizational settings and tend to be very persuasive as well.

In terms of career choice, organizational scholars have found that those who are more Machiavellian tend to prefer careers in business-related fields and to avoid professions that involve helping others. Several studies have also sought to understand the link between Machiavellianism and leadership styles. The principal findings of this line of inquiry are that high-Mach leaders tend to be more autocratic and initiate

more group interaction than do low-Mach leaders. The data also suggest that Machiavellianism is unrelated to leadership effectiveness or to the emergence of group leadership. In studies of U.S. presidents, though, it has been argued that Machiavellian presidents tend to have greater legislative success during their presidencies, are more likely to be seen as charismatic leaders, and are rated as more effective presidents overall.

With regard to job performance and career success, high Machs generally seem to fare no better than low Machs; however, there is some evidence that high Machs are more successful than low Machs when they are working in organizational environments that are less regulated or structured. Some research also suggests that high Machs often do well in settings that encourage employees to act opportunistically. With regard to other work outcomes, researchers have consistently found that Machiavellianism is positively related to job stress and inversely related to job satisfaction. In terms of these findings, it has been argued that high Machs are often dissatisfied because they tend to be more anxious in general and typically dislike settings that might constrain their ability to be manipulative.

A great deal of research on Machiavellianism has actually focused its attention on the instruments and specific items commonly used to measure the construct. By and large, such studies have emphasized the weaknesses of these instruments and have been especially critical of the Mach-IV and Mach-V scales. The principal criticisms here are that these measures of Machiavellianism are too highly correlated with measures of socially desirable responding, that these instruments lack adequate internal consistency or reliability, and that these Machiavellianism scales are, in fact, multidimensional and thus tap several different constructs rather than just one. Nevertheless, researchers continue to use the Mach-IV and Mach-V scales in their research, and these instruments have been vigorously defended by some scholars.

According to citation counts, it appears that research on Machiavellianism has generally been declining since 1982, when it reached its peak. Indeed, more recent research on Machiavellianism has been less focused on identifying differences between high Machs and low Machs and more concerned with understanding how this construct may fit in with theories and constructs that have been more commonly examined outside of the organizational and

social psychological literatures. For example, clinical psychologists have sought to learn more about the potential overlap between Machiavellianism and psychopathy. Evolutionary psychologists and biologists are interested more generally in the link between Machiavellianism and the ability to manipulate others as an important aspect of human evolution. Researchers have also called for more cross-cultural investigations of Machiavellianism as, by and large, most of the research in this area has been conducted within the United States.

—Mark C. Bolino and Traci L. Nyberg

See also Personality and careers, Proactivity, Type A behavior pattern

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MENTORING

Mentoring within the workplace is typically described as a relationship between two individuals, usually a senior and junior employee, in which the senior employee takes the junior employee “under his or her wing” to teach the junior employee about his or her job, introduce the junior employee to contacts, orient the employee to the industry and organization, and address social and personal issues that may arise on the job. The mentoring relationship is different from other organizational relationships (e.g., supervisor-subordinate) in that the mentoring parties may or may not formally work together; the relationship is typically

not sanctioned by the organization; the relationship usually lasts longer than most organizational relationships; the issues addressed during the course of the relationship may include nonwork issues; and the bond between the mentor and protégé is usually closer and stronger than those of other organizational relationships.

Mentoring relationships are by nature developmental and therefore are thought to be a critical career development activity. For example, mentoring relationships play a prominent role in career and life stage theories. Establishing mentoring relationships with others is a critical developmental task faced by individuals during the early career years. The advice and guidance of a mentor can be an invaluable resource as individuals seek to establish themselves during this career stage. Mentoring is also a key task during later stages of career development. Specifically, serving as a mentor to others during the later career years provides a sense of accomplishment and serves as a means for the older worker to contribute to future generations.

The power of mentoring relationships has also been widely discussed beyond the academic literature. Popular business leaders such as Jack Welch and Lee Iacocca have publicly credited their success to having a mentor. In addition, reports suggest that over 75 percent of executives indicate that having a mentor played a key role in their careers. Career counselors often advise individuals to cultivate a relationship with a mentor, and many organizations encourage the formation of mentoring relationships between organizational members.

MENTORING FUNCTIONS AND STAGES

Mentors provide two major functions to their protégés. *Career-related functions* focus on success and advancement within the organization and include sponsorship, coaching, exposure and visibility, protection, and challenging assignments. *Psychosocial functions* focus on the enhancement of sense of identity, competence, and effectiveness in the professional role and include role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and friendship. Empirical research based on factor-analytic studies supports the existence of these two overarching mentoring functions.

Mentoring relationships are theorized to progress through four distinct stages over time. The first stage is *initiation*. In this stage, the mentor and the protégé are just beginning the relationship and learning about

each other. If the relationship matures into a mentorship, the second phase, known as *cultivation*, begins. This is the most active phase of the mentorship, during which the greatest amount of career and psychosocial mentoring is thought to be provided. It is during the cultivation phase that the most learning occurs. This is the longest phase of the mentorship and is expected to last from two to five years. As the needs of the mentor and the protégé evolve, the partnership enters the *separation* phase. During this phase, the protégé begins to assert independence, and the mentor comes to believe he or she has no additional knowledge to share with or guidance to provide to the protégé. This phase is thought to last from 6 to 24 months. The final phase of the mentoring relationship is referred to as *redefinition*. This is when the relationship changes into one of peers or colleagues. Little research has been conducted that provides a direct test of these phases. However, there is some evidence that psychosocial and career mentoring does increase from the initiation phase of the mentorship into the subsequent phases.

THE MEASUREMENT OF MENTORING

Much of the mentoring research is based on two types of studies. One type compares those with mentoring experience (protégés or mentors) versus those without mentoring experiences (nonprotégés or nonmentors) on some variable of interest. Mentoring experience is typically operationalized as a dichotomous variable (yes or no) based on responses to a screening question that includes a definition of a mentoring relationship. That is, research participants are provided with a definition of mentoring and then are asked to respond yes or no as to whether they have ever been in such a relationship.

The second common type of mentoring study examines the relationship between mentoring provided and other variables of interest. In this case, those that report mentoring experience also report on the degree to which mentoring was provided during the course of the relationship. Several measures exist in the literature to assess mentoring provided. Mentoring provided is usually examined at the level of Kathy Kram's two primary mentoring functions described earlier, psychosocial and career mentoring. However, exceptions to this exist. Several measures separate mentoring behavior into more discrete categories (e.g., role-modeling is examined as a separate

function), while others combine career mentoring and psychosocial support into a single measure.

MENTORING BENEFITS

Much has been written about the benefits of mentoring. Mentoring relationships are touted as beneficial for protégés, mentors, and organizations. To date, most research has focused on career success outcomes and benefits for the protégé. Career success outcomes can be grouped into those that are objective and those that are subjective. Objective career outcomes are tangible, such as promotion and compensation. In contrast, subjective outcomes are affective and less tangible, such as career and job satisfaction. Recent meta-analytic research supports the notion that mentoring relates to both objective and subjective career benefits for protégés. Specifically, individuals who are mentored advance more rapidly in the organization, earn higher salaries, have greater job satisfaction, and have fewer intentions to leave the organization. Being mentored also has been associated with other career-related variables. Specifically, those who have been mentored report greater career planning, career involvement, career motivation, and career self-efficacy than those who have not been mentored. Mentoring also serves as a form of social support and has been positively associated with employee socialization. Although limited research exists regarding other outcomes, being mentored has been also associated with less stress, more organizational citizenship behavior, and less family interference with work.

Although the benefits of mentoring for protégés seem to have been firmly established, it is important to keep in mind that most research has been cross-sectional. It is commonly assumed that mentoring leads to advantages such as greater career outcomes, but the direction of the relationship is uncertain. For example, it is also possible that those who possess the skills to obtain greater career benefits also possess the skills to attract a mentor. Until more long-term longitudinal studies are conducted, alternative causal directions cannot be ruled out.

Much less research has focused on the benefits of mentoring for the mentor. Qualitative studies examining the benefits of mentoring others suggest that mentors achieve personal satisfaction from passing knowledge and skills on to others, exhilaration from the fresh energy provided by protégés, improved job performance by receiving a new perspective on the

organization from protégés, loyalty and support from protégés, and organizational recognition. The few quantitative studies that have been conducted yielded similar findings, indicating that mentors report that mentoring others provides personal satisfaction and improved workgroup performance. In a study of the expected benefits of being a mentor, five categories of benefits were identified, including rewarding experience, improved job performance, loyal base of support, recognition by others, and generativity (that is, leaving a legacy to future generations).

Researchers are only beginning to examine how mentoring others may relate to more tangible career benefits to the mentor, such as increased promotion rates and salary. Preliminary research shows that after controlling for variables commonly associated with objective career success, those who have mentored others report greater salary and rates of promotion than do those without any experience as mentors. Similar to research regarding protégés, longitudinal studies are needed to better ascertain the causal direction of the relationship.

Mentoring is also thought to provide benefits to the organization. However, organizational benefits have primarily been inferred based on individual benefits. For example, mentoring can have organizational benefits by reducing individual employee turnover, enhancing employee productivity, and increasing the retention of women and minorities. There are no empirical data demonstrating that mentoring relates to organizational-level outcomes, such as firm performance. In addition, while formal mentoring programs are frequently touted as a way to attract employees to the organization and as an effective mechanism for facilitating succession planning, research supporting this assertion does not exist in the published literature. In short, much work remains to be done examining the impact of mentoring at the organizational level.

NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF MENTORING

Recent research has demonstrated that like any form of interpersonal relationship, mentorships can also have dysfunctional aspects. Even generally effective and healthy mentorships may be marked by negative experiences that range from the relatively minor (e.g., petty disagreement) to the malicious in nature (e.g., revenge or sabotage). Protégé accounts of negative mentoring experiences include tyrannical or manipulative behavior on the part of the mentor,

mentors who lack technical or interpersonal skills, a mismatch in terms of values and personality, overprotection and paternalism by mentors, and neglect by the mentor. Protégés who report negative mentoring experiences also report less learning within the relationship, less relational quality, and weaker perceptions of relational complementarity. Negative experiences are not limited to the protégé, as mentors also report encountering problems related to mentoring others. These include a drain on time, difficulty dealing with protégés who have performance problems, protégés who are unwilling to learn, protégé deception and betrayal, and concerns regarding jealousy or favoritism. This line of research is important in that it serves as a useful reminder that although mentoring is generally a beneficial career development process, it also has potential drawbacks and challenges that should be recognized.

FACTORS RELATED TO MENTORSHIP PROCESSES

Gender

A considerable amount of research has been devoted to examining the impact of gender on mentorships. Lack of access to mentors has been offered as one explanation for the disparity between men and women in terms of advancement into senior leadership positions. However, men and women generally report similar levels of experience as protégés. Although men and women may have similar access to mentorships, once in a mentoring relationship, the type of mentoring provided may differ. The results of research examining this issue are mixed, with some studies finding differences and others finding none. When gender differences are detected, the results lean toward women reporting more psychosocial mentoring than men and men reporting more career-related mentoring than women.

There is some evidence that the gender of the mentor may matter in terms of the type of mentoring provided and the benefits accrued. For example, female mentors have been found to provide more psychosocial mentoring than have male mentors. In addition, having a male mentor has been associated with greater career outcomes, such as compensation, than having a female mentor. One explanation offered for this finding is that male mentors are more likely to be in power positions in the organization and thus have greater opportunity to aid the career development of their protégés.

The dyadic composition of the mentorship is also an important consideration. Theory concerning diversified mentoring relationships suggests that the specific dyadic composition of the mentorship impacts the level of mentoring support provided and satisfaction with the mentorship. That is, not only the gender of the mentor or of the protégé is important but also the interaction between the two. For example, although findings are inconsistent across studies, there is some evidence that greater psychosocial mentoring occurs in same-gender mentorships than in cross-gender mentorships. However, it is interesting to note that the majority of cross-gender mentorships comprise male mentors with female protégés. Female mentors with male protégés are typically a small percentage of mentorship pairs.

Race

There has been considerably less research examining race and mentoring than that examining gender and mentoring. Similar to the findings regarding gender, there is little evidence that minorities are less likely to have mentoring experience than are nonminorities. There is no consistent evidence to suggest that the amount of career or psychosocial mentoring provided differs across race. However, the race of the mentor does appear to make a difference. Research has shown that Black employees with White mentors earn more compensation than do Black employees with Black mentors.

Research also indicates that protégés in same-race mentorships report greater psychosocial support than do protégés in cross-race mentorships. There is some evidence that individuals experience more interpersonal comfort in same-race and same-gender mentorships than in cross-race and cross-gender mentorships and that this accounts for the greater psychosocial mentoring reported by protégés. It should also be noted that when cross-race mentoring relationships are studied, the majority comprise nonminority mentors paired with minority protégés.

One factor that should be considered regarding the research on race is that often because of small samples, different minorities are grouped together and analyses are conducted that examine minorities versus nonminorities. Thus, the extent to which findings generalize to all minorities is not certain. In addition, research that has focused on a single race has been almost exclusively on Black Americans. We have

limited knowledge regarding cross-race issues for other minority groups, such as Asian Americans and Hispanics/Latinos.

Protégé Attributes

Some research has indicated that dispositional characteristics relate to the likelihood that one will engage in a mentoring relationship. Mentoring researchers have identified several personality characteristics related to protégé-initiated mentorships. Individuals who have an internal locus of control (those who believe that they are in control of life events) and are high self-monitors (those who modify their behavior to fit the situation) have been found to be more likely to initiate mentoring relationships than have individuals who have an external locus of control and are low self-monitors. Research also indicates that individuals higher in need for achievement are more likely to report having a mentor than are individuals lower in need for achievement. Relatedly, the ambition-to-succeed aspect of the Type A personality has been positively related to protégé-initiated mentoring.

While some protégé attributes relate to their likelihood of being mentored, some research also suggests that mentors look for certain attributes in protégés to be mentored. Social exchange theory suggests that mentors will look for protégés thought to bring desirable attributes into the relationship in an effort to maximize their rewards from the relationship. Consistent with the social exchange perspective, research has found that mentors prefer protégés who possess strong potential for achievement, show favorable past performance, and are willing to learn and accept feedback.

Mentor Attributes

Research has shown that several factors relate to the propensity or willingness to serve as a mentor to others. One consistent finding is that someone with previous mentoring experience, either as a protégé or as a mentor, is more willing to be a mentor to others than someone with no previous mentoring experience. There is also evidence that dispositional factors relate to the willingness to mentor others. Individuals who possess a more pro-social personality (are generally helpful and empathetic toward others) are more likely to have experience as mentors and are more likely to report willingness to mentor others. In addition, internal locus of control and upward striving have been

associated with willingness to mentor others. The relationship between gender and willingness to mentor others has also been examined. Although women have reported more barriers to becoming a mentor to others than have men, most research shows that they are equally willing to do so.

A limited amount of research has examined mentor individual differences that relate to the degree of mentoring provided. One study has found that individuals higher in openness to experience report providing more mentoring than those lower in openness to experience. Learning goal orientation by mentors (the propensity to view challenges as opportunities for growth and development) also has been positively linked with mentoring provided. Recent research has examined the motives that mentors report for mentoring others and how this relates to mentoring behavior. Mentors motivated to mentor others for self-enhancement reasons appear to be more likely to provide career-related mentoring, whereas mentors motivated by the intrinsic satisfaction that mentoring brings report providing more psychosocial mentoring.

Very limited research has been conducted to examine what attributes protégés look for in mentors. The research that does exist suggests that protégés prefer mentors with strong interpersonal skills, a broad knowledge of the organization, and powerful positions within the organization.

Perceived Similarity

In addition to examining the impact of mentor-protégé similarity in terms of demographic characteristics such as race and gender, some mentoring research has examined perceived similarity in terms of attitudes, values, personality, interests, and work styles. Perceived mentor-protégé similarity has been consistently associated with greater mentoring provided and relationship quality. Results show that protégés who perceive that their mentors are more similar to themselves are more satisfied with the relationships and report receiving more mentoring than do protégés who perceive that their mentors are less similar to themselves. Likewise, mentors with protégés perceived to be more similar to themselves report more high-quality mentoring relationships than do mentors with protégés perceived to be less similar to themselves.

It is important to emphasize that this research is based on perceptions of similarity. Research that examines actual similarity in terms of values, personality,

and interests is scarce. One exception is that protégés in mentor-protégé pairs who shared similar levels of learning goal orientation reported greater psychosocial and career mentoring. It is also important to note that because most existing research regarding perceived similarity is cross-sectional, it is possible that mentors and protégés in successful relationships attribute the success of the relationship to having a similar mentoring partner rather than similarity actually resulting in a more effective mentorship.

Organizational Factors

Some aspects of the organizational environment can inhibit or facilitate the occurrence of mentoring relationships. Organizations can foster mentoring relationships among employees by encouraging an organizational learning and development climate. Mentoring relationships are more likely to naturally occur and be successful when the organization fosters an environment that encourages employees to take active roles in learning from and teaching others. This can be done by recognizing and rewarding the efforts of those who mentor others, providing opportunities for junior and senior employees to interact, and helping employees develop the tools needed for coaching and counseling others.

FORMAL MENTORING

To capitalize on the known benefits of mentoring, many organizations have developed *formal mentoring programs*. Various reports estimate that up to 66 percent of companies may have some form of structured mentoring. Formal mentoring programs can help organizations develop and advance the careers of women and minorities who may have limited access to informal social networks, can be used as a recruitment and retention tool, can be used to help groom employees for positions of greater responsibility and expose high-potential junior employees to senior leadership, and can be used to foster cultural change.

Formal and informal mentoring relationships differ in two primary ways. One is that formal mentoring relationships occur through an assignment or matching process instigated by a third party within the organization. In contrast, *informal mentoring relationships* develop spontaneously through the process of mutual attraction. Second, formal mentoring relationships are usually shorter in duration than are informal mentoring

relationships. While informal mentoring relationships typically last three to six years, formal mentoring relationships generally last for six months to one year.

The design and purpose of formal mentoring programs can vary greatly. For example, some programs are geared primarily toward organizational newcomers, while others target high-potential employees. Some programs are highly structured, while others take a more casual approach. Most literature regarding best practices for developing and designing a formal mentoring program is based on conjecture rather than empirical data. However, some preliminary research evidence indicates that formal mentorships are most effective when mentors and protégés have some input into who will be their mentoring partners, training is provided to the mentoring parties prior to the start of the relationship, and guidelines are provided regarding meeting frequency.

One of the most critical issues for the design of formal mentoring programs is determining what specific mechanism to use for matching mentors and protégés. Research concerning actual practices within industry indicates that a variety of methods are used. In some cases, programs purposefully match partners who are similar to each other, and in other cases, partners who are dissimilar are intentionally matched. Organizations also vary in their philosophies with regard to issues such as matching mentors and protégés from different departments, geographic locations, and functional areas. Although research on this issue is needed, it is probably safe to assert that the purpose of the program should be taken into account when deciding on the matching approach to use. For example, if a program is designed to enhance the understanding of different areas of the business, matching individuals from different functional areas would likely help accomplish such goals.

Interest in formal mentoring has also resulted in research examining differences in outcomes for protégés involved in formal versus informal mentorships. Generally speaking, the research tends to show that formal mentoring relationships are less effective than informal mentorships but better than no mentoring. However, it is important to keep in mind that most formal mentoring programs are not designed with the intention that participants will achieve greater objective career outcomes, such as promotion and salary, over nonparticipants. As noted above, programs may be designed with distinct purposes such as enhancing newcomer socialization or increasing diversity awareness.

Hence, the effectiveness of formal mentoring programs might be better evaluated in terms of how well the program meets its stated objectives rather than how well informally mentored protégés compare with formally mentored protégés. It is also important for formal mentoring participants to recognize that formal mentorships are no substitute for informal mentorships. Finally, research shows that the quality of the relationship matters more than does the manner in which the relationship was initially formed. All formal mentorships are not created equally, and high-quality relationships can emerge from formal programs.

NONTRADITIONAL FORMS OF MENTORING

Although mentorships have been traditionally thought of as dyadic, face-to-face relationships with hierarchical distance between an older mentor and a younger protégé, recent research has focused on other mentorship forms. One newer approach beyond the traditional dyadic focus is viewing mentoring relationships in terms of a constellation of different developmental relationships that vary in terms of strength and diversity. The *developmental network* is made up of concurrent relationships with others that occur at a particular point in time that are important to the career development of the individual. The developers may come from a variety of settings (e.g., employing organization, professional association, religious institution), and each relationship may vary in terms of the strength of the relationship bond. Some research indicates that having multiple mentors can be beneficial beyond the effects of a single traditional or primary mentor.

Related to the developmental network perspective is the recognition that developmental support can be provided by a variety of sources. For example, in some cases, more experienced peers may be able to provide some of the same functions provided by senior members of the organization. Peers may be particularly suitable for providing support that aids in the socialization of newcomers. Moreover, given that individuals are more likely to have multiple jobs or even careers during their lifetimes because of today's boundaryless-career landscape, there is an increasing likelihood that older individuals may be organizational newcomers. This sets the stage for mentoring relationships to occur between younger mentors and older protégés.

Another nontraditional approach to mentoring is online or electronic-mentoring, or e-mentoring.

E-mentoring, also known as *virtual mentoring*, refers to the use of electronic media, such as e-mail, as the primary means of communication between mentors and protégés. In recent years, there has been a proliferation of online networks designed to facilitate virtual-mentoring relationships. One example is that of MentorNet, a program that pairs professionals working in industry and academia with women studying engineering or science at participating universities and colleges, postdoctoral students, or untenured faculty. There are several potential benefits to e-mentoring. It can help increase the pool of mentors available. This can be particularly helpful in small or rigidly structured organizations that provide limited opportunities for mentoring relationships to develop. Because e-mentoring does not occur in a face-to-face context, it can also reduce the impact of social cues or salient features, such as race and gender, that can play a part in the dynamics of a mentoring relationship. Although there are a number of potential benefits to e-mentoring, research is needed to support the effectiveness of its use.

DYADIC RESEARCH

Most mentoring research examines issues from the individual perspective of the mentor or of the protégé. An interesting new area of research examines mentor and protégé agreement with regard to mentoring provided. Research that has collected data from mentor-protégé dyads and obtained reports of mentoring provided from mentoring parties show minimal consistency across reports. That is, correlations between mentor and protégé reports of mentoring provided are typically small in magnitude. Similarly, correlations small in magnitude have been observed with regard to mentor and protégé reports of relationship quality. This suggests that mentors and protégés typically do not hold shared views of the nature of their relationships. This is important in that there appear to be benefits to shared perceptions. One study found that both protégés and mentors in mentorships with greater mentor-protégé agreement regarding psychosocial mentoring provided reported greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment than did protégés and mentors in mentorships with less agreement. Examining dyadic-level processes within mentoring relationships should be a promising new area for continued research.

—Tammy D. Allen

See also Boundaryless career, Career success, Early career stage, Middle career stage, Reverse mentoring

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MERIT-BASED PAY

Organizations often seek to link pay to a measure of performance in order to attract, motivate, and retain the best employees. The organization can link pay increases to the performance of an individual, a group, or the whole company. There are many forms of individual performance-related pay, the most

popular being *merit-based pay*, because it can be applied to many jobs and covers a broad range of performance criteria. Under a merit-based pay system, an employee's pay increase is based on a supervisor's assessment of performance over a previous time period, usually the prior 12 months. Reward for past performance is intended to increase performance in future time periods. Pay increases made under a merit-based pay system accumulate in base pay, so that subsequent increases build on the increase of the previous year. In some organizations, the merit-based pay system is the only means for achieving a pay increase. It also serves as the mechanism for moving employees through the pay range for the job.

The annual cycle of a merit-based pay scheme commences with the establishment of performance objectives, either by the supervisor or jointly between the employee and the supervisor. Progress toward these objectives is monitored over the ensuing months, although the formal rating of the employee usually occurs at the end of the evaluation cycle. The supervisor is required to rate the performance of an employee against the objectives established at the beginning of the cycle, typically on a three-, five-, or seven-point scale. Each of these rating points is then associated with the amount of a pay increase (usually expressed as a percentage), so that the higher the rating, the higher the amount of the merit-based pay increase. The size of the pay increase can also vary depending on the position in the pay range. Typically, employees at the bottom of the pay range with high performance ratings will get a larger increase than an employee near the top of the pay range with a high-performance rating. In some cases, the intention is to enable the employee to reach the top of pay range at the same time as he or she is ready to be promoted (and therefore eligible for further merit-based increases).

The magnitude of the merit increases will also be a function of the merit-pay budget made available by the organization, which reflects not only the financial circumstances of the organization but also their view of how much of a merit-pay increase is necessary to affect employee behaviors. There has been some research that has attempted to determine this "optimal" amount, though there is no agreement on the quantum. A further difficulty is that merit-based pay is not supported by all employees. Past research has demonstrated that merit-based pay is attractive to some occupations (for example managers) and to certain demographic groups (such as white-collar

workers, high-income earners, and younger employees), but it might not be the best remuneration approach for all occupations, individuals, or organizations.

—Michelle Brown

See also Compensation, Pay compression, Pay-for-performance reward systems

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METAPHORS FOR CAREERS

When people talk, or even think, about careers, they typically use metaphors. A *metaphor* is a figure of speech in which one concept, usually a relatively abstract one, is substituted by another, usually more concrete, to provide clarity and dramatic effect. Thus, Nelson Mandela did not title his autobiography *My Career* or *My Life*, but *Long Walk to Freedom*. In this metaphor, his career becomes a journey, on foot, to a known destination. The metaphor gives clarity, additional meaning, and color to the subject matter.

In their career discourses, people employ metaphors frequently. Many of these are variations on the journey metaphor: for example, *career path*, *career trajectory*, *career plateau*, *career ladder*, *fast track*, *rat race*, *getting to the top*, *zigzag career*, *roller-coaster ride*. All of these attribute "journeylike" characteristics such as movement and direction to the career, and some of them provide cues as to the kind of career that one should have (moving upward, fast, in competition with others, etc.). Career talk is not confined to journey metaphors, however. There are many different associations that people habitually employ when talking about their careers. Each of these metaphors reveals particular truths, and by considering each one in turn, we can develop a multifaceted

view taking us closer to understanding some total truth about careers.

The focus here is on (a) the influence of metaphor, not just on language, but on ways of thinking about careers; (b) the strengths and weaknesses of the metaphor as a means of understanding and gaining insight about careers; (c) the metaphors and their implications most frequently employed in discourse about career; (d) the recent development of new metaphors in response to new characteristics of the career environment; and (e) the use of metaphor in career practice.

METAPHOR: A WAY OF THINKING

A metaphor is not just a "figure of speech." Scholars of the relationship of language to thought advise us that metaphor is more than an affectation, more than a smart way of talking, and more than a means of persuasion: It is a representation of how we think. Consider the metaphorical implications of the common career-related phrases, *wrong side of the tracks*, *silver spoon in his mouth*, *story of my life*, *self-made man*, *playing a part*, *square peg in a round hole*, *loyal company servant*. Each phrase depends on the literal meaning of the words that constitute it but also conveys more than that literal meaning. People's metaphors embody and betray their internal images of the world around them. Using metaphors in our speech, we influence others to share our pictures of the world, and by listening to others' metaphors, we modify our own internal images and develop new ones. While some might worry that metaphors are inherently deceptive—Nelson Mandela did not literally *walk* to freedom—they are apparently inevitable. If that is the case, it is important to understand both the strengths and limitations of metaphors.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF METAPHORS

One strength of the metaphor as a tool of thinking and talking is its ability to represent difficult abstract concepts by means of clear, familiar, often concrete, parallels. People find it easier and more interesting to work with such images.

Another advantage is that metaphors, particularly novel ones, can enable us to gain new insights and to use these to solve problems. Generating multiple metaphors for the same phenomenon may enable people to see things in a new light and thereby act innovatively to solve career problems.

The advantages of the metaphor can be observed in the common representation of the career as a journey. Most people can identify in their own lives career associations with travel-related phenomena such as planning the trip ahead, having a smooth or bumpy ride, making choices of direction, trying to keep up a good pace, overcoming obstacles, losing momentum, getting stuck, going astray, and reaching a destination. Recognizing the parallels between physical journeys and career journeys may therefore bring fresh insight. On the other hand, excessive and dramatic focus on the career as a journey might inhibit alternative potentially helpful images. Much imagery relating to careers, such as fast track, rat race, winners, getting to the top, and so on, constitutes a rhetoric of progression, competition, and pressure that may fairly represent some careers but make unwarranted assumptions about many others. A metaphor can be used not just to assist comprehension and to extend vision but also to persuade and politicize.

Seldom is a metaphor a complete and perfect representation of the concept that it stands for: Carried to their logical conclusion, most metaphors eventually break down. But metaphors should be judged not just by how accurately they appear to describe the reality they are supposed to represent but also by the extent to which they facilitate productive and new thinking. For those seeking to understand their own careers or careers in general, the method of multiple metaphor is recommended: Each new metaphor enables complementary layers of understanding and meaning to be added, until a more complete and balanced understanding of the phenomenon is reached.

PREDOMINANT CAREER METAPHORS

A number of major metaphors for careers have special significance in career studies. Most likely, they represent generic ways of thinking about careers both by theorists who frame their concepts of career through them and laypeople grappling with their own careers.

For example, much theorizing on the sociology of occupations and careers is based on an inherent metaphor of the career as an *inheritance*. This metaphor reminds us how much of our career behavior and success is predetermined by characteristics such as gender, social class, education, and genetically inherited abilities. Understanding careers in this way might lead career actors to accept the status quo

and the inequality it may entail or to attempt to improve people's career chances by altering the social structure or protecting "disinherited" individuals from it—rather than by empowering people to overcome their inherited handicaps through proactive behavior.

Another common way of considering careers is as a *cycle* or cycles. This metaphor tells us about cyclic stages and transitions that careers typically go through in sequence. The cyclic metaphor *the seasons of a life*, for example, provides the message that careers take place in inevitable stages that are uniform across different individuals. Acceptance of this metaphor might lead individuals to plan their careers carefully in light of their expectations that their priorities and career issues will change (predictably) as they age. However, it might also handicap them under conditions in which either unpredicted changes in their own experiences (for example, seeking to leave an established occupation and "start again") or radical change in the environment (for example, organizational failure leading to layoff) have disrupted the expected cycle. A cycle metaphor emphasizing that the career is not a single cycle but a sequence of transition cycles between employment experiences might provide a more flexible outlook.

The metaphor of the career as *action* or *construction* adds to both of the above by emphasizing the power that individuals may exercise over their careers as they create them through proactive action and "construct" them cumulatively in their own ways, regardless of the constraints of either inheritance or sequence in the cycle. Individuals who hold this model of career might emphasize the planned development of their careers through the careful, self-directed construction of new experiences and achievements on the basis of what has gone before. A variant metaphor, careers as *jazz*, proposes that careers, rather than being preplanned, are actively improvised around particular themes in response to changing conditions.

The *fit* metaphor sees the career as resulting from an interaction between the individual and the work environment aimed at achieving a good match between the two. An individual with an implicit fit model of career might become preoccupied with understanding both himself or herself as well as the environment of work within which a good fit must be found and maintained as the career progresses. Indeed, this metaphor appears to underpin much of the work of those in the career development and guidance movement who are concerned with providing

clients with good self-measurement devices and advice on “adjustment.”

The *resource* metaphor emphasizes the career as a repository of the person’s accumulating energy, talents, and skills that can be utilized in combination with other resources in the efficient production of goods and services. The career management theories developed in business schools and the human resource management and organizational commitment-building practices of many business organizations implicitly adopt this metaphor, seeking to engage the career resource productively. This may be accomplished through the encouragement of “organizational careers” in which the individual’s resources are developed and his or her progression in the organization is planned and implemented according to operational and strategic company requirements, yet in a way that utilizes human potential and provides individual fulfillment. This very common metaphor raises interesting issues about the ownership of the resources embodied in a person’s career and about the long-term mutuality of interests between people and their employers. Whatever the benefits to organizations, individuals who consider their careers to be company resources may gain benefits (e.g., pensions) from reciprocal company patronage but risk overdependence on the sole controller of the resource. On the other hand, conceptualizing one’s career as an accumulating repository of knowledge and consciously building the resource as a form of tradable “career capital” may be a smart career strategy.

As mentioned, the *journey* metaphor for careers is the most common of all in public use and emphasizes that careers involve movement toward destinations that sometimes emerge only as the journey proceeds. The metaphor’s main strength—and weakness—is its wide applicability. There are so many different kinds of journeys (short-long, fast-slow, planned-unplanned, upward-downward) that career experiences might be hard to find that do not have convincing “journey” parallels. This perhaps makes the journey metaphor conventional and commonplace, but at the same time, it creates a common imagery for discussion about careers and may, for example, enable counselors to assist their clients to find new forms of travel imagery (e.g., “So, your vehicle has broken down on the road. Could you jump-start it? Could you get out of the vehicle and explore the surrounding country?”)

As indicated earlier, one criticism of the journey metaphor is that its associated imagery often appears

preoccupied with vertical movement, such as climbing ladders and getting to the top. This possibly idealizes hierarchical journey making to an extent that alternative models, such as horizontal movement, free movement, and nonmovement, appear to be stigmatized. In that respect, the recent recognition of the validity of “downshifting” is to be welcomed.

NEW CAREER METAPHORS

Recent changes in structures of employment opportunities, particularly for organizational restructuring, downsizing, and outsourcing, and the rise of contingent forms of work have apparently led to changes in the typical forms of careers and their general destabilization. This has created a need for new metaphors to represent new career realities.

Two important metaphors developed by theorists are the *protean career* and the *boundaryless career*. The protean career is based on Proteus, a character from Greek mythology who could change shape at will; it represents the notion of career as being self-directed by the individual based on a strong inner identity plus the adaptability to be able to make good career changes in a rapidly changing environment. The boundaryless career crosses boundaries and barriers, for example, between organizations, occupations, and industries, enabling the individual to keep his or her career essentially independent of external control. The boundaryless career is based also on a “boundaryless attitude” by the individual. The shape-changing and boundary-crossing virtues inherent in these metaphors make them attractive as idealized formulae for career development in a changing society, but if pushed too far, they may appear intolerant of alternative models (for example, those whose under-privilege prevents them from being self-directed or mobile).

Another increasingly common career metaphor, driven by the development of postmodern approaches to social science and the recognition that careers may be socially constructed rather than having objective reality, is of the career as a *narrative* or *story*. The storylike characteristics of most accounts of careers is striking, whether they are individual monologues, vitae, material elicited by counselors, or barroom boasting—as are differences of “fact” and emphasis in accounts of the same career given by different individuals or by the same individual to different audiences and for different purposes. Talking about one’s

career as a constantly developing and changing story may enable individual adjustment, rationalization, and perhaps even sublimation in fantasy and self-mythologizing. For this reason, there is an increasing recognition of the potential of narrative approaches to career guidance.

METAPHOR AND CAREER PRACTICE

It is likely that the interactions of career guidance counselors and their clients are characterized by much metaphorical discourse indicating interesting built-in career models. However, so far this remains unresearched. The material in question is not confined to generic models of career. Often a client will use a metaphor to describe a momentary part of the career, for example, "I'm in a rut" or "I want to fly." Can these spontaneous metaphors be utilized by the counselor to facilitate the client's development? Some progress has been made on the deliberate utilization of metaphor as part of the guidance process. One question is whether the process should always be based on the metaphors spontaneously used by the client or whether it is legitimate for a counselor to attempt to stimulate a client's thinking by providing a new metaphor for the client to consider.

Another imposition of metaphor in career practice comes in the publication of metaphor-based "self-help" books urging the reader to "Reinvent yourself," "Be a brand," "Become Supermom," "Pack your own parachute," and so on. The attractiveness and popularity of such books is a testament to the power and rhetoric of metaphor, but a single powerful metaphor may constrain one's breadth of thought. Readers of such books need to think through the validity and limitations of the metaphor carefully and to consider how it might be supplemented by others.

CONCLUSION

Career metaphors are more ubiquitous and powerful than most people realize. Those interested in careers need to surface and explore their own characteristic metaphors. They may benefit, too, from giving thought to alternative metaphors and being creative about generating possible new metaphors.

—Kerr Inkson

See also Boundaryless career, Career, Career construction theory, Protean career

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MIDDLE CAREER STAGE

Early career theorists studied careers as a linear progression that generally corresponds to a person's life span. They focused primarily on men who worked for one or two organizations, with a ladder of opportunities for promotion. In a typical career, the *middle career stage* is the point at which an individual attains a level of successful accomplishment recognized by both oneself and one's peers. This usually occurs approximately at middle age.

According to careers researcher Douglas T. Hall, the middle career stage may occur at different times depending on a person's pattern of entering and leaving work situations as well as when he or she experiences various work events. Although the middle career stage may be referred to as *midcareer*, *midlife*, and *midworklife*, they are not the same. Hall defines midcareer as a subjective experience of attaining a level of achievement and establishing an occupational or career role. However, if a person changes careers several times or has a sporadic work history due to, for example, the need to care for children, then what we consider the point of a middle career may occur

several times, before and after middle age (i.e., midlife). A person with a job or occupation rather than a career might experience midworklife earlier than the accepted age 40 midlife point. For example, men in industrial jobs showed an earnings peak at age 35. According to John C. Rife, women often show a different work pattern than men; they are more likely to have a more sporadic work history, to work part-time, and remain in the workforce longer. A woman might not embark on a career until a much later age than the average man and thus would attain a middle career stage in a later age range.

Furthermore, it would be difficult to define a middle career for these less-than-linear career engagements. More recent research acknowledges the similarities and differences between careers of men and women and those who make several career changes. These changes may be due to individual choice, such as a woman or man who returns to school to train in a new field or stays out of the workplace to care for family members. Career changes may also be precipitated by circumstances such as downsizing and economic downturns. The idea that careers evolve throughout a lifetime in a series of stages has received much attention and produced an enduring framework.

STAGE THEORISTS: PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACHES AND THE MIDDLE CAREER STAGE

Stage theorists take a life course approach. They evaluate an individual life across time, which they then aggregate to discern patterns. One of the most well-known theories of career stages was developed by Donald E. Super. He proposed four career stages. In the first stage, *exploration* (teen years to 20s), individuals engage in self-examination and preparation for a career. During the second stage, *establishment* (late 20s to mid- to late 30s), a person finds employment and works to be a successful contributor to the organization. During the third stage of *maintenance* (late 30s to mid-40s), a person maximizes his or her capabilities and may be a mentor to others. The maintenance stage may be considered the middle career stage. Some people in this stage continue to grow in their careers; others reach career plateaus; while still others stagnate if they fail to learn new job skills and remain professionally active. The fourth stage is *disengagement*, in which the individual may leave the organization to find personal fulfillment outside of a

career. Super later identified a *recycling phase*, in which individuals may change career paths.

Building on his stage model, Super developed the Life-Career Rainbow, a “life-space, life-span approach.” He identified the early 30s and late 40s as the period in which one allocates the most time and effort to the worker life role. Thus, the middle career stage would be the point at which one attains a clear level of competence and devotes the most life space to career issues.

The stages identified by Super were also supported by the work of Daniel Levinson. Levinson studied men in a variety of occupations (e.g., hourly workers, business executives, biologists and novelists) to discern developmental periods of stability and transitions that correspond to age. Using the “life structure” of self, family, affiliations, career, and community, he observed the following: an Early Adult Transition from age 17 to 22; the era of Early Adulthood, spanning age 17 to 45, with an Age 30 Transition commencing between age 28 and 32 and concluding between age 33 and 40; the Era of Middle Adulthood, from age 40 to 65, with a Midlife Transition somewhere between age 40 and 45 and another transition between age 50 and 55; and the Era of Late Adulthood, commencing at age 60.

The Transition periods involve a reassessment of the life structure with a special focus on work and family. Specifically, the Age 30 Transition involves the man identifying the benchmarks of success—a ladder of accomplishments—and creating a strategy to attain them. If the man determines that his life structure is not satisfying, he may be prompted to change jobs. During this stage, the man reaches for his dreams; he desires to win and gain recognition. Whether one changes an occupation or not, the Age 30 Transition sets the stage for the Age 40 Transition. During the latter transition, the man reviews his past and prepares for the future. At this point in his life, he becomes more concerned with his own internal markers of success than with approval from others. He is more concerned with using power to lead and help others, forming a legacy, and having more caring relationships.

Thus, in Levinson’s framework, the middle career stage occurs at the end of early adulthood (age 33-40), when the man has devoted much of his energies to establishing himself in his chosen occupation with associated markers of success. The individual is more likely to attain a balance between internal and external markers of success through the process of the

Midlife Transition (age 40-45). Although commonly associated with a "midlife crisis" of disillusionment with one's life structure, especially career status, the Midlife Transition may also be a time of flexibility, creativity, and developing new goals and aspects of the self. A person perhaps shuns externally driven rewards, choosing those he prefers; he takes delight in the intrinsic rewards of his career. He is in a position to make positive organizational changes, mentor others, and decide the terms of his attachment to his career as an independent person. He assesses his legacy as the value of his life that he leaves to subsequent generations.

Levinson's later work included women, and he found that similar eras of stability and transition exist for both men and women. The homemakers, businesswomen, and academics he studied also experienced Midlife Transitions. Some women found that their "careers" as homemakers, wives, and mothers did not contribute to their self-development. They faced the work world with fewer resources at an older age. However, some homemakers were able to turn to occupations for new avenues of personal satisfaction. They were able to dedicate themselves to work pursuits as the demands of home and family decreased and became less preferable. In contrast, career women experienced more conflict among their dreams of being the "successful career woman," "antitraditional figure," and "traditional homemaker figure." They entered the Midlife Transition with the realization of the difficulty of having a career, a marriage, and a family.

Both men and women engaged in career change by moving from external rewards, such as promotions and salary, to examining internal gauges of success. The successful respondents realized that they had attained success in one area but were starting at the bottom of a new area in the MidLife Transition. Almost all the women studied by Levinson changed their life structures during this transition, especially when they realized the deleterious impact of gender discrimination. A longitudinal study of MBA men and women by Joy A. Schmeer and Frieda Reitman supports this idea. Schmeer and Reitman found that although there were no gender differences in early careers, by midcareer, women had experienced lower levels of satisfaction, difficulty in progressing in their careers, being unappreciated by their managers, and gender discrimination.

Stages are useful in understanding individual career choices and attitudes, especially in occupations

with clear career paths. For instance, Susan A. Lynn, Le Thi Cao, and Betty C. Horn studied male and female accounting professionals at different career stages. They defined these stages by professional tenure (years in the accounting profession since college graduation, with 10 years considered the maintenance or middle career stage for the profession). Professional tenure was significantly related to intrinsic and extrinsic reward satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational commitment and negatively associated with intention to leave for the men, but not for the women, in this sample. A study by Rajiv Mehta, Rolph E. Anderson, and Alan J. Dubinsky examined the effect of career stage in sales managers, also considering tenure to measure career stage. Middle stage was considered to be the period of working in the field for 8 to 15 years. Reward preferences varied with career stage. Middle stage sales managers ranked the attitudes of superiors toward them as being the highest preference (compared with those in early and late career stages), followed by salary and commission bonus, achievement of market goals, respect of fellow salespeople, and opportunities for promotion. Significant differences were found between middle stage managers and late stage managers in achievement of market goals and middle stage and early stages managers in opportunities for promotion and earning the respect of salespeople. David A. Jepsen and Hung-Bin Sheu, using a sample of working-class adults, found that midcareer status predicted job satisfaction for men, but not for women. Thus, an organization may be better able to establish rewards, set policies, manage employees, develop leaders, and understand employee career decisions if managers examine how preferences and attitudes may vary by career stage and the interaction of stage and gender.

Although these stage models are intuitively appealing and are based on longitudinal in-depth studies, they may not apply to individuals who do not fit the traditional career model of working for one or two employers in a stable environment of promotion opportunities (i.e., career ladders). Careers scholar Edgar H. Schein proposed a career cycle that encompasses both an internal and external career regardless of career opportunities or type of work. The external career reflects the characteristics of work itself, such as opportunities and limits. Although still perceived by the individual, it provides markers that influence the internal career assessment, which is the individual's subjective ideas of a career and one's role in it.

Schein recommended that aspects of career development be viewed as a series of issues or tasks irrespective of age or life stage. In his framework, an individual enters the work world and receives training between the age of 16 and 25. An individual attains full membership in an early career anywhere between age 17 and 30. Schein identified full membership in a career or midcareer from age 25 on. In this middle career stage, the major issues for the person to consider are choosing between being a generalist or specialist, retaining skills through learning, developing visibility, becoming more responsible for work tasks and managing others, being productive, and formulating a long-range career plan. At this point, a person is also gaining independence, developing personal standards, and forming a clearer self-assessment and the ability to evaluate opportunities. He or she is also becoming a mentor and seeking family/work balance. From age 35 to 45, a possible midcareer crisis has the individual seriously reassessing attainments versus goals to determine whether to change careers, keep the status quo, or move ahead. He or she also considers desired versus actual outcomes, examines the weight of a career in life, and becomes a mentor to others. This middle stage also includes a realistic appraisal of economic and family needs as well as how to maintain skill competencies.

Schein acknowledged that people move through these stages at different rates and that personal and family factors also play a role in career decisions. In illustration, Dawn S. Carlson and Denise M. Rotondo examined MBA graduates to determine whether there was a difference between external and internal careers in terms of promotion stress. They found no difference in career stress based on internal career stage, but did find that early external career individuals showed the highest levels of promotion stress, followed by midlevel career stage. The higher career stages showed lower levels of promotion stress.

Despite the appeal and research findings of the stage theorists, we need to look beyond their assumptions of organizational stability and job security to understand careers in contemporary work life. In our present-day work environment, organizations are under continual pressure to change and adapt to their environments. Similarly, individuals employed in organizations as well as those outside of them face the need to change with their environment to have a meaningful connection to work. The learning, experience, and motivation that brought a person to the

middle stage of a career path will help the person navigate career and personal change as well as develop innovations and new business ideas. Sally J. Power and Teresa J. Rothausen observed that when an individual scans the external environment for work information, it indicates a readiness for midcareer development. Power and Rothausen extended our knowledge of the midcareer or maintenance stage by proposing a middle-career development structure in which individuals consider work in a broader context, rather than as a specific job; engage in continuous learning to avoid obsolescence by surveying the environment to determine the future requirements of their work; and analyze their organizational roles to make lifestyle decisions, such as how to maintain their skill value to their present employer while remaining marketable. Using these three concepts, they identify three levels of midcareer development with developmental tasks and cycles.

According to Power and Rothausen, the first level of midcareer development is *job oriented*, in which the person is dependent on the employer and reactive, an early midcareer situation. Most people at midcareer who work for large organizations are probably at this stage. They either cannot or do not realize that the need for organizational adaptation may influence their future employability. The second level is *work maintenance*, in which a person has attained job satisfaction and internal and external rewards but is cognizant of the need to become a lifelong learner to remain marketable. An example of this is a person who has good “people skills” but may need to learn the more commonly used software applications. The third level is *work growth development*, in which a person proactively fashions growth and learning opportunities to satisfy new internal and external rewards as part of a long-term career development plan. This would involve self-assessment, retraining, and changing the organization-person role agreement.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAGE APPROACHES: AN ARRAY OF CAREER PATTERNS

Whereas traditional stage theorists assume a long-term career within the same stable organizational environment, with development of organizational-specific skills to climb the hierarchy and career decisions made more likely by the organization (or at least in tandem with the individual), other theories consider less linear paths and emphasize the need for the

individual to take control of his or her career. Kenneth R. Brousseau, Michael J. Driver, Kristina Eneroth, and Rikard Larsson described a multiple-career concept model. In addition to the “traditional” linear career, they explain an *expert career*, in which there is little movement and one stays in one career for life; a *spiral career*, in which a person moves into different careers every 7 to 10 years; and a *transitory career*, in which a person changes jobs every 3 to 5 years, usually in unrelated areas.

Experts such as self-employed health care professionals, lawyers, and skilled craftspersons with their own businesses may experience midcareer analyses differently than does the traditional organizationally employed person. Little is known about the expert career pattern because we have only just begun to study these types of work situations. Because experts are motivated to continually develop professional competency, it may be that these individuals seldom experience a middle stage or midcareer reevaluation. In contrast, a person with a spiral career pattern may have several midcareer experiences at different points within each career experience. While those with a spiral career pattern are motivated by developing new knowledge and skills that enhance personal development and creativity, these individuals move every three to five years to unrelated areas, in search of variety and independence. Similarly, those with transitory careers may have midcareer evaluations at different points in each career experience, or they may not even experience midcareer reevaluations because they move on to the next exhilarating experience once they start feeling bored.

Contemporary organizations are more likely to include the expert, spiral, and transitory career patterns. Firms need to build their human capital while considering these nontraditional patterns, using strategies including contracts for long- and short-term assignments; career development, training, counseling, and cafeteria-type rewards and benefits tailored to different trajectories and patterns; engagement of workers in forthright discussions and strategy-building sessions; and mentoring across career patterns not only to meet organizational and individual needs but also to sustain motivation, as a person may move through several midcareer issues.

BOUNDARYLESS AND PROTEAN CAREERS

In response to the “new economy” and accompanying organizational changes, Michael A. Arthur and

Denise Rousseau have proposed that a career is now the converse of the organizational career in terms of individual independence from organizational employment. This unbounded state can be determined by moves across employers, organizational levels, functional areas, occupations, or industries; validation by the market; reliance on external networks; emphasis on personal reasons over organizational imperatives; or the individual’s perception of himself or herself as unbounded. In these circumstances, an individual may adopt any of Brousseau and colleagues’ career concepts described earlier and become the architect of his or her own career. This shifts more of the focus from external career success indicators to the internal markers.

In the boundaryless career setting, the individual would be determining midcareer attainment in terms of skill proficiency and marketability. Instead of an organization, the market and the inner self provide feedback as to career status and success. For example, boundaryless careerists such as filmmakers, consultants, and self-employed skilled craftspersons often start out working as an apprentice, develop a reputation, engage in networking, gain work based on referrals, work on different projects with various clients, and decide when and where to work. These individuals gain knowledge and skills as they move from project to project and can use their career capital when they desire new career challenges. We have all read about successful actresses who switch to directing or entertainers who use their visibility to highlight social issues.

A similar reliance on internal indicators of success is found in the “protean careerist,” a term identified by Hall. Although related, the protean career is conceptually distinct from the boundaryless career. Like the middle-career psychosocial development issues described by Super, Levinson, Schein, and Brousseau, Hall described a career driven by an “internal compass” of satisfying internal rewards. Protean careerists are in charge of their careers; seek growth, mobility, and psychological success; and are committed to a profession while maintaining balance with other life issues. The protean careerist seeks continuous learning, is open to exploration and change, and engages in learning cycles that constitute a career.

CONCLUSION

An individual in the middle stage of his or her career has developed an array of knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences and recognized accomplishments in a

chosen career or occupational area. Middle careerists are repositories of organizational learning, mentors, and present and future leaders in and out of organizations. They function as change agents in the work environment. However, if the middle career stage does not reflect desired accomplishments, it may be associated with demotivated or plateaued workers, the loss of talent, and psychological distress and despair, all of which impact individual and economic development. We need to recognize that individuals in and out of organizations may have diverse middle-career experiences at different ages. These experiences may also vary with occupation and with individual factors, such as gender, interests, and abilities. Given the importance of work to self-esteem, social standing, and perceived success in our society, we need to examine ways to maintain the psychological satisfaction, creativity, productivity, skills, and experiences of people in the middle stages of their careers.

—Madeline Crocitto

See also Boundaryless career, Early career stage, Late career stage, Protean career

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MIDLIFE CRISIS

The term *midlife crisis*, or *midlife transition*, is generally defined as a period in an adult's life, believed to occur at or around the age of 40, in which there is a reappraisal of life's accomplishments, a more poignant recognition of health issues and ultimate mortality, and the potential for a change in lifestyle or behaviors. "Midlife crisis" is instantly recognized in the United States and increasingly in other Western nations. The recognition is most likely due to its prominent use in novels, movies, art, and advertising. People tend to use the term negatively, associating it with stereotypes about physical aging, career stagnation, and midlife marital boredom. The term is also most often associated with men's experiences, although recent research on popular beliefs about the term suggests that some women also believe that they have experienced midlife crises. In the United States, therapists, popular writers, and people outside the academic and therapeutic professions connect the midlife crisis to the strong cultural expectation that a successful and self-fulfilling work career is central to achieving success in life. The assumption is that if by age 40, career growth and development has stagnated, men (and increasingly women) will experience crises.

Although there is some evidence that age 40 held special cultural significance before the twentieth

century, the term midlife crisis is a recent creation first introduced in 1965 by Elliott Jaques. In his article "Death and the Midlife Crisis," Jaques argued that there is a critical stage of development among creative male artists in their late 30s, taking three forms: the cessation of creative activities, a marked change in the quantity or quality of the creative output, or death. The term crossed quite rapidly into popular usage, applied well beyond the original sample of observation.

Another major milestone was the work of Daniel Levinson and his colleagues. Their work *Seasons of a Man's Life* described a stage theory of adult development that gave prominent play to crises associated with transitions between key decades in life, including the transition into full middle age around age 35 to 40. Predictable stages of adulthood and throughout midlife were also popularized by Gail Sheehy in the book *Passages*.

The aging of the baby boom generation into midlife has brought the concept of midlife crisis to the fore in popular culture. It is important to note that scientific studies of emotional well-being at midlife have never established the midlife crisis as a universal or expectable stage of life in the general population. In fact, the scientific literature tends to reject the idea. There is also considerable scientific skepticism as to whether the traditional definition of the midlife crisis applies to middle-aged people at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Some researchers, such as O. G. Brim and David Chiriboga, have argued that the concept may never have been an accurate description of the expectable course of midlife development. Marjorie Lachman found that the midlife crisis was reported by those who had life histories characterized by serious life events and adjustment disorders. Stanley Rosenberg has recently observed that it is more useful to think of the midlife crisis as an "ideal type" concept that has evolved into a popular myth and a staple of literary treatments of midlife. In sum, the influence of the midlife crisis in the scientific literature on adult development was relatively brief; already in the 1970s, researchers such as George Vaillant had published studies challenging the idea that midlife crises were expectable crises of life or universally experienced. The concept itself has psychiatric and therapeutic roots, and thus it was probably predictable that scientific skepticism would emerge.

Three major social trends now also tend to undercut the idea of a predictable midlife crisis connected with careers. First, the years that are popularly

believed to constitute midlife have shifted upward and have extended further as longevity has increased. People believe that midlife begins at age 40, rather than age 30. Second, many more women are pursuing careers. Jaques theorized that the midlife transition would be "obscured" in women because of the timing of menopause. Women's mixed-life paths, with child-bearing interruptions, have transformed what midlife (and midcareer) looks like for the average American woman: midcareer may be in the 40s for a man, but in the 50s for a woman who invests in her work career after having children or has her children in her 30s, interrupting early career progress. Third, the idea of a lifetime career is disappearing as well. How does a crisis involving boredom or stagnation in a "career job" apply to workers who are necessarily switching companies, careers, and work opportunities several times throughout their adult lives?

Another related issue is a theoretical one: Developmental stage theories of adult development have fallen into disfavor in both psychology and sociology. Major new works on the midlife in the United States, such as the recent work supported by the MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Successful Aging (*How Healthy Are We? A National Study of Well-being at Midlife*) call the expectation of a midlife crisis into serious question. This edited volume suggests that midlife and midcareer are increasingly diverse among Americans—and that most Americans in the 1990s experienced midlife positively rather than negatively. Thus, a "crisis" model seems outdated, as researchers develop models of midlife that emphasize process, diversity, adaptation, and the effective use of accumulated resources to solve problems rather than lockstep progression through universal stages.

Because scientific research on the midlife crisis is scarce, lay definitions rule the day. Lay definitions are inherently elastic. Recent studies of midlife and attitudes toward midlife by Stanley Rosenberg and by Elaine Wethington have found that the general public defines the midlife crisis broadly: as a period of reevaluation or regret sometime in middle age. This is evidenced by Wethington's recent study of American use of the term *midlife crisis*, conducted for the previously mentioned MacArthur Foundation research network. In general, the study found that people used the term as a way to explain the meaning of severe life events in their lives. People reported a fair degree of uncertainty about what the term actually meant; it was

common for a respondent to ask the interviewer whether a recent life event "counted" as a midlife crisis. Equal proportions of women and men reported that they believed they had experienced midlife crises. Almost half of the self-reported crises were situations that occurred before or after the age range of 39 to 54. The types of events that were nominated as midlife crises were those that prompted a reevaluation of life priorities; however, there was no evidence that this type of reevaluation was distinguishable from the types people make at other points in the life span. Echoing Rosenberg, the popular use of the term midlife crisis is more accurately described as the appraisal people give to crises that happen to occur to them when they are in their 40s and 50s.

Does the term midlife crisis hold any future relevance for the career literature? Rosenberg makes a valid point that the term gives meaning to career and other changes in midlife. Thus, it serves as a useful heuristic for everyday people describing the meaning and impact of severe life events or career transitions. Yet the outlook for the term will probably be more mixed in the scientific literature on career development. Current scientific research embraces a process-and-continuity view of adult development through changing circumstances in adulthood. Why maintain a concept that paints a very negative view of midlife, when the reality is that at midlife, people are at the peak of their capacities to master problems in their lives?

—Elaine Wethington

See also Career plateau, Career transition, Erikson's theory of development, Middle career stage

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MINNESOTA CLERICAL TEST

The *Minnesota Clerical Test* (MCT) first was published under the title of the Minnesota Vocational Test for Clerical Workers in 1933 for use in the selection of clerical personnel and to provide career guidance information. The instrument has remained unchanged since its first publication.

The MCT is a brief test, taking 15 minutes to complete. The test itself comprises two parts that measure numerical and verbal acuity. These skills are assessed by asking respondents to identify identical pairs of numbers or words. The two sections, Numerical Comparison and Name Comparison, yield separate scores calculated by adding up the number of correctly identified same pairs minus any pairs incorrectly marked as similar or similar pairs that are not marked. For each section, the maximum raw score possible is 200.

The most recent MCT manual, published in 1979, provides updated information on the instrument's reliability and validity. Information on the test-retest reliability of the MCT is provided on a sample of female business school students at both a northeastern university and a midwestern university. The test-retest reliability of the Numerical Comparison section, with four days between test sessions, was .81 for the northeastern sample and .83 for the midwestern sample. For the Name Comparison section, the test-retest reliability was .86 and .87 for the northwestern and midwestern samples, respectively. Evidence of reliability for the MCT also shows stability in scores over long periods of time. The manual provides data on bank bookkeeping machine operators and two samples of clerks, who were retested during a span of 8 to 54 months. Correlations between the first and second testing ranged from .56 to .69 for Numerical Comparison and .62 to .81 for Name Comparison.

The two parts of the MCT have been shown to be highly correlated. For male and female samples of

mixed ethnicity, correlations between the Numerical and Name sections ranged from .58 to .73. The samples included students, job applicants for clerical positions, and experienced clerical workers.

Data supporting the validity of the MCT also are provided in the manual. For example, scores on the MCT for samples of employed clerks and secretarial and business students were correlated with a variety of other clerical tests for verbal and numerical ability. Correlations between verbal tests and the MCT Name section ranged from .36 to .52. Correlations ranged from .38 to .59 between numerical tests and the MCT Numerical section.

The MCT has been used in research and selection procedures. For example, reports have been published using the MCT as a predictor of job performance and clerical task performance. The MCT also has been used in employee selection. Last, research on the MCT has focused on creating norm comparison groups, and research also has focused on practice effects.

—Melanie E. Leuty and Jo-Ida C. Hansen

See also Abilities, Multiple intelligences

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MINNESOTA MULTIPHASIC PERSONALITY INVENTORY-2 (MMPI-2)

The *Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2* (MMPI-2) is a 567-item, true-or-false measure of personality and psychological symptoms. It can be administered individually or in a group format, via booklet or on a computer. It requires roughly a sixth-grade reading level. Audiocassette versions are available for individuals with reading difficulties, vision

problems, or physical disabilities that affect their abilities to manipulate the test materials. It is intended for individuals age 18 or older; an adolescent form (the MMPI-A) is available for individuals between the age of 14 and 18. Under standard conditions, the MMPI-2 requires approximately 60 to 90 minutes to complete. It can be scored by hand, optical scanner, or computer processing. Computer-based interpretations of the results are available as well. Nonetheless, MMPI-2 results should be interpreted only by individuals who are thoroughly trained in test theory, personality, psychopathology, and psychodiagnosis.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MMPI

The original version of the instrument, the MMPI, was published in 1943. It had been developed at the University of Minnesota by psychologist Starke Hathaway and psychiatrist J. Charnley McKinley to aid in the diagnostic screening of clinic patients. The original items were selected for the inventory because they discriminated statistically between psychiatric patients and individuals without identified psychiatric problems. This method of test construction, known as *empirical keying*, reduced the subjectivity of the interpretation of the test results.

Initially, the inventory included eight clinical scales, which measured psychoneurotic concern with bodily health (Hypochondriasis, now known as Scale 1); symptomatic depression (Depression, Scale 2); conversion hysteria (Hysteria, Scale 3); antisocial tendencies and psychopathic behavior (Psychopathic Deviate, Scale 4); suspiciousness and mistrust (Paranoia, Scale 6); anxiety with obsessive and compulsive features (Psychasthenia, Scale 7); symptoms of the four recognized subtypes of schizophrenia (Schizophrenia, Scale 8); and the tendency to act in euphoric and hyperactive ways (Hypomania, Scale 9). Two more scales were later developed from the items, at the time being intended to measure "male sexual inversion" or homosexuality (Masculinity-Femininity, Scale 5) and social introversion-extroversion (Social Introversion, Scale 0).

In addition, four scales were created to evaluate the validity of the test taker's report: Cannot Say (?), to track the number of items that were omitted or to which both true and false were answered; Lie (L), to detect unsophisticated attempts to portray oneself overly favorably; Infrequency (F), to reflect item responses that deviated from typical ones; and Correction (K), to

measure clinical defensiveness. The K scale was later used to weight scores on Scales 1, 4, 7, 8, and 9, which were thought to be most susceptible to underestimation in the context of a defensive test-taking approach. Evaluating the validity of respondents' profiles is critical for understanding their degree of cooperation with the assessment process and their possible attempts to distort responses, such as by minimizing problems or exaggerating symptoms.

In the years following the publication of the MMPI, it was subjected to extensive and rigorous scientific study. The research showed that the instrument was not reliable for differentially diagnosing discrete psychiatric groups, as it was originally intended to do. However, the research produced a collection of empirical correlates of high and low scores on the clinical scales and corresponding classification rules for describing behavior and personality traits. Over time, the MMPI became the most widely used personality instrument in the United States, and the MMPI-2 holds that same designation today.

THE MMPI-2

In 1982, a committee was formed to modify the original test booklet and develop new norms for the MMPI. The restandardization project was initiated because (a) many of the 40-year-old MMPI items were out-of-date, and some were objectionable in content; and (b) the original normative sample of White, rural Minnesotans was not regarded as representative of the U.S. population in the late twentieth century. In 1989, the restandardization project culminated in the publication of the MMPI-2. Extensive validation research has documented the MMPI-2 as an effective replacement for the original MMPI for assessing adults.

The MMPI-2 contains the same clinical scales and validity indicators as the original instrument. However, there have been changes in the interpretation of some scales (for example, Scale 5 is now considered a measure of degree of deviation from stereotypical gender roles). There also are several new validity indicators, including two additional scales of infrequent responses (F_b , measuring endorsement of aberrant items in the latter portion of the test; and $F(p)$, measuring endorsement of problems that are uncommon even among psychiatric inpatients); two response-inconsistency scales (Variable Response Inconsistency, or VRIN, and True Response Inconsistency, or TRIN); and means of assessing “faking

good” among nonclinical samples (such as Superlative, or S). Awareness of the benefits of paying attention to the content of the inventory items prompted the development of clinical scale subscales, so-called content scales, and myriad supplementary scales. Most recently, a set of restructured clinical scales has been introduced and proposed as another means of facilitating profile interpretation.

The MMPI-2 can be used in a variety of settings. It is valuable for assessing psychiatric inpatients and outpatients, and it is also favored for use in forensic settings. It provides important information for non-clinical purposes as well, including screening for high-risk employment positions in the airline industry and public safety. It is valid for use with people representing a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and it has been translated into dozens of foreign languages to extend its usefulness beyond English-speaking populations. Serving as a rich source for empirical investigation, its body of literature is ever increasing. Potential new and advanced uses include computerized adaptive testing to tailor the instrument to the individual while it is being taken. Numerous texts and other reference materials provide further information about these innovations (as well as about useful interpretation strategies), and frequent national workshops and conferences afford training opportunities and expose attendees to the latest research on the MMPI-2 and its applicability.

The MMPI-2 can add to evaluation in career counseling assessments in several ways. First, the MMPI-2 item pool contains many items that address the assessment of emotional adjustment, a factor that is pertinent to many careers that require high emotional stability and good judgment (for example, in airline pilot selection, nuclear power plant operation, police and fire departments). The test also provides information about a potential candidate's general personality functioning, including factors such as interpersonal relationships, impulse control, responsibility, and potential substance use problems. The MMPI-2 is one of the widely used personality measures in personnel selection and can add valuable information to the decision as to whether a client shows the emotional stability and responsibility needed for some occupations.

—James N. Butcher and Julia N. Perry

See also Big Five factors of personality, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Personality and careers, Sixteen Personality Test (16PF)

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MINNESOTA THEORY OF WORK ADJUSTMENT

The *Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment* (TWA), developed by Rene Dawis and Lloyd Lofquist, provides a way of conceptualizing the fit between an individual and a job or organization. It was initially influenced by research into the job placement problems of the physically disabled, which was the focus of a consultancy undertaken at the University of Minnesota as part of the Work Adjustment Project commenced in 1957. Much of the early research leading to TWA was published with the Minnesota Studies in Vocational Rehabilitation. In developing the TWA, the authors drew heavily on the strong measurement tradition at Minnesota. This emphasis resulted in a theory that provides a set of clearly testable hypotheses, which has stimulated many decades of research and associated development of instruments and measures.

TWA consists of both a structural model and a process model. Much of the research has focused on the components of the structural model, thereby failing to capture the underlying influence of learning theories on the development of the model and, more important, missing the richness of the dynamic aspects of the theory that deal with how both individuals and environments change. However, the dynamic component of TWA has increasing relevance because of the way in which the theory accommodates the current focus on adaptation and change in the work environment.

STRUCTURAL MODEL

The TWA describes both people and work environments in terms of the demands they impose on or ways they can reinforce each other and in what each can offer, or supply, the other. Commensurate measurement of the individual and environment along two broad dimensions captures the extent of the match between demands and supply.

Knowledge, Skill, and Abilities (KSAs)

TWA requires a detailed understanding of the environmental requirements in terms of the KSAs (perceptual, cognitive, social, and physical), education, and experiences that are necessary for optimal functioning. The measurement of these requirements derives from the job analysis literature.

A principle of symmetry embedded in TWA requires that the individual be assessed on the same KSA dimensions as those used to describe the environment. Commensurate measurement provides information not only on what the individual has to offer but also on how well his or her supplies match the work requirements. This emphasis on stable individual differences is unique among career development theories, and although it implies certain limitations, it does not deny the influence of the situation or the potential for change.

Further evidence of symmetry can be seen in the focus on the demands the environment places on the individual, and vice versa.

Needs, Values, and Interests

The importance of assessing an individual's needs, values, interests, and preferences illustrates TWA's link to fundamental learning principles. The concept of individuals seeking environments that will reinforce their values or the potential of an occupational reinforcer to reinforce behavior was heavily influenced by the early learning theory traditions of Edward Tolman and B. F. Skinner. Originally, measurement of needs and values occurred through the Minnesota Importance Questionnaire (MIQ), which included 20 need dimensions thought to be common to the majority of working people. These 20 needs were summarized into the five work values of achievement, autonomy, status, safety and comfort, and altruism, which, according to TWA, are higher-order needs.

Similarly, the environment is assessed in terms of the opportunities it has to offer individuals as motivational incentives, that is, its capacity to fulfill an individual's identified needs, values, and interests.

Work adjustment is the outcome of a match, or correspondence, between requirements and supplies from both the individual and the work environment on the two dimensions described above. Three major criteria are viewed as indicators of work adjustment: satisfaction, satisfactoriness (i.e., satisfactory performance), and tenure.

Satisfaction

Satisfaction is the outcome from the match between the individual's vocational interests, motivational needs, and values and the extent to which the organization is able to provide appropriate rewards and reinforcement of these. The authors of TWA argued that satisfaction was more than an overall component and therefore incorporated satisfaction with specific aspects of one's job such as supervision, coworkers, working conditions, hours of work, pay, and types of work. Importantly, they also highlighted the more intrinsic aspects of work, including satisfaction arising from the fulfillment of aspirations, expectations, and needs.

Satisfactoriness

Unlike other theories of career development that focus solely on the individual's perspective, TWA also incorporated the employer perspective through the inclusion of *satisfactoriness* (satisfactory performance). Resulting from the correspondence between the environment's need for specific KSAs and the individual's capacity to supply these, satisfactoriness covers efficiency, productivity, the ability to get along with a supervisor and coworkers, and a willingness to follow company policies. The early measure of this construct, The Minnesota Satisfactoriness Scales (MSS), asks the employer to rate how well the individual is performing compared with others in his or her work group on dimensions parallel to current conceptualizations of *task performance* (quantity and quality of work); *contextual performance* (e.g., accepts direction from supervisor, works as a member of a team); and *adaptive performance* (e.g., adapts to changes in procedures or methods, adjusts to different interpersonal approaches). The MSS also has sections that address what is currently called "counterproductive behavior" (e.g., comes late for work, becomes upset and unhappy, and requires disciplinary action).

Furthermore, TWA proposes that the extent to which correspondence between person and environment results in satisfactoriness is moderated by (that is, dependent on) the level of an individual's satisfaction. Specifically, the prediction of satisfactory performance from the match between an individual's KSAs and those required by an organization is stronger for satisfied employees than for unsatisfied employees. Likewise, satisfactoriness moderates the

extent to which satisfaction is predicted from a match between an individual's needs and the reinforcers provided by the environment.

Tenure

Tenure, that is the length of time an individual and environment interact, is a function of both satisfaction and satisfactoriness. While TWA originally operationalized tenure as a period of time before voluntary or involuntary removal from the workplace, more recently, the concept of withdrawal behavior has been used to include voluntary turnover as well as absenteeism, lateness, and other behaviors that indicate a reduced affective commitment to work.

PROCESS MODEL

The dynamic component of TWA was developed to explain the process by which either the person or the environment adjusts or adapts to minimize deterioration in fit.

Based on control or systems theory, it is proposed that a lack of correspondence acts as a trigger for a behavioral response aimed at reducing the tension that is created by the associated dissatisfaction. The extent to which this behavior is initiated depends on the so-called response style of either the person or the environment. *Response style* is classified in four dimensions: *celerity*, or speed of response; *pace*, or strength of response; *rhythm*, or pattern of response; and *endurance*, or length of sustaining the response.

The actual behaviors that reduce the level of mismatch can be enacted by either the person or the environment. There are four kinds of behaviors or *adjustment styles* that describe this process of maintaining or improving correspondence: activeness, reactivity, flexibility, and perseverance. Taken from the perspective of the person, *activeness* is when the individual attempts to reduce the mismatch by acting to change the environment to better suit himself or herself. An example of activeness on the part of the person would be negotiating job changes or a salary increase. Conversely, *reactiveness* occurs when the individual changes or modifies himself or herself to better suit the environment. Examples of reactive behavior include learning new skills, adapting interpersonal relating, and cross-cultural adaptability. *Flexibility* is tolerating a mismatch, such as being able to cope with higher-than-desired levels of stress and

ambiguity in the workplace. Finally, *perseverance* describes the degree to which an individual will enact adjustment behaviors before giving up. In the same way that individuals act in these four adjustment styles, so do environments. For example, an organization can provide feedback and training to actively change its employees' KSAs and reactively changes itself by instituting work redesign initiatives.

RESEARCH

The structural and process models of TWA combine to produce 17 research proposals. Propositions X to XVII relate to the style variables and, due mostly to inadequate measures of these, have attracted scant empirical attention. Likewise, there has been little testing of the hypotheses concerning the moderating role of satisfaction and satisfactoriness (Propositions IV and V).

In contrast, a large body of research has been consistent in supporting the prediction of satisfaction from the congruence between an individual's needs, interests, and values with the corresponding environmental reinforcers.

Similarly, there has been extensive support for the proposed relationship between satisfaction, satisfactoriness, and tenure. However, recent research has highlighted the complexity of measuring tenure and the recently identified need to include work withdrawal behaviors other than resignation or termination (such as absenteeism and lateness).

Support for the propositions regarding the prediction of satisfactory performance is found directly in research investigating TWA as well as indirectly through the large body of selection research of the last decade, particularly that showing a link between cognitive ability and job knowledge and performance. Admittedly, much of this research shows the direct link between KSAs and performance, failing to account for the requirements of a specific job. However, the identification of a number of moderators of the relationship between cognitive ability and job performance, such as task complexity and novelty, does suggest that the more a task requires cognitive ability, the stronger its prediction of performance.

UPDATED VERSIONS

Although the TWA was originally developed to assist people to choose careers and to adjust in a rehabilitation

context at a time when work environments were relatively stable, the theory has shown itself to be readily amenable to being updated to cater to changing work conditions and ongoing research developments.

As mentioned, the concept of tenure has evolved with the recognition of the importance of both work and job withdrawal behaviors. Aharon Tziner and Elchanan Meir expanded TWA to take account of this research and also included the notion of organizational commitment. Attention has also been paid to the other TWA criteria of satisfaction and satisfactoriness. Peter Warr identified the need to account for mental health and well-being along with satisfaction. He emphasized the measurement of job-related well-being, and much of the subsequent support is found in the stress and coping literature. Other seminal work showed that job performance (satisfactoriness) is, in fact, a multidimensional construct and that its dimensions are differentially predicted, suggesting that future investigations of TWA consider measurement of these separate aspects of performance.

The role of personality factors was not a focus of the original TWA. Although considered as higher-order variables derived from the more basic model variables, their role is not clear. Renee Dawis extended the model to include personality as one of several "other factors" that moderate the relationship between the three outcome variables. Alternatively, Beryl Hesketh and Barbara Griffin suggested that because of the established empirical relationship between interests and personality and between job performance and personality, individual differences in personality could belong in the structural model of TWA as one of the essential aspects requiring a fit between person and environment.

—*Beryl Hesketh and Barbara Griffin*

See also Knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs); Person-environment fit (P-E fit)

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MORALE

Morale has been a recognized business concept and management concern for as far back as the construction of the pyramids. Although managers intuitively understand what morale is, there is no crisp, universally accepted definition. Morale can be understood as a state of mind—a positive outlook toward the workplace, wherein work is fun and a source of pride for the employees. Morale can be separated from the concept of employment, whereby one can focus simply on behaviors indicating a desire to be part of the team, a sociological phenomenon. Signs of low morale are negative employee attitudes, reduced energy levels, high stress levels, and an overall gloomy atmosphere devoid of a palpable sense of accomplishment.

Although managers are frequently warned to keep morale high to avoid suffering a loss of productivity, evidence suggests that high morale and high productivity have a common cause rooted in constructive management practices. Businesses with low morale

are destined to face unfavorable performance consequences, since low morale can result in errors on the job, customer dissatisfaction, and employee burnout. But low morale is a symptom, not necessarily a cause, of these negative outcomes. Research on morale has indicated that there are several organizational factors influencing morale, including the degree of mutual trust between employees and management, the degree of buy-in by employees to the company's mission, and degree of trust or belief that employees have in their coworkers.

Morale as a construct should not be confused with job satisfaction, although employee satisfaction surveys have served as a surrogate for assessing morale for some time. Employees can have a strong personal satisfaction with a job that stands apart from collective organizational morale. Questions such as "I am satisfied with my salary" address individual employee satisfaction but indicate nothing about organizational morale. A company can be made up of a loose collection of highly compensated, highly satisfied employees performing in an organizational vacuum in which morale is low or nonexistent. Standard employee survey questions that address employee morale include "I am proud to be a member of this company" or "I would recommend employment in this company to a friend." In essence, morale is reflective of the fact that employees crave social interaction with their peers, respect from their managers, and opportunities to make visible contributions.

The search for high organizational morale can focus business executives on management practices that engender both high morale and high productivity. Accordingly, there are a number of methods available to improve organizational morale. The first set of methods, as discussed below, focus on engendering mutual employee/manager trust.

Communicate Honestly. Keep the employees "in the loop" by communicating directly and honestly about business conditions. Even in bad times, reality is often more desirable than the receipt of information via the "grapevine." Asking for employee input and advice can yield creative solutions and provides employees with a much-desired sense of control in uncertain times.

Listen to Employees. Use both formal (such as surveys) and informal methods to understand employee ideas and concerns. Informal methods include suggestion boxes, establishing an ombudsman role, and

conducting “brown bag” lunches where employees and management meet to have lunch and exchange ideas. Listen attentively to ensure complete understanding and follow up on employee suggestions. Publicly make the connection between improvements in the internal organization and employee suggestions.

Focus on the Positive. Take every opportunity to communicate improvements in the company situation, such as successful responses to environmental change, product launches, marketing campaigns, capital acquisitions, and positive swings in financial status. Celebrating accomplishments provides strength when conditions get difficult. Deliver day-to-day positive reinforcement in the form of oral comments and handwritten notes.

Focus on Employee Health, Safety, and Financial Security. Support benefit offerings, such as 401(k) plans, employee assistance programs, flexible spending accounts, and college investment programs to align employee personal and professional goals. Provide creative solutions for employees who require flexible schedules, for example, to attend to child care needs, and allow personal time off in cases of short-term medical or personal emergencies. Helping employees meet their long-term goals improves morale and builds lasting adhesion to both the company and fellow employees.

Provide a Quality Work Environment. Invest in quality work processes, tools, and equipment. Keep physical space and furnishings comfortable and safe. Ensure that frontline personnel have the authority to take care of the customers with minimal management oversight. In addition to providing superior customer service, this delegation of authority will foster employee pride in themselves, their team, and the company. Encourage calculated risk-taking and entrepreneurial behavior.

The primary method to strengthen buy-in to the company’s mission is to continuously extol the virtues of the company, including its contributions to society, not only as a thriving enterprise but also as a good corporate citizen. Companies can exhibit positive civic leadership in a number of ways, including permitting time off for community service, matching employee contributions to charities, and providing free products or services to those in need. Employees want to know that their company’s values are in line with their personal values.

Finally, to foster trust and belief in coworkers, show appreciation and celebrate success to ensure that employees understand how their accomplishments contribute directly to company success. Praise all employees responsible for a given success, with special attention to the frequently forgotten units within the organization, such as facilities, the administrative staff, or customer service, without whom nothing could be accomplished. Acknowledge employee accomplishments in trade organizations. Reprint and distribute employee-authored articles. Post letters of appreciation from customers on company bulletin boards. Encourage employees to acknowledge each other in writing.

In conclusion, high employee morale is not a sufficient condition for creating high organizational productivity, but management’s efforts to foster morale can contribute to high organizational productivity. When morale is high, employees will identify and prevent potential organizational problems well beyond the ability of management to identify and build plans to address such issues. When morale is high, employees will encourage and help each other to accomplish what were once thought to be unimaginable feats.

—David Perri

See also Job involvement, Job satisfaction, Organizational commitment, Work ethic

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MOTIVATION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

This entry considers the relationship between the internal motivation of people and their career development. The discussion centers on what has been theorized and researched connecting the internal drivers of behavior and decision making to career outcomes and career satisfaction.

Generally, *motivation* can be defined as a force or energy that exists within a person and influences

effort, directs behaviors, and ultimately affects performance and other individual outcomes. Researchers believe the importance of personal motivation in career development has grown in recent years for a variety of reasons. For example, work roles have become more flexible, less well-defined, and subject to increasing change both within organizations and across the span of a career, which often involves multiple organizations. Career transitions appear to be more frequent and involve larger qualitative differences than in years past. These more significant qualitative differences reflect a transition from one career to another, for example, a person moving from an occupation as an engineer to one as a teacher.

Self-management of one's own career development is seen as increasingly important in this more uncertain environment. Individuals are being urged to take responsibility for their own careers not only by the popular press and career counselors but also by the organizations in which they presently reside. Researchers have argued that people want to feel in control of the direction of their own careers, with a sense that they can significantly impact their own destinies. However, this desire varies across individuals, and some find the prospect of having control of their own destinies frightening in what seems to be an increasingly uncertain world. The direction and intensity of personal motivation to influence one's career development varies across individuals. Personal motivation and career self-direction affect not only career success but also other factors, such as mental health and life satisfaction.

One well-known early theory relevant to the topic of motivation and career development was presented by Donald E. Super in his classic book *The Psychology of Careers*, in which he discussed the course and cycle of an individual's working life. In the *exploration stage*, a person develops a self-concept. In the *establishment stage*, the self-concept is implemented. The *maintenance stage* involves an individual preserving or being nagged by a self-concept. The *years of decline* involve a person's adjustment to aging and a new sense of oneself.

Recent researchers have emphasized careers as involving multiple, short learning cycles over one's life span. An individual's career can be viewed as a series of ministages of exploration, trial, mastery, and exit across functions and organizations. New cycles are motivated by constant learning and mastery. Douglas T. Hall and associates have argued that a shift

has occurred from the organizational career to the "protean career." From this perspective, careers are seen as driven by the person, not the organization. In addition, careers are reinvented by the individual over time as the person and environment change. In this sense, the career of the twenty-first century is not measured by chronological age and stages in life, but by continuous learning and identity changes. Thus, during a model career in the twenty-first century, growth is motivating and involves a process of continuous learning fueled by a combination of personal characteristics, work challenges, and relationships. The following is a further description of the protean career and what motivates the individual's career development.

The *protean career* is a process managed by the individual, not the organization. It consists of all of a person's experiences gained through school, training, various organizations, and changes in occupations. The person's own career choices and search for self-fulfillment are the unifying themes in life. Success is not externally defined, but consists of the person's internal sense of success. Career development involves continuous learning and is self-directed, relational, and found in work challenges. The individual is motivated in this process to achieve the goal of psychological success (as defined below). The most important motivator of learning for the individual is the fact that the "new career contract" is not with the organization, but with oneself and one's work. Success is described in terms of one's unique vision and the fulfillment of central values in life that allow one to arrive at psychological success.

Psychological success involves the feeling of satisfaction, pride, and accomplishment that comes from achieving the most important goals in one's life. These goals are not just work related and can be varied. They could include, for example, achievement, family happiness, inner peace, fulfillment in a hobby, or other life goals. To realize the potential of the protean career, a person must develop new competencies related to managing oneself and one's career. A person must be motivated to develop self-knowledge and adaptability in a continuous learning process. This motivation profile is viewed as fitting the demands of the twenty-first century, with a shift from those with "know-how" to those with the motivation and capability to "learn how." The more an individual can learn how to adapt to changes in the work environment and to continuously grow and evolve as the

world changes, the more the person is “learning how to learn.” To achieve success, a person will need to be motivated to be adaptable as well as have a sense of identity concerning life goals. From this perspective, adaptability and identity are more important than basic skills and knowledge. The motivation and capability to learn how to learn will be essential to success in the self-directed protean career. The protean career is seen as dominating in the twenty-first century, and those motivated by continuous learning, with a clear understanding of their life goals, are viewed as well-positioned for success.

Recently, Hall and Dawn E. Chandler expanded on the concepts of the protean career and psychological success in their research on careers as a calling. A *calling* can be viewed as work that a person perceives as his or her life purpose. From this perspective, the person evaluates work from a subjective self-referent view of career meaning. The calling comes from intrinsic motivation that is not driven by instrumental goals. For this type of individual, what can be termed the *subjective career* is the most pertinent perspective from which different facets of their own career can be evaluated. Career research cannot ignore the subjective career to the extent that it has in the past. This is particularly true given today’s turbulent career environment, in which individuals are less dependent on organizational career arrangements. In this environment, an individual must have the intrinsic motivation to be an adaptable and able learner in the pursuit of his or her calling.

Hall and Chandler have observed that when an individual is motivated by a career calling, subjective measures are critical to an understanding of success. Psychological success in a career develops in cycles, as the result of setting and attaining challenging goals. A sense of psychological success is likely to be felt when the person independently sets and expends effort toward a challenging and personally meaningful goal and then attains that goal. When faced with difficult task situations, people with a sense of purpose will more likely be able to manage setbacks, because they will believe that, ultimately, they will succeed.

Hall and Chandler proposed a model of a success cycle involving a sense of purpose or calling, self-confidence, goals and effort, objective and subjective success, and identity change. For example, when people experience their career as a calling, they will have a strong focus on goals that reflect that purpose. As a result of this goal clarity, they will expend the effort

needed to succeed and carry out the calling. Objective success will lead to subjective success, a more competent self-identity, and self-confidence. The new sense of competence will reinforce one’s sense of calling. Thus, the development of the career calling is an ongoing, cyclical process involving the exploration of personal goals, trial efforts, and reflections on success.

DIMENSIONS OF MOTIVATION AND CAREERS

Manuel London and associates have researched career motivation and its dimensions for more than 20 years. They have postulated and found empirical support for three basic dimensions of career motivation: resilience, insight, and identity. *Career resilience* provides the personal drive to keep trying in the face of obstacles and career barriers. When faced with a difficult situation, career resiliency enables a person to persevere. In addition, resiliency allows the individual to adapt to changing circumstances, even when these circumstances are frustrating, discouraging, or disruptive. Career resilience is built on a belief in oneself, need for achievement, a willingness to take risks, and working either independently or cooperatively depending on what the situation requires.

Career insight means having a strong understanding of oneself and the work environment. When career insight is well developed, the person has a keen and accurate sense of his or her strengths and weaknesses and elements in the environment that support or block his or her ability to perform in that situation. Career insight is the ability to be realistic about oneself and one’s career, without delusion. Insight enables accurate assessments and perceptions, which are put to use to establish and pursue career goals. London has referred to insight as the spark that energizes people to act, with resilience keeping the spark alive.

Career identity channels a person’s energy, behavior, and performance toward a specific set of career objectives. Moreover, career identity involves the extent to which a person defines himself or herself by work. Career identity encompasses task, job, organizational, and professional involvement. Driving forces for a person with a strong career identity include the needs for achievement and advancement, recognition and accomplishment, and a desire to take a leadership role.

The three components of career motivation are complementary. Resilience, which provides the strength and courage to keep trying and moving forward even

in the face of obstacles and setbacks, is the foundation that allows meaningful career insight to develop. Insight, the energizing component developed through experiences and reflection, then allows the individual to choose and pursue a career direction that uses his or her talents to the fullest. Work life and career development will naturally involve encountering obstacles and barriers. Career barriers will cause individuals to question their career identities and rethink career insight up to that point in their career development. How constructive this process is for long-term career success depends largely on career resilience. Resilience will enable an individual to realistically assess a career barrier and determine constructive coping strategies for the situation. Resilience, then, provides the foundation for enabling useful insights into oneself and the work environment. Career resilience is the essential component of career motivation facilitating the individual's ability to not only develop career insight and identity but also cope effectively with career obstacles and barriers.

Empirical research has provided support for the three dimensions of resilience, insight, and identity as three distinct components of career motivation. Using the career resilience, insight, and identity framework, four patterns of career development have been identified: (1) healthy development, (2) redirection, (3) intervening self-doubt, and (4) breaking away from an ineffective pattern.

In addition, London noted that the concepts of career resilience, insight, and identity can be related to concepts in other career theories. For example, John L. Holland related how career decisions are affected by the ability to face barriers and the need for information, reassurance, and vocational identity. Career insight can be related to Donald Super's "vocational self-concept crystallization." Career identity can be conceptually tied to the concepts of work commitment, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship. Also, each of the three career motivation concepts can be found in Hall's model of career identification. In the career identification model, the importance of career to the person (career identity) depends on self-knowledge of one's inclinations (career insight) and career success (which enhances self-confidence, part of career resiliency). Career resilience is also linked to the concepts of hardiness, self-efficacy, achievement motivation, and career maturity. Career resilience can also be linked to the concepts of flexibility, perseverance, and reactivity in work adjustment theory.

London and associates also developed theory on the relationship of career motivation to situational characteristics. Specifically, reinforcement contingencies are seen to develop career resilience. Reinforcement for good performance, opportunities to achieve, and an environment supportive of risk taking all contribute to the development of career resilience. Information processing contributes to the development of career insight and career identity. An environment in which a person is encouraged to set goals and in which information about career opportunities within the organization is provided contributes to career insight. An organization that provides abundant opportunities for self-development and opportunities for advancement in the organization and in which there are expert role models with whom to identify and learn from contributes to increased career identity.

CAREER SELF-MANAGEMENT

The concept of *career self-management* is closely related to the topic of personal motivation and career development. One perspective on career management has been provided by Raymond A. Noe, who noted that many human resource professionals have advocated career management to improve a person's motivation. In the literature, career management, developmental behavior, and performance are believed to be linked. The process of career management consists of career exploration, development of career goals, and using career strategies to achieve career goals. Vocational psychologists developed the *theory of exploratory behavior*, on which the concept of career exploration is based. Career exploration involves collecting information about one's values, interests, and strengths and weaknesses. The behaviors involved can include both mental and physical activities that provide information about oneself or the environment. Studies have shown that career exploration is related to developmental behavior, including participation in seminars and the acceptance of mobility opportunities.

The second aspect of career management from Noe's perspective is the development of career goals. *Goal-setting theory* has been used to provide insight into the development of career goals. Goal-setting theory postulates that goals influence behavior by focusing attention, stimulating and maintaining effort, and facilitating the development of approaches for goal attainment. Having career goals may be an important determining factor in developmental behavior

and a person's willingness to participate in developmental activities. Goals can influence the individual to engage in behaviors and activities in order to improve on skills and address weaknesses. The more focused people's career goals are, the more likely they will be to engage in behaviors to reach them and the greater their motivation to participate in developmental activities. Career goals are also believed to be positively related to a person's performance.

The third aspect of career management from Noe's perspective is the use of career strategies to achieve career goals. A *career strategy* is a behavior or activity that increases the probability of career goal attainment. Examples of career strategies include participating in a mentoring relationship or developing skills and competencies. A person's use of career strategies is likely to stimulate additional developmental behaviors. The entire career management process is likely to be influenced by a person's age, position, and the manager's support for developmental activities. These factors are also likely to influence a person's developmental behavior and performance.

Noe's empirical research provided limited support for the relationships discussed above. The research did support the idea that an individual's motivation to participate in developmental behaviors was related to environmental exploration. The relevant factors of environmental exploration include seeking career-related information from peers, managers, and other sources. In addition, management support was significantly related to developmental behavior.

Researcher Zella King has provided a thorough discussion of the nature of career self-management as well as its causes and consequences. From King's perspective, career self-management is seen as heightening a person's perception of control over his or her career and leading to career satisfaction. However, career self-management may also be associated with negative outcomes and maladjustment. From the career self-management perspective, a person is seen as using three types of self-managing behaviors as adaptive responses to career development issues: positioning, influence, and boundary management. When these three types of behaviors are used to respond to or eliminate career barriers successfully, constructive vocational adjustment occurs. The career self-management perspective builds on earlier research by John O. Crites on vocational adjustment in order to revise and update vocational adjustment theory to provide a more contemporary perspective.

Earlier vocational adjustment theory argued that people are motivated either by internal or external forces to behave in certain ways in their jobs. For example, an individual might endeavor to seek acceptance from others, attempt to achieve recognition and status, or work at being granted greater autonomy in a job. When people are stymied in their attempts to achieve outcomes they desire either by external circumstances such as frustration or internal conflicts such as competing desires and internal conflicts, they will attempt to adjust by eliminating the obstacles or reducing the tension experienced. If the individuals are effective in their responses, they will succeed at vocational readjustment and experience a feeling of success and job satisfaction. However, if responses to the difficulties are not successful in overcoming the problems they face, they will continue to experience frustration and conflict and can be considered vocationally maladjusted. From a career development perspective, the motivation to achieve vocational adjustment occurs over the entire course of a career, from the first job to retirement. Naturally, the contexts in which they occur, the nature of the challenges faced, and the responses of the individual will vary across the span of his or her working life.

Importantly, recent perspectives have emphasized that understanding career development must include consideration of an individual's personal life in addition to working life. A total picture of career self-management must include a person's life desires outside of work. A comprehensive career management perspective includes a consideration of adjustments made by an individual to deal with total life desires, including work, family, leisure, spiritual pursuits, and other areas of life important to the individual.

As noted above, King has described career self-management as a dynamic process involving the three types of co-occurring behaviors, namely, positioning, influence, and boundary management. *Positioning* involves behaviors aimed at making sure the individual has the contacts, skills, and experience to achieve his or her desired career outcomes. *Influence* involves behaviors aimed at actively trying to affect the decisions of key individuals important for the person to be able to achieve desired outcomes. *Boundary management* involves attempts to balance the demands of work and nonwork activities important in one's life. Each of these three types of behavior may be rationally and consciously planned by following a clear path, or they may be improvised as demands arise

through various situations encountered over time. In any case, positioning, influence, and boundary maintenance can be considered basic elements of career management; each one is intended either to eliminate external challenges that would otherwise prevent a person from achieving desired career outcomes or to address internal sources of conflict between roles.

The three types of career management behaviors can be viewed as driven by three determinants: self-efficacy, desire for control, and career anchors. In other words, self-efficacy, desire for control, and career anchors are the underlying reasons that explain why career management behaviors are initiated in the first place. Each concept has a prominent place as a behavioral construct in the management and psychology literature. *Self-efficacy* refers to the belief of a person that he or she can effectively perform the behaviors required in a particular situation. With respect to *desire for control*, career self-managing behaviors are seen as producing responses aimed at increasing a person's perceived control over his or her career. *Career anchors* can be viewed as higher-order goals or career orientations. They are basic organizing principles that guide an individual's career-related decisions, driving and constraining choices about how to achieve desired career outcomes.

MOTIVATION AND CAREER-ENHANCING STRATEGIES

Ghulam R. Nabi researched motivational factors to predict career-enhancing strategies. *Career-enhancing strategies* consist of behaviors that are not part of the formal job description specified by the organization. Many researchers believe that career-enhancing strategies are beneficial to an individual's career management and do contribute to positive career outcomes. They include expertise development, self-nomination, and networking. *Self-nomination* refers to, for example, promoting one's aspirations and desire for advancement as a means for attaining greater job responsibility. *Networking* refers to building a network of organizational contacts to gain information, power, and support in order to enhance one's career. The motivational attributes used to predict career-enhancing strategies include advancement motivation and work/career centrality. Research results indicate that advancement motivation is positively related to expertise development and self-nomination. These results provide support for the belief

that advancement-motivated people tend to be intrinsically motivated to channel their energy to include career-enhancing strategies. In addition, work-related centrality has been found to be positively related to expertise development and networking. People who consider work to be a central part of their lives (and are therefore presumably career oriented) were found to have higher levels of self-nomination of their aspirations and abilities to those higher up in the organizational hierarchy and also to engage in more networking. The results are consistent with prior research emphasizing that employees who tend to consider work and career the most central part of their lives are motivated to use career strategies more frequently than those for whom work/career is less central.

MOTIVATION AND MENTORING

Rachel Day and Tammy D. Allen have done research that they believe is the first to reveal connections between mentoring, career self-efficacy, career motivation, and protégé career success. These researchers used the career motivation framework (consisting of career resilience, career insight, and career identity) developed by London. Career motivation is viewed as one factor in explaining the benefits protégés realize from mentoring relationships. The results showed that protégés reported more career motivation than did nonprotégés and that career motivation mediated the relationship between career mentoring and protégé performance.

This research built on earlier research that found that employees with managers who were supportive, provided clear performance feedback, encouraged subordinates to set career goals, and exhibited other mentor-type behaviors were more likely to report high levels of career motivation than employees who did not have such managers. Building on this line of research, Day and Allen found that people who were mentored did report higher levels of career motivation than those who had not been mentored. In addition, people receiving more mentoring had greater career motivation. In this research, individuals who received more career mentoring reported greater self-efficacy. The researchers concluded that career-mentoring activities such as encouraging the protégé to take challenging assignments and providing coaching and exposure may reinforce protégé feelings that he or she is capable and competent. Furthermore, career motivation was found to be related to career success.

Specifically, career motivation was positively related to an individual's salary, subjective reports of career success, and performance.

CONCLUSION

This entry examined research relevant to intrinsic motivation and career development. Researchers believe that personal motivation as a driver of career development has become increasingly important for a variety of reasons. These include the fact that tasks, jobs, and occupations have become more flexible, less well-defined, and subject to increasing change both within organizations and across the span of a career that often involves multiple organizations. The role of internal motivation is critical in understanding individual behavior and decision making in these circumstances.

Specific research relevant to this topic includes several different research streams. One is the career stages theory of adult development. This life span approach describes how an individual's self-concept impacts vocational choices. Stages in this theory include exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. More recent research emphasizes a shift from the organizational career to the protean career. From this perspective, careers are seen as driven by the person, not the organization. In addition, protean careers are reinvented by the individual over time as the person and environment change. The motivation and capabilities to "learn how to learn" will be essential to success in the self-directed protean career. Recent conceptualizations of the protean career and psychological success have been extended to research on a career as a calling. A calling can be viewed as work that an individual perceives as his or her life purpose. From this perspective, the person evaluates work from a subjective self-referent view of career meaning.

Research on the specific dimensions of individual motivation related to career development has postulated and found empirical support for three basic dimensions. These dimensions are resiliency, insight, and identity. Career resiliency provides the personal drive to keep trying in the face of obstacles and career barriers. Career insight means having a strong understanding of oneself and the work environment. Career identity channels a person's energy, behavior, and performance toward a specific set of career objectives. Moreover, career identity involves the extent to which a person defines himself or herself according to work. The concept of career self-management is also closely

related to the topic of personal motivation and career development. The process of career management can be viewed as consisting of career exploration, development of career goals, and using career strategies to achieve career goals.

Another perspective emphasizes three types of self-managing behaviors as adaptive responses to career development issues. These three types are positioning, influence, and boundary management. When these three types of behaviors are used to respond to or eliminate thwarting conditions or career barriers successfully, constructive vocational adjustment occurs. Career-enhancing strategies belong to a related area of research. They consist of behaviors that are not part of the formal job description specified by the organization. Many researchers believe that career-enhancing strategies are beneficial to an individual's career management and do contribute to positive career outcomes. Career-enhancing strategies include expertise development, self-nomination, and networking. Mentoring and career motivation have been part of another area of investigation. Research results show that protégés reported more career motivation than did nonprotégés and that career motivation mediated the relationship between career mentoring and protégé performance. As the nature of tasks, jobs, and occupations continues to evolve and change, motivation will continue to be an important area of research for understanding successful career development.

—Narda R. Quigley and Walter G. Tymon Jr.

See also Career as a calling, Career motivation, Career salience, Work ethic

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MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATION

A *multicultural organization* is defined as one that seeks and values all differences and develops systems and work practices that support the success and inclusion of members of every group. Multicultural organizations are characterized by equality, justice, and full participation at both the group level and the individual level. In multicultural organizations, differences of all types are not merely tolerated; they are actually sought out because their inclusion offers critical opportunities for improvement and enhanced outcomes for organizations, including increased profitability, learning, creativity, flexibility, adaptation to change, and organizational growth.

Leaders in contemporary organizations are paying attention to multiculturalism for a number of reasons. Two converging factors in particular are contributing to organizational interest in multiculturalism. First, organizations are increasingly the locations of diversity across a broad spectrum: People of different races, genders, educational levels, sexual orientations, socioeconomic status, religious affiliations, and any number of dimensions of diversity are coming together at work. To effectively manage and leverage this diverse workforce, organizations must pay attention to the environment being created for the workforce.

A second important factor is that organizations are operating in a context of constant change: Advances in technology, rapidly changing customer bases, and dramatic policy shifts and legal challenges all affect organizations. Both factors require organizational leaders to consider the importance of building multicultural organizations.

Scholars who study and write about multicultural organizations acknowledge that only a small number of organizations are truly multicultural. In contrast to multicultural organizations, most organizations fall into one of two other categories: monolithic or plural. *Monolithic organizations* are typically very homogeneous and are characterized by substantial numbers of White males, who make up the majority in the overall employee population; few women or people of color in management positions; high levels of occupational segregation; high levels of discrimination and prejudice; and an explicit valuing of one dominant group, culture, or style to the exclusion of other minority groups. The *plural organization* differs from the monolithic one in several important ways. Plural organizations are characterized by a more heterogeneous workforce, policies and practices that are more inclusive of people who are not part of the dominant group, greater integration of minority group members into informal networks, and reductions in discrimination and prejudicial attitudes. Plural and monolithic organizations share these criteria: (a) Both are characterized by skewed integration of minorities across functions, levels, and work groups; and (b) both assume that those who are different will assimilate to fit into the dominant culture.

Organizations move from being monolithic to multicultural by paying attention to change in very concrete ways and at several levels. Much of the work on multicultural organizations focuses on change in three particular ways: structural change, cultural change, and behavioral change. *Structural change* focuses on the formal systems that guide and control the work of the organization. Proponents of structural change are paying attention to recruitment, advancement, retention, career development, and attention to other policies and/or procedures, such as benefits, flexible work schedules, compressed workweeks, and job sharing and job rotation. *Cultural change* is concerned with basic assumptions, values, beliefs, and ideologies that define an organization's view of itself. Proponents of cultural change guide the organization by encouraging an environment that welcomes a wide range of work styles and behaviors and embraces diversity in

thought, practice, and action. *Behavioral change* is dedicated to altering behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions (at the individual and work group levels) that hinder the goals of diversity. Proponents of behavioral change challenge the organization to surface intentional and unintentional consequences of actions that differentially and negatively impact minority group members. Each of the three forms of change is important in moving an organization from monolithic to multicultural; using them in conjunction with one another provides a powerful mechanism for leveraging several different interventions.

Multicultural organizations use a number of different interventions to support their employees. Common interventions include managing/valuing diversity training, orientation programs for new members, targeted career development programs, mentoring programs, focus groups, task forces, performance appraisal and reward systems that consider diversity, and company-sponsored social events. There is a temptation to pick and choose from among these many different interventions at random. But multicultural organizations determine which interventions to use and when to use them through a strategic and proactive planning process, often consisting of the following five steps: (1) laying the groundwork and securing organizational leadership for intervention; (2) assessing organizational needs related to diversity; (3) developing and communicating a vision, goals, and strategic plan; (4) implementing selected interventions; and (5) monitoring and evaluating progress and results. Each step is important in preparing an organization to shoulder the complex and intensive work involved in supporting multiculturalism.

Although it is no small feat for an organization to become multicultural, it is nonetheless a worthy endeavor. In light of the rapidly changing nature of work in the twenty-first century, multicultural organizations provide a competitive edge over organizations that remain monolithic and plural in nature: the ability to provide a forum to fully support and draw from all of their human resources.

—Stacy Blake-Beard

See also Affirmative action, Diversity in organizations

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MULTINATIONAL ORGANIZATION

The growth of the *multinational organization*, which has been part of the globalization process in recent years, has had the effect of changing and internationalizing many careers. Through the development of foreign facilities and mergers with foreign companies, multinational organizations extend their business internationally and often become global in scope, at the same time retaining a "head office" focus in a home country. This country is not necessarily the United States: In 2001, only 12 of the world's 50 largest companies by foreign assets were based in the United States.

Multinational organizations have a number of competitive advantages, including the maintenance of a worldwide strategic focus, international reputation and "brand image," and the ability to locate business in whichever country local conditions (such as prevailing labor costs) provide the greatest advantage. Against this, they may lack familiarity with local politics, mores, and culture. In all countries, there is periodic concern that the effect of multinational corporations, particularly very large ones, may be to concentrate power and resources in the hands of nonaccountable foreigners, usurp the functions of government, and act in a socially irresponsible manner, particularly in the displacement of labor and its replacement by low-cost foreign alternatives.

As far as labor is concerned, multinational organizations must decide whether to appoint local people or to

expatriate employees from elsewhere, particularly the “home” country of the organization. Local employees have the advantage of familiarity with the local scene and often lower cost. Expatriates, mainly people who have already had several years’ experience in the organization, have better awareness of the strategy and global operations and culture of the organization and often have had more appropriate education and training than any locally available alternatives. If expatriates are mobile across countries within the organization, they also have the potential to cross-fertilize the organization with an understanding of its different locations.

A common pattern is to have foreign subsidiaries managed, at least initially, by experienced and knowledgeable managers from within the organization, particularly from the home country and head office, with the objective of securing close control and adherence by the subsidiary to organizational strategies and structures. These managers are frequently given “expatriate assignments” of up to five years, after which they return to their own countries. Local people are typically employed in lower-level, more routine work but may be developed to progressively fill more senior roles.

There has been much interest in, and research on, the effects of expatriate assignment on careers. On the positive side, moving to a new country, particularly a culturally dissimilar one, is likely to provide the opportunity for considerable personal growth, the development of cross-cultural skills and a global perspective, and an increase in the individual’s value, both in the employing organization and elsewhere. Against this, traveling across cultures adds additional stresses to those associated with any job change. Expatriates may lack “cultural intelligence,” or the ability to function well in unfamiliar cultural settings. Assignees are normally accompanied by their partners and children, who must make cultural and educational adjustments of their own.

There has been concern, too, about the phenomenon of “expatriate failure,” whereby the expatriate is forced to return early, leaves the organization, or fails to achieve his or her objectives. Returning assignees often find that their expectations of rapid career progression based on their newfound foreign expertise are not appreciated by the organizations. For these reasons, expatriation has failed to live up to its potential as a strategy for career development. There are also indications that expatriation failure is more common among American than among, for example,

European expatriates, perhaps because the latter have a more cosmopolitan perspective.

Research in this area typically adopts a “human resources” frame; that is, it views failures in expatriation as failures in the management of expatriates and seeks to develop improved techniques of expatriate selection, training, orientation, mentoring, and career planning, which will reduce the likelihood of failure and increase the utilization of expatriate experience in organizations. The theory and practice of international human resource management emphasizes a more strategic approach that locates expatriate assignments within a broader organizational planning frame involving the appreciation of the employee’s long-term career development. A recent trend has been for multinationals to reduce long-term expatriate assignments in favor of “global executives,” who travel frequently and exercise authority in a number of foreign locations but continue to be based in their home countries.

In research and discourse about expatriate assignment, the perspective of the individual expatriate is sometimes lost. Expatriates often travel with their own objectives in mind, such as adventure, exploration, and living in different cultures, as well as organizational objectives. They also must take responsibility for the success or failure of their assignments and for the development of their own careers. “Expatriate failure” as defined by the organization on its own terms may have a corollary in “expatriate success” as defined by the individual, in terms of personal development, cross-cultural learning, newfound career mobility, and the opportunity to move to a more congenial organization.

Too great a preoccupation with expatriate assignment may divert attention from the careers of two other key groups. One group, foreign employees of multinationals, often have to make major adjustments in their careers to the new structural and cultural dictates of the owning organization. No doubt, the spreading of foreign direct investment around the world provides new opportunities for many workers, including the opportunity to travel, but it also poses great challenges. The other group is made up of the millions of people who each year migrate from their own countries to try to find greater opportunities elsewhere, including career opportunities. Migrants are typically energetic, but even those with good qualifications and experience have been discriminated against and marginalized in the workforce and have had their careers disrupted far more often than have

corporate expatriates. This results in major human distress as well as underutilization of the diversity of precious human resources.

In coming years, the forces of globalization, multinationalism, migration, and workforce diversity can be expected to increase. International and “global” careers—which not only cross boundaries but lose their identification with any single country—will become more common. International travel will become a feature of more and more careers. Much mature thought and research is required to enable us to respond to these opportunities and challenges.

—Kerr Inkson

See also Globalization and careers, International careers

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MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

What does it mean to be an intelligent person? Philosophers, psychologists, educators, and everyday people have answered this question using a wide variety of definitions for *intelligence*. This question has particular significance for someone seeking a career path in which the chance for success and satisfaction will be maximized. Naturally, everyone wants to make a “smart” career choice.

Since Alfred Binet created the first intelligence test in Paris, France in 1904, it has been assumed that human intelligence can be accurately defined as a single entity (*g*, or general intelligence) and measured by an IQ score. Our understanding of how the human brain/mind processes information and how cultures around the world function has evolved over the past 100 years. Advances in scientific and cultural knowledge have necessitated that we evolve beyond a simplistic representation of intelligence as a singular entity to account for the full potential of the human brain. Successful career planning requires a more complicated and culturally informed model of what it

means to be an intelligent person capable of solving important problems and creating products of value on the job.

In his landmark book *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, Howard Gardner provided extensive research to support his contention that human intelligence is multifaceted rather than singular. To qualify as an intelligence in Gardner’s *multiple intelligences* (MI) theory, each ability must satisfy a range of criteria: the potential for isolated breakdown of the skill through brain damage; the existence of savants, prodigies, and other exceptional individuals with this ability; support from psychological training studies and from psychometric studies, including correlations across tests; evolutionary plausibility; and a distinct developmental history culminating in a definable set of master performances. In addition, each intelligence must have an identifiable core operation or set of operations as well as susceptibility to coding in a symbol system (e.g., language, mathematics, picturing, or musical notes).

Gardner used these eight basic criteria to identify several different intelligences possessed by all humans as part of their cerebral endowment. Of course, given that the normal human brain consists of approximately 100 billion neurons and each individual is exposed to an infinite variety of environmental stimuli influencing the course of intellectual growth, each person possesses a unique profile of strengths and limitations.

The eight intelligences currently identified by MI theory are Linguistic, Logical-mathematical, Spatial, Kinesthetic, Musical, Naturalist, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal. Each intelligence has its own memory system, with cerebral structures dedicated to processing its specific contents. The intelligences are broad categories of ability composed of specific sets of skills evident in daily life (e.g., musical intelligence includes instrumental skill, vocal talent, etc.). As our scientific knowledge increases, it is possible that the list of intelligences will change accordingly. In fact, at the time of this writing, Howard Gardner is reviewing the scientific evidence regarding a possible ninth intelligence, Existential. The core components of the eight intelligences are briefly summarized below, along with their career implications.

Linguistic and *Logical-mathematical* intelligences are most often associated with academic accomplishment and are the primary elements of general intelligence (*g*). The core features of Linguistic intelligence

include the ability to use words effectively for reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Linguistic skill is important for providing explanations, descriptions, and expressiveness. Gardner has described the poet as the epitome of linguistic ability. Other career fields requiring skill in this area include teaching, journalism, and psychology. Convergent aspects of Linguistic intelligence assessed by standard intelligence tests include vocabulary and reading comprehension. Activities requiring divergent thinking include storytelling, persuasive speech, and creative writing.

Logical-mathematical intelligence involves skill in calculations as well as logical reasoning and problem solving. People strong in this intelligence are usually described as being “smart” (e.g., mathematicians, philosophers, logicians, engineers). Logical-mathematical intelligence is required for multistep, complex problem solving and mental math. Most IQ tests assess a person’s ability to reason logically and problem solve quickly but do not examine divergent and reflective aspects of Logical-mathematical intelligence. Divergent aspects of this intelligence include curiosity, the identification of novel problems, or the generation of new and worthy questions.

Musical intelligence includes sensitivity to pitch, rhythm, timbre, and the emotional aspects of sound, as pertaining to the functional areas of musical appreciation, singing, and playing an instrument. A composer requires significant skill in many aspects of this intelligence, especially involving creative musical thinking. Some musical careers (e.g., instrumentalist, vocalist) may require more circumscribed abilities that emphasize technical skill rather than creative output.

Kinesthetic intelligence highlights the ability to use one’s body in highly skilled ways for both expressive (e.g., dance, acting) and goal-directed activities (e.g., athletics, working with one’s hands). Well-developed kinesthetic ability for innovative movement is required for success in professions such as choreography, acting, and directing movies or plays. Precision, control, and agility are the hallmarks of athletes such as karate masters, professional soccer players, and gymnasts. Brain surgeons and diamond cutters must have well-developed fine-motor dexterity, and modern dancers and mimes are able to express complex abstract ideas through subtle gestures and movements.

Spatial intelligence includes the ability to perceive the visual world accurately and to perform transformations and modifications on one’s initial perceptions

via mental imagery. Functional aspects of spatial intelligence include artistic design, mapmaking/reading, and working with objects. Visual artists and interior designers exemplify creative spatial thinking, and a successful architect will need both creative abilities and technical expertise. An automobile mechanic or engineer, in contrast, may rarely need creative or artistic abilities to find the solution to a malfunctioning engine.

A person strong in the *Naturalist* intelligence displays empathy, recognition, and understanding for living and natural things (e.g., plants, animals, geology). Careers requiring strong naturalist skills include farmer, scientist, naturalist, and animal behaviorist. Skilled scientists use pattern recognition to identify an individual’s species classification, create taxonomies, and understand ecological systems. Empathic understanding is a related ability that allows people to care for and manage the behavior of living entities.

Unique contributions of the MI model to intelligence theory are the personal intelligences. The *Intrapersonal* and *Interpersonal* intelligences are presented as separate yet related functions of the human brain (especially the frontal lobes). Intrapersonal ability emphasizes self-knowledge, and interpersonal involves understanding other people.

Vital functions of Intrapersonal intelligence include accurate self-appraisal, goal setting, self-monitoring/correction, and emotional self-management. Results of research have highlighted the importance of metacognition for learning in the basic academic skills of reading and mathematics. Intrapersonal intelligence is not the same as self-esteem, but it may be a strong factor in promoting self-confidence and effective stress management. Well-developed Intrapersonal intelligence may well be essential to an individual’s sense of satisfaction and success. Intrapersonal intelligence has been referred to as the “royal road to achievement, learning, and personal satisfaction” and is thus key in maximizing career success. Specific vocations that require skills in intrapersonal self-management include pilots, police officers, writers, counselors, and teachers.

Interpersonal intelligence also plays a vital function in a person’s sense of well-being. It promotes success in managing relationships with other people. Its two central skills, the ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals and the ability to recognize the emotions, moods, perspectives, and motivations of people, are known to be critical factors in successful

employment. The ability to manage groups of people is required for managerial or leadership positions. Good teachers, counselors, salespersons, and psychologists need to understand a specific individual and then be adept at managing that relationship.

CAREER IMPLICATIONS OF MI THEORY

There are four practical implications for applying MI theory to career planning, selection, and development. First, the chances for maximum career development are increased when there is a good match between the job tasks and an individual's MI strengths. Second, the strength and development of Intrapersonal intelligence is a key factor in positive career selection and advancement. Third, career development will be enhanced when a person's significant others (parents, teachers, counselors, supervisors, peers, coworkers, etc.) are aware of the individual's particular strengths and are supportive of their development. Fourth, the potential negative impact of a person's weaknesses on career success will be minimized when particular strengths are emphasized and then employed, to bridge any significant deficits.

The challenge of matching one's MI strengths to an appropriate career path whereby the chances for success will be maximized is not always easy to accomplish. Successful completion of most real-world tasks, jobs, and careers requires competence in a combination of at least two or perhaps three or more different intelligences. There are several approaches to guide career planning using MI theory. The first approach involves a general consideration associated with one's main MI strengths, either individually or in combination. The second approach is to look more carefully at specific skills within the main MI strengths and match those to particular careers. For example, if the person's top-two main MI strengths are musical and linguistic, he or she might consider a career such as a music teacher, lyricist, or music critic. These are related but quite different career paths. If the person's specific skills are in the areas of writing and musical appreciation, this would focus career planning on musical scholarship or criticism.

Intrapersonal understanding is essential for effective personal judgment and decision making. Research has found that low self-understanding contributes to career confusion and indecision. When young people are taught to use MI language to carefully describe which of their skills will be engaged by

particular jobs, they are assisted in imagining career paths that will allow them to use and develop their MI strengths.

Skill building and career development do not occur in a vacuum. An individual needs accurate feedback from significant others to form a realistic self-understanding as well as an understanding of the world of work. For someone to achieve career advancement, he or she needs to be challenged to build the skills required for higher levels of employment. This challenge typically comes from parents in the early years, later from teachers, and as an adult from professors, mentors, or supervisors.

A person's limitations or weaknesses can inhibit career advancement. For example, a person wishing to become a nurse may have adequate interpersonal and linguistic abilities but have difficulty passing the required math courses. This person has several choices for overcoming this block. He or she might choose a different career objective not requiring advanced math, such as sales or child care. Or the individual might devote creative energy to discover how to pass math by using linguistic and interpersonal strengths to study.

A key element in the MI definition is that competence in each intelligence can be acquired via the convergent thinking associated with IQ or via divergent (creative) thinking. This shift in definition expands the core criteria for identifying who is "smart" and who is not. In addition, MI changes the basic question from "How smart are you?" to "How are you smart?" In other words, in what way is a person smart? MI theory recognizes that each person has his or her own particular MI strengths, and the task of assessment is to accurately describe those strengths so each person's potential may be developed via guidance, challenge, and support.

An additional benefit for using MI theory to enhance career selection is that it recognizes that a person can be successful through the use of creative thinking both at work and in everyday life. Successful performance in a career often requires the creative use of a combination of two or more intelligences. For example, a lawyer who is low in writing skills but strong in interpersonal thinking will emphasize his or her courtroom performance over the writing of legal briefs. Similarly, career development does not necessarily depend on high logical-mathematical skills to maximize success if the person is able to think creatively when solving important problems, creating products, or providing services.

To conclude, it must be understood that the multiple intelligences are different from learning styles or personality characteristics. MI theory describes a person's "abilities," whereas personality and style characteristics emphasize one's "preferences." These constructs may or may not be highly correlated. For example, a person can be friendly, extraverted, and sociable but have very few skills for negotiation, empathy, and collaboration. A benefit of MI theory for career planning is that it focuses individuals' thinking on matching their actual abilities, rather than merely preferences or wishful thinking, with career paths. Research has found that career seekers often gain greater clarity for selecting college majors or career goals when they are provided with information about their multiple-intelligences profiles as well their interests or preferences.

—C. Branton Shearer

See also Emotional intelligence, Intelligence, Stanford-Binet Intelligence Inventory, Wechsler Intelligence Scales

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MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR

The *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (MBTI) was created by Isabel Briggs Myers and Katharine Briggs to make Carl Jung's theory of psychological types practical for everyday use. One of Myers's primary motivations in developing the MBTI was her desire to help people find work that was congruent with their individual preferences.

The most fundamental use of the MBTI in the career field is to provide an individual with insight into his or her preferences and then to recommend job families, occupations, or occupational specialties that potentially provide a good fit for those preferences. The MBTI has also been used to foster the career exploration and search process for career decision making and for career management and development activities.

THEORY

The essence of Jung's psychological type theory is that much seemingly random variation in behavior is actually quite orderly and consistent due to basic differences in the way individuals prefer to use their perceptions and judgment. *Perception* involves how people become aware. *Judgment* entails coming to conclusions about what has been perceived. Systematic differences in how perception and judgment are exercised lead to corresponding differences in behaviors, interests, values, motivations, and skills. Since the basic cognitive functions of perception and judgment enter into almost every behavior, the scope of practical applications of the MBTI is very wide. The primary uses of the MBTI include team building, management and leadership development, individual counseling, enhancing relationships, conflict resolution, understanding teaching and learning styles, and career management and development.

In addition to measuring preferences for perception and judgment, the MBTI also measures two attitudes: (1) the attitude in which preferences are expressed, and (2) the attitude preferred in dealing with the outer world. Each of the two cognitive functions and the two attitudes comprises a pair of dichotomies. Every person has a preference for one pole of each of the four dichotomies. An often-misunderstood component of the theory is that every person is assumed to use both poles of each of the four dichotomies at different times or in different situations, but to respond first, most often, and most comfortably with the preferred pole.

THE FOUR PREFERENCE DICHOTOMIES

The MBTI instrument includes the following four separate scales: Extraversion-Introversion, Sensing-Intuition, Thinking-Feeling, and Judging-Perceiving. The intent of the instrument is to reflect a habitual choice between these rival alternatives.

The Extraversion-Introversion (E-I) index is designed to reflect a person's preference for extraversion or introversion in the sense intended by Jung. Extraverts are oriented primarily toward the outer world and thus tend to focus their perceptions and judgments on people and objects. Introverts are oriented primarily toward the inner world and thus tend to focus their perceptions and judgments on ideas or sensations.

The Sensing-Intuition (S-N) index is designed to reflect a person's preference for two opposite ways of perceiving. Those who prefer Sensing (S) perceive

observable facts and present reality through one or more of the five senses. The opposite is the process of Intuition (N), through which meanings, relationships, or possibilities are perceived.

The Thinking-Feeling (T-F) index is designed to reflect a person's preference between two contrasting ways of judging. A person may rely primarily on thinking (T), to decide impersonally on the basis of logical consequences, or primarily on feeling (F), to decide on the basis of personal or social values.

The Judging-Perceiving (J-P) index is designed to describe the process a person primarily uses in relating to the outer world. A person who prefers judgment (J) uses either thinking or feeling in relating to the outer world, whereas a person who prefers perception (P) uses one of the perceptive processes, either Sensing or Intuition.

THE 16 TYPES

The four indexes are independent of one another, yielding 16 possible combinations. The combinations of the four preferences are called "types," which are denoted by the four letters of the preferences. For example, "ISTJ" refers to a person who prefers Sensing as his or her mode of perception, makes Thinking judgments about those perceptions, and uses Introversion to focus on his or her inner world and Judging for the outer world. The theory further postulates specific dynamic relationships between the preferences. For each type, one process is the leading or dominant process, and a second process serves as an auxiliary. Each type has its own pattern of dominant and auxiliary processes and attitudes (E or I) in which these are habitually used. The characteristics of each type follow from the dynamic interplay of these processes and attitudes, in which the whole becomes greater than the sum of the parts.

The 16 types are displayed in a type table, as shown in Table 1.

The MBTI differs from other personality instruments primarily in two respects. First, the theory postulates and the instrument measures dichotomous preferences. Almost all other psychological instruments assume and measure traits ordered on a continuum. Second, in MBTI theory and practice, each preference is assumed to be equally valuable, with its own characteristic strengths and potential weaknesses. In contrast, trait instruments usually characterize one end of the continuum as "negative" and the other "positive," or they describe people as having "too

Table 1. The 16 MBTI Types

ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ

much" or "too little" of the trait. The intent of the MBTI scales is, instead, to sort people into the equally valuable categories to which they naturally belong, based on their preferences. Also unlike trait instruments, measurement around the midpoint of each scale of the MBTI is more important than fine differentiations at other points along the scale. To increase measurement precision around the midpoint, item response theory is used to score the MBTI items and to assign people to one pole or the other on each of the four dichotomies. These differences are the cause of the majority of misunderstandings of the MBTI.

ASSUMPTIONS

The basic postulate underlying the use of the MBTI in the career domain is as follows: Individuals are attracted to and more satisfied with occupations in which they find (a) opportunities to express their unique type preferences, (b) tasks associated with those occupations that are interesting and challenging, and (c) rewards for doing what they like to do and what they are good at doing. Conversely, people tend to avoid or become dissatisfied with occupations that do not meet these criteria. In fact, when a person enters an occupation that is not congruent with his or her natural preferences, that person will be more likely to be dissatisfied, to leave the occupation, or to experience more job-related stress. A corollary of the basic postulate is that type preferences are also related to career variables, such as occupational values, leisure activities, job satisfaction, turnover, preferred work environments, and a host of other variables relevant to career counseling.

If the basic postulate is correct, one would expect that the distribution of types across occupations would not be the same as the distribution of the types in the general population. The most direct method for testing the postulate is to compare the distribution of the 16 types in a variety of different occupations with the distribution of the types in an appropriate base population.

Type distribution studies have been conducted on many hundreds of occupations, on 22 of the 23 job families used by the U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Information Network, which currently serves as the standard job classification system for the U.S. labor market, and on specialty choice in medical, engineering, and other professions. The primary method of testing the hypothesis is categorical analyses of contingency tables subjected to significance testing, although log-linear analyses of larger tables have also been used. For example, in a study of tax preparers, 100 percent of the sample exhibited a preference for Sensing, and two types, ISTJ and ISFJ, constituted 44.4 percent of the sample. Since this proportion represents almost 2.5 times the proportion of these two types in the base population and the occupation requires exacting and scrupulous attention to detail and a vast amount of detailed knowledge, both characteristics of Sensing types, this is a highly significant finding, both statistically and practically. Although not all results are as clear-cut as this, the evidence that the frequency of the 16 types found in different occupations supports the type proposition is abundant and compelling.

The type hypothesis has also been tested by examining the degree of overlap in a list of occupations recommended for people of opposite types. If types are not differentially attracted to occupations, then one would expect that occupations recommended for, say, an ENFP, would be similar to those recommended for people of the opposite type, ISTJ. A high-percentage overlap would mean that the same occupations were attractive to people of opposite types, a finding that would be inconsistent with type theory. In contrast, a low-percentage overlap would indicate that different types are, indeed, attracted to different occupations. Research has shown little or zero overlap in the occupational lists for seven of the eight pairs of opposite types, and the only pair of opposite types on which there was overlap had only one of the occupations in common.

Type theory also predicts that different types will have different criteria for job satisfaction. For example, those who prefer Extraversion are more satisfied with jobs in which they can interact with a wide variety of people throughout the day. Measuring specific aspects of job satisfaction is more effective than using a global criterion, and such specific aspects are related to type preferences. Furthermore, MBTI scales have been shown to predict a sizable portion of the variance in job-specific satisfaction, over and above

that contributed by situational factors, as well as intention to leave the job and actual turnover.

PRACTICE

The primary uses of the MBTI in the career domain are for career exploration, career choice, and career development. The basic assumption is that certain tasks, occupations, and work environments are more attractive to some types and not to others. It is important to note that the MBTI is not recommended for use by organizations for the purpose of employee selection or promotion. In fact, such use would violate the ethical principles of the Association for Psychological Type.

When using the MBTI for career choice, the results can help clients identify characteristics of jobs or work environments that are congruent with their preferences. For example, the Judging-Perceiving index can help clients identify the amount of structure or autonomy desired to perform a task, while the Extraversion-Introversion index is used to determine the amount of contact with others that is needed. The results can also be used to understand and resolve career dissatisfaction. For example, a manager with a preference for Intuition may balk at spending most of his or her day dealing with operational details.

Basic requirements for using the MBTI in career counseling and management include the following: (a) a database of people whose type and occupation are known, (b) a method for ranking those occupations by their attractiveness to each type, and (c) descriptions for how to use type for career search, exploration, decision making, and management. There are two large-scale databases, one maintained by the Center for Applications of Psychological Type and another by CPP, Inc., the publisher of the MBTI. The former database is available through the Atlas of Type Tables and contains over 300,000 people and hundreds of occupations. The CPP database is the foundation of the *MBTI Career Report*. This database is more recent and contains over 106,000 people from 282 specific occupations representing 22 job families. Furthermore, these people have indicated that they are satisfied with their jobs. The number of people of each type in this database ranges from 2,489 INFJs up to 13,624 ESTJs. The system used to categorize the MBTI occupational database is adapted from the O*NET occupational classification system used by the U.S. Department of Labor as the standard for U.S. occupations. Career clients can therefore easily link their results to the

national occupational database, which includes detailed job descriptions, educational requirements, and a plethora of additional information.

The method used to rank the occupations in each database is based on an index called a *self-selection ratio*. The numerator of the self-selection ratio is the percentage of people of that type in the occupation. The denominator is the percentage of people of that type in the base population. For the application of type theory to careers to be valid, it must be demonstrated that persons of a particular type are found in a much higher or much lower frequency in a given occupation than would be expected based on the frequency of that type in the base population. In contrast, if the frequency of that type in the occupation is the same or similar to the frequency of that type in the general population, one would conclude that occupational membership is determined by factors unrelated to MBTI preferences. A self-selection ratio greater than 1.00 for a given type in a given occupation therefore means that the type is overrepresented, suggesting that people of this type are attracted to this occupation more than would be expected. In contrast, a self-selection ratio less than 1.00 is evidence for underrepresentation of that type, suggesting that people of this type avoid this occupation. If type preferences had no effect on the selection of an occupation or a career field, self-selection ratios for all 16 types for all occupations would equal 1.00. Once self-selection ratios have been computed, they can be used to index the attractiveness of any given occupation for each of the 16 types. For example, in the *MBTI Career Report*, the highest self-selection ratio for a specific occupation is 7.45 for ISFPs employed as veterinary assistants. This ratio means that ISFPs who are satisfied with their jobs are found in this occupation at almost 7.5 times the frequency than would be expected given the frequency of this type in the entire sample. In contrast, for those occupations ranked as least attractive in the *MBTI Career Report*, the self-selection ratios range from zero for many types across numerous occupations (i.e., there are no such types in that occupation) up to .50 (i.e., the proportion of this type in the occupation is one-half what one would expect given the frequency of this type in the general population). Overall, the magnitude of self-selection ratios for broad job families and for attractive and unattractive occupations supports the link between type and career choice.

A number of practitioners have provided descriptions of the preferences for each type for tasks and work environments. The *MBTI Career Report* provides interpretive statements based on the client's reported type to address personal style, challenges, and strategies in the areas of career choice, career exploration, and career development. The interpretive statements in the report represent a distillation and condensation of hundreds of statistically significant research findings, including data collected from a national representative sample of the U.S. population. These data include the relationship of MBTI type with the following aspects: ideal work environment, satisfaction with 14 specific aspects of work, intention to leave one's current job, confidence in performing different kinds of work, organizational values, and on-the-job behaviors.

—Allen L. Hammer

Note: MBTI® and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® and Introduction to Type® are registered trademarks of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Trust.

See also Career counseling, Career exploration, Occupational choice, Occupational Information Network (O*NET), Self-awareness

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N

NATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

The *National Career Development Association* (NCDA) is the home for approximately 3,800 practitioners, scholars, and students devoted to promoting the career development of all people over the life span. As the third largest division of the American Counseling Association, NCDA provides service to the public and professionals involved with or interested in career development. NCDA has a long history of service to the counseling profession.

In 1913, the National Vocational Guidance Association (NVGA) was founded. The inception of NVGA stemmed from the changing economic and educational milieu and a social demand for the guidance of youth. In 1951, the association accepted divisional status in the American Personnel and Guidance Association, now called the American Counseling Association. In 1985, NVGA became the National Career Development Association (NCDA). On a global scale, NCDA promotes sharing of workforce policy and practices and welcomed its first international affiliate in 2002, the Japan Career Development Association. NCDA provides a voice for members who deliver career services to diverse groups in a variety of settings.

NCDA has been instrumental in disseminating knowledge on career theory, research, and practice. In 1921, NCDA published its first periodical, the *National Vocational Guidance Association Bulletin*. In 1952, after a few title changes, the journal was renamed the *Vocational Guidance Quarterly* and later

became the *Career Development Quarterly* (CDQ) in 1986, which remains as the official journal of NCDA today. The purpose of the CDQ is to foster career development through the design and use of career interventions and publish articles on career counseling, individual and organizational career development, work and leisure, career education, career coaching, and career management. In addition to the CDQ, the counseling profession has made great progress in defining the specialty of career counseling.

NCDA speaks for professionalism and is the recognized leader in developing standards for career counseling and development. NCDA sets ethical standards for the field, including guidelines for the provision of career services on the Internet, and provides competency and performance indicators. NCDA works with licensing and credentialing bodies to support the recognition of career counselors and career development facilitators (CDF). The CDF credential was developed to provide standards, training specifications, and credentialing for individuals who are currently providing career assistance but are not professional counselors. In cooperation with the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), the ACES/NCDA commission on Preparing Counselors for the New Millennium was developed to stress the continued importance for career training in the counseling curriculum. Committed toward higher standards, NCDA has recognized members for their exemplary service to the profession.

Recognition for achievement and service has been a hallmark of the NCDA. Recognition awards and monetary grants are conferred annually to members, including graduate students in counseling for their

outstanding practical or theoretical contributions to the career field. Awards are presented at the annual conference, which is a global gathering that attracts over 1,000 career development professionals across many career service areas. To recognize career professionals who exhibit professional distinction, NCDA recently created three special membership categories: Fellow, Master Career Counselor (MCC), and Master Career Development Professional (MCDP). Through these efforts and many others, the NCDA continues to foster a sense of community among its members and will strive to be a leader in the field of career development for years to come.

—Louis A. Busacca

See also American Counseling Association, American Psychological Association, Career counseling

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NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT (NLRA)

The *National Labor Relations Act* (NLRA) is the basic federal law that governs unionization and collective bargaining in the United States. When it was originally enacted in 1935, the NLRA was called the Wagner Act, based on the name of its main sponsor, Senator Robert Wagner of New York. The NLRA underwent major amendments in the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, also called the Labor-Management Relations Act. The NLRA was also amended in 1958 and in 1974.

The NLRA regulates labor relations in almost all private sector businesses in the United States that affect interstate commerce. The NLRA does not cover public employees (who are covered by state labor relations laws), agricultural employees, or employees in the

railroad and airline industries. Labor relations in the latter industries are governed by the Railway Labor Act.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE NLRA

The collective bargaining system in the United States as governed by the NLRA has five basic principles: employee choice, majority rule, exclusive representation, the "appropriate bargaining unit," and labor and management determination of terms and conditions of employment. The principle of employee choice means that employees in an "appropriate bargaining unit" (to be discussed below) choose whether they wish a union to represent them for collective bargaining purposes, and if so, which union. The principle of majority rule means that the choice of whether employees choose to be represented is made by a majority of the employees in the "bargaining unit." If a majority of the employees in the bargaining unit do not select representation, the employees in the unit are not represented by a union.

If a majority of the employees in the bargaining unit choose union representation, the principle of "exclusive representation" comes into play. Under this principle, the union selected by a majority of the employees in a bargaining unit represents all the employees in the unit, regardless of whether the employees supported unionization. The employer, in turn, has a legal obligation to bargain with the union in good faith over terms and conditions of employment for the represented employees.

The fourth principle is that the selection process for unionization takes place among the employees in an "appropriate bargaining unit." An appropriate bargaining unit is a grouping of employees who work for a single employer and have a "community of (employment) interest" or common employment interests. They may be the employees who work in a company facility or the employees in an occupational group or a department or within a particular craft. Employees who have a community of interest are employees with similar supervision, pay structures, tasks, hours of work, responsibilities, and work location.

The fifth principle is union and management determination of terms and conditions of employment. The employer has an obligation to bargain in good faith with the union representing its employees, and the union has an obligation to bargain in good faith with the employer. Neither party has an obligation to agree, however. Terms and conditions of the employment are

determined by the parties' negotiations influenced or affected by the bargaining power of the parties as manifested by their use of economic weapons, such as a strike, a lockout, or employer replacement of strikers. The purpose of these economic weapons is to move the parties toward agreement, even if one party concedes. The law does require that the parties reduce an agreement to writing. An agreement in writing is generally enforced through a grievance procedure ending in binding arbitration.

BASIC RIGHTS UNDER THE NLRA

The NLRA provides employees the right to bargain collectively, to form, join, and assist unions (called labor organizations), and the right to engage in concerted activity for other mutual aid or protection. Thus the NLRA is not limited to employee attempts to unionize. The NLRA also protects the rights of employees to refrain from any activities related to collective bargaining or unionization.

The employees who may exercise rights under the NLRA are only employees who are considered "employees" for purposes of the act. Persons employed in industries not covered by the NLRA are not considered "employees" for the purposes of the NLRA. Other persons employed who are not considered employees for the purposes of the NLRA are supervisors, managerial employees, independent contractors, and persons whose jobs are related to an employer's labor relations function.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE NLRA

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), an administrative agency of the federal government, administers the NLRA. The NLRB consists of five members who serve staggered five-year terms. The NLRB members are nominated by the president of the United States and must be confirmed by the U.S. Senate. By the third year of a president's term, the president will have appointed a majority of the board members. There is a custom, however, that no more than three board members may be affiliated with one political party. Because of these limited terms and appointment by the president with confirmation by the Senate, the NLRB is designed to be an agency that changes its composition, and to some extent its views on labor relation issues, with the changing political consensus in the country.

The NLRB has two main functions: determining representation and preventing unfair labor practices. In its representation function, the NLRB determines whether a unit of nonunion employees wishes to be represented by a union. Upon a showing of "substantial interest," which is generally demonstrated by at least 30 percent of the employees in a bargaining unit signing union "authorization cards" designating the union as their collective bargaining representative and presenting the cards to an NLRB regional office, the board will initiate its representation procedures. After resolving any disputes regarding the bargaining unit, the typical method for determining representation is through a representation election. During the one-year period from October 2002 through September 2003, the NLRB conducted 2,797 representation elections. Employees chose representation in 1,458 elections (52.1%) and did not choose representation in 1,339 (47.9%). A total of 181,496 employees voted in these elections. Of these, 74,649 were in units that selected representation, and 106,847 were in units that did not select representation.

The second major function of the board is preventing unfair labor practices. An employer commits an unfair labor practice under the NLRA when it discriminates, interferes with, or coerces its employees who are attempting to exercise their rights under the NLRA or when the organization refuses to bargain with a union that represents its employees. A union commits an unfair labor practice when it discriminates against an employee who wishes to exercise rights to refrain from union activity or commits any one of several other types of offenses. During the period from October 2002 through September 2003, the NLRB closed 30,390 unfair labor practice cases. Of these, 23,444 were charges of unfair labor practices against employers.

CONCLUSION

Although the NLRA has been in existence for more than 70 years, labor relations in the United States and its regulation by the NLRA continues to be controversial and the cause of a wide gap in viewpoints between employers and unions. The NLRA and labor laws in the United States touch on issues of individual rights and collective rights, property rights, and human rights to organize. These are issues that lie at the very heart of the relationship between business, society, and government in the United States.

—Richard N. Block

See also Collective bargaining, Employment-at-will doctrine, Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

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NEEDS

The term *need* describes a recurrent concern for a certain type of outcome resulting from individuals' interactions with their environments. Examples of biological needs are hunger, thirst, sex, or avoidance of bodily harm; examples of psychological needs include social contact, dominance, and curiosity. The common denominator of most biological and psychological needs is that the successful attainment of a need-specific outcome (e.g., food, water, orgasm, interpersonal closeness, high rank, new rewards) is pleasurable and satisfying. Anticipation of the pleasurable end state provides motivational needs with energy and direction. For instance, hungry individuals invest effort and energy into the procurement of food but not into the attainment of dominance or social contact. Needs also influence learning and memory by facilitating the retention of behaviors that are instrumental in need satisfaction and the recall of contexts that are associated with need satisfaction or frustration.

Research on individual differences in psychological needs (often called motives) has focused on the

needs for achievement (n Achievement), power (n Power), and affiliation (n Affiliation). These needs are also labeled implicit motives, because they operate outside of a person's conscious awareness and are assessed indirectly, through empirically derived scoring systems that are used to analyze stories individuals write in response to picture cues. The validity of picture-story measures of implicit motives has been documented by studies relating them to a large array of phenomena, ranging from psychophysiological responses, to measures of mental and physical health, and to societal and historic phenomena. Importantly, implicit motives predict career trajectories, entrepreneurial activities, and managerial success. Moreover, implicit motives do not correlate with measures of explicit or self-attributed needs assessed per questionnaire. Implicit and explicit motives are activated by different types of cues, predict different types of behavior, and interact in shaping individuals' adjustment and well-being.

THE POWER MOTIVE

The implicit power motive represents a recurring need to have impact on others or the world at large. Findings from longitudinal studies show that power-motivated individuals have more successful careers, as reflected in higher occupational levels attained. In large companies, they are also more likely than other individuals to rise to higher management levels, particularly if they have a strong prosocial power motive. There are two reasons for power-motivated individuals' greater career success: First, a successful career provides prestige and social visibility and therefore satisfies power-motivated individuals' need to have an impact on others. Second, to the extent that the work itself gives power-motivated individuals frequent opportunities to influence and direct others' work, it can provide an outlet on a daily basis for the need to have impact on others and thus promote frequent need satisfaction. Research also shows that power-motivated individuals excel at influencing and leading others. They are particularly adept at using behavioral strategies that project intelligence and competence. As a consequence, they have an easy time persuading others and rallying them to their cause. Research on U.S. presidents has shown that presidents whose inauguration speeches were particularly saturated with n Power were also judged by historians as being the most effective at leading the country.

Depending on the individual's socialization and learning history, n Power can be expressed in prosocial, controlled ways by helping, leading, or teaching others or in antisocial, uncontrolled ways by coercing, controlling, or aggressing against others. Research suggests that career and management success are frequently associated with controlled forms of power motivation (also called inhibited or socialized power motivation), which enables individuals to be socially successful by taking the long-term consequences of their behavior into account. In contrast, individuals characterized by uncontrolled power motivation are more likely to express their need for impact in impulsive acts, exploitative behavior, and alcohol abuse. Not surprisingly, individuals with this variant of power motivation are less likely to have successful careers or to be promoted to higher management positions.

THE ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVE

Individuals with a strong implicit achievement motive derive pleasure from doing well or improving on a task. In contrast to power-motivated individuals, who feel comfortable delegating work to others, achievement-motivated individuals want to have complete control of the task and master it on their terms; extrinsic demands for good performance or external interference with the way they want to complete the task can be powerful disincentives for achievement-motivated individuals. Achievement-motivated individuals achieve optimal task performance by setting medium difficulty, challenging goals and seeking frequent feedback on how well they are doing en route to goal attainment.

The implicit achievement motive is a predictor of several aspects of career success: on average, achievement-motivated individuals earn more, they make more realistic occupational choices, and they tend to be more satisfied with their job than individuals low in achievement. In large companies, achievement-motivated individuals are also more likely to rise to higher management levels, as long as they do not need to manage large numbers of people and can still make contributions on their own. In contrast to power-motivated individuals, however, they rarely make it to the top management positions, and if they do, they tend not to do well in these positions, because they no longer have direct control over the tasks and goals to be accomplished but have to delegate the actual execution of plans and tasks to others.

Implicit achievement motivation has also been linked to innovation. A strong achievement motive predisposes individuals to constantly seek new, better, and more efficient ways of achieving their goals. As a consequence, the achievement motive has been linked to increases in the U.S. patent index, to the adoption of innovative agricultural practices by farmers in developing countries, and more generally to greater curiosity. High levels of achievement motivation make individuals more interested in and capable of doing well in business, because this line of endeavor requires that one take moderate risks, have personal control over process and outcome, and find new and innovative ways of making and marketing products. It also provides the achievement-motivated person with constant feedback as costs and profits increase or decrease. For achievement-motivated individuals, money is important only to the extent that it reflects how well they are doing in a particular line of business.

THE AFFILIATION MOTIVE

People with a strong implicit affiliation motive derive satisfaction from establishing, maintaining, or restoring close, friendly relationships with others. As a consequence, they are more likely to cooperate with and help others and less likely to enjoy competing with, confronting, or directing others than individuals low in affiliation motivation. Affiliation-motivated people are also characterized by good interpersonal skills. In laboratory experiments and naturalistic studies, the affiliation motive has been found to predict good task performance and positive social interactions when affiliation incentives were present (e.g., a warm and friendly instructor or manager) but not when such incentives were absent. Affiliation-motivated individuals tend to have less success than others when they head small companies, and high-affiliation individuals are also less likely than low-affiliation individuals to be promoted to higher management levels in large companies, primarily because high-affiliation individuals tend to shrink away from conflict and hard decisions regarding personnel. High-affiliation individuals do tend to excel in integrative management positions, though, because such positions allow them to use their interpersonal skills to resolve conflicts and facilitate cooperation within and between groups.

One reason why affiliation-motivated individuals do not show much evidence of career and managerial success may be that the n Affiliation measure has a strong

fear-of-rejection component. In other words, affiliation-motivated individuals are particularly motivated to avoid rejection and try to belong to a group without necessarily aiming at building truly deep and meaningful relationships with others. Researchers have therefore developed a picture-story measure of *n* Intimacy, which, despite some overlap with *n* Affiliation, captures a positive, hopeful component of the need for close social contact. Although little research on the effects of *n* Intimacy on career success exists, some studies suggest that intimacy-motivated individuals have overall better social adjustment and mental health than individuals low in intimacy motivation.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN IMPLICIT AND SELF-ATTRIBUTED NEEDS

A large body of research suggests that picture-story measures of implicit needs and questionnaire measures of individuals' self-attributed needs and goals do not substantially correlate. This means, for instance, that a person can be endowed with a strong implicit power motive without possessing a strong conscious need to dominate, influence, or control others. Likewise, a person can be low in implicit power motivation but endorse many items related to the pursuit of power and dominance on a questionnaire. Of course, the absence of a substantial correlation also means that some people can be high and some can be low in both types of measures.

Whereas implicit motives are hypothesized to be based on affective preferences—that is, on the capacity to experience the consummation of a motive-specific incentive as rewarding and pleasurable—explicit motives are linked to the goals and expectations that are normative for a particular group (e.g., family, peers, society) and that thus focus the individual's decisions and behaviors on what the group deems important and desirable. Explicit motives guide voluntary goal setting and thus can either channel the expression of implicit motives into certain contexts and behaviors or even override motivational impulses, which increases both the flexibility and the stability of behavior. Thus a crucial difference between implicit and explicit motives is that the former motivate and the latter channel and regulate goal-directed behavior.

Implicit and explicit motives also differ in the types of incentive cues they respond to. Implicit motives respond to task-intrinsic (or activity) incentives, that is, to the pleasure of working on a challenging task, in

the case of implicit achievement motivation, or the pleasure of having friendly conversations with others, in the case of implicit affiliation motivation. Explicit motives, in contrast, respond to social-extrinsic incentives, that is, to salient external demands and social norms. For instance, individuals' self-attributed need for achievement can become activated by an experimenter's explicit instructions to do well on a task, and individuals' self-attributed need for affiliation can become a salient guide for behavior if cued by specific demands to be friendly and socialize with others. Some research also suggests that implicit motives are more likely to respond to nonverbal incentive cues than to verbal-symbolic stimuli.

Finally, implicit and explicit motives influence different types of behavior. Implicit motives are particularly likely to show an effect on nondeclarative or operant measures of motivation (i.e., measures that tap into individuals' know-how in operating on their environment), whereas explicit motives and goals have a stronger influence on declarative measures of motivation (i.e., measures that assess individuals' self-related "knowing that" or their attitudes, judgments, choices, and decisions). For instance, individuals' implicit need for achievement has been shown to predict their performance on a speed-based achievement task (a nondeclarative criterion) but not their decision to continue on the task (a declarative criterion). Conversely, individuals' self-attributed need for achievement has been found to predict the decision to continue on the achievement task, but not their performance on the task itself.

INTERACTIONS BETWEEN IMPLICIT AND SELF-ATTRIBUTED NEEDS

There is growing evidence that despite their statistical independence, implicit and explicit needs interact in shaping individuals' well-being and life outcomes. For instance, it has been found that individuals whose explicit goal pursuits in a particular motivational domain (e.g., power) are supported by a strong underlying implicit motive disposition experience more motivational well-being upon realizing their goals than individuals whose goals are mismatched with their implicit needs. Both research and theory also suggest that the pursuit of explicit goals becomes effortful and demanding for individuals' capacity to self-regulate if the goals are not supported by strong implicit needs. Thus, for instance, a person

who is committed to the goal of becoming a manager and directing the activities of others, but whose implicit need for power is low, will experience the pursuit and realization of this goal as more difficult and challenging than a person who wants to become a manager and has a strong implicit power motive. Because research on the interactions between implicit and explicit needs has just started to gain momentum, it is currently unclear to what extent people are also objectively less successful at realizing explicit goals that are misaligned with their implicit needs and are more likely to suffer from impaired social adjustment and mental health problems. However, it has been demonstrated that individuals can maximize the fit of their explicit goals and their implicit needs if they explore a potential goal experientially (e.g., by vividly fantasizing about the pursuit and attainment of the goal) before deciding on whether to adopt the goal. This suggests that although people often consciously desire outcomes for whose attainment they do not have the necessary implicit motivational resources, they can increase the degree to which their goal choices match their implicit needs through careful exploration of the incentives and disincentives associated with the pursuit of a given goal.

—*Oliver Schultheiss*

See also Career anchors, Interests, Personality and careers, Values, Work values

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NEPOTISM

Nepotism is generally defined as preference given to a relative by a person in a position of power in an organization. Nepotistic preferences are most often defined in terms of hiring decisions but may also be manifest in evaluations, pay decisions, and other personnel decisions. Anthropological theory and historical evidence suggest that hiring decisions are heavily influenced by preferences given to one's relations. When compared with a standard of merit, this form of nepotism is typically viewed as unfair and unethical and is often prohibited by organizational rules and governmental laws.

From a psychological perspective, this traditional definition of nepotism is framed first as a hiring decision on the part of a manager or supervisor and then as an acceptance or rejection decision on the part of the person presumably receiving the unfair benefit of nepotistic hiring. No published measures have been developed for nepotism; however, it may be that the usual indicators of nepotism (generations of family working in the same workplace or occupation, family ties in business and government, married people in the chain of command within an organization) are not always the result of such a top-down decision. Recent research suggests that career choices based on offspring or spousal preferences for occupations may lead to the appearance of nepotism, even though the offspring or spouse may in fact be a meritorious candidate. Moreover, the choice to enter an occupation may be opportunistic from the career choice perspective. Researchers have referred to this career choice and opportunistic nepotism as "new" nepotism.

There are also arguments that antinepotism laws may have a disproportionate negative impact on women, who are less likely to be in positions of power and therefore more likely to be excluded from jobs than their male counterparts. Research to date has not supported this argument, but the paucity of research

and theory in this area leaves this and other questions open.

—Robert G. Jones

See also Personnel selection, Unbiased hiring systems

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NETWORKING

Networking refers to a set of behaviors used to develop and maintain relationships that can potentially provide information, influence, guidance, and support to individuals in their careers. Actively maintaining contacts inside and outside of one's organization, engaging in professional and community activities, and increasing one's organizational visibility through accepting challenging work assignments are examples of networking behaviors. Social network and careers research have emphasized the importance of engaging in networking behaviors in the attainment of valuable career outcomes such as enhanced advancement, compensation, career satisfaction, and career mobility.

Networking is believed to enhance career outcomes mainly because networking behaviors help individuals develop their social capital. Social capital refers to the resources available to individuals through their network relationships. Some of the resources embedded in one's network of relationships include information, expertise, professional and political advice, exposure, friendship, and support. Availability of such resources in turn facilitates career advancement and development primarily because these resources enable individuals to have greater access to different career opportunities both inside and outside of their current organization and to develop their ability to act on these opportunities.

Network researchers state that the accumulation of valuable social capital requires the development of networks with certain structural characteristics. Network size or the number of contacts that constitutes one's network is one of the important characteristics of an effective network. Although the development of large networks is critical for finding new job opportunities and for creating intrafirm mobility, the sheer size of a network is not sufficient to accumulate valuable resources. In addition to the size of a network, network structure and composition also need to be considered when developing effective networks.

Network structure explains how contacts in one's network are connected to each other. It is considered to be beneficial for an individual to build a low-density network connected through weak ties. Weak ties are represented by less frequent and less emotionally intense relationships than strong ties. Weak ties are thought to be advantageous because they reach outside of one's immediate social clique and therefore offer unique, nonredundant information and resources to the individual. Low-density networks are characterized by structures in which one is connected to individuals who are not connected with each other. By linking otherwise disconnected individuals, one gains important information and control benefits such as referrals on his or her behalf, timely access to diverse and unique sets of information, and greater control over the flow of information and resources due to brokering opportunities available in such a network.

Network composition refers to characteristics and types of contacts that make up one's personal network. It is advantageous to develop a diverse network composed of contacts from a variety of social contexts (e.g., work, family, and community) and contacts with different demographic and organizational characteristics (e.g., gender, organizational level, and organizational affiliation). Knowing many kinds of people from many different social contexts is believed to improve one's chance of getting a good job and to increase one's power base and advancement opportunities in an organization. Forming relationships with contacts who hold high status positions inside and outside of one's organization is found especially useful to obtain future promotions and highly prestigious jobs.

In recent years, networking as a career management tool has gained considerable research interest due to a drastic increase in the number of people experiencing more fluid careers with high cross-organizational

mobility. It is believed that successful navigation of such careers requires the development of interpersonal relationships through networking, because this helps individuals exploit career opportunities outside the current employment context and remain continuously employed. Given the importance of networking in the pursuit of newly emerging careers, researchers have started to focus more specifically on understanding the types, predictors, and outcomes of networking behaviors.

Studies examining the relationship between networking behaviors and career outcomes have found that networking is associated with salary progression, promotions, and enhanced interfirm career mobility. Recent research has become more refined in terms of identifying different types of networking behaviors and studying their effects on important career outcomes. This research identified five different types of networking behaviors—maintaining contacts, socializing, engaging in professional activities, participating in community, and increasing internal visibility—and found that only two networking behavior types, increasing internal visibility and engaging in professional activities, positively affected the number of promotions, total compensation, and the perceived career success of managerial and professional employees.

Recent research has examined several demographic, dispositional, attitudinal, and job-related factors as possible predictors of networking behaviors. This research has found that the demographic variables of gender and socioeconomic background and the personality and attitudinal characteristics of

self-esteem, extraversion, and favorable attitudes toward workplace politics are significant predictors of involvement in networking behaviors. In terms of job-related factors, one's organizational level and type of position influence whether individuals engage in networking behaviors.

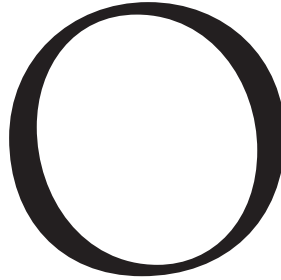
Because of its highly pronounced importance in the pursuit of newly emerging fluid career forms, networking has become a mainstream topic of interest in both the popular press and scholarly writings. Empirical research has shed some light on the dimensions, predictors, and consequences of networking behaviors. However, further research is needed for developing more comprehensive theoretical models and scales of networking behaviors.

—S. Nihal Colakoglu

See also Boundaryless career, Career investments, Career mobility, Career strategy, Social capital

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OBSOLESCENCE OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The *obsolescence of knowledge and skills* has long been recognized as a problem affecting individual careers and organizational effectiveness. While obsolescence has been discussed from a management as well as a psychological perspective at least as far back as 1930, concern over the problem became widespread following the rapid changes that began during the post–World War II era.

The problem of obsolescence has been most often addressed with reference to professional or managerial careers in organizations. However, the problem also affects careers in which professionals are self-employed (e.g., medicine and law) as well as in other occupations that require a body of knowledge and skills. Therefore, obsolescence has an impact on knowledge workers, a widely diverse and rapidly growing population of workers who require a base of specialized and practical knowledge acquired through education and experience.

DEFINING OBSOLESCENCE

Obsolescence can be defined as the degree to which knowledge workers lack the up-to-date knowledge or skills necessary to maintain effective performance in either their current or future work roles. There are several concepts or dimensions that are part of this definition of obsolescence, and they include the following:

1. *A lack of new knowledge or skills.* Obsolescence occurs when the individual lacks new knowledge or skills. Obsolescence involves a failure on the part of the knowledge worker to keep current. However, obsolescence is a matter of degree. While knowledge workers typically need to deal with the problem of staying up to date, few are totally obsolete. Even among those who do stay current, it is practically impossible to be completely up to date.
2. *Ineffectiveness.* Obsolescence becomes a problem for the individual as well as the organization when it results in ineffectiveness. However, most types of ineffectiveness would not be attributed to obsolescence. For example, a knowledge worker who may have the most up-to-date knowledge and skills but is unwilling or unable to use them may be ineffective but not obsolescent. Such ineffectiveness may be attributable to personal (e.g., motivational) or organizational (e.g., poor supervision) factors that can inhibit performance. Only ineffectiveness that stems directly from a lack of current knowledge and skills should be attributed to obsolescence.
3. *Job and professional roles.* Obsolescence has most often been connected to the effectiveness of performance in one's current work role. Consequently, knowledge workers who lack the knowledge or skills necessary to perform their current jobs effectively are obsolescent. This has sometimes been referred to as job assignment obsolescence or simply job obsolescence.

However, other types of obsolescence relevant to specialist or professional career roles have also been identified, although with less frequency than the job assignment type. Those roles may be affected by

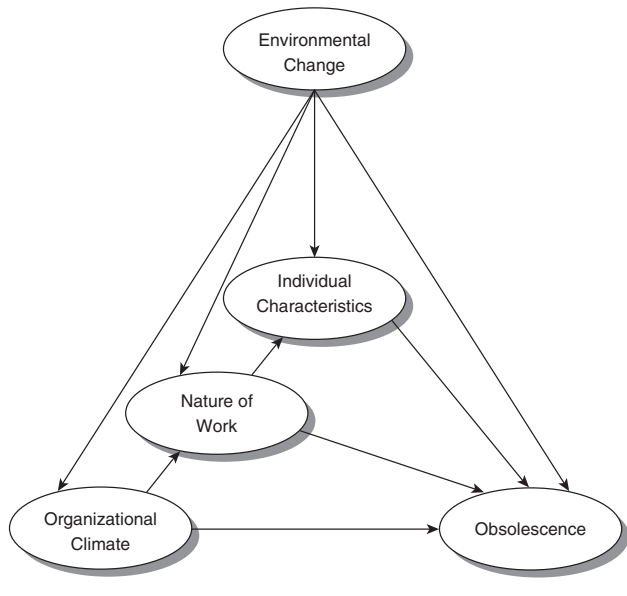


Figure 1. The Kaufman Model of Obsolescence

professional obsolescence, which occurs when individuals do not keep up with the latest developments in their disciplines. Such obsolescence potentially impairs effectiveness of performance in future work roles during the knowledge worker's career.

Although knowledge workers may be up to date in their present job assignments, they may not have kept broadly current in their professional disciplines, and so their capability to take on different or greater responsibilities becomes more limited. For example, this type of professional obsolescence became visible among many knowledge workers who were terminated in the aerospace and defense industries. They were very likely current in the specialized knowledge and skills required by the jobs in their industry. However, they may have failed to maintain the broader professional knowledge and skills that would have more easily facilitated their reemployment in a different job role related to their discipline but in another industry.

CAUSES OF OBSOLESCENCE

The complexity of obsolescence is manifested by multiple contributing factors. These can be somewhat simplified by applying a theoretical model that integrates these factors and shows some of the possible relationships among them (see model in the figure above). According to the model, obsolescence is due to environmental change, individual characteristics, the nature of the work, and organizational climate.

Environmental Change

The roots of obsolescence have been traced to the knowledge revolution, the information explosion, and the dynamic changes that have occurred in technology, organizations, occupations, and management methods. Such environmental change is the driving force toward creating a knowledge economy that produces and distributes ideas and information, requiring a workforce dominated by knowledge workers. However, this knowledge economy, in turn, has not only accelerated the rate of change but has also contributed to the rapid obsolescence of knowledge workers themselves. Therefore, environmental change can be depicted as all-pervasive, directly affecting the obsolescence of knowledge workers as well as the individual, work, and organizational factors that contribute to the problem (see figure).

Individual Characteristics

Knowledge workers differ among each other not only in their degree of obsolescence but also in many other individual or personal characteristics that may either predispose them to keep abreast with new developments or contribute to their becoming out of date. These individual characteristics are demographic as well as psychological in nature and can have a direct effect on obsolescence (see figure).

Age

It is widely assumed that obsolescence increases with age. Acceptance of this assumption has institutionalized the stereotype in many organizations that obsolescence is an inevitable consequence of aging. This can result in a self-fulfilling prophecy that as knowledge workers get older, they are more likely to be treated as obsolescent, and consequently their behavior reflects the stereotype. There is conflicting evidence regarding obsolescence and age that can generally be classified into one of three types of relationships, based largely on cross-sectional research. One relationship found that peak contributions and performance occur when knowledge workers are in their thirties and steadily decline among older groups. These results may reflect the self-fulfilling prophecy, as well as reinforce the stereotype, that older knowledge workers are more obsolescent.

The second type of relationship is a consistent upward trend in contributions and performance with

increasing age that tends to reach a peak for those over age 50. This contradicts the first relationship that obsolescence increases with age. The third general relationship found between age and contributions or performance among knowledge workers is twin peaked or bimodal. Typically, contributions and performance are highest among knowledge workers who are at an early career stage (in their thirties), after which there is a drop-off for those in mid-career followed by a resurgence among those who are over age 50 and in the later stages of their professional life. Such results indicate that there is not a simple relationship between increasing age and obsolescence. A possible reason for a peak appearing early as well as later in the career may be that there are two populations of knowledge workers: one whose contributions and performance decline with age and another that either maintains the level of contributions and performance or improves them over time. A more definitive answer to how age and obsolescence are related awaits longitudinal research.

Half-life

Related to increasing age is the half-life of a professional education. The half-life can be viewed as the time it takes after completion of formal studies for half of the knowledge acquired in one's professional studies to be no longer useful or applicable because of new developments in the field. Therefore, it is the length of time that has elapsed since a knowledge worker has completed his or her education, rather than age, that may be a crucial factor in susceptibility to obsolescence. There is evidence that the half-life has been growing ever shorter, which is in keeping with the accelerating rate of creation and application of new knowledge in a wide variety of fields, especially those affected by rapid technological change. However, the half-life of some fields has been found to be shorter than others—with four years not atypical and some even shorter. Software engineering, computer science, and fields impacted by changes in information technology typically have the shortest half-life. Therefore, knowledge workers in fields with a short half-life have the greatest need to stay up to date.

Psychological Factors

Although the half-life of a professional education may play an important role in creating a susceptibility

to obsolescence, personal characteristics that are psychological in nature may be critical. If in fact there are two populations of knowledge workers, one that becomes obsolescent and another that stays up to date despite increasing age, it would be useful to identify some of the more important psychological factors that contribute to differential development.

An important psychological characteristic that can facilitate or inhibit obsolescence among knowledge workers is their *cognitive ability*. Different types of cognitive abilities appear to be related to obsolescence, depending on the occupation. For example, limited proficiency in mathematics is associated with obsolescence among engineers, whereas more general problem-solving abilities are important for managers to stay current. Moreover, the cognitive strength that knowledge workers bring to their first jobs can help determine the degree to which they stay abreast of new knowledge during subsequent career stages. Knowledge workers who enter the workforce with weak cognitive abilities would be more obsolescence prone. However, there is evidence that some cognitive abilities improve throughout the career, largely as a result of experience.

Knowledge workers who fail to keep current in their field, even when they have the ability to do so, very likely lack *motivation*. Research supports the great importance that lack or loss of motivation plays in knowledge workers becoming obsolescent. Those with strong motivation apparently do not experience the decline found among those in their forties and tend to prolong their achievement over a broad span of their career. Motivational changes that occur during the midlife or mid-career crisis may help explain the different relationships found for age. During the midlife period, some knowledge workers may perceive that what they have been doing is no longer fulfilling or important and that they have not attained the success in their careers that they expected. Obsolescence is a likely outcome among those who have not been able to cope with their mid-career crisis adequately, whereas those who remain current may not have experienced the crisis or resolved it successfully.

Other individual characteristics, related to motivation, that can affect obsolescence have been identified. *Occupational interests* of knowledge workers are well established at the start of the career, remaining highly stable thereafter and help influence occupational choice as well as other career-related outcomes. The degree to which knowledge workers engage in activities

likely to keep them up to date with new developments is influenced by their interests.

More directly related to motivation are individual differences in *needs*. However, unlike interests, which remain relatively stable, needs can change greatly over time and contribute to motivational changes affecting obsolescence. For example, security needs of knowledge workers tend to be relatively strong at the start of their careers but then decrease in strength in the next five years, whereas their needs for growth increase significantly in intensity, regardless of career success. Knowledge workers whose careers are successful are able to satisfy their growth needs, such as achievement, esteem, and self-development, whereas the satisfaction of such needs drops among those who do not experience career success. If the frustration of growth needs continues into the mid-career stage, they may level off or diminish, whereas security needs are likely to increase. As growth needs level off or diminish in mid-career, obsolescence can become a problem among knowledge workers.

Growth needs are satisfied through the achievement of relevant *goals*. The most important goals for new knowledge workers are challenging work and opportunities for advancement. These goals can change during the career, depending on whether or not they are achieved. Also, a socialization process occurs in which the individual's goals may become more congruent with organizational goals. Knowledge workers' goals that satisfy growth needs may be classified as either (1) local—oriented to the individual's organization or (2) cosmopolitan—directed to one's profession. Obsolescence is most likely to occur among knowledge workers who lack a cosmopolitan goal orientation focused on doing work involving new ideas, acquiring new knowledge, and attaining professional recognition.

By mid-career, knowledge workers who have not kept up to date may seek to satisfy their growth needs by striving for local goals such as advancement. If they reach a stage in their careers when neither cosmopolitan nor local goals are attainable, security goals become important. At that stage, obsolescence may be irreversible. For those who keep up to date, such goal attainment requires that *energy* be expended. Therefore, a lack or loss of energy also predisposes knowledge workers to obsolescence. Moreover, individual *initiative* has been identified as a personal characteristic that contributes to the expenditure of energy to stay up to date. Initiative involves

not only starting an action but also the capacity to discover new ways of goal attainment. Therefore, knowledge workers with low initiative would be more likely to become obsolescent. Initiative may be related to career *resilience*, one component of a multidimensional career motivation construct. Resilience includes adaptability to change, willingness to take risks, and having self-confidence, all of which have been identified as individual characteristics of knowledge workers who stay up to date.

Nature of the Work

There is consistent evidence that the nature of the work carried out by knowledge workers is the most important factor contributing to obsolescence, both directly and by its effects on individual characteristics (see the figure above). There are several aspects of the work carried out by knowledge workers that can affect their obsolescence.

Although challenging work is one of the most important goals of knowledge workers, most feel that their knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) are not utilized well. Poor utilization affects the development of knowledge workers and can occur early in the career.

The First Job Experience

There is consistent evidence that the nature of the work experienced by knowledge workers in their first job has long-lasting effects on their career development and can contribute directly to obsolescence. For example, the Bell System's classic long-term Management Progress Study found that, for newly hired college graduates, the work challenge during the first year had a greater effect on later career growth than the challenge of succeeding years. Work challenge included the degree to which the new managers were expected to utilize their knowledge and skills, use new methods, solve novel problems, apply their learning capacity, become involved in self-development, commit their time and energy, and demonstrate initiative. Those who had challenging work in their first job increased their motivation to achieve and their concern for accomplishment, as distinct from advancement or salary increases. Work challenge may be even more critical to knowledge workers in technology. For example, longitudinal studies of engineers in several organizations demonstrated that being initially assigned to work that demands utilization of technical

knowledge and skills results in higher levels of job performance, professional contributions, and competence in their subsequent careers. However, the greatest effect of challenging work occurred among engineers who were more capable to start with. This demonstrates how professional career development can occur when knowledge workers have the appropriate abilities and the work environment demands utilization of those abilities. The effects of work challenge may be another demonstration of the self-fulfilling prophecy. Knowledge workers who are expected to utilize their knowledge and skills in challenging work in their first job will be motivated to increase their competence early in their careers. Conversely, those whose utilization is much more restricted are at risk for becoming obsolescent.

Dimensions of Utilization

Utilization of knowledge and skills is an important aspect of work challenge and has been found to be strongly related to obsolescence. Two relatively independent dimensions of utilization have been identified, *misutilization* and *underutilization*. Misutilization occurs when light intellectual demands are combined with heavy time pressure. For example, misutilization of knowledge workers results from time pressure to carry out routine assignments that should be done by clerical personnel or technicians. In a study of engineers, the two most important causes of obsolescence were related to misutilization, namely, (1) work assignments that do not require knowledge of the latest developments and (2) the pressure of schedule demands that leave no time or energy for study. Three-fourths of the engineers who reported considerable misutilization in their work had difficulty keeping up with new developments. On the other hand, over half of those who felt that misutilization is not a problem reported having no trouble keeping up to date.

Work assignments that do not utilize professional knowledge, skills, and abilities may also result in underutilization, which is similar to misutilization insofar as they both involve light intellectual demands. However, the underutilized knowledge worker has light, rather than heavy, time demands. Underutilization apparently occurs most frequently during the first job and affects the new employee's development, because the job itself does not offer challenge. However, obsolescence may not occur as readily as it would if the professional were misutilized.

Nevertheless, either can contribute to obsolescence. Underutilized knowledge workers who do not possess the initiative to take advantage of the light time pressure at their job in order to keep abreast of new developments could also be on the path to obsolescence.

Changes in Job Assignments

Knowledge workers who have had frequent changes in job assignments during their career more easily adapt to change and adjust quickly to their new responsibilities. The challenge provided by frequent job assignment changes serves to maximize utilization of their KSAs and minimize obsolescence. There is evidence that providing different job assignments starting at the beginning of the career is highly associated with remaining professionally up to date in later years. However, not all changes in job assignments help knowledge workers keep up to date. For instance, being assigned many routine jobs does not provide challenge, and would tend to contribute to obsolescence, very likely through misutilization. In addition, job assignments should last long enough for the knowledge worker to become proficient in the specialties required to perform the job effectively.

Specialization and Diversity of Job Assignments

Knowledge workers often become proficient in narrow specializations in their job assignments. However, many wish to utilize their abilities in a broad field of interest. Knowledge workers who have a wide understanding of important new fields rather than a thorough knowledge of narrow specialties make greater contributions to both their organization and their professions. This is even more characteristic of those who are older. A diversity of specializations, rather than only one, not only enhances a knowledge worker's usefulness to the organization but also stimulates a wide range of professional contributions. On the other hand, being assigned to a narrow area over a long period of time can lead to an inability to perform other parts of the job. Knowledge workers feel that obsolescence is likely to occur when the work becomes so specialized that the broader base of knowledge is unused and forgotten. Moreover, the single most important stimulation for professional development and growth is on-the-job problem solving that requires a diversity of challenging work assignments.

Organizational Climate

Organizational climate includes attributes of the work environment determined by management and organizational practices that affect obsolescence. According to the model in the figure above, organizational climate not only has a direct effect on obsolescence, but it also affects the nature of the work, which has a major impact on obsolescence. Providing challenge through utilization of knowledge and skills is to some degree determined by the technology of the organization. But organizational climate can also stimulate or stifle utilization, which, in turn, affects obsolescence. Some aspects of organizational climate that have been identified as relevant to obsolescence include colleague interaction and communication, leadership style and expertise, and management policies, as well as their effects on organizational communication, influence, uncertainty, and rewards.

Colleague Interaction and Communication

One aspect of organizational climate is created by the colleagues of the knowledge worker. Interaction and communication with colleagues provide an important source of stimulation for keeping current. However, the impact of such communication on obsolescence will vary with the particular group of knowledge workers. For example, one study demonstrated that engineers, compared to scientists, receive much more of the information needed to stay up to date from interpersonal communication within their own organizations.

How work groups are organized can motivate knowledge workers to gain new knowledge and skills. Working with people from diverse fields can stimulate knowledge workers to learn about different specialties. Not only does diversity in the composition of work groups help stimulate professionals to keep informed of new developments, but including at least one “gatekeeper” helps in the flow of current information. Gatekeepers are generally the most competent and up-to-date knowledge workers in their group. They stay in close contact with other gatekeepers in the organization as well as in the external world and keep the organization current with new developments.

The duration of time knowledge workers have been in the same group appears to influence the stimulation provided by colleagues. For instance, interaction with colleagues and diversity of group members have been

found to be effective in stimulating competence in both job and profession only when the knowledge workers have not worked together for too long. After several years, individuals who have worked closely together no longer provide stimulation and novelty. This would suggest that job assignments as well as group composition should be changed periodically.

Leadership Style and Expertise

A participatory style of management has been widely advocated as the best way to motivate knowledge workers, since it provides them with a considerable amount of influence in decision making about their work. Although giving knowledge workers freedom to explore new ideas and to pursue their own interests is related to remaining up to date, providing them with freedom is most effective when the supervisor consults them before making important decisions affecting the work of the group. The development of subordinates can be stimulated or stifled, depending on the degree to which the supervisor understands the current knowledge and skills relevant to the work group. The technical competence of managers is more important than their human relations skills in encouraging knowledge workers to keep up to date. Respect for their supervisors' competence and judgment is the most important reason knowledge workers comply with supervisory directives. Technical expertise is the most prominent basis for supervisory influence, and it also has a very strong relationship to the knowledge contributions, satisfaction, and performance of their work group.

A climate that discourages obsolescence can be created by competent managers who embrace and utilize new methods. For example, knowledge workers whose managers encouraged them to use major technical advances tended to be more up to date in their specialties. Alternatively, those whose managers emphasized meeting schedules were more likely to be obsolescent. Since managers can determine how the work assignments are distributed, they can use the work itself to motivate subordinates to stay up to date. Just as managers can stimulate their work group members to stay up to date through challenging and diverse job assignments, they also may contribute to obsolescence by assigning work that does not properly utilize professional KSAs. The manager's style, combined with expertise, can be a powerful influence in creating a climate of utilization and challenge that

can motivate knowledge workers to keep up to date. Since managers can have a direct influence on the updating behavior of their work group members, they also play an important role in encouraging individuals to participate in continuing education activities.

Management Policies

The role of managers in motivating their work group members to stay up to date is limited by external constraints created by top management policies. For example, knowledge workers complain about management policies relevant to schedules or work assignments that resulted in underutilization or misutilization. Such policies came from top management and virtually ensured that obsolescence would be a problem among knowledge workers in their organization. Although underutilization or misutilization can be intended results of management policy decisions, such problems more likely occur as an unintended consequence of policy.

Communication within organizations is critical for many knowledge workers to stay up to date. However, a major complaint is that the lack of regular information exchange among departments as well as between different levels in the organization affects knowledge workers' ability to influence the decision-making processes. Management policies that create a climate in which knowledge workers have little or no influence on decisions that affect their work can result in underutilization, as well as greater uncertainty. Such a climate of uncertainty may involve frequent changes or cancellations in scheduled objectives, job requirements that are not clear, misinformation, and job assignments with inadequate feedback. Policies that create an organizational climate laden with uncertainty can have pervasive effects among knowledge workers. The symptoms are poor communication, limited influence, avoidance of risks, and underutilization—all of which can contribute to obsolescence.

Among the most important policies directly affecting obsolescence are those that determine whether or not professional growth and development are rewarded by the organization. There is evidence that the reward climate created by management policies can enhance or inhibit obsolescence. If knowledge workers do not see that their efforts in self-development are rewarded by the organization, the likelihood that they will become obsolescent is increased. For example, knowledge workers who feel that keeping

themselves abreast of new developments will not result in more challenging work assignments, salary increases, or promotions are also more obsolescent. On the other hand, those who perceive that their organizations reward updating with challenging work, promotions, and pay are also the most up to date. In a study of computer marketing and support professionals, participation in self-development activities was perceived as most likely to lead to worthwhile accomplishment and self-esteem as well as opportunities for promotion. Furthermore, the expectation that organizational rewards would be forthcoming for updating efforts was significantly related to current and future efforts at self-development. The organizational reward climate apparently has an important impact on the effort expended by professionals to stay up to date.

However, when organizations reward professional development, older knowledge workers may be excluded. For example, for older managers, those who possess the *most* initiative, self-assurance, and intelligence tend to be rewarded the *least*, although it was the opposite for younger managers. By discouraging development of older knowledge workers who are most capable of and still desire growth, management avoids having to make an investment that may provide a short-lived and limited rate of return to the organization. Such a management policy reinforces the self-fulfilling prophecy that obsolescence is inevitable with increasing age. However, rewarding self-development reinforces motivation toward professional growth even among older knowledge workers, who, with their experience and loyalty, can continue to contribute if they are encouraged to remain up to date.

—Harold G. Kaufman

See also Career motivation, Career plateau, Knowledge work, Middle career stage

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OCCUPATIONAL CARD SORTS

The *occupational card sort* is a technique used by career counselors to assist persons who are unclear about their present or future vocational choice. It accomplishes this by (1) increasing the range and quality of information about self and about specific occupations, (2) expanding or narrowing the range of occupations being considered, and (3) encouraging further self and career exploration.

The occupational card sort is made up of a deck of cards, most often with occupational titles on one side and various types of information about the occupational titles on the reverse side. That information might include the definition of the occupation and various groupings or classifications of the occupation, such as the Holland Occupational Code, the World of Work classification, or data from the O*Net system. While occupational titles are the most common element on the front of such cards, other developers

have used skills, values, or college majors as the items to be sorted.

The typical process used for the occupational card sort is to have the client sort the cards into three piles: Might Choose, Probably Would Not Choose, or Undecided. A simple instruction would be to have clients rank their top 10 occupations from their Might Choose pile. In some uses of the deck, the counselor will use the codes on the back of the Might Choose pile to derive a summary code, for example, a Holland Occupational Code. Several studies have found this to be an adequate method for deriving such a code, though there has been controversy over whether or not the deck should be used in this fashion. Some argue that if all that is desired is a simple code, instruments developed for that purpose should be used instead, and that the best use of the card sort is to gather more in-depth information or to initiate discussion or thinking about vocational issues.

To accomplish this, many counselors have their clients further sort their cards, for example, sorting only the cards they considered for their Might Choose pile into several piles representing the various reasons why they most liked the occupations. One subpile might represent occupations chosen because they would allow the client to help others, another might be a pile of occupations they believe would allow them to have a flexible combination of work and family life, and so on. As clients discuss their reasons with the counselor, it can open up discussion about the relative importance of various choice mechanisms. It can also alert the counselor to any obvious misinformation the client might have about the world of work.

Some counselors use the cards as stimuli for discussion, having clients go into great detail about their thinking about each card. For example, a client might put the card "Teacher" in their Would Probably Not Choose pile. With prompting on the part of the counselor, clients might be able to identify several issues that are playing themselves out in their deliberations about many occupations, not just teacher.

There are many attractive features of occupational card sorts, including the active level of involvement of the client, the immediacy of the results, the low cost, and the less formal atmosphere compared to paper and pencil or computerized testing. By having to generate their own reasons for why the occupational titles ended up in one pile or another, clients are actively engaged in creating the data and are manipulating the

data in their heads, conjuring up images, and making greater distinctions and connections. The results of this process may allow the client to have a greater sense of ownership of the results and to feel a greater sense of accomplishment in the process. This is in contrast to a computer-scored inventory that does most of the processing for clients, the result of which is simply given to clients, without their having to do much reasoning. Finally, card sorts can promote a greater interaction with a counselor, which could bring about greater clarification of values and interests, gender role stereotypes, and other limiting beliefs. In fact, some of the early occupational card sorts were developed as a means of addressing gender role stereotypes, not just in the popular beliefs of clients, but in interest inventories themselves.

Occupational card sorts provide a process-oriented alternative to paper and pencil and computerized methods of assessment and exploration. As such, they can be particularly useful when working with persons who produce flat interest profiles or for whom none of the more traditional forms of career counseling seem to work. They are sometimes described as belonging to the group of more subjective, qualitative, or even projective methods of assessment, as contrasted with objective or quantitative methods.

—Thomas S. Krieshok

See also Career counseling, Career exploration, Holland's theory of vocational choice, Occupational Information Network (O*NET), Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI)

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OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE

For many individuals and for a long time, *occupational choice* has been seen as the goal of career development. Theory and practice focused on either occupational choice or career development, but more recently these have been integrated into more complex conceptions of career. Historically, occupational choice is a comparatively new phenomenon. Up until the twentieth century, most people's occupations were determined by their station (position in the society) and their family circumstances. Occupations were usually inherited and passed on through generations within families. This was so prevalent that many family names in English-speaking countries are actually occupation titles, such as Baker, Farmer, Cook, Carpenter, Potter, Taylor, Ryder, and so on. The vestiges of this form of career are evident in the development of family dynasties traditionally associated with property and agriculture but more recently with large corporations in which owners pass leadership on to their progeny across generations. However, increasing industrialization and its sociological impacts resulted in major changes in the structure of the labor market, including the decline of some traditional occupations and the establishment of new occupations associated with machine operation and increased urbanization. It was not possible to "inherit" an occupation if the occupation had not existed previously. Progressively more people had to choose occupations.

In fact, early in the twentieth century it was recognized by social reformers such as Frank Parsons that occupational choice constituted a very significant way in which individuals could actually improve their life circumstances. If people could choose rather than inherit occupations, then this was a major opportunity for them to better their lives on the basis of talent and motivation rather than just birth or station. Later in the twentieth century, others with a social reform agenda in Western societies also saw the potential of occupational choice and opportunity as crucial in the development of disadvantaged groups such as minorities, those with disabilities, women, and indigenous peoples. Indeed in the counseling literature relating to occupational choice, a major theme has become the relative priority of social change in comparison with individual fulfillment.

The paradigm for such choice was that of matching characteristics of the person with those of particular

occupations. The concept of “career” was the progressive development of a person’s working life within the occupation originally chosen after leaving school, college, or university. A rigorous example of the matching paradigm originated in the University of Minnesota and became known as the theory of work adjustment (TWA). The fundamentals of this theory were that good occupational choices would be made when there were correspondences between characteristics of individuals and those of occupations. Thus if there was a good match between the abilities of an individual and the performance demands of an occupation, then it was likely that the person would be successful in working in this occupation. The TWA called this “satisfactoriness.” If the personal preferences of an individual corresponded with the rewards offered by an occupation, then it would be likely that the person would like working in this occupation. The TWA designated this as “satisfaction.” As a result, a suitable occupational choice was understood to be one in which the person was both satisfactory in performance and satisfied in preference.

HOLLAND’S MATCHING THEORY OF OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE

The matching paradigm has had a venerable history in vocational psychology. Another theorist who prominently applied it to occupational choice was John Holland. His approach to occupational choice was both minimalist and pragmatic. Holland sought to answer the question: What is the simplest and yet most helpful way to assist individuals to make occupational choices? Holland’s approach was to make the match between individuals and occupations more systematic. This was done not by the development of normative measures of abilities, interests, and values, as the TWA researchers had done, but by simply asking people through a self-scored questionnaire what they thought their skills and preferences were. Holland’s research generated a taxonomy both of human types and occupational stereotypes. This classification has become and remains the single most influential representation of occupational interests in contemporary career development practice and has frequently been used also as a basis for organizing occupational information for those facing occupational choices.

The Holland typology or “hexagon,” as it has been designated due to the theorized set of relationships between the six types, can be summarized as follows:

1. Realistic (R): a preference for using practical skills with machines and the natural environment
2. Investigative (I): a preference for using intellectual skills for scientific and technological activities
3. Artistic (A): a preference for using creative skills for aesthetic, design, and entertainment activities
4. Social (S): a preference for using interpersonal skills for caring, supportive, teaching, and counseling activities
5. Enterprising (E): a preference for using persuasive skills for leadership, business, selling, and managing activities
6. Conventional (C): a preference for using clerical skills for office, financial, and administrative activities

The Holland approach enabled both individuals and those working in various occupations to be classified using this typology according to a three-letter code representing one of each of the six types. For example, someone after having completed a Holland theory-based questionnaire may derive a three-letter code of ISR (refer to the descriptions of Holland types). According to the Holland approach, such an individual is much more like a food technologist (also coded ISR) than a photojournalist (coded AEC). Therefore, this person would be advised to consider occupations such as food technology rather than those such as photojournalism.

This is the essence of the Holland approach. However, Holland was not naïve enough to think that “perfect matches” were easily generated by self-estimates of individuals and occupation incumbents. Obviously, other factors might influence occupational choice such as family, the labor market, and so on. Moreover, Holland recognized that individuals may match a variety of occupations rather than just one. While cognizant of such considerations, Holland maintained that his approach enabled individuals to narrow down the range of occupational alternatives from the otherwise daunting task of trying to consider literally thousands of possible occupation titles.

SUPER’S DEVELOPMENT THEORY OF CAREERS AND CHOICE

A more descriptive approach to the issue of occupational choice was adopted by Donald Super. Actually, Super is usually credited with shifting the focus of counselors and researchers alike away from

“occupations” to that of career. Super’s theory focused on describing the process of career development, and over a 40-year period, the theory evolved by incorporating ongoing thinking in other areas of psychology into his theory. Super’s initial theory sought to describe individuals’ careers in terms of stages: growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline (later renamed “disengagement”). Originally, Super’s theory considered occupational choice as a single event in this developmental paradigm. Occupational choice was seen as individuals implementing their self-concept. That is, as individuals develop through the growth and exploration stages, they develop a set of perceptions about themselves that they then seek to match with particular occupations. The closer the match, the greater the sense of personal and work satisfaction. Although broader in scope than Holland, this resembles the trait and factor approach. However, as Super elucidated the theory incorporating life span and life space concepts emphasizing the multirole nature of careers, the self-concept was later conceptualized as an internalized perspective of the person’s self along with the person’s perception of the context in which the person lives out other chosen roles in addition to worker, including parent, student, citizen, homemaker, child, and leisurite. Occupational choice for Super came to be viewed as one way in which individuals manifest their selfhood in the world. However, Super also introduced the concept of “life role salience,” indicating that work is only one of several roles that at any time in people’s lives may be most important for them.

The demands of different roles for individuals may also result in role conflict, especially in terms of time, effort, and money. However, sometimes different roles may compensate for one another. For example, individuals who want to be parents but are prevented from having children for whatever reason may assume the role of workers in a child care setting.

Thus increasingly, Super incorporated contextual factors into his theory of career development, and in doing so, occupational choice became only one of many important decisions that people may be, and usually are, called upon to make in their lives. Implementing the self-concept through occupational choice involved synthesizing all the developing characteristics, roles, evaluations, and learnings of individuals, on one hand, and compromising with the constraints of external reality, on the other. Indeed, occupational choice for Super gradually assumed a

developmental perspective. Decision making began to be understood as an ongoing process of development and change. Super introduced two ideas to account for this. As the person developed and changed, so too did the self-concept, resulting in a series of occupational choices, each one attempting by “successive approximations” to secure a better match between self and work. The other concept that Super employed was that of the “minicycle,” in which individuals make ongoing occupational choices by recycling through the stages of growth, exploration, and establishment. Thus by the time of his death in 1994, Super had embedded occupational choice in the broader conceptualization of ongoing personal change and development, a multiplicity of influences, and a multirole perspective in which life structure and career became virtually synonymous.

INTEGRATING CHOICE AND DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVES—CIRCUMSCRIPTION AND COMPROMISE

More recent formulations in vocational psychology have usually sought to synthesize the disparate perspectives of choice (as exemplified by the Holland approach) with development (as exemplified by the Super approach). One such attempt was that of Linda Gottfredson. She viewed occupational aspirations as developing through a process of circumscription (eliminating the unacceptable options) and choice through a process of compromise (relinquishing some preferences to broaden the range of available options). Like Super, Gottfredson drew attention to developmental experiences shaping individuals’ perceptions of themselves; however, Gottfredson placed more emphasis on early development. The salient aspects of childhood development for occupational choice were seen by Gottfredson as the formation of sex type, then prestige, and then interest preference perceptions of both the personal self and the environment. Thus, occupational choice was viewed as the process of matching the perceptions of the self with the corresponding perceptions of the world of occupations. Gottfredson charted a Cognitive Map of Occupations based on generally held stereotypes of occupations in terms of their sex type (how masculine or feminine they were perceived to be), prestige (what is the perceived socioeconomic status of each occupation), and field of work (classified according to the Holland categories outlined earlier). For example, most people

would agree that construction worker is perceived as a male, low-prestige, Realistic occupation, while dental hygienist is seen as a female, mid-range, Social occupation. As individuals develop their understanding of themselves and their environment, particular occupations come to be seen as congruent or incongruent with the self. Incongruent occupations, often unconsciously, are eliminated from consideration on the basis of the occupational stereotype. By the time career-related decisions are being made, individuals have circumscribed their occupational options to what Gottfredson called a “zone of acceptable alternatives.” While individuals may have ideal preferences within this range of occupations, often adventitious factors may precipitate another choice within the same range. To illustrate, consider a 17-year-old boy having narrowed the range of options by eliminating all occupations except those that are male, mid-range, and Realistic. He would likely be thinking about trade and technician-level occupations, since such occupational stereotypes correspond with such a self-concept. This person might consider electronic communication technician as his most preferred option. However, the competition for obtaining such work may result in the boy deciding to commence training and work as an electrical mechanic, because that occupation is also in his zone of acceptable alternatives and because he is offered a position by an uncle who owns an electrical manufacturing firm (a serendipitous event).

Such a scenario illustrates a number of new dimensions to our understanding of occupational choice. First, choice can be about what we do not want as much, if not more, than what we want. Second, the often unconscious influence of perceptions, images, and stereotypes, rather than standardized occupational information, is frequently influential in and determinative of occupational choice, regardless of their accuracy. Third, occupational choice is not necessarily “a perfect match” but may be simply in some way “acceptable.” Fourth, unplanned contextual factors (such as having an uncle in the industry) can be influential in the occupational choice outcome.

Gottfredson also sought to address the issue of how individuals respond when they are unable to choose and enter an acceptable occupation. Such individuals have to “compromise.” Gottfredson postulated that the most recently developed perceptions of self, being less integral to individuals’ understanding of themselves, are more likely to be relinquished as a way to broaden the zone of acceptable alternatives. Thus

individuals are more likely to broaden their interest preferences rather than their prestige preferences and more likely to lower their prestige preferences before broadening their sex type preferences. In a more recent formulation of her theory, Gottfredson indicated that while this pattern of compromise generally applies, it can be moderated by the degree of the compromise and the individuals’ level of concern. By introducing in a systematic way the notion of compromise, this approach sought to integrate developmental, psychological, and contextual processes into occupational choice.

INTEGRATING CHOICE AND DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES— SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

John Krumboltz and his associates used principles derived from learning theory as a basis for incorporating a wider range of influences than Holland’s pared-down approach. Basically there are three types of learning:

1. Classical conditioning or associative learning: two ideas or events are so frequently linked that the learner makes a connection between the two on a continuing basis.
2. Instrumental conditioning or reward and punishment: this is learning by experience that particular actions can have either positive or negative outcomes.
3. Observational learning or learning by example: by observing others and our world we learn by inference, imitation, and demonstration.

Using these principles, Krumboltz and his associates outlined a set of influences on people as they develop and make career decisions. These influences include (1) genetic endowments and special abilities; (2) environmental conditions and events, many of which are beyond the control of the individuals; and (3) learning experiences, which result in the development of task approach skills (which include personal standards, habits, ways of thinking and observing, and emotional reactions). Part of this process also is the development of individuals’ understanding of both themselves (self-observation generalizations) and their environment (worldview observation generalizations). These become outcomes that combine further with other task approach skills such as decision-making style to produce actions in the form of decisions (such

as an occupational choice) and behaviors intended to lead to or implement decisions. Increasingly, Krumboltz has come to emphasize two particular aspects of this formulation relevant to occupational choice. The first is the impact of unplanned events as influences on people's career development and occupational choice. His vision of such influences is much broader than Gottfredson's, extending beyond immediate serendipity to include the vagaries of training and employment opportunities, finances, laws, natural disasters, family circumstances, community expectations, and technological change.

The second aspect is the extension of occupational choice into the broader context of life transitions. Decisions associated with work influence and are influenced by other decisions people make about their life circumstances. Thus, for example, the fact that someone is married or gets divorced, moves interstate, wins the lottery, has a life-threatening experience, and so on cannot be dissociated from the person's work circumstances. In fact, Krumboltz very recently has gone so far as to suggest that career counselors should become life transition counselors, who develop a long-term continuing relationship with their clients as individuals course through their lives and as planned and unplanned events impact on them and precipitate the possibility or necessity for change. The analogy that Krumboltz uses for a life transition counselor is an individual's personal dentist, who is visited regularly for checkups and from whom treatment is sought when a problem arises. Such a counselor would also help in the development of habits to prevent or minimize negative unplanned events in the same way a dentist might help by providing a mouth guard for playing human contact sports.

DECISION-MAKING APPROACHES TO OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE

An alternative approach to occupational choice that overlaps some of the preceding formulations is the focus on the actual process of choice or deciding. A systematic application of this decision-making approach was that of Irving Janis and Leon Mann. Decision-making perspectives tend to be sequential in their presentation of the choice process. Janis and Mann outlined the decision sequence as follows:

1. Accepting the challenge: deciding to decide rather than procrastinate, shift responsibility, or engage in defensive avoidance
2. Searching for alternatives: using creative problem-solving techniques such as brainstorming and modification of flawed alternatives
3. Evaluating alternatives: using a balance sheet to weigh gains and losses to self and others of particular occupation options
4. Choosing and becoming committed: using strategies such as "maximizing" (finding the one best alternative) or "satisficing" (selecting an alternative that is acceptable even though it may not be the very best); developing contingency plans was also recommended in case the worst case scenario in the future were to eventuate
5. Overcoming setbacks and adhering to the decision: analyzing when plans fail or the unexpected occurs in order to learn from the experience and to discover how plans might be redeemed and adverse outcomes redressed; flexibility was advocated to be able to adapt alternatives in light of unforeseen change

Some of the themes of contemporary perspectives of occupational choice are evident in the Janis-Mann model such as incorporating others as well as self in the choice process, the use of creativity in developing choice alternatives, the uncertainty of the future, and the need for flexibility in responding to change.

SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE

From time to time in the career development literature, an insurgent voice of protest is raised, challenging the very concept of "occupational choice." It is objected that the idea of "choice" is a prerogative of the privileged, and that for many who are disadvantaged, there is little or no choice. This view often emphasizes sociological and labor market perspectives—social class, remote location, economic disadvantage, and employment supply and demand. One-industry towns are a classic example of this viewpoint, which could be summarized by saying that people do not choose occupations, jobs choose people. This constitutes a salutary reminder, especially to psychologists in the career development field, that many of the influences on individuals' occupational choices are not in fact psychological at all.

RECENT FORMULATIONS OF OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE

The five approaches to occupational choice outlined represent a sampling of how thinking about this

topic has been approached and has changed. A range of other more recent conceptions are also mentioned to provide an indication of some of the latest thinking about occupational choice in career development.

Social cognitive career theory expands on the learning theory approach. Learning processes are linked in this perspective with cognitive processes of self-regulation, including self-efficacy (the belief in one's own ability to effect change), outcome expectations (beliefs about the consequences of actions), and personal goals (commitments to act to effect desired outcomes). This approach emphasizes the importance of the person *and* the environment in the process of occupational choice. Individuals both shape and are shaped by their interactions with their contexts. The choice process is viewed as a feedback loop, commencing with the expression of a goal, action taken to implement this goal, performance attainment information gained as a result of the action taken, feeding back into the expression of a revised goal, and so on.

The cognitive information processing model is an emerging approach to occupational choice, expanding on earlier decision-making perspectives. Occupational choice is a specific instance of a range of decisions that individuals are called upon to make in their lives with varying levels of generality and complexity. This approach draws attention to metacognitions such as self-talk, self-awareness, and monitoring and control in the process of decision making. The choice process is conceived as a five-stage cycle in which people act in and act on their contexts. Moreover, decision making at one level of generality such as lifestyle (e.g., the desire to live in a warmer climate) is likely to influence decision making at a more specific level such as occupational choice (e.g., having to find a new job in a different location). The five-stage cycle process is (1) communication (perceiving a need or gap), (2) analysis (identifying the causes of and connections with the problem), (3) synthesis (developing potential action alternatives), (4) valuing (prioritizing alternatives), and (5) execution (developing a strategy for choice implementation). Then there is a return to the communication stage to evaluate if the need is met and so on through the cycle again.

Contextual accounts of career stress the complexity and multiplicity of possible influences in career development. However, rather than seek understanding of these in causal sequences, proponents of contextualism tend to look for the goal directedness and meaning for individuals in their present contexts. This

approach to career understands occupational choice in terms of action and construction. Action is individuals' capacities for change, intentionality, meaning, and continuity. Truth and meaning emerge from the transaction of individuals with their contexts. Construction is the person's capacity to interpret and integrate his or her experience in meaningful ways as a basis for further action such as occupational choice. Interpretation and narrative become major means to assist individuals make occupational choices within the broader context of life planning. These theorists often talk about career in terms of being constructed as a project that emphasizes intrinsic motivation, purpose, and meaningfulness. This approach incorporates emotions as motivators, regulators, and interpretive keys to meaning and significance. From this perspective, occupational choice is not about questions of "how" to choose a career but "why" a career is being constructed this way and "what" this tell, us about each individual's sense of purpose.

Recently, attempts have been made to introduce systems thinking into the career development field as a way to understand contextual diversity and the need for greater conceptual comprehensiveness. Such approaches view career in terms of a pattern of (mutually influencing) life influences in which individuals are both systems comprised of subsystems and are subsystems of more general systems (such as family, workplace, and community), which are themselves part of even more general systems such as the economy, geopolitics, and the law. Such an approach emphasizes the embeddedness of individuals in their context and the interactive potential of systems to influence one another in unplanned and disproportionate ways.

Allied to systems thinking in career development is the emergence of chaos and complexity theory applications. Such theories build on the contextual and systems accounts of career by focusing on the implications of complexity in terms of occupational choice. These theorists draw attention to the role of chance, the nonlinearity of change, and the adaptive and evolutionary propensities of the self-organizing properties of systems. In particular, the chaos and complexity approach focuses on the susceptibility of individuals as complex systems to change and the concatenating effects of such change. This can in turn result in the dramatic transformation of the system (sometimes called a phase shift). For example, some form of "conversion" or "trauma" experience can

totally alter the personality and course of individuals' lives. Occupational choice is viewed as a decision-making task undertaken in a context of perpetually incomplete knowledge and significant, though always limited, control. The susceptibility of complex systems to change renders preparing for, initiating, and dealing with change, the perpetual challenge for career decision making and development.

In attempting to understand how we make career decisions, we must at some stage confront our irrational natures. There is a plethora of research pointing to our inability to apply logic appropriately in decision-making tasks. However, much theorizing on occupational choice has taken an overly optimistic view of our rationality and what can be predicted. Such traditional thinking has started from the premise that certainty of choice is the desirable outcome and that rational deductive logic can be applied to systematically remove uncertainty until all that remains is the logical career choice. Aside from the issue of whether absolute certainty is attainable or desirable, it is unlikely that most of us make career decisions based on logic alone. Hunches, emotions, weaknesses, prejudices, unplanned events, indeed life events in general, will all conspire against the purely rational choice. Furthermore, this dynamical nature of reality and human experience reminds us that we can act purposively to fashion a job to our liking, rather than passively and supinely fitting into a rigid and predefined job.

A FINAL COMMENT

In most contemporary theoretical and research literature, the term *occupational choice* is rarely cited. Most writers refer to *career choice* and *career development*, since the idea of "career" incorporates the broader notions of not just occupation but leisure, family and community commitment, and other salient activities. Some theorists who still value simplicity continue to want to focus specifically on the mechanisms of choosing. However, the dominant perspective that is ascending is that choices relating to work have to be understood and made within the broader context of individuals' lives, in which a multiplicity of potential influences may be operative. Moreover, the notion of "occupational choice" has associated with it, from its historical origins, the idea of a front-end, single career choice for life. While some of the predictions about the need to change careers from 5 to 10 times in the future are yet to be verified, the idea of a

single "occupational choice" seems to sound curiously old fashioned. However, it is still the case that about 40 percent of most Western societies' workers have remained basically in one occupation for virtually all of their working lives, suggesting that such an idea might still be relevant. Furthermore, labor market statistics in Western economies typically reveal that the lability of employment varies considerably across occupations, again suggesting that the idea that people will alter occupations very frequently may not be universally applicable across most labor markets.

Therefore, it may be somewhat premature to jettison the concept of occupational choice entirely from the career development literature and counseling practice. For example, the word *vocational* has largely been eschewed by writers in favor of *career* in the same way that *guidance* has given way to *counseling and development* in most contemporary literature. However, the resurgent interest in the role of spirituality in career development has emphasized ideas of purpose, fulfillment, identity, and calling, to which the term *vocation* originally applied. Thus it suddenly does not seem so improbable that *vocation* will make a comeback in the career development literature. If so, then consigning occupational choice to desuetude may also be premature. Researchers, theorists, and practitioners are all taught the virtues of parsimony in explaining outcomes and behaviors. However, if science in general has taught us anything in the last hundred years, it is that reality is anything but simple. In fact, it is wonderfully and astonishingly complex. Therefore, trying to explain everybody's working life and behavior with a single paradigm and even with a single set of terms may not be achievable or even desirable. Notwithstanding whatever the half-life of some other types of work may be, for at least some occupations and those who choose them, the idea of an occupational choice remains meaningful, relevant, and applicable.

—Robert G. L. Pryor and James E. H. Bright

See also Circumscription and compromise, Holland's theory of vocational choice, Person-environment fit (P-E fit), Super's career development theory

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OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

Occupational classification systems are schemas for grouping jobs and job data. Government agencies often use occupational classification systems to standardize the way job data are collected and how jobs are described. For example, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) uses a standard classification structure to collect and sort national job data, such as wages, employment projections, and occupational outlook information. The census also uses this system to collect and present its data on jobs spanning geographic regions and industries in the United States. Because of the standardized nature of many classification systems, they may be used to compare job information across organizations and government agencies.

Occupational classification systems are developed in a variety of ways. One commonly used qualitative development method is known as the top-down approach. Such systems are often hierarchical and are developed by experts who have knowledge of the occupation or job information. The information is grouped into a structure of more generalized occupational groups, using characteristics such as work function, job title, or skill level. Occupational classification systems can have two or more hierarchical levels in which to group jobs. Because the developers usually tailor classification systems for a specific purpose, there is no consistency in the number of hierarchical levels or number of job titles included.

A second empirical approach involves applying statistical techniques such as cluster analysis or factor analysis to the knowledge, skill, and ability data associated with various jobs. The job analysts name the resulting clusters that become the hierarchical levels within the structure. These classification groupings are based on data rather than subjective opinion, which can be advantageous for purposes such as validation and research. However, classification systems developed using only statistical methods can be difficult to interpret and may lack the face validity necessary to be widely accepted.

In response, a third approach combines the qualitative and quantitative approaches described above. For example, experts design and develop a structure of occupations using the top-down approach, based on some need or organizational objective. Once the hierarchical structure has been established, statistical analyses are used to verify, modify, or provide validation support for the rationally derived hierarchical classification schema.

DEFINITIONS

In the above overview, terms such as *occupation*, *job*, and *occupational category* were used in the explanation of occupational classification systems. Although some people tend to view the terms *job* and *occupation* as synonymous, they are not. Therefore, to clarify and eliminate potential confusion, definitions are provided below.

Position

A position is a group of specific tasks performed by a single worker.

Job

Michael T. Brannick and Edward L. Levine described a job as work performed in association with others performing similar work, for similar goals, and in roles defined by mutually agreeable titles. In keeping with the above examples, an example of a job is “heart surgeon.”

Occupation

An occupation is a collection of similar jobs. Thus, it can be considered “broader” than a job. An example of an occupation is “surgeon.”

Occupational Category (or Occupational Family)

An occupational category is a collection of occupations. Thus, it can be considered “broader” than an occupation. An example of an occupational category is “health care practitioners.”

In the sections that follow, occupational classification systems are described in terms of some of their commonly known uses. In addition, five examples of both domestic and international occupational classification systems are discussed. Finally, advantages and disadvantages of classification systems are described, and suggestions for improvement are provided.

USES OF OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

According to Human Resources Development Canada, occupational classification systems serve three main functions. The first function is the collection of occupational statistics. Economists and statisticians use these systems when collecting census and other data such as data on worker mobility, technological change, and occupational employment statistics.

Second, occupational classification systems are often used to analyze changes or patterns in the labor force. Government agencies and organizations use these systems to understand changes in workforce demographics and other important labor market trends. This information is sometimes used to guide policy and develop systems for training, recruiting, and job matching. In addition, the information may be used to draw comparisons across work that, on the surface, may appear quite different.

A third function of occupational classification systems is both for career exploration and planning. It is important for job seekers, employment counselors, and employers to understand the requirements and descriptions of jobs and occupations so they may assist people in finding professions that match their skills and interests. Career guidance counselors use these systems to educate students or workers considering a career move or job transition. By matching job seekers’ interests and level of knowledge and skill in job-related activities with those of various occupations, they can make an informed choice about a new career to pursue.

EXAMPLES OF U.S.-BASED CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)

As described in the U.S. Department of Commerce’s *SOC Manual*, the SOC is a system for classifying all occupations in the economy, including private, public, and military occupations. This classification system replaces all occupational classification systems previously used by federal statistical agencies. It is used by these agencies to collect occupational data and provide a means to compare occupational data across agencies. The SOC was developed, as stated in the agency’s user guide, to “cover all occupations in which work is performed for pay or profit, reflecting the current occupational structure in the United States.”

The SOC was originally released in 1977 by the U.S. Department of Commerce to provide a way to cross-reference and aggregate data collected by other social and economic statistic reporting programs. As many programs in the U.S. government began to collect statistical data, a need grew for a unified occupational classification system for the federal government. With the help of various government organizations, a system was developed for statistical reporting purposes. Its classifications are based on the type of work performed and, in some cases, the level of skill and education requirements.

The current SOC contains four levels of aggregation within its hierarchy. The first and most general category is known as the major group level. There are 23 major groups in the SOC. Within the major group level are 96 minor groups, which are less general than the major groups. The third level in the hierarchy is the broad occupation. There are 449 broad occupations. The fourth and most specific level is the detailed occupation. There are 821 detailed occupational titles at this final level of the SOC. It is at this level of detail that brief occupational descriptions are provided and jobs are typically grouped. The table below provides an example of the four-tiered hierarchical structure of the SOC.

THE OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION NETWORK (O*NET)-SOC SYSTEM

The O*NET-SOC is the result of a merger between the O*NET occupational system and the SOC.

Table 1. Example of the SOC Four-Tiered Hierarchical Classification Structure, Including Codes and Titles**Major Group**

21-0000 Community and Social Services Occupations

Minor Group

21-1000 Counselors, Social Workers, and Other Community and Social Service Specialists

Broad Occupation

21-1010 Counselors

Detailed Occupation

21-1011 Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors

21-1012 Educational, Vocational, and School Counselors

21-1013 Marriage and Family Therapists

21-1014 Mental Health Counselors

21-1015 Rehabilitation Counselors

21-1019 Counselors, All Other (“residual category”)

SOURCE: Sample taken from the *SOC Manual* (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1999).

O*NET was once based on an older coding and classification system known as the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES). Shortly after the final revision of the SOC, the Office of Management and Budget mandated that all federal reporting agencies adopt the SOC as the standard classification and coding system. The National O*NET Center then transitioned its OES-based codes and titles to an SOC-based system, utilizing SOC occupational codes and titles. In addition to incorporating the four levels of the SOC, O*NET added a fifth level of occupational detail to accommodate for occupations in O*NET’s original list that did not “fit” well into the SOC’s structure.

In addition to being a classification structure, O*NET also provides descriptive data on over 900 occupations. Because of the cross-occupational nature of O*NET’s descriptive information such as knowledge, skills, abilities, work activities, and work context, direct comparisons between occupations can be made. This system of occupations provides users with valuable data and online tools for use in vocational guidance and career exploration activities. The O*NET-SOC classification system is by far one of the most comprehensive classification structures in the world. The O*NET-SOC provides an excellent system for

grouping occupations, jobs, or job data for government or an organization’s data collection effort.

The Monster Occupational Classification (MOC)

While the SOC, O*NET-SOC, and other classification systems discussed herein have been developed by both government and quasigovernmental agencies, private organizations have also developed occupational classification systems to meet their needs. As an example, consider the organization Monster.com, a popular online job-posting Web site. In recent years, Monster decided to incorporate an occupational classification system into its résumé database. After extensive research both domestically and abroad, the SOC was chosen to be the framework for a system that would serve to organize, by job title, over 40 million résumés. Unfortunately, the SOC was insufficient to classify all new job seekers’ résumés and those already in Monster’s archival database, so tailoring it became essential. For example, the SOC has limited detail in occupational areas such as computers, information technology, and finance. Monster, with the help of occupational classification experts, expanded these and other areas to meet its needs while at the

same time maintaining the SOC-based coding structure. Monster initially named it the SOC+, but they customized it to become more Monster specific. Soon after, it came to be called the MOC (i.e., the Monster Occupational Classification).

EXAMPLES OF INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)

The ISCO-88 is a system currently being revised and maintained by the European Union and has been adopted by many countries in Europe. According to the National Research Council, the ISCO-88 has three primary objectives: (1) to facilitate international discussion regarding occupations through its usage; (2) to provide international occupational data for research, decision making, and other activities; and (3) to serve as a model, not a replacement, for countries developing their own occupational classification systems. The hierarchical system contains 10, 28, 116, and 390 titles at various levels, and occupations are clustered according to duties performed. The information reported about each occupation includes a brief paragraph of duties performed and a listing of its general education requirements.

The National Occupation Classification (NOC)

The NOC is Canada's occupational system that provides a hierarchy based on skill level, skill type, education requirements, and industry type for each occupation. The hierarchy contains 26, 47, 139, and 514 titles at various levels and contains tasks reported for each job. Information such as education, training, experience, and licensing information are provided for each occupation.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

Advantages

Using occupational classification systems provides several advantages to organizations or agencies. First, occupational classification systems provide an excellent framework to organize jobs and work activities. Organizations may group many jobs into one category,

thus streamlining various human resources functions such as training course design and assessment tool development. Second, because classification systems tend to be hierarchical in nature, jobs or occupations can be grouped at whatever level necessary to fulfill the objectives of the classification effort and thus the organization's goal. Third, a standardized occupational system may be used for occupational or cross-job comparisons and allows different systems to "talk" to each other.

Disadvantages

Some examples of the disadvantages of occupational classification systems are presented here. First, occupational classification systems tend to be inflexible. They are often difficult to adapt to adjustments in work structure. If necessary updates to the system are not made in a timely manner, the system will become obsolete. Second, an occupational structure may lack face validity and coverage. Many occupational classification systems currently in use are not easily understood by the average person. Making correct classifications and using the coding system properly are often reserved for experts, such as job analysts or industrial psychologists.

Another disadvantage is that occupational classification systems can be inefficient practical tools. It is often time consuming and difficult to peruse an entire four-tiered classification structure to group all jobs within a single organization into the most appropriate categories. Finally, the level of generality and/or specificity of the occupations listed as part of a hierarchy are often inconsistent, thus making the task of classifying jobs more difficult. When developing a classification system, occupations at their respective hierarchical levels should be as close to the same level of generality or specificity as possible to increase the ease of grouping jobs.

SUMMARY

Occupational classification systems are developed for a variety of purposes. Often, they are developed by government agencies to carry out objectives such as (1) to assist economists and statisticians in their data collection efforts, (2) to analyze changes or patterns in the labor force and provide labor market information, and (3) to assist individuals in career exploration, career planning, and job seeking. Although all of the

occupational classification systems discussed have been useful, the flexibility, face validity and coverage, efficiency, level of generality, and questionable validity continue to present challenges for their developers and users. As a result, organizations such as the National O*NET Center and Monster.com attempted to overcome these challenges by developing classification systems that are dynamic and adaptable, to accommodate frequent changes in jobs and technology. However, there is still clearly a need for further research and practice to uncover newer, streamlined, and valid procedures for developing and using occupational classification systems in a variety of settings.

—Scott T. Bublitz and Jonathan D. Levine

See also Occupational card sorts, Occupational Information Network (O*NET), *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Occupational stereotypes

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OCCUPATIONAL COMMITMENT

The term *career* has been defined by several prominent behavioral scientists as a pattern of work-related experiences, including attitudes and behaviors, that span a person's life. Such a definition encompasses

different work referents, including job involvement, organizational commitment, *occupational commitment*, and work/nonwork roles. Adopting this definition suggests that a person can change jobs, organizations, and occupations, as well as retire and then even "unretire," all as a part of his or her career.

In their study of different work commitment measures, Gary Blau, Allison Paul, and Natalie St. John found that the *career* commitment measures could be combined into a more parsimonious measure of *occupational* commitment. Other research shows that just as organizational commitment has three components, so too does occupational commitment, namely affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment. Affective commitment is one's emotional attachment to his or her occupation, normative commitment is a person's sense of obligation to remain in the occupation, and continuance commitment involves the individual's assessment of the costs associated with leaving one's occupation.

In a quantitative review of the research on occupational commitment, Kibeom Lee, Julie Carswell, and Natalie Allen noted that most prior research had defined occupational commitment as the psychological link between an individual and his or her occupation that was based on an *affective* reaction to that occupation. This definition clearly emphasizes the affective component, that is, individuals with higher occupational commitment strongly identify with and have positive feelings about their occupation. Although empirical work has found support for the affective, normative, and continuance components of occupational commitment, such research has been less successful in demonstrating differences in the relationships of these separate occupational commitment components to other variables, which would provide stronger evidence for the uniqueness of each component. Recent research, however, has found support for the distinction between the three components of occupational commitment, demonstrating that affective commitment had a stronger negative relationship to occupational withdrawal cognitions and had stronger positive relationships to forms of professional participation. Moreover, normative and continuance commitment combined to explain withdrawal cognitions, such that there was a negative relationship between normative commitment and withdrawal cognitions only when continuance commitment was low.

Research supports the view of John Meyer and Natalie Allen that continuance *organizational* commitment

develops as employees recognize that they have accumulated investments or costs that would be lost if they left their organization, or that the availability of comparable alternatives is limited. Applying this notion to *occupational* commitment suggests the usefulness of the concept of career (or occupational) entrenchment. Career entrenchment focuses on the perceived costs associated with leaving one's occupation and the perceived lack of occupational alternatives. Research suggests that occupational entrenchment consists of three dimensions: occupational investment, emotional costs, and limited occupational alternatives.

Occupational investment represents the accumulated investments or costs (e.g., time, money, training) in one's occupation that would be lost if one changed occupations. Often, professionally trained employees need to have either advanced schooling or some form of certification to enter their occupation and then must maintain their competence through attending continuing education programs and/or participation in associations. *Emotional costs* refer to the anticipated emotional price associated with pursuing a new occupation. For example, the loss of coworker friendships and severance of professional ties can exact an emotional toll on a person changing his or her occupation. Based on investment model research, coworker friendships, a network of contacts, time, money, and training *each* represents investments or accumulated costs in one's occupation. Limited occupational alternatives tap the perceived lack of available options for pursuing a new occupation. Individual efforts to maintain occupational investments and minimize emotional costs will divert an individual from scanning the environment for viable occupational alternatives.

Gary Blau has suggested that emotional costs and occupational investments might be better represented together as *accumulated occupational costs*, and he found support for four components of occupational commitment: affective, normative, accumulated costs, and limited alternatives. The components of accumulated costs and limited alternatives represent two distinct aspects of continuance commitment. By subsuming occupational entrenchment within occupational commitment, researchers now can focus on a common integrative construct, that is, occupational rather than career commitment.

Occupational commitment is an important construct for future study because organizations will continue to restructure and revise the psychological contract of mutual employee-organization expectations,

employees will make multiple job changes during the course of their work lives, and the contingent workforce will continue to grow. Collectively this suggests that employee commitment may be shifting in many industries from organizations to occupations. As such, understanding the meaning, antecedents, and consequences of occupational commitment will only become more important for both academics and human resource practitioners to understand.

—Gary Blau

See also Career salience, Job involvement, Organizational commitment

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OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION NETWORK (O*NET)

Commissioned by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, the *Occupational Information Network* (O*NET) aspires to be America's most comprehensive and widely applicable career development resource. A replacement for the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*, O*NET's primary feature is its detailed, research-based descriptions of nearly 1,000 occupations. Available as a database, an interactive Web site, and a

reference text, O*NET provides a range of informational resources intended for use by laypersons and by all professionals who play a role in workforce development. To serve such a wide audience, O*NET describes all occupations using plain-language terms organized by a general model of workforce development concepts.

Developed from extensive surveys of workers and expert job analysts, O*NET profiles 974 occupations using over 275 different characteristic descriptors. All of this information maps onto six broad categories. An occupation's *worker characteristics* include the interests, values, and abilities of the typical worker, while *worker requirements* refer to job-performance-related skill and knowledge areas. *Occupational requirements* are nonspecific aspects of the job or work environment, such as frequency of team-based work, while *occupation-specific information* would include descriptors like "obtaining evidence from suspects." Finally, *occupational characteristics* include compensation and job outlook trends, and *experience requirements* describe the education and training necessary for employment in a given occupation.

It is difficult to overstate the volume of information provided by O*NET. Consider the occupation of mechanical engineer. A computer printout of O*NET's most detailed mechanical engineer profile contains 19 pages of bullet-point style information. The precision of this descriptive information is considerable. For example, not only does the mechanical engineer profile specify that knowledge of chemistry and the ability to read technical drawings are both relevant to the job, but it also quantifies the relative job-relatedness of these and many other characteristics on a 100-point scale. This kind of detailed information is directly accessible from the O*NET Web site, and the O*NET developers' guiding assumption is that these profiles could be used by a college student exploring possible careers, a recruiter evaluating job candidates, a department chair setting curriculum standards, or a scholar researching trends in the labor force.

In addition to the occupational profiles themselves, O*NET has inspired numerous supplementary tools and applications. The O*NET Web site assists general audiences in identifying career options through an interactive self-assessment exercise and a searchable database of all occupational profiles. For career counselors, O*NET provides free measures of abilities, values, and interests—the results of which connect directly to O*NET occupational summaries.

Researchers can download the entire O*NET database and accompanying technical reports. Finally, within certain guidelines, program developers have been encouraged to adapt O*NET resources to their specific needs. To this date, such developments have included a Spanish-language version of the database, a new occupations guide for the Armed Services Vocational Assessment Battery (ASVAB), and a career guidance training program for paraprofessional counselors in Wisconsin.

In summary, no other career development resource approaches the breadth and depth of information, or the scope of potential applications, associated with O*NET.

—Robert O. Hartman

See also Environment awareness, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*

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OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK HANDBOOK

Career researchers and counselors emphasize the value of accurate information in the career planning process, and the *Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)* is the most widely used source of occupational information in existence. Drawing on an ongoing U.S. Department of Labor data collection project, the *OOH* is a print and Internet reference designed to provide essential information to individuals exploring their career possibilities. The *Handbook* covers around 270 occupations—accounting for nearly 90 percent of the U.S. labor force—and allots about two to three double-columned pages of text to each entry. In doing so, the *OOH* attempts to present the concise balance of occupational breadth and depth that readers need to develop an initial understanding of occupational paths worthy of further consideration.

Despite differing focus areas, most models of career development view effective career decision making as an integration of self-knowledge and occupational knowledge. Self-knowledge includes information obtained via interest inventories, aptitude tests, and other assessment techniques, while occupational knowledge implies a realistic, fact-based understanding of the world of work. As a person acquires self-knowledge, this usually stimulates a search for corresponding occupational knowledge: Which occupations will allow me to work with my hands, interact with people, make at least \$50,000 per year, or operate my own business? The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* is an encyclopedia of answers to such questions.

All *Occupational Outlook Handbook* entries are organized according to a common set of category headings. A Significant Points section presents a few of each occupation's most important characteristics or trends. Nature of the Work describes common job duties and day-to-day work activities. Working Conditions addresses the work environment, including hours, extent of travel, psychological stressors, and physical demands. An Employment section lists the total number of jobs that the occupation contributes to the labor market, as well as a breakdown of job numbers by various industries. Training, Qualifications, and Advancement delineates the experiences and credentials required to enter and progress within the occupation. Job Outlook projects the number of openings expected over a 10-year period given trends in job turnover and new growth, while Earnings presents salary averages and ranges. Finally, each entry offers a short list of Related Occupations, as well as a few Sources of Additional Information, such as professional association Web sites.

The Internet has transformed the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. Though it continues to be published as a text, the *OOH* is also now available as a free online search engine, allowing people to locate information under various topic areas or by occupational keyword. Upon locating occupations of interest, Web users can download entire *OOH* entries or find answers to specific questions via an interactive menu of the aforementioned category headings (e.g., Earnings). The popularity of this new resource is evident in the 5.5 million hits it receives each month. With this advance in technology, a broader audience is utilizing the *OOH* in their career decision making.

—Robert O. Hartman

See also Environment awareness, Occupational Information Network (O*NET)

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OCCUPATIONAL PRESTIGE

The inclusion of *prestige* as part of interest assessment is not a new phenomenon but has gained increasing attention over the past few years. As a construct, prestige encompasses level of aspiration, level of training, preference for public recognition and esteem, desire for high income, occupational level, responsibility, and socioeconomic status. Prestige may also reflect an individual's preference for a blue-collar versus professional lifestyle. Although prestige has been incorporated within several earlier models of occupational perceptions, it generally has not been incorporated within interest assessments.

Prestige has also played an important role in models of career development and occupational selection. Sex typing, that is, the societal view that certain careers are masculine or feminine, and prestige, together with interests, have been proposed to form a basis of occupational choice, with each being viewed as independent. However, research has demonstrated that such independence is not appropriate, supporting the collective examination of interests with prestige. When scales measuring prestige or status have been incorporated within interest assessments, these scales were supplementary rather than primary, and the link between prestige and occupational preference was not explicit. Research, however, has consistently indicated that people do rely on prestige in their evaluation of different occupations. Furthermore, prestige has also been shown to have more importance to individuals than the sex typing of occupations during career choice dilemmas.

One reason for the lack of incorporation of prestige within interest assessments (despite its theoretical and empirical history) is that prestige is often viewed as a part of values, and many researchers have sought to

distinguish values from interests. Interest assessments are generally thought to be measuring aspects of a person's identity, where interests refer to the relative liking and disliking of things. Values, however, refer to the relative importance of things to a person, with scales of this type being found within separate instruments. Yet the distinction between interests and values may be more a function of the scales designed to measure these constructs rather than any actual differences.

The predominant model of interest and vocational preference is Holland's Hexagon, where six personality types, that is, Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional (RIASEC), are arranged in the shape of a hexagon. The different types provide information about the characteristics of individuals along with related occupations based on their type. Holland's typology provides a convenient and meaningful way to present individual differences in interests. Although the field has focused much attention on the hexagon itself, research has distinguished two key features of Holland's model: the circular ordering of the RIASEC scales and the two dimensions, or perpendicular x - and y -axes, that underlie Holland's model. These dimensions account for the distribution of the types in a circular arrangement. The two dimensions are most often represented by data-ideas and people-things, and each type is an abstraction of the data formed by the underlying two dimensions. Occupations have also been mapped on this two-dimensional plane.

Through more fully assessing the content domain of interests, research has demonstrated the presence of an additional dimension to the two traditionally utilized, data-ideas and people-things. The addition of this dimension adds the relative prestige of occupations and is perpendicular to the plane formed by the two dimensions that underlie Holland's types. The presence of this prestige dimension in interests has been found in occupational preference ratings but also in activity preferences.

Employing a three-dimensional model that has the data-ideas and people-things dimensions (x - and y -axes) combined with high-low prestige (z -axis) allows for more thorough assessment of interests. The three-dimensional model allows occupational preferences to be mapped on the three-dimensional coordinates (x -, y -, and z -axes) of a structure, for example, a sphere, thereby combining the RIASEC-type-based occupations with relative prestige ratings of occupations. Several structures that model interest data

utilizing the above three dimensions have been researched. These are the cylinder, cone, and sphere. For the cylindrical structure, prestige needs do not affect interest preferences, that is, the same types lying on the x , y plane would be valid for high, moderate, and low prestige (the z axis). For the conical structure, prestige needs affect interest preferences only at one end of prestige, for example, high reliance on prestige at high levels, but increasingly equal prestige preference from the mid to opposite end of the cone. For the spherical structure, prestige needs differentially affect interest preferences at both ends of prestige, for example, the RIASEC types lie at the equator, that is, the plane defined by the x - and y - axes, with prestige (the z -axis) running from the north to south poles of the sphere.

Because it has been found that individuals with high or low needs for prestige generally do not differ as much in their occupational preferences relative to those with moderate needs for prestige, that is, individuals at either pole of the prestige dimension are less differentiated in their interest preferences relative to those at the equator, a sphere is the only structure that appears to account for the differential reliance on prestige during the evaluation of occupations. However, more research pursuing the integration of prestige with basic interests is needed.

As mentioned above, prestige is not a new construct. What is relatively new, however, is the incorporation of prestige within a model of interest and occupational preferences that explicitly measures and utilizes prestige to describe individual differences across three dimensions and translating this information into occupational preference in a manner that is utilizable to career counselors and their clients.

—Terence J. G. Tracey and Sandro M. Sodano

See also Interests, Occupational choice

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OCCUPATIONAL PROFESSIONALIZATION

For more than a century, people who study work, occupations, and society more generally have been interested in what distinguishes a profession from an occupation and how an occupation becomes a profession. Over time, theorists have provided different answers to these questions and proposed different processes of *occupational professionalization*. What underlies all of the theories is the fundamental assumption that professions such as medicine and the law are different from other occupations and that professional status is something desirable and something to be aspired to. This entry reviews five main approaches to the study of professions: functionalist, taxonomic, professionalization, power, and systems. The approaches are presented in chronological order, tracing the historical development of ideas. The entry also discusses more recent trends in research on professions and professionalization and concludes with thoughts about why modern occupations continue to strive for professional status.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF PROFESSIONS AND PROFESSIONALIZATION

The Functionalist Approach

During the late nineteenth century, Émile Durkheim, often cited as one of the fathers of sociology, was interested in the function or purpose of a division of labor in society. He argued that the functional division of labor binds people to one another in a new way and creates a new sense of "solidarity" among people who differ from each other but who are mutually dependent. Durkheim was also greatly concerned with what he perceived as a growing sense of isolation and disconnectedness between individuals in an industrial society. He defined a profession as an

occupational group whose members share a body of knowledge and a moral commitment. Professions were important to him because he believed that they provided support for members and linked them to the broader society thereby reducing the experience of isolation and disconnectedness. This functionalist approach does not address the negative or *dysfunctional* effects professions have on subordinate occupations and the people who seek out professional advice and services. Nor does it describe the process by which an occupation becomes a profession (i.e., occupational professionalization).

The Taxonomic Approach

Research more narrowly focused on the topic of professions emerged in the 1920s and 1930s. Around this time, researchers such as Sir Alexander M. Carr-Saunders and Paul A. Wilson were concerned with differentiating between occupations and professions. To that end, they identified criteria that marked professions. Examples of such criteria include service orientation, technical knowledge, and specialized training. This approach to studying the professions, referred to here as a taxonomic or classification approach, may be overly concerned with what some see as the futile task of determining what is and is not a profession while, like the functionalist approach, being short on ideas regarding the causes and consequences of professions.

The Professionalization Approach

The professionalization approach evolved from the taxonomic approach described above and dominated the American and British literature on professions through the mid-1960s. It focused on the organization of professions and their stepwise progression from occupational group or craft guild to full profession. Theorists in this group, especially Harold L. Wilensky, were among the first to identify an orderly process whereby an occupational group becomes a profession. In other words, they specified a process of *occupational professionalization* that included creating training schools and professional associations, initiating licensure requirements, and establishing a code of ethics. According to this approach, professional status depends on whether an occupational group has gone through all the necessary steps. This approach to understanding professionalization has been criticized

for being unidirectional and more concerned with organizational structure than work. Furthermore, some have argued that the stepwise approach conceptualizes professions as homogeneous and the professionalization process as constant both across professions and over time.

The Power Approach

Research during the 1960s and 1970s moved away from the process-oriented, stepwise professionalization approach and led to the emergence of power theories to explain professional status. These theories focused on the way a few well-established professions (e.g., medicine and the law) dominated and subordinated other occupational groups that did similar work—often to the detriment of the people who sought professional assistance. For example, Eliot Freidson asserted that the dominance of medicine over other occupations such as nursing was potentially harmful to patients and that people in need of health care would be better served by a less hierarchical organization of health occupations. Power theories also tended to describe professions as monopolistic and self-serving. From this perspective, one way to identify a profession is to look at the amount of power an occupational group possesses. Critics of this approach have described it as simply another version of the taxonomic approach that focuses on power, as opposed to organizational structure, as the defining characteristic of professions. Some have suggested that it does not sufficiently forward our understanding of how an occupation achieves professional status.

Andrew Abbott and the Systems Approach

In his effort to understand the nature of expert knowledge and the people and groups that produce, practice, and control it, Andrew Abbott came to understand professions and the process whereby an occupation becomes a profession differently from the way his scholarly predecessors understood them. His predecessors researched individual professions and saw them as evolving independently of one another. They focused on how professions were organized and how much power they had. Abbott, on the other hand, saw professions not as individual and independent entities but as members of an interdependent system

where a shift in one impacts the work and boundaries of others. He focused on the work of professionals and the way they compete for jurisdiction over certain types of work. Jurisdiction can be described as the power or right of an occupational group to produce knowledge and claim expertise in a certain area. This focus on work and jurisdiction signified a fundamental departure from the way professions had been studied in the past.

In addition, Abbott's concept of professionalization was different from earlier accounts, namely the stepwise professionalization approach. Abbott rejected the idea of unidirectional movement from an occupation toward full professional status. For him, going through a series of steps did not necessarily make an occupational group a profession. Rather, an occupational group became a profession as a result of gaining jurisdiction over certain types of work (e.g., childbirth or mental health). Jurisdiction was achieved via competition and settlement with competing occupational groups. For example, the turn of the twentieth century revealed midwives in stiff competition with physicians for jurisdiction over childbirth in the United States. Physicians, with their scientific knowledge, arguably won the dispute for control over childbirth. However, midwives (both lay and nurse-midwives) continued to attend a small percentage of births in the United States and have been mounting an organized effort since the 1970s to regain legitimacy and jurisdiction over at least some, namely "normal" or "low-risk," births. According to Abbott, such disputes result in the continuous construction and reconstruction of jurisdictional boundaries over time.

Four concepts are central to Abbott's systems theory: work, jurisdiction, competition, and system. When more than one profession tries to claim expertise with respect to a certain type of work, jurisdictional disputes arise and must be settled. Rarely can jurisdiction be equally shared. Thus professions compete to have their work acknowledged as legitimate and their knowledge recognized as dominant. A shift in one profession's jurisdictional boundaries affects others, and as this process unfolds over time, the entire system of professions is impacted. Such is the nature of this amoebalike system of interlocking professions—constantly shifting, swelling, and contracting. Much of the recent literature on professions and professionalization tests, extends, or illustrates shortcomings in Abbott's work.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PROFESSIONS RESEARCH

Since Abbott published *The System of Professions* in 1988, no researcher has undertaken so systematic and comprehensive a project aimed at introducing a new and groundbreaking theory of professions. At the same time, the professions literature has not stagnated. Theoretical and empirical research on professions has continued to flourish by (1) testing and augmenting existing theories and (2) describing the changing environment in which professions negotiate jurisdiction and the new professionalization strategies such changes have inspired. New and interesting areas of inquiry in the study of professions and professionalization include intraprofessional relations, workplace size and degree of bureaucratization, gender, and unconventional professionalization strategies.

INTRAPROFESSIONAL RELATIONS

Sydney A. Halpern was interested in why some professions are better than others at subordinating competing groups. Using comparative and historical methods to analyze data gathered from medical publications and professional association meetings, she explored the degree to which American medicine has had control over adjacent occupational groups such as radiologic technology, physical therapy, laboratory technology, and nurse anesthesia over time. She tested the professionalization, power, and systems theories and found that none fully explain American medicine's pattern of domination. Rather, she suggested that *intraprofessional* relations (e.g., between two medical specialties like radiology and internal medicine) significantly affect *interprofessional* boundary negotiation (e.g., between radiology and X-ray technology). She found that a subsection of a profession (e.g., radiology), not the profession as a whole (e.g., medicine), embarks on an effort to challenge a competing group (e.g., X-ray technology). Her data revealed that for a subsection to be successful in its efforts to subordinate a competing occupation, it must have support from other subsections of the profession. In light of her findings, Halpern suggested that Abbott's theory should be extended to explain not only interprofessional relations but intraprofessional relations as well.

WORKPLACE SIZE AND DEGREE OF BUREAUCRATIZATION

Cecilia Benoit criticized researchers' tendency to universalize findings from studies of American and British professions and professional boundaries to other countries. She reviewed historical data on midwifery in Sweden, the Netherlands, and Canada and found that the concepts of medicalization of birth and deprofessionalization (i.e., loss of professional status) of midwives as a result of the rise and dominance of obstetrics are not as relevant in Sweden, the Netherlands, and some Canadian provinces as they are in the United States and Britain. Rather, in the countries she studied, birth continues to be understood as a natural process, and midwives have attained a level of professional status not seen in the United States and Britain. Most important, she argued that workplace size and degree of bureaucratization are important factors for whether an occupational group becomes a profession. She asserted that midwives in Sweden, the Netherlands, and Canada may have achieved professional status, at least in part, because they work in small, relatively nonbureaucratic settings.

GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Kristin Barker built on Abbott's systems theory and presented evidence of a gendered system of professions. She focused on the dispute between the American Medical Women's Association and the American Medical Association regarding the 1920 Act for the Promotion of the Welfare and Hygiene of Maternity and Infancy, popularly known as the Sheppard-Towner Act. She analyzed discourse on Sheppard-Towner between 1921 and 1929 as recorded in the *Medical Women's Journal* and the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. She found that shared gender both divided and united women in their efforts to gain jurisdiction over pregnancy and birth. Intraprofessional (i.e., within the medical profession) and interprofessional (e.g., among medicine, nursing, and social work) collaboration helped women gain initial jurisdiction. However, the interprofessional coalition did not include midwives and, in the end, served to undermine midwifery's historic claim to jurisdiction over childbirth. Due to these and other circumstances, women, regardless of professional status and affiliation, lost the battle over childbirth to the

predominantly male medical profession. Barker urged fellow researchers to pay careful attention to the gendered nature of jurisdictional disputes, both intra- and interprofessionally.

Tracey L. Adams also contributed to the literature on the gendered nature of professions and professionalization processes. She presented a case study of dental hygiene in Ontario to explain how some female-dominated occupations attempt to gain professional status. Her data consisted of articles published in Canadian dentistry journals between 1945 and 2000, government documents, legislation, research reports, dental hygienists' MA and PhD theses, and interview transcripts. Adams found that ideas about (1) women having equal access to historically male-dominated work and (2) women being inherently more caring and better communicators play a significant role in the relatively successful professionalization of dental hygienists in Ontario. She raised questions about whether claims to jurisdiction and professional status based on feminine gender will prove successful in the future as dentistry, among other professions, becomes increasingly populated by women.

UNCONVENTIONAL PROFESSIONALIZATION STRATEGIES

As described above, dental hygienists in Ontario used feminine gender as a strategy for gaining professional status and autonomy from historically male-dominated dentistry. This strategy, mobilizing gender-specific arguments when making claims to professional status, is not new. Women physicians in the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries used this strategy to enhance their status within medicine. They argued that women have a special capacity for caring and healing and are uniquely suited, perhaps even better suited than men, for medical practice. Although this is not a new strategy, it is still considered unconventional—mainly because prior research on professions rarely addressed gender and, therefore, gendered professionalization strategies have only recently been described.

Martin Laffin and Tom Entwistle wrote about another unconventional professionalization strategy. They began by describing typical professionalization projects and went on to suggest that new conditions (e.g., changes in how policy is made and globalization) are forcing occupational groups and existing professions to experiment with new approaches. They

identified three major shifts in occupations' approaches to professionalization: (1) from exclusive jurisdiction to interdisciplinarity and overlapping jurisdictions, (2) from an "insider" approach to affecting policy to public advocacy, and (3) from stand-alone professions to interprofessional collaboration and the formation of "strategic alliances." They argued that such changes in professionalization strategies force us to reconsider what it means to be a professional and what it looks like when occupational groups undertake professionalization projects.

CONCLUSION

This entry has described five approaches to understanding professions and the process of professionalization: functionalist, taxonomic, professionalization, power, and systems. Each approach contributes to our understanding of what a profession is and the process by which an occupation becomes a profession. Recent research points to a number of areas ripe for further inquiry such as intraprofessional relations, workplace size and bureaucratization, gender, and emerging professionalization strategies. Regardless of focus or temporal location, all of these studies share an underlying assumption. They assume that professions are different from and more desirable than "ordinary" occupations. This leads to the question: Why is professional status desirable or, in other words, why do occupations aspire to professional status? First, at the level of the individual, professionals may make more money, exhibit more autonomy, and experience higher status and more control over their work than people who do similar work in nonprofessional adjacent occupations. Second, there is some evidence that professionalizing improves services and the quality of work done by members of the occupational group. Thus a commitment to quality service may serve as motivation. Third, professions and professional organizations exercise a considerable amount of power in the public and legal spheres. Together, these benefits of professional status may contribute to improved quality of life for members of professions, to continued interest by occupational groups in professionalization, and to continued relevance of occupational professionalization as an area of academic inquiry.

—Rachael B. Kulick

See also Occupational classification, Occupational prestige, Occupational stereotypes

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OCCUPATIONAL STEREOTYPES

Occupational stereotypes are a reflection of our tendency to use heuristics in our thinking about the world in the place of data. The result in this domain can be, and often is, prejudice and unequal opportunities for those demographic groups who become labeled. Classes of occupations can also suffer from generalizations made about them. However, occupational stereotypes can also be beneficial in understanding the complexities of modern working life.

The capacity to organize systematically their knowledge of themselves and their world is one of the outstanding characteristics of human beings. However, the processes of discovering, observing, educating, concluding, and remembering are all selective and interpretive in nature. Our environment and our experience of it are multilayered and complex, and so we select aspects of both and form them into patterns by thought processes such as induction, deduction, and abduction. This is how we understand our experience of the world, and this becomes the basis of human knowledge. This knowledge is either

learned directly by individuals or taught to them indirectly by others.

The necessity of this selection and interpretation process is that of simplification. Humans focus on some aspects of their experience and environment and neglect others. Those aspects that they select they interpret as a way to make the experience meaningful. Thus knowledge is an individually or communally constructed sampling of reality. From such sampling or knowledge, individuals develop expectations and form behavioral responses. Sometimes individuals may have limited direct experience of some aspects of the world, and those aspects of the world may be mediated by the selective exposure to and dogmatic interpretation by authority figures in those individuals' lives. This may result in stereotyped thinking, characterized often by oversimplification, prejudice, projection of individuals' own inadequacies onto others, and ignorant or willful misinterpretation of the character and behavior of others. Racism is a typical example of stereotyping in which whole communities or nations are reduced in the minds of others to a few basic (almost always very negative) characteristics in order to justify some form of violence or exploitation. This is an example of the very negative side of stereotypic thinking. However, insofar as stereotyping represents a summary of our experience of reality, as a form of knowledge, it also has a positive dimension.

OCCUPATIONAL STEREOTYPES IN THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT FIELD

Perhaps not unexpectedly, occupational stereotypes in the career development literature have been understood, investigated, and utilized in both positive and negative ways. Negatively occupational stereotypes have been viewed as individual and community cognitive errors in thinking. Such stereotypes are seen as derived from incomplete or false information, from biased values, and from feelings of threat associated with change or a challenge to existing power groups. An example from the career development field that has received a lot of attention has been to investigate and challenge the stereotype that all girls are poor at math. The resultant occupational stereotype is that females should avoid mathematically based occupations, including most sciences (other than biology). Research sought to expose that there is no obvious genetic basis for females being worse than males at math and that the limitations of females doing well at

math were environmental, such as adults telling them that girls either do not need a career or should take humanities rather than science subjects, since this seemed to fit a stereotype of the artistic and nurturant woman rather than the logical and mathematical scientist. Research also indicated that females were often treated differently in educational contexts, resulting in limiting their exposure to math-based courses and resources for developing basic arithmetic skills.

Various interventions were subsequently developed to challenge these gender and occupational stereotypes, including more gender-fair occupational information, counseling to encourage exploration of nontraditional careers, changes to legislation to facilitate female participation in such careers, the development of mathematical self-efficacy scales to assist females to redress some of the social conditioning telling them they would not have mathematical skills, and parental education about the possibilities for female participation in math-based studies and careers.

Significant research has been conducted on the impact of gender and ethnic occupational stereotypes. Generally, there is widespread evidence of the existence of such stereotypes that appear to be robust over time. They have been shown to have impacts on (among other things) hiring decisions, vocational assistance and expectations, mother-child interactions, self-efficacy, and event-related brain potentials (electrical brain activity).

Positively, occupational stereotypes have been viewed as reflections of individuals' knowledge of the world of work. Such knowledge reflects their experience of work and may become the basis for both improved self-awareness in relation to work as well as a foundation on which to build occupational exploration and job search strategies.

OCCUPATIONAL STEREOTYPES AS PROBLEMS

In the field of social psychology, there is a vast literature on prejudice into which cognitive mechanisms such as stereotyping are to be found. Some of this overlaps the career development field insofar as work often constitutes a major way in which disadvantaged and minority groups are able to redress their social and financial disadvantage. The focus of most of this work is on people's overgeneralized, only partially true, often misleading, and almost always oversimplified

ideas and perceptions about such groups. Such ideas and perceptions are frequently the result of lack of knowledge and personal contact with other groups or a "clash of cultures" in which stereotyped thinking becomes a perceptual filter through which the actions of other groups are interpreted.

Relevant to work, such stereotyping adversely impacts the selection of candidates for work. At both the legislative and educational levels, endeavors have been made to reduce the inequity of such thinking and action along the lines of gender, age, disability, culture, religion, and ethnic origins. For example, those with cerebral palsy are frequently perceived to have major cognitive deficits, when in fact the condition is predominantly a motor dysfunction, and as a consequence are excluded from some occupations for inappropriate reasons. Notwithstanding the obvious importance of this whole area of theory, research, and practice, in career development the focus of attention relating to "occupational stereotypes" has been much more specific.

OCCUPATIONAL STEREOTYPES AS POSSIBILITIES

John Holland was the vocational psychologist who decided to make occupational stereotypes one of the main bases for his theory of career development and its practical applications. Holland began with the acknowledgment that most people view the world of work in terms of occupational stereotypes. However, rather than see these occupational stereotypes as problems, confusions, and barriers to career development, he saw them as providing opportunities to develop and assess individuals' understandings of both themselves and occupations. In fact, Holland saw such occupational stereotypes as often accurate and distilled pieces of knowledge that individuals gained through their experience of the world. Where this experience was limited with respect to a particular occupation, then individuals' stereotypes of these occupations were indications of people's projections of themselves. This too was valuable data for counselors to utilize in career counseling for occupational choice. In some ways this perspective prefigures modern constructivist counseling approaches, most notably that of Mark Savickas, which emphasizes perception as construction and construction as a key to meaning and change.

Initially, Holland used occupational titles as a way to categorize and assess individuals' preferred ways of

interacting with their environment, which he thought of as personality. Holland's research led him to conclude that both individuals and occupations could be classified according to six general types. Briefly these six types are as follows:

1. Realistic (R): a focus on manual, mechanical, outdoor, practical, building, and agricultural activities
2. Investigative (I): a focus on intellectual, scientific, analytical, conceptual, and mathematics activities
3. Artistic (A): a focus on creative, idealistic, aesthetic, performance, introspective, and emotionally expressive activities
4. Social (S): a focus on supportive, teaching, religious, sociable, cooperative, and caring activities
5. Enterprising (E): a focus on business, sales, media, leadership, and extroverted activities
6. Conventional (C): a focus on office, clerical, money handling, methodical, and conforming (to rules) activities

In theory each person's and each occupation's type was the ordered combination of all six categories. However, for most practical purposes, the subtype—the highest three assessed type scores—were employed for both individuals and particular occupations. For example, architect's subtype is Artistic Investigative Realistic (AIR), which makes sense in that the job involves creative design (Artistic), knowledge of materials and calculations (Investigative), and an appreciation of the realities of building and construction (Realistic). Initially, Holland sought empirically to confirm occupational stereotypes by establishing which type and subtype combination were most dominant for workers in each occupation. Subsequently, he elaborated this to include also a consideration of the kinds of tasks that people in the occupation performed.

This classification has found widespread acceptance, application, and both empirical and counselor support over the last 30 years up to the present. It constitutes the basis for many of the most popular classifications of vocational interests and occupational information databases in both English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries. This classification also formed the foundation for Holland's own person-occupation matching theory of occupational choice and for the development of a number of inventories assessing both individuals and work environments.

As Holland's thinking developed and changed over time, he increasingly wrote about "work environments" rather than "occupations" or "occupational stereotypes." A work environment was created by particular types of individuals congregating and fashioning a physical and social context reflective of their preferred ways of interacting with each other and the rest of the world.

The Holland taxonomy does have some limitations characteristic of all stereotypes. Holland himself has noted that work environments are rarely homogeneous. As a consequence, a single occupation such as "counselor," while having a dominant subtype SAE, also has been found through research to have other subtypes such as SEA, SCE, ASI SAI, SEC, and SAC. Holland attributes such variation to characteristics of the work environment that are predominantly not psychological in nature, such as the size and complexity of the organizational context, the relative power and independence of workers in a particular occupation, and the perceptions and expectations of others in the work environment. This in turn points to recent perspectives of understanding both individuals and their work in terms of complex, multivariate contextual as well as psychological influences. Holland's approach was based on simplicity, practicability, and research data, and it exemplifies such virtues. However, the tradeoff with simplicity is the risk of oversimplification, an issue with which the field of career development as a whole is continuing to come to terms.

The other main area of criticism of the Holland taxonomy also illustrates the issue of generality versus specificity. These criticisms are leveled at the actual content of the classification at the type level. For example, it has been noted that the Realistic category as represented by numbers in the workforce is about eight times the size of the Artistic category. This does seem disproportionate and has led some writers to suggest that this reflects a bias that requires redressing by further differentiating the Realistic category. Another example is criticism of the actual type names, which some counseling clients find misleading (such as private investigator is not I but E) and less than flattering (not many people like being labeled "conventional," which connotes being boring and predictable). However, notwithstanding such limitations, Holland's taxonomy has been found to be useful by counselors, researchers, test constructors, and career development theorists (see the following) alike.

THE COGNITIVE MAP OF OCCUPATIONS

Linda Gottfredson took Holland's notion of occupational stereotypes and applied it to sociological as well as psychological aspects of career development and choice. Gottfredson noted that most people's knowledge of occupations is social rather than vocational. Thus, for example, comparatively few people in the general population can enunciate the duties of a petroleum engineer. However, most can agree on whether it is most typically seen as a male or female type of occupation and whether it is a high, average, or low-level social status occupation. Gottfredson's theory indicated that as individuals develop from childhood, so too do they develop increasingly differentiated images of themselves (self-concept) and occupations (images or stereotypes). According to the theory, this development has a set sequence: sex types, prestige (and ability) level, and field of work (classified according to Holland's taxonomy).

Research has confirmed by and large that the general population shows high levels of agreement about most occupations according to masculinity-femininity, prestige range, and dominant field of work (interest/activity). Gottfredson used such data to develop the Cognitive Map of Occupations to illustrate this consensus. Moreover, these (social) images of occupations have a major impact on the development of occupational aspirations. Individuals' developing understanding of themselves in gender terms, for example, is matched by a sex type perspective about the world of work. These two images are matched in a process that eliminates occupations whose images are viewed either consciously or unconsciously as incompatible with the developing self-concept. Thus a female child will typically not see occupations that involve highly masculine-oriented activities such as mining, boxing, and construction work as appropriate. Once eliminated, such occupational options (based on their occupational images) are not reconsidered by the developing person.

This same process, called "circumscription" by Gottfredson, then occurs in sequence for prestige/ability level and field of work. Individuals thereby limit the range of acceptable alternatives to those whose images (or stereotypes) are a reasonable match with their own self-concept based on sex type, prestige level, and field of work. According to Gottfredson, people are often unaware of this process occurring. One of the roles of career counselors may be to make the circumscription process more "visible" to their clients so that they, the clients, can then consider both the

accuracy and appropriateness of such a development of occupational aspirations. This may lead them to challenge their occupational stereotypes by choosing a non-traditional career, and they may require some ongoing counselor support to "swim against the (traditional) social tide." Making the process explicit may also help people to "compromise" when they cannot find an appropriate occupational image and/or fail to be able to implement it successfully. This compromise process is seen as a reversal of the circumscription process. Individuals are more likely to relinquish field-of-work preferences before they relinquish prestige preferences before they relinquish sex type preferences. Images of occupations remain the basis for this compromise process. More recently, Gottfredson has introduced the idea of degrees of compromise as a way to illustrate the relationship between the three developmental dimensions of self and occupational images and to account for the discrepancies between her original formulation and subsequent research findings.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

Stereotypical thinking is simply a function of the often unacknowledged reality that humans are always limited in their knowledge. Such an acknowledgment is often only grudging in much of the career development theory literature. As a consequence, these formulations typically overemphasize the rational in career decision making. If career development theorists and counselors commence with the assumption that there are major limitations on our rationality, then more can be done to utilize and if necessary redress the implications and effects of stereotypical thinking. Occupational stereotypes may serve as limited but useful summaries of how individuals view their world, thereby giving insight into their perceiving and meaning making. Occupational stereotypes may produce deleterious effects if they unnecessarily limit individuals either in terms of personal cognitive constraints or in terms of external contextual barriers, from being able to consider and choose from the potentially widest range of options available. Either way, the worst thing that can be done is to ignore the reality of occupational stereotypes as a fundamental way humans formulate their understanding of themselves, their world, and their careers.

—Robert G. L. Pryor and James E. H. Bright

See also Circumscription and compromise, Holland's theory of vocational choice, Occupational choice, Occupational prestige

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ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

On-the-job training, often referred to as OJT, occurs whenever more experienced employees teach less experienced employees how to do one or more of the tasks of a job. It is practical, hands on, and found in all organizations at almost every level. On-the-job training is the single most commonly used training method in organizations today.

The most common applications of OJT are in training new workers in manual tasks. Typically, new employees are assigned to work alongside more senior employees, who show the novices how to do required tasks and oversee their work. All employees undergo some OJT, typically in cases where how-to knowledge is company specific and only one or two employees are learning at a time (e.g., administrative tasks such as time accounting or business-expense claims). Coaching and mentoring, especially at managerial levels, are also forms of OJT.

According to some studies, employees who receive more hours of OJT programs may start at lower wage levels; all studies report higher wage and productivity growth rates in firms with extensive OJT programs. The more educated the employees, the higher the rates of return for OJT; in fact, the return rate is more than 80 percent for college-educated employees. Studies have also shown that much OJT learning is portable across employers and even across industries. With

today's boundaryless career model, OJT learning seems a wise investment.

Historically, all training was OJT. Children learned from their parents and extended family members. Medieval guilds established formal apprenticeship programs that many craft unions still use today, albeit with formalized courses of instruction and skill testing to determine task mastery. For example, the United Association's five-year program to train plumbers and pipefitters includes 1,700 to 2,000 hours of OJT each year.

OJT is highly cost effective, particularly in small companies where few employees require training at any given time. Companies normally spend three to six times as much on OJT as they do on formal training. The return on organizational investment is higher, since OJT includes no external trainer costs and materials fees. In addition, fewer employees are unproductive during OJT than during formal training, so productivity drops less—a particularly important benefit in smaller companies.

Learning is focused and usually faster, since both the trainer and the trainee generally engage in actual production during the training period. The training utilizes the actual equipment and materials from the live job, so no adaptation or retraining is required following the training period. Furthermore, no latency period follows OJT that allows the new skills to be forgotten. Hence, OJT is an excellent way for established employees to enhance their skills and learn new ones. OJT uncovers learning and ability problems quickly and allows them to be addressed within the departmental unit. In addition, since the trainer is usually a peer or supervisor, OJT can help build relationships with new employees.

Although OJT is very effective, it is not perfect. Most OJT trainers have received little or no instruction in teaching methods. Trainers are usually chosen because they are good at their jobs, rather than because they can explain those jobs. They may not be productive when their training styles do not match the learning styles of their trainees.

Because on-the-job training rarely has specific goals other than a simple how-to, learning goals and training plans with predetermined content are usually absent. The training process may be haphazard, and trainees often learn by rote, with little understanding of why tasks are performed. Hence, OJT is highly unsuitable for training in theoretical situations.

The implementation problems of OJT can be largely overcome through careful planning. Job instruction training, or JIT, was developed to teach manufacturing during World War II; it is still acknowledged as

the best approach today. JIT has four overall stages: prepare, present, try out, and follow up.

The prepare stage is actually the most complex and difficult, and it is the one most commonly left out. The job supervisor needs to break down all the steps of the job, seeing the job through the eyes of a total novice. From the steps comes an instruction plan that can be tailored to individual trainees. The final part of this stage—putting the trainee at ease—is critical to provide motivation and set the stage for success.

The present stage has four steps: tell, show, demonstrate, and explain. First, the trainer gives the trainee an overview of the task while pointing out the equipment, materials, and so on that are involved, following the main steps listed in the training document prepared in Stage 1. The trainer runs through the job once to communicate the overview and convey the gist of the job, showing the sequence of steps and their rhythm. Next, the trainer demonstrates each step in detail, actually doing the steps of the task and explaining each step, one at a time, while the trainee watches. The steps may not be demonstrated in the sequence of actual operation; often it is better to demonstrate simple tasks first to build confidence. Showing finished products at each appropriate step helps the learner understand what is required. While demonstrating, the trainer explains why each step is done in the way it is done.

The third or try-out stage involves direct trainee participation. First, the trainee talks through what has been learned, then instructs the supervisor on the steps of the job. Once the trainee and supervisor are comfortable that the trainee is ready, the trainee does the job steps under supervision. The trainer provides both positive and corrective feedback. Finally, the trainee practices, with clearly defined targets for performance measurement.

During the Stage 4 follow-up, the trainer monitors progress, offering feedback and pointers where needed and when asked. This ongoing involvement gradually tapers off as the trainee masters the tasks.

In office environments, OJT has advanced dramatically in the last few years with computer-based training (CBT). Many office workers learn most new skills at their desks with vendor-supplied, self-paced training materials. These materials can be as simple as texts and associated data files (enabling users to learn new computer applications quickly) or as elaborate as multimedia simulations with audio, video, and even virtual reality components. As expected, the training complexity tends to increase with the sophistication of the job to be learned.

Corporate intranets are the latest delivery mechanism for OJT. Such nets enable nearly all employees

to participate in general educational programs (e.g., ethics, diversity, and sexual harassment) that require feedback and/or assessment; these nets also deliver training on companywide systems. This simple, user-controlled distribution system, coupled with a tracking mechanism to ensure training delivery and mastery, delivers considerable bottom line benefit.

On-the-job training has been and continues to be the most widely used job-training method. Computer delivery of OJT incorporates many of the JIT steps; it offers the potential to improve OJT and increase its already proven benefits. As careers become even less structured, employers' training requirements increase, and technology supports more interactive and realistic user interfaces, OJT will become even more pervasive and more effective.

—C. Melissa Fender

See also Boundaryless career, Retraining, Training and development

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ORGANIZATIONAL CAREER MANAGEMENT

This comprehensive view of *organizational career management* systems discusses the portfolio of career planning and management practices available to organizations and explores ways by which organizations can use career systems to meet their needs. It focuses on organizational career management: what it is, why it is needed, and what it does. Special attention is given to career management practices and how they form an integrative system for people development within organizations.

What is a career? A career can be seen as the pattern of work-related experience that spans the course of a person's life, an evolving sequence of a person's

work experience over time, the sequence of employment-related positions, roles, activities, and experiences encountered by a person, or as a process of development along a path of experience and roles in one or more organizations. Careers take place in specified social environments, and particularly in organizations. A “normal” or typical professional career usually follows a sequence of developmental phases, each of which is delineated by a distinct shift in the individual’s sense of self, but each is shaped and influenced by the organization in which the person works.

A career belongs to the individual, but in much, if not most, employment settings, the career is planned and managed for the individual by the organization. The organizational structure identifies an internal road map, clarifying positions and the interrelationships between these positions, as well as the relevant competencies necessary to fill them. Furthermore, organizational career management includes mechanisms that enable people to navigate this road map. This is how organizations take a leading role and have control over career planning and management.

The organizational system of career management relates to several levels, as depicted in Yehuda Baruch’s CAST model. The three P’s—philosophy (strategy), policy, and practice—are parallel to the three A’s of individuals—aspirations, attitudes, and actions. The need for matching individual and organizational needs has been emphasized by many scholars. Peter Herriot and Carol Pemberton’s model associates the business environment with the organization in terms of strategy, structure, and processes. Even more important, their model compares and contrasts the organizational and individual needs and expectations.

Moving from the strategic level to the practical level—the actual human resource management (HRM) activities that form the career management system—the next section of the entry outlines a comprehensive portfolio of HRM practices, which can be conducted by organizations to plan and manage employees’ careers. Evidence is presented regarding the extent to which these practices are actually applied in organizational settings. Based on both data and conceptualization, six dimensions are utilized to demonstrate the nature and role of these practices. Finally, a framework that integrates the various practices into a comprehensive system is offered.

The interpretation of the utilization of these practices needs to be taken in the context of dynamism of the social system. Contemporary work has focused on the changing meaning of careers. There is a clear shift

from long-term relationships to transactional “short-termism,” with major changes in the nature of the psychological contract between employers and employees.

THE UTILIZATION OF CAREER PRACTICES

The importance and prominence of organizational career planning and management (CPM) as part of HRM have been widely recognized. Organizational career systems comprise a three-level framework of strategy, policy, and practice. At the practical level, one may find a number of activities and practices that aim to help organizations manage the careers of employees, in particular managerial and professional careers. An appropriate system should aim to ensure a fit between individual needs and aspirations and organizational requirements.

The list of practices discussed in this entry evolved from several earlier studies of CPM practices. Table summarizes findings from these studies, all of which examined the use of CPM practices in organizations as reported by human resource directors. The next section describes these practices, with a specific consideration of their relevance and viability in the context of the twenty-first century. This is followed by a discussion of how the practices can be integrated into a single comprehensive system.

Before embarking on the task of describing the various practices, let us identify their target population. Each person, be they the porter or the CEO, has a career, a personal and occupational journey. Each organization is a career system, the landscape for people’s journeys. Nevertheless, many individuals develop their career outside the boundaries of large organizations. Self-employed people who run small businesses, freelancers, and the unemployed all have their career external to an organizational framework. However, most working people are engaged in organizations, usually as employees. Career management practices are carried out by organizations, usually via the HRM unit, to answer employees’ needs and match them with the organization’s needs.

A PORTFOLIO OF CAREER MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Posting (Advertising) Internal Job Openings

Whenever a position needs to be staffed, the organization can look to fill the vacancy with candidates either inside the organization (internal candidates) or

Table 2. Empirical Studies Examining the Use of Career Practices

Career Practices	A 1 – “not applied at all” to 7 – “applied extensively”		B1 % of use by the organizations	B2 % of use	C % of use
	Mean	sd	%	%	%
Job postings	5.62	1.65	55	89	68
Formal education/tuition reimbursement	5.08	1.48	100	100	78
Performance appraisal usage for career planning	4.80	1.63	82	89	
Counseling by manager	4.52	1.62	59	89	97
Lateral moves (job rotations in U.S.)	4.33	1.6			60
Counseling by HR	4.16	1.78	41	56	67
Preretirement programs	4.15	2.15	90	78	5
Succession planning	3.6	1.75	63	33	69
Formal mentoring	2.95	1.79	43	44	44
Common career paths	2.73	1.8	67	56	
Dual ladder	2.42	1.77	75	44	34
Career booklets/pamphlets	2.41	1.6	22	33	19
Written individual career plans	2.38	1.82	14	33	
Assessment center	2.34	1.79	69	67	23
Peer appraisal	2.26	1.73			
Career workshops	2.15	1.6	14	44	24
Upward appraisal	2.04	1.7			
Appraisal committees			37	11	30
Training programs for managers			75	44	30
Orientation program					78
Special needs (dual-career couples)					13

SOURCES: A adapted from 194 U.K. organizations: Baruch, Y. and Peiperl, M. A. 2000. "Career Management Practices: An Empirical Survey and Implications." *Human Resource Management* 39:347-366.

B1 and B2 adapted from 51 and 9 high-technology firms in Israel and U.K. respectively: Baruch, Y. 1996. "Organizational Career Planning and Management Techniques and Activities in Use in High-tech Organizations." *Career Development International* 1(1):40-49.

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outside the organization (external candidates). The choice depends on the level and type of the position and the norms of the organization's career management practices. A model developed by Jeffrey Sonnenfeld and Maury Peiperl identifies such a typology of external versus internal recruitment. Many organizations employ a policy that requires internal job posting before any external search is conducted. Extensive use of job posting within the company indicates to the employee that the organization focuses on the internal labor market, preferring internal promotion to recruiting managers from outside.

Formal Education as Part of Career Development

With this practice, the organization selects people of managerial or technical potential and sends them to a program of formal study as part of their development path. The education can include a first degree in engineering, an MBA, other academic studies, or professional and vocational qualification training. Once the organization has identified a training or education gap in the near or far future, these programs can rectify the problem with this long-term approach.

Lateral Moves to Create Cross-functional Experience

Lateral moves to create cross-functional experience are on the increase and may be seen as elementary career planning and management practices that most organizations with HRM systems need to apply. The flattening of organizations means fewer hierarchy levels and thus fewer opportunities for upward mobility. Because people no longer move up the ladder so fast, organizations need to clearly indicate that a route with slower upward mobility reflects career success rather than failure, a shift from past norms.

Retirement Preparation Programs

This practice is directed at a target population of employees approaching retirement and about to leave the organization. In these programs, the employee is prepared to face retirement in several ways. Much attention is devoted to financial considerations such as understanding the pension conditions and learning tax regulations. However, the more effective programs also take into account the psychological issues surrounding an individual's need to readjust to life without work. With the advent of heavy redundancies (reductions in force or layoffs), fewer people are leaving the workplace at the legal retirement age. As a result, traditional preretirement programs might become quite rare in the future. Progressive organizations may opt to transform the preretirement program into a preredundancy program.

Booklets and/or Pamphlets on Career Issues

Booklets, pamphlets, or leaflets on career issues represent a formal presentation by an organization regarding all kinds of career-related information. Such information is directed at all employees but is important especially for newcomers, either recently recruited to the organization or recently promoted to the managerial ranks.

Dual Ladder

The dual ladder provides an organizational hierarchy for nonmanagerial staff, such as professional or technical employees, that is parallel to the managerial hierarchy. The major role of such a ladder is to enable upward mobility and recognition for those employees who cannot or do not wish to pursue a managerial role in the organization.

Induction or Socialization

The process of introducing people to their new organization is the first CPM practice that the employee experiences. This is a process whereby all newcomers learn the behaviors and attitudes necessary for assuming roles in the organization. Part of this process is formal, led by organizational officials, whereas other aspects are learned in an informal manner.

Assessment and Development Centers

Assessment centers have been found as a reliable and valid tool for career development. Assessment centers were first used as a selection device for managerial recruitment. Later they were also used for identifying managerial potential and for developmental purposes.

Mentoring

The principal aim of mentoring is to bring together a person with managerial potential and an experienced manager who is not necessarily the direct manager. Such a senior manager can provide advice and tutoring, serving as a kind of "uncle" or "godfather" in the workplace. Thus mentoring is directed mostly at managerial personnel and is used frequently for graduate recruitment programs. The potential of this practice has been suggested in many studies. Mentoring might also be dysfunctional, due, for example, to a negative relationship between mentor and protégé, a possible collision of interests between the individual's mentor and his or her direct manager, and the challenges of managing a cross-gender relationship.

Career Workshops

Career workshops are short-term workshops focusing on specific aspects of career management that aim to provide managers with relevant knowledge, skills, and experience. These can be specific to providing certain skills, to help the individual learn about organizational processes and changes, or to improve self-career management (e.g., workshops to introduce career concepts such as career resilience or intelligent careers).

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AS A BASIS FOR CAREER PLANNING

Performance appraisal (PA) systems operate in most organizations. There is, however, a need for a close

connection between the PA system and career development. PA is perhaps the most fundamental system and can be utilized by human resources in a very similar way to that by which accounting reports (such as profit and loss statements or balance sheets) provide information regarding financial and accounting systems. Valid and reliable PA systems provide answers to acute questions such as who should be promoted, who should be made redundant in case of a downsizing, and who should receive training and development. The most recent development in PA is 360-degree feedback that includes self-appraisal, peer appraisal, upward appraisal, committee appraisal, or a combination of several sources in addition to that given by the direct manager. Although the literature supports the use of 360-degree feedback, this practice is very demanding in terms of the time that needs to be invested and the analysis that needs to be conducted.

CAREER COUNSELING

Career counseling involves two-way communication between the employer and the employee, and two main sources are available for conducting the counseling. The first is the direct manager (or another higher manager) who has a good knowledge of the employee's attitudes, behaviors, skills, and so on, and the second is a human resource manager. Depending on the complexity and the financial resources of the organization, external counseling can additionally be provided.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Succession planning (also labeled *management inventory*) can be valuable for long-term planning. It determines the possible replacement of every manager within the organization and evaluates the potential for promotion of each manager. It is primarily directed toward the managerial workforce. It will be different, but not less important, in a flattened organization where lateral movements predominate.

PROGRAMS FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF EMPLOYEES

With an increasing level of employee diversity, new work arrangements, and globalization, career practices need to address the needs of specific populations, such as ethnic minorities, women, physically disabled, and dual-career couples. In the banner of equal opportunities and with increased litigation brought against companies, organizations realize the need to go beyond

paying lip service to equality and to make sure that all members are given a fair option for promotion.

NEW CAREER PLANNING MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Building Psychological Contracts

The concept that a psychological contract exists between the employee and the workplace was discussed earlier and is a crucial aspect of the employment relationship. Recent research has examined the negative impact of breaking these psychological contracts. The cycle of career planning and development for each person joining the workforce starts with the establishment of a mutual agreement, a psychological contract, that sets the stage for future relationships.

Secondments

A secondment is a temporary assignment to another area within the organization and sometimes even to another associated organization (such as a customer or supplier). A person from the managerial or professional echelons of one organization is transferred for a specific time (usually from one to three years) to another organization. Experience is shared in a way that benefits both the organization and the individual.

CPM PRACTICES THAT REQUIRE REASSESSMENT FOR THE FUTURE

Written Personal Career Planning for Employees

Written career planning documents imply a commitment on the organization's part. Long-term commitment (e.g., lifetime employment) has already become virtually an extinct feature of organizational life. Written personal career plans are problematic also in the sense of creating employee expectations that may not be capable of being fulfilled in the organization.

Common Career Paths

A career path is the most preferred and recommended route for the career advancement of a manager in an organization. Such career paths can lead people through various departments and units within the organization, as in the case of future top-level managers in multinational companies who take a managerial role in an overseas subsidiary. With traditional hierarchical structures flattening and diminishing

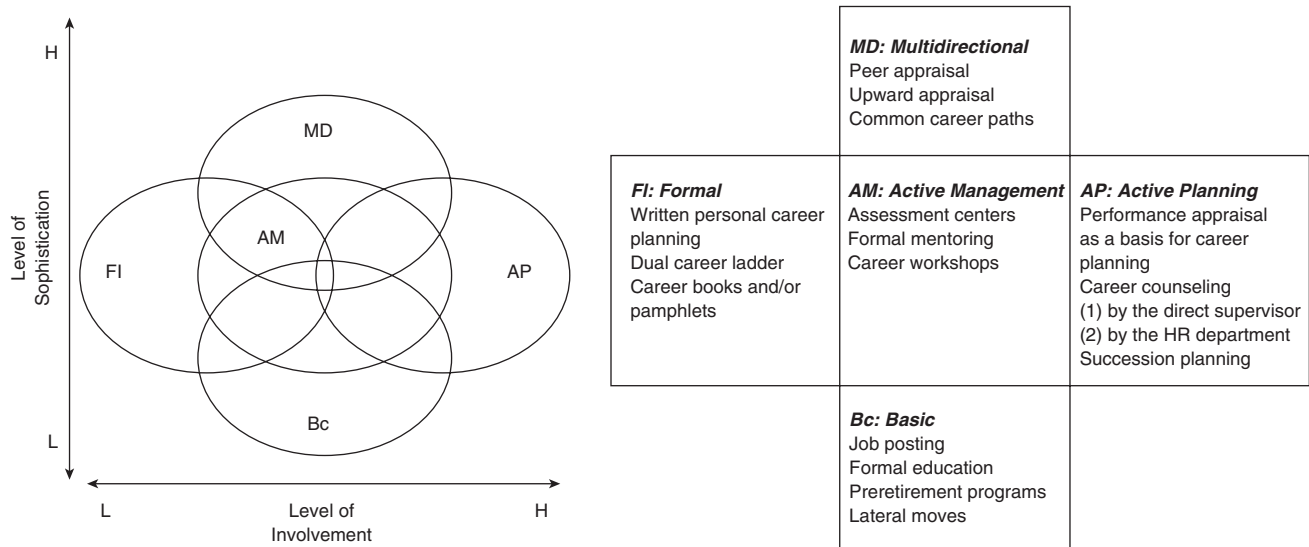


Figure 2. Baruch and Peiperl's Two-Dimensional Model of Career Management Practices

and with the creation of boundaryless and virtual organizations, future development in career paths seems likely to decline. It is now the norm, rather than the exception, for organizations to have no fixed career paths and for individuals in them to see no further than one or two years ahead.

Integrating a Set of Practices Into a System

The practices presented above have a significant problem if they are presented as distinct, almost stand-alone practices. However, both managerial logic and practical experience point out that there should be a system designed to manage careers, and this system applies the various practices according to need. However, a question remains: What are the relationships between these practices? Two answers are provided here in the form of descriptive and normative models.

A DESCRIPTIVE MODEL FOR CAREER PLANNING MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The first answer is based on a descriptive model, that is, what happens in real organizations. The results of an empirical study in the United Kingdom (shown in the figure above) reveal five clusters of CPM practices. It is a model based on field-research data gathered from almost 200 organizations and was constructed using a statistical procedure known as factor

analysis. The classification of CPM practices is configured along two dimensions: (1) the degree of sophistication embodied in the practice and (2) the level of organizational involvement required by the practice. The five clusters are described below:

Basic

Job posting, formal education as part of career development, preretirement programs, and lateral moves to create cross-functional experience appear in this category. These may be seen as elementary CPM practices that most organizations with HRM systems need to apply. Evidence indicates that they are applied in most of the organizations studied. Although currently widespread, they may best fit the traditional, bureaucratic organization model. Contemporary organizations, for example, may be reluctant to invest in education, see no need for preretirement programs, and due to the frequency of organizational changes, abandon long-term planning.

Active Planning

This category includes performance appraisal as a basis for career planning, career counseling by the direct supervisor, career counseling by the human resources department, and succession planning. These practices share both an active involvement on the part of the organization in individuals' career development over time as well as the organization's need to fill jobs

in the future. This manifests a forward-looking, initiative-taking HRM system.

Active Management

Assessment centers, formal mentoring, and career workshops are the three practices in this group. They clearly all have an informational element, which characterizes either the process of gathering information for the organization or the use of information for developing individuals. The bidirectional nature of this information transfer (between the organization and the employee) is characteristic of organizations that take the time to put these elements in place.

Formal

Written personal career planning for employees, dual career ladders, and books and/or pamphlets on career issues are the three practices in this group. These represent elements of career management whereby the organization provides the employee with a formal system of information and presentation of opportunities. However, this represents a downward direction of information transfer (from organization to employee) rather than bidirectional.

Multidirectional

Peer appraisal, upward (subordinate) appraisal, and common career paths comprise this category. The inclusion of common career paths in this category is a bit surprising, because they are logically associated with formal career structures. The remaining two practices could be characterized as increasing options by expanding the directions through which people can receive feedback and develop within the organization. These are more advanced practices, which many organizations will need in the future.

Analyses regarding these five clusters revealed that they were associated with different aspects of an organization's culture. For example, practices in the active planning category tended to be provided in open and proactive cultures, the basic practices in team-oriented cultures, and the multidimensional practices in open cultures and in organizations that used an internal labor market to fill positions. Not surprisingly, formal practices were more likely to be provided in large organizations than in small organizations.

The practical implications for HRM suggested by this descriptive model are as follows:

- For the basic: Offer basic career system elements, satisfy employees' expectations, and provide a relevant infrastructure
- For the formal: Support the internal labor market, provide stability, and clarify options for career development within the firm
- For the active management: Maximize the firm's knowledge of employees and maximize the employee's knowledge of the firm, including the options within the firm
- For active planning: Make performance-career links explicit, offer personal and emotional support, provide for succession
- For the multidirectional: Maximize performance feedback, promote an open culture, but beware of risks in small or "closed" organizations.

A NORMATIVE MODEL FOR CAREER PLANNING MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Whereas a descriptive model identifies clusters of practices that are currently used in organizations, a normative model identifies what should be used. A subsequent study expanded the number of dimensions for evaluating the relevance of a career practice from two to six and was based on the perceptions of leading career scholars who were asked to identify how the various CPM practices can be characterized by these six dimensions. The six dimensions are as follows:

1. Involvement: From a very low to a very high level of organizational involvement needed while dealing with the specific career practice
2. Sophistication and complexity: From a very simplistic to a highly sophisticated and complex practice
3. Strategic orientation: From a very practical "tactical" practice to a very strategic practice
4. Developmental focused: From a low to a high relevance for developing individuals
5. Organizational decision-making focused: From a low to a high relevance of the practice to aid organizational decision making
6. Innovative: From a very traditional or conventional practice to an innovative and unorthodox practice.

Based on a Delphi approach, Baruch's 2003 normative model emerged, based on the views of 16 leading scholars from the Careers Division of the Academy of Management. Table 3 presents the evaluation of the practices along the dimensions.

Table 3. Ratings by Scholars of 22 Career Planning Management Practices on Six Dimensions

<i>Dimensions on Which the Career Planning Management Practices Were Rated</i>	<i>Organizational Involvement</i>		<i>Strategic Orientation</i>		<i>Innovative Orientation</i>		<i>Developmental Focus</i>		<i>Organizational Decision-Making-Oriented</i>		<i>Sophistication and Complexity</i>	
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>
<i>Career Planning Management Practices</i>												
1. Job postings	3.76	1.03	2.41	.87	2.00	.94	3.35	1.17	3.13	1.26	2.06	1.09
2. Formal education/tuition reimbursement	2.71	1.10	3.00	1.17	2.29	1.21	4.00	1.00	2.38	.96	2.35	1.11
3. Use of performance appraisal for career planning	4.12	.60	3.65	1.06	2.76	.90	3.88	.93	3.44	1.03	3.18	.95
4. Counseling by manager	2.94	.90	2.53	.87	2.71	.92	4.00	.94	2.63	1.15	2.82	.81
5. Counseling by HR	3.29	.69	2.65	.61	2.53	.80	3.65	.79	2.75	.77	2.65	.93
6. Lateral moves/job rotations	3.88	.78	3.41	.80	2.71	.99	3.65	1.00	3.13	.96	3.18	.81
7. Preretirement programs	2.82	1.29	1.82	.95	2.00	1.00	2.59	1.18	1.87	.96	1.82	.81
8. Succession planning	4.53	.62	4.65	.61	3.18	.95	4.00	.87	4.25	.68	3.94	.75
9. Formal mentoring	3.65	1.00	3.06	.66	3.00	.71	4.29	.59	2.56	.81	3.00	.79
10. Common career paths	3.65	1.00	3.59	.71	2.65	.86	3.29	1.21	3.06	.85	3.00	1.06
11. Dual ladder	3.76	.90	3.59	.71	3.24	1.03	3.41	.87	2.88	.81	3.41	1.18
12. Career booklets/pamphlets	2.65	1.37	2.00	.79	1.88	.78	2.59	.94	1.69	.70	1.59	.71
13. Written individual career plans	3.59	.80	3.12	.99	2.76	1.09	4.00	.79	2.75	.93	2.71	1.10
14. Assessment centers	4.06	.90	3.35	.70	2.82	1.01	3.65	1.06	3.50	1.15	3.53	1.18
15. Development centers	3.76	1.03	3.35	.86	3.41	.94	4.53	.62	3.13	1.09	3.88	1.05
16. 360° appraisal	4.12	.60	3.00	.94	3.53	.94	3.94	.75	2.62	.72	3.59	.94
17. Career workshops	2.88	.78	2.59	.62	2.88	.99	3.88	.86	2.31	1.01	2.76	1.20
18. Induction/orientation program	3.47	1.01	2.29	.69	2.12	.78	2.71	1.05	1.87	.89	2.06	.90
19. Special attention (e.g., high flyers, dual-career couples)	3.63	.62	3.31	.87	3.25	.93	3.63	.81	3.00	.85	3.00	.89
20. EEO population (e.g., age, gender, minorities)	3.82	.81	3.00	.87	3.24	.90	3.18	1.24	3.25	.86	3.06	1.09
21. Creating psychological contracts	4.13	.72	3.44	.81	3.88	.89	3.94	.85	3.13	.92	4.00	.97
22. Secondments	3.35	.61	3.24	.66	3.06	1.30	3.94	.83	2.69	.70	3.00	1.12

SOURCE: Baruch, Y. (2003). Career Systems in Transition: A Normative Model for Organizational Career Practices. *Persomnel Review* 32(2). © Emerald Group Publishing Limited <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/pr.htm>. Reprinted with permission.

Integration

Career practices should not be discussed in isolation, as if they are a set of unrelated or disassociated practices. Careers in organizations are meant to be planned and managed in a joint manner. A system should be designed to answer the needs and requirements of both the individual and the organization. Professional, effective HRM will make sure that the career system operates in a well-integrated, comprehensive way.

Applying a twofold level of integration is necessary to achieve a fit and optimal utilization of career practices. These levels are “internal” integration among the various practices and “external” integration between the bundle of practices (that is, the career system) and the organizational culture and strategy. Both internal and external integration should be driven by the organization’s strategy, because it determines major business decisions. For example, the decision whether to go international or stay within national borders has implications for career practices, because such a strategy necessitates policies and practices regarding expatriation and repatriation.

Internal integration relates to the match between the various career practices, a fit that is in dire need. For example, an effective performance appraisal system should be associated with other CPM practices. Inputs from certain practices (e.g., mentoring) will influence the use of others (e.g., workshops, secondments). For external integration, career systems that best fit the organization depend on the operational strategy of the whole enterprise. The career system should be developed in line with business objectives and needs. The culture of the organization will help in shaping the career practices and their use, but in a complementary way, career management practices can help in the reshaping of organizational culture.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

With the boundaryless organization came the boundaryless career, and with them came new psychological contracts. These had a profound effect on the management of careers. Much of the burden of career planning and career management has shifted from the organization to the individual, as individuals are expected to shape their own future. The involvement of the organization will vary too, according to the target population (e.g., their educational level, professionalism, and proactivity). Thus there is apparently a lesser need for a system of “command and control”

from the organization and a greater need for a support system in which human resources is the enabler of successful individual careers rather than the manager of them. This will be reflected in CPM systems in organizations of the future. The future will bring more managerial complexity, resulting in more sophistication required from career systems.

—Yehuda Baruch

See also Boundaryless career, Career-planning workshops, Performance appraisal and feedback, Psychological contract

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ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is an action taken by an individual that is discretionary and not formally recognized or rewarded by an organization but in total promotes the organization’s effective

functioning. Simply put, it is behavior that goes above and beyond the requirements of the job yet is not necessarily compensated by the traditional organizational reward system. Individual instances of OCB do not, in themselves, enhance effectiveness, but aggregated over time and across persons, citizenship behaviors increase organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Examples of OCBs include helping a coworker with a work-related problem and promoting a positive work environment. Related concepts include extra-role behavior, prosocial organizational behavior, organization spontaneity, and contextual performance.

A number of reasons have been offered to support the underlying assumption that citizenship behaviors promote organizational effectiveness. OCB is believed to serve as an effective means of coordinating activities between team members and across work groups, increase coworker and managerial productivity, and enhance stability of organizational performance. Moreover, citizenship behaviors have implications for individual careers, as they have been found to have a positive influence on managers' evaluations of performance. Research suggests that OCBs influence performance evaluations over and above objective measures. Supervisors perceive citizenship behaviors as contributing to the value of an employee's performance and consider them when making reward allocation decisions. In addition, citizenship behaviors are positively related to employee retention.

Organizational citizenship behavior was originally conceptualized as an alternative explanation for the satisfaction-causes-performance hypothesis. It was developed in response to studies that found only modest relationships between employee attitudes and traditional measures of work performance. Research indicates that employee attitudes, such as job satisfaction, are expressed through extra-role behaviors for which employees have volition and discretion. In essence, employees respond to supportive treatment from their organizations with organizational citizenship behaviors.

Theorists have relied primarily on the social exchange framework to support the proposition that employee attitudes influence organizational citizenship behavior. Social exchange theory suggests that people seek to reciprocate those who benefit them. Therefore, to the extent that job satisfaction results from organizational efforts, employees will respond by performing citizenship behaviors. Although less applied, researchers also note a second justification. According to the social psychology literature, prosocial

behaviors are likely to be performed by individuals experiencing a positive mood state. Therefore, to the extent that job satisfaction results in a positive mood state, satisfied employees are likely to display organizational citizenship behaviors.

Organizational citizenship behavior research has considered both overall measures of the construct and various dimensions of it. Although there has been a general lack of consensus about the dimensionality, the five most commonly examined dimensions are altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue. Altruism consists of discretionary behaviors that aim at helping certain people in an organization with a relevant task or problem. An example of altruistic behavior includes employees helping coworkers finish an important project, even though the helpers are not responsible for its completion. Conscientiousness, which was originally termed *general compliance*, involves employees going beyond the minimum requirements of the job. For example, an employee who forgoes a vacation day to work on a project that would not otherwise meet the completion deadline would be displaying conscientiousness. Sportsmanship refers to one's willingness to tolerate personal inconveniences and impositions without protest or fuss, thus conserving energy for job tasks. Courtesy includes proactive gestures such as consulting with others before taking action and passing along information. Civic virtue refers to the involvement that an employee shows in the political life of the organization such as attending meetings and discussing organizational issues on personal time.

Since its conception, studies have gone beyond the examination of satisfaction to identify other predictors of organizational citizenship behavior. A number of attitudinal, dispositional, and individual difference measures have been examined. Although job satisfaction has been the most robust correlate, additional attitudinal predictors include perceptions of fairness, perceptions of leader support, and organizational commitment. In addition, various task (e.g., task feedback, intrinsically satisfying tasks) and leadership behaviors (e.g., contingent reward behavior, supportive leader behavior) have been consistently linked to OCB.

The limited research examining consequences of OCB have focused on organizational as well as individual outcomes. As noted previously, this research has found that citizenship behaviors have a positive impact on several important personnel decisions made by managers. In particular, citizenship behaviors have shown an influence on performance evaluations and

managers' reward allocation decisions (e.g., salary, reward, and promotion recommendations). In addition, the limited amount of research examining organizational outcomes has shown strong support that citizenship behaviors increase work group and business unit performance.

Due to the implications for both organizations and individuals, organizational citizenship behavior has received a great deal of research attention in the last 20 years. Research continues to be refined in terms of the factors that influence performance of such behaviors and the ensuing outcomes. Recently, research has been refined to differentiate between targets of organizational citizenship behaviors. This research has examined those behaviors intended to benefit the organization as well as those that are intended to benefit specific individuals within the organization, such as coworkers.

—Christy H. Weer

See also Antisocial work behaviors, Organizational commitment, Positive organizational scholarship

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ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Organizational psychologists—researchers and practitioners alike—have long been interested in understanding how people react, psychologically, to the various aspects of their workplace and in understanding

the consequences of these psychological reactions. Given that most people are likely to spend at least some of their working careers as members of one or more organizations, it is perhaps not surprising that a great deal of this interest focuses on employees' commitment to the organizations for which they work. Indeed, of the several "work attitude" variables studied by organizational psychologists, only job satisfaction has received more research attention than *organizational commitment* (OC). As with the study of job satisfaction, much of this research deals with the conceptualization and measurement of OC. In addition, considerable attention has been given to understanding the conditions under which OC develops and its consequences.

CONCEPTUALIZING ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

The early OC literature produced various, and quite distinct, definitions of the concept. At a general level, however, most scholars would agree that organizational commitment refers to a psychological state that characterizes an employee's relationship with the organization for which he or she works. This psychological state has important implications for whether the employee will choose to maintain a particular course of action, in this case, remaining with the organization. Thus regardless of their specific conceptual definition of OC, most researchers expect that strongly committed employees have a greater intention to stay with the organization than those with weak commitment.

Beyond this, however, there are different views about the *nature* of the psychological state that binds an employee to the organization. Indeed, just as the word *commitment* is used somewhat differently in everyday language, early researchers in the field provided differing conceptualizations of OC and developed different measures of the construct. In all cases, however, commitment was described in one-dimensional terms. For some early researchers, OC was an emotional attachment to the organization much like love or affection. Others focused on identification with the organization and what it represented. Some researchers viewed OC in terms of a reluctance to endure sacrifices, or incur costs, that voluntarily leaving the organization would entail. Still others described commitment in terms of a moral obligation to remain with the organization.

From these different views has emerged wide acceptance of OC as a construct that has not one, but

multiple, dimensions. Although specific details vary, the basic premise of most of these multidimensional models is that a given employee's commitment to the organization has more than one psychological base or component and that each of these should be measured separately in order to give a full picture of the employee's commitment to the organization. Of these various multidimensional models, the three-component model (TCM) proposed in the 1990s has received the most empirical attention. Although it is through this lens that the research on the development and consequences of OC is viewed here, it is important to note that research from various traditions has contributed to this body of knowledge.

As its name implies, the TCM proposes that OC has three distinct components. Each develops via somewhat different processes and represents a distinct psychological tie that binds the employee to the organization. *Affective commitment* refers to the employee's emotional attachment to the organization, characterized by an enjoyment of the organization and a desire to continue membership in it. Employees with strong affective commitment remain with the organization because they *want to* do so. In contrast, *continuance commitment* refers to the extent to which the employee perceives that leaving the organization would be costly. The focus is not on emotional attachment to the organization but rather on what employees would lose if they left. Employees with strong continuance commitment remain because they feel that they *have to* do so. *Normative commitment* refers to the employee's feelings of obligation to the organization and the belief that staying with it is the "right thing" to do. Employees with strong normative commitment remain because they feel that they *ought to* do so.

It is important to note that affective, continuance, and normative commitments do not represent a typology of commitment. That is, a given employee's commitment is not characterized in terms of one of the three components but rather as a "commitment profile" made up of all three. Furthermore, the model proposes that the three components have interactive effects on employee behavior.

MEASURING ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Researchers and practitioners usually assess OC directly, using multiple-item scales, or questionnaires, administered to the employees themselves. Typically,

employees respond to these questionnaires anonymously in order to ensure that they feel as free as possible to provide candid responses. As with any such measures, it is critical that items reflect the underlying construct in question. Especially in early OC research, this was accomplished with varying degrees of success. Particularly noteworthy, however, is the 15-item Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). Developed in the 1970s to assess identification with, involvement in, and emotional attachment to the organization, the OCQ represents a valid and reliable measure of desire-based, or affective, commitment to the organization. It has been used in hundreds of studies over the years, and this research has contributed greatly to what we know about the development and consequences of the affective component of OC.

In order to extend this research, and to assess propositions based on the multidimensional view of OC referred to above, TCM researchers used the construct approach to develop separate measures of each of the three proposed OC components. Since then, the affective, continuance, and normative commitment scales (ACS, CCS, NCS, respectively) have been used extensively in research conducted in dozens of organizational and cultural contexts and with members of various occupations. Both the original and alternate versions of the scales have been subjected to considerable psychometric scrutiny. Overall, the evidence shows that the measures are reliable, correlate with other variables in general accordance with TCM propositions, and, based on factor analytic evidence, appear to represent distinct factors.

DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Although OC might be expected to develop on the basis of both "person" and "work experience" factors, the evidence suggests that the latter plays the more important role. Some demographic and other individual difference variables (e.g., age, locus of control) are modestly related to OC, but it is what people experience in their jobs and at their organizations that seems to have particular influence on OC development.

With respect to affective commitment, meta-analytic evidence (that is, a quantitative review of a body of empirical research) suggests several work experiences that seem especially important. Perhaps not surprisingly, affective commitment is particularly strong among employees who feel that they have been

treated by their organizations in a supportive manner. Such perceptions can, of course, arise from numerous policies, practices, and everyday events; of key importance here is that employees feel that the organization is on their side. Also important, and perhaps indicative of organizational support, are various types of workplace justice: interactional, procedural, and distributive forms of justice have all been shown to be positively related to affective commitment. Affective commitment is also stronger among employees who experience minimal role ambiguity and role conflict at work and whose managers and/or leaders adopt transformational leadership styles. Finally, although this has not been examined meta-analytically, there is evidence that affective commitment is stronger among employees whose work experiences enhance, rather than degrade, their feelings of competence.

The TCM proposes that normative commitment—the “ought to” component—will develop on the basis of both cultural and organizational experiences that highlight the mutual obligation between employees and the organization and/or make the reciprocity norm salient to employees. These theoretical propositions have received relatively little empirical attention. Meta-analytic results show that some of the same variables (e.g., organizational support, role ambiguity, justice) that seem to influence affective commitment are related to normative commitment, albeit relations are weaker. Possibly the relations between some of these experiences and normative commitment are explained by employee interpretations focusing on the feelings of indebtedness and obligation that underlie normative commitment. Furthermore, there is some evidence that the impact of work experiences on normative commitment depends on employees’ cultural values (e.g., individualism vs. collectivism).

Consistent with theory, continuance commitment is more strongly related than are the other two components to two sets of variables: perceived alternatives and perceived investments. Specifically, continuance commitment is stronger among employees who believe that they would have few, rather than several, viable sources of employment if they left the organization. This makes sense, since for such employees the costs associated with leaving their current organization would be quite high. In addition, continuance commitment is stronger among employees who believe that they have made significant investments developing their skills and acquiring education that would not transfer readily to other organizations.

Compared to those with easily transferable skills/education, such employees would incur greater costs if they left the organization.

CONSEQUENCES OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

As mentioned earlier, examining OC consequences in terms of the commitment profile (or interactions between components) is most consistent with theory. Some researchers have taken this approach, but most studies have involved the examination of potential OC consequences on a component-by-component rather than profile basis. In such research, the emphasis has been on employee retention, work performance, and employee well-being.

The links between OC and employee retention are clear and consistent. Meta-analytic research shows that affective, normative, and continuance commitments are all negatively related to employee intention to leave the organization voluntarily. This research also shows that both affective commitment and normative commitment, but not continuance commitment, predict actual turnover.

For many organizations, of course, how employees *behave* at work is as much, or greater, a concern as whether they stay. In this regard, the distinction between the three components of commitment becomes particularly important. Beyond their demonstrated link with turnover intention, affective, continuance, and normative commitments are considered, and have been shown, to have somewhat different implications for employee behavior.

Meta-analytic research confirms that affective commitment is linked to several key performance indicators. Employees with stronger affective commitment are less likely to be absent from work than those with weaker affective commitment, and interestingly this effect is stronger for absence under the employee’s control than for involuntary absence (e.g., illness, emergencies). Affective commitment also predicts job performance. Across a wide variety of jobs, both self-report ratings and supervisory ratings of in-role (or required) work performance are higher among those with stronger affective commitment. Employees with strong affective commitment are also more likely to go the “extra mile” at work, engaging in more organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) than those with weak affective commitment. OCB includes various behaviors (e.g., exerting greater effort, courteousness,

helping coworkers, championing the organization) that help create a more productive and more positive workplace. As such, it is important for both the organization and its employees.

Normative commitment is unrelated to employee absence. Its relations with other performance indicators, however, are positive, though effects are more modest than for affective commitment. Interestingly, meta-analytic evidence shows that relations between normative commitment and both in-role performance and OCB are stronger in studies conducted outside North America, suggesting that cultural factors might play an important role in the behavioral expression of this component of commitment. Finally, although this has not yet been tested, it has been argued that normative commitment might influence the “tone” with which the employees carry out their work, particularly if they also have weak-to-moderate levels of affective commitment. Specifically, a strong sense of feeling of obligation to stay, in the absence of strong desire to stay, might occasionally create feelings of resentment, prompting such employees to carry out their duties in a competent but more grudging manner.

Like normative commitment, continuance commitment is unrelated to employee absence. In contrast to affective and normative commitment, however, it is also unrelated to organizational citizenship behavior; those with strong continuance commitment are neither more nor less likely to go the extra mile. Most noteworthy, however, is the strong negative relation—reported in meta-analytic research—between continuance commitment and in-role job performance. The fact that employees with strong (vs. weak) continuance commitment perform more poorly has a critically important implication for those organizations that develop retention strategies around what employees will lose if they resign. Such organizations might well increase retention but do so at the cost of employee performance. This will be especially so if employees are given little reason to develop affective commitment to the organization and, as a consequence, feel “trapped” within it.

Finally, researchers are beginning to examine whether OC has implications for employee well-being. Presumably, most people prefer to feel positively, rather than negatively, toward the environment in which they work. Some have argued, however, that strong affective OC could interfere with well-being by causing employees to focus undue attention on work. Thus far, there is little evidence of this latter view.

Indeed, meta-analytic research suggests that strong affective commitment is related to reduced stress/exhaustion and greater quality of life beyond the workplace. In contrast, however, continuance commitment is related to poorer quality of life and greater stress levels.

EMERGING ISSUES IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT RESEARCH

Organizational commitment has received a considerable amount of research attention over the past 30 years. Because it has important consequences for organizations and their employees, this attention would appear to be well placed. Nonetheless, there remain many challenging issues that researchers and practitioners continue to examine.

As mentioned earlier, the examination of consequences in terms of the commitment profile represents an important research direction. Preliminary research suggests that different profiles are associated with different consequence patterns, but more of such work is needed. In a related vein, although commitment research began with a focus on the organization, more recent theorizing incorporates the idea that employees feel multidimensional commitment to numerous work-related domains, or foci, nested within the organization (e.g., department, work unit, supervisor) and beyond it (e.g., career, occupation, union). Although complex, a comprehensive understanding of commitment in the workplace will only come through considering, in concert, the various components of commitment that employees feel toward these various interrelated foci.

Other challenges are driven by the changing nature of the workplace. For example, as outsourced work becomes more common, it will be important to determine how employees develop psychological attachments to their two focal organizations (employment agency, current workplace) and how these attachments interact in influencing work behavior and other employee outcomes such as well-being. In addition, we need to learn more about the effects of other alternate work arrangements (e.g., part-time employment, temporary/contract-based work) on the development and consequences of OC. Within the workplace, employees and managers are placing greater emphasis on the interplay (or “balance”) between work and nonwork/family considerations. Thus, it will be important to examine how policies and practices

related to these issues influence the development of OC. Finally, likely driven by the increasing cultural diversity in the workforce, the challenges of globalization, and the growing researcher base worldwide, greater attention is being focused on the role that cultural factors may play in shaping the structure, development, and consequences of organizational commitment.

—Natalie J. Allen

See also Job satisfaction, Occupational commitment, Organizational justice, Procedural justice, Turnover

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ORGANIZATIONAL ENTRY

Organizational entry is a multistage process whereby a new employee is brought into an organization. This process, which can be examined both from an individual and an organizational perspective, generally includes such steps as the initial attraction and recruitment of a job candidate, the assessment and possible selection of that job candidate, and then the orientation and socialization of the new hire into the organization. Past research has found that the organizational entry process is linked with a number of individual and organizational outcomes. When handled successfully, the organizational entry process can help produce new hires who have positive work attitudes, an increased commitment to the organization, lower absenteeism and turnover, and improved performance. In contrast, when organizational entry is not handled well, the new employee can have less positive work attitudes, reduced commitment, higher absenteeism and turnover, and lowered performance. Thus organizations tend to pay significant attention and devote considerable resources to ensure that the organizational entry process is a favorable experience for the new hire and that organizational performance goals for human resources are consequently achieved.

STAGES OF ORGANIZATIONAL ENTRY

John Wanous, who has written extensively on the organizational entry process, identifies four distinct stages through which the individual and the organization proceed in the hiring of a new employee. The first stage is known as *recruitment* and involves various activities to achieve mutual attraction between the prospective job candidate and the hiring company. At this stage, the goal for the job candidate is to become known to the hiring organization through whatever mechanisms are most appropriate. These mechanisms can include attending job fairs, responding to employment advertisements, posting one's résumé on an Internet job site, or networking with family and friends. For the hiring company, recruitment involves becoming known and reaching out to prospective employees. These steps could include presence at or the hosting of job fairs, the placement of employment advertisements in newspapers or on the corporate Web site, and the use of professional recruiters and employment agencies. The ultimate goal of the recruitment stage of

organizational entry is to create a pool of job candidates who are attracted to the organization and who, at the same time, are attractive to the organization.

Wanous's second stage of organizational entry is the *selection* of the new hire, or the process of mutual choice. In this step, the job candidate and the organization make critical assessments of one another. These assessments are designed to test for a match or fit between the abilities, personality, and interests of the person seeking the job with the requirements, culture, and environment of the hiring organization. The idea of matching the person with the organization is more generally known as P-E (person-environment) fit or as P-O (person-organization) fit. Research on the importance of "fit" has consistently shown that it has significant performance implications. The achievement of P-E fit has been shown to produce employees who are more satisfied with their career choices and jobs, have higher performance levels, have more favorable work attitudes, show reduced stress and burnout, and have greater job stability in terms of tenure. There are a number of individual and organizational approaches to assessment and selection, including a personal interview, a site visitation, personality and ability tests, and anticipatory socialization activities such as internships and cooperative education assignments.

Once a selection has been made, the organizational entry process moves to the third stage, which Wanous refers to as *orientation*. At this point, the goal is to facilitate the initial adjustment of the new employee to the organization. Orientation can include formal activities such as training sessions as well as informal events such as a luncheon with departmental management. The intent of the orientation process is to help the newcomer through the stresses and uncertainties of organizational entry while also ensuring that the newcomer understands the organization's mission, goals, procedures, and corporate culture. Normally, the orientation of a new employee takes place within the first three months of employment but in many cases occurs during the very first week.

The final stage of organizational entry is new employee *socialization*, or in Wanous's terms, the process of mutual adjustment. In this step, the goal of the organization is to fully "integrate" the newcomer into the company. By its very nature, socialization is the organizational entry stage that typically takes the longest amount of time to complete, mainly because it involves attempts to change individual attitudes and behaviors to meet organizational expectations and

values. Indeed, one of the primary goals of socialization is to exert control over the new employee such that the newcomer is willing to subjugate his or her own individualism to the collective values, norms, and culture of the organization. The positive side of this indoctrination process is that it creates a pool of employees who adhere to the company's expectations and who act in accordance with the wishes of the management of the organization. Of course, the negative side of socialization is that new employees become too conformist and potentially lose individual creativity or, more seriously, blindly follow the company's direction even when that direction is unethical or illegal.

Mechanisms to allow full socialization and new employee assimilation to occur can include formal training, job rotations, mentoring and other supportive alliances, participation in task forces and work groups, and performance feedback and coaching by immediate supervisors. Formal socialization usually lasts as long as five years and unfolds in stages as the employee achieves greater acceptance by the organization.

OUTCOMES OF ORGANIZATIONAL ENTRY

The potential consequences of the organizational entry process can be examined both from an individual and an organizational perspective. For the individual job seeker, recruitment and selection are the initial stages where one must first display the abilities and personality traits that are attractive to the hiring organization and then convince the organization that they are the best person for the job. The individual can either be successful at these activities, by generating interest and a job offer, or unsuccessful, where little interest is generated or where no job offer is extended. If successful, the newcomer must prepare for the stages of orientation and socialization. If not successful, the individual would need to seek out other employers or change his or her approaches to seeking a job.

For the hiring organization, the first stages of recruitment and selection represent the attempts to find and hire individuals who will fit or match the job requirements and the internal environment within the company. When a strong match is achieved, the organization will be hiring new employees who are expected to have positive work attitudes and a strong commitment to the organization. Thus organizations are well advised to use realistic recruitment practices so that the newcomer is not disillusioned or overwhelmed during the early part of the work career. By

giving a job candidate a realistic and balanced preview of what the job entails, hiring organizations have a better chance at producing a more satisfied and committed workforce.

The orientation and socialization stages of organizational entry are critical early periods of an individual's career development. For the newcomer, the expected outcome of these stages is a greater degree of understanding of the organization, its structure, mission, and operating procedures, and the important people and relationships that exist within the company. This greater knowledge and awareness of the company should produce employees with more positive work attitudes and a higher degree of commitment to the hiring organization, which improves overall morale and reduces new employee turnover and absenteeism.

—Gerard A. Callanan

See also Assimilation and mutual acceptance, Organizational socialization, Orientation, Personnel selection, Realistic recruitment

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ORGANIZATIONAL IMAGE

Organizational image (OI) can be defined as a construction of the public impressions of an organization created to appeal to an external audience while simultaneously interpreted by the organization's members. Construed external images, projected images, and desired future images can be developed and transmitted by mass media, public relations consultants, and savvy marketers. Typically, these image consultants attempt to manipulate the public's perceptions of a given corporation to help its top management achieve the firm's strategic goals. One key goal, attracting and retaining high-quality talent, is requisite for continued

organizational effectiveness and survival. Related perceptual concepts include corporate reputation, organizational identity, and brand image.

The importance of organizational image in career-related research has typically focused on investigating the relationship of organizational image within recruitment efforts. The logic that potential recruits will be attracted to an organization based on positive perceptions of its image is consistent with much of the staffing literature. Before potential recruits consider job-specific factors (e.g., starting salary, promotional opportunities) in job search efforts, they are believed to be attracted to certain employers based on their organizational images. Most of this research has studied novice job seekers or soon-to-graduate college students, while less is known about OI's impact on seasoned job seekers, blue-collar workers, and current employees.

Organizational image has been identified as one of the key factors that can affect the likelihood of potential applicants choosing one employer over another. Companies that are considered good employers often seek a strong, positive image in the marketplace. Successful employers consciously manage outsider perceptions and employee experiences to impact the firm's image. Top management seeks those coveted "Employer of Choice" awards and "Best Company to Work For" rankings because they can contribute to a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining talented employees, loyal customers, and satisfied shareholders. Research indicates that a positive OI can significantly increase organizational attractiveness and job pursuit intentions.

Organizational scholars have explained the formation of OI from several information processing perspectives. Early career pursuit begins with incomplete knowledge and a broad search for cues and clues. Individual image formation typically follows a phased sequence from exposure to stimuli to an attention phase to a comprehension stage, then acceptance, and finally retention. Social identity theory has also been used to explain how an employing organization can provide a key determinant of an employee's self-concept and self-image. Seeking career opportunities with a specific employer is also an overt expression of a person's value orientation, career expectations, and identity. Inferences and symbolic meanings can dominate individual decisions during an information shortage. Job seekers and employees create and adjust an employer's attractiveness beyond measures of

objective (i.e., job/organizational) attributes to include trait inferences, symbolic meanings, and internal/external communication programs.

The construction and maintenance of positive organizational images are crucial to the attraction and retention of human resources in today's workplaces. The power of a positive image simplifies individual career decision making by reducing the uncertainty of the potential employment outcomes in the eyes of the job seeker and employee. Images are adjusted and modified on an ongoing basis by organizational stakeholders both within and outside the firm. Employers that fail to develop and maintain satisfying images risk recruiting shortfalls and employee defections.

Researchers have found that the dimensionality of OI is as varied as the multiple audiences or stakeholders holding mental referents of the organization. Perceptions that an employer practices good corporate citizenship, follows progressive labor practices, and shows a proenvironment sensitivity would generally contribute to the formation of a positive organizational image. Beyond the social desirability bias of these employment-related perceptions is the need for thematic and symbolic consistency across the messages communicated to insiders and outsiders alike.

Other organizational image typologies seek to analyze and understand the construction, maintenance, and modification of employer images over time. One particular decision-making perspective has identified four key image types, which are organizational self-image (the common belief and value structure shared within the organization), trajectory image (future image goals on the organization's agenda), action image (specific planning tied to each goal identified in the prior stage), and projected image (the resulting image from action image implementation). Another analytical approach identifies three main image forms: construed external image (employees' perceptions of how outsiders perceive their organization), projected image (an organizationally constructed image to be communicated to various stakeholders), and desired future image (a visionary perception of the organization).

Strategic dilemmas like that facing Wal-Mart's management team as it tries to repair its tattered organizational image as valued community partner and potential employer could be addressed by applying these analytical perspectives. Only by thoroughly understanding how its current image has been impacted can it hope to reconstruct a positive

employer image for careers in retailing. Failure to manage its organizational images proactively has reduced its ability to recruit talent or to stem defections and lawsuits from career employees.

The construction and maintenance of organizational images has been found critical to attracting, developing, and retaining an employer's talent pool. Individual career attachment decisions (e.g., seeking alternative employment, pursuing promotional opportunities) have been tied to public perceptions of a given organization. OI is best viewed as a dynamic and continually evolving representation of an employer in the eyes of a diverse public.

Image audits can provide one tool for understanding how a company's Web site design communicates its attractiveness as an employer or how the stigma of bankruptcy might affect employee retention. Difficult-to-staff occupations such as public sector nursing or the military could benefit from a more conscious management of their employer images using such assessment methods. Employers trying to attract more racially and gender diverse applicants should assess any mediating effects that their OI can have within these groups.

Research attention on OI is just starting to converge across the fields of organizational communication, marketing, public relations, and organizational behavior. Corporate leadership's responsibility is to harness this complex knowledge base to help achieve its strategic goals and agendas with employees and customers alike.

—Thomas Alexander Kolenko

See also Job search, Organizational staffing

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ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE

Organizational justice refers to judgments of the moral rightness or social appropriateness of events in the work environment. As studied by management scholars, this organizational justice or fairness (these terms tend to be used interchangeably) is treated as a subjective judgment made by an individual or group of individuals. Organizational justice research emphasizes the description of events that lead workers to perceive fair or unfair treatment. It also focuses on the consequences of these perceptions.

Evidence indicates that employees prefer to work in a just environment. Indeed, when fairness is lacking individuals tend to be less productive, have poorer attitudes, and less well-being than when fairness exists. In other words, injustice harms both employee and employer alike. For this reason, considerable attention has been devoted to understanding the causes of injustice and suggesting ways of alleviating the resulting problems. In this regard, researchers have identified at least three classes of organizational events that can give rise to justice (or injustice) perceptions. These are outcomes received (distributive justice), the allocation process (procedural justice), and interpersonal treatment (interactional justice).

Distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness of outcomes. This is an evaluation by an individual or group of what has been received. Notice that “fairness” is distinct from “favorability.” The former refers to a moral evaluation or a judgment of normative appropriateness. The latter refers to the hedonic value of an outcome. An unqualified job applicant, for example, might be disappointed at not receiving a desirable position, but could still acknowledge the fairness of the rejection. That having been said, there is an egocentric correlation between favorability and fairness, such that we rate outcomes as more fair when they are beneficial to us and less fair when they are not.

Judgments of outcome fairness are often made by comparing the results of an actual allocation to an ideal distribution prescribed by some allocation rule. Three such rules have been especially influential: equality (to each the same), equity (to each in accordance with contributions), and need. Notice that the application of each of these rules requires that we possess some knowledge about what others have received. Consequently, we need some “referent other” to which we can compare ourselves. As our standard

changes, so do our justice judgments, and this is so even if our outcomes remain constant. Other things being equal, women who are underpaid relative to men in the same position, report higher pay satisfaction when they compare themselves to other (underpaid) women, and lower pay satisfaction when they compare themselves to their better compensated male peers.

Procedural justice refers to perceived fairness of the allocation process. Whereas distributive justice is about *ends*, procedural justice is about the *means* by which these ends are assigned. When compared to distributive justice, procedural fairness tends to have a larger impact on evaluations of decision-makers (e.g., supervisory trust) and social institutions (e.g., organizational commitment). Distributive justice, on the other hand, tends to have a larger impact on evaluations of particular outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction). Six characteristics of fair procedures have been suggested. Procedures are fair when they are applied consistently, bias free, correctable, accurate, representative of all stakeholders, and consistent with ethical standards. Procedural justice has been found to be important in the design of effective human resource policies, such as those for selection, performance evaluation, and grievance resolution.

Interactional justice refers to the perceived fairness of the interpersonal treatment one receives. Interactional justice is highly correlated with procedural justice, though most contemporary scholars prefer to distinguish them on the grounds that procedures refer to formal aspects of the process, whereas interpersonal interactions refer to social aspects. In addition, the two types of justice seem to show distinct patterns of associations with other variables.

Two types of interactional justice have been identified. *Informational justice* refers to the thoroughness and openness with which decision makers explain and describe events. Providing an adequate explanation for a layoff would be an example of informational justice. *Interpersonal justice* refers to the dignity and respect with which one is treated. Politeness is an example of interpersonal justice. Informational fairness and interpersonal fairness tend to be correlated. For this reason, some scholars are inclined to collapse them together as interactional justice. Nevertheless, the recent years have seen a move for treating them as distinct, and the evidence to date is very promising.

While most research to date has examined the main effect relationships between the different types of

justice and work-relevant criteria, another line of inquiry suggests that the three types also interact. It has been found that distributive justice is more strongly related to work attitudes and behaviors when procedural justice is low. To describe the same effect in a different way, if either distributive justice or procedural justice were high, then employees tended to show relatively positive work attitudes and relatively more productive work behaviors. However, if *both* distributive and procedural justice were low, then worker reactions became more negative. A two-way interaction of the same form has also been documented between distributive justice and interactional justice.

Findings such as these have prompted scholars to investigate the possibility of a three-way interaction among all of the different types of fairness. Though more work is needed, efforts to date have yielded some success stories. One study found that employees were most apt to engage in counterproductive work behaviors when all three types of fairness were low. Other work has found that this same interaction predicts the filing of grievance claims and reactions to affirmative action programs.

Due to the implications for both individuals and organizations, organizational justice has in recent years surfaced as an important and fruitful area of study. Organizational justice investigations focus on the events leading up to a fairness evaluation, the outcomes resulting once a fairness perception has been formed, and the contexts in which these perceptions are formed. Although focus more distantly has been on distributive justice, and more recently on procedural justice, research as of late finds interactional justice to be a promising avenue for future research.

—Russell Cropanzano and Jessica Bagger

See also Inequality, Organizational politics, Procedural justice

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ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS

The mention of *organizational politics* is frequently met with harsh words and disparaging glances. Society, as a whole, has grown to view anything political with chagrin. Much of this disdain comes from the awareness that politicking, when successful, is associated with manipulation, and in some cases, verbal or physical intimidation. Moreover, the general public has been inundated with stories of abuses of political authority including misappropriation of funds and dubious financial transactions of government and industry officials. These personal transgressions have done little to remove the dark cloud that has developed over anything construed as *political*.

Unfortunately, politics pervades virtually every work environment and no public/private enterprise, service/manufacturing industry, or blue-collar/white-collar occupation is immune from its influence. Simply put, as long as there are employees with diverse personalities, needs, and wants, workplace politics are to be expected. Politicking is viewed unfavorably because it often blurs the relationship between what one contributes at work and what one receives in return. Instead of raises and promotions coming to those who work the hardest and contribute the most to company profitability, rewards are given to those who are most successful at manipulating the reward allocations of decision makers.

WHAT ARE POLITICAL BEHAVIORS?

Politicking represents deliberate, self-serving behaviors (although frequently indirect) that are often inconsistent with the goals of the organization. Behaviors can be very subtle or extremely caustic, and

Table 4. Attributes and Examples of Political Behavior

<i>Attribute:</i>	<i>Example:</i>
1. Purposeful effort to maximize returns.	“There are three of us up for the next promotion and I better make sure that I get it.”
2. Behavior is self-serving, although benefits do not always go directly to the politician, per se.	“I’m going to do whatever I can to see that my subordinate, Smith, is promoted to sales manager instead of Johnson’s subordinate.”
3. Goals are often inconsistent with the objectives of the organization.	“I could care less about the company share price; I just need to find a way to make vice-president by the end of the year.”
4. Specific tactics can be very innocuous or extremely destructive.	“I could either tell the boss how much effort I put into my report, or I could destroy Garrett’s report that I found on the copy machine.”
5. Influence attempts can be directed upward, downward, horizontally, or externally—often simultaneously.	“If I want this promotion, I better get my subordinates to tell upper management that I am a good manager, sabotage the efforts of my peers, start having lunch with those choosing the next director of promotions, and getting my best customers to call my supervisor.”
6. Often undertaken to secure outcomes unable to be achieved under more accepted means.	“Johnson has outsold me every quarter for the last 10 years, but I’ve been here longer. I need to make management understand that longevity is more important than performance.”
7. Most likely to be used when environments possess limited resources.	“I’ve heard that there is only enough money in the budget for one new computer. I need to convince management that my computer is outdated although it really isn’t compared to others.”
8. Politicking is not a tactic used for poor performers exclusively.	I’m the best performer in my department, but I keep getting passed over for promotions. It’s clear that I need to advertise my successes since it is apparent that nobody will notice otherwise.”

directed toward multiple constituents both internal and external to the organization. The only requirement for politicking to surface is for the work environment to possess finite resources or a limit on available rewards. Resources can take the form of equipment, personnel, mentors, and/or social support. Rewards include status enhancements, promotions, pay increases, and development opportunities.

In general, individuals see politicking as a means to secure desired outcomes perceived as unattainable under more organizationally legitimate means. The table above outlines the major attributes of politicking at work along with examples of each.

Despite disparaging opinions, employees would likely agree that much would go undone and many successes unrealized if politicking were eliminated from the corporate landscape. For example, trade associations hire lobbyists largely due to their ability to sway the opinions of important legislators. In this instance, politicking occurs, but the self-serving benefit is more indirect.

It is apparent that politics has a rightful place in organizations. Unfortunately, there is little consensus

in terms of the exact location of this “rightful place.” What is known, however, is that politicking is viewed favorably when it leads to personally beneficial outcomes such as greater than anticipated raises, promotions, and favorable treatment from supervisors.

ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES OF WORKPLACE POLITICS

Reactions to workplace political activity can range from mild amusement to devastation. On the one end of the spectrum, many organizations have the “chronic politicians” who spends considerably more time trying to manage their image than actually working. These individuals are viewed as largely transparent, with their obvious motives and their tactics caricatures of the quintessential “slick snake oil salesman.” That is, these individuals come across with an obvious personal agenda, their style is too smooth, and they are too ready with a canned response or elusive statement when confronted. In short, these individuals offer little in the way of contribution but much in the way of comic relief or irritation.

The negative effects of perceived politics typically occur over an extended period of time, because one does not just experience a single event; there are typically multiple events. Thus, on the other end of the continuum, politics can have debilitating effects on both job and health factors. For example, one's perceived contributions and probability of appropriate rewards are likely curtailed if politicking causes a disruption of work activities. In this regard, effort dedicated to providing a positive contribution is replaced with in-fighting, turf wars, and one-upsmanship.

Politics can lead to a variety of physical and psychological health ailments, which include substance abuse, high blood pressure, general anxiety, sleep disturbances, and depression. Furthermore, a failure to attend to conflict generated by politics at work has the potential to have indirect crossover effects on family relations. Specifically, because individuals often have difficulty leaving their problems at the office, strain at work can amplify the incidence of domestic conflict at home. Finally, the consequences of strain-induced politics can be even more devastating. A regrettable consequence of anxiety-provoking politics is an associated increase in mental health ailments, which include, but are not limited to, dejection, hopelessness, and in the most extreme case, self-destructive behavior.

THE FUTURE OF POLITICKING

There is little reason to believe that active politicking will fade away in the future. With outsourcing, globalization, and major restructurings affecting the way jobs are designed and redesigned, organizations are going to have fewer assets to allocate. As such, competition for resources will be intense and potentially tumultuous as "doing more with less" becomes more than business jargon. For example, instead of all employees receiving technology upgrades every two years, 25 percent of the workforce may take delivery of new equipment every three years. Workers may see their jobs moved permanently overseas. To make sure that one receives the resources to be successful at work (or to secure the signal of status that comes with such commitments), performance (i.e., working hard) and nonperformance-based influence strategies (i.e., working at influencing others) are likely to be incorporated into one's daily routine.

Deliberate workforce modifications, which have made climbing the corporate ladder a far more daunting task, further increase the possibility of politicking.

Because layers have been eliminated in many organizations, there are fewer rungs (entry-level → managerial → executive) to navigate, suggesting that promotions will occur less frequently. Instead of occurring every year or so, employees can expect the time between promotions to be extended (i.e., greater than three years). Because rewards are available so infrequently, the stakes become greater when a promotion is anticipated. Failure to successfully influence may result in a failure to secure the promotion.

Restructurings serve as a catalyst for politicking in other ways, as well. Because levels of evaluators are being eliminated, employees cannot rely on supervisors' direct observation of performance to ensure that efforts are viewed favorably. Bosses are no longer able to appraise performance by direct observation because there are simply fewer bosses wandering around to witness employee work contributions. As a result of fewer interactions, subordinates may go out of their way to advertise their successes, minimize the contribution of their colleagues, or both.

Finally, layoffs increase the likelihood of politicking because the consequences of not fully participating in influence attempts at work are great. Very rarely do downsized individuals find jobs with equivalent work attributes in terms of pay, status, and potential for promotion. In environments expected to experience a layoff, some individuals may choose positive behaviors, while others may opt for tactics viewed by many as disreputable in order to ensure survival.

STRATEGIES TO MANAGE POLITICS AT WORK

"An eye for an eye," "Fight fire with fire," "tit for tat," "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Matching the tactics of workplace politicians seems like a logical response when one feels aggrieved. For example, if a coworker sabotages one's work efforts, it may sound appealing to respond in a comparably hostile way. Despite the allure, there is a downside to using tactics that are largely reactive and reciprocal. Grudges develop, anxiety increases, and time dedicated to work is now dedicated to planning for the next attack. Most important, reactive strategies never directly address the underlying issues that create the need for politicking.

Organizational politics are harmful because they create uncertainty, insecurity, and confusion. Individuals are unsure of where they stand with management, what represents acceptable performance,

and how they can expect their career to progress in political settings. Instead of putting out fires by matching political behaviors with aggressors, reducing uncertainty is a more useful and health-promotive option. There are a number of proactive strategies to understand office politics and reduce ambiguity in the workplace, each of which is briefly discussed below.

Seek and Maintain Mentoring Relationships

A mentor can be extremely helpful not only in terms of career development but warding off the adverse effects of politics (in fact, these objectives are largely interrelated). For example, a mentor can help establish links between performance and rewards (i.e., “If you sell 100 cars this year, your bonus will be . . .”), keep the employee on track in terms of progress and promotions (i.e., “In five years, I expect you to be sales manager”), offer support (i.e., “Let me talk to your manager and see if I can get you some resources), and shield the employee from the potentially debilitating effects of unnecessary politicking (i.e., “Concentrate on your job and I’ll take care of the rest”). Because mentors often develop a sense of identity with their protégé, they are generally sensitive to external factors that may serve to derail scheduled progress. Mentoring programs are effective because communication is more frequent and thorough, and discussions are allowed to extend to interpersonal aspects of work that are critical to success (e.g., “Watch out for Johnson. He’ll do anything to get the next promotion”). If the organization does not have a formal mentoring program, informal programs are often equally effective. In sum, having the support of someone influential is often needed to maximize career success. Having a senior member of the organization help mitigate the potentially debilitating effects of politics, especially early in one’s career, can go a long way in this regard.

Develop Short- and Long-Term Performance and Career Goals With Superiors

If mentoring is unavailable, goal setting can serve to minimize much of the uncertainty that encapsulates political environments. If done correctly, consensus is reached in terms of performance expectancies, methods and timetable for achievement, and rewards for

accomplishment. More structure equals less ambiguity, and by sticking to agreed-upon guidelines for behavior, the uncertainty caused by workplace politics is likely curtailed. As noted, the time managers are able to spend directly planning and observing employee work activities will become more limited. Thus the responsibility to remain on track is likely to fall on the shoulders of the subordinate.

Remain Active in the Interpersonal Context at Work

Often, individuals are blindsided by politics because much of the manipulation occurs outside the boundaries of formal work activity. Lunches, company parties, work breaks, and other social gatherings provide employees the opportunity to get away from work while still tolerating discussions about work. Remaining active in the social environment is particularly important for individuals who are likely isolated from their colleagues for reasons otherwise unrelated to the job, such as gender, age, and race. It is clear that understanding the reasons and tactics of those opting for politically motivated influence can minimize uncertainty. Remaining active may allow one to be part of the conversation and develop a greater appreciation for the causes and consequences of politicking.

Work on Interpersonal Skills

It has been suggested in the popular press that emotional intelligence (i.e., social skill) is a key predictor of career success. Individuals with high levels of social skill are able to empathize with others, listen carefully, read communication cues and patterns, and develop social networks. These attributes are particularly relevant in terms of minimizing politically derived ambiguity because socially skilled individuals are (1) able to pick up on the subtle cues that identify causes of behavior, (2) competent in accurately assessing the emotionality of the politician, and (3) skilled in soliciting the advice and support of others in their extensive social network. In terms of specific application, a socially skilled employee may be in a position to recognize when politicking occurs, can understand it, and may help coworkers who are less socially skilled to understand it as well. Understanding helps remove ambiguity and uncertainty. Furthermore, the socially skilled individual need not

rely on manipulation to receive support and recognition, hence eliminating the need for politicking.

Adopt an Opportunity Instead of a Threat Mentality

Politics exist and will continue to exist in the foreseeable future. In general, it is comfortable and socially acceptable to focus on the negative attributes of organizational politics (e.g., wasting time, confounding the relationship between performance and rewards, creating emotional and job-related strain). Society is enamored with conflict, personality clashes, and encounters that lead individuals to be at odds with one another. Take, for example, the countless number of newspaper articles and television talk shows that focus on the less attractive elements of family and social interactions.

In contrast, some level of organizational politicking can be beneficial. In a complex way, politics breathes life into the organization by increasing competition and requiring employees to participate more fully in the social environment at work. Most employees would classify an organization completely devoid of politics as boring, a figment of top management's imagination, or dead. Politicking, despite all of its drawbacks, gets individuals interested in the inner workings of the organization.

Furthermore, politics signal that the organization has deficiencies or areas for improvement. For example, the goal of the organization may be to promote group achievement. Selection instruments may have instead focused disproportionately on the best way to maximize individual rewards. Understanding the impetus for politicking and designing effective programs to address these motivations can go a long way to enhance organizational effectiveness. In this case, designing a more appropriate selection tool that focuses on maximizing group rewards not only enhances organizational effectiveness but also makes one valuable to the organization. This leads to the last strategy.

Take an Active Role in Your Career

Politicking requires individuals to take an active role in career development and become more accountable for securing desired outcomes. One way to survive most political wranglings is to add value and become irreplaceable. This may take the form of

technical skills (e.g., "You're the only one who understands the new computer program"), securing an important client (e.g., "The Cortez account is worth \$5 million, and if I go, it goes with me"), designing a new process that improves organizational effectiveness (e.g., "Jose designed the new selection process"), or possessing the interpersonal abilities that are desired by decision makers (e.g., "When we need a loan, we send our best negotiator, Brown"). Developing these competencies cannot occur overnight. Thought, planning, and adopting long-term developmental strategies are required, which inherently assumes a proactive approach to career development.

CONCLUSION

Organizational politics exist in virtually every work environment. They are self-serving behaviors (frequently indirect) that are often inconsistent with the goals of the organization. They are behaviors that can be very subtle or extremely caustic and may be directed toward multiple constituents internal and external to the organization. Politics can have debilitating effects on both job and health factors. However, even though politics comes with adverse consequences, political behaviors can have a rightful purpose in organizations. We have offered a number of strategies to reduce uncertainty in the workplace, because this is a primary factor leading to the negative effects of politics. By doing so, individuals can reduce the negative effects of politics and take control of their careers.

—Wayne A. Hochwarter and Zinta S. Byrne

See also Career investments, Career strategy, Impression management, Networking, Organizational image

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ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION

Organizational socialization describes how people learn to fit into a new organization or job. It is a process by which an individual learns appropriate attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge associated with a particular role in an organization. The general theory asserts that people who are well socialized into an organization are more likely to stay and develop their careers with that organization. This is a critical process for individuals pursuing successful careers and for organizations building effective workforces. Every year in the United States, around 3 million people graduate from high school and 2 million people earn college degrees. Most will begin looking for jobs and organizations that will provide satisfying careers. However, for many new and established employees, the fit between themselves and their organizations is better described as a misfit. About 2 million

people voluntarily quit their jobs in the United States every month. This figure does not include retirements, deaths, or disability reasons for quitting, and most of these people will try again to look for new jobs and satisfying careers.

Building a competent workforce, one where people believe they fit in well with their organizations, is often viewed as a competitive edge in today's business. For organizations, a competent and committed workforce minimizes costly turnover and selection expenses. Moreover, individual employee attributes associated with successful organizational socialization can accumulate across the organization to positively affect organizational performance and effectiveness. Organizational socialization is a primary process to facilitate work adjustment for new employees or for employees taking on new roles.

For individuals, a good fit within the organization can lead to several positive benefits. People who are well socialized are more committed to their organizations, more satisfied with their jobs, and earn more than people who don't learn to fit in with their organizations. Furthermore, people who are well socialized are less likely to quit their jobs and more likely to build successful careers within the organization. The extent to which both organizational and individual socialization processes support a good person-organization fit will define the extent to which that individual has been successfully socialized.

WHO IS SOCIALIZED IN ORGANIZATIONS?

Typically, organizational socialization concerns how new hires adjust to a new job and organization, and these people are generally described as organizational newcomers. However, the process by which an individual learns appropriate attitudes and behaviors applies to anyone who faces a new job. Thus many employees who have been promoted or transferred within their current organization will also need to adjust to their new roles. Organizational newcomers generally have more to learn than job changers, because they need to adjust to both a specific job and an organizational culture, so most of the research on organizational socialization focuses on organizational newcomers.

When an individual begins a job at a new organization, that person may already have some expectations of what the job and organization will be like. Some of these expectations may be realistic (e.g., "I will work

from 9:00 to 5:00”), whereas other expectations may be unrealistic (e.g., “Top managers will adopt all my suggestions”). Furthermore, as the individual begins work, early experiences will meet some expectations (e.g., “I expected to work in teams and I was assigned to a team”), but other expectations will not be met (e.g., “I did not expect some of my team members to be difficult to work with”). Many newcomers experience reality shock when their expectations are unmet, regardless of how unrealistic those expectations may be. Newcomers who experience these surprises would try to make sense of them. Based on their own predispositions and past experiences, and based on how others within and outside the organization interpret these surprises, the sense-making process can help a newcomer resolve unmet expectations. Individuals whose sense making complements the organization are more likely to stay with that organization (e.g., “Top management did not adopt my suggestion because they saw problems I didn’t foresee”). Individuals whose sense making attaches negative attributes to the organization are more likely to quit their jobs (e.g., “Top management did not adopt my suggestion because they are closed minded and stupid”).

Although most of the research in organizational socialization examines organizational newcomers, many established employees also undergo socialization processes as their jobs change. Obviously, employees who are transferred to new locations or to new business units need to learn how to fit in with their new job demands. Global organizations are constantly moving their personnel around in order to maximize the capacity of their human resources. Less obvious are the socialization needs of employees who might stay in their positions but experience organizational changes around them. Employees with new managers might have to adjust to a different vision for the business unit. New technologies may render old ways obsolete and demand adjustments from established employees. Finally, organizational mergers and acquisitions may force new values and work processes on established employees, requiring them to adjust and fit in with the new order. Thus organizational socialization is a relevant issue for any individual faced with substantial job or organizational changes.

HOW THE ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION PROCESS UNFOLDS

The organizational socialization process unfolds within human resource management processes.

Recruitment and selection systems identify candidates who are considered for employment and those who are eventually hired. These processes are often designed to hire a particular type of person who will fit into the organization. Furthermore, recruitment and selection activities are often first-contact experiences for the newcomer and organization; they help shape initial expectations each has about the other.

There are several stage models of organizational socialization; each describes evolving experiences of newcomers as they adjust to a new job/organization. Most of these models describe three basic stages, beginning with anticipatory socialization, entry-encounter experiences, and ending with change and mutual acceptance. The anticipatory socialization stage describes how early job/organization expectations are shaped as a person selects and prepares for a particular career. Career choices are often based on rough ideas or expectations of what that career will be like. For example, a person’s family, teachers, and friends might share their experiences and influence an individual to choose a career in business. Preparation for this career might include a university’s masters of business administration program. Faculty and fellow students can further shape this person’s initial job expectations even before the person has applied for a job. Furthermore, managers and recruiters can help a job candidate form specific expectations about an organization and the candidate’s role within that organization. The extent to which these expectations are met on the job will define the amount of adjustment required to successfully fit into the organization.

The second stage of socialization typically includes early learning and adjustments after organizational entry. The newcomer learns how to do the job as well as how to fit into the organization’s culture. This learning stage includes the sense-making process that helps the newcomer reconcile unmet expectations and surprises. Organizations can conduct formal orientation and training programs to help newcomers learn how work is conducted in the organization. In addition, informal learning occurs on the job as the newcomer observes and solicits information from superiors, peers, and subordinates. These informal lessons may reinforce formal organizational procedures (e.g., a secretary reminds you to be on time for your department meeting) or they may introduce informally acceptable behaviors that are not sanctioned by the organization (e.g., a coworker tells you that it’s OK to call in sick if you need a personal day off).

The final stage of socialization generally recognizes successful adjustment as an organizational newcomer is transformed into an organizational insider. Insiders have learned the ropes to fit in and can serve as valuable resources of information for future newcomers. Organizations may hold initiation ceremonies or rites of passage to signify that a newcomer is no longer a rookie or recruit but a full-fledged member of the organization. Although most of the research on organizational socialization centers on newcomers, some studies recognize that insiders can learn more about their own roles as they socialize newcomers or as newcomers precipitate shifts in role expectations for insiders.

Research in organizational socialization has failed to support any particular stage model. Although stage approaches provide rich descriptions of the transformation from organizational newcomer to insider status, they ignore many organizational factors and situational contexts that may unintentionally influence the socialization process, and they ignore personal characteristics of individuals who are adjusting to a new job and work environment. Thus, stage models can help describe what newcomers experience, but they do not offer any specific interventions to help newcomers to be successfully socialized into their organizations.

Following the development of socialization stage models, six classes of organizational socialization tactics have been proposed as ways for organizations to socialize their newcomers. These strategies are described as continuums of organizational intervention, with one end of the continuum describing an institutionalized approach and the other end describing an individualized approach. First, the formal-informal continuum describes how formal and structured socialization tactics can range, from formal orientation programs to informal spontaneous conversations with organizational insiders. Second, the collective-individual continuum concerns the number of people who are socialized together, ranging from massive training and induction programs for large groups to individually tailored strategies for one person. Third, the sequential-random continuum describes the extent to which discrete, identifiable stages of socialization exist versus socialization that proceeds within a general newcomer stage. For example, a police recruit may undergo a sequential pattern of academy training, field training, and patrol assignment with a senior partner, whereas a secretary may not have a set of

socialization experiences to complete. Fourth, the fixed-variable continuum describes the extent to which the socialization process unfolds over a specified time frame. For example, after six months of police academy training, a ceremony is held for rookies as a rite of passage—recognition that they have become police officers. Conversely, a secretary may not have a specific time frame to become recognized as a full member of the organization. Fifth, the serial-disjunctive continuum describes whether there are role models for newcomers to imitate. Serial tactics have existing role models performing the same job as the newcomer (e.g., rookie officer can model senior officer), whereas disjunctive tactics do not have any role models (e.g., unique job is created to manage new technology). Sixth, the investiture-divestiture continuum describes the extent to which a newcomer's individuality and identity are accepted by the organization. Investiture strategies welcome individual characteristics and embrace this diversity into the organization. Conversely, divestiture strategies mold the newcomer to behave like all other organizational members with little tolerance for unique behaviors (e.g., military recruits trained to dress and act alike).

The socialization tactics provide an organizational perspective on newcomer socialization. Different tactics will process people into different types of organizational members. Organizations that use more institutionalized tactics—by processing newcomers together in groups, establishing a fixed sequence of career progression, exposing newcomers to insider models for the new role, and pressuring newcomers to change their self-definition—are thought to yield more compliant employees who understand and accept organizational values. In contrast, individualized tactics—which involve individual processing, more variable career progression, few existing role models, and greater acceptance of the self—are predicted to yield more innovative employees who are less accepting of the status quo.

Although the organizational perspective helps us understand processes for work adjustment, it neglects socialization factors that are not organizationally designed or controlled. In particular, newcomers processed by institutional tactics must at some point be integrated into an organization's social network. They will come into contact with supervisors, coworkers, and staff who will comprise a more local socialization context. Socialization will continue in ways that may be either consistent or inconsistent

with formal tactics. How well are the effects of formal tactics likely to hold up under this resocialization effort? As newcomers adjust to their jobs, they may be less responsive to institutional socialization tactics and more responsive to other aspects of the workplace. Moreover, the organizational perspective often treats newcomers as a passive employee open to socialization tactics. An individual's personality and career expectations might be powerful drivers in seeking information and engaging in proactive socialization experiences to fit in more effectively than other newcomers.

In contrast to the organizational perspective, other researchers have focused on the individual perspective, examining information seeking by newcomers as they attempt to comprehend the organization and its defining characteristics. This research has examined what newcomers attempt to learn (content) and how they attempt to learn it (process). In addition, some research has sought to go beyond information acquisition per se to understand how informal, insider processes influence newcomer socialization. For example, much of the information-seeking research has focused on active newcomer efforts to ask questions and inquire of insiders. However, active efforts by supervisors and coworkers to socialize newcomers are relatively more important to adjustment than newcomer proaction. Positive work relationships with supervisors and peers reduce negative effects of unmet expectations on job satisfaction and other traditional indicators of socialization effectiveness.

The research literature on information seeking and successful socialization is mixed. Some studies support a positive link with findings that show that information seeking reduces uncertainty about the newcomer's job/organization, which in turn, helps build the newcomer's competence and self-efficacy. Conversely, other studies found negative links between information seeking and newcomer socialization when there are social costs if a newcomer is constantly asking questions or if feedback is not positive. Thus information seeking may backfire on newcomers who ask too many questions, because insiders may perceive them as incompetent, intrusive, or meddlesome. Finally, there may be no link between information seeking and socialization if the information is not related to adjustment and/or the newcomer cannot use the information to facilitate his or her work adjustment.

The organizational socialization process is complex because it involves actions taken by both the

newcomer and the organization, and lessons learned may be intentional or unintentional. Newcomers will go through a socialization process, regardless of what the organization may do or not do; thus good human resource management would prescribe some planning to guide employee adjustment to the job and organization. Transparent human resource practices that support the organization's mission and values are more likely to help employees make sense of their roles in the organization than management practices that conflict with or confuse employees. For example, mentors can provide an informal, personal socialization process when senior members tutor junior members and groom them for successful careers within the organization. Although this mentoring may be informal, managers and supervisors who are likely to be mentors can be trained to provide positive socialization experiences for their newcomers.

The socialization process is not entirely controlled by the organization; nor is it entirely controlled by the individual. The mix of formal organizational interventions (e.g., orientation program) and informal interventions (e.g., a mentor) may not provide compatible lessons, thus rendering the sense-making process complex. Furthermore, an individual's acquisition of knowledge does not always occur at a conscious level. A newcomer's learning may be implicit knowledge gained from observations and experiences but without a concerted, conscious awareness that one has learned anything. The first day on a new job is often one of information overload for the newcomer. Explicit lessons (e.g., a supervisor explains the workload to a newcomer) and implicit lessons (e.g., a newcomer feels uncomfortable around a particular supervisor) merge to help the newcomer determine if he or she fits with the organization. The tacit knowledge gained from implicit learning serves as a base for a newcomer's sense of intuition. This intuition could influence subsequent attitudes and behavior. Thus a newcomer may not be able to articulate why he or she feels uncomfortable about a supervisor, but that feeling may signal potential problems as the socialization process unfolds.

WHAT IS SPECIFICALLY LEARNED IN ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION?

There are several models of socialization content describing *what* a newcomer learns during the adjustment process. One of the earliest models describes

three dimensions for learning: functional, hierarchical, and inclusionary. The functional dimension focuses on the content of a person's job functions. Obviously, in order to be successful in a job, one needs to know how to perform it. Knowledge in one's function (e.g., accounting knowledge for accountants) is essential to career success. The hierarchical dimension focuses on the rank of a person's position. Different attitudes and behaviors are usually associated with different positions related to status and power. Thus executives might be expected to hold a set of values and behaviors that differ from technical staff, secretarial staff, and production crews. Finally, the inclusionary dimension focuses on the extent to which one is included in work operations. Regardless of rank or function, a person with critical knowledge, political connections, or negotiation skills can be instrumental or central for others to get their work accomplished effectively. People who know their job, know their rank within the organization, and know how to help others are well socialized. They may be so successful that they are prime candidates for promotion. If this occurs, then the learning cycle repeats as the newly promoted individual learns a new function, new rank, and new inclusionary knowledge and behaviors. Although this three-dimensional model can be useful in describing different content areas for newcomers to learn, it has not received much empirical research support.

More recently, socialization researchers developed six content areas for organizational socialization and developed scales to research learning in these areas: performance proficiency, language, people, politics, organizational goals and values, and history. Performance proficiency involves learning to perform a job successfully. Language involves learning special acronyms and terminology used by the organization. The people dimension includes learning to get along with other organizational members. Politics involves learning formal and informal power structures. Organizational goals and values involve understanding the organization's culture. Finally, history involves learning about the organization's past as well as the specific history associated with the newcomer's business unit. Organizational newcomers generally scored lower on these dimensions than organizational insiders. Furthermore, people who are better socialized tend to be more satisfied with their jobs, are more involved in their careers, and earn more income than people who are less well socialized. Perhaps most interesting is the finding that people who don't

perceive themselves to fit with the organization's goals and values are most likely to quit their jobs and change organizations. Regardless of *how* people learn in these content areas, mastery was associated with greater socialization and greater socialization was associated with positive job and career outcomes.

Other content areas have been discussed that involve personal learning (e.g., learning more about one's own desires and needs), role management (e.g., learning how to manage work and personal lives), and specific organizational interventions (e.g., training received). Within global organizations, new socialization content areas include cultural issues as expatriates and host-country nationals learn to bridge cultural differences and work in multinational environments. These content areas vary widely in terms of their application to most newcomers and illustrate how lessons learned during the socialization process can affect personal values and sense of identity that go beyond organizational control.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Organizational socialization occurs whether the individual or organization manages it or not. Organizations can facilitate this process by building a strong organizational culture that provides consistent lessons to newcomers using both formal and informal methods. A strong culture describes clear values and expectations shared by most organizational members. This base of common knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors will maximize the likelihood that a newcomer will receive similar instruction from most organizational members. Thus, coworkers can reinforce what was learned in a formal training program by serving as good role models for the newcomer. If an organization does not have a strong positive culture, or if the culture is not endorsed by top management, the potential for conflicting lessons increases and the confusing experiences make adjustment more difficult for a newcomer. In this case, organizations should carefully manage the socialization process by designing appropriate orientation/training programs for newcomers, matching newcomers with appropriate role models and mentors, and monitoring the socialization process to correct misunderstandings or to help newcomers make sense of their early experiences. However, no amount of organizational intervention can socialize newcomers to be radically different from current insiders unless factors supporting new organizational roles and values are promoted to all employees.

In addition to culture-related socialization interventions, organizations can help their employees adjust to their jobs by providing adequate training and resources to help employees maximize their job performance. Company manuals can help newcomers learn important acronyms and jargon that distinguish organizational members. Employee handbooks can shape newcomer expectations and identify behaviors and customs of insiders that the organization would like to promote. Finally, performance feedback can give newcomers a sense of how the organization perceives the person-organization fit and provide guidance to improve the fit, if warranted.

Individuals should also be proactive managers of the socialization process. By astute observations, selective information seeking, and positive responses to organizational demands, individuals can better determine if the type of person desired by the organization is the type of person the newcomer wants to be. Newcomers should adhere to the organization's dress code and be sensitive to behaviors that are judged to be acceptable or unacceptable by management. Newcomers should also learn organizational jargon and acronyms quickly in order to avoid calling attention to themselves as "outsiders," naïve to insider language. Finally, newcomers with exceptional job performance may be identified as having high potential in the organization with great value for long-term career success.

Both short- and long-term career goals can help determine whether the person-organization fit is good enough for the newcomer. Individuals should also recognize the need for resocialization when jobs, assignments, and work groups change. An individual might perceive a great fit with the organization when the person is a professional, but the fit might be disastrous when the person is promoted to management. Building a wide and strong social network within the organization can help the individual anticipate realistic expectations for future organizational roles. Extending the network outside the organization can help an individual learn whether a different organization, new job, or even new career would provide a better fit to that person.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

We have seen an evolution in socialization theory and research from descriptive stage models to a focus on variations in process and outcomes attributable to the organization (tactics), to current attention on the

individual being proactive, seeking information, and learning specific content areas for work adjustment. With relatively few exceptions, there has been little integration across theoretical perspectives. Clearly more research is needed to better understand how organizational interventions and newcomer sense making interact to shape lessons learned and the fit between newcomer and organization.

Theorists in organizational socialization caution that efforts to mold people into organizational members with rigid roles and values may result in an overconforming workforce that may lack the capacity to be innovative or creative. Thus the maximum benefits from organizational socialization might be best realized from adjustment processes that give newcomers a good sense of identity with the organization, without overly restricting a newcomer's individuality. Future research can explore a continuum of socialization adjustment and perhaps identify a tipping point where too much socialization can be detrimental to organizational adaptability and innovation.

New developments in network theory may be applied to organizational socialization research. A newcomer's social networks significantly influence organizational socialization. Specifically, information networks affect the newcomer's learning, while friendship networks affect the newcomer's assimilation. Together these networks help a newcomer learn how to fit in well with other organizational members and with the organization as a whole. Future research can focus on newcomers' networks by examining types of network links that would aid or hinder their work adjustment. In addition, future research can expand beyond the newcomer's network to study how multiple networks of a work group can build a particular type of organizational climate that would be passed on to the newcomer. Within a dynamic framework, these networks can be explored to examine the socialization process as it unfolds, to determine critical transitions or experiences that influence socialization. Furthermore, not only can the dynamic perspective examine how the newcomer changes, but it can also examine how newcomers might change an existing organizational climate of established insiders. A particularly strong or powerful newcomer has the potential to resocialize insiders to a new way of work.

Finally, future research can explore the link between organizational socialization and personal adjustment. Most of the research has examined organizational socialization from the organization's perspective and

what the organization can gain from well-socialized employees. Little research has examined how organizational socialization affects an individual's personal mental health. In an extreme example, organizations that mold employees to adopt a strong set of values may create a cult of people engaged in behaviors that may harm the individual. Military organizations socialize soldiers to protect their own and kill the enemy. Unethical organizations socialize managers to promote unsafe products or report false earnings. These tactics may have short-term benefits to the organization, but the long-term effects on the organization and the individual may be devastating.

Future research in organizational socialization will be challenging. Ideally, research should examine how organizational interventions and individual actions and reactions interact to determine the person-organization fit. Corrective measures taken by one or both parties who perceive a misfit should be explored. Actions taken to correct misperceptions could save a valued employee from leaving the organization. Conversely, if a true misfit is identified, a separation of the individual from the organization is likely to benefit both parties, and early recognition of a misfit could minimize negative consequences. Well-designed longitudinal studies can track the socialization process as it unfolds, shedding more light on the dynamics of organizational socialization.

Organizations interested in attracting and retaining the best people should manage the socialization process in order to maximize a workforce that is committed to providing value to that organization. Individuals interested in building a satisfying career should manage the socialization process in order to effectively determine if the present organization fits well with that individual's needs and desires. Together the intended and unintended actions of the individual and the organization will determine what is learned, how it is learned, and whether the fit between the individual and organization provides rewards for both.

—Georgia T. Chao

See also Mentoring, Person-environment fit (P-E fit), Realistic recruitment, Recruitment, Turnover

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ORGANIZATIONAL STAFFING

Organizational staffing is concerned with having the right people at the right place and time to achieve organizational outcomes. Staffing is a complex, multifaceted process that affects all areas of the organization but is particularly important with regard to organizational effectiveness. As such, the organization strives to attract, motivate, and retain a workforce with the appropriate characteristics to achieve the organization's mission, strategy, goals, and objectives. Viewing staffing as a continuous process rather than a discrete event (e.g., hiring a particular individual) is an essential component of virtually all contemporary staffing models and conceptualizations. Staffing

includes recruitment, selection, employment, and retention and is strongly affected by numerous laws and external conditions that bear directly on organizational employment processes.

Staffing strategy flows from the organization's mission, strategic plan, goals, and objectives that, in turn, influence human resource planning efforts. Human resource plans are developed for the organization as a whole and, in larger organizations, for each business unit. From the staffing perspective, the human resource plan examines an organization's demand for labor and the current labor supply to determine whether any gaps exist. Plans are devised to address the gaps and achieve the desired staffing levels. At the department level, such action plans identify the number of hires and the positions that will be filled within a specific timeframe. Plans must also address economic conditions, the labor market, and skill and technology changes as part of ongoing environmental scanning. Finally, the plan should address issues of diversity and affirmative action.

HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING AND JOB ANALYSIS

Human resource planning helps to identify gaps in supply and demand, but what specifically needs to be known in order to recruit, select, and employ new personnel? All staffing systems are essentially matching processes that evaluate the fit between individual and organizational characteristics. Traditionally, the fit between the individual and a particular position was examined, but increasingly the overall fit with the organization is most important. The individual factors of most concern are knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAO). In light of organizational matching just noted, personality characteristics are an important consideration as well. The way in which organizations assess individuals to determine the suitability of the fit will be examined below in connection with recruitment and selection processes.

Organizations assess jobs and job families through systematic study called job analysis, a process that describes and records job behaviors and activities. Job analysis is generally considered the backbone of an effective human resource management system, and it is particularly important in staffing functions of recruitment and selection, as well as assessing the level of job performance. Job analysis involves the collection of information about jobs in the organization

(not the persons holding the jobs). As such, the analysis focuses on duties, responsibilities, knowledge, skills, and other characteristics required to perform the job. Information can be collected via observation, interviews with job incumbents and supervisors, questionnaires, professional and trade associations, other employers, and published works such as O*NET commissioned by the Department of Labor.

Job analysis information is used as a basis for job descriptions and job specifications. These written documents summarize the information collected during the analysis phase. Job descriptions include the job title, duties, responsibilities, task activities with relative importance of each, job context and working conditions, and the date of the analysis. The date is important, since jobs evolve and shift over time as organizational conditions and technologies change and as new jobs are developed. Job specifications also include the job title, employee qualifications (experience, education, specialized certificates or licenses, etc.), job summary, KSAOs, and date of the analysis. Up-to-date job analysis information (including job descriptions and job specifications) is essential for human resource planning and the range of organizational staffing processes.

Recruitment

When human resource planning indicates that additional employees need to be hired, the organization engages in recruitment activities. The initial goal of recruitment efforts is attracting a pool of potentially qualified applicants to the organization. This pool is then screened until an appropriate number of candidates are offered employment. Recruitment activities include assessment of immediate and long-term employment needs, monitoring the labor market conditions, designing recruitment materials and methods, generating pools of qualified candidates, monitoring the effectiveness of different sources and methods of recruiting, follow-up with candidates regarding hiring decisions, and evaluation of the overall recruitment efforts. Legal issues like the definition of an applicant, company disclaimers, the nature of job advertisements, and misrepresentation of employment opportunities also come into play.

There are a number of strategic choices that organizations make regarding the recruitment process. Does the company want to develop employees by promoting from within, or are needed employees brought

in from outside of the company (i.e., internal vs. external recruiting)? Does the human resources department handle recruitment activities, or is an outside recruitment agency retained for this purpose? What role does technology play? How much discretion do business units and managers have in recruiting employees? How is the recruitment budget developed? Is the recruitment budget administered in a centralized or decentralized fashion? How does the company incorporate diversity issues in the recruitment process? Who is responsible for the success of recruitment activities?

Organizations also make strategic decisions about the appropriate methods for recruiting. Available technology has a significant influence on this process. Web-based recruiting is currently enjoying widespread use, and in fact prospective employees may be encouraged or dissuaded from applying based on a review of the company's Web site.

Once the organization sorts out its recruitment strategy and plan, recruitment is generally conceptualized as sources of recruits and methods utilized to attract recruits. Recruits can be found inside and outside of the organization. Internal candidates, who are already employed by the organization, might be considered for promotion, transfer to another unit or location, job rotation, or other assignment. Often internal job openings reflect a career or mobility path where the open position is the typical next step for the employee. Internal methods include job postings, skill inventories, nominations, and succession plans. Consider job postings. A position can be posted on a bulletin board, in the company newsletter, on the Internet, or on the organization's intranet. Hiring managers need to follow company policy on where to post, the duration of the posting, and the closing date for applications to ensure that interested candidates are aware of the opening. Postings have several benefits such as improved morale, retaining valued employees who may be seeking additional challenges and rewards, and reduced costs when compared with external methods. However, issues can arise when multiple, equally qualified internal candidates apply for a posted job and only one can be selected or when the "heir apparent" is passed over for another candidate. Plans should be made for dealing with such situations.

The organization may need to augment the pool of qualified applicants by looking outside the company. Recruits from the outside may bring new ideas and increase diversity. External sources of employees

include referral programs, walk-ins, employment agencies, temporary help agencies, trade associations and unions, schools (high schools, colleges, and universities), and foreign nationals. External methods include advertisements in the media (print, TV, radio, Web), employment agencies, open houses/job fairs, executive search firms, direct mail, and so on. The mix of methods will depend on the recruitment budget and previous success with each method.

The way that an organization portrays itself (e.g., company Web site and newspaper advertisements) and the jobs for which it is hiring (e.g., full time, part time, permanent, temporary) are critical aspects of the recruitment process. Providing "realistic job previews" that give recruits an accurate and balanced perspective (including negative information) regarding the job and the company is widely recognized as an effective practice in retaining employees once hired. Research supports the notion that realistic previews can reduce employee turnover and, in addition, can increase employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment. There are several possible explanations for the effectiveness of realistic previews: realistic information may inoculate the recruit against unrealistically high expectations when newly hired, the match between the individual and the job may be enhanced by giving realistic information, and the organizational commitment of the new hire is increased because of lack of external coercion or pressure.

Whether or not a recruit is eventually offered employment, the quality of the experience is an important determinant of the feelings and perceptions that recruits have of the process and attributions (positive or negative) they make about the organization. Managing this process so that the majority of individuals have a positive experience is essential, since they will convey such opinions to others and possibly be a consumer of the company's goods and services. Organizations should strive to convey a positive image of the recruitment process.

SELECTION

Selecting employees from a recruitment pool requires information about how well the prospects will perform the job and fit with the organization's culture. All selection systems are probabilistic, meaning that selection mistakes will occur despite the best efforts to minimize such hires. As such, the complexity and sophistication of selection systems vary

greatly. Having explicit policies and procedures along with accurate record-keeping are required in case selection processes face legal challenges. Most organizations use multiple selection devices or procedures to evaluate applicants in a thorough fashion. The employment interview is widely used often in conjunction with application blanks and résumés, references, tests, work samples, and, increasingly, physical ability and drug tests.

The employment interview, a conversation with the purpose of gathering information about an applicant's suitability for hire, does suffer from a number of shortcomings. Research has criticized interviews as unreliable, subject to a number of judgmental errors. The first impression that is formed of an applicant by an interviewer, almost instantaneously, whether positive or negative, is resistant to change even when disconfirming evidence is available. Another error, among many others, is the contrast effect, comparing interviewees with one another. An average applicant may appear very strong when compared to a weak candidate interviewed previously. Training interviewers and using structured interviews (asking the same questions in the same order for all applicants) can help to reduce some of the problems noted in the research.

In addition to the interview, tests are widely used in organizational selection systems. Tests can be thought of as behavioral samples that predict other things, like expected performance levels if hired for the job. The use of tests has increased the focus on important variables in the selection system, such as consistency of measurement (reliability) and whether a selection device measures what it is supposed to measure (validity). Validation of selection devices, showing that such measures are related to job performance, has become an important legal issue when an individual or group claims that the test was not an accurate measure of job performance.

Information gathered during the selection process is evaluated with reference to fit and expected job performance. Two major strategies for combining the results of multiple selection procedures are compensatory and multiple hurdles. In the compensatory approach, a low score on one measure can be offset by a high score on another, yielding an overall score for the candidate. By contrast, in the multiple hurdle approach, the candidate must achieve a minimum or cut-off score on each device (or hurdle) or be eliminated from the candidate pool. Selection models have become quantitative and sophisticated, requiring a

thorough grounding in statistical models for construction and interpretation.

How useful is a selection system? A major aspect of usefulness is the proportion of applicants who perform successfully after being hired. To the extent that success in hiring can be tied to the use of specific selection procedures, there is a gain in the success rate that can be attributed to the use of the procedure(s). Other variables also come into play. The so-called utility of a selection system is influenced by several factors: the number of people hired divided by the total number of applicants (selection ratio), the rate of success of applicants without using the selection device (base rate of success), and how well the test is related to job performance (validity of selection devices). The utility of the system increases when there are many applicants for a few positions, when the base rate is moderate (i.e., 50%), and when the validity of the selection procedure is high. The cost of the selection system is also an issue; adding a new selection procedure must be judged by time, expense, and contribution to predicting success on the job.

RETENTION MANAGEMENT

Retention management is often conceptualized as a process that begins with organizational entry of newcomers through organizational exits, including such events as retirement and reductions in force (downsizing). The focus thus far has been on acquiring employees to enhance organizational effectiveness. New employees have been recruited and selected. The new hires are on the payroll, they have been through the employee orientation program, some have been given training while others will be trained subsequently, and employees will go through a performance appraisal process to see how well they are doing. How long will our new hires remain with the organization? The answer is that we do not know. Organizations are focusing considerable attention on retention management because of the replacement costs and the overall investment in human resources.

The term *turnover* is used when an employee leaves the organization. Perhaps the employee has found a more attractive job at another organization (voluntary turnover), or on the other hand, the employee was performing poorly and was terminated (involuntary turnover). Notice that the former action was initiated by the employee, while the latter was initiated by the organization. Sometimes an organization

will attempt to dissuade an employee from leaving by matching or exceeding the terms of employment offered elsewhere. Similarly, the organization might attempt to provide assistance when the employee is not performing commensurate with expectations. It should be noted, however, that not all turnover is undesirable from the organization's perspective. The classification of turnover has become very complicated as retention has increased in importance. Understanding the causes of turnover (using exit interviews and research) as part of a retention management system is critically important.

There are also situations where large numbers of employees may be at risk. Many organizations have and continue to restructure to increase efficiency, deal with global competitiveness, and achieve profitability. Such reductions in force or downsizing efforts lead to job losses and layoffs. The employees who remain, the "survivors," are also affected by the layoffs. Having a plan with a fair process for implementation has been shown to be very important in downsizing.

LEGAL ISSUES

As noted previously, there are legal requirements that affect every aspect of organizational staffing. Organizations need to be aware of legal obligations and requirements or face the possibility of expensive litigation. Staffing, in a legal sense, deals with the employment relationship. There are laws regulating virtually every aspect of the relationship. Central to this are laws on equal employment opportunity and affirmative action (EEO/AA). These laws include, among others, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964, 1991), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (1967), Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), the Rehabilitation Act (1973), and Executive Order 11246 (1965). Enforcement of the Civil Rights Act, Age Discrimination in Employment, and Americans with Disabilities falls under the jurisdiction of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures* have been adopted by the EEOC, the Civil Service Commission, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Justice. The *Guidelines* provide structure in determining nondiscriminatory testing and selection procedures for employers, labor organizations, employment agencies, and licensing and certification boards. In addition to compliance with the laws noted above, organizations need to develop and

implement equal employment opportunity programs indicative of the organizational commitment to EEO.

Volumes would be needed to review and summarize all of the legal issues in organizational staffing. Those responsible for staffing systems need to be fully conversant with the legal requirements to ensure compliance.

—Nicholas J. Beutell

See also Knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs); Personnel selection; Realistic recruitment; Recruitment; Turnover

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ORIENTATION

In common usage, to orient oneself is to locate oneself in respect to points of reference. In an organizational setting, *orientation* is the process of assisting individuals in locating themselves with respect to the organization's culture, values, vision, mission, goals, structure, and procedures. While typical notions of orientation begin with the new member's entrance into the organizational system, organizations may also consider the orientation process to impact persons outside their system. In some regards, this broader definition of orientation relates to branding, corporate goodwill, and reputation. For the purposes of career development, most employers begin to focus attention on the orientation process somewhere between the recruiting stage and the onboarding stage (when a new employee begins employment). However, many organizations fail to recognize that the process can and should continue past this single moment in time.

It is helpful to think of the orientation process as the organization's formal effort to compete with other potential perspectives. Because the candidate or employee is part of other systems—families,

friendships, and so on—they have access to other, possibly competing, views of the organization that recruits and ultimately employs them. Thus any activity that supports the organization's ability to shape the individual's view of the organization should properly be seen as an orientation effort.

Identifying appropriate goals for each stage of the orientation process and addressing those goals through the appropriate mechanisms are keys to a successful employee orientation process. In each stage, organizations must balance short- and long-term goals.

At the *pre-entry stage*, the principal short-term goal is to generate and encourage positive attitudes toward the organization. This step includes the provision of information sufficient to transform a potential candidate into an actual candidate or to convince a candidate to accept an offer to join the organization. The longer-term goal is to create a commitment to the organization and its objectives. At this stage, of course, the goal is simply to lay the groundwork for that commitment. Because of the demand for highly individualized information and the need to begin the attitudinal transformation of the candidate, personal interactions and other interactive tools tend to be highly successful. However, the expense of these mechanisms means that most organizations must find ways to offer as much interaction as possible to most individuals while focusing in-person efforts on those opportunities with the highest likely return on investment. Organizational Web sites and intranets are the most popular alternative to in-person activities, as they have the potential to provide the wide range of information needed to address concerns and answer questions. A well-crafted Web site or intranet is also a potent transmitter of positive cultural messages.

The *entry stage*, which typically encompasses the first four to six months of employment, is where most organizations focus the bulk of their orientation resources in terms of time, money, and energy. Nearly all organizations hold some sort of local, on-site or in-office orientation for new employees. Most employee orientation programs have several content elements in common: organizational policies and practices, basic logistics of the work, such as parking, security, expected hours, and so on; organizational structure and key individuals in the organization; and the organization's history, culture, values, strategies, vision, goals. Many orientation programs also include introductions to or elementary development of key job skills. That is

not to say, however, that all new employee orientation programs *should* include all these elements. The appropriate goals at this stage vary greatly along several dimensions, including the nature of the business or industry, the type of role to be filled by the new employee, the complexity of skills involved in the job being filled, and the subsequent orientation activities planned for the new employee. For example, the orientation goals of a telemarketing company that has traditionally high turnover and fairly straightforward job descriptions should be quite different from those of a consultancy, which might also have high turnover but which expects a much greater range of skills of its employees. In each case, the company will want to continue its positive cultural message, emphasizing those attributes that make it an attractive employer. But while the telemarketer may choose to emphasize employees' opportunities for commissions, the consultancy may choose to emphasize employees' opportunity to move rapidly toward partnership.

In order to emphasize the company's commitment to its new employees, most employers elect a person-to-person approach for employee orientation, using some combination of human resource personnel, professional trainers, and other staff to personally deliver the message. On the other hand, many companies' orientation programs include long informational sessions that are frequently tedious for the new employee and whose content they do not retain. A far better mechanism for this kind of information is some sort of reference material, to which the employee can turn when questions arise. Good examples are manuals and a company intranet. In practice, it is often to other staff that the new employee turns, so many companies adopt the practice of assigning a mentor or "learning buddy," to make sure the new employee has someone specific to turn to with questions.

Finally, each organization must determine those points throughout an employee's career at which they are in need of further orientation. Each time an employee enters a new career stage, the organization has a new opportunity to orient or reorient them within the system. Examples include annual performance appraisal cycles, promotions, taking on a new role, and taking on management responsibilities. At each of these moments, the organization should help the employee understand how they fit into in the system from their new vantage point. Organizations that fail to recognize the need for further orientation, or that miss the opportunities to provide that positive

orientation, risk losing influence over employees' views to competing perspectives, thus increasing the likelihood of employee turnover. The variety of mechanisms for addressing those goals is as broad as the variation between organizations.

—Tom Hughes

See also Anticipatory socialization, Assimilation and mutual acceptance, Organizational entry, Organizational socialization, Realistic recruitment

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OUTPLACEMENT

Outplacement refers to company-supported initiatives that help terminated employees cope with their termination and find reemployment. These initiatives are often conducted by outplacement firms hired by organizations undergoing downsizings or staff reductions, although some companies provide outplacement assistance internally. Outplacement has become a common business practice, with millions of employees receiving outplacement over the last few decades. The outplacement provided to employees is often part of their severance packages.

The outplacement process typically entails several stages. In the first stage, outplacement counselors attempt to help individuals cope with the shock, anxiety, and stress associated with their recent job loss, often by employing active listening techniques and stress reduction exercises. During the second stage, outplacement specialists help displaced employees evaluate their career interests, skills, and goals. A variety of career-related tests are often utilized at this stage along with in-depth conversations about career plans and strategies for career development. In the final stage, outplacement specialists help clients develop effective job search activities, such as résumé writing, networking, and interviewing. Finally, many outplacement firms and sponsoring organizations follow up with terminated employees to inquire about

their job search and to assess their satisfaction with outplacement services.

Although limited in quantity, research has begun to examine the scientific basis for various components often used in outplacement. For instance, one line of experimental research has demonstrated that job search programs that provide job search assistance and social support result in higher earnings and foster easier job acquisition than those that do not provide such assistance and support.

TYPES OF OUTPLACEMENT

The type of outplacement assistance offered to employees varies widely. For instance, basic assistance programs may consist of single, half-day workshops that focus exclusively on résumé writing and job search activities. In contrast, more in-depth programs might consist of elaborate testing and evaluation, unlimited one-on-one counseling, comprehensive job search support, and unlimited use of facilities and technologies at the outplacement firm. Although there has been little research testing the effectiveness of various outplacement programs, James Westaby's research, utilizing a large sample of displaced managers and executives, has found some evidence to support the use of comprehensive programs in comparison to less comprehensive programs. After controlling for past salary, severance, and demographic variables, this longitudinal study found that displaced managers and executives participating in comprehensive programs with high levels of outplacement support had a greater likelihood of reemployment and received higher salaries in new jobs than individuals participating in programs with lower levels of outplacement support. Results also indicated that the participants in comprehensive programs also took more time to find reemployment. Thus while comprehensive outplacement may result in longer time to reemployment, the outcomes for displaced workers are advantageous. More research is needed to examine the reliability of these findings across various outplacement firms, as well as the degree to which other factors, such as the quality and experience of staff in the outplacement firm, influence outcomes for displaced workers.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF OUTPLACEMENT SPECIALISTS

Outplacement specialists often need to have multidisciplinary knowledge and skills to deal with the

complex set of issues involved in the outplacement process. For instance, specialists often need to have knowledge, skills, and abilities related to individual counseling, career development, social and organizational psychology, job search technologies, financial planning, human resource management, labor law, and labor markets. Outplacement counselors also need to be cognizant of a variety of issues facing their clients such as potential financial strain, psychological pathology, coping patterns, social support, family interactions, job search motivation, expectations about the outplacement process, and self-efficacy toward acquiring quality reemployment. In addition to helping displaced workers develop and implement concrete job search plans of action, outplacement counselors are often well served by continually showing support, encouragement, and empathy to displaced workers. In addition to building trust between the counselor and displaced employee, this helps repair self-esteem for many individuals experiencing shock as a result of losing their jobs.

ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

From a macro perspective, many organizations engage in staff reductions and downsizings to cut costs or to survive difficult business conditions. To assist in staff reduction processes, many companies partner with outplacement firms because of their expertise in managing the complex set of issues associated with such transitional periods. For instance, not only do outplacement firms have systems in place to help displaced workers find reemployment as quickly as possible, but they also provide recommendations to management about how to handle related issues, such as dealing with communications and severance payments to departing employees. Many companies also report additional benefits of using outplacement assistance, such as boosting the morale of employees surviving the workforce reduction, reducing costs of unemployment insurance, lowering the incidence of wrongful discharge litigation by mitigating perceptions on unfair treatment, helping preserve a positive reputation in the community, reducing stress on managers responsible for implementing organizational changes, and feeling as though they acted in a socially responsible manner. However, despite these potential advantages, providing outplacement to displaced workers entails financial costs. The fees for providing outplacement services to displaced employees can range from 10 to 20 percent of

an employee's compensation. However, the costs would be reduced for less in-depth outplacement options, such as group workshops. More research is needed to evaluate the return on investment associated with the use of outplacement not only from business perspectives but also from sociological and psychological perspectives.

Outplacement activities are designed to help terminated employees find reemployment in a timely manner while buffering the repercussions of job loss. The type of outplacement provided to displaced employees varies widely across companies, depending on the type of individuals being displaced and the budget available for outplacement. Several studies have shown a number of beneficial outcomes of outplacement services for terminated employees, both subjective and objective, although future research is needed to further explore the validity and utility of outplacement for serving the diverse needs of displaced employees and their sponsoring organizations.

—James D. Westaby and Orla M. NicDomhnaill

See also Bridge employment, Career transition, Derailment, Downsizing, Job loss

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OUTSOURCING AND OFFSHORING

Outsourcing affects hundreds of thousands of employees around the world every year and generates over \$100 billion in outsourcing contracts in the United States alone. In simple terms, outsourcing is the contracting out of noncore organizational activity to an outside vendor. Outsourcing occurs both domestically

and globally. *Offshoring* is the term used to describe the process whereby jobs are contracted out globally, usually to countries with talented but comparatively less expensive human resources. Current estimates indicate that over 80 percent and perhaps 90 percent of larger companies outsource at least part of their businesses. Although outsourcing initially targeted only transactional-type jobs like housekeeping and catering, it has moved to high-skill technical jobs such as information technology and human resource management. Activities that are often outsourced include information systems/technology, real estate and physical plant logistics, human resources, customer service, finance, marketing, and sales.

Offshoring, because it involves the transfer of jobs from one country to another, is politically controversial. Companies feel pressured to use this kind of outsourcing to maintain price competitiveness but often downplay the use of these practices. In 2004, Foresster Research projected that by 2015, 3.4 billion U.S. office-based jobs will go offshore. This is 10 times the number experienced in 2003. The main countries that have benefited from this practice have been Mexico, China, India, and other Asian countries.

Supporters of this practice suggest that these job losses will be replaced by higher-level technical and analytical jobs in other sectors spurred by the increased demand and purchasing power of the recipient countries. Until these new jobs are created, there are fears of unemployment in the countries where companies use this outsourcing practice. Questions of ethics and quality of the services provided are an area of debate.

It has been proposed that firms outsource to realize strategic advantages from cost savings, increased focus on core competencies, and increased strategic flexibility. Other common reasons include cost reduction, control and cash infusion from sale of assets, and personnel reductions. Outsource service providers through economies of scale and scope and technical expertise can provide services at a lower cost with skilled employees and up-to-date resources. Outsourcing strategy decisions are based on two management theories: the resource-based view of the firm (RBV) and transaction cost economics (TCE).

The use of the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm has directed most corporations to focus on core competencies. Companies now realize that it is most profitable to focus resources on those things they do uniquely well. The underlying assumption of the

model is that resources are both unevenly distributed among competitors and are not perfectly mobile. Therefore, the greatest profits and competitive advantage come from focusing on an organization's inimitable resources.

The choices that companies make on what functions or job types to outsource have been guided by transaction cost economics. TCE theory helps the organization determine which of their supportive, noncore functions they should buy and which they should produce or make in-house. The theory focuses on transactions rather than commodities or technology, stating that it is transactions that mainly determine the efficiency of one mode of exchange over another. The make or buy decision is made using TCE to evaluate the governance structures of firms and markets and to determine which is best suited to economize on transaction costs. The efficiency is determined by comparing costs of planning, adapting, and monitoring task completion under each governance structure. Contributors to these costs include uncertainty, frequency with which the transactions occur, and the degree to which specific investments are required to realize least cost supply. Simply stated, it answers the question: Should the firm make or buy the product or service?

Recently, external market conditions have encouraged outsourcing of various functions. The increased focus on competition and dependency on technology are just a few of the issues directing organizations to get expert help from outsourcing providers. Globalization, for example, requires expertise in national cultures and international business practices. Mergers and acquisitions present unique human resource questions that can be better answered by experts with previous experience.

There are several types of outsourcing. At one extreme there is pure labor contracting, where the contractor provides only employees and the host company provides everything else, including process, systems, technology, materials, facilities, and management. The other extreme is where the contractor provides everything from labor to equipment and the host's sole but critical responsibility is limited to managing the relationship with the service provider. Some newer companies, often called virtual companies, outsource many of their services from the beginning; outsourcing is part of their original business plan. Other companies move to outsourcing for the above-mentioned reasons.

Outsourcing can be introduced to a company in three different ways. In the most severe case, the employees of the company pursuing outsourcing are

terminated and their tasks are taken over by the company that specializes in that particular service. In this scenario, contract workers do the work formerly done by organization members. In other instances, what was previously a division or department of a larger company becomes a stand-alone operation. This is often set up as an arm's-length management organization (ALMO). In a third case, employees and their tasks are taken over by an outside specialist (i.e., the services continue to be provided by those employees who have done the work in the past, but the original company is no longer responsible for their hiring and direct supervision). The results of outsourcing, especially the effects on the employees, can differ based on the type of outsourcing and the outsourcing process.

Most of the published outsourcing results focus on the financial issues. In general, the results are seen as positive, with reductions in cost and increases in capacity and quality of services. There are some outsourcing failures that are often blamed on unrealistic expectations, poor communication, lack of trust between contractor and host, and general mismanagement of the outsourcing relationship. The literature reports outsourcing failures at around 25 percent to 30 percent.

Possibly the greatest failure but least researched aspect of outsourcing is in human issues. In terms of the individual employees, outsourcing may be viewed as positive or negative in relationship to their careers. If the employee provides a technical skill, which is seen as only peripheral or supportive to the existing business, being transferred to a service provider that specializes in the employee's skill will present promotional opportunities not available from the original employer. These outsourcing providers are growing at a rapid pace and will provide job opportunities for many. On the other hand, if the transferred job is in an area such as housekeeping, where the contracting firm has a flat organizational structure with little opportunity for advancement, then the individual's future career prospects might be dim.

When firms outsource some employees, the outsourced employees are not the only ones that are affected. Often trust in and loyalty to the organization

diminishes as the "survivors" (those remaining at the organization) see how the outsourced employees have been treated. In many cases, the outsourced employees are still on site, so other employees are constantly reminded of their plight. Once outsourcing starts at an organization, it is not unusual for the most talented employees to leave, seeking to find jobs before they themselves are outsourced. Commitment levels of the outsourced and the remaining employees may fall, negatively affecting organizational performance. Human resource issues must be addressed in order to prevent the negative response by the employees.

Employee careers and development can be affected by outsourcing in another direct way through the outsourcing of some or all of the human resources department activities. Some organizations see outsourcing human resources areas as a way to develop expert tools such as specific types of training. Other organizations, such as Southwest Airlines see human resources outsourcing as abdicating the role of the employer to lead their people.

—Mary S. Logan

See also Globalization and careers, International careers, Strategic human resource management

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PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Part-time employment is a formalized work arrangement where an employee works fewer hours than what an employer judges to be customary for a full-time employee. For legal and comparative purposes, the U.S. Department of Labor defines part-time employees as those working 1-34 hours during a typical work week and full-time employees as those working 35 or more hours during a typical work week. In 2004, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that part-time employment status was held by about 17 percent of the U.S. labor force. This percentage is likely to increase and is particularly strong in the service and retail employment sectors. In addition, universities report that increasing numbers of their students now hold part-time positions while attending school.

Part-time work is also evident in many other countries, although the number of hours used to define part-time status is variable. European countries demonstrate a part-time employment rate of around 16%, comparable to the U.S. rate, but it has increased more rapidly as some nations have encouraged part-time work as a means of alleviating unemployment.

Historically speaking, the majority of part-time workers in industrialized countries have been female (e.g., 65 percent in the United States, 90 percent in Germany and France, 80 percent in the United Kingdom and Japan). Domestic responsibilities (e.g., housework, child care, elder care) are cited as explanations for these gender differences. Younger people, aged 16 to 19, also account for about 13 percent of U.S. part-timers, many of whom are students at the

high school or university level. Few differences in part-time versus full-time employment have been observed around racial lines. In the future, retirees are anticipated to increasingly work part time. A return to employment is predicted for several reasons. Among these reasons are better health (and longer life expectancy) of older persons, the expected financial needs of many retirees, and possible revision of governmental policies to no longer tie hours of work through earnings tests to government retirement programs (e.g., Social Security benefits).

CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS

Part-time work is one of many new “nonstandard” forms of employment relationships. The conditions under which employees and employers agree to partner are no longer characterized by time and location or by implications regarding job security or advancement. Accordingly, new models of human resource staffing and individual employee career development are evolving, and these models entail part-time employment.

Motives for part-time employment from an employer’s point of view include insufficient justification for hiring full-time employees because of seasonal variation in demand (peak workload time frames such as harvest or holidays), needs for employee staffing (coverage) that are shorter than customary employment periods (i.e., less than eight hours), and insufficient demand for employee skills to justify full-time employment. Employers usually further benefit from such arrangements by paying lower wages and by not having

to provide employee benefits available to full-time employees. In addition, employers may benefit by securing a trial employment of a potential full-time employee. In short, employers accrue higher levels of staffing flexibility and lower human resource costs when employing part-time employees.

Motives for part-time employment from an employee's point of view include a desire to work fewer hours than a full-time employee (e.g., job sharing) for personal reasons (e.g., to care for children or elders, to attend school or training, health or medical limitations) or a perceived need to supplement one's personal or family income (i.e., moonlighting). Over 7 million Americans, for example, hold two jobs, at least one of which is almost necessarily a part-time job. Others are motivated to accept part-time work until full-time work with a current part-time employer (or another full-time opportunity with another employer) becomes available. Unfortunately, this latter category, termed *involuntary part-time employment*, characterizes about a fourth of all part-timers.

In addition to the voluntary versus involuntary subcategories of part-time work, other distinctions can also be made. For example, part-time work may entail on-call, seasonal, or year-round employment, may be permanent or temporary, may be a primary or a secondary job, and may or may not be arranged through a third party (i.e., contract employment). Moreover, there are difficulties in defining part-time work, because the comparative standard regarding what constitutes full-time work is also a changing phenomenon. The historical "40 hours over five days" is a moving benchmark in several ways. Many Americans routinely work more than 40 hours a week. Work schedules are increasingly based on business availability to customers around the world 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Accordingly, many new work scheduling patterns have evolved, making the definition of full-time work a more and more arbitrary reference point (e.g., many nurses now work three 12-hour shifts per week, and this is considered full time).

A case example of this phenomenon can be seen in the increasing number of part-time professionals. These jobs are typically permanent, year-round positions that an organization has elected to fill with an employee seeking a job with reduced hours. Professions that have demonstrated a willingness to engage part-timers with some frequency include law, medicine, accounting, and computer programming. However, defining a part-time professional becomes problematic, because full-time professional work usually

exceeds 40 hours per week, leaving the appropriate hours of reduction for part-time status open to debate. In this case, full- and part-time distinctions become social contractions more than distinctions based on time worked.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME WORKERS

Both academic scholars and practitioners have long speculated that part-time and full-time employees are "different." One reason for this speculation is based on the idea that because part-timers spend less time at work, they are regarded and/or perceive themselves to be only partially included in the workplace. Another reason is that part-time work status alters these employees' frames of reference such that they identify more with other part-timers than full-time employees. More recently, it has been suggested that part-time employees formulate a different psychological contract than full-time employees do with their employers. None of these explanations, however, has yet to achieve widespread consensus.

Empirical studies seeking to determine whether part-time employees are materially different from full-timers with respect to work-related attitudes and behaviors have yielded inconsistent results. However, this body of research was recently examined using meta-analytic procedures (i.e., techniques that assess the combined findings of multiple studies) and revealed the following: First, there is little difference between part-timers and full-timers with respect to their level of job satisfaction (including satisfaction with specific facets of work), organizational commitment, and intentions to quit. Second, full-timers do manifest higher levels of job involvement than part-timers. Third, and perhaps most important, these conclusions did not appear to be affected by the type of job (professional vs. nonprofessional) or employee gender, and only a very small difference was detected based on voluntary versus nonvoluntary part-time status. Employees working part time on a voluntary basis reported higher job satisfaction than part-timers working part time on an involuntary basis.

As this latter finding suggests, what may be more critical to understanding whether part-time workers and full-time workers are different is whether an employee's part- or full-time work status reflects employee decision making or whether work status is organizationally imposed. The term *decision* can even be misleading if the employee freely decides to work

part time but would prefer not to work at all. And few studies have posed questions about preferences for part-time work among those choosing to work full time. In other words, the motives for accepting part-time (and full-time) work may be more complex than the simple voluntary/involuntary dichotomy suggests.

The quality of the part-time job may also have a bearing on part-time employee attitudes and behaviors as well as the employee's career stage. When the least intrinsically rewarding or challenging work assignments are relegated to part-time employees, it is unrealistic to expect such job holders to demonstrate equally favorable attitudes and behaviors as their full-time counterparts. Moreover, individuals seeking postretirement employment may approach a part-time job with a very different mind-set than a nonretired individual (e.g., opportunities for advancement may not be a relevant component of this individual's job satisfaction).

Based on scientific research, managers have a limited basis upon which to argue that part-time employees are less desirable than full-time employees. Only the job involvement of part-timers has consistently been shown to be lower than that of their full-time counterparts. However, additional research on this topic (e.g., motivation, organizational citizenship behavior, perceptions of organizational support) is needed to further substantiate this conclusion, as part-time and full-time work status remains confounded with other characteristics of work previously noted (e.g., temporary work status).

CAREER DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Part-time work is likely to increase in the coming years as a result of two converging trends: (1) the ever-increasing rates of women's labor force participation and (2) a shift in employee career patterning away from traditional, organizationally based careers emphasizing vertical progression to protean career models. As already acknowledged, women are more likely than men to be engaged in part-time work in order to accommodate domestic responsibilities. The increased labor force participation rate of women desiring employment has thus fueled the increase in the number of part-time workers. In addition, the growing ranks of women in managerial and professional jobs have independently contributed to the increase in part-time employees by their encouragement of employers to adopt more family-friendly work-life policies that include part-time work options, along with on-site day care, telecommuting, extended family leave, and so on.

Variability in career patterns continues to increase, and these changes have made the choice to work part-time far more socially acceptable for both men and women. As employers have moved away from life-long employment models and, consequently, responsibility for their employees' career development, employees themselves have concomitantly taken on the responsibility for their career management. The term *protean career*, which asserts that individuals can and should self-direct their careers, is used to capture this change in orientation. Women and men who assume responsibility for their own career management have recognized that there is no longer a single "best" career model and that part-time work can be part of a protean career. "Cutting back," "stepping off the career track," or "following a different career trajectory" by working part-time allows for retraining, changes in career interests, opportunities to pursue personal goals such as travel, volunteer work, taking care of relatives, and so on. Indeed, career experts assert that periodic departure and reentry into the workforce may become much more commonplace.

In the near term, however, moving to part-time work is not without disadvantages. Requests to move from full- to part-time status are frequently denied, and the request itself can derail career prospects. Firms are most likely to approve requests from high-performing and difficult-to-replace employees. Women are more likely to be approved than men, especially for child care reasons as opposed to other personal reasons (e.g., to write a novel). Part-time workers are often provided less challenging assignments and experience fewer opportunities to network, which can initiate a spiral of perceptions that such employees are less valuable to the company.

Despite these disadvantages, nonstandard work options like part-time work are likely to continue to grow. Evidence is already beginning to accumulate to suggest that definitions of career success are rapidly changing away from definitions that are rooted in measures linked to organizational success, to definitions emphasizing the successful integration of personal and work-related goals. Human resource professionals, especially in the service, retail, and leisure and hospitality sectors, who recognize this shift may gain competitive advantage for their firms by demonstrating more employment scheduling flexibility to attract and retain the best employees. Indeed, securing a cadre of loyal, hard-working, part-time employees may be just the solution to employment situations characterized by low-skill jobs, limited opportunities for advancement,

and where, accordingly, employee turnover has traditionally been high and costly. Such a scenario would be win-win for employees and employers alike.

—Paula C. Morrow

See also Family-responsive workplace practices, Flexible work arrangements, Job sharing, Organizational staffing, Protean career

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PAY COMPRESSION

Pay compression is present when individuals with more years of experience receive pay rates nearly equal to (compression) or less than (inversion) individuals with

fewer years of experience. Pay compression most commonly occurs when demands from the external labor market push the starting salaries of organizational newcomers to pay levels that are similar to those of existing employees. In other words, as job tenure with the organization increases, wage growth is stifled and the value of additional years of tenure declines over time. As a result, there is a narrowing of the pay differentials between employees with differing levels of experience. Pay compression typically results when the salaries or wages of organizational members do not grow at the same pace as external market wage rates and more recently hired employees are paid at rates similar to longer tenured employees. On an individual employee level, the degree of compression an individual experiences is determined by the relationship between an individual's seniority, their salary level, and the salary of individuals with less experience. Therefore, an individual employee's relative position within a pay structure is the key determinant of their experienced level of pay compression.

A unique instance of compressed pay levels occurs when organizations are operating in markets in which there is high demand for skilled employees and these organizations are forced to raise the pay rates of newcomers in order to attract them. When companies are designing a pay system, they may simultaneously use both external market surveys, in which supply and demand pressures are used to establish pay rates, along with internal job evaluation systems, in which the worth of a given position is determined in relation to organizational strategy and design. Research has found that pay compression may be an outcome when organizations focus more heavily on these external market pressures, via an external equity strategy, than on internal job evaluations or job equity analyses, both internal equity strategies, when determining wage rates. The greater demand for qualified employees makes employers willing to pay more for skilled workers, thus directing their efforts toward an external equity strategy. To attract the best employees, companies may ignore internal pay equity and pay the market value for workers instead. However, such actions produce pay compression by narrowing the pay ratios between newcomers to the organization and current members.

In recent years, the problem of pay compression has been particularly prevalent in high-growth industries and in occupations where market forces push starting salaries for new hires to increasingly higher levels in an attempt to stay competitive in the recruitment of new

employees. As a result, wages increase faster in the external labor market than in the internal company structure. For example, recent studies have found that internal pay rates grow, on average, 3.4 to 3.7 percent per year. However, in the external labor market, wages might increase in the range of 10 to 15 percent per year. Accommodation of these external pay rates when recruiting and selecting organizational newcomers will then narrow the pay gap between employees of differing levels of organizational experience.

Currently, pay compression is argued to be endemic across pay systems inside a vast majority of private, public, and not-for-profit organizations and across all major industry types. Some have argued that changes in the economy, the use of outsourcing, and general economic and managerial control policies are leading this new wave of pay (both wage and salary) compression well beyond what has traditionally been experienced. As pay rates become more restricted inside organizations, for whatever reason, these pay rates do not tend to recover at the pace of those newly hired by organizations. It could be argued that organizations are not only ignoring the experience and loyalty factors of their workforces but are failing to respect the external wage and salary market unless new talent is needed from outside the organization.

It is important to realize the negative ramifications that can be associated with pay compression. Multiple streams of research have shown that the amount of pay an employee receives strongly influences key attitudes and behaviors such as job performance, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and intentions to leave an organization. The level of pay also impacts an individual's feelings of self-worth and the perception of their value to the organization. In addition, organizations and managers should be aware that individuals are not only concerned with the absolute amount of money they make but also how that level of pay compares to that of other individuals in the organization. Employees frequently compare their pay against that of their coworkers in an attempt to determine their personal value and status in the organization.

Variations in pay rates among employees are justifiable and, therefore, deserved if the relative worth and contribution of those employees differ. Under such conditions, pay differentials are viewed as equitable and fair. However, problems arise when the pay differentials between individuals are not as wide as employees believe they should or could be. In conditions of pay compression, individuals of differing levels of experience

are receiving similar pay rates. As a result, a perception of unfairness, or inequity, can be created as the more experienced employee does not feel that their pay level is reflective of their performance, loyalty, and commitment to the organization. Less tenured employees are receiving similar pay as longer tenured employees because the external labor market created an opportunity for them to demand a higher starting salary, not because their relative contributions are similar.

Because pay compression occurs across groups of differing experience, it will likely be viewed as unfair and be detrimental to employee performance and organizational outcomes. Limited variance in pay levels between individuals in a relative group, such as those with similar levels of experience, is desirable. However, to guard against perceptions of unfairness, differentials must be present across individuals of differing levels of experience. When pay compression occurs, these differentials are eroded. As a result, those longer-tenured employees will likely feel that their pay is unfair and begin to look outside the organization for opportunities to resolve this inequity. In addition, their commitment to the organization will suffer and their performance levels may fall. These individuals may perceive that their value to the organization is unrecognized, and as a result, their self-esteem, satisfaction, attachment, and motivation can suffer. Such negative outcomes suggest that organizations must be aware of the potential danger of allowing external market strategies to overtake internal equity and stimulate pay compression within their pay structures. Each new generation of employees seemingly demands greater attention to fairness of rewards in the workplace. Understanding this reality will position the issue of pay compression as increasingly salient to organizations in the future.

—Amy B. Henley and Gary C. McMahan

See also Compensation, Merit-based pay, Pay-for-performance reward systems

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PAY-FOR-PERFORMANCE REWARD SYSTEMS

Pay-for-performance reward systems are one of the major types of variable-based pay plans. In compensation terms, the guaranteed salary a person receives in each paycheck is referred to as base pay. Variable pay is a monetary component that is offered in addition to base pay. Thus, variable pay plans, including pay-for-performance, involve money that is at risk of being lost. What distinguishes pay-for-performance reward systems is that the variable pay component is awarded on the basis of individual or group behavior or productivity. Such systems are seen as encouraging the retention of high-performing individuals, although skill-based pay or competency-based pay systems are seen as more consistent with high commitment workforces.

Pay-for-performance, then, is a type of variable pay that is based on behavior, productivity, or the attainment of some other goal of importance to the organization. Pay may be allocated, and also measured, at the individual, group, or organizational level. The award is an additional at-risk (i.e., unlike base salary it is not guaranteed) component that is added to base pay but does not become a part of the calculation of base pay in the future. The questions with pay-for-performance include (1) how to measure work and (2) how to convert this assessment into monetary payouts.

The four basic steps in setting up a pay-for-performance plan include the following:

1. Introduction phase: Plan the switch from the old to the new compensation plan
2. Design phase: Determine basic design, including consideration of various legal issues
3. Formula phase: Determine basic measures and formula for converting performance to money
4. Implementation phase: Introduce and communicate plan to employees

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL PAY-FOR-PERFORMANCE

Pay-for-performance may be measured and awards made at the individual level. In some ways, this may be thought of as being similar to the older concepts of piece rate, that is, a portion of individual pay is based upon the quantity or quality of individual performance. Performance may be evaluated at the individual level using objective measures of performance, performance appraisals, 360 evaluations, or evaluations of progress toward goals. A matrix is then set up in order to convert performance into pay increments; this matrix may consider simultaneously a number of performance and profitability indicators.

ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL PAY-FOR-PERFORMANCE

Pay-for-performance may also be calculated at the team, group, or organizational level and may be based upon metrics, including cost, quality, delivery, waste, production, downtime, and safety. Organizational level schemes often involve participative management and a suggestion system. Some common organizational level pay-for-performance methods include profit sharing, gain sharing, and goal sharing. The actual payout is based on a combination of performance and overall profitability. Employee involvement and trust are key components to a successful organizational-level pay-for-performance plan.

PAY-FOR-PERFORMANCE DISTINGUISHED FROM MERIT PAY

Both pay-for-performance and merit pay involve rewards for individual performance or productivity. The fundamental difference is in the nature of the payouts. With merit pay, the associated wage increase is added to the base salary. Thus, in future years, the base salary is increased by the merit pay award from previous years. With pay-for-performance, the additional pay must be earned or is at risk every year.

PAY-FOR-PERFORMANCE DISTINGUISHED FROM SKILL- AND COMPETENCY-BASED PAY

Skill- and competency-based pay can be considered types of pay-for-performance but are usually distinguished. Whereas pay-for-performance rewards

performance or productivity, skill-based pay provides monetary incentives for acquiring various skills, knowledge, or abilities. Competency-based plans provide rewards for the acquisition of various behavioral competencies; skill- and competency-based plans are often differentiated based upon the level of worker, lower (skill) or higher (competency). The skills or competencies need not be directly related to the current job being performed but may be related to organizational needs, roles, or more general skills.

Skill- and competency-based pay plans may include a component that is added to base pay or may involve an annual payout. The incentive to acquire skills is consistent with various plans for high commitment workforces and with individual career development.

LINKS TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Pay-for-performance plans at the individual level may be seen as more consistent with protean career principles than with career development within a high commitment workforce. Because the emphasis in a pay-for-performance plan is on productivity and performance, individuals may be unwilling to take time out for personal development unless they see such efforts as consistent with long-term personal goals.

Skill-based and competency-based plans are very consistent with internal career development programs and with the concept of a high-commitment workforce. Both reward directly individual investments in training and development.

Organizational level pay-for-performance plans may require an investment in development, especially among lower level employees. Such plans require greater employee commitment and an understanding on the part of employees of quantitative variables and quality-improvement methodologies. Retention rates tend to be higher among high-ability or high-performing employees under a pay-for-performance plan. Turnover rates will be higher among low-ability employees. Thus, pay-for-performance can be seen as encouraging career development among highly talented employees, as the plans are an inducement to such employees to stay with the organization. On the other hand, they may have no or a negative effect on career development among low- and mid-range employees.

EVALUATION OF PAY-FOR-PERFORMANCE

Pay-for-performance involves the use of a variable or an at-risk pay component based upon either individual

or group performance. As might be expected, these plans tend to lead to greater satisfaction and acceptance when performance and productivity are high, and tend to be seen more negatively during bleak economic times. In addition, the acceptance of such plans will depend on the fairness of the performance measurement systems. Skill- and competency-based methods are probably more consistent with a high commitment workforce, and an associated emphasis on career development, than are pay-for-performance plans. A recent study found that despite the increased costs of pay-for-performance reward systems, they did result in substantial positive utility.

—Dennis Doverspike

See also Compensation, Merit-based pay, Pay compression

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PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND FEEDBACK

The purposes of a *performance appraisal* fall within two broad categories, namely administrative and developmental. The former provides a basis for decisions regarding promoting, demoting, transferring, compensating, laying off, or terminating an employee.

Because most Western countries have laws that affect these decisions, organizational decision makers must take these into account when making an administrative decision that affects an employee's status in the organization. The second purpose of a performance appraisal is concerned with ways of inculcating in an employee the desire for continuous improvement.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

For a performance appraisal to increase a person's performance, five steps must be taken.

Step 1. Determination of the Metrics

Step 1 requires determination of the metrics or criteria on which a person will be evaluated. An axiom in psychology is "that which gets measured gets done." If people are unsure of what is expected of them, they are unlikely to meet those expectations. Performance criteria, the metrics that influence administrative decisions, may include bottom-line cost-related outcomes such as revenue generated, costs reduced, or voluntary employee turnover within one's team. The advantage of bottom-line measures is the relevance to the organization as well as their interobserver reliability; that is, two or more appraisers are highly likely to make the same appraisal, independently, regarding an employee's performance when bottom-line measures are used. The disadvantages of these measures are fivefold. First, they are often excessive in that they are affected by situational factors beyond a person's control (e.g., the economy). Second, they are usually deficient in that they do not take into account factors for which a person should be held accountable (e.g., team playing skills). Third, they can encourage a "results at all costs" mind-set, which in turn can lead to ethical, if not legal, issues. Fourth, outcome measures may be available for a team, but often they are nonexistent for assessing an individual's performance. Fifth, even when such measures do exist, they only yield information on the "score" and do not provide information on what an employee should start doing, stop doing, or be doing differently. Information on the latter is critical for coaching others as well as oneself for inculcating a desire for continuous improvement.

A second performance criterion that can be used for making performance appraisals is an assessment of a person's traits such as creativity and initiative. The advantage of trait measures is that they are usually applicable to all employees in all jobs. Both the CEO and the hourly employee must be "conscientious." A downside of using traits as a performance criterion is that they are ill defined. Consequently, they invite acrimony between the person who receives the appraisal and the person who conducts it. Moreover, the likelihood that two or more appraisers will make the same appraisal decision independently

is low. Hence the courts too take a dim view of trait appraisals. The solution is to define these traits behaviorally. This is accomplished through a job analysis.

To attain an organization's goals requires a strategy. To implement the strategy requires employee knowledge of the behaviors necessary to implement the strategy. This is accomplished through a job analysis. A metaphor for a job analysis is a "recipe" for success. The job analysis specifies in writing what the person must do (behaviors) to implement the strategy effectively. People who are aware of the aims and objectives of a job (e.g., program coordinator), who frequently observe incumbents performing the job, and who can discern competent from incompetent behavior are asked to identify behaviors that are critical to the implementation of the organization's strategy. Behavioral observation scales (BOS) and behavioral expectation scales are both based on a job analysis called the critical incident technique. Studies have shown that how one is appraised on BOS correlates significantly with bottom-line measures. Moreover, BOS have been shown to be content valid in that they contain a representative sample of the behaviors critical for an employee to demonstrate on the job in order to be seen as effective. Finally, these behavioral criteria facilitate performance feedback, identification of training needs, and the setting of specific high goals. In short, behavioral criteria developed from a job analysis ensure that people are coaching others as well as themselves on "the right things."

Step 2. 360-degree Feedback

Once the appraisal instrument is developed, the second step is to determine who should use it. Traditionally, the answer has been the employee's supervisor. Supervisors, however, are often unable to gain a complete picture of an employee. In recognition of this fact, many organizations get a comprehensive assessment of an employee by soliciting feedback from peers, subordinates, and the employees themselves in addition to the supervisor. Hence the term *360-degree feedback*. Through this 360-degree vantage point, an employee's strengths and developmental needs are identified. This approach is especially applicable for autonomous teams. Peers, for example, are usually in a far better position to provide accurate assessments of team members than is one single individual, namely a supervisor. The role of the boss is primarily to be an information gatherer, who assesses

the information and coaches an employee on an ongoing basis with regard to goal setting and goal attainment. The emphasis on coaching reflects the growing shift in emphasis by organizational decision makers to a performance management system rather than the traditional performance appraisal that typically occurs only one to four times a year.

Step 3: Goal Setting

Feedback is only useful to the extent that a person acts on it. For behavior to improve, the person must use the feedback to set specific high goals. Goal setting is the third step in the performance appraisal process. A study of highly educated engineers and scientists shows that the higher the goal, the higher the person's performance. Similar findings have been found in performance appraisal studies involving unionized employees. Nevertheless, the advantages of goal setting, namely increasing a person's focus, effort, and persistence, can be a two-edged sword. Once a goal is set, people may direct their attention to one area of their job (e.g., revenue) at the expense of another aspect that is also important to the implementation of an organization's strategy (e.g., team playing). A "balanced score card" ensures the proper weighting of the goals and the metrics for assessing goal attainment. Because so many faculty members in top tier universities place so much emphasis on research, many of these universities have subsequently implemented a 40/40/20 scorecard whereby 40 percent of a faculty member's assessment is based on teaching, 40 percent is based on research, and 20 percent is based on a person's contribution to the university as a whole (e.g., service on committees).

Step 4: Ensuring Objectivity

Appraisals often reflect the biases of the appraiser rather than the performance of the person being appraised. For example, the extent to which the employee is similar to the person or persons who are doing the appraisal can ensure a favorable appraisal. Gender proportion in a group can affect a person's evaluation even when there is no actual difference in the performance of women and men. Increasing the representation of women in the group increases the likelihood of a positive appraisal of a female employee. Training can minimize observer biases. When appraisers are given several hours of instruction where they view people on videotape, receive feedback

on their evaluation, are informed of the judgmental error, and discuss ways to minimize errors in the future, objectivity increases significantly. This training is the fourth step to take for ensuring an effective appraisal process.

Step 5: Coaching

The fifth step involves ongoing coaching of employees. Day-to-day coaching has a more beneficial effect on a person's performance than a quarterly, biannual, or annual performance appraisal. To the extent that the goals that are set are challenging, an employee is likely to encounter difficulties in attaining them. Waiting until the end of an appraisal period to offer an employee advice is nonsensical. Ongoing coaching should focus on outcome expectancies and the employee's self-efficacy. The role of the coach is to help people see the relationship between what they do and the outcome they can expect. "When you approach a customer this way, here is the outcome you can expect; when you approach the customer that way, here is a very different outcome you can expect." Self-efficacy refers to task-specific confidence ("I can do this"). The role of a coach is to instill optimism, to build resiliency following failure. Ways to accomplish this include (1) giving the person assignments, sequencing the tasks in such a way that they all but guarantee early wins. With a succession of wins, a can-do mind-set forms; (2) finding a model with whom the person identifies who has either attained similar goals or is in the process of doing so; and (3) identifying a significant other. A significant other is a person to whom the person listens. There is a strong tendency for us to behave in accordance with the expectations of those who are significant to us. Persuasion by a significant other that a goal is indeed attainable will increase a person's effort and persistence.

CONCLUSION

Performance appraisals are among the most important systems/processes in an organization. Performance appraisals are the basis for determining whether an organization's selection/staffing system is effective. In the process of ongoing appraisals, decision makers discover whether the person has the desire but lacks the requisite knowledge and skills to attain one or more goals. Hence performance appraisal is a basis for determining who should be trained as well as what should be trained. Ongoing coaching ensures that the

person is motivated to apply newly acquired knowledge and skills to attain the specific high goals that were set. With goal attainment, an employee's confidence is increased and even higher goals are set. This performance cycle leads to a high-performing individual in a high-performing organization.

—Gary Latham

See also Three-hundred-sixty-degree (360°) evaluation, Training and development

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PERSON-ENVIRONMENT FIT (P-E FIT)

The person-environment interactional and transactional models assume that human behavior tends to be influenced by many determinants both in the person and in the situation. The models emphasize the effects of person-situation interactions on personality, satisfaction, and well-being and suggest that behavior involves a continuous interaction between individuals and situations. As noted by Walter Mischel, we can't

take a person out of personality, but, at the same time, we cannot ignore the fact that environments and social cultures, like people, have personalities and influence behavior and well-being.

THE INTERACTIONAL PERSPECTIVE: A DEFINITION

Norman S. Endler and David Magnusson have defined interactional psychology as the scientific investigation of a complex interplay of situations and persons in determining behavior. They further suggest that there are four basic elements of the person-situation interactional model. The first basic element suggests that behavior is a function of a continuous process of multidirectional interaction between the individual and the situations he or she encounters. Second, the individual is an intentional, active agent in this interactional process. Third, on the person side of the interaction, cognitive and motivational factors are essential determinants of behavior. Fourth, on the situation side, the psychological meaning of situations and cultures for the individual is an important determining factor. The interactional perspective may also be expressed as $B = f(P, E)$, where B stands for behavior, f for function, P for person, and E for the environment or situation. Thus, in many respects the interactional perspective may be viewed as a synthesis of person and environment in which the interaction of the two is the main source of behavior. In attempts to assess and understand behavior, the various theories of person-environment psychology discussed below have in general mirrored the interactional perspective. However, as we shall see, within this perspective the theoretical frameworks have emphasized different concepts and variables.

PERSON-ENVIRONMENT FIT PSYCHOLOGY: MODELS AND PERSPECTIVES

John L. Holland's theory is based on the notion that behavior is a function of personality and social environment. The theory suggests that behavior is a function of the complementary match or congruence between the individual's personality style and the psychological environment. Holland suggests that individuals enter environments because of their personalities and remain in those environments because of the reinforcements and satisfactions obtained through the interactions in that environment. In

general, research testing the theory clearly indicates that individuals tend to choose and enter college majors and occupational environments consistent with their personality types. In addition, evidence suggests that to some extent person-environment congruence is related to measures of job satisfaction and stability, job involvement, work quality, productivity, and well-being but not necessarily to measures of decision making, sociability, and problem-solving ability.

Rudolf H. Moos's social ecological perspective is based on the general principle that the way one perceives the environment tends to influence the way one will behave in that environment. Thus, Moos focuses on the social climate (the personality of the environment) by suggesting that environments, like people, have unique personalities. Just as some people are more supportive and nurturant than others, so are some environments more supportive and nurturant than others. In terms of research, the evidence indicates that people tend to be more satisfied and comfortable, less depressed and irritable, and more likely to report beneficial effects on their self-esteem in environments that they perceive emphasize the human relationship dimensions. The human relationship dimensions assess the degree to which people are involved in the setting, the degree to which they support and help one another, and the extent to which they express themselves freely and openly. In essence, people report being more satisfied and more productive in environments that they perceive to be relationship oriented.

The theory of work adjustment (TWA) views work as an interactive and reciprocal process between the individual and the work environment and grew out of research begun in 1959 that investigated the work adjustment of vocational rehabilitation clients. Based on results from their initial studies, Rene V. Dawis and Lloyd H. Lofquist developed a theory that has as its primary focus the proposition that tenure (length of stay on a job) will be predicted by a combination of satisfaction (workers' self-reported job satisfaction) and satisfactoriness (e.g., supervisors' ratings of employees as performing satisfactorily). Also important is how the two interact (greater job satisfaction would lead to higher ratings of satisfactoriness, and higher ratings of satisfactoriness would lead to a great job satisfaction). Thus, the theory focused on the interaction of the person and the work environment. Research evidence from a variety of settings supports the importance of fit between the person and the

environment for achieving both satisfaction and satisfactoriness. In addition, there is a growing body of research evidence supporting their proposition that as a worker remains longer on a particular job, the worker will change in ways that are more correspondent (congruent) with the work environment.

Robert W. Lent, Steve D. Brown, and Gail Hackett recently developed a comprehensive model of career development that addresses interest development, vocational choice, and vocational performance. Central to their theory are three variables from general social cognitive theory: self efficacy ("Can I do this?"), outcome expectations ("If I do this, what will happen?"), and personal goals. Personal goals assist in organizing and sustaining behavior, although environmental events and personal history certainly help shape behavior. The model also includes Albert Bandura's triadic reciprocity that indicates bidirectional causal relationships between personal attributes, external environmental factors, and overt behavior. The research evidence indicates that self-efficacy can be improved with self-regulatory scales training programs that provide both ways of obtaining better performance outcomes and drawing more appropriate conclusions from those performances. Stated differently, when self-efficacy is improved, job performance improves. For example, training programs have been found to increase the interest and performance in math and science for young women.

Lawrence A. Pervin's model notes that person-environment interaction, and thereby questions of congruence or fit, involve relations between multiple personal goals and multiple environmental demands or opportunities for goal attainment. The questions of congruence or fit must be considered in terms of person systems, environment systems, and the relations between person-environment systems. What is important to note is that multiple goals (the person) are involved with multiple affordances (the environment and action possibilities), and the environment provides for action possibilities that are congruent for some goals but not with others. Goal hierarchies and plans are central to Pervin's concept of the person. For Pervin, behavior is motivated, and the concept of goals is suggested as a useful motivational concept.

Brian R. Little's social ecological perspective demonstrates the importance of completing personal projects in explaining and predicting human well-being and adaptation. More specifically, traits and personal contexts facilitate the pursuit of personal

projects and a sense of adaptation and well-being. To the extent that people are engaged in personal projects that are meaningful, well-structured, supported by others, efficacious, and not too stressful, their well-being is enhanced and the person-environment process is rewarding.

Kenneth H. Craik suggests that understanding individual environment transactions involves the interplay between traits, goals, and behavior settings. On the person side are goals and personality traits. The environment is defined in terms of behavior settings that are implicated in the actions of people as they pursue major life goals. Behavior settings link people and environments according to behavioral rules and individual pursuits. Personality traits may be viewed as facilitating or thwarting the pursuit of life goals in a behavior setting context. According to Craik, traits, goals, and behavior settings may be analyzed in terms of the ongoing person-environment process.

Benjamin Schneider, D. Brent Smith, and Harold W. Goldstein suggest that people make the environment and that good *person-environment fit* (the individual has the characteristics that are similar to the characteristics of the persons in the environment or the organization) may result in positive outcomes for the individual over the short term, namely in terms of adjustment, satisfaction, and commitment. These authors suggest, however, that over the long term, this cycle may yield homogeneity in thinking, decision making, and action and, in this context, discuss some aspects of the dark side of person-environment fit.

Robert Hogan and Brent W. Roberts suggest that people choose activities and interactions that are consistent with their identities and avoid interactions that are inconsistent with their identities or their motives, goals, and values. These authors note that people's past choices of situations tend to predict their future involvement in various environments. Substantial evidence indicates that preferences for environments effectively predict occupational membership, occupational tenure, and occupational change. These preferences tend to be stable over time because people tend to choose environments depending on their motives and goals.

Jack L. Nasar's theoretical framework conceptualizes the person in terms of personality predispositions and how our perceptions of physical environments facilitate an evaluative image that influences meaning and behavior. The evaluative images that are formed based on these perceptions influence subsequent

meaning of behavior. Stated differently, how we perceive the environment (pleasing, arousing, exciting, and relaxing) influences our view of that environment and subsequent behavior. Once again, the concept of congruence is relevant.

IMPLICATIONS

There are a number of conceptual and methodological issues regarding person-environment psychology and the research that has examined this process. For example, studies of person-environment congruence frequently implement a point-in-time view of congruence or fit. The primary approach has been to describe the person and the environment and explore their independent and interaction effects. In essence, the research generally is conducted in one point in time. However, a number of theoretical frameworks note that people tend to seek out complementary or congruent environments and that environments attract, retain, and influence these individuals. Bandura, for example, suggests that humans act on the environment; they create, uphold, and transform their environment in an interplay between personal agency and environmental influences. According to Bandura, people are producers of their life circumstances and not just products of them. Thus, these assumptions further suggest the need for research designs that run across time. Very few studies have empirically investigated the person-environment hypothesis from a longitudinal perspective. This very clearly needs to be added to the research agenda.

In addition, major methodological issues continue to revolve around ways of measuring people's personality, interests, and environment, and congruence itself. From all indications, people are the strength. The person concept has been operationalized using a variety of traditional inventories of personality, interest, competencies, and values that have proven reliability and validity. For example, theories conceptualize and define the person in terms of motives, values, projects, pursuits, traits, and major life goals. The measurement quality of the instruments used is such that we can be reasonably certain that we have obtained a good estimate of the person side of the equation. However, actually measuring the environment or the situation has been far more elusive. There is no question that we need better (more reliable and valid) assessments of the environment. Stated differently, we are still in the early stages of our understanding of the

characteristics of the situation or environment that affect behavior. Different from personality, we have no well-accepted taxonomies we can use to describe the significant dimensions of situational or environmental variability.

In spite of limitations, it seems that the above theories and models represent a cluster of attitudes, implicit if not explicit, concerning the relationship between the individual and the environment. Each theory does have its assumptions, even though at times they are not clearly stated. Each theory has stimulated some meaningful research that has implications for performance, satisfaction, and well-being. Many of the investigations have procedural difficulties, but the fact remains that, to a varying degree, the effectiveness of each theory has been empirically examined. In any event, these approaches hopefully will continue to lay the groundwork for more sophisticated theories, research, and practice.

—W. Bruce Walsh

See also Holland's theory of vocational choice, Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment, Social cognitive career theory

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PERSONAL GLOBE INVENTORY

The *Personal Globe Inventory* (PGI) is a new interest inventory based on a spherical model of interests that measures activity preferences, activity competence beliefs, and occupational preferences. The PGI is unique in that it explicitly incorporates prestige as a prominent factor in interest assessment. Through the use of innovative features in profile interpretation, the PGI offers individualized profiles, thus providing an assessment that may be applicable to many users at various points in their career development.

The globe model is an extension of John Holland's six-type model. He proposed that interests can be characterized by six personality types (i.e., Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional) and that these six RIASEC types are arranged in a hexagon. The development of the spherical structure of interests evolved out of a series of studies conducted by Terence Tracey and James Rounds. Their exploratory research demonstrated that an eight-type model of interests fits their data well or better than Holland's six-type model, pointing to the arbitrary nature of Holland's RIASEC types. In addition to validating the presence of the two dimensions typically found in interest data, Dale Prediger's People/Things and Data/Ideas, they found a third dimension of prestige, a salient but often overlooked variable in vocational interest assessments.

Best conceptualized as an occupational interest globe with the dimension of prestige represented along

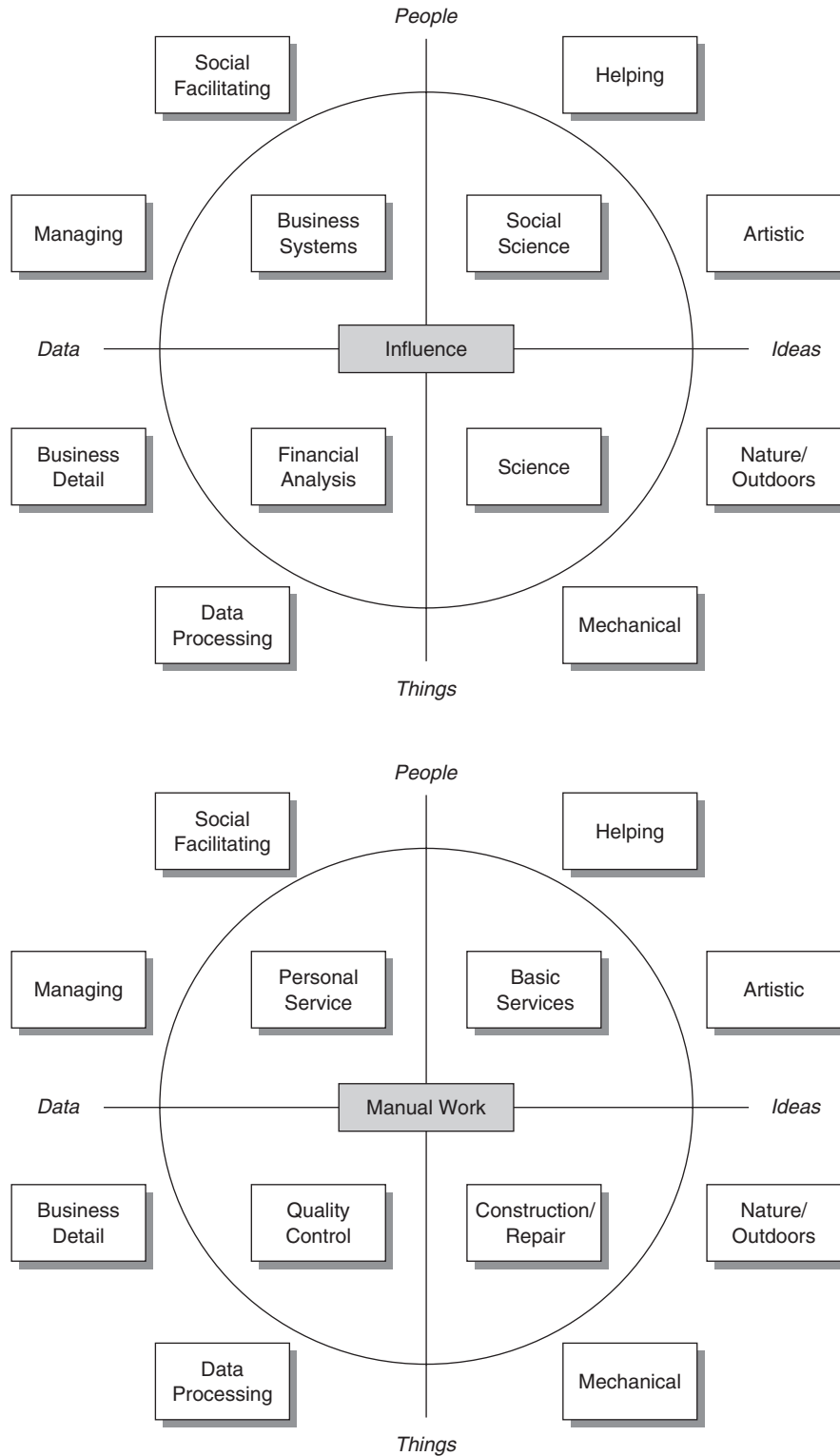


Figure 1.

the north pole–south pole axis and differentiating interest areas, the PGI is depicted in Figure 1. With the addition of the dimension of prestige, the PGI

yields scores from 18 spherical scales that represent three dimensions of People/Things, Data/Ideas, and Prestige. In addition, the PGI also yields information

provided by many other interest inventories scores including eight basic interest scales (e.g., social facilitating, helping, artistic, nature/outdoors, mechanical, data processing, business detail, and managing), six RIASEC scales, and Prediger's two dimensions. Research on the psychometric properties of the PGI supports its reliability and validity across gender, educational level, and ethnicity.

The PGI offers several innovative approaches to interest profile interpretations. PGI profiles are depicted by a circular graph with a single vector score. The direction of the vector on the circle enables a simple interpretation of an individual's major area of interest; the magnitude, or length, represents the strength or differentiation of that interest area with high vector lengths indicating well-differentiated interests. Another unique feature of the PGI is that it has the capacity to provide individually adapted output presentations based on the user's profile information so that only salient features for that particular user are graphically displayed. The flexibility of the instrument makes it applicable for a broad range of persons.

The incorporation of prestige in the PGI has implications for career development practice and research. In clinical application, the inclusion of a dimension of prestige enables assessments across a wide range of both low and high prestige areas, making it applicable for a broad group of users whose interests may reflect different preferences along the prestige continuum. In research, the inclusion of prestige with basic interest circles could allow for a more thorough investigation of salient vocational psychology hypotheses in which prestige may play a central role, like the person-environment congruence hypothesis.

—Christy E. Hofsess and Terence J. G. Tracey

See also Holland's theory of vocational choice, Interests, Strong Interest Inventory

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PERSONALITY AND CAREERS

Personality refers to characteristics that make individuals unique, including their prototypical thoughts, emotions, interests, habits, and behaviors. Psychological in nature, personality is relatively stable over time. Personality plays a significant role in determining how a person behaves in various situations. Many dimensions of personality have been linked to *career* development. Almost every element of a person's career is in part determined by his or her personality. Such fundamental career decisions as occupational choice, early career socialization, job performance, career satisfaction, and career changes are affected by personality.

Personality can influence our behavior in different ways. Human personality plays a direct role in determining our behaviors; our dispositions or personality traits directly influence our actions. For example, extroverted people would be expected to behave in an outgoing and sociable fashion in most situations encountered throughout life. Personality reflects peoples' natural tendencies to behave in certain ways; people are remarkably consistent in their behaviors over time in part because of the direct effect of personality.

However, personality is not always an important influence on peoples' behavior; its significance varies from situation to situation. A "strong" situation has relatively clear expectations for appropriate behavior; in a strong situation, the situational expectations are stronger than personality in influencing behavior. For example, a boisterous and gregarious personality might choose to behave in a more calm and sedate fashion when meeting with the boss because this type of behavior is expected by one's immediate supervisor. In this example, the situation (meeting with the boss) dominates the personality (boisterous). Situations without such clear-cut behavioral expectations are termed *weak* situations, and in these instances, personality becomes a primary determinant of behavior.

Another perspective is based on the concept of interactional psychology; this approach maintains that behavior is jointly determined by personality and situation. People and situations interact to create patterns of behavior; people influence situations and situations also influence people. In particular, the interactional approach notes that personality plays an important role in determining the types of situations

people choose to enter. For example, an introverted person might choose jobs that do not require much contact with others. People engage in a complex process where they select, interpret, and change situations; thus they can also shape situations to suit their personality. For example, people can change their work methods, procedures, and task assignments in order to create a more hospitable situation at work. Both the dispositional and interactional approaches are relevant for understanding the relationship between personality and career development.

THE CONCEPT OF FIT

The idea of examining the fit between person and environment to gain insights into human behavior has resulted in an increased understanding of many work-related issues, including career development. The extent to which there is a correspondence or congruence between person and situation is related to such outcomes as job performance, satisfaction, job tenure, and turnover. A subset of this research has focused on the fit or match between person and occupation. The premise of this approach is that positive outcomes occur when the characteristics of people are similar to those of their occupation. The fit between a person's interests and occupational types has been especially useful in understanding careers.

VOCATIONAL INVENTORIES

Several inventories assist in vocational guidance by assessing peoples' interests and considering how those interests fit with various occupations. An early approach was the Strong Interest Inventory, which compares peoples' interests with the interests of people already working in a particular occupation. A recent version of the Strong Interest Inventory includes broad personal style scales that reflect preferences in living and working that are quite similar to personality traits. A related approach, the Kuder Preference Record, evaluates peoples' likes and dislikes and compares them to the content, tasks, and working conditions of various occupations. These inventories are both based on trait theories, whereby a match between individual traits and occupational features is desirable. Personality is recognized as a key influence on career choice, success, and satisfaction under both approaches.

HOLLAND'S THEORY OF VOCATIONAL CHOICE

John Holland's theory is a prime example of person-occupation fit research; it is based on examining the congruence or match between the career interests of people and occupational environments. People search for vocations that match their interests; such a fit results in vocational stability, satisfaction, and high achievement. Poor fit results in the opposite patterns. Holland believes that these vocational interests are a fundamental component of one's personality.

Holland's theory classifies people and jobs into six personality types, labeled Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional (RIASEC). Realistic types value practical things, see themselves as practical and mechanical, and like to work with animals, tools, or machines. Investigative types value science, see themselves as intellectual and precise, and like to study and solve math or science problems. Artistic types value the creative arts, see themselves as expressive and original, and like to perform creative activities like drama or music. Social types value helping people and solving social problems, see themselves as helpful and trustworthy, and like to do things focused on others, like teaching or nursing. Enterprising types value success in politics, leadership, and business, see themselves as ambitious and social, and like to lead and persuade people. Conventional types value success in business, see themselves as orderly and good at following plans, and like to work with numbers, records, or machines in a set way.

Holland's theory classified environments into the same six categories: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. Because people tend to seek out problems and work situations that are congruent with their interests and personalities, each environment is primarily populated with people having the matching personality type; for example, Investigative types dominate the investigative environment.

When there is a fit between person and environment, workers are more likely to be successful and satisfied. Practically, this theory suggests that people should choose occupations whose environmental type is similar to their personality type. In addition to predicting the value of an exact match of personality type to environment, Holland's theory also suggests other specific environments that are compatible with each personality type. Realistic people would be compatible with the investigative and conventional environments,

Investigative people would be compatible with the realistic and artistic environments, Artistic people with investigative and social environments, Social people with artistic and enterprising environments, Enterprising people with social and conventional environments, and Conventional people with enterprising and realistic environments. Because most people are a combination of the various personality types, they should consider occupations compatible with more than one category.

THEORY OF WORK ADJUSTMENT

Another example of using the concept of fit to understand vocational issues, the Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment also considers the correspondence between people and environments. This theory considers the process through which people acquire and maintain correspondence with their environments. The level of fit between person and environments is hypothesized to fluctuate over time as both person and environment changes; thus people may change either themselves or their environments to get and maintain correspondence. This theory is consistent with the interactional approach described earlier; people and environments act on and react to each other. For example, dissatisfied workers may not just accept the dissatisfying working conditions; rather, they take action to improve conditions.

The Theory of Work Adjustment considers two types of correspondence between person and environment. Satisfactoriness results from a fit between peoples' abilities and the requirements of a particular job. Satisfaction comes from a match between peoples' needs and desires and the rewards obtainable from a particular job. As people spend more time on a job, both satisfactoriness and satisfaction will increase. However, over time, both factors depend on individual and environmental factors.

Four relatively stable personality styles describe the way in which people interact with and change the work environment. Celerity denotes the speed with which people initiate interactions with the work environment; people who are uncomfortable with a lack of correspondence are likely to be high in celerity. These people might be expected to change jobs or initiate changes to themselves or the environment because of the discomfort. Pace reflects the effort exerted in obtaining correspondence; some people may be willing to go to great lengths to better meet the demands of a job, while others may be willing to live with low

levels of correspondence. Rhythm is the pattern of effort expended in achieving correspondence; some people strive for steady correspondence, while others do so only occasionally. Endurance reflects the persistence of individuals in responding to and interacting with the environment.

BROAD AND NARROW PERSONALITY FACTORS AND CAREERS

There are many words and phrases that have been studied as elements of personality. Early work in the personality field identified nearly 18,000 words from the dictionary as being potentially useful in distinguishing people from one another. Later work determined that over 3,500 of these labels actually were stable personality traits. The overwhelming number of potentially informative personality traits has caused personality psychologists to seek ways to simplify the study of personality. Various taxonomies or ordered sets of traits into particular categories have been offered to achieve this objective. The goal of such a classification system is to reduce the thousands of personality traits into a smaller, more manageable set.

An individual personality trait is a narrow and precise approach to categorizing one of the unique features of a human being. It is focused on a single element of personality. However, logically one would expect that various sets of narrow personality traits would be related; for example, someone who is generally dependable might also tend to be very organized. A broad trait is multidimensional and is comprised of a set of more narrow traits. Broadly defined traits offer a more wide-ranging coverage of human personality. Thus a narrow trait can be thought of as one end of a continuum representing unidimensionality, while broad traits can be thought of as the other end of the continuum and represent multidimensionality.

THE FIVE-FACTOR MODEL OF PERSONALITY

The five-factor model (also known as the Big Five) is a popular broad conceptualization of personality. The Big Five taxonomy has gained widespread acceptance among personality theorists and organizational psychologists alike. Proponents of the five-factor model believe that personality can be described by focusing on five broad dimensions: neuroticism, extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and

conscientiousness. Neuroticism refers to emotional instability as opposed to adjustment. People high on neuroticism are characterized by anxiety, vulnerability, and self-consciousness; those low on neuroticism are emotionally stable and calm, even tempered, and unemotional. Extraversion reflects the social component of personality. People high on extraversion are gregarious, outgoing, and talkative; people who are low on extraversion tend to be reserved, passive, and quiet. Openness to experience relates to curiosity and the tendency to seek out and appreciate new experiences and ideas, reflected in imagination, innovation, and broad-mindedness. People who are low in openness to experience are conventional, down-to-earth, and prefer routine. Agreeableness is defined by peoples' interpersonal orientation; those high on agreeableness are cooperative, trusting, and friendly, while those low on agreeableness are described as ruthless, irritable, and antagonistic. Conscientiousness reflects intrinsic motivation. People high in conscientiousness are responsible, persevering, and achievement oriented; people who are low in conscientiousness are irresponsible, disorganized, and negligent.

These dimensions of personality are consistently related to a number of work-related behaviors that influence careers. People who are low on neuroticism (that is, who are emotionally stable) exhibit "getting along" behaviors at work and demonstrate high levels of job performance across occupations, especially in jobs requiring teamwork. Furthermore, people who are low in the neurotic personality are less likely to assertively hunt for other jobs. Extraversion is related to "getting ahead" behaviors, predicting job performance in jobs with a large social component such as sales and management; it is also related to success in training. Openness to experience is related to "receptivity to change" and creative ability; it is most consistently related to training success. Agreeableness is also related to "getting along" behaviors at work; it predicts performance in jobs with a large customer service component or a significant teamwork component. Conscientiousness is related to "getting things done" at work; among the Big Five factors, conscientiousness is the best predictor of job performance across all jobs and occupations. It is difficult to think of a situation where conscientiousness would not be desirable or positively associated with job performance or any other element of careers. Conscientiousness is positively associated with frequency of job-searching behavior and negatively associated with early attrition. Organizational citizenship behavior—a desirable

occupational behavior involving going above and beyond the call of duty by performing extra roles at work—is related to the conscientious personality

There is some overlap between the Big Five factors and Holland's RIASEC types. For example, the Big Five factor of openness to experience is strongly related to Holland's Investigative and Artistic types. However, empirical evidence suggests that the Big Five are not subsumed by RIASEC and vice versa. Because RIASEC types and Big Five factors are somewhat unique and empirically distinct from one another, some recommend the use of both approaches for vocational counseling. There is also evidence to suggest that we can better predict job performance by simultaneously considering the Big Five factors and Holland's RIASEC environments. For example, conscientiousness might be a better predictor of job performance in the social and investigative environments than in the other four environments.

The Big Five factors have been found to be related to a number of affective (defined as emotion, feelings, and attitudes) career outcomes. For example, neurotic personalities tend to be less satisfied with their jobs, feel greater occupational stress, and report greater indecision concerning career-related decisions. Neuroticism is also related to work/family conflict. Extraversion tends to be associated with job satisfaction; people who are highly extraverted tend to report higher levels of job satisfaction than people low on extraversion. Extraverted personalities prefer managerial careers, whereas introverts prefer more technically oriented careers. People with a personality characterized as high on agreeableness prefer to work in supportive and team-oriented organizational cultures. Highly conscientious people tend to prefer detail-oriented cultures that are focused on outcomes. Among unemployed individuals, conscientious personalities tend to be more active in seeking jobs and have a positive sense of self-worth in spite of their employment status.

The Big Five factors have been studied extensively in relation to career success, defined in terms of the positive psychological and work-related outcomes accumulated as a result of one's work experiences. Intrinsic career success refers to satisfaction with one's career, while extrinsic career success is reflected in salary and promotion, two observable rewards from the job. Various Big Five factors are related to both intrinsic and extrinsic career success, even when controlling for the effects of other relevant factors (such as general mental ability and firm size). In

particular, conscientiousness is positively related to both intrinsic and extrinsic career success. That is, people who report having a highly conscientious personality tend to be happier with their careers, have higher incomes, and have been promoted more frequently than those who report being lower on this Big Five factor. Another Big Five factor, neuroticism, appears to be negatively related to intrinsic and extrinsic career success. Extraversion is associated with higher salary levels, and agreeableness is negatively related to career satisfaction.

The Big Five factors are broad in nature; that is, they are at a higher level of abstraction than more specific personality traits. The Big Five are not considered a comprehensive list of traits or a replacement for other personality theories or systems but as a framework for interpreting them. As we have seen, the broad factors described by the five-factor model have been helpful in understanding relationships between personality and careers; however, the existence of the Big Five factors does not preclude studying and learning about how more specific and narrow personality factors relate to career development. One way of thinking about this is to reflect on the level of analysis between personality and outcome; the broad Big Five factors are excellent predictors of general and wide-ranging outcomes (that is, outcomes at the same level of analysis), while more narrow personality traits might be useful in predicting and understanding a more specific set of career-related outcomes.

CORE SELF-EVALUATIONS

A broad dispositional concept referring to the extent to which people hold a positive self-concept, core self-evaluations are related to several career processes and outcomes. Core self-evaluations are basic evaluations that individuals hold about themselves, and they are indicated by four specific traits: self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability (low neuroticism). Core self-evaluations are related to job satisfaction, task motivation, and job performance.

Like the Big Five factors, core self-evaluations represent a broad trait comprised of more specific and narrow traits. Self-esteem refers to the overall value that people place on themselves, and it includes self-acceptance, self-liking, and self-respect. Generalized self-efficacy is the extent to which people believe that they have the ability to perform well on various tasks and across a variety of situations. It reflects the extent

to which people believe that they can cope, perform, and be successful. The extent to which people believe that they personally control their lives (rather than fate, luck, or chance) is referred to as locus of control. This trait is reviewed more fully in the next section. Emotional stability is one of the Big Five traits, and it represents emotional adjustment and manifests itself in positive tendencies such as feeling confident and secure. To the extent that people believe themselves to be described by these four traits, they would be viewed as having positive core self-evaluations. People who view themselves as relatively low on these traits would have lower core self-evaluations.

NARROW PERSONALITY TRAITS AND CAREERS

There are literally thousands of individual personality characteristics that can be used to describe humans, and many of them are potentially useful for better understanding careers. A select set of narrow personality traits that are particularly useful for understanding careers are discussed in this section.

Proactive Personality

Consistent with the interactional perspective, people can intentionally change their current circumstances, such as by making career changes. People can be classified across a reactive/proactive continuum to describe their proclivity to make such changes. Proactive personalities are people who take action to influence their environments; they identify opportunities and take action. Proactive personalities take initiative and persevere until they bring about meaningful change. Less proactive people exhibit the opposite patterns; they prefer to passively adapt to circumstances rather than change them. Proactive personality is associated with many work-related phenomena, including individual and team-based job performance, entrepreneurship, and leadership.

Proactive personality is associated with objective (salary and promotions) and subjective (career satisfaction) career success. Compared to less proactive people, proactive personalities earn a greater income, have achieved more promotions, and are generally more satisfied with their careers. The reason for this is that proactive people select, create, and influence the situations in which they work, increasing the chances for both high performance and happiness with the work. Examples of such behaviors include engaging

in career management activities such as job search behaviors, obtaining mentors, and conducting career planning.

A theme of current writings on careers in the twenty-first century is that careers have become boundaryless, requiring people to take responsibilities for their own careers in order to ensure that they are able to contribute to their employing organizations. Proactive personality is consistent with the idea of boundaryless careers, because proactive individuals actively manage their careers. Proactive personalities demonstrate career initiative. They plan for the development of their careers, develop skill sets to continue to be valuable human assets, and consult with more senior personnel about career-related issues. They also demonstrate greater levels of innovation at work, successfully implementing new ideas for achieving objectives. All of these activities point toward greater levels of career success.

Proactive personality also is related to successful job search behaviors in terms of exerting effort toward finding a job, invitations for second interviews, and the number of job offers received. Proactive personalities believe in their ability to accomplish things, which increases the chances of a successful job search. Socialization behaviors—which set the stage for successful careers—also are in part a function of proactive personality. Proactive people take the initiative in learning the behaviors and attitudes necessary for becoming effective at new jobs and workplaces. People who actively facilitate their socialization show greater task mastery, role clarity, and social integration. Thus proactive socialization leads to valuable outcomes for both person and organization.

Locus of Control

The extent to which people believe that they control the events surrounding them is referred to as *locus of control*. People with an internal locus of control believe that their behaviors are guided by their personal decisions and that the outcomes following their actions depend upon what they do. At the other end of the spectrum is an external locus of control, whereby people believe that fate, luck, and other outside forces guide their behaviors, and that events outside of their control influence the outcomes of actions. This concept was briefly mentioned earlier as a subcomponent of the broad trait of core self-evaluations. However, because this personality variable has been extensively

studied in the context of careers, it merits separate attention as an important narrow personality trait.

Generally speaking, an internal locus of control is viewed as more desirable in the world of work. An internal locus of control is associated with greater career decision-making skills and greater confidence in career decision making. Career aspiration is also associated with locus of control; internals prefer more intellectually demanding careers. There is some evidence that internal locus of control is associated with job satisfaction. People with an internal locus of control are more likely to mentor others in the workplace and to initiate mentoring relationships. On the other hand, people with an external locus of control are more likely to withdraw psychologically from their jobs and ultimately leave them.

Dispositional Affect

The moods, feelings, and emotions of workers play a significant role in a number of career-related attitudes and behaviors. Affect can be considered as a disposition, or a generalized trait or tendency to react to stimuli in a certain way. Affective disposition is comprised of two facets: positive affect and negative affect. Positive affect is characterized by high energy, enthusiasm, and pleasurable engagement; it is reflected in a happy, cheerful, and pleasant demeanor. Negative affect is characterized by distress, anxiety, and hostility; it is reflected in a generally grouchy, unhappy, and unpleasant demeanor.

Positive and negative affect are linked to job satisfaction. People with positive affect tend to be more satisfied with their jobs; the greater the level of positive affect, the more satisfied we would expect people to be. The opposite is also true: Negative affect is inversely linked to job satisfaction; the greater the level of negative affect, the less satisfied we would expect people to be. Negative affect is also linked with greater levels of work/family conflict and with occupational strain. Positive affect also influences the performance of extra-role behaviors and spontaneity. People with positive affect should be more willing to help coworkers, make constructive suggestions, and engage in self-development activities.

CONCLUSION

Personality, or the characteristics that make people unique, is an important determinant of human behavior

in general and careers in particular. Human personality affects much of who we are and what we do, both directly and indirectly, through its impact on the situations we choose to enter. A critical element is the concept of fit between person and situation or environment; personality plays an important role in determining whether a person will be comfortable in a particular situation. Various vocational inventories (e.g., the Strong Interest Inventory and the Kuder Preference Record) assess this by gauging how personality types will fit with various occupations. Holland's theory of vocational choice is also predicated on the fit or congruence between a person's personality type and occupational environments.

Thus, personality can play a significant role in helping people determine occupations that may or may not be a good match for them. It has long been acknowledged that good things can come from introspection and that it is important to "know thyself." One outcome of such self-knowledge is a better understanding of which occupations and career paths would better match your interests and personality. Being honest with ourselves about who we are and our strengths and weaknesses can help us choose situations that we will be comfortable in, as well as make us aware of situations that we might want to avoid.

Both broad and narrow personality traits are relevant for understanding careers better. Broad traits are multidimensional and wide-ranging in their coverage of human personality; narrow traits are unidimensional and specific. Among broad traits, the Five-Factor Model is a popular and generally well-accepted framework for categorizing personality traits. The Big Five factors are associated with a number of important career-related factors, including occupational choice, work adjustment, job performance, job satisfaction, and career success. Another broad trait, core self-evaluations, also is relevant for understanding careers; early evidence suggests that it is associated with job satisfaction, task motivation, and job performance.

Narrow or unidimensional personality traits can also provide insight into careers. While there are thousands of different narrow personality traits, some seem particularly relevant for the career domain. Proactive personality, or the tendency to take initiative and identify opportunities for change, is associated with both objective and subjective career success. Locus of control, or the extent to which people believe that they control the events of their lives, is associated with career choice, mentoring, and withdrawal.

Dispositional affect or consistent moods and emotions is related to job satisfaction, work/family conflict, and occupational strain.

A conclusion that one could draw from considering the various approaches to personality discussed here is that "personality matters." Our personality fundamentally shapes who we are, how other people view us, and the situations that we choose to enter. By better understanding who we are and identifying the various elements of our own personality, we can make better decisions about careers.

—J. Michael Crant

See also Big Five factors of personality, Career success, Holland's theory of vocational choice, Person-environment fit (P-E fit), Proactivity

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PERSONNEL SELECTION

Personnel selection is the systematic process of making decisions about which individuals to employ to fill open positions within an organization. The main goal of selection is to identify and employ those individuals who have the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to successfully complete the work of the organization. The volume and quality of this work directly affects organizational success. The individuals selected may be new entrants to the organization identified through an external recruitment process. Alternatively, those selected may be internal applicants—current employees who move to new positions within the organization and who are identified through the internal recruitment process. Internal applicants may be interested in advancing their career through a promotion or may want to change career paths.

The usefulness of selection depends on the (1) number and quality of individuals in the applicant pool, (2) identification of specific KSAs necessary to perform the job, (3) appropriate job-related content of selection instruments, and (4) psychometric properties of those instruments.

NUMBER AND QUALITY OF APPLICANT POOL

Selection begins when the company requires additional employees or a different type of employee to meet production or service demands or when a current employee leaves the organization, resulting in a job opening. Some organizations have a formal human resource planning (HRP) process in which forecasts are made about the number and types of employees

needed to achieve future organizational goals. Based on these forecasts, the company engages in recruitment activities designed to attract applicants for employment. New employees are selected from the resulting applicant pool.

The organization is in a good position if the pool contains more applicants than there are open positions and if the large majority of individuals in this pool have the minimum KSAs for success on the job. In such situations, selection identifies those individuals who have the highest level of the KSAs required and who, as a result, would be expected to perform at a high level on the job. If the applicant pool is relatively small or has relatively few qualified applicants, selection may not yield an adequate number of high-performing individuals.

IDENTIFICATION OF KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

The development of a selection program begins with a job analysis to detail the nature of the work the job incumbent will be doing. Job analysis information is commonly obtained from interviews, observation, archival records, reference books, or surveys completed by job incumbents and supervisors. A job description is developed from this information and describes the tasks, duties, responsibilities, and accompanying KSAs a job incumbent will need. Additional descriptive information may be included about the working conditions of the job, such as physical requirements, noise levels, and hazards.

The job analysis information is used to determine the appropriate KSAs required to perform essential job duties: Knowledge is the body of information necessary for performance (e.g., knowledge of career development theories), skill is competency in performing a specific job task (e.g., use of Excel), and ability is a general, job-related proficiency (e.g., ability to read at Grade Level 8).

CONTENT OF SELECTION INSTRUMENTS

The KSAs determine the format and content of selection instruments. Using the previous examples, applicants could be given a written theory test, asked to prepare an Excel spreadsheet, and then given a verbal test of reading comprehension. Research studies have found that selection has the best results if (1) instruments have a defined scoring system and

(2) scores are used as the primary data on which applicants are judged for their potential for future work performance. The value of the selection instrument is directly related to the extent to which the content of the questions or activities making up the instrument reflects job activities.

Application Form

Almost all selection programs start with the use of an application form. This brief document requests descriptive information about topics such as education, previous work experience, awards, and contact information. The form is limited, providing space for only general, brief statements. Studies have determined that approximately one-third of applicants provide inaccurate information to at least some of the questions on these forms.

A training and experience form is a type of application form that does provide useful information. This form contains questions that directly reflect job tasks and includes a scoring system measuring the extent of the knowledge of the task operations. For a college instructor position, a training and experience form could provide descriptions of five tasks. One task might be the following: "Develops course lesson plans covering class topics, methods of presentation of each topic, and learning objectives." The applicant is asked to indicate if he or she has ever performed or been trained in the performance of this task. If the answer is yes, the applicant is asked to provide a brief description of what was done during this work or training experience. Trained judges may be used to grade responses.

Interview

Applicants generally react more favorably to job interviews than to other types of selection measures. Unstructured interviews are those for which there is no set of specified questions or defined scoring system. The interviewer asks whatever questions are thought to be appropriate and evaluates the applicant on his or her judgment of the applicant's general performance in the interview. Structured interviews developed from job analysis information have proven to be more valuable in selection. These interviews are composed of job-related questions used with all interviewees, along with a defined scoring system for evaluating responses.

The behavioral description interview is one of the most widely used types of structured interviews. Applicants are asked to describe specific examples of how they acted in past situations similar to those they will encounter on the job if hired. The underlying philosophy is that past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior.

Cognitive Ability Tests

In a research study of 19 selection measures, cognitive ability tests (also referred to as general intelligence tests) had the highest predictive validity for job performance. These tests measure several mental abilities that are part of the tasks of almost every job. Abilities measured include verbal comprehension, numerical fluency, general reasoning, memory span, and logical evaluation. Research has consistently found that cognitive ability tests can be used for all jobs, and that they increase in value as the job of interest increases in complexity. These tests also are among the lowest cost selection measures. The strong relationship between job performance and scores on general mental ability tests may exist because these tests are also a strong predictor of job-related learning and problem solving. Those individuals who have greater mental ability are likely to learn more quickly than others and also may be able to better solve problems that occur when a job operation is in error or when a new demand is placed on the job incumbent. Both job learning and job problem solving translate into better job performance. Caution is recommended when using these tests; adverse impact against legally protected (e.g., racial, ethnic) groups has resulted from their use.

Work Samples

Work samples require the applicant to perform one or more of the job tasks. A secretary could be asked to take a word processing test. Other jobs that frequently use work samples are skilled craft positions, construction, computer programming, and food service. Designed correctly, work samples closely approximate the actual job. The organization has a much better idea of the quality of work to expect from an employee based on the applicant's performance on this measure. Work samples are usually better at predicting future job performance than other selection instruments but are costly to develop and use and

require that the applicant already be trained to perform the job.

Assessment Centers

Assessment centers are job simulations commonly used for selection of managers or professionals, often for advancement within the organization. In an assessment center, a group of job candidates participates in a series of activities. Representative activities include the Leaderless Group Discussion and the In-Basket exercise. In the former, groups of six applicants are given an organizational problem and asked to interact in order to provide a solution to the problem. Raters observe the job candidates throughout the process and rate each candidate on his or her behaviors during the exercise. The In-Basket presents the candidate with a series of office memos. The individual is required to provide detailed responses and recommendations for each memo. Responses are scored by a trained evaluator. Often assessment centers last for multiple days and are quite expensive to develop and operate. Organizations have used these devices for measuring the strengths and weaknesses of employees in order to identify training needs.

Personality and Integrity Tests

Personality and integrity tests are self-report questionnaires in which the respondent provides information about his or her feelings or behaviors. Psychologists have agreed that the optimal personality test is one that measures the Big Five personality dimensions: extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience. These personality dimensions have been theoretically linked to many different jobs and found to be statistically related to performance in various jobs. This latter is especially true for conscientiousness and extroversion. Literally hundreds of personality tests have been used for selection; however, tests of the Big Five are among a very small group of such tests that have demonstrated value in selection.

Integrity tests are intended to identify those applicants who have a high probability of engaging in acts such as stealing, embezzlement, sabotage, or violence. Integrity tests have steadily evolved in recent years and currently have demonstrated the ability to predict those behaviors. Most of these tests ask the same types of questions as do personality tests. They are

scored in relationship to behaviors that are indicative of a general set of counterproductive actions that may be taken by employees. Responses that reflect or are related to these counterproductive actions are scored as signifying low integrity.

PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES OF SELECTION INSTRUMENTS

Selection measures must demonstrate the test construction properties of reliability and validity in order to demonstrate their usefulness. Reliability refers to the consistency, dependability, and stability of the scores generated by the selection instrument. Selection methods that are reliable will yield the same results if administered at two different times or if used by different raters. Reliability is a necessary but not sufficient condition to ensure that the selection measures are useful.

Validity refers to the extent to which the selection measures actually do assess the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for successful job performance. Validity provides evidence that the measure can predict future job performance. In the context of selection, when KSAs have been identified for a particular job, the HR specialist has formulated testable hypotheses about the worker characteristics required for job performance. Validity refers to the process of determining if those worker characteristics are indeed related to job performance.

There are two major forms of validity. Content validity involves systematically using subject matter experts (e.g., practitioners and academics in the field of work) and job analysis information to develop the items to include in the selection measure. Accountants would be most knowledgeable about the questions to ask on an accounting test or the questions to ask in an interview for accounting jobs.

Empirical validity is the statistical demonstration that there is a significant correlation between the scores on the selection instrument and the scores on measures of job performance. Predictive and concurrent validity are types of empirical validity. In both types, scores are collected for a group of individuals on both the selection instrument and the job performance measure. Statistical analysis is then performed to determine if the correlation between these two scores is high enough to be greater than chance. If the correlation is statistically significant, there is evidence that applicants with higher scores on the selection measure will perform well on the job.

Legal Issues

Selection measures have been involved in a number of discrimination cases brought against organizations. A charge of discrimination may be filed when an individual(s) claims that he or she has been denied employment and can link that denial to one or more of the demographic characteristics identified in the equal rights federal legislation. The demographic characteristics often cited in selection discrimination cases are race, gender, religion, age, disability, and ethnic origin.

There are two forms of discrimination that may be charged by the plaintiff: disparate treatment and disparate impact. Disparate treatment occurs when membership in one of the previously noted demographic classes is used as the basis for the selection decision. If an employer decides that females should not be promoted into a particular job, disparate treatment has occurred. In this case, gender has been used illegally as the basis for the employment decision.

Disparate impact occurs when a protected group of people are treated differently from the majority. On a selection test, lower scores might be found for one demographic group than for others. A selection measure could be a weight-lifting requirement for a firefighter or a high school diploma requirement for a secretary. Both of these selection measures are likely to result in lower scores for specific demographic groups, thereby making individuals from that demographic group less likely to be hired than individuals from another group. Females, in general, are less likely to be able to meet a stringent weight-lifting requirement. Minority groups, such as African Americans or Hispanics, are less likely to meet the high school diploma requirement.

In either type of discrimination charge, the organization can only defend its selection program by clearly demonstrating that the scores produced by the selection instrument being questioned are related to job performance for individuals in the demographic group charging discrimination. The methods of determining validity discussed previously would be used to demonstrate the relationship between instrument scores and job performance scores.

Technological Development

Among the most important current selection issues is how to successfully employ technology. Many organizations have embraced the use of selection

testing using the Internet and other electronic instruments. Uses include having applicants complete application and training and experience forms online and the administration of interviews, cognitive ability tests, and personality surveys. The major issues being raised include the following: (1) Are electronically administered tests equivalent to traditional tests? (2) How can the use of reference materials be prevented? and (3) How can the identity of the applicant be definitely established? The limited research to date comparing electronic and traditional testing has looked at testing times, applicant reactions, design of tests, and proctoring of tests. This research is inconclusive on most of these issues although some studies report more positive applicant reactions for electronic tests. Additional research is needed to provide more definitive information about the reliability and validity of electronically administered tests.

Value of Selection

Research over the past 85 years has provided a great deal of information regarding the monetary value to the organization of using valid selection measures. Such measures lead to increased learning of job-related skills and increased output on the part of the employees. Overall, the monetary gain from using valid selection methods is typically large, with the gain being directly proportional to the increase in validity of the better methods versus previously used methods. The more valid selection measures have greater return.

—Mary A. Gowan and Robert D. Gatewood

See also Abilities; Job interviews; Knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs); Organizational staffing; Unbiased hiring systems

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PHASED RETIREMENT

Phased (or gradual) retirement normally means that an older worker remains with his or her employer while gradually reducing effort and hours worked. The reduced work time is viewed as a step toward full retirement and can take the form of fewer hours per day, week, month, or year. The term *phased retirement* is sometimes used more broadly to include reduced work time associated with a change in employers, a move to self-employment, or even a reduction in the intensity of work without a change in hours. Here, however, the focus is on the narrower definition: reduced work time without a change of employers.

In terms of careers and career development, phased retirement obviously belongs to the final stages of a career. It enables workers to gradually reduce work activity while continuing to exercise skills developed at earlier points in the career. Workers can enjoy both the activities and social relationships that are central to a career while developing and pursuing other interests.

There are several potential benefits from phased retirement. Older workers can use phased retirement to make a smooth transition toward a less stressful schedule, a schedule that is perhaps less stressful than either full time work or full retirement, or a schedule that allows for maintenance of social networks, earnings, and a sense of efficacy but that also accommodates a possible age-related reduction in stamina or capacities. From an employer's perspective, phased retirement can retain experienced employees with specialized knowledge of their job and of the larger organization. Finally, from the perspective of the

larger society, phased retirement could extend the work life and thereby reduce pressure on private and public pensions (e.g., Social Security).

The idea of phased retirement is not new. It has been the subject of expert discussion for decades. Nor is it simply an academic idea; there is a long history of private sector employers permitting older workers to reduce their hours as they approach full retirement. Books written in the 1950s about employment of older workers often included discussions of companies with functioning phased retirement plans.

Given that the idea has been around for decades and that older employees often express interest in phased retirement, it is somewhat surprising that phased retirement is evidently quite rare. According to the Health and Retirement Survey, in 1996 more than half of the employed respondents age 55 to 65 preferred to gradually reduce their hours of work as they aged. Yet studies from the 1970s that followed a cohort of older workers as they moved to complete withdrawal from the labor market indicate that less than 10 percent took phased retirement; most people simply moved from full-time work to full-time retirement, and those who become part-timers frequently change employers. More recent data collected by the Health and Retirement Survey indicate no substantial change in these numbers.

EMPLOYERS AND PHASED RETIREMENT

Employers play a major role in determining who has an opportunity for phased retirement. A recent survey asked 950 establishments whether there were conditions under which they would be willing to permit an older full-time white-collar worker to take phased retirement. Interestingly, most of the establishments indicated that something could be worked out. They usually had in mind an informal arrangement that would depend on the establishment's need for a part-time worker. Of those who were open to phased retirement, only about one-third had formal policies regarding phased retirement, and even those policies often make phased retirement a matter of employer discretion.

One particularly interesting form of phased retirement is called "retire-rehire." In this case, full-time workers officially retire from their firm and then return as part-time workers. There are situations where the time interval between retirement and rehire is a matter of days. The survey of 950 establishments

found that the great majority of employers who permit some form of phased retirement would allow it both before and after official retirement. A small minority of the establishments—only 7 percent—would prefer that the shift to part time always occur after official retirement.

Since phased retirements are often handled informally, one might expect them to also be offered selectively. The survey of 950 establishments confirms this. Within the same establishment, some older white-collar workers are more likely than others to have an opportunity for phased retirement. Opportunities for phased retirement tend to rise with age and job tenure. Moreover, employers were more likely to accommodate wishes for phased retirement from high-performing workers. In terms of worker performance, workers who require little supervision and who “make an extra effort to get the job done” are particularly likely to have opportunities for phased retirement.

That result holds, however, on average. Not all employers behave this way. As indicated by a well-executed recent study, there can be circumstances where employers use phased retirement to encourage retirement of low performers. In 1996, the University of North Carolina instituted a formal systemwide program of phased retirement for tenured faculty. The study used information on recent pay increases as a measure of performance. It found that the low performers—those with smaller recent pay increases—tended to enter phased retirement. The employees covered by the University of North Carolina program are, however, rather unusual employees. Since it is extremely difficult for universities to discharge or even reassign tenured faculty, and since mandatory retirement is illegal in the United States, a formal phased retirement program may be one of the few tools that universities have for inducing faculty to leave full-time positions. Thus, as noted by the authors, other employers may not use phased retirement the same way that universities do.

WHY DON'T WE SEE MORE PHASED RETIREMENTS?

A prominent explanation for the small number of phased retirements focuses on defined benefit pensions. Defined benefit pensions base benefits on a formula; as such they are distinct from defined contribution pensions, which base benefits on the amount of

money in a personal account at the time of retirement. Several authors have argued that in contrast to workers covered by defined contribution pensions (or no pension), workers with defined benefit pensions confront formidable obstacles to phased retirement.

There are two reasons why defined benefit pensions may impede phased retirement. First, under defined benefit pensions, a retired person's pension benefit will sometimes depend on earnings in years just before retirement. In that case, an older person who chooses to work half time at half pay prior to retirement could lose as much as half of all future pension benefits. Indeed, one author calculates that in such a system, a 10 percent decrease in annual earnings can translate into a lifetime wealth loss of 150 percent of annual earnings. No rational worker would choose part-time employment under such a pension. The same problem does not arise with defined contribution pensions, since benefits are based on the amount of money in a personal account. In this case, a person who works half time in the final years before retirement makes lower contributions to the personal account and thereby receives lower benefits. But the decrease is small and nothing close to a lifetime wealth loss of 150 percent of annual earnings.

Second, regulations in the federal tax code can make it quite difficult for an active employee to receive pension benefits from a defined benefit plan that is operated by a current employer. Specifically, an active employee cannot receive benefits before the plan's normal retirement age. To see the problem, consider a 63-year-old employee who takes phased retirement, receives reduced earnings, and wishes to supplement those earnings with pension benefits. If the employee's pension is a defined benefit plan with a normal retirement age of 65, then that will not be possible. If, on the other hand, the pension is a defined contribution plan, the employer can establish policies so that an active employee can draw pension benefits. The major federal limitation on such payments from a defined contribution plan is that the employee must be over age 59½.

Interestingly, in the above-noted survey of 950 employers, pensions did not play a major role in phased retirement policy. The results indicated that while defined benefit pensions are associated with reduced opportunities for phased retirement in simple cross-tabulations, when other determinants of phased retirement (e.g., industry, organizational size, and presence of a union) are controlled for, pension effects

largely disappear. As such, the hypothesis that pensions play a crucial role in shaping opportunities for phased retirement should be viewed with skepticism.

An arguably more important determinant of an employer's phased retirement policy is whether the employer permits employees to have flexible hours. If an establishment has part-time jobs, permits job sharing, and has a policy of flexible starting times, then the employer is much more likely to say that phased retirement can be accommodated. When employers say that they are open to phased retirement, in most cases they are also willing to accommodate hour reductions for younger workers. Alternatively stated, when employers say that they prohibit phased retirement, they are not usually singling out older workers; they would deny a similar reduction in hours to a young worker.

Given that most employers indicate that they would be open to working out phased retirement, why is phased retirement so rare? Of course, part of the answer may be that some workers are just not interested in phased retirement. For example, there is evidence that women are more interested in phased retirement than men, and that—at least for women—interest in phased retirement is greater if one's spouse is not retired.

But given the previously noted survey data indicating that many older employees would like to reduce their working hours as they approach retirement, it is difficult to claim that the small number of phased retirements is due to lack of interest. While strong conclusions are not possible, there is reason to think that the terms of the employer's offer of phased retirement may not be especially attractive to many older workers. The employer's offer may require a shift to a new job in the establishment as well as a change in health insurance. Health insurance may be especially important; many employers offer health insurance to full-time workers but not to part-time workers. Older workers may reflect on such an offer and decide that they would rather not take phased retirement but would rather either remain full-time workers or become full-time retirees.

PHASED RETIREMENT AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

In part because it may reduce the incidence of early retirements, many national governments have sought to encourage phased retirement. The United States has not been a leader in this area. In the United States, the primary focus has been on promoting work at older ages. In particular, changes in the Social Security

program such as the elimination of the earnings test or the gradual increase in the normal retirement age encourage all forms of work, including phased retirement. There have, however, been legislative proposals for changes in the rules regulating how defined benefit pension plans handle phased retirement. For example, the Phased Retirement Liberalization Act was introduced in Congress in 2000. It would have permitted active employees to receive benefits from a defined benefit pension plan prior to the plan's normal retirement age. This legislation was controversial and did not become law.

European countries, including France, Germany, Sweden, Finland, and the Netherlands, have been more active than the United States in implementing government policies aimed at expanding opportunities for phased retirement. For example, Germany and the Netherlands grant older workers a limited legal right to a part-time job with their full-time employer, that is, if full-time older workers ask for part-time work, there are conditions under which their employer is obligated to provide it. To date little is known about the impact of such policies.

One country with notable success in encouraging phased retirement is Sweden. From 1976 to the late 1990s, Sweden had a partial pension program whereby older people who shifted to part-time work received a payment from the government equal to about half of the associated lost earnings. Before 1994 this benefit was available after age 60, and from 1994 on it was available to people after age 61. One estimate is that in some years as much as 27 percent of the eligible workers took advantage of the program. In most cases, workers stayed in the same job with the same employer. Due in part to the restructuring of the Swedish public pension system, this government-financed program was phased out in 2001.

All indications are that with the aging of the baby boom generation, more older people will be available for work. Moreover, changes in both Social Security and private pensions (in particular, the rise of defined contribution pensions) are increasing financial incentives for work. It is then likely that in coming years increasing numbers of older people will want to work, and many of them will want part-time work. Phased retirement could be a very good way to accommodate that desire.

—Robert Hutchens

See also Bridge employment, Early retirement, Retirement

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POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

Positive organizational scholarship (POS) focuses on the generative (that is, life-building, capability-enhancing, capacity-creating) dynamics in organizations that contribute to human strengths and virtues, resilience and healing, vitality and thriving, and the cultivation of extraordinary states in individuals, groups, and organizations. POS is premised on the belief that enabling human excellence in organizations unlocks latent potential and reveals hidden possibilities in people and systems that can benefit both human and organizational welfare. POS does not adopt one particular theory or framework but instead

draws from the full spectrum of organizational theories.

The term *positive organizational scholarship* describes what this perspective is about: positive, because it emphasizes elevating, affirmative, and generative states and dynamics; organizational, because it highlights how these generative dynamics unfold within and across organizations; and scholarship, because it emphasizes theoretically informed accounts, backed by data and analysis, that suggest implications for organizational functioning, practice, and teaching. When applied to career development, POS uncovers new ways of thinking about antecedents and outcomes of career development and suggests new research questions about the career development process.

ORIGINS OF POS

Although the POS perspective is relatively new, its core ideas were seeded by the ideas of earlier scholars. POS origins developed in parallel, though a few years behind, the Positive Psychology movement, initiated in 1998 by Martin Seligman and colleagues. Positive Psychology aims to shift the focus in psychology from dysfunctional mental illness to mental health, calling for an increased focus on the building of human strength (as opposed to shoring up human weakness), a focus on creating good lives for healthy people (as opposed to healing people who are psychologically distressed), and building the best in people (as opposed to repairing the worst). POS is a cousin to the Positive Psychology movement—POS broadens the focus by examining these thriving and generative dynamics within organizations and by emphasizing the role of embedded contexts (extraorganizational, organizational, and intraorganizational) in explaining generative dynamics and positive states of individuals, groups, and organizations.

Positive organizational scholarship also provides a theoretical grounding for an organizational development and change paradigm called Appreciative Inquiry, introduced by David Cooperrider in 1986, which has become a widely adopted change practice used in organizations globally. The core premise of Appreciative Inquiry is that change involves search and discovery processes that value, prize, and honor the life, or what is called the "positive core," in an organization.

POS is an interdisciplinary perspective, drawing not only from psychology and organizational theory but

also from sociology, anthropology, and social work. Different aspects of POS focus at different levels of analysis and on different aspects of positive dynamics. For instance, one subset of POS, called positive organizational behavior, focuses on positive individual-level states (e.g., confidence, hope, optimism, resiliency) and their development. More macrolevel POS perspectives view positive dynamics through the lens of institutional theories, network models, and resource-based views of the firm; here the focus is on the creation, diffusion, and legitimation of POS practices in business units and organizations as well as the development of generative capacities such as resilience and capability building. For instance, network researchers have demonstrated how positive energy networks in organizations (e.g., ties with other people with whom one subjectively experiences a heightened sense of energy) explain individual and project performance over and above information networks. Institutional perspectives highlight the changing context of positive organizational practices and the struggle of reproducing such practices within and across organizations as well as the generation of alternate forms of practices. Finally, other scholars focusing on intangible organizational assets draw attention to how a positive organizational identity may build social and reputation capital for the firm and its members.

CORE ASSUMPTIONS OF POS

Several key assumptions underlie the POS perspective. First, an assumption in POS is that the factors that bring about a problem state (organizational stress, for example) are not necessarily the same factors that cause an extraordinary or positively deviant state (organizational thriving, for example). Just getting rid of the conditions that cause stress will not be sufficient for creating thriving at work. Thus, to theorize what promotes and enables positive deviance (above normal, extraordinary states that are good, honorable, or virtuous) may require new or slightly altered theoretical lenses and explanations than what currently exists in organizational studies.

Second, a POS perspective draws attention to a broader repertoire of human and collective states that organizations impact but which organizational scholars study only sporadically. In effect, POS enlarges the domain of outcomes that are examined. The POS focus on the positive and affirmative means asking questions about what individual and organizational

conditions (and their interactions) account for valued human conditions such as resilience, vitality, thriving, fulfillment, transcendence, courage, flourishing, integrity, wisdom, as well as other individual and collective virtues and strengths. POS reemphasizes the importance of outcomes such as well-being, citizenship, and health not only as means to the desired end of strong economic performance but also as ends worthy of explanation on their own.

Third, a POS perspective assumes that organizational scholars benefit from considering how, why, and when various positive states shape individual, group, and collective behavior. For example, there is a growing body of research on three possible engines of life-giving dynamics in organizations: positive emotion (e.g., joy, happiness, contentment), positive meaning (e.g., seeing one's job as a calling, perceiving one's organization as virtuous, assessing one's career as valuable), and positive connections (e.g., connections with others that are trusting, mutual, respectful, and enabling). While these topics have each been considered in isolation within various research domains in organizational studies, a POS lens encourages consideration of how they interrelate as core engines of generative and life-giving dynamics in individuals, groups, and organizations.

Fourth, POS assumes that it is important to focus on positive states and positive dynamics as a corrective to the hard-wired human tendency to attend to the negative more than the positive. Psychologists have conducted exhaustive literature reviews of psychological research and concluded that, when it comes to perceptions, the bad trumps the good. For example, we are more deeply affected by losing \$50 than by gaining \$50. The effects of negative events take longer to dissipate than the effects of positive events. However, work by Barbara Fredrickson and Marcial Losada suggests a way to counterbalance this basic human tendency. They found that a 3:1 mathematical ratio of positive to negative behaviors, communications, or emotions activates the broadening and building dynamics that enhance the capacities of individuals, dyads, and teams to act. Thus, given the human tendency to weight the negative more heavily, a POS perspective offers a counterweight, alerting our attention to the importance of amplifying the positive.

DOMAINS OF POS INQUIRY

Currently, there are several identifiable domains of inquiry that are taking shape under the broad umbrella

of positive organizational scholarship. One domain involves virtuous processes, strengths, and positive organizing; it includes work on individual and organizational virtues, integrity, compassion, resilience, wisdom, human strengths, and positive identity. A second domain involves the study of upward spirals and patterns of positive change; it includes work on appreciative inquiry, positive deviance, positive emotions, knowledge creation, and positive leader development. A third domain focuses on positive meanings and positive connections; it includes work on the dynamics of vitality and energy in organizations, relationships, cooperation, and creativity. Another domain focuses more on the institutional and structural aspects of POS; it includes work on developing and reproducing organizational designs that enable positive dynamics and outcomes. All these domains of POS inquiry are a blend of new and old theoretical perspectives that find a fuller integration under the POS umbrella.

POS INVITES EXPLORING NEW FRONTIERS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Positive organizational scholarship opens up possibilities for career research by posing innovative questions that redirect and motivate studies; these are complementary to existing thinking about careers but do stretch the reach of both POS and careers research into several new directions. First, POS invites career researchers to consider the antecedents and dynamics of positively deviant career-relevant outcomes. For example, we might ask, Under what conditions do individuals' careers flourish or enable people to live within an optimal range of human functioning? For example, some researchers have asked, What enables people to view their jobs and careers as callings? Alternatively, What are the contexts that enable people to have moments or episodes of career thriving, where thriving is defined as the experience of increased vitality and learning? Or, as other researchers have asked, When and how do work and family roles enrich rather than deplete the individuals and their organizations?

Second, POS may help career researchers see a complementary perspective to traditional research questions in career research. Traditional research on career problems (whether early career setbacks, mid-career plateauing, or retirement adjustments) has focused on understanding how people cope and rebound to where they were before the setback or adjust

to the new work situation. A POS lens shifts the focus slightly, redirecting attention to looking at how people can be resilient and grow in response to career setbacks, discovering perhaps new or unexplored career possibilities. For example, a large body of research on organizational downsizing documents how difficult it is for victims (or those laid off) to find new jobs at their previous level/compensation. However, rather than simply restoring people to their pre-downsizing levels, POS opens up the possibility that there may be many positively deviant workers who are energized by the opportunity to break out of old patterns and do something really different and meaningful. A POS lens would suggest more work on these positive rebounds and creative career redirections.

A third way in which a POS perspective might help reframe careers research is that POS invites consideration of different mechanisms to explain career-relevant processes and outcomes. For example, POS researchers might inquire as to when and how positive emotions, positive connections, and positive meaning, both in isolation and in interaction, contribute to desirable career-relevant outcomes. For example, how do organizations enrich and enable positive meanings about different roles and different careers, and what effect do these positive career-relevant meanings have for the individuals and for the organization? How do occupational, professional, and organizational contexts contribute to inspiration, hope, and a sense of possibility for different career development end states and career development pathways? How do different organizational features (e.g., culture, design, strategy, leaders) amplify and/or buffer the psychological conditions that propel individuals to deeply satisfying, authentic, and capability-building careers?

A fourth way that POS might offer new insights in career research is in the reframing of mentoring. Traditional research on mentoring has focused on how mentors contribute to the mentee's capabilities, job performance, and career trajectory. The focus is on how mentors help protégés. POS suggests a slight reframing of mentoring research to focus more attention on the effects of mentoring on the mentor. For example, recent research has suggested that the givers of social support actually receive more benefits than the receivers. Other research confirms the health-promoting, stress-relieving benefits of coaching for mentors. Thus, a POS lens would suggest focusing on the effects of mentoring on the mentor rather than on just the mentee.

Finally, a POS perspective introduces new topics for consideration that do not fit neatly into current career development topic categories. For example, it encourages consideration of how career behaviors and pathways cultivate different human strengths and virtues. It invites consideration of how organizations cultivate positive identities and shape conditions in which individuals can grow toward a “best self.” It considers how individuals can grow and develop not only in response to threats, challenges, and hardships but also to positive jolts that highlight the best in people and systems. It asks how career patterns contribute to the creation and sustenance of organization-level virtues or strengths such as wisdom, integrity, compassion, or justice. Overall, a POS perspective on career development and management invites an enriched and integrated approach to understanding ways in which career options can ultimately better both people and organizations.

CONCLUSION

The POS approach is an emergent and growing perspective on individuals, groups, and organizations that can shift our view of career development in organizations. POS offers a fresh view of individuals and organizations as sites or moments of vitality or flourishing and life-giving dynamics. Through the POS lens, then, the career choices of individuals and the recruitment efforts of organizations are redirected toward building human capital that enables those conditions and encourages the best of the human condition. A POS perspective focuses on how organizations can be sites of human and collective strength and capability building and thus, in employment interviews and in career planning, the focus is on building the best self (instead of countering the worst) and developing capabilities, rather than simply compensating for shortcomings.

—Jane Dutton, Mary Ann Glynn,
and Gretchen Spreitzer

See also Mentoring, Work-family enrichment

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PROACTIVITY

Proactivity refers to the idea that individuals initiate action and make constructive changes in their environment. As careers have become more fluid and self-structured, the concept of proactivity has become increasingly relevant to career development. In the past several years, researchers have defined the concept in terms of dispositional tendencies to act proactively, cognitive processes that lead to initiating action, and the behavioral manifestations of proactive people.

PROACTIVE PERSONALITY

One approach is to view proactivity as an individual disposition and examine individual differences in the extent to which people engage in proactive behaviors. Proactive personality has been defined as a stable disposition to take initiative in a broad range of situations and environments. The role of proactive personality in shaping one’s work environment is consistent with the

interactional perspective in which situations are viewed as much of a function of people as vice versa. People high on proactive personality can thus be characterized as people who are relatively unconstrained by situational forces, identify opportunities and act on them, and persevere until they bring about meaningful change. Proactive personality has been shown to be distinct from other personality traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Proactive personality has been related to a number of employee outcomes, including job performance, leadership effectiveness, participation at work, tolerance for stress, entrepreneurship, and career success.

Concerning career development, a proactive personality is particularly important as the responsibility for managing one's career falls increasingly on employees. Highly proactive individuals create situations that enhance their likelihood of success and maximize their own job and career satisfaction. Empirical research has shown that individuals rated high on the proactive personality trait had achieved higher salaries, more promotions over their lifetime, and were more satisfied with their careers. In a large sample of managerial and technical workers, proactive personality had a positive effect on all three career outcomes after controlling for a number of demographic, human capital, motivation, and industry variables.

PERSONAL INITIATIVE

A second line of research on proactivity examines the underlying processes motivating a person to take initiative. According to this perspective, personal initiative is a behavioral syndrome in which individuals take an active and self-starting approach to work that is (1) consistent with the organization's mission, (2) has a long-term focus, (3) is goal directed and action oriented, and (4) is persistent in the face of barriers. Personal initiative is based on action theory, which states that individuals, to a certain extent, always plan actions, and actions are guided by goals. A long-term goal orientation is the essential element of personal initiative. Accordingly, an action-oriented person will develop a fuller set of goals that go beyond what is formally required in the job, are long-term focused, and are quickly translated into actions. In the implementation of one's goals, initiative implies that one will deal with obstacles actively and persistently. Personal initiative has been shown to be correlated, yet distinct, from the personality traits of need for

achievement and an action orientation and from problem-focused coping strategies.

With respect to career development, it has been found that individuals high on personal initiative were more likely to have developed and executed long-range career plans and had higher intentions of being self-employed. Among those who were unemployed, those high on personal initiative were more likely to be employed a year later than those low on personal initiative. These findings indicate that one's level of personal initiative impacts career planning, career choices, and job search success. It is important for career development policies and programs to consider conditions that lead to higher or lower initiative among its employees. For example, control over work conditions and task complexity increase personal initiative by empowering employees and encouraging them to develop their knowledge and skills. Career development programs need to consider the theoretical underpinnings of the personal initiative concept to teach employees to be goal directed and action oriented in developing and executing their career plans. Both the organization and the employee will reap benefits from such an approach to career development.

PROACTIVE CAREER BEHAVIORS

A final stream of research on proactivity has focused more on what proactive people do. Proactive behaviors have been defined as those that show initiative in improving circumstances or creating new ones and those that involve challenging the status quo rather than passively adapting to present conditions. For example, research has found that individuals high on proactive personality were more likely to engage in innovative behaviors, had more knowledge of organizational politics (i.e., knew who the influential people were in the organization), and took more initiative in planning their career strategies and updating their skills.

Efforts have also been made to develop typologies of proactive career behavior. Applying the extensive research on proactive behaviors during organizational socialization to the boundaryless career concept, researchers have identified four proactive career behaviors. First, career planning refers to setting goals, exploring career options, and formulating plans. Second, skill development refers to mastering important competencies for one's occupation. This includes building one's reputation through work experiences and increasing relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Career planning and skill development help employees develop and implement career goals consistent with the concept of personal initiative. Third, consultative behaviors include information seeking, advice giving and help giving and receiving. Through consultation, individuals establish relationships with supervisors and colleagues that can benefit their careers. Fourth, networking behaviors build interpersonal relationships that can be used as learning systems. Networking behaviors help one navigate organizational politics and provide access to resources and information, both of which benefit one's career. Career development programs need to encourage all employees, especially those low on proactive personality, to engage in the proactive behaviors identified above.

IMPLICATIONS

A greater understanding could be achieved by integrating the three perspectives on proactivity to provide practical advice to career strategists. Individuals, especially those low on proactive personality, may need to incorporate proactive career behaviors and the concepts of personal initiative in managing their own careers. At the same time, organizations can offer employees opportunities and learning experiences that encourage the kinds of goal-directed behaviors consistent with action-oriented personal initiative.

—*Maria L. Kraimer*

See also Big Five factors of personality, Personality and careers

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PROCEDURAL JUSTICE

Researchers from a variety of disciplines within psychology have come to the conclusion that people care a great deal about fairness. One stream of this research, organizational justice, focuses on issues of justice in the workplace. Whereas most justice researchers agree that organizational justice is a multidimensional construct, this entry focuses on one particularly important dimension of justice called *procedural justice*.

DEFINITION

Procedural justice is generally defined as the perceived fairness of the procedures used to make decisions. In organizations, these decisions often involve allocating resources such as promotions or raises. While people are certainly concerned with the fairness and favorability of their outcomes, the procedures used to arrive at these decisions can also influence peoples' reactions.

AN OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURAL JUSTICE

John Thibaut and Laurens Walker first demonstrated the importance that people place on procedural justice. These researchers examined process control, which refers to the opportunity to voice one's opinion, and decision control, or the ability to influence the outcome via one's voice, in the context of legal negotiations. They found that people were willing to give up decision control as long as they were still allowed to voice their opinions about the process used to negotiate a decision. The process control idea has been extended into organizational settings, where employees see procedures as fair when the procedures are correctable, ethical, unbiased, based on accurate information, used consistently, and consider stakeholders' opinions. So why do people care about procedural justice? One theory, the instrumental model, states that people care about procedural justice because fair procedures should lead to fair and favorable outcomes over time. The relational model has a different take on this, arguing that people care about procedural justice because fair procedures signify that one is valued by the group. The relational model also has implications for the self, as fair treatment can affect one's identity by verifying that one is a valued group member.

Perceptions of procedural justice affect a number of important attitudes and behaviors, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, trust, perceived organizational support, self-esteem, and identity. Procedural justice also influences performance, withdrawal, turnover, discrimination-claiming behavior, and organizational retaliatory behaviors such as employee theft. Organizations should be concerned with the fairness of their procedures, which can also have significant implications for career development. Before describing the implications of procedural justice for career development, this entry briefly discusses career management systems in today's workforce. It then presents three major decisions or processes involved in career development—(1) choosing a career, job, or organization, (2) advancing within an organization, and (3) changing careers or organizations—and highlights the important role that procedural justice plays for both the individual's career development and the organization's success.

CAREER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

A great deal has been written about the changing nature of work and the move from traditional employment, where employees spent their entire careers with one organization, to a more dynamic career path. This shift to a protean career, a career that changes frequently due to changes in the employee's interests or work environment, requires that employees take responsibility for their own career development. This is important, as most employees today do not stay with the same organization for the duration of their time in the workforce. This new relationship between employees and employers creates a definite need for organizations to invest in a career management system. These systems vary a great deal in terms of their focus and goals. For instance, some systems may focus more on helping employees understand their career values, interests, and abilities, whereas other systems may center on short- and long-term goal setting. Other organizations may create a system with clearly established career paths within the organization, whereas another system may be less formalized. Regardless of the system's structure, career management is a shared responsibility among different partners and therefore becomes largely affected by interactions among those partners. The employee, manager, and organization share responsibility for supporting career management, although each partner

has different role responsibilities. Employees should perform well, discuss career-related issues with their managers, identify areas that need improvement, and establish career goals. The manager's role requires effective coaching, counseling, communication, and use of the organization's resources. Finally, the organization is responsible for creating a culture and systems that support career management.

CHOOSING A CAREER, JOB, OR ORGANIZATION

As individuals enter or reenter the workplace, their employment choices should ideally support their career goals. While a number of factors affect these decisions, the impression that an organization gives to potential employees will influence the likelihood that these individuals will pursue a career with that organization. Thus organizations should ensure that their recruiting policies and practices are procedurally fair with regard to relevant guidelines such as the EEOC, contractual policies, and labor practices. However, it is also important to consider potential employees' perceptions of the organization's recruiting procedures. If an individual does pursue a job within that organization, procedural fairness during the selection process is also critical. Potential applicants' perceptions of the organization go beyond recruitment and selection procedures, however. For example, an organization that values development and operates a solid career management system may attract better candidates and ultimately cultivate greater social capital. This should serve to enhance employees' perceptions of procedural fairness with regard to their career development and related issues. Furthermore, once new employees begin their employment, it is crucial that the organization provide beneficial training and development opportunities, because this will enhance new employees' perceptions of procedural fairness. These early experiences influence subsequent attitudes and behavior, and it is difficult for the organization to change employees' negative impressions once they are set.

ADVANCING WITHIN AN ORGANIZATION

In organizations that have career management systems with clearly established career paths, the organization should do its best to communicate the purpose of the system and how it operates, as this will enhance perceptions of procedural fairness. Employees should

know what competencies are important for success in the various positions and the developmental activities needed to develop these competencies. If an organization establishes formal procedures for determining when developmental activities occur and who participates, these procedures should be applied consistently, ethically, and without bias. Employees should be allowed to appeal the decisions, and the information used to make these decisions should be as transparent as possible. Organizations should consider allowing employees to participate in designing the procedures used to make these decisions, because this will likely enhance their perceptions of outcome fairness. All of these activities have been shown to promote perceptions of procedural fairness. These issues also have implications for talent retention, because employees who perceive the career management system as procedurally unfair may leave the organization prematurely. This can have serious consequences for the organization, particularly if the organization is concerned with succession planning.

Following from the protean career, effective development now focuses less on formalized training and more on building relationships and gaining experience. Thus, organizations should consider what they can do to enhance these outcomes. For example, employees may benefit from job rotation, either within a work team or across areas of the organization. Creating opportunities for employees to network with others in the organization or industry may also be beneficial to both the employee and the organization. Organizations should also reward employees for participating in these activities, as this sends a strong message that employees' learning and development are valued. Thus, organizations should ensure that their culture and systems support career management. However, managers also play an important role here. For instance, they need to coach employees through the development process and demonstrate supportive communication. It is important to keep in mind that the interactions between employees and managers, as well as with the organization, can affect perceptions of procedural fairness. Thus, managers need to clarify performance expectations, provide adequate feedback, and treat employees with respect during these interactions.

Because so much hinges on the developmental opportunities an organization provides, organizations should take care to implement these opportunities in a procedurally fair manner. For instance, information regarding developmental opportunities and possible

career moves should be made available to all employees to enhance perceptions of procedural justice. Special consideration should be given to employees whose skills may quickly become obsolete. The organization should ensure that these employees have access to developmental activities that will update these skills or teach skills that will be needed in the future. This is especially important if the organization anticipates laying off employees. When an organization makes a good faith effort to develop and prepare its employees for future work, even if these employees will eventually leave the organization for one reason or another, several positive things can happen. For example, employees who are laid off will react more favorably to their negative outcome, be less likely to pursue discrimination-claiming litigation against the organization, and be more likely to speak favorably of the organization. This also enhances the reputation of the organization as a positive place to work, which can serve as a powerful recruiting tool.

Once the organization is ready to make promotional decisions, issues of procedural justice will again arise. The organization should ensure that these procedures are fair before implementing them to make promotional decisions. However, employees' perceptions of these procedures must also be managed. Again, this can be done by allowing employees to voice their opinions about how promotional decisions should be made. Procedural justice may be especially important when these types of decisions are made because the organization cannot promote a large number of employees, particularly in organizations with a flat hierarchical structure. Thus, there will generally be many employees who are not promoted at any given time. If not promoted, employees who view the procedures used to make these decisions as fair will most likely perceive their unfavorable outcome as fairer than they would had the procedures been unjust.

CHANGING CAREERS OR ORGANIZATIONS

Many researchers have stated that the nature of employment between an employee and an employer is dramatically different from the past. Employees used to expect that they would be employed by the same organization for the duration of their careers and that they would eventually be promoted up the hierarchy. However, this employment arrangement has become outdated, as organizations must be flexible and responsive to customer demands and other environmental

changes. Employees need to understand this and take responsibility for their career development, focusing on their lifelong career goals and learning objectives. For example, employees need to ensure that they are performing as effectively as possible and regularly communicating with their manager concerning career development goals and progress. Employees must also know where they want their careers to go and be able to identify areas where they require development, although this can be difficult to do. On the other hand, this change also shifts a different kind of responsibility onto organizations. Because most employees spend several years with any given company, organizations should ensure that they provide the best developmental opportunities, given the organization's constraints and environment. In other words, organizations need to provide helpful learning and development opportunities, which should benefit both the individual and the organization. To many employees, the fairness of these programs and opportunities is absolutely critical.

Because of this shift in the nature of employment, employees need to know that their organization will provide strong developmental opportunities. Moreover, when organizations provide developmental opportunities and information about career prospects, employees should show stronger career motivation. This in turn benefits employees because they gain insight into their own strengths, areas needing development, and career interests. Developmental opportunities also engage employees in learning activities, ensure that their skills do not become outdated, and provide strategies for handling stressful working conditions. Organizations benefit because employees' career motivation is enhanced, which could encourage innovation, organizational commitment, flexibility, and pride in one's work. Organizational justice plays a major role in organizations of the twenty-first century, and its role in career development will continue to grow as employees recognize the increasing importance of career management to their working lives.

—Paul E. Levy and Corrie Pogson

See also Organizational justice

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PROTEAN CAREER

The *protean career* is a name given to describe a career that is driven by the individual and not by the organization. The concept of the protean career dates to 1976, when in the book *Careers in Organizations*, Douglas T. Hall noted an emerging type of career form that was less dependent upon the organization in terms of defining success or achieving certain outcomes.

The most central characteristic of the protean career is that it is a reflection and manifestation of the individual career actor. An individual with a protean career—or one who is protean—is thought to put self-fulfillment and psychological success above concerns and norms that would have their source outside of the individual. Psychological success is considered to be subjective success on the person's "own terms" in contrast to "objective" success that might be measured or defined externally (e.g., by salary or promotions). While a protean career might be identified externally as a definable career pattern, the literature and this entry are primarily concerned with how the career is enacted, managed, defined, and evaluated from the individual's subjective perspective.

Two broad dimensions of the protean career are (1) a values-driven career orientation and (2) self-directed career management. Having a values-driven career orientation means that the career actor is defining career values on his or her own terms and assessing career success according to those terms. Self-directed career management occurs when a career actor actively manages his or her own career development according to personal values.

Because of the emphasis upon following one's own career path, authors in the field have often associated the protean career with careers and lifestyles that are independent of a heavy commitment to or reliance upon an employing organization, or upon traditional status symbols such as income. Although protean career actors have been assumed to be more interested in learning and in achieving life balance and self-fulfillment, strictly speaking a person could independently (in a protean fashion) select traditional career contexts and value some of the symbols of success they portend, including income and advancement.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE PROTEAN CAREER

In understanding the original and evolving definition of the protean career, it is important to realize that it emerged at a time when organizations and their influence upon careers were relatively dominant as compared to today's standards. Indeed, while individually driven careers have certainly always existed, thinking about career development as decisively independent of the organization was a novel approach in 1976.

Interest in the protean career concept grew in part due to the tumultuous organizational and business environment of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Because of downsizing, rapidly changing economic conditions, globalization, advances in technology (that allowed things such as telecommuting), increased emphasis upon contingent workers, and changing societal values around the importance of work and nonwork priorities, careers in fact became more individualized proactively or reactively on a wide scale.

A major shift relevant to the protean career involved a change in the "psychological contract" between employers and employees—simply put, what they expect of one another. A shift was seen from the traditional and "relational" contract that stressed loyalty on both sides of the contract to a "transactional" contract in which employers do not guarantee

employment but provide opportunities, and employees do not promise loyalty but do commit to high performance. Some have opined that these broad trends are exaggerated; others suggest that emerging contracts mix aspects of both the traditional and relational perspectives. What is indisputable is that the psychological contract is perceived to have shifted in a way that encourages individual management of a career.

Research has shown that it takes many organizations and employees several years to recognize and cope with the changing psychological contract and to make associated changes in career development efforts. Such organizations start with stages characterized by trauma before they are later able to adapt to the new contract. A minority of organizations are able to leverage a learning culture into a less dramatic transition based upon continuous employee and organizational learning.

The rapid emergence of the "boundaryless" career concept in the 1990s may have benefited from as well as benefited the complementary protean career concept. While the boundaryless career crosses many different "boundaries" that are more negotiable than before, its primary characteristic is that it plays out across multiple *organizational* boundaries. The implication is that a protean career approach is more obvious and functional in such a setting. Many authors have treated the protean and boundaryless careers as almost synonymous with one another, and in fact the chief scholar behind the boundaryless career concept, Michael A. Arthur, has collaborated on several works with Hall intertwining the two concepts. But as the two theories mature into constructs, their distinctive nature and myriad combinations in theory and practice are becoming evident.

Some scholars have seen the protean career in a Western or Anglo-Saxon context partly because of its origin and development primarily in U.S. business schools and because of its obvious preoccupation with the individual. While research in several Western cultures has shown the protean career construct to be a reliable and robust predictor of career outcomes, it is underresearched in non-Western and collectivistic cultures and should not be used to draw conclusions in such contexts until further research is done.

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AND THE PROTEAN CAREER

Because research constructs for measuring protean career attitudes and approaches have only recently

been developed, the empirical validation of protean career measures falls short of the theoretical maturity of the concept at this juncture. Some research has indicated that protean career attitudes are linked to a constellation of other career attitudes that might be considered “agentic” in nature. For example, strong correlations have been found between the protean career and a proactive personality, career self-efficacy, and a boundaryless mind-set. Furthermore, the protean career has been correlated with a “mastery” or learning orientation toward goals. This is in contrast with a performance orientation, which would entail a concern with success as defined by others rather than by oneself.

To this point, research has not definitively shown whether protean career identity and attitudes are associated with one’s age or gender. In terms of age, some have pointed out how acting in a protean fashion may be more challenging as one ages, especially if one has become accustomed to the traditional psychological contract wherein the organization assumes most of the responsibility for career development. But some studies have actually found a moderate positive relationship between aging and protean attitudes, whereas other research suggests that a protean orientation to the career is consistent across age groups.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND THE PROTEAN CAREER

Rationale for Developing a Protean Career Approach

Addressing career development begs the question of “why?” Why develop people to be more protean? It has been assumed in the literature that the organizational environment is less predictable, much more fluid, and less forgiving than in the past. Within such an environment it is further assumed that a more self-directed approach to the career is advantageous for purposes of adaptability and for enhancing the likelihood of subjective career success. Other presumed benefits of a protean approach to the career are that it will enable career actors to adjust to change better, which will benefit organizations as well as employees. Limited research has suggested that protean career actors do in fact adapt more quickly to organizational change and unemployment.

Jon P. Briscoe and Hall have argued that for a protean career approach to reap its ultimate benefit for the

career actor, both a values-driven career orientation and self-directed career management are necessary. They argue that one who is high only in a values-driven orientation will be rigid and one who is high only in self-directed career management will be able to drive and react to career changes but not ultimately be grounded. Obviously, being low in both is problematic, but individuals who are high in both protean dimensions are expected to be more transformative in terms of their career and potentially able to offer more transformational skills to their organizations as well.

As the “new” career has gained recognition in academic and practitioner circles alike, some organizations have viewed protean and boundaryless career forms with suspicion. In such organizations, the suspicion seems to be that protean or boundaryless employees may be less loyal and committed. Interestingly, several emerging studies suggest that this is not necessarily true. Some studies have suggested that protean employees become committed to their organization affectively (“I want to remain in the organization”) and normatively (“I should remain in the organization) for the same reasons as other employees. There is some evidence that protean employees are less likely to remain in the organization simply for economic advantages. Research suggests that employees prefer cultures that allow for innovation, independence, and value expression.

SKILLS RELATED TO THE PROTEAN CAREER

Hall has proposed two broad skills or “metacompetencies” that relate to the protean career—identity (self-awareness) and adaptability. He refers to these as metacompetencies in that they allow the career actor to “learn how to learn.” Identity awareness and understanding are seen as key to the values-driven nature of the career and to having a secure personal base in which to ground oneself and from which to experiment based upon changing external conditions. Adaptability involves the ability to change career and work behaviors in a way that allows one to succeed in a variety of potential contexts without the constant need for externally driven career development.

With both identity and adaptability skills, ongoing reflection is seen as a requisite “fuel” that challenges and develops the individual’s identity, values, assumptions, and skills across the course of his or her career. Thus reflection itself might be considered a requisite skill in the protean career.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Broadly speaking, career development practices that help individuals increase their identity awareness, adaptability, and reflection skills will enhance their protean attitudes and identity. A large barrier to self-development with respect to the protean career is the inability to go beyond adaptation to career challenges and step back to reflect upon identity, career assumptions, and working definitions of success. Research has suggested that such "double-loop" reflection on both identity and adaptability is relatively uncommon and thus represents a prime target for the focus of career development. Because double-loop learning is apparently not natural for many people, especially in areas that are taken for granted such as identity and values, this is an area that might require outside intervention to stimulate many individuals to address it.

The current dynamic organizational environment is rich in its ability to provide a variety of experiences from which the individual could "learn to learn" and in the process enhance the metacompetencies of identity and adaptability. In this sense, development opportunities abound. For individuals this implies trying to target and obtain experiences that enhance identity, adaptability, and reflection skills. The implications for organizations wishing to assist in career development is similar, except that it is expedient to ensure that the individual is a strong, independent influence upon the process.

Philip H. Mirvis and Hall have conceived of the protean career as a series of learning cycles. Through such a lens, the learning cycle becomes the key frame through which individuals and those interested in their development can attempt to leverage advances in career insights and skills.

Beyond skills in reflection and developmental experiences themselves, relationships are a major vehicle for the career development of the protean career actor. As outlined by Kathy Kram, relationships can provide learning to the career actor as well as emotional and developmental support. Such benefits allow for growth and reflection in both adaptability and identity. A paradox in the new career environment, however, is that although some of one's most developmentally oriented relationships are at work, these relationships are vulnerable to the volatile forces of business. Thus it behooves the career actor to develop a rich network of relationships beyond his or her contemporary work environment.

As of this writing, the protean career concept is mature theoretically but in its adolescence empirically. It

has received wide acceptance as a template for understanding the "new" career. Its limitation empirically may be in part due to the fact that suitable research constructs have until recently lagged behind theory. In addition, the protean concept has been used at times prescriptively in addition to descriptively. This may have slowed efforts to understand it through a more rigorous perspective. Nevertheless, recent research findings indicate that the protean career can be measured in a reliable way, and further that it seems to impact career performance in the directions it has been postulated to. The next logical step is for practitioners and academics to better understand how such an approach might be best developed and whether it will be efficacious across cultures.

—Jon P. Briscoe

See also Boundaryless career, Customized careers, Psychological contract

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PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT

The term *psychological contract* has been around since the 1960s and was first used to capture the

relationship between a work group of employees and a plant foreperson in terms of what the two parties exchanged in their relationship (acceptable wages and job security in return for higher productivity and lower grievances). This initial definition of the psychological contract is similar to what is currently known as normative contracts. A number of other definitions of the psychological contract subsequently appeared, giving rise to different views on what the psychological contract was capturing. For example, the psychological contract was defined as mutual expectations, an implicit contract, and a set of unwritten expectations between an individual employee and the organization. While the early work on the psychological contract was characterized by disagreement, since the late 1980s there seems to be broad consensus that the psychological contract captures an individual's perception of the mutual obligations that exist between that individual and another party.

In the context of the employment relationship, psychological contracts encompass what employees believe their employer has promised to provide in return for certain employee contributions. Whether the employer fulfills these obligations is contingent upon the employee fulfilling its obligations to the employer. For example, an employee may believe that the employer has promised to provide long-term job security, career development, interesting work, and competitive rewards in return for employee loyalty, flexibility, and meeting the formal requirements of the job (in-role performance) as well as going beyond the formal requirements of the job (extra-role performance). Consequently, the degree to which an employee receives career development, competitive rewards, and so on is dependent upon the extent to which the employee performs at the required level, is flexible, and so on. The terms of the psychological contract may be unspoken and unwritten, and there may not be agreement between the employer and employee regarding the obligations each has to the other.

A distinguishing feature of the psychological contract is its focus on contingent obligations whereby one party (the employee) must fulfill its obligations in order to receive promised benefits from the employer. As such, providing a safe work environment or treating employees fairly in terms of the procedures adopted to make decisions or interpersonally through the enactment of those procedures would fall outside the realm of the psychological contract; in most cases, these obligations are deemed universal, that is, the

employee should not need to fulfill any obligations in order to be treated fairly or to have a safe working environment.

TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS

Psychological contracts sit alongside other types of contracts such as social, legal, normative, and implied contracts. However, the distinctive focus of the psychological contract on an individual's perception of mutual obligations differentiates it from social contracts that reflect culturally shared beliefs regarding the appropriateness of behavior within a given society. Legal contracts require objective evidence that contractual obligations exist—an acknowledgment by the parties to the contract or a judicial determination that an offer was made and accepted. In contrast to the objective standard required of legal contracts, the psychological contract is subjective; it resides in the eye of the beholder in terms of the perceived obligations that exist between the parties. The employee and employer may not objectively agree on their mutual obligations, but in the employee's mind, there is a perception of agreement.

A normative contract captures the psychological contract at the group level. In other words, where a group of employees working for the same employer hold a common set of beliefs regarding the employer's obligations to them and their obligations to the employer, a normative contract exists. The primary difference with the psychological contract is the level at which the contract is captured—normative contracts exist at the group level and psychological contracts exist at the individual level. An implied contract differs from a psychological contract in terms of the perspective adopted—the observer. An implied contract captures the attributions of a third party/outsider regarding the terms, acceptance, and mutuality of the contract in contrast to the “eye of the beholder” perspective adopted by a psychological contract.

Psychological contracts may not be enforceable (in contrast to legal contracts), they reside at the individual level (in contrast to social and normative contracts), and they capture subjective beliefs regarding obligations (in contrast to the objective stance of legal and the third-party perspective of implied contracts). Thus the psychological contract offers a distinctive and complementary lens to viewing “contracts” and in doing so offers a valuable framework for understanding the exchange integral to the employment relationship.

CONCEPTUAL GROUNDING OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACTS

The theoretical basis of psychological contracts draws on social exchange and the norm of reciprocity. Social exchange involves unspecified obligations such that when one party does another a favor, there is an expectation of a future return. This type of exchange relationship relies on both parties accepting the norm of reciprocity—when one exchange partner provides another with a benefit, there is an obligation on the recipient to return a benefit at some future point. The timing of the benefit and the nature of the benefit are not specified, which requires the donor to trust that the beneficiary will reciprocate at some future point. Because the relationship is long term, the recipient's willingness to remain obligated to the donor and the donor's trust in the willingness of the recipient to "repay" serve to strengthen the ongoing conferring of benefits and the discharge of obligations during the course of the relationship. In stark contrast, economic exchanges are tangible and do not require trust, as the investment in the relationship is minimal and time limited.

The distinction between economic and social exchange is paralleled in the literature on the psychological contract where two types of psychological contracts are distinguished: transactional and relational contracts. These contracts can be differentiated based on their focus, time frame, stability, scope, and tangibility. A transactional contract is one where what is exchanged is economic and extrinsic, and it remains static and observable over the specified length of the relationship. An example of a transactional type of contract would be seasonal work where an employee is hired to work for a specific period of time in return for economic rewards. The terms of the contract are tangible and remain static over the length of the relationship, for example, piecework whereby the employee is paid based on the quantity of strawberries picked. Finally, the scope of the contract is narrow where there is little spillover between work and personal life. When the seasonal worker's shift has ended, he or she has no obligation to the employer, and thus there is little chance that the worker's employment situation would affect their personal life. In contrast, doctors would be expected to help at the scene of an accident even though they are not on call, and as such, the boundary between work and personal life is porous.

A relational type of contract is manifested in employment relationships where employers hire employees at entry level with the view that they will be developed and remain with the employer until retirement. As the employer cannot specify in advance what an employee will have to contribute under a variety of unforeseen circumstances, the content of what is exchanged will be dynamic over the course of the relationship; it will involve an exchange of tangible and intangible resources that may not be specified and thus contain an element of ambiguity. The boundary between an individual's work life and personal life is permeable, as the employer provides a sense of identity and self-esteem for employees and thus the employer becomes important to an individual's self-identity.

Although both types of contracts are extremes, they reflect the potential gamut of types of employment from seasonal work to entry-retirement relationships. Within each, the nature of what is exchanged, the timing of the exchanges, and the perspective of each party to the exchange are very different. In personal relationships, the difference is akin to a "date" and marriage. The two parties in a relational exchange offer a range of benefits (status, love, money, services), have a view that they are entering a long-term relationship that facilitates delayed reciprocation that in turn enhances trust in the relationship.

CHANGES IN THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

Times are changing, and not surprisingly these changes have significant implications for the employment relationship. In particular, two general trends are visible: the decline in a collectivist and legalistic approach to employment relationships and the rise in different types of work arrangements as organizations respond to deregulation, increased uncertainty, and volatility in the economy and the pressures emanating from globalization. Together, these trends have given rise to increasingly diverse employment relationships that inject a degree of ambiguity as to the nature of what is exchanged in the employee-employer relationship.

In many countries, traditional labor laws have become less influential in determining the employment relationship. Declining trade union membership on a worldwide basis and the increasing proportion of individuals being employed in sectors not traditionally covered by labor statutes have resulted in fewer

employees' employment conditions being negotiated on a collective basis and fewer employment conditions being subjected to regulation by legal standards. Even in countries (e.g., Sweden) where trade union membership is among the highest worldwide, there has been a decline in membership and, arguably with it, a decline in collectivistic and solidaristic values.

Parallel to these changes, organizations have come under significant pressure to become more flexible and respond to changing market conditions. Technological advancements have changed not only where work is done but also when it is done, and they have given rise to and facilitated the view of a 24/7 society. In addition, the workforce has become more diverse, and to speak of the traditional male sole breadwinner is no longer appropriate. In addition to facing demands to become more outwardly flexible, organizations are confronted with pressures to become inwardly flexible, where employees themselves are increasingly expecting organizations to be more flexible in terms of the employment conditions being offered (e.g., variation in working hours, support facilities for young children, support for career sabbaticals, working from home part of the working week, etc.).

The need for organizational flexibility is leading employers to adopt more diverse employment arrangements, and this is taking the form of the increasing use of temporary employees, on-call contracts, fixed-term contracts, agency employees, seasonal workers, independent contractors, floats, and part-time workers. The diversity in employment arrangements is evident in a recent Bureau of Labor Statistics report, where 8.6 million U.S. workers identify themselves as independent contractors, 2 million as on-call day laborers, 1.2 million working for temp agencies, 0.5 million working for organizations that provide a client service on the client's site, 23 million as part-timers, and 7 million holding multiple jobs. The complexity of the current changes in the employment relationship is reflected in the rise of employees falling in the domain of multiple agency relationships, in which an employee works for two organizations simultaneously: the agency and the client organization. Furthermore, organizations are adopting greater flexibility in terms of business risks as they transfer some risks to employees through the introduction of profit sharing and profit-related pay schemes, share ownership, and finally differentiate between core and peripheral employees. Concurrently, employees are seeking individualized opportunities that fit their

career and work-family relationships and thus are expecting greater flexibility on the part of their employer to provide opportunities for the achievement of these goals.

In the context of changing societal expectations for speedier responses from organizations, the decline in legalistically driven regulatory frameworks, and the ever-decreasing collectivist approach to the employment relations, organizations are faced with the opportunity and pressure to develop idiosyncratic employment relationships with employees. In these changing circumstances, a conceptual framework is needed that allows researchers to explore diverse types of employment relationships, and the psychological contract offers this prospect.

FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT

Individuals begin to form their psychological contracts during the anticipatory socialization phase, at which point their anticipatory contract consists of a naïve and imperfect schema about the nature of the exchange. An individual's contract schema originates in childhood and adolescence, where family, school, peers, and media influences as well as direct interactions with working individuals shape beliefs about what one should give and receive in an employment relationship. An additional influence is past work experience, and together these influences shape the lens through which an individual interprets a new employment relationship. Therefore, when organizational agents involved in the recruitment and selection stage send signals to potential employees regarding what the organization promises to give and requires in return, these cues are being interpreted by employees in the context of their own schemata. Furthermore, individuals' psychological contract schemas are shaped more implicitly through their inferences about perceived implicit promises made, interpretations of ambiguous or indirect statements, as well as the more subtle cues such as body language or how questions are answered.

Employees bring their anticipatory schema to the encounter stage, and during their first few months at work, they begin to experience what it is like to work in the organization, and this begins to modify their anticipatory psychological contract. During this stage, newcomers engage in a sense-making process where they actively search for information with the view of

making their psychological contract more complete and thus reducing the uncertainty and making their organizational experience more predictable. As a consequence of this sense-making process, employees' perceptions of employer obligations are adapted based on their interpretation of their organizational experience. For example, the promise of rapid promotion during the recruitment stage could be interpreted by the newcomer as promotion within six months, but based on their socialization experience (and more accurate information), they may revise their interpretation as meaning promotion after two years contingent upon an excellent performance rating at the annual performance review. Consequently, individuals may adapt their psychological contract schema as a result of actively searching for information as part of a reality check—a test between the anticipations of and the reality of the organizational experience.

Another process that shapes an individual's schemata is the norm of reciprocity. Here, employees adapt their psychological contract contingent upon how they perceive the behavior of the employer. Employees may adapt their obligations and contributions based on their perception that their employer has fulfilled its obligations to them. Thus, the ongoing conferring of benefits and discharging of obligations over time is likely to increase the number and diversity of the obligations exchanged as individuals attempt to create a positive imbalance, thus alleviating the tension associated with being in debt to the other party.

Once an individual's psychological contract schema is fully developed and reality tested, it becomes highly resistant to change, and individuals will take steps to preserve their initial schemata rather than fundamentally revise their contract. However, a fundamental revision may be necessary when organizational circumstances dictate a drastic change in its exchange relationship with employees. For example, in response to severe competitive pressures, organizations may consider moving a group of employees from permanent employment status to a contingent one or outsourcing the function to a different organization. Thus, an employee's contract schema that included job security, career development, and support in return for loyalty and performance may be irrevocably challenged.

Organizational agents may hold different psychological contract schema in terms of what is promised to employees and what employees are required to contribute in return. Thus, while employees may be

experiencing contract breach (e.g., as a consequence of moving to contingent status), organizational representatives may not have held the same schemata, and hence the divergent views and experience is a consequence of incongruence.

Incongruence arises when the two parties to the exchange have different perceptions regarding each other's obligations and the extent to which those obligations have been fulfilled. In other words, the employer and employee may disagree on whether an obligation exists or the specifics of that obligation. For example, both parties may agree that the employee is obligated to work overtime when needed, but the extent of the overtime and whether the overtime is compensated may be subject to differing perceptions. Consequently, incongruence can lead to either party perceiving that the other has not fulfilled one or more obligations, and this occurs as a consequence of both parties having a different perception regarding the existence and or meaning of the obligation. Organizations, therefore, need to take steps to minimize the occurrence of incongruence and hence reduce the likelihood of the resultant perception of contract breach.

Organizations can attempt to manage incongruence in a number of ways. First, they could take steps to ensure greater consistency in the signals sent by different organizational agents. For example, during the recruitment process when employees are forming their psychological contract, recruiters need to exercise caution that they don't make promises that others in the organization cannot fulfill or have no intentions of fulfilling (i.e., provide realistic job previews). Therefore, organizations need to ensure coordination and communication among agents to increase the likelihood of employees receiving similar messages irrespective of the source.

In addition to consistency in communication, organizational agents can communicate with employees on a regular basis to discuss mutual obligations. Frequent regular communications can serve as a mechanism for the adjustment of obligations and provide the opportunity to discuss and resolve divergent views. Agents may also influence employees' attributions of why they did not receive what they were expecting through communication—adequate justification for a decision can mitigate the effects of contract breach or reduce the likelihood of breach occurring. The use of formal and informal communication channels can serve to increase agreement between organizational agents and employees concerning their mutual obligations and the

fulfillment of those obligations, thereby reducing the subsequent development of contract breach due to differing perceptions.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT

A central thrust of much of the research on the psychological contract has focused on its consequences on employee psychological and behavioral outcomes. Specifically, researchers have examined the consequences of perceived contract breach that can occur as a result of incongruence or renegeing. The latter reflects an employer's unwillingness or inability to fulfill its obligations to employees. An employer may be unwilling to deliver on a promise to promote if the employee has underperformed or an employer may not be able to deliver on a promise of job security due to financial pressures.

The empirical evidence is strongly supportive of the negative consequences of perceptions of psychological contract breach. In terms of psychological outcomes, contract breach is associated with reduced employee obligations to the employer, lower trust in the employer, reduced affective commitment to the organization, greater intention to exit the organization, increased commitment to trade unions, and increased cynicism toward the subsequent employer. Empirical research has established a link between psychological contract breach and behavior: perceptions of breach are associated with reduced in-role and extra-role performance, less fulfillment of employee obligations, and increased acts of retaliation against the organization. Irrespective of the type of employee or cultural setting, the empirical evidence is reasonably clear: When employees perceive that their employer has broken a promise to them, negative consequences occur. However, the intensity and nature of these consequences may vary across individuals and situations.

Individual dispositions play a role in how individuals interact in exchange relationships. Some individuals will contribute to the organization contingent upon how well they perceive the organization as treating them. These individuals who are high on exchange ideology will contribute to the organization as long as they believe their employer is fulfilling its obligations. On the other hand, individuals who are low on exchange ideology will continue to contribute to their employer even if they feel they have been treated badly or unfairly. Individuals will also vary in terms of the

degree to which they have internalized the norm of reciprocity. Individuals who are high on creditor ideology will "overpay" the employer for benefits received. These individuals do not want to be in debt and thus will return benefits to the employer to a greater value than the benefits received. Individuals who are low on creditor ideology are likely to "underpay" the employer for benefits received. Similarly, individual dispositions are likely to affect whether individuals perceive a contract breach. Individuals who are high on self-esteem and who are "entitleds" are more likely to interpret the slightest discrepancy as a psychological contract breach. These types of individuals are more likely to think that they have fulfilled their obligations to their employer and that the employer has not adequately fulfilled its side of the exchange.

How employees react to contract breach is not solely dependent upon their dispositions but also the justice context in which the breach occurs. Organizations can mitigate the effects of contract breach by providing a credible justification for the breach (interactional justice). For example, a pay freeze is a consequence of the severe financial situation of the organization. Organizations can also conform to the tenets of procedural justice (e.g., bias suppression, advance notice, appeals mechanism, representativeness) in breaching an individual's psychological contract. Therefore, in the case of the pay freeze, it is applied consistently throughout the organization, giving advance notice and allowing employees to appeal the decision. Finally, distributive justice may come into play after a contract breach as a way of honoring the spirit but not the letter of the contract. In this case, the organization substitutes a benefit in lieu of the broken promise (e.g., increasing entitled vacation time). Therefore, different facets of justice have a role in the breaking of promises but also in minimizing the effects of broken promises.

Significantly less research has been conducted on how employer representatives react to employee psychological contract breach; in this case, the employee has not fulfilled his or her obligations to the employer. The little research that does exist points to managers, as organizational representatives, rating an employee lower on performance and organizational citizenship behavior when they perceive the employee as having breached his or her obligations to the employer. Therefore, it looks as if negative evaluations follow the perception of breach by either party in the exchange relationship.

CAREER MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Many psychological contracts theorists have argued that a “new deal” is emerging in the employee-employer relationship in response to the increasingly diverse pressures facing organizations. As organizations are no longer in a position to offer job security and a “career for life,” they are emphasizing flexibility and employability. Thus, job security is being replaced with job security based on an individual’s value in the marketplace. Although individuals may no longer have a job with the same organization, as a result of their value they will have a job with an organization for their working career. As a consequence, organizations are emphasizing giving employees the opportunity to develop a broad range of skills, and in return employees must be willing to change jobs and become more flexible. This in turn will increase their marketability and hence their future employability in the marketplace.

The implication is that the nature of careers is changing as well as the view of what constitutes career success. In place of a linear trajectory within a single organization is the idea of a “boundaryless career” in which individuals may have a number of employers and a number of jobs within the life of their career. Therefore, career success is defined (among other criteria) as one of individual marketability, where an individual is able to add value to the existing organization and concurrently is deemed marketable by external organizations. In this respect, the goal of managing individual careers becomes one of remaining employable throughout one’s career.

Who, therefore, is responsible for career management in organizations? Traditionally, organizations took responsibility, and organizational career management was planned and managed by the organization. The type of formal activities may range from training courses to mentoring. Therefore, it was the organization that was responsible for facilitating and managing the careers of its employees. However, the onus of responsibility is shifting toward individual employees, where employees are increasingly expected to self-manage their own career. This clearly places greater ownership on employees to take steps to manage and promote their own career. Employees, therefore, need to engage in continuous improvement in their own job and take steps to increase their preparedness for job mobility. Thus, the deal has changed from a guarantee of a career to the opportunity to have a career.

The implications for the exchange relationship are quite clear—“It takes two to tango”—and organizations

need to offer different career management interventions in return for employees proactively managing their own careers and implicitly being self-starters, flexible, and adaptable to new experiences. Thus the responsibility for career management lies with the two parties to the relationship, and the idea that the employee is the passive recipient of organizational career management interventions is slowly becoming outdated.

Organizations need to offer a different set of career supportiveness practices such as providing opportunities for employees to develop their skills, build internal and external networks that will increase their social capital, and develop mentoring relationships. The benefit to an organization is having an enhanced knowledge base and also having externally marketable employees who will increase the quality of its applicant pool. In return, employees need to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the organization and concurrently create further opportunities to enhance their marketability to any organization by engaging in networking activities internal and external to their organization. Furthermore, in taking responsibility for their own career, individuals need to consider expanding and updating their portfolio of skills so as to remain an attractive investment to their current employer and marketable to external organizations. To draw an analogy, lifelong marriage has been replaced by serial monogamy.

The implications of the changing nature of careers for the psychological contract is that organizations need to exercise caution in the promises they make to employees, particularly during the recruitment stage, to avoid perceptions of contract breach in relation to career issues arising at some future point in the relationship. When employees join the organization with traditional career expectations in mind, organizations should take steps to ensure that when newcomers undergo their reality check, their expectations of what the organization is willing to do to assist employees in developing their career is explicitly, consistently, and accurately communicated. This will facilitate congruence between employees and employer representatives and help avoid the consequences associated with perceptions of contract breach relating to career management.

—*Jacqueline A.-M. Coyle-Shapiro*

See also Boundaryless career, Organizational socialization, Realistic recruitment, Recruitment

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PYGMALION EFFECT

The *Pygmalion effect* is a special case of self-fulfilling prophecy (SFP) in which raising a manager's expectations regarding worker performance boosts that performance. The Pygmalion effect debuted in educational psychology when psychologists experimentally raised elementary school teachers' expectations toward a randomly selected subsample of their pupils and thereby

produced significantly greater gains in achievement among those pupils in comparison to pupils in the control group. Subsequent experimental research has replicated this phenomenon among adult supervisors and subordinates in a variety of military, business, and industrial organizations and among all gender combinations. Both men and women lead both men and women to greater success when they expect more of them. Through the medium of interpersonal expectancy effects in various mentoring relationships, the Pygmalion effect undoubtedly plays a major, albeit largely unheralded, role in career development.

Several theoretical models have been proposed to explain how a leader's expectations influence subordinates' performance. Common to all these models is a causal chain that begins with the impact of the leader's expectations on, and his or her own behavior toward, subordinates, which arouses some perception or motivational response on the part of the subordinates and culminates in subordinate performance in accord with the leader's expectations. Self-efficacy has emerged as the key motivational variable in this causal chain. Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in his or her ability to perform successfully. Self-efficacy has been shown to be a key determinant of performance. When individuals believe they have what it takes to succeed, they try harder; however, those who do not believe they can succeed, refrain from exerting the effort that would apply the ability that they do have toward performance, and they accomplish less than they could. The Pygmalion-at-work model posits that having high expectations moves the leader to treat followers in a manner that augments their self-efficacy, which in turn motivates the subordinates to exert greater effort in their work, eventuating in enhanced performance. Thus, the Pygmalion effect is a motivational phenomenon initiated by the high performance expectations held by a leader who believes in followers' capacity for success. In a largely unconscious interpersonal process, leaders with high expectations lead their followers to success by enhancing their self-efficacy.

The SFP is a double-edged sword: As high expectations culminate in improved performance, low expectations can depress performance in a negative SFP process dubbed the Golem effect. "Golem" means oaf or dumbbell in Hebrew and Yiddish slang. Leaders who expect dumbbells get dumbbells. Another variant of SFP is the so-called Galatea effect. This is an intrapersonal expectancy effect in which self-starters fulfill their own prophecy of success; believing in their own capacity to excel, they mobilize

their internal motivational resources to sustain the effort needed for success even without any external source of high expectations. Finally, some research has shown group-level expectancy effects in which a manager's high expectations for a whole group, as distinct from particular individuals, culminate in that group's exceeding the performance of groups in the control condition.

A fascinating but elusive aspect of interpersonal SFP involves the communication of expectations. Some of this communication is verbal and conscious, but much of it is not. Teachers and managers exhibit numerous nonverbal behaviors through which they convey their expectations, both high and low, to their pupils and subordinates. When they expect more, they unwittingly smile more, nod their heads affirmatively more often, draw nearer, maintain more frequent and longer eye contact, speak faster, and show greater patience toward those they are mentoring. These nonverbal behaviors serve to "warm" the interpersonal relationship, create a climate of support, and foster success. Other ways in which leaders favor those of whom they expect more include providing them with more input, more feedback, and more opportunities to show what they can do, while those of whom less is expected are left, neglected, "on the bench."

Meta-analyses have abundantly confirmed the validity of the Pygmalion phenomenon in management as in education. The experimental design of this body of research confirms the flow of causality from leaders' expectations to follower performance. What remains to be shown is the practical validity of the Pygmalion effect. Although abundant field-experimental replications have produced the effect in military and civilian organizations, attempts to get managers to apply it through managerial training have been less successful. Managers' prior acquaintance with their subordinates appears to be a barrier to widespread practical application. Virtually all the successful replications have been among newcomers whose managers had not previously known them. Familiarity apparently crystallizes expectations, as managers do not expect their subordinates to change much. Therefore, the most effective applications may be made among managers and their new subordinates. Thus the Pygmalion effect may be most relevant in the early stages of career development. These may be the most important, formative years.

Organizational innovations and other digressions from routine can occasion conditions conducive to

Pygmalion effects. For example, when organizational development programs unfreeze standard operating procedure or when the organization undergoes profound change in structure or function, a window of opportunity opens for managers quick of mind and action to piggyback on these unsettling events and raise expectations in order to promote effective change and successful outcomes. In one classic example, the introduction of job rotation and job enrichment produced significant improvements in production when accompanied by information that raised expectations from the new work procedures, but neither innovation produced any productivity improvement when expectations were not raised. The implications for practical application are clear: Change presents managers with opportunities for creating productive Pygmalion effects. It is incumbent upon those who want to lead individuals, groups, and organizations to success to convey high expectations when the opportunity presents itself. Conversely, cynicism or expressions of doubt about reorganization or other potentially disruptive changes condemns them to failure. Thus the practical agenda is twofold: first, managers and other mentors must counteract any manifestations of contrary expectations, and second, they must implant high expectations.

The essence of the Pygmalion effect is that managers get the workers they expect. Generalizing to career management, one can prophesy that one gets the career one expects. Expect more and you will get more. However, the converse is true too: Expect less and you will get less. All the mentors who have a hand in career development can and should play a Pygmalion role by cultivating in themselves high expectations regarding their mentees' developmental potential and by fostering in the mentees themselves high self-expectations regarding their own potential for success. High expectations are too important to be left to chance or whim; they should be built into all career development programs to make sure they take root.

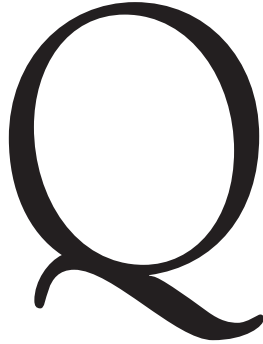
—Dov Eden

See also Leadership development, Motivation and career development, Self-efficacy, Self-leadership

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QUALITY OF WORK LIFE (QWL)

The term *quality of work life* (QWL) refers to the degree of satisfaction and contentedness an employee experiences with respect to his or her job and the overall work situation. QWL has been linked with a number of positive outcomes both for individual workers and for employing organizations. QWL programs sprang from the humanistic theories of management that became popular in the 1950s and 1960s, all of which emerged from the human relations movement in management and industrial/organizational psychology. Examples of QWL goals and strategies suggested by these early theories include.

1. *Decrease the conflict between the employee and the organization.* This goal may be achieved if the formal structure of the organization is changed to allow employees to be more active than passive, to be more independent than dependent, to assume a longer rather than shorter time perspective, and to hold positions that are at least equal to those of their peers.
2. *Enrich the job.* Management can accomplish this step by, at least, increasing the number of tasks that employees have to perform and preferably giving them more control over their jobs.
3. *Use participative or employee-centered leadership.* Employees must enjoy self-expression in the organization. The organizational structure should be modified to allow for group-centered leadership. The work unit should have responsibility for defining the group's goals, evaluating behavior, and providing team direction. In addition, the work unit should experience rewards and punishments collectively.

During the early years of the movement, much research was conducted to document instances where QWL programs resulted in an increase in productivity and employee growth and self-development. Thus management's efforts to satisfy the needs of the workers have been an impetus behind the QWL movement in management thought and practice. More recently, the trend in QWL research has emanated from two sources, with one source referred to as the management perspective and the other as the quality-of-life view.

QWL FROM A MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

Management scholars often do research on QWL initiatives where the program's design is guided by management's self-interest to promote profitability. Organizations have found that programs designed to increase job satisfaction and empower employees can increase employee productivity and job performance. In turn, higher levels of productivity and performance serve to increase the organization's profitability. Based on this perspective, much research has focused on specific QWL programs to examine the effects of these programs on employee productivity as well as job satisfaction.

Research has shown that *teamwork*, characterized by reciprocal trust and respect among team members, serves to enhance employee productivity and job satisfaction. Teamwork can be induced through role clarification (clarifying and negotiating role expectations of each team member), problem solving (educating team members on how to solve problems by first defining the problem, followed by generating possible

alternatives for corrective action, selecting the best alternative, implementing the corrective action, and monitoring the outcome of the corrective action), goal clarification and prioritization (the team is instructed to develop measurable performance goals and prioritize these goals), and conflict resolution (the team is taught how to resolve conflicts through a built-in process to review decisions, team members are induced to learn more about the specialty fields of one another through planned mutual instructions, roles are clarified, and greater communication and openness are encouraged).

Jobs generating higher levels of involvement involve *parallel structures*, also known as collateral structures, dualistic structures, or shadow structures. Jobs involved in parallel structures provide members with an alternative setting to address problems and propose innovative solutions free from the formal organization structure. *Quality circles* are an example of parallel structures. Quality circles consist of small groups of 13-15 employees who volunteer to meet periodically, usually once a week for an hour or so, to identify and solve productivity problems. These group members make recommendations for change, but decisions about implementation of their proposals are reserved for management. Research has shown that parallel structures and quality circles do play an important role in employee productivity and job satisfaction.

Research has shown that the *ethical corporate mission and culture* of an organization can influence employee productivity and job satisfaction. Employees believe that being associated with an ethical organization gives them a sense of meaning and purpose in their work. Examples of these organizations include the religious-based or values-based organizations where the founders or managers are guided by general religious or philosophical principles.

An organization's *work schedule* has been researched as a QWL program affecting employee productivity and job satisfaction. Specifically, research has shown that matching the time preferences of employees with the time demands established by organizations is likely to enhance job performance and job satisfaction. The match between the individual's ideal and actual time behaviors brings a sense of temporal symmetry in which the rhythm of people's lives matches their preferred lifestyles. Time congruity serves to reduce work and nonwork role conflict and allows the individual to meet work and nonwork demands with minimal stress.

Substantial research has shown that *participation in decision making* and *high-involvement programs* contribute positively and significantly to work motivation and satisfaction. High-involvement programs are thought to be a conduit to help employees express their thoughts and feelings in important organizational decisions. As such, high-involvement programs serve to enhance person-environment fit in the work domain. Allowing employees to participate in important organizational decisions amounts to providing employees with greater work resources that help employees meet work demands more readily.

Job design is the process of defining and structuring job tasks and work arrangements to allow optimal accomplishment. This process may determine the amount of satisfaction that workers experience at work. The best job design (referred to as *job enrichment*) is one that meets organizational requirements for high performance, offers a good fit with employees' skills and needs, and provides opportunities for job satisfaction. Research in this area has differentiated hygiene factors (or dissatisfiers that are in the job context such as pay) from motivators (or satisfiers that are in the job content—the actual work that people do). Examples of motivators are work opportunities for achievement, recognition for good performance, work itself, responsibility, and advancement and growth. Building motivators into the job enriches the job and increases worker satisfaction and motivation to work.

Total quality management (TQM) has also been treated as a QWL program. TQM is an aspect of organizational control. The idea underlying TQM is that all members of the organization are committed to high quality results, continuous improvement, and customer satisfaction. TQM also prescribes employee involvement and empowerment. Research has shown that TQM plays an important role in job performance and employee satisfaction.

The policy to *promote from within* is yet another QWL program. Self-actualization is the desire to become anything that one is capable of becoming. Progressive firms engage in practices that aim to ensure that all employees have the opportunity to self-actualize. Promotion and career advancement are important in that regard. Progressive companies have promotion-from-within programs, which means that open positions are filled, whenever possible, by qualified candidates from within the company. Those companies typically hire at entry level and then train and develop personnel to promote them to higher

levels of responsibility. People are hired at entry-level positions based on their potential for advancement within the company and on their having the right values. Research has shown that companies that have policies to promote from within have employees who are more productive and satisfied with their jobs than companies that do not have such policies. Also, progressive companies provide *educational and training resources* to help employees identify and develop their potential. This may be accomplished with programs of career planning, company internships, and tuition assistance.

There are many *incentives plans* that organizations use to reward their employees and satisfy employee needs for self-actualization, self-esteem, and social recognition. These include individual incentive programs, group incentive programs, profit-sharing plans, and gain-sharing programs. Research has shown that these programs do play a significant role in employee productivity and job satisfaction.

The goal of *alternative work arrangements* is to minimize work-family conflict and help employees balance the demands of their work and family lives. The most common type of work-family conflict is time-based conflict experienced when the time devoted to one role makes the fulfillment of the other difficult. Common programs that manipulate work arrangements include full-time work-at-home, part-time work-at-home, flextime, compressed workweek, and part-time work arrangements. Alternative work arrangements typically affect job satisfaction by reducing work-family conflict. Operationally speaking, alternative work arrangements attempt to restructure one's job to allow for more flexibility in managing the hours devoted to work and the hours that are available for family commitments. These restructurings could include adjusting the employee's arrival and departure times to and from work, restructuring hours at work in order for the employee to be at home at certain times, limiting the number of evenings per week where the employee is expected to work at the office, limiting weekend work at the office, limiting travel, and making special arrangements at work to attend to family needs.

With respect to *employment benefits*, many firms offer at least basic employment benefits to their employees, which play an important role in employee productivity and job satisfaction. Examples of employee benefits include health insurance, retirement/pension benefits, and supplemental pay benefits.

Furthermore, there are many *ancillary programs* described in the QWL literature designed to meet employee nonwork needs. These include child care programs, elder care programs, fitness programs, social programs and events, employee assistance programs, educational subsidies, counseling services, credit union, and others. Among the lesser known QWL programs are lakefront vacations, weight loss programs, child adoption assistance, company country club memberships, tickets to cultural activities and events, lunch-and-learn programs, home assistance programs, subsidized employee transportation, food services, and executive perks.

QWL FROM A QUALITY-OF-LIFE PERSPECTIVE

While an economic orientation may remain a necessity for business organizations, it need not preclude a focus on overall employee well-being. QWL programs are organizational development efforts that result not only in job satisfaction but also *life satisfaction*. Thus, much research has been conducted to understand how specific QWL programs influence employee life satisfaction.

Specifically, this line of research has examined the spillover between job satisfaction and life satisfaction. Substantial research has documented the fact that job satisfaction is positively correlated with life satisfaction. People segment their feelings or compensate for divergent affective reactions across life domains (work life, family life, social life, etc.). Also, people experience reciprocal *spillover* between job satisfaction and life satisfaction. Research has shown that the spillover from one's experience in a particular life domain to one's satisfaction/dissatisfaction with life in general may be affected by a variety of moderators such as organizational commitment. That is, employees who have a higher level of organizational commitment tend to experience a greater spillover effect than those who expressed lower levels of commitment.

Interestingly, both job and life satisfactions share a substantial dispositional component. A top-down approach to the study of job and life satisfaction suggests that common traits (e.g., positive and negative affectivity) influence both. In fact, although personality removes a huge chunk of the variance from the job-life satisfaction relationship, the link still remains. Such traits may gauge the broader construct of life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is a higher order concept

that encompasses domain satisfactions. It is interesting to note that situational influences on reports of life satisfaction—the bottom-up approach to the study of life satisfaction—have been found to account for a significant amount of variance in life satisfaction.

QWL research based on the quality-of-life perspective has indicated that a number of organizational factors can explain the job-life satisfaction link. One such factor is *organizational structure*. Bureaucratization is associated with an increase in job dissatisfaction and life dissatisfaction. That is, workers in a decentralized bureaucracy experience a greater spillover between job satisfaction and life satisfaction than workers in a centralized bureaucracy. Fostering decentralized bureaucracies allows workers to enjoy greater work discretion and lesser immediate supervision. Work discretion and low levels of supervision reduce work role stress, which in turn reduces negative affect and dissatisfaction in work life. This reduction of negative affect and dissatisfaction in the work domain serves to decrease negative affect in overall life through spillover, contributing to life satisfaction.

Another factor moderating the job-life satisfaction link is *occupational status*. Research has shown that different jobs carry different levels of social status, with clerical and sales scoring moderate in both social status and job satisfaction and unskilled car workers scoring lowest in both social status and job satisfaction. Spillover occurs between job satisfaction and life satisfaction moderated by occupational prestige. Specifically, occupational prestige is a poor predictor of both job and life satisfaction, except for the highest status occupations. High-prestige jobs often nourish self-esteem and generate positive affective experience (i.e., job satisfaction and life satisfaction) that is not generated by low-prestige jobs.

Research continues in the context of both programs of research—QWL from a management development perspective and from a quality-of-life perspective. Much more is needed to study the various QWL programs to better understand their effects not only on job performance and job satisfaction but also on life satisfaction. Different QWL programs tend to affect different role identities in various ways. Some are effective in generating more resources to facilitate the realization of role expectations. Some are effective in

reducing conflict within a specific role identity or between two or more role identities. Others are designed to clarify and articulate role expectations to match work and nonwork demands.

—M. Joseph Sirgy

See also Career satisfaction, Employee assistance programs, Family-responsive workplace practices, Job satisfaction, Wellness and fitness programs

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RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Forty years have passed since the Civil Rights Act of 1964 made it illegal to engage in racial employment discrimination in the United States. Many scholars agree that this enactment has played a significant role in reducing this type of discrimination. Indeed, all accounts seem to suggest that blatant or outright prejudice is seen infrequently in modern workplaces. Nevertheless, a new and subtler form of prejudice, which is known as *aversive* or *modern*, has taken its place. Holders of these beliefs feel that *racial discrimination* is a thing of the past, minorities are pushing too hard for further change, and many of the gains attained by minorities have been unwarranted. Consequently, despite legislation outlawing racial discrimination and a reduction in old-fashioned prejudice, systemic inequalities have persisted, racist attitudes have evolved, and discrimination continues.

The purpose of this entry is to acquaint readers with the current state of knowledge concerning racial discrimination and its impact on careers. To begin, discrimination is defined comprehensively. Subsequently, the effects of racial discrimination on careers are examined at two stages: pre- and postorganizational entry. At the preentry stage, factors such as teacher and guidance counselor prejudice, inequalities in schools, questionable higher education admissions criteria, and biased personnel selection practices are discussed. At the postentry stage, the focus shifts to systemic discrepancies in human resource management practices such as employee placement, performance appraisal, promotions, compensation, and

layoffs. In short, a comprehensive look at how discrimination affects career development and progression is provided.

To provide conceptual clarity, any discussion of discrimination must begin with a definition. Within the context of employment, racial discrimination can take one of two forms: adverse impact or disparate treatment. Adverse impact refers to situations wherein members of a particular racial group are intentionally or inadvertently systemically disadvantaged. For instance, if a cutoff score on a test is used in making hiring decisions and this criterion places Native Americans at a relative disadvantage (i.e., the proportion of Native Americans meeting this threshold is less than four-fifths of that of the majority group), then it can be said that this procedure results in adverse impact. Conversely, disparate treatment is an intentional discrepancy in the treatment afforded to members of different racial groups by employers or fellow employees. For example, executives at Texaco in the 1990s explicitly decided that African Americans in general were less qualified for managerial positions and therefore promoted them considerably less often. In this entry, both forms of discrimination are considered and discussed.

PREENTRY DISCRIMINATION

Racial discrimination can have a significant impact on an individual's career before he or she ever applies for a job. During primary education, which remains highly racially segregated despite the outcome of the *Brown v. Board of Education* case 50 years ago, minority and majority group members tend to undergo

very different experiences. For instance, racial and ethnic minority youth are disproportionately more likely to attend schools that are disadvantaged in terms of the resources (physical and human) available to promote student intellectual and emotional development. Hence, the facilities, educational materials, curricula, and instruction received often tend to be inferior to those experienced by much of the majority group. In addition, minority youth are more likely to drop out of school, which contributes further to their subsequent disadvantaged position in the labor market.

Within this segregated school system, minority youth often encounter teachers and counselors who harbor prejudice and bias against them. For instance, evidence indicates that minority students are disproportionately more likely to be placed in vocational courses and less likely to be placed in college preparatory courses than their majority group counterparts, irrespective of their test scores. Studies also show that teacher prejudice and bias tends to result in lowered expectations of student performance. These lowered expectations produce a type of Pygmalion effect, wherein students are treated differently according to the teachers' perceptions and ultimately produce outcomes that confirm the teachers' initial bias. Furthermore, teachers' low expectations often result in students developing and holding low self-expectations that produce negative self-fulfilling prophecies (i.e., you don't expect to accomplish much, so you don't). This helps explain why minorities in secondary and postsecondary education tend to perceive fewer vocational opportunities than their White counterparts. Consequently, before officially beginning their careers, many minorities' prospects have been irrevocably diminished.

Another obstacle to minority achievement is getting into college. Although other criteria are often involved in the admissions process, the two most important tend to be high school grades and standardized test scores, such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American Collegiate Test (ACT). Working against minorities is the fact that high grade point averages earned at economically disadvantaged schools receive less weight during admissions decisions than those from schools with more resources. In addition, a number of questions have been raised regarding whether the SAT and ACT, the most commonly used standardized tests, are culturally biased in favor of majority group members. Regardless of this alleged bias (which has yet to be adequately verified

or refuted), a more pressing issue with regard to these tests is their ability to predict collegiate academic performance. Recent research suggests that reports of their validity in this regard may have been exaggerated. Thus, by relying heavily on test scores when making admissions decisions, schools may not only be adversely impacting minorities (who tend to score lower), but the variance in these scores that forms the basis of their decisions may not translate into actual differences in college grades.

Individuals who manage to achieve in spite of the aforementioned obstacles must then obtain employment befitting their credentials. Despite laws prohibiting discriminatory personnel selection, recent empirical results suggest that inequalities persist. In fact, evidence indicates that many employers consider a White male candidate with a criminal record to be more hireable than a Black male without one. Merely being thought to be a minority may be enough to disqualify applicants from further consideration. For instance, having a name linked to minority groups (e.g., Jamal or Lakisha) on one's résumé considerably decreases the probability of receiving a callback from a prospective employer. Furthermore, increasing the quality of the credentials on the résumé has no effect for these individuals, irrespective of whether the position applied for is at the entry level or executive level. One potential explanation for such blatant discrimination is that those responsible for hiring have formulated or encountered business-oriented rationales for why the company should hire majority, as opposed to minority, group members. Individuals who endorse the tenets of modern racism tend to view these rationales as an adequate justification to discriminate against minorities.

After the initial stages of job seeking, discrimination often continues to act as a hurdle to be overcome. Many companies use cognitive ability tests to screen job applicants. Although these tests usually do an adequate job of predicting performance, their use as a screening mechanism often has an adverse impact on the hiring of minorities. Furthermore, interviewers, who are often White, tend to be biased in favor of members of their own racial and ethnic groups. More recently, these findings have been extended to include panel interviews, indicating that panels are apt to discriminate against minorities unless there are minorities on the panel. Interestingly, it appears that even when interviews do not introduce racial bias into the selection process, interviewers may retain prejudiced

impressions of the minority applicants (e.g., that they are less intelligent than White applicants) that they have chosen to hire. Clearly, discrimination remains an obstacle to attaining employment for many racial and ethnic minority group members.

POSTENTRY DISCRIMINATION

Unfortunately, the impact of racial discrimination on careers is not limited solely to the preemployment experiences discussed above. In fact, research suggests that it may be equally, if not more, pervasive after minorities have been hired. Initially, minorities tend to be placed under the supervision, and in the immediate company, of other minorities when hired. Although the repercussions of this practice may not be immediately apparent, its implications for the careers of minorities are grave. By limiting the workplace interaction between minority employees and their majority coworkers and supervisors, who tend to hold the balance of power within U.S. organizations, companies are constraining minorities' advancement and developmental opportunities. Effectively, these individuals are less able to form mentoring relationships with those in power, less likely to be assigned to work on high-level projects, and less likely to be identified early as prospective future organizational leaders.

Discrimination also tends to rear its head in the process of performance appraisal. Evidence indicates that minorities receive lower performance evaluations and subsequently are less often recommended for promotions. Although many experts have contended that these differences are attributable to actual performance differences, several findings suggest otherwise. Rather, it appears that even after accounting for any existing differences in human and social capital, racial differences in promotions persist. It has been demonstrated recently that the impact of these promotional discrepancies increases over time. This suggests that employers, indeed, are engaging in discriminatory appraisal processes and that the effects of this type of discrimination on minorities grows over the course of their careers. These artificial constraints on minorities' career advancement possibilities collectively represent what is commonly referred to as the glass ceiling effect.

Given the inequalities in placement, appraisals, and promotions cited above, it is not surprising that a considerable pay gap remains between the compensation received by majority and minority group members.

This gap is especially prominent for Hispanics and those of African descent who receive between 70 and 75 cents for every dollar received by their White counterparts in comparable positions. Similar to promotions, it appears that these disparities in compensation cannot be attributed solely to differences in human capital. Instead, majority group members tend to enjoy disproportionately favorable returns for their human capital investments (e.g., education, training, experience) relative to their minority counterparts. In fact, evidence indicates that minorities even receive lower payoffs than comparable White employees when switching jobs from one organization to another. Furthermore, the latter are more likely to have social ties to organization members who aid them in negotiating higher starting salaries. Perhaps even more disturbing is that any initial pay gaps only tend to widen with time, leaving minorities further disadvantaged as their careers progress.

A less often discussed source of discrimination that affects minorities originates from customer preferences, whether they are actual or perceived. It seems that organizations whose clientele are primarily White are less likely to hire minorities based on their belief that their customers prefer to see employees of their own racial or ethnic group. This tendency to try and match employees to customers is even more pronounced when the degree of employee-customer contact required for the positions is high. Accordingly, the race of a company's customers also predicts wages. Organizations that hire more minorities are those that serve a greater proportion of minorities and, therefore, typically pay their employees lower wages. What this means for minorities is that their occupational options often are restricted to those organizations that pay less and cater primarily to members of their own groups.

Further complicating the careers of minorities is the old adage "last hired, first fired," which suggests that minorities are discriminated against in the making of termination as well as selection decisions. Belief in this adage appears to be relatively high among minority and majority group members alike. In fact, minorities have reported perceiving greater discrimination concerning terminations than hires. Moreover, 72 percent of all respondents in a recent study reported believing that minorities are unfairly targeted for layoffs. Recent experimental evidence corroborates this belief, indicating that White employees are less likely to be laid off than non-White (e.g., Asian American, African American, and Hispanic) employees.

In conjunction with the discrimination experienced when attempting to secure employment, this contributes to a vicious cycle of unemployment that disrupts the careers of many minorities.

A final, and somewhat less systemic, form of racial discrimination occurs in the form of prejudice and harassment from coworkers. Despite the fact that these actions are less likely to be formally institutionalized than those discussed thus far, the impact on victims' careers can be equally damaging. For instance, the amount of prejudice and discrimination one experiences elevates stress levels, blood pressure, and reported illness while deteriorating mental health and general well-being. Studies show that many minorities are exposed to discriminatory treatment at work on a routine, if not daily, basis. Such hostile environments are said to have a negative diversity climate, which tends to lower commitment to the organization and one's career, and satisfaction with one's job, manager, and career. As might be expected, more diverse companies tend to have more positive diversity climates, and consequently, voluntary turnover among minorities is considerably lower in these organizations. Thus the impact of this consistent disparate treatment on the career development of its recipients is significant.

CONCLUSION

It is important to note that all racial and ethnic minorities tend to experience discrimination. Whereas most examination of the topic has focused on African and Hispanic Americans, some evidence indicates that those of Asian descent often are victims of discrimination as well. In particular, there appears to be a glass ceiling limiting the advancement prospects for members of this group as well. This is an important realization, because many readers likely endorse the "model minority" stereotype (i.e., that Asian Americans exhibit positive characteristics that make them distinct from other minorities) and therefore may doubt the occurrence of discrimination against this group.

Although the moniker "reverse discrimination" is a misnomer, because discrimination does not inherently require that its victims be of a particular race, it is important to acknowledge that minorities are not alone in reporting experiences of racial discrimination. In fact, survey data suggest that a considerable proportion of majority group members believe that they have been discriminated against because of their racial group membership. Experimental research

investigating this topic, however, is relatively limited. Consequently, it is difficult to ascertain with any degree of confidence the extent to which White employees are subjected to racial discrimination in American workplaces.

The fact that the level of discrimination faced by racial and ethnic minorities is less than it once was is encouraging. Nevertheless, it remains a pervasive deterrent to career success. Its impact in many cases can be traced from inequalities and discriminatory treatment during childhood and adolescence, to biased human resource management criteria and systems. Its presence is felt as well in many everyday interactions between minority and majority group members. Many scholars argue that legislative changes have contributed to a marked decline in the significance of race in the workplace. Nevertheless, the findings of several recent studies clearly demonstrate that employment discrimination remains prevalent. Moreover, until systematic inequalities impacting early career development are addressed, efforts to achieve postentry equality (e.g., affirmative action plans, diversity management programs) will have only marginal utility in leveling the playing field. In sum, it is impossible to comprehend the impact of racial discrimination on minorities' careers without considering the entire career.

—Derek R. Avery

See also Affirmative action, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Civil Rights Act of 1991, Glass ceiling, Pygmalion effect, Reverse discrimination

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RATER ERRORS IN PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Anyone who rates another person's performance has the potential to commit a *rater error* in the evaluation of that performance. A rater error is defined as an inaccuracy that makes its way into an employee's appraisal that results from a bias, either conscious or unconscious, on the part of the rater. Rater errors represent a significant concern for organizations as they try to equitably evaluate the performance of their employees. Since it is virtually impossible to eliminate rater errors from the performance appraisal process, it is important for organizations to take steps to minimize their impact in misjudging an employee's overall performance. Ongoing training for managers in understanding the sources of rater errors is one technique that can help. In addition, many organizations have moved to multisource approaches to performance appraisal, such as 360-degree assessments, to smooth out the rater errors and thus minimize the degree of inaccuracy in an employee's evaluation.

What are the types of rater errors and why do they occur? One type of rater error is the halo effect. This error occurs when an employee is seen by the supervisor as highly competent in one or more areas

and, as a result, is rated highly in other areas. For example, if an employee is a good record keeper but is occasionally late, the supervisor might overlook the tardiness because the positive work habit overshadows the problem behavior. The opposite of this is the horn effect, which occurs when the employee is seen as weak in one or more areas and is rated low in other areas based on that weakness. An example would be where an employee's poor customer service skills negatively influences the evaluation of other relevant skills or causes the rater to overlook the employee's superior skills when preparing the appraisal.

Another rater error is the recency effect, which occurs when a supervisor considers only the most recent performance rather than the performance over a year (or the length of time the appraisal covers). This can be a serious issue if the employee has performed well all year, only to have a performance problem right before the evaluation takes place. Of course, the opposite can also be true, where an employee's performance improves a few months before the appraisal and the manager only recalls the recent performance progress at the time of assessment.

Bias occurs when a supervisor has prejudices against certain employees based on gender, age, religion, ethnicity, race, weight, disability, or some other non-job-related aspect. An additional rater error is strictness, which occurs when an appraiser believes that no employee can ever be worthy of the highest rating since "no one is perfect." The opposite effect is called the leniency error. This happens when the supervisor believes that all employees put forward their best efforts, so they should all be worthy of a higher rating. A related error is called central tendency, which occurs when the rater believes that all employees are average and should fall somewhere in the middle of the rating scale.

Contrast takes place when the appraiser rates one employee based on the work of other employees, rather than based on the performance standards for a particular position. One employee may be a "shining star," which would make all other employees seem average in comparison, or an employee could be a constant performance problem, which then makes all of the other employees seem like superior performers in comparison.

Sampling error occurs when the supervisor has observed only a small portion of the employee's work and bases the rating only on what was witnessed. This situation might occur when an employee telecommutes or works in another location. It might also

occur if the supervisor is new to the position and has worked with the employee only a short time. Ideally, a performance appraisal should take into consideration all of an employee's work during the period of evaluation, even if more than one supervisor's ratings needs to be considered.

The final type of rater error is known as *similar to or different from me*. This type of error occurs when supervisors give higher ratings to employees who are similar to them in personality, interests, or other non-job-related issues. Of course, the opposite can also be true where supervisors give lower ratings to those employees who are not like them.

Rater errors are most common when one person is evaluating the performance of another. It is for this reason that ongoing training in performance appraisal is important. Companies and individual raters can find themselves in legal trouble if an employee is terminated for a poor performance appraisal based on rater errors. In addition, performance should be based on only job-related items and not on personal feelings. Each employee should be provided with his or her job description and job expectations prior to their performance review. There should be no surprises for the employees during the review about performance expectations. This is why consistent, ongoing feedback on performance is important. It should not be something that is discussed only once or twice per year—it should be a regular occurrence. Furthermore, corrective performance counseling should be provided on an ongoing basis so that the employee can improve performance all year. And finally, every appraisal process should include a method to appeal or disagree with the outcome.

—Shelly Prochaska

See also Performance appraisal and feedback, Stereotyping of workers, Three-hundred-sixty-degree (360°) evaluation

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REALISTIC RECRUITMENT

The primary method in *realistic recruitment* is the realistic job preview (RJP). The RJP is the presentation of realistic—often quite negative—information about an organization to a job candidate. It is given to job candidates during the selection process to help them make an informed job choice, should a job offer be made. A second realistic recruitment strategy is to use certain recruitment sources (e.g., employee referrals), which communicate realistic information to job candidates while avoiding others that do not (e.g., newspaper ads). Finally, four selection methods that also communicate realistic information to job candidates are briefly mentioned, because their primary intended purpose is for selection rather than recruitment.

THE RJP

An RJP contains accurate information about job duties, which can be obtained from interviews with “subject matter experts” or from a formal job analysis. The RJP also contains information about an organization's culture, which can be obtained from surveys, interviews with current employees, and exit interviews. There are four criteria for selecting the specific information to include in the RJP: (1) it is important to most recruits, (2) it is not widely known outside the organization, (3) it is a reason that leads newcomers to quit, and (4) it is related to successful job performance after being hired. Because of the need to tailor make the RJP, based on both job and organizational information, it is not really a specific technique. Rather, it is a general approach to recruitment, or “philosophy,” as some might say. Furthermore, organizations often differ on the particular means for presenting realistic information to job candidates, for example, (1) a brochure, (2) a discussion during the job interview, or (3) a video. Combinations of these three specific techniques are sometimes used. Combining the latter two is probably the best approach, as discussed below.

One important purpose of the RJP is to increase the degree of fit between newcomers and the organizations they join. There are two types of fit affected: (1) person-job fit and (2) person-organization fit. Good person-job fit typically results in better newcomer performance, as well as indirectly on increasing retention. Good person-organization fit typically results in reduced quitting, as well as indirectly on increasing

job performance. To the extent that an RJP affects job choices by candidates, also known as self-selection, it can improve either or both types of fit.

RJP information is communicated to job applicants prior to organizational entry. Realistic information that is disseminated after organizational entry has been defined as newcomer orientation, which is different from the RJP in several ways. The most important difference is that the primary purpose of newcomer orientation is to help new hires cope with both a new job and a new organizational culture. Thus, newcomer orientation teaches solutions to common newcomer adjustment problems during organizational entry. In contrast, the RJP presents the adjustment problems without the solutions. This is because one purpose of the RJP is to discourage job candidates who are likely to be misfits with the job and/or organizational culture.

For a long time, the RJP was thought to affect newcomer retention more so than job performance, as reported in a 1985 review by Steve Premack and John Wanous. However, a 1998 review by Jean Phillips found a stronger effect of the RJP on job performance than Premack and Wanous did, while reaffirming the same effect of the RJP on retention of new hires. As of this writing, the Phillips review is the most recent one that is available.

Some RJP methods are better than others. Specifically, the best RJP technique for hiring better performers is a video. The best RJP method to increase new hire retention is a two-way conversation between a job candidate and a job interviewer during a job interview.

The main explanation for a video RJP increasing the performance of new hires is that recruits are shown a role model performing critical job duties successfully. Role models are an effective way to demonstrate both interpersonal and physical skills that are part of most entry-level jobs.

Explaining why RJPs increase new hire retention, however, has been more complicated. There are four different hypotheses. First, the information provided in an RJP helps job candidates choose more effectively among job offers. This process of self-selection is believed to increase person-organization fit, as mentioned earlier. Furthermore, to the extent that job candidates feel free to accept or reject the job offer, the more likely they are to be committed to the choice itself, as suggested by decades of research on cognitive dissonance. Second, the RJP can “vaccinate” expectations against disappointment after organizational entry, because the most dissatisfying job and organizational

factors have already been anticipated. Third, the information in an RJP can help newcomers cope more effectively with the stress of being in a new environment, originally called “the work of worry” by Irving Janis. Finally, an RJP can enhance the perceived trustworthiness or supportiveness of the organization to job candidates, thus increasing their initial commitment to the organization. Support for any one of these hypotheses does not necessarily mean that others are refuted, however. All can be viable explanations.

Several guidelines for designing and using the RJP can be derived from the two reviews, using sophisticated quantitative methods, that Phillips and Wanous have done. First, self-selection should be explicitly encouraged. That is, job candidates should be advised to carefully consider whether to accept or reject a job offer. This can be done best during the job interview, which may be an important reason why it is the best method for increasing new hire retention. Second, the RJP “message” must be credible. Credibility can be achieved by using actual employees as communicators, whether in a video and/or a job interview. This may explain why using only a brochure is the least effective of all methods. Third, how typical employees feel about the organization, not just sterile facts, must be part of an RJP. Again, employee feelings can be best provided in a video and/or a job interview. Fourth, the balance between positive and negative information should closely match the realities of the job itself. This requires careful data collection and analysis before developing an RJP. Finally, the RJP should normally be done before, rather than after, hiring, but not so early that the information is ignored. (An exception might be to position the RJP at the end of executive recruitment, although there has been no research on executives.)

Research continues to identify the boundaries for the RJP.

- First, if the retention rate for new hires is very low, the job is probably so undesirable that an RJP will have no effect on job survival. For example, one study of newly hired self-service gas station attendants revealed that not 1 of the 325 new hires lasted as long as nine months. In fact, many quit by the end of the first month. In organizations with very high retention, the RJP may not be able to improve on that already high level. Because of this, the RJP is probably most effective when the one-year job retention rate for newcomers is in the 50 percent to 80 percent range. Estimates for using the RJP to increase job retention for an

organization with a 50 percent job retention rate (for the first year after being hired) range from increasing it up to 56 percent to increasing it up to 59 percent.

- Second, if the relevant labor market has relatively few job openings, the RJP will have little effect on a job candidate's job choice, because the chance of obtaining multiple job offers is low. Furthermore, a very tight labor market means that new hires tend to stick with a job even if they would prefer to leave it.

- Third, the RJP appears to be more effective when job candidates have some previous job knowledge or work experience, because they can better understand the information that is provided.

- Fourth, both Phillips and Wanous found that the RJP increases newcomer retention more so in business organizations than in the military. The primary reason for this difference in job survival rates is that there are restrictions on attrition from the military.

Translating the impact of the RJP into dollar terms (utility analysis) can be done by calculating the difference between the number of new hires needed without using an RJP versus the number needed when using one. Consider an organization that wants to hire and retain 100 new employees. If the job retention rate for the first year is 50 percent, the organization will need to hire 200 in order to retain the target goal of 100. If the RJP increases job retention from 50 percent up to 56 percent, it would mean hiring only 178 people. If the RJP increases job retention from 50 percent up to 59 percent, the organization would have to hire only 169 new people. For a fast-food chain of restaurants (e.g., McDonald's, Wendy's, Burger King, Pizza Hut) that typically hires over 100,000 newcomers corporation-wide at a cost of \$300 to \$400 per hire, the dollar savings in recruitment and hiring can be in the tens of millions of dollars.

The RJP may also be relevant for other aspects of human resource management. They could easily be used for preparing managers for international assignments. Although intuitively appealing, there has been no rigorous research on this topic, which is puzzling because the costs of failures in international assignments for executives is far greater than for lower paying, entry-level jobs that typify most studies of the RJP.

REALISTIC RECRUITING SOURCES

Besides the RJP, there are other ways that realistic information can be communicated to job candidates.

One recruitment strategy is to hire from those sources that have higher job retention rates and higher job performance. A rigorous review of this research by Michael Zottoli and Wanous found that inside sources (referrals by employees and rehires) had significantly better job retention rates than those from outside sources (newspaper ads and employment agencies). Furthermore, inside sources produced better job performers, although their effect on performance was less than on retention. However, the effect of recruitment source on retention and performance are both significant. Their usefulness in dollar terms can be estimated in the same way as for the RJP. Although the number of recruitment source studies (25) is less than those of the RJP (40), there seem to be enough studies so that the results of recruitment source research should be taken seriously now. Unfortunately, no study has yet examined an organization that combines the RJP with inside recruitment sources. Thus, the effect of combining both of these realistic recruitment methods is unknown at present.

Six hypotheses have been offered to explain the link between recruitment source, on the one hand, and job survival and job performance, on the other. Some of these are identical to those concerning the RJP. First, inside recruits have more accurate information, which results in less disappointment among newcomers. Second, having accurate information enables job candidates to make better job choices. Third, inside recruits fit better with the organization because those who referred them know what it takes to be both successful and not to quit. Fourth, those from employment agencies or newspaper ads may know more about the full range of job possibilities and thus have higher turnover than those from other sources because of this greater knowledge. Fifth, source differences might be the result of systematic differences in the types of people from each source. Sixth, those referred by friends might be treated better by experienced employees and thus, have higher retention than other new hires.

A second recruitment source strategy is to set up a company Web site that communicates realistic information to potential job candidates. Unfortunately, there is no rigorous research on real organizational Web sites as of this writing. Studies of students responding to fictitious Web sites are just now beginning to be published. However, the trustworthiness of research using college students reacting to fictitious Web sites has yet to be established.

The Texas Instruments (TI) Web site (www.TI.com) is an example of how a Web site might be used for realistic recruitment. Job seekers are directed to a section where a self-scored survey can be taken. The purpose of the survey is to assess both person-job fit (14 questions) and person-organization fit (18 questions), which TI refers to as “job content fit” and “work environment fit” respectively. Job seekers are asked to rate certain items on a 5-point scale (*Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree*). After responding to the 32 items, the job seeker is then given an overall score. The score shown is a simple dichotomy: You fit or you do not fit at TI. In addition to overall fit, the job seeker is also shown TI’s “best answer” to each of the questions right next to one’s own answer. TI is careful to remind job seekers that the TI best answers are not “right vs. wrong.” Rather, they indicate TI’s best estimate of its typical work content and typical organizational culture. Unfortunately, how these “best answers” were determined is not provided.

REALISTIC SELECTION METHODS

Although the RJP and recruitment sources are the two major topics in realistic recruitment, there are four selection methods that may also communicate realistic information, thus complementing both the RJP and the use of inside recruitment sources. These include (1) probationary employment, (2) “structured job interviews” (i.e., the situational interview and the behavior description interview), (3) work sample tests (both verbal and motor skills tests), and (4) assessment centers. Research on these four has concerned job performance rather than retention. Because these are primarily selection methods, rather than recruitment methods, detailed analysis of them is beyond the scope of this entry. As predictors of job performance, however, their validity and utility are both fairly well established.

—John Parcher Wanous

See also Organizational entry, Organizational socialization, Recruitment

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RECRUITMENT

Recruitment is typically defined as activities engaged in by an organization with the purpose of attracting potential employees. Internal recruitment refers to the processes used to attract current employees to apply for job openings in the firm. External recruitment refers to the processes involved in attracting individuals who are not currently employed by the firm to job openings in the firm. In general, however, the term *recruitment* is used to describe external recruitment, which involves the processes of identifying and attracting applicants for open positions, keeping the applicants interested in the position and the organization, and ultimately turning the applicants into employees. Much of the recruitment research on which our current knowledge is based has examined larger firms. Although evidence indicates that larger firms are somewhat more formal and bureaucratic in their recruitment than smaller firms, it seems likely that many of the findings, which are based on larger firms, are applicable to smaller firms.

Recruitment is influenced by and influences other human resource management and career development practices used by firms. The first step in recruitment is

identifying potential sources of applicants. However, before a firm can identify potential sources, the firm needs to have conducted a job analysis, which provides information about important attributes needed by employees to perform the job successfully. Information about such attributes influences sources used to advertise the position and to attract candidates. For example, firms may use different sources to attract secretarial support staff versus chief financial officers. The recruitment process, which involves attracting applicants, is conducted concurrently with the selection process, which involves evaluating the suitability of the applicant for the position. Thus firms need to balance the processes used to “sell” the firm to applicants with the processes used to evaluate the fit of the applicant to the firm.

Evidence indicates that a firm’s human resource management practices can influence organizational performance and thus can provide a firm with a competitive advantage. Recruitment is an important human resource management practice because it influences the characteristics and quality of the applicant pool, which subsequently influences the success of subsequent human resource management practices such as selection, socialization, and training and development. Firms that attract more and higher quality applicants can be more selective, which can result in higher quality employees and fewer, or perhaps different, training and socialization needs.

The firm’s recruitment processes influence other important outcomes in addition to the quality and the diversity of the applicants. Important outcomes relative to the recruitment process are the percentage of applicants that remain in the applicant pool during the recruitment process and the percentage of applicants who subsequently accept a job offer. In planning their recruitment process, firms typically use a recruitment yield pyramid, which shows the ratio of invites to acceptances at various recruitment stages. For example, a recruitment yield pyramid might present information about the number of applications expected, the percentage of those applications that will be invited to interview with the firm, the percentage of applicants who will accept that invitation, the percentage of applicants who will be offered a job following the interview, and the percentage of applicants who accept the job offer. In addition to outcomes measured during the recruitment process, firms should consider posthire outcomes such as job survival rates, absenteeism, length of employment, and job performance.

The first step in the recruitment process involves informing potential applicants of the job opening and encouraging high-quality applicants to apply for the position. Evidence indicates that organizational characteristics can influence applicant attraction to the firm and actual application decisions. For example, location of the job opening appears to be an important organizational characteristic that influences applicant attraction and application decisions. In addition, both industry and size of the firm appear to influence attraction to the firm as an employer, at least for some applicants. Perhaps some of the more important organizational characteristics influencing applicant decisions are whether the applicant is familiar with the firm and the firm’s reputation or image. Applicants tend to be more likely to pursue employment opportunities with firms with whom they are familiar. Note that familiarity can result from specific recruitment activities as well as from nonrecruitment activities such as media exposure, advertisements, and product usage. In general, firms with better reputations tend to attract more and higher quality applicants than firms with less positive reputations. A firm’s reputation is theorized to influence applicant attraction through two related mechanisms: (1) reputation sends a signal about working conditions in the organization, such that firms with more positive reputation are perceived as having better working conditions; and (2) individuals may feel more pride (enhanced self-esteem) from working with well-known firms with positive reputations.

There are many methods, typically called *recruitment sources*, that can be used to notify potential applicants of job openings: newspaper advertisements, advertisements in professional journals and newsletters, job fairs, Internet job boards, school placement offices, private and government employment agencies, and referrals by current employees. Although the evidence is being accumulated, the quality of applicants appears to vary depending upon the recruitment source. In general, internal and informal sources, such as referrals by employees and rehires of former employees, lead to longer job survival and somewhat better job performance than do external and formal sources such as newspaper ads, school placement services, and employment agencies. Several mechanisms have been proposed for such relationships. The realistic information mechanism proposes that applicants who learn about the job from inside sources are provided with more accurate information about working conditions, which leads to more realistic expectations

and better job attitudes, job survival, and job performance. Similarly, the prescreening mechanism proposes that potential applicants may obtain better quality information about the position and poor-fitting applicants will self-select out of the applicant pool. The individual difference mechanism proposes that different recruitment sources target, and therefore attract, applicants who differ in terms of important individual differences such as applicant quality or fit with the position. Current evidence does not indicate which mechanism best explains the increased effectiveness of internal sources and, most important, all three mechanisms may be occurring simultaneously. Nonetheless, current research does support a prescription to provide applicants with realistic information about the job.

In an attempt to attract many applicants and then keep them in the applicant pool, traditional recruitment activities may overemphasize the positive aspects of the position and perhaps ignore or minimize the negative aspects. Although such a strategy may attract more applicants and allow the firm to be more selective, the job may not meet the expectations of the individuals hired, which can lead to dissatisfaction and subsequent turnover. Thus many firms now provide what has been called a *realistic job preview* (RJP) in an attempt to align applicant expectations with the realities of the job. In general, but not always, realistic job previews provide applicants with more negative information about the job than do traditional recruitment activities. Thus, firms are concerned about whether applicants who receive an realistic job preview RJP self-select out of the applicant pool. Evidence suggests that applicants provided an RJP typically do not self-select out of the applicant pool, and that RJP typically lead to somewhat less turnover and somewhat higher performance, although the effects are not large. Nonetheless, the accumulated evidence supports the importance of providing applicants with realistic information about the job and working conditions.

As noted above, recruitment is most effective when firms attract a large number of qualified applicants and keep those applicants interested in the job (i.e., in the applicant pool) while they are being assessed for their fit with the job and the organization. Evidence suggests that the firm's recruitment processes (e.g., job postings, initial interviews, site visits) can influence applicants' attraction to the firm and their decisions to stay in the applicant pool and to accept/reject

job offers. Although applicants want to know what it would be like to work at a firm, they typically have incomplete information about the job and the organization and thus experience uncertainty. Thus, in an attempt to understand what it would be like to be an employee of the firm, applicants may interpret recruitment activities as providing signals about working conditions in the firm. For example, unimpressive recruitment materials may signal that the company does not invest much in developing human resources and result in low applicant attraction to the firm.

Considerable evidence indicates that the initial interview influences applicants' perceptions of the firm as an employer and attraction to the firm. In general, applicants are more attracted to firms when the interviewer is more personable, is interested in the candidate, and is knowledgeable about the firm. Although the evidence is somewhat mixed, interviewer demographic characteristics, such as gender, race, and age, typically do not influence applicant attraction to the firm. Some evidence suggests that applicants prefer line recruiters versus staff recruiters, although it is important that the recruiters receive training in how to conduct interviews. Notably, recruiters can influence applicants' perceptions of job and organizational attributes that, in turn, influence attraction to the firm. Thus, the evidence indicates that interviewers have an important influence on applicant attraction to the firm since they provide information about the job and the organization and applicants tend to interpret interviewers' behaviors as providing signals about working conditions in the firm.

Typically, following the initial interview in campus-recruiting programs, a subset of applicants is invited for a site visit (i.e., a visit to the site of the job opening). The recruitment processes involved in site visits can influence applicant attraction and retention in the applicant pool. For example, long delays between the initial interview and the site visit invitation may lead applicants, particularly high-quality applicants, to infer the firm is not interested in them and thus to drop out from the applicant pool. The site visit typically provides applicants with detailed information about working conditions in the firm and opportunities to meet and interact with potential coworkers and supervisors. In general, employees met on the site visit tend to have more influence on applicant acceptance decisions than do employees met during the initial interview. More broadly, evidence indicates that the likableness of individuals met on the site visit and

applicants' evaluation of the site visit are related to job offer acceptance decisions.

As noted, since recruitment and selection are conducted simultaneously, an important question concerns how applicants react to selection procedures used by firms. Even a valid selection procedure can be detrimental to a firm if applicants withdraw from the applicant pool following the procedure. Although little research has investigated whether applicant reactions to selection procedures lead to applicant withdrawal, considerable research has investigated how applicants react to selection procedures and whether such reactions are related to applicant attraction. Applicants tend to evaluate interviews, work samples, résumés, and references most favorably followed by cognitive ability tests, personality inventories, and biodata; honesty tests and graphology were evaluated least favorably. In general, applicants react more positively to selection procedures when they believe that the procedure is related to job duties and predicts job performance. More broadly, research indicates that applicants who perceive selection procedures as fair and job related are more attracted to the firm as an employer, and indicate they are more likely to accept a job offer from the firm, although further research is needed to investigate actual job offer decisions. Nonetheless, the research indicates that to keep applicants attracted to the firm as an employer, firms should attempt to make the relationship between the selection procedures and job duties as transparent as possible to the applicants without, of course, affecting the validity of the procedure.

The final step in the recruitment process is turning applicants into employees (i.e., having applicants accept the job offer and subsequently report for work). Scholars have proposed three mechanisms describing influences on job choice decisions. The *objective factors mechanism* theorizes that job choice decisions are made based on attributes of the job. The *subjective factors mechanism* theorizes that job choice is based on perceived fit of applicant's needs and the ability of the firm to meet such needs. Finally, the *critical contact mechanism* theorizes that applicants have difficulty in differentiating among firms and therefore are influenced by recruitment contacts (i.e., the interview, site visit) with the firm. These mechanisms are not conflicting, and there is evidence to support each of them.

In support of the objective factors mechanism, considerable research indicates that "vacancy characteristics" are a strong influence on job acceptance

decisions. Not surprisingly, pay and benefits tend to be important characteristics that influence job choice decisions. In addition, individuals are more likely to accept job offers when the job is perceived as providing challenging and interesting work and when applicants see opportunities for development of skills and advancement in the firm. Interestingly, evidence suggests that the factors influencing job offer rejections may be different from the factors leading to acceptance. For example, applicants may eliminate potential jobs based on factors such as location, although location does not, typically, influence job acceptance decisions. Such evidence supports a model suggesting that applicants have a threshold for certain job attributes and eliminate jobs that do not meet the minimum level for a threshold (e.g., location). The remaining alternatives are then compared based on other job attributes (e.g., type of work).

Whereas the objective factors mechanism suggests that the level of certain attributes influence job choice decisions, the subjective factors mechanism theorizes that applicants determine their fit with the firm by considering their needs and the ability of the firm to meet such needs. In support of person-organization fit models, considerable research indicates that characteristics of applicants influence their reaction to organizational attributes. For example, although, in general, people are more attracted to higher paying firms, compensation tends to be more important to individuals who are more materialistic and/or have a higher need for pay than to individuals who are less materialistic or with a lower need for pay. More broadly, research also indicates that applicants' perceptions of their fit with the firm influence their job choice decision. However, although research supports the importance of person-organization fit for job choice decisions, less is known about which attributes of the person and which attributes of the organization are most important to consider when assessing fit.

Finally, the *critical contacts perspective* suggests that because applicants have difficulty differentiating among firms, they use recruitment contacts to assess how they will be treated as an employee. Stated differently, recruitment contacts are interpreted as providing signals about working conditions. Considerable evidence supports the belief that applicants interpret recruitment contacts as a signal about working conditions. However, the information value of recruitment contacts as a signal of working conditions is theorized to be the greatest when applicants have the least

information about the firm, because they have little other information about the working conditions beyond those suggested by the firm's recruitment activities. Based on such logic, recruitment contacts would be expected to have a stronger influence on whether applicants stayed in the applicant pool than on final job choice decisions, since applicants with a job offer presumably have learned more about working conditions. Nonetheless, recruitment contacts can influence the number and quality of applicants who are given job offers if applicants withdraw from the applicant pool during the recruitment process. Furthermore, some evidence suggests that when there is a delay between accepting a job offer and reporting for work (such as with college graduates), applicants are more likely to report for work if the firm keeps in contact with them after they accepted the offer.

Given the importance of human resources management for firm success and the importance of attracting top talent, considerable research has investigated recruitment processes, although much of it has focused on the recruiter and examined the initial interview. Furthermore, while research has provided insight into factors related to applicant attraction, we know less about factors that lead to applicant decisions to apply for, or to accept, a job. Researchers have begun investigating how image and reputation influence application decisions and factors that predict job acceptance. Such research will benefit organizations participating in the "war for talent."

—Daniel B. Turban

See also Organizational image, Organizational staffing, Personnel selection, Realistic recruitment

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REDEPLOYMENT

Redeployment is a strategic course of action taken by an organization to redirect or reallocate its current human resources: its employees. Continued utilization of effective human capital is primary to the life of an organization. Redeployment, which comes as a result of business circumstance or necessity, can be viewed as an intended transitional process. While employers may use redeployment as a reactive measure, the benefit of this continued process would be prolonged use or preservation of valued human capital. From a strategic perspective, the process would include taking measures to assess value attached to an employee's expertise, knowledge, skills, and abilities. Then the organization would have to determine where the resources can be best used in response to the organization's internal need to change. Redeployment is used when a company shifts a surplus of human resources from one department or division to another or to other units of its business that are in need of staff.

Change can come in many forms. For example, an organization could experience a merger, acquisition, downsizing, right-sizing, restructuring, or many other situations requiring a need to shift its resources and still retain assets attached to its valued employees. Redeployment is an effort to harness human knowledge that is already rooted, grown, and matured in an organization. This effort to harness resources would benefit an organization as it attempts to minimize the loss of valuable employees.

As a strategy, redeployment can be very effective. As employers set out to strategize and remain market

competitive, there is a need to retain expertise, knowledge, and know-how where possible. For example, knowledge-based organizations yield effective results through the use of redeployment maneuvers. The maneuvers should parallel the organization's business practices to respond to and counter market needs. As well, new business is constantly being won or lost. Employers are most efficient when they are able to retain their skill set, knowledge base, educational and practical experience, and corporate culture. Employers seek to redeploy employees and retain knowledge within the organization and minimize the drain on their intellectual knowledge base. Consistency of services would be promoted in the redeployment of human resources. As well, redeployment enables employers to provide services without loss of quality talent. Employees would take from the redeployment a sense of good faith on the employer's part. In return, valued employees are retained within the organization that can enhance an employee's organizational loyalty. Redeployment permits management to redirect its human resources in a manner that is both beneficial to the valued employees and the organization as it moves through phases of change. As employers manage staffing needs, the redeployment of staff augments effective human resource management practices. Redeployment is opportunistic for an organization's staff. It allows organizations to make knowledge shifts to sections of the organization where this knowledge can be utilized.

As organizations reallocate their knowledge resources, those transferable resources are put to use in new arenas; new work facets are experienced expanding and compounding employees' duties and responsibilities within the organization. When there is a need to redeploy employees, managers assess in advance when resources will become available and can plan in advance for their redeployment to another line of business. Employees who are redeployed—redeployees—can be considered for vacant and new positions, including any positions made vacant by various forms of voluntary or involuntary turnover. Retraining can augment redeployment. Recognizing that different job families and levels of employees will have varying needs as they transition, employers can train in an effort to enhance the knowledge base of employees as required.

Redeployment processes can include many facets. Redeployment policy and procedures should be developed internally as a proactive measure. The option to

be redeployed can be pushed as a benefit of the organization or an alternative to a reduction in force or layoff. Due consideration should be given to employees considered for selection or interested in being redeployed. In response to a surplus of staff, a manager or supervisor would assess the skill level of the employee and the viability of continued employment. Once this realistic assessment has taken place, there would be a need to look at alternative positions or locations within the organization where an employee's skill set would be beneficial. Successful deployment could manifest effective outcomes for the organization as a whole.

As an extension of career development, redeployment could be a successful means of progression where an organization faces change. This change could promote opportunities for advancement and growth of an employee or a group of employees possessing the talents, skills, education, and expertise that can be transferred and redeployed in an organization. Employees can gain being given an opportunity to use their skill set in other areas of the organization. Training opportunities can also aid employees in their professional development. In addition, employees who are transferred or moved to other areas will benefit from being exposed to new business units. Employees will grow in flexibility as they are challenged with new experiences. Redeployment could be viewed as negative; still, the process is advantageous to employees. Strategic shifts and maneuvers to preserve the longevity of an organization's knowledge base are crucial to the success of the organization. Redeployment is not a standard means of career pathing or movement within an organization; however, it is a process or measure by which organizations can open doors of opportunity to employees. The door would permit employees to continue working for the organization while the organization capitalizes on the strength of a consistent knowledge base. Employers seek expeditiously to capture and harness the value brought to the organization by its employees. Consistency of knowledge is a benefit to the organization and to the organization's client base. Even in the face of adversity, an organization that redeploys its employees smoothly transitions through change to provide continued service to its customers without interruption in quality or value received by the customer.

—Dyane Johnson Holt

See also Churning of jobs, Human capital, Organizational staffing

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REFERENCES FOR EMPLOYMENT

Although much more is written about effective résumés and interviewing, written or oral statements about an individual's suitability for a position, commonly referred to as *references*, should not be underestimated as tools in the job search process. In fact, references may well tip the scale in favor of an applicant in a job interview or in the making of a job offer. Consequently, selecting and preparing individuals to provide references should be done with the same care and attention to detail given to other aspects of the job search process.

The first consideration is to choose individuals who can provide the most appropriate references for the job being sought. References might be personal, professional, or academic. Effective references are provided by individuals who know the applicant well, who can be specific about the applicant's skills, personal qualities, experience, and career goals, and who will respond with enthusiasm. Thought should also be given to selecting references who are credible because of their professions or personal reputations and who are effective communicators.

After developing the list of possible references, it is critical to determine each individual's willingness to serve as a reference and then to prepare the individuals to provide helpful, accurate information. The applicant should supply each with a current résumé. When a potential position is identified, a description of the job should be forwarded to the individuals selected as the most appropriate references for that

particular position. It serves the applicant well to inform the references about why this job is of interest and why the applicant is a strong candidate. Employers are typically interested in knowing about an applicant's interpersonal and teamwork skills, leadership qualities, quantity and quality of work output, as well as the ability to perform particular tasks associated with the job. The applicant should remind the references of examples of achievements corresponding to areas of importance to the employer.

Some employers request that an applicant submit letters of reference with the application. However, more typically, the employer will ask for a list of references, some of whom will be contacted by telephone. Consequently, the applicant must supply accurate information about how to contact each reference. The reference list, tailored to the particular job being sought, may be appended to the résumé accompanying the application letter or provided at the interview. It is helpful to categorize and annotate the references. For example, a professional reference may be annotated as follows: "Colleague on a team redesigning company payroll system, 2003-2004." If an employer requires completion of an application form, references can be copied onto the form. It is critical that the applicant notify the reference at the time his or her name is provided to a potential employer.

If employed and seeking a new position, an applicant may need to request deferral of contact with the current employer until a job offer has been made, perhaps contingent on a satisfactory reference from the current employer. The applicant should stay in touch with references during the job search. If some references are contacted by telephone, the questions asked can be good feedback to the applicant. All references should be notified and thanked on completion of the job search.

—Ellen Harshman

See also Electronic employment screening, Personnel selection, Recruitment, Résumé

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REINFORCEMENT THEORY

Reinforcement theory is the basis for the prediction and control of human behavior through the use of contingent rewards that strengthens the behavior and increases its subsequent frequency. Reinforcement theory explains learning through the linkages or connections that are made between behavior and environmental contingencies. It emphasizes the importance of observable, measurable behavior. Environmental contingencies (behavior and its linked-up consequences) are the primary unit of analysis.

Reinforcement theory can be contrasted with cognitive learning theories that attempt to understand and explain the causes of human behavior in terms of internal, mental processes and indirect measures of thoughts, feelings, intentions, and subsequent behavior. Reinforcement theory has its historical roots in Ivan Pavlov's (1849-1936) classical (S-R) conditioning, Edward L. Thorndike's (1874-1949) law of effect, John B. Watson's (1878-1958) experiments with human conditioning, B. F. Skinner's (1904-1990) operant conditioning (R-S), and, when applied to behavior management in the workplace, Fred Luthans and Robert Kreitner's organizational behavior modification (O.B. Mod.).

REINFORCEMENT THEORY AND LEARNING

The most significant contribution of reinforcement theory is its implications for learning in general and for managing behavior in particular. Thorndike's early studies (with cats in a puzzle box) provided the well-known law of effect: Behavior followed by positive environmental consequences will increase in strength and subsequent frequency, while behaviors followed by negative or no environmental consequences will decrease in strength and subsequent frequency, and, over time, disappear. As the major premise of reinforcement theory, learning results from the connection between behaviors and environmental contingencies.

Basic research over the years has supported reinforcement theory. For example, Pavlov successfully conditioned dogs to salivate to the sounding of a bell associated with the presentation of food (stimulus-response or S-R). Watson was able to condition "little Albert" to dread white rats by associating them with loud noises. Drawing from Thorndike's law of effect, Skinner refined reinforcement theory, showing that contingent consequences, and not just antecedent stimuli, were most important in predicting and controlling

behavior. He distinguished between respondent conditioning (Pavlovian S-R connection) and operant conditioning (the organism operates on the environment in order to obtain a desired consequence, or the R-S connection). Skinner's extensive studies provided the foundation not only for reinforcement theory but also the behaviorism school of thought in psychology and behavior management (or O.B. Mod.). In summary, reinforcement theory and learning says that behavior is a function of its contingent consequences. Applied to behavior management and O.B. Mod., it simply says that "You get what you reinforce."

REINFORCEMENT THEORY AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Reinforcement theory provides an approach and specific guidelines for managing behavior. The application of rewards contingent upon the individual exhibiting desired performance behaviors will increase the probability that these behaviors will strengthen and be repeated. As the association or connection is formed between these behaviors and their contingent positive, desired consequences, the individual will learn that increasing the frequency of these behaviors will lead to receiving more of the desirable rewards. This reinforcement approach is called positive reinforcement. For example, if working harder with no errors results in more financial rewards, workers will work harder and try to be accurate.

Another, less effective, reinforcement approach in behavior management is the withdrawal of undesirable, noxious consequences. Individuals are reinforced not only by receiving what they desire but also by avoiding negative consequences. When certain behaviors result in avoiding undesirable consequences, individuals learn to repeat these behaviors more frequently, which is referred to as negative reinforcement. Most important, both positive and negative reinforcement have the same effect of increasing behavior, but the process is different. Under negative reinforcement, workers complete a task on time in order to avoid being chewed out by their supervisor and possibly being fired, whereas under positive reinforcement, they complete the task on time in order to be recognized by the supervisor and possibly receive a raise in pay.

There are other approaches that can be used to decrease the frequency of undesired behaviors. When behaviors are followed by the removal of desired rewards or the application of undesirable consequences, individuals decrease the frequency of their

behaviors. This approach is referred to as punishment and should not be equated with negative reinforcement. Again, negative reinforcement increases behavior, punishment decreases behavior. Under punishment, individuals can learn that reducing or stopping certain behaviors is tied to the elimination of negative consequences or the receipt of positive consequences. For example, service employees will decrease behaviors such as being short or rude with a customer because they know that if they do, they will be punished with admonishment from the supervisor and possibly being fired.

Another approach that can also be used to decrease and over time eliminate undesirable behaviors is to receive no consequences for the behavior. This approach is referred to as extinction. When no consequence (positive or negative) follows a certain behavior, individuals tend to switch to alternative, hopefully more rewarding behaviors, causing the behavior with no consequence to fade away. For example, attention-seeking disruptive behaviors by a work team member will decrease over time if ignored and the desired attention is not forthcoming.

According to reinforcement theory and considerable research, positive reinforcement is a much more effective strategy of managing behavior than negative reinforcement, punishment, or extinction. However, a punishment approach may take effect sooner and thus may be necessary in dangerous situations. For example, if workers are violating safety regulations, exposing themselves or coworkers to imminent danger, then immediate punishment may be both essential and effective in decreasing such potentially destructive behaviors. On the other hand, research has clearly shown that the long-term psychological disadvantages of punishment, which tend to manifest themselves in terms of stress, burnout, revenge, turnover, decrease in commitment, and many other negative outcomes, outweigh the potential benefits. Moreover, positively reinforced behaviors not only lead to more effective performance but also tend to be more resistant to extinction. When the positive consequences decrease over time, the behavior is sustained and may become self-reinforcing. On the other hand, punished behaviors tend to be only suppressed and tend to return soon after the negative consequences disappear.

REINFORCEMENT SCHEDULES

Although it is vital for consequences to be contingent upon behavior in order for reinforcers to have an

impact, it is not necessary for consequences to actually follow behavior every time. Initially, it is important that positive (or negative) consequences follow the behavior to get it tracking in the desired direction. This continuous schedule allows a clear association to be established between behavior and its contingent consequences. However, once this link is created, several other reinforcement schedules can be effectively applied.

Reinforcers can be contingent upon sustaining certain behaviors over time. This is referred to as an interval schedule. For example, paying people weekly for successfully accomplishing assigned tasks would be an example of an interval schedule. On the other hand, some behaviors are not practiced on a regular time basis and thus do not lend themselves to be reinforced on an interval schedule. For example, commissions based on number of cars sold would be an example of a ratio schedule of reinforcement.

Contingent reinforcers would be effective if administered as the desired behavior is sustained over a certain time period (interval) or as it is repeated a certain number of times (ratio). However, in addition, contingent reinforcers can also enhance desirable behaviors if administered at fixed or variable reinforcement schedules. On a fixed interval schedule, the worker is paid every two weeks and on a fixed ratio schedule, and the car salesperson is paid a certain amount for every three cars sold. However, if the interval or ratio at which an individual receives reinforcers is variable, and thus uncertain, such reinforcers will still increase the frequency of desired behaviors. In fact, research shows that the variable-interval and variable-ratio schedules are related to even stronger, sustained behavior, as well as being more resistant to extinction, than the fixed schedules. For example, an employee is rarely promised to get promoted upon exhibiting the behaviors desired by the manager or the organization for a fixed amount of time or for adequately performing the job a certain number of times. However, if employees realize that hard work, productivity, and commitment are related to promotions in this organization (and see themselves and others being promoted accordingly), productive behaviors are likely to result. The promotions are given on a variable schedule and, if fair, can lead to sustained productive behavior and be resistant to extinction.

REINFORCEMENT THEORY IN THE WORKPLACE

Significant applications of reinforcement theory to the workplace have been demonstrated by Luthans

and others and have been referred to as organizational behavior modification, or simply O.B. Mod. The O.B. Mod. approach attempts to predict and manage workplace behavior through five specific steps of application: (1) identify critical performance-related behaviors, (2) measure the frequency of these behaviors, (3) analyze the existing antecedents and consequences, (4) intervene with positive reinforcers, and (5) evaluate the results.

Through more than three decades of experimental workplace studies, Luthans and colleagues, as well as many other behavioral management researchers, have been able to clearly show consistent findings regarding various types of reinforcers that can be effectively utilized in workplace settings to increase performance. Specifically, three types of reinforcers were found to result in significant improvements in workplace performance when administered through the five-step O.B. Mod. model: money, performance feedback, and social recognition. Meta-analytical research findings on the studies over the years show that the application of O.B. Mod. in the workplace increases performance by an average of 17 percent. Interestingly, although feedback and recognition involve little if any direct cost, they can yield results that are similar to, and sometimes higher than, monetary rewards. Moreover, unlike money, both feedback and recognition tend to resist satiation. In other words, rarely do employees get “filled up with” or “tired of” too much feedback or recognition. Unfortunately, these nonfinancial rewards tend to be less emphasized and are greatly underutilized in managing today’s human resources at all levels and types of organizations.

As emphasized earlier, the key to effective reinforcement is that rewards need to be administered contingently upon performance. For example, for monetary rewards to reinforce desired (i.e., those that help attain goals of performance) behaviors, they need to exhibit variation in amount and timing that is directly related to performance. A monthly, fixed-amount paycheck is often not contingently reinforcing performance. For performance feedback to be effective, it needs to be positive, immediate, graphic, and specific. An annual performance appraisal session to justify why an employee will (or will not) receive a pay raise is too often insufficient. For recognition to enhance performance, it should be in the form of personal, one-on-one attention and appreciation. The employee knows the manager has observed the desired behavior and recognizes the contribution.

A random pat on the back or an occasional “Good job!” is not contingent and therefore is not sufficient and is not an effective way to proactively manage behavior through recognition.

REINFORCEMENT THEORY AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Reinforcement theory is not limited to performance management. It can also be applicable to many other areas of human resource management such as career development. Increasingly, managers are struggling with their employees’ diminishing loyalty and organizational commitment and engagement. However, such attitudes should be no surprise for managers, considering what is being reinforced in today’s organizations. In light of the present and likely future high rate of change and increasing uncertainty facing employees, organizations are no longer capable of providing job security and long-term growth opportunities for their employees. Frequent mergers, acquisitions, restructurings, and layoffs are making single-organization careers very rare.

In terms of reinforcement theory, employees are frequently observing that those who align their personal goals with their organizations’, solely depend on their employers for development and growth, and do not explore other opportunities are the ones who face the most negative consequences in times of change. On the other hand, those who take charge of their own careers, take advantage of their organizations for personal development and growth, never cease their job search and career exploration activities, and minimize their own emotional attachment to their organizations tend to be rewarded for such behaviors. In other words, employee career-oriented behaviors are changing as a function of their consequences.

Another example of the role reinforcement theory can play in providing insights into career development concerns new graduates entering the workforce. Throughout school and college years, students are conditioned to a teacher-student relationship that is characterized by well-defined expectations, clear performance standards, and frequent, objective feedback (grades) at regular, short-time cycles. This is in contrast to most manager-employee relationships, where flexibility and adaptability is expected, performance expectations and standards are continuously shifting, and longer time cycles may elapse before feedback, usually subjective, is provided. In other words, consequences in the academic environment may tend to be

more contingent upon performance than consequences found by those starting off their careers in the workplace environment. This may help explain initial feelings of confusion and lack of direction for new entrants in a career.

Besides providing insights for the beginning phases of career development, reinforcement theory can also be used to analyze mid-career issues and crises. When reaching the middle of their career, many employees experience career plateaus; they feel stuck at a particular level of their careers. In such dead-end situations, the most common reactions are job dissatisfaction, frustration, unhappiness, and lack of motivation. In terms of reinforcement theory, what these employees are experiencing is a lack of reinforcing consequences for their life's work. They are undergoing an extinction process in which their work behaviors are followed with little or no consequences. From a career development perspective, unless these consequences for mid-career employees are given attention and better managed, potentially productive employees, with considerable human capital in terms of experience and tacit knowledge, will become apathetic, indifferent, and disengaged. Reinforcement theory provides understanding and support for effective career development that features lateral career movement, job rotation, international assignments, dual-career ladders, work-life balance, and other initiatives that provide mid-career employees with positive consequences that would continue to reinforce their performance. On the other hand, a traditional career often dead-ends with no reinforcing consequences.

LIMITATIONS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Although a reinforcer is any environmental consequence that strengthens and increases the frequency of the behavior, it is important to remember there are individual differences on what this reinforcer may be and the weight or relative importance of it. Despite the proven generalizability of money, feedback, and recognition in workplace settings, the contingent application of such rewards in each specific setting, as well as the frequency, amount, administration logistics, and continuously changing relative importance of each reward, continues to challenge the implementation of organizational behavioral modification programs.

Besides these individual differences, reinforcement theory also provides little understanding or explanation

of how reinforcers work because it does not integrate the cognitions and thought processes that cause contingent consequences to shape behavior. Still another limitation is that many situations involve multiple, competing contingencies that interact to shape behavior. Reinforcement theory does not attempt to handle these interactions, which often result from the social context within which contingent reinforcement (or punishment) occurs.

More complex social cognitive theory (SCT) extends reinforcement theory to address the limitations noted above. Albert Bandura's SCT is based on the continuous reciprocal interaction between the person (cognition), the environment (physical context, including organizational structure and design, and social context, i.e., other people), and the behavior itself. Under SCT, behavior is not only a function of its contingent consequences as in reinforcement theory but is also influenced by the cognitive processes of symbolizing, forethought, observation, self-regulation, and self-reflection.

For example, from an expanded SCT perspective, the role of contingent reinforcers in enhancing performance can be better understood and explained in terms of outcome utility, informative content, and regulatory mechanisms. Monetary rewards tend to be highest in outcome utility (they have direct and instrumental value in acquiring desirable material things). Feedback, on the other hand, is usually highest in its informative content, which individuals tend to seek and value. However, with appropriate (contingent) administration, money and recognition can also be of high informative content. Finally, recognition is strongest as a regulatory mechanism. While immediate recognition and attention takes place in the present, the cognitive capacity for forethought allows for future rewards (e.g., a promotion) to be imagined, linked to present behavior, and thus serves as a reinforcer. In addition, the cognitive capacity for self-regulation in turn allows for present behavior to be shaped accordingly. In other words, SCT provides a depth of understanding, as well as more informed application, in contrast to the more pragmatic reinforcement theory.

Today's managers, as well as scholars in the behavioral sciences, education, and organizational behavior, have generally come to the realization that we can no longer emphasize any one aspect of the social cognitive triad (the person, the environment, and the behavior itself) at the expense of the others. The social cognitive theory integrates the objectivity and predictive

capacity of reinforcement theory, with the depth, realism, and application of social cognitive perspectives. Reinforcement theory contributes greatly to behavior management for performance improvement and has many implications for modern human resource management such as career development. Social cognitive theory is a new development that extends reinforcement theory to overcome some of its limitations and provides a depth of understanding needed for today's increasingly complex and ever-changing environment.

—Fred Luthans, Carolyn Youssef,
and Brett Luthans

See also Compensation, Performance appraisal and feedback, Social cognitive career theory

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RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

Religious diversity and discrimination are realities of the modern workplace. In a recent survey of people in the United States, over 90 percent professed a religion, representing more than 1,500 religious denominations. Indeed, during the past decennia, the religious makeup of the workforce in Western countries has changed considerably due to increasing globalization,

immigration trends, shortages in the labor market, and the reintegration of the older and often more religiously observant workers in the workforce. Religious beliefs are not simply turned off when a person enters a workplace. Ignorance of religious practices may lead to misunderstandings and conflicts among employees and foster prejudice and discrimination. In the United States, claims of workplace intolerance on religious grounds presented to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission climbed about 30 percent from 1992 to 2000. Similar trends are reported in Western European countries. The Dutch Equal Treatment Commission, for example, reported twice as many complaints about *religious discrimination* and harassment at work in 2003 compared to 2002.

Organizations dealing proactively with religious diversity at work may do so for several reasons. First, conflicts in the workplace can adversely affect job performance and lead to turnover. Valuing religious workers in a way they feel accepted and included in the workforce may foster a more productive and profitable work environment. Second, the growing diversity of the workforce necessitates an openness to diversity in the recruitment and selection process in order to attract and retain the best employees.

DEFINITIONS

Religion can be defined in many different ways and from several different viewpoints, including philosophical-theological (Plato, Kant, Foucault), sociological-political (Durkheim, Marx), historical-anthropological (Malinowski, Lévi-Strauss), evolutionary (Bellah, Tylor), psychological (Allport, Freud, Vergote), or legislative (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Religious Freedom Restoration Act). Put differently, how one defines religion depends on the particular context in which religion is considered. For a consideration of religious discrimination in the workplace, the legislative and social science perspectives are of particular interest.

From the legislative perspective, the protection of employees' religious rights while at the workplace falls under the concept of freedom of religion, as protected in international human rights law (cf, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion and Belief, 1981; the Oslo Declaration on Freedom of Religion and Belief, 1998). In the United States, this protection is mostly derived from Title VII

of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and guidelines promulgated by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Although different accents can be found in national and international acts and laws, they all formulate some perspective on religion, including nondiscrimination principles as well as varying forms of occupational exceptions.

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Guidelines on Discrimination Because of Religion (29 CFR Part 1605-U.S. federal legislation), religion is defined as both beliefs and practices that are sincerely held. For example, an employer may not refuse to hire an applicant because of that person's Islamic faith (belief). Also, an employer may not fire a Muslim because of religious practices, such as breaks for prayer time during official working hours (practice). Moreover, these beliefs and practices should be sincerely held, which means that U.S. law is not confined to organized religions such as Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Judaism. Wiccans, Pagans, and Atheists are legally protected against religious discrimination in the workplace as well.

Employers should reasonably accommodate the religious observances (beliefs and practices) of their employees unless doing so would impose an "undue hardship" upon the employer (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act 1964). For example, a company may legally reject an applicant who refuses to cut his beard for religious reasons because of commercial and sanitary concerns (*EEOC v. Sambo's of Georgia, Inc.*). However, where appropriate, employers should consider accommodations to prevent or resolve religious work conflicts by offering flexible scheduling of working hours, by permitting employees to swap shifts, by relaxing grooming or clothing requirements, by transferring employees to different locations or functions, and by permitting unpaid or accrued paid absence leave due to religious needs. If there is a business necessity for certain hours or other requirements, the employer should explore the employee's accommodation needs without making any explicit inquiry or reference to religious forms as a basis of a potential conflict. Nevertheless, occupational exceptions are allowed. Religious schools, for example, may impose religious requirements upon the hiring of teachers and administrators.

From a legal perspective, religious discrimination at the workplace can be defined as taking two forms: (1) refusal to employ or accommodate employees based on sincerely held beliefs and practices (disparate

treatment discrimination) and (2) a treatment on the basis of inadequately justified factors other than religion that disadvantages members of a religious group (disparate impact discrimination). Disparate treatment discrimination occurs when a member of a religious group is treated less favorably than a similarly situated member of the same or another religious group. It may take the form of quid pro harassment when an employee should submit to religious practices in exchange for job benefits or to avoid adverse actions. Far more commonly, however, is a second form, namely the hostile work environment. Disparate impact discrimination occurs when a behavior or practice that does not involve religion directly has an adverse impact on members of a religious group without a sufficiently compelling reason. An example is firing employees who do not dress professionally when such a policy results in proportionately more dismissals of members of certain religious groups. These practices are unlawful unless a compelling business-related reason can be supplied to justify them. This might be the case when the wearing of religious symbols, haircuts, or dress may endanger employees' safety or sanitary conditions at the workplace. From a legal standpoint, it always remains open to the employer to argue that discrimination can be justified for business-related reasons. Moreover, in some instances, organizations are legally allowed to require codes of conduct and occupational requirements that discriminate against (prospective) employees on other grounds. Complaints that are not considered discrimination from a legal point of view may still be perceived as discriminatory from the individual's perspective.

The legal definition includes actions the organization might take (e.g., prohibiting the wearing of religious clothing) in the name of customer preference. The definition further implies that people may discriminate against adherents of other faiths as well as of the same faith. For example, an employer may decide not to hire an applicant of the same faith because the applicant appears not to be a regular churchgoer or performs poorly when being questioned about religious matters during the interview.

From the perspective of the social sciences, increasing attention has been paid to religiosity and spirituality at the workplace. Although related to religion, scholars overall recognize that spirituality differs from religion in that it is not necessarily formal, structured, or organized. Spirituality is broadly described as the deeper, more mysterious part of

being, referring to some interconnectedness with the universe. Religion, on the other hand, is considered as a more institutionalized way through which a person's spirituality is manifested.

From a social science perspective, discrimination is often discussed in terms of overt or blatant discrimination and subtle discrimination. Examples of blatant religious discrimination are personal belongings being destroyed because of religious beliefs, not being allowed to have some time off from work to observe religious holidays or prayer breaks, not being allowed to wear certain forms of clothing, including head covering, and being rejected from selection on the basis of religious background. Most discrimination, though, is more subtle and indirect. Examples of subtle religious discrimination are supervisors keeping employees with faiths different from their own less well up to date about business. Being mocked or ridiculed because of religious beliefs or practices can take both overt and subtle forms.

ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

The psychological literature on discrimination provides models to clarify when individuals will perceive discrimination, including antecedents of discrimination, coping mechanisms, and consequences. While it is beyond the scope of this entry to review all of the literature, presented below are some key conclusions regarding religious discrimination in the workplace.

In general, the visibility and perceived controllability of a stigmatizing attribute will affect whether an individual is discriminated against, with greater visibility and greater perceived controllability contributing to greater stigmatizing treatment. Religion is not typically a visible characteristic but can become so in the workplace by an individual's appearance (wearing religious symbols or clothing) and actions (praying during breaks or at meals). As the psychological research predicts, greater religious discrimination occurs when religion is made salient. Discrimination may also be more likely to occur when religious practices are seen as controllable (e.g., praying, fasting) and therefore able to be suppressed in the work environment.

While no systematic research has been done on motives for religious harassment in the workplace, the social-psychological literature has pinpointed prejudice and stereotypical beliefs as determinants of

discriminatory practices in general. Other potential determinants are dissimilarities in beliefs, anxiety of the unknown, competition between groups, self and group preservation (e.g., need to uphold individual or group status, dominance, or power), and personality characteristics (e.g., ethnocentrism, authoritarianism, dogmatism). Furthermore, research on diversity climates in the workplace indicates that certain organizational contexts may promote greater tolerance of a diversity of viewpoints and behaviors and greater support for individual differences.

Even within the same situation, some people may feel more discriminated against compared to others. For example, individuals who are high in religious group identification may attribute negative treatment by employees to religious discrimination when situational cues to religious prejudice are ambiguous, where those less identified would be more likely to do so. Treatment may be seen as justified rather than attributed to prejudice, depending on an individual's belief in the dominant ideology (e.g., belief in a just world), stigma consciousness (expectation of being stigmatized), group identification, and other personal characteristics. A strong belief in a just world, for example, may lead members of low-status groups to fail to consider treatment as injustice.

Research on perceived discrimination has shown cognitive, affective, behavioral, and physiological consequences, affecting such factors as the victims' social status, psychological well-being, physical health, and performance. Theories on stress and coping argue that the relationship between personal/situational determinants and outcomes of perceived discrimination is mediated by the degree one's identity has been threatened or challenged. Religious identity threat results when a stigma-relevant stressor is potentially harmful to one's religious identity and exceeds one's resources to cope with the demands. Religious stigmatization may also lead to identity challenge instead of threat. Antireligious slurs, for example, may not be perceived as threatening when one has sufficient coping mechanisms (being assertive, being optimistic, having social support, etc.). Coping mechanisms can be emotion focused (e.g., praying) or problem-focused (e.g., adapt to dress code). They may result both in disengagement strategies (e.g., absenteeism, turnover) and in engagement strategies (e.g., complain, claim, or challenge religious harassment). Whether one challenges religious discrimination may not only depend on the resources

available but also on the perceived social costs associated with making a discrimination claim. Complaining may affect interpersonal relationships, the way others perceive the complainant, and the complainant's self-esteem. Consequently, people may be motivated to deny, minimize, or ignore religious discrimination to avoid additional devaluation or exclusion. Just as some individuals may be more prone to discrimination than others, a single person may respond differently to religious discrimination in different situations. For example, one might deny outlets of religious harassment on a train or in a shopping center but might not deny them at the workplace. Clearly, a person-by-situation approach is needed to fully understand the determinants and effects of religious discrimination on individuals.

CONCLUSION

To date, religious discrimination in the workplace has mostly been considered from a legislative point of view. Remarkably, almost no systematic, psychological research on religious discrimination, including its forms, antecedents, and consequences, has been conducted. Empirical studies have shown spirituality as an effective mechanism for coping with occupational stress. But what if these beliefs become a source of occupational stress themselves? Most chapters or books on workplace diversity and workplace spirituality/religion only slightly touch upon spiritual/religious diversity and discrimination at the workplace. However, in line with the growing cultural diversification of the workforce and the political climate after September 11, 2001, it can be expected that religious diversity and discrimination in the workplace will become a growing concern in the future. Just as with cultural diversity issues, employees, managers, customers, and shareholders will encounter religious diversity much more frequently, both inside and outside organizations.

Attempts to deal with religious discrimination in the workplace have highlighted its complex, subjective, and multifaceted nature. In courts of law, discrimination decisions are often based on comparing testimonies of both observers and victims. Social psychological research has shown that victims and observers may use different decision rules in deciding whether or when an action reflects discrimination (e.g., gender, age). Future research could investigate how this applies to perceptions of religious discrimination. Understanding how perceptions of religious

discrimination are formed may especially be relevant to understanding and dealing with subtle forms of discrimination.

Religious diversity within the workplace can be viewed negatively, as some empirical studies show more stress, more turnover, and less interpersonal attraction in culturally diverse working groups. The negative view on religious diversity has even fostered the idea of a complete secularization of the workplace as a way to minimize potential religious frictions. However, people may not leave their religious beliefs at home. Banning any form of religious expression at the workplace is unrealistic. Interestingly, organizational research has also shown some potential benefits for organizations such as enhanced creativity, innovation, and reduction of groupthink in culturally diverse working teams. In the same way, while religious expression might sometimes cause problems, at other times it might be very helpful (or at least inconsequential) for the organization. In the future, exploring the consequences of religious diversity in the workplace and assessing the contributors to religious discrimination are likely to be the focus of greater research attention.

—Eva Derous and Ann Marie Ryan

See also Culture and careers, Multicultural organization, Racial discrimination, Spirituality and careers

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RÉSUMÉ

Every job search is inherently discouraging. Whether someone has 2 years of work experience or 20, the search for a job will run into disappointments, primarily because of the intense competition in the job market. There simply are more qualified applicants for every job that is advertised, resulting in discouragement when it minimizes the chance to be noticed as a potential candidate. However, a well-written *résumé* can help the job applicant get noticed for the relevant skills and qualifications, thereby maximizing the chances of being called for an interview.

Writing a solid *résumé* requires that a person choose the best format to describe work experience associated with the skills related for a job or chosen career path, and that the *résumé* address four fundamental objectives: (1) identification of work accomplishments, (2) quantification of work performance, (3) concise narrative of previous job roles, and (4) the connection between experience and a targeted job and industry. Before discussing the details of these objectives, an overview of *résumé* formatting is needed.

The traditional *résumé* format starts with the heading of Work Experience, which follows a chronological sequence of employment history beginning with the most current job and ending with the first job held. This chronological sequence is a standard for all *résumés*, regardless of format, and should not be altered. The other headings in a traditional format are Education and Skills/Activities. When listing education, be sure to include the most recent credential completed first followed by any previous credentials. If a person completed a bachelor's degree, there is no need to list a high school diploma on the *résumé*.

It is appropriate for individuals with less than two years of work experience to include GPAs next to the academic diploma or degree obtained. When reviewing *résumés* that show more than two years of work experience, employers are less concerned or impressed with GPAs and more interested in assessing actual work history and job performance. However, if

a person graduated with honors, it is acceptable to identify educational attainment with the appropriate distinction such as *cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, or *summa cum laude*.

When deciding what to list under Skills/Activities, only include computer skills, language skills, or other work-related skills specific to your profession. For activities, it is wise to refer only to volunteer involvement, trade group, or professional association affiliations and to avoid references to religious affiliation or personal interests like cross-country skiing, guitar playing, etc.

Other guidelines regarding the *résumé* format to keep in mind are as follows: use bullets to separate your duties and tasks when describing each of your jobs; use font size of 11 or 12 with the exception of your name, which can be set at 14 font but not larger; and do not use the heading References Upon Request. This is an unnecessary use of space on a *résumé*. It is now a common hiring practice to request and check references of candidates who are likely to be offered a position. Last, it is okay to have a two-page *résumé*. A general rule of thumb is to allow two-page *résumés* for people who have three or more years of work experience.

The objectives mentioned earlier are paramount to a well-written *résumé* regardless of how brief or seasoned your employment history. The first objective is to highlight accomplishments. This can be done by identifying general tasks associated with each job while being specific on some of the results of the job performance. In other words, in describing a job task, try to explain how, by doing that task, a positive result was accomplished. See how Example B improves upon Example A below:

Example A

Created an Access database to track travel expenses for sales team.

Example B

Created an Access database to track travel expenses for sales team, resulting in cost savings.

The second objective is to quantify a task or output whenever possible. Adding relevant and factual data, whether it is percentages or raw numbers, shows the level of complexity related to a job and amplifies your accomplishments. The recruiter who is seeking a

results-oriented person for a sales position is likely to respond positively to the résumé that makes references to data supporting the percentage of revenue increase or number of accounts brought in by the candidate in current or previous roles. Quantification also helps the recruiter understand the complexity of job performance, which may otherwise be interpreted as mundane. For example, there is a difference between managing a staff of 3 people and managing of staff of 30. Using Example B from above, notice the difference when a simple data set is included.

Created an Access database to track travel expenses for a 12-person sales team, resulting in a year-end cost savings of 20%.

The third objective is to provide a concise narrative of job tasks that highlights technical skills and demonstrates relevant personal abilities. Too many résumés simply list duties associated with a job that consequently comes across as one-dimensional and uninspired. In describing jobs, provide explanations of the tasks and the context of how and why these tasks were performed. Notice the dynamic tone in the examples below when compared to how they were written before.

Before

Used software tools for data analysis.

Assisted manager with consulting assignments.

After

Used SAS software tools for data analysis of infant mortality rates for a sociology class project on teen pregnancy.

Supported branch manager on complex consulting projects by monitoring budget expenses and reviewing project progress reports.

Finally, for the fourth objective, a résumé should be written so that it links work experience with a target function and industry. Beyond determining a candidate's qualifications to perform a job, employers are also looking for a candidate whose experience is relevant to the industry or the culture of the company. Therefore, it would be helpful to identify work and academic accomplishments, and include in the résumé, the ones that are most aligned or valued by the industry and

relevant to the targeted function. Also, appropriate industry-related jargon and buzzwords should be included sparingly in the narrative of a résumé, especially when describing an accomplishment.

The résumé is the most important tool in the job search. Before an employer decides to interview an applicant, a judgment is made on a person's qualifications and abilities solely on the quality of the résumé. It is imperative that a résumé reflect the factual documentation of the applicant's employment history while communicating how value was contributed to past employers and why these accomplishments are relevant to the job being sought.

The four objectives outlined in this entry are timeless points of reference when revising a résumé throughout various career progressions. But the most important résumé tip of all is to proofread. Employers will rarely be inclined to interview a person whose résumé has spelling and grammatical errors no matter how well all four objectives are addressed.

—Pedro Gonzalez

See also Job interviews, Job search, Recruitment

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RETENTION PROGRAMS

In the first half of the twentieth century, employment careers were often characterized by long periods of stable, uninterrupted employment at a single firm. However, contemporary career models are becoming more episodic in nature. Gone are expectations of career-long, stable employment. They have been replaced by expectations of substantial job mobility. Because workers are more accustomed to and accepting of job change, the task of designing programs that will convince workers to maintain current employment (i.e., effective *retention programs*) has become significantly more challenging.

Organizational attritions take various forms (e.g., quits, layoffs, retirements), but it has become customary in the domain of retention research to focus on voluntary quits. This focus is rooted in assumptions about the controllability of turnover behavior. Voluntary turnovers are controllable, it has been argued, because effective management intervention might potentially convince prospective quitters to stay. In contrast, involuntary turnovers (e.g., layoffs, firings) are more commonly viewed as irrevocable events—driven more by circumstance than personal volition.

Attempts to depict the turnover process have borrowed heavily from attitudinal and decision-theory frameworks. Typically, turnover models describe a series of cognitive and affective events that flow toward a decision to quit or stay. Decisions to quit (or stay) are products, in these models, of rational choice.

Attitudinal mechanisms have a central position in turnover theory. Affective tone (i.e., positive or negative) is thought to act as a routing mechanism—determining behavioral directionality. Positive affect predisposes an individual toward staying. In contrast, negative affective tone predisposes an individual toward quitting. Studies evaluating these ideas have usually supported them. For example, a substantial body of research on job affect (i.e., job satisfaction) convincingly shows that levels of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction reliably predict stay/leave decisions. Extending this position further, studies of organizational affect (i.e., organizational commitment) have also shown that attitudes toward the organization impact turnover in a similar fashion.

Organizational retention programs often attempt to capitalize on the knowledge of the affect-turnover linkage. For example, organizations have employed survey feedback as a component of their retention programs. Studies show that the administration of an employee attitude survey, followed by dissemination of the results to participants, results in attitude-score improvements. Attitude-score improvements should lead, in turn, to downstream improvements in employee retention rates.

A similar approach underlies the use of job redesign as a retention strategy. Job redesign involves reconfiguring a job so that the job will provide intrinsic rewards, like job satisfaction, to the worker. As workers experience more job satisfaction on their current job, they correspondingly become less interested in leaving the job for some alternative position.

Realistic job previews represent yet another retention strategy rooted in expectations about the value of

positive affect. During processes of employee recruitment, realistic job previews challenge recruiters to present the hiring organization in an accurate light—even if that light shines on unflattering details about the firm. Presenting prospective employees with a realistic picture of their future employer helps to defuse the disappointment mechanisms that often follow misleading recruitment pitches. If disappointment and its attendant dissatisfaction can be avoided, the chances of longer term retention of new recruits become better.

Although important, job affect is not alone in accounting for individual turnover. Job search is another important mechanism shaping these decisions. Quit/stay decisions are substantially impacted by the visibility and accessibility of alternative sources of employment. In essence, contemporary turnover models assume that individuals will be most inclined toward quitting when an alternative job is perceived to be superior (e.g., more pay, more promotion opportunity) to the currently held position.

Retention program sponsors can make use of this insight by adjusting the relative attractiveness of jobs within the current organization. Adjusted enough, they may overtake external alternatives in terms of relative attractiveness. If the present job is deemed comparable to or better than an external job alternative, individuals may choose to forgo a job change altogether. Other things equal, employees will often favor the status quo over undergoing a major change in their life circumstances.

To improve job attractiveness, retention program sponsors may introduce periodic reviews of salary and benefit packages as a means of sustaining market competitiveness. However, job comparisons are not limited to compensation issues. Focusing on long-term career progress, workers may also evaluate the advancement and professional growth implications of a job move. Retention program sponsors can address these issues in a number of ways. They can eliminate dead-end jobs by restructuring promotion paths so that advancement opportunities are open to more individuals. They can create career ladders and implement “promotion from within” policies to send the message that employees will be given every opportunity for advancement with their current employer. They can also take steps to improve access to training and development opportunities for workers. Workers understand that skill and knowledge acquisition are the main currencies of career advancement, and they may reject a job change, even

one offering more money, if the learning opportunities associated with the current job are seen as providing the best avenue toward long-range personal betterment and fulfillment.

Increased job mobility is making the task of retaining valued employees even more difficult in contemporary business environments. To increase the chances of program success, program developers must face the challenge of developing retention programs that respond to the unique needs and concerns of key employee populations.

—Robert P. Steel

See also Organizational staffing, Strategic human resource management, Succession planning

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RETIREMENT

Broadly conceptualized, *retirement* is the departure from a job or a career path, usually occurring sometime after the age of 50, where the individual retiree displays a limited or nonexistent psychological attachment to work after the departure. Retirees are normally differentiated from nonretirees based on several criteria, including tending to spend less time working for pay, having a source of income that is specifically designed for retirees, and viewing themselves as a retired person.

Actually, retirement was not always an understood phase that occurs after decades of work life. Retirement is a concept that became a virtual birthright as a

part of the expanding industrial economy during the last century. It was the celebrated passage allowing an individual to leave the workplace and stop punching the time clock or to hang up the work clothes for good. In that context, individuals would simply go through the standard steps in preparing for a happy retirement, including planning for life after one's career ends, securing financial resources, and considering what to do with all of the additional free time. However, beginning during the 1980s, the trend toward earlier and earlier retirement (made possible by more generous Social Security benefits and pension plans) began to shift back toward both delaying retirement for a number of years and continuing to work at least part time after initial retirement. Many workers were also setting a pattern for retiring and going to work for another employer.

Thus this entry describes retirement according to the clear direction experienced by many recent "retirees," that is, that retirement is not the end of career development but rather a new career phase that can continue to feature meaningful work, but it might involve alternate work schedules and thereby allow for the rather comfortable combination of outside work with personal "retirement" pursuits. This direction in the thinking about retirement is supported strongly by the members of the baby boom generation who will begin retiring in great numbers in the early part of the twenty-first century. This oversized generation has already set the pattern for so much of the American culture, and now they will undoubtedly also change the perspective on the life and career phase called retirement.

By 2010, when the baby boom generation is expected to be retiring in great numbers, the United States's labor market must find ways to keep older workers on the job longer. There simply will not be enough people to fill open positions in the job market. Demographically, the United States's population is aging, and the generation following the boomers is much smaller in size. Labor shortages could occur if existing older workers, who possess many of the skills needed by corporations, were to retire and immigration does not sufficiently make up the loss. Other industrialized nations are facing the same issues due to aging societies in the midst of technological economies. The level of need is great enough to require an increase in employment of 25 percent for those over 55. Otherwise, there is concern that when baby boomers start retiring, the labor force may well shrink. A greater

participation rate by the aging baby boomers is one scenario that could resolve that concern.

STRUCTURAL FACTORS IN THE RETIREMENT DECISION

There are a number of variables to consider when analyzing the feasibility of delayed retirement by older workers. These factors take into account the reality that the contingent of older workers represent different segments of the population and are individuals with personal options in a democratic society. They vary by experiences, skills, educational level, income, and preparation for retirement. The restructuring occurring in the workplace, including layoffs, downsizing, and rightsizing, may be understood, at least partially, in the context of the phenomenon of transitioning from a goods-producing economy to a services-producing economy. It is an era characterized by knowledge, information, and technology, rather than manufacturing. Though change is always difficult to deal with, and a reasonable period of time is required for people of any age to cope with major transitions in their work life, technological advances are not incompatible with aging, and the increasing deemphasis on physical labor will be shown to be an advantage for older workers. The service economy and the restructuring brought about by technology renders their work less physically demanding. In fact, technology can be perceived alternatively as a factor that contributes to the extension of the work life for people in the later stages of their careers.

Another structural factor influencing the retirement decision is educational level. Education level is linked to income levels among the baby boomers and is strongly linked to labor market factors. Older employees who continue in the workforce tend to have a college education, whereas those who have retired are more likely to have a lower level of education. Furthermore, education level is linked to income, and income tends to be the most important factor in the retirement decision. More specifically, the point of reference for the retirement decision is replacement income, or the percentage of preretirement income replaced by Social Security, pensions, and savings. Therefore, expected income replacement rates affect retirement decisions such that as expected replacement income increases, the probability of planning to stop working increases.

Another structural factor that acts as a determinant in the retirement decision of older workers is their

level of preparation for retirement. For example, many baby boomers might need to continue working longer because of deficits for Social Security and Medicare, discontinuance of defined benefit plans, and low savings rates. A problem with defined contribution plans is the ability for people to cash out before retirement. Only about one-third of the early disbursements are returned to retirement funds or other investments. In other words, many workers are spending significant portions of their retirement funds before they reach retirement.

TRAINING FOR OLDER WORKERS

Older workers are experienced, and they represent stability. They often can be productive immediately or with little training. They are valuable but not always valued by organizations. Younger workers will require training programs (with older workers serving as mentors) as organizations need to teach valuable work skills. Older workers will not have to move aside to make room for the young. Their presence provides a better personnel mix, in that they can pass on the workplace culture, skills, and experience. Mentoring less experienced workers is also one way to confront the career plateau.

If older workers are to delay retirement and continue as productive workers, then they must become or remain up to date in workplace skills. Training can integrate older workers into the work environment so that they can continue to add value. Because of the rate of change in the business environment and with technological innovations, all workers need retraining every four to five years. Therefore, the need for training may be the same for older workers as for younger workers. However, training will often be by computer, and there is a perception that older workers are less technologically able than younger workers.

The structural factors in the economy would, on balance, facilitate the retention of older workers in the workforce. During the 1980s, labor market trends were favorable for older workers; after job displacement was so high in the early 1980s, there were shortages, and older workers were sought. Then with the recession in the early 1990s, displacements returned en masse, especially for workers aged 55 to 64, with unplanned and early retirements becoming a big factor. Another economic slump could result in an earlier than projected exit of the baby boomers from the workplace that, in turn, could lead to exacerbation of

the projected employment shortage for later in the twenty-first century.

THE CHANGING WORKPLACE

The traditional workplace in a manufacturing environment could be described in terms of a given work location with workers assigned to well-defined jobs on a regular schedule. In the transition to a service economy, more emphasis has been placed on skills, and many employees are referred to as *knowledge workers*. Much of the work performed by knowledge workers can be performed from most any location—not necessarily in the employer's office. Indeed, the concept of the workplace is in question as more and more workers are telecommuting with the approval of their employers. Nor is there the constraint of full-time regularly scheduled work assignments. The changing workplace can be particularly advantageous for older workers who may not want to continue working full time but want to continue working, whereas employers can still realize the skills and experience of their older workers.

FLEXIBLE WORK HOURS AND SCHEDULES

More employers are providing the option of non-traditional work schedules and the provision of alternate work arrangements. There is some recognition that the experience of older workers is valuable, and many would welcome continued employment in the context of policies that support flexible work schedules for a blending of work and personal pursuits. Such alternate work arrangements as flexible work schedules, part-time work, job sharing, phased retirement, and independent contracting could be seen as remedies for pension plans that penalize work after a certain age and limits on Social Security earnings. Allowing people to organize their own time, redesigning work-around projects, rethinking jobs to avoid long daily hours at the job site, and encouraging telecommuting are strategies that provide the flexibility that many older workers are seeking.

PHASED RETIREMENT AND BRIDGE JOBS

Bridge jobs, or phased retirement programs, are desired by many older workers. *Phased retirement* refers to arrangements that provide for employees approaching retirement to ease into retirement gradually by reducing their work time and job responsibilities.

Phased retirement includes short-term projects, job sharing, part-time jobs, work at home, and telecommuting. Many Americans are separating from the labor force gradually, moving into part-time or short-term positions either in the same career or in a new pursuit. Bridge jobs and other accommodations could entice older workers to delay retirement if they were financially able to retire.

IMPLICATIONS

Highly educated, highly skilled, and technically able older workers are the ones whose irreplaceable experience is needed in tighter labor markets. Fortunately, with pensions, financial assets, and opportunity costs to consider, highly skilled older workers may be more inclined to participate longer in the workforce. Projected labor shortages, along with research that fails to show an association between age and decline in performance, should motivate employers to find ways to retain their successful older workers. Encouraging older workers to work longer would help alleviate the economic burden of entitlements, Social Security, and Medicare, effectively confront labor shortages, and provide the work opportunities desired by older workers themselves.

The barriers to the employment of older workers include corporate entrenchment, that is, attitudes that are difficult to change, higher costs of employing older workers, and pension rules that discourage continued employment. Business and government officials are considering policy changes that would allow older workers to both work and receive pension distributions without changing employers, and the prorating of benefits for older workers based on cost may help alleviate the higher costs for older workers. Attitude changes are reliant on educating employers on the need to accommodate older workers and their realization that there may be no better alternative than to rethink the employment of older people.

—Gerald Collins

See also Bridge employment, Early retirement, Late-career stage, Obsolescence of knowledge and skills, Phased retirement

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RETRAINING

Retraining has taken on increased significance over the past two decades as globalization and economic restructuring in many Western, industrialized nations has resulted in widespread worker displacement. Traditional industries, such as farming, manufacturing, and natural resource extraction, have been particularly affected. Changing consumer demands for individualized rather than mass-produced products has contributed to the changing nature of work and the reorganization of many work environments. In addition, declining natural resources has led to the collapse of certain labor-intensive industries altogether and the downsizing of others. The skills and knowledge required of individuals who work in labor-intensive industries are, in many cases, industry specific and not easily transferable to other forms of employment. The result is an increasing number of unemployed individuals with little or no opportunity for reemployment without specific forms of intervention.

Differentiating between retraining and training requires an understanding of the underlying concepts and the target populations. The term *displaced worker* is used with specific reference to individuals who have been permanently displaced from employment. The term *displacement* is applied to workers who suffer job loss through structural reorganization and industry decline and who are unlikely to find reemployment without some form of intervention. While

an unemployed individual may hope to acquire work with his or her current skills and knowledge, displaced individuals often have a skill set and knowledge base not easily transferred to other jobs or economic sectors. Thus retraining targets a specific population: displaced workers.

Traditional training programs, whether provided publicly or privately, can supply the kinds of skill upgrading and job search assistance needed by the unemployed who have existing, transferable skills. The needs of workers displaced by industrial decline often differ significantly. For many working in traditional industries, higher levels of education are not normally required for the vast majority of jobs in that industry. As such, workers displaced through industrial decline often have comparably lower levels of education. Displaced workers with lower levels of education, coupled with industry-specific skills and knowledge, require particular kinds of training programs. It is more appropriate to use the term *retraining*, as opposed to simply *training*, when referring to the needs of displaced workers. The use of the term *retraining* recognizes that the particular needs and circumstances of displaced workers are quite different from those of the unemployed in general.

Research and writing specifically devoted to retraining is sparse. When research and writing is undertaken on retraining, it is more often subsumed within the broader fields of adult education and lifelong learning. Within the field of adult education, research and writing on training is primarily concerned with training as it occurs in the workplace and with continuing education. Little consideration has been given to the particular needs of displaced workers and thus retraining. Lifelong learning has historically focused on learning across the life course generally. More recently, writings on lifelong learning have begun to focus on the role of lifelong learning in the context of globalization and economic restructuring. Emphasis has been placed on the importance of skill and knowledge acquisition throughout life as preparation for, and maintenance of, employment in a global economy. Yet even with the recognition of the need for lifelong learning as a result of economic restructuring, research on lifelong learning remains broad based and general and does not focus on the specific particularities of worker displacement and retraining.

Research conducted on retraining focuses almost exclusively on the analysis of statistics associated

with worker displacement, the implications of displacement for the individual, retraining outcomes, and rates of return. For example, issues such as wage levels prior to and following displacement, earnings loss, and reemployment percentages have dominated the research. Studies have also focused on specific retraining programs at the local level, with little national or international comparison. The implications of both displacement and retraining for individual workers, their families, and their communities are featured prominently in studies on retraining. The research highlights the various barriers facing the displaced worker not only in undertaking retraining but also in securing employment following that retraining. Education levels, individual motivation, the potential for reemployment locally, family commitments, and the availability of personal or institutional financial support are common points of analysis in studies on retraining.

That workers displaced by industrial decline require specific kinds of training interventions is now more widely recognized among policymakers and those who provide training. As such, retraining programs have become popular as a means of meeting the needs of changing labor markets and individuals displaced by industrial decline. In recent years, this recognition has manifested itself in the development of retraining programs that provide technical and soft-skills training. In determining the most effective kinds of technical training, attention must be paid to local labor markets and the kinds of employment available. Technical skills training that does not meet the needs of the local labor market will not help displaced workers in securing employment. Since many workers displaced through industrial decline have lower education levels, retraining programs should provide opportunities for basic academic upgrading. It is not uncommon for those working in traditional industries to have held one job, in one industry, from a young age. With no experience in finding employment or in transitioning from one job to another, the provision of soft-skills training becomes key if these workers are to be successful in finding employment. Skills such as résumé writing and interview strategies as well as job search and transition counseling can assist the displaced worker in coping with displacement and in securing employment.

In summary, retraining is specific to displaced workers. Displaced workers are those workers who find themselves unemployed with few opportunities

for reemployment without distinct forms of intervention. Therefore, displaced workers require particular kinds of training to secure alternative employment. Retraining programs must be cognizant of these needs and provide displaced workers with technical and soft-skills training as well as basic academic upgrading if they are to be relevant and successful.

—Melissa White

See also Cross-training, Downsizing, Lifelong learning, On-the-job training, Training and development

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REVERSE DISCRIMINATION

Reverse discrimination claims often arise out of an employer's attempt to honor either affirmative action programs or diversity initiatives focusing on attracting more women and minorities in the workplace. Lawsuits alleging reverse race discrimination generally fall under the rubric of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, or the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, depending on whether the employer is a private or a public entity. Suits also may arise under the equal protection clauses of various state constitutions or other state or local

laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, and/or national origin.

Reverse discrimination is defined as discrimination against Whites or males in employment or education. Even as early as 1978, the U.S. Supreme Court made it clear that it does not support laws that provide for reverse discrimination in employment. The Supreme Court determined that it is not acceptable to discriminate against individuals regardless of their minority status when it decided that reverse discrimination is not acceptable either legally or constitutionally.

In reverse discrimination lawsuits, plaintiffs will claim that they are not being afforded the same benefits or opportunities that other individuals are being afforded on the basis of their race (Caucasian) and/or gender (male). This unequal treatment is against the law. Success of the suit is not dependent upon whether the individual is a member of a protected category; rather, the focus of the inquiry is on whether all individuals, regardless of race and/or sex, are afforded the same benefits and/or opportunities under the law.

Issues often arise regarding how reverse discrimination is related to affirmative action initiatives. Affirmative action programs analyze statistics and request that certain governmental agencies consider certain patterns of the past and opportunities of the future to attract women and minorities to the workforce. As a result, often an employer will give more favorable treatment to women and minorities in an effort to achieve certain affirmative action initiatives. Such action is not necessary and, in fact, is prohibited by the law.

To state a prima facie case of reverse discrimination, a plaintiff must “present sufficient evidence to allow a fact finder to conclude that [the employer] is treating some people less favorably than others based upon a trait that is protected under Title VII.” *Iadimarco v. Runyon*, 190 F.3d 151, 161 (3d Cir. 1999). The burden then shifts to the employer to articulate a legitimate, nondiscriminatory reason for the rejection or termination. Once a reason is articulated, the plaintiff must prove by a preponderance of the evidence that this decision is merely pretextual and that the real reason for the employment action is discriminatory.

The U.S. Supreme Court has recognized that an employer who discriminates will almost never announce a discriminatory animus or provide employees or courts with direct evidence of discriminatory intent. Accordingly, the Court fashioned the burden-shifting analysis to allow plaintiffs to proceed without direct proof of illegal discrimination where circumstances are such that

common sense and social context suggest that discrimination has occurred. *McDonnell Douglas, Inc. v. Green*, 411 U.S. 792 (1973). In the “ordinary case,” where a minority plaintiff alleges race-based employment discrimination, the plaintiff “must carry the initial burden under the statute of establishing a prima facie case of racial discrimination . . . by showing (i) that he belongs to a racial minority; (ii) that he applied and was qualified for a job for which the employer was seeking applicants; (iii) that, despite his qualifications, he was rejected; and (iv) that, after his rejection, the position remained open and the employer continued to seek applicants from persons of complainant’s qualifications.” *McDonnell Douglas*, 411 U.S. at 802.

Once the plaintiff establishes a prima facie case, “the burden then must shift to the employer to articulate some legitimate, nondiscriminatory reason for the employee’s rejection.” *Id.* at 802. However, “the defendant need not persuade the court that it was actually motivated by the proffered reasons.” *Texas Dept. of Community Affairs v. Burdine*, 450 U.S. 248, 254 (1981). For purposes of defeating a plaintiff’s motion for summary judgment, “it is sufficient if the defendant’s evidence raises a genuine issue of material fact as to whether it discriminated against the plaintiff.” *Id.* If the employer offers some evidence of a legitimate, nondiscriminatory reason, then plaintiff must “be afforded a fair opportunity to show that [employer’s] stated reason for [plaintiff’s] rejection was in fact pretext.” *McDonnell Douglas*, 411 U.S. at 804.

Inasmuch as the first prong of this test requires plaintiffs to establish their identity as a member of a minority group, the literal application of the test would preclude its use by plaintiffs alleging reverse discrimination. In fact, the historical context of Title VII allowed for some debate as to whether Congress intended to extend its reach to practices that have come to be known as reverse discrimination. However, in *McDonald v. Santa Fe Trail Transp. Co.*, 427 U.S. 273, 283 (1976), Justice Marshall, writing for a unanimous Court, stated: “The Act prohibits all racial discrimination in employment, without exception for any group of particular employees.” Thus the dictates of Title VII “are not limited to discrimination against members of any particular race [and Title VII] proscribe[s] racial discrimination in private employment against Whites on the same terms as racial discrimination against nonwhites.” *Id.* at 278-79, 280. No doubt because of this country’s history of race relations, most Title VII plaintiffs have been members of a minority group, and the first prong of the *McDonnell Douglas*

test was stated in the context of that history. However, the holding of *Santa Fe Trail* as well as the language of *McDonnell Douglas* itself clearly establishes that the substance of the burden-shifting analysis applies with equal force to claims of reverse discrimination. Accordingly, reverse discrimination plaintiffs must show that the challenged employment action was based upon a protected characteristic (i.e., their race or their sex), regardless of what that characteristic may be.

—Lisa Scidurlo

See also Affirmative action, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Racial discrimination, Sex discrimination

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REVERSE MENTORING

Scholars as well as business practitioners have long recognized the importance of mentoring for organizations and the people in them. In recent years, an innovative type of mentoring has extended the traditional mentoring model by turning roles upside down with *reverse mentoring* relationships. Traditional mentoring relationships have been defined as those in which a more experienced person helps a less experienced organization member develop and advance at work. In contrast, reverse mentoring is a relationship in which a younger employee provides guidance and advice to an older upper-level manager or executive. Reverse mentoring happens from the bottom up, rather than the traditional top down.

Research shows that traditional mentoring relationships can offer both organizations and their members a wealth of benefits. Similarly, initial anecdotal evidence shows many benefits of reverse mentoring. While there

is no existing research that examines reverse mentoring, companies that have created and encouraged these relationships report positive changes in the culture of the organization, better positioning of company products and campaigns to the younger market, creation of higher standards, improved knowledge of technological issues, and increases in effective cross-gender and cross-cultural communication throughout the organization. Senior-level managers and executives in the unusual role of protégé report benefits that include exposure to fresh approaches, being more in touch with the changing needs of the upcoming business generation, better knowledge and understanding of the people who work for them, having a sounding board, and feeling excited about learning something new. Young mentors report feeling valued by their companies, satisfaction in having their expertise and knowledge confirmed, increased exposure to high-level executives, and appreciation for proving their skills.

REVERSE MENTORING IN PRACTICE

The practice of reverse mentoring has been successfully introduced in many organizations. Former chief executive of General Electric Corporation, Jack Welch is typically credited with formalizing the concept of reverse mentoring when he encouraged approximately 500 GE managers to become students of those lower in the company hierarchy. The program at GE was specifically focused on creating mentoring relationships that would build a new skill set for protégés while giving mentors a unique opportunity to interact with higher-level managers with whom they otherwise would not have a relationship.

Proctor & Gamble's Mentoring Up program was created to increase communication between junior-level female managers and senior-level male managers, determine why female managers were leaving the company, raise consciousness about work-related issues affecting women, and reduce future turnover of women. Another P&G reverse mentoring program was created to provide senior management new perspectives and better understanding of company culture in biotechnology. Internationally, AMP-Pearl in the United Kingdom implemented a reverse mentoring program by pairing 12 young employees with assistant directors, helping managers understand the shift in the business environment caused by technology. As a result, the company experienced a positive change in its corporate culture. Wharton Business School pairs established executives with Wharton students to learn,

create, and operate e-businesses. Students bring their knowledge of the latest technological developments to the table and create a working partnership with outside senior executives. The unique mentoring experience provides an opportunity for the executive managers to keep up to date on technology trends and provides opportunities for business school students to create relationships with business leaders.

CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR SUCCESSFUL REVERSE MENTORING

Developing a reverse mentoring program takes planning and development to succeed. As with traditional mentoring, there are bound to be informal relationships as well as formal reverse mentoring programs. In either case, there is a delicate balance between individuals in the relationship. A key ingredient for success is to ensure that both parties are interested and willing. Senior-level people must be open-minded to learning from a less experienced worker. The younger worker must be open-minded and feel comfortable with the relationship. Companies suggest that creating mentoring relationships outside of reporting lines is critical for the younger mentors.

Some of the basic steps in setting up an effective reverse mentoring program are to set clear objectives, treat each other with respect, consider generational differences, identify specific assignment of duties in the partnership and defined rules of conduct, and develop measurable outcomes to determine program effectiveness. As with any mentoring program, training helps the mentor, the protégé—and the program itself—be successful.

Organizations are motivated to encourage reverse mentoring and implement such programs. For example, these relationships give both partners the opportunity to learn about and understand how to work with a generation other than their own. Upper-level managers learn how the new generation of employees wants to be managed and how they can translate that understanding into greater long-term success for the business.

THE FUTURE OF REVERSE MENTORING

Many reverse mentoring programs grew out of the need for upper-level managers to be more in tune with the changing technological age. Nevertheless, companies and people reap other benefits from these

relationships. As organizations continue to establish formal mentoring programs, they are sure to consider reverse mentoring. Moreover, as the composition of the workforce inevitably continues to change along with attitudes of its new members, reverse mentoring can provide mutually beneficial partnerships for lower-level employees and upper-level managers to communicate and learn from one another. Thus it will become increasingly important to understand these nontraditional reverse mentoring relationships. If the growing trend of more top name corporations establishing reverse mentoring programs is any indication of the power of these programs' success, it is sure to continue in the future.

—Regina O'Neill

See also Leadership development, Mentoring, Technology and careers

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ROKEACH VALUES SURVEY

The *Rokeach Values Survey* (RVS) was originally developed in 1973 by Milton Rokeach. The RVS is one of the most extensively used measures of human values and is utilized by career counselors to assess clients' values as they relate to the world of work. The RVS is a 36-item inventory consisting of 18 terminal values or end states (e.g., happiness, an exciting life, world of peace, world of beauty, national security, social recognition) and 18 instrumental values (e.g., logical, cheerful, imaginative, honest, broad-minded,

ambitious, clean). This instrument was initially designed for rank-order scaling, but more recent studies have provided evidence that ratings on a five-point scale yield similar results, if higher ratings are limited to a small number of the values.

Rokeach developed the RVS based on interviews and in-depth reviews of language and of the existing literature on values. Unfortunately, Rokeach was unable to identify an underlying structure for his value system. Later research by Shalom H. Schwartz provided evidence that the RVS contains 10 motivational types, each of which incorporates two or more of the terminal and/or instrumental values. For example, the motivational type Power includes the end states of social power, wealth, authority, and the instrumental value of preserving public image. The motivational type Achievement contains the instrumental values of successful, capable, and ambitious. The motivational type Universalism incorporates the instrumental values of broad-minded and protecting the environment and the terminal values of social justice, wisdom, world at peace, a world of beauty, unity with nature, and equality.

Schwartz presented evidence that the 10 motivational types are arranged in a circumplex, with more highly related values placed contiguously. From the top right position, moving clockwise, the motivational types are as follows: Universalism, Benevolence, Conformity and Tradition (the preceding two motivational types occupying the same wedge), Security, Power, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation, and Self-direction. Furthermore, the motivational types located on opposite sides of the circumplex represent opposing values and thus can be conceptualized as being positioned along two underlying dimensions of the circumplex. These dimensions are described as follows: (1) values emphasizing independent thought and action and openness to change versus values placing more emphasis on submissive self-restriction, stability, and tradition; and (2) values emphasizing acceptance of others and concern for others' welfare versus values highlighting the pursuit of one's own success and dominance over others. In short, motivational types related to openness to change are found on the opposite side of the circumplex as those related to conservation. Similarly, motivational types related to self-transcendence are located opposite those related to self-enhancement.

Values can be conceptualized as learned beliefs about preferred ways of behaving or being, which act

as guiding principles in one's life. Understanding the structure of personal values systems is a vital part of comprehending the motivational foundation to all behavior, including work-related behavior. To this end, the RVS is used by career counselors to access and bring to awareness a client's hierarchical organization of work-related needs, desires, and goals. The importance of assessing values lies in deepening the self-awareness of the career client and allowing the client to access underlying motivations for career-related decisions. In addition, when this information is considered in conjunction with other work-related variables such as interests, self-efficacy, and abilities, the result is a more complete and multidimensional view of the career client and the relevant career choices.

—Carrie H. Robinson

See also Values, Work values

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ROLE MODELS

There are two primary views of *role models*. One, the traditional view, depicts role models as persons critical to an individual's career development process. They often occupy socially important roles, such as leaders, managers, teachers, and coaches. They offer individuals a way to refine their developing identity by providing an image of someone they would like to become. Role models provide inspiration to individuals, and this motivates them to emulate aspects of their role models' behavior or style. In this view, role models are exemplary figures offering essential clues to identity and career achievement.

A second, more recent view depicts role models as cognitive constructions devised by individuals to construct their ideal or "possible" selves based on their own developing needs and goals. Rather than focusing on the actions of a prominent person, however, the

second view focuses on the perceptions of the individual. The individual is seen as piecing together a composite role model from attributes derived from a range of possibilities, both real and imagined. The emphasis in this view is on an active learning process from multiple role models, rather than a focus on selecting a particular exemplary person.

The term *role model* draws on two prominent theoretical constructs: the concept of role, and the tendency of individuals to identify with other people occupying important social positions, and the concept of modeling, the psychological matching of cognitive skills and patterns of behavior between a person and an observing individual. These two aspects of role models reflect two different theoretical traditions. The first, role identification theories, emphasizes the notion that individuals are attracted to people based on similarity. They may perceive similarity in terms of attitudes, behaviors, goals, or a desired status position, and they are motivated to enhance that similarity through observation and emulation. The second, social learning theories, suggests that individuals attend to models because they can be helpful in learning new tasks, skills, and norms. Identification theories place relatively more emphasis on the motivational and self-definitional aspects of role models, while modeling theories emphasize the learning aspects.

In discussing role models, it is important to distinguish them from two other types of career developmental relationships, behavioral models and mentors. Behavioral modeling focuses on matching specific actions and attitudes between an individual and a model. Typical examples of behavioral modeling in organizations involve supervisors or trainers illustrating specific task skills and performance goals and norms. The basis of the behavioral model relationship, then, is to facilitate individuals' learning of specific tasks and skills by vicarious observation. The basis of a mentoring relationship is distinguished by an active interest by a mentor in advancing an individual's career, and the mentor is understood to provide both career-related and psychosocial functions. In both cases, the focus of these constructs is on the actions of the superior other (a mentor or behavioral model) in helping to develop the individual.

The basis of the role model relationship, in contrast, is identification and social comparison processes. The individual makes other people role models by identifying with them or comparing upward to them: The focus is on this cognitive process rather than on direct

action by the model. Indeed, interaction between the individual and his or her role models is not required. Individuals can be understood to have a "portfolio" of role models who can be observed for specific attributes and abilities, and the type of learning revolves around role expectations and self-concept definition rather than specific skills (as provided by behavioral models) or career advancement (as provided by mentors).

Given the lack of conceptual clarity surrounding the role model construct, it is not surprising that widely differing approaches have been taken in empirical research. Most research has examined children and adolescents identifying with parental role models. A secondary group of studies focuses on role models as a component in college students' selection of careers, with a special focus on the need for, and frequent lack of, role models for women and minority students. Within organizations, role models have been primarily examined as one part of the socialization process and through a behavioral modeling lens. In terms of the latter, studies have found that social information conveyed through role models is related to increased learning of specific skills, higher goal setting, and increased performance levels.

Such research has not convincingly shown, however, whether role models are critical in career development and achievement, and how. While most empirical research has investigated the traditional understanding of role models outlined above, recent research has applied a more fine-grained qualitative approach to examining how individuals perceive and relate to their role models, especially as they are socialized to new organizational roles. Four key processes characterize the findings of this research. First, these studies find that individuals seek a variety of role models from whom they derive attributes and behaviors that can be helpful in their development. These role models may be predominantly "positive," that is, illustrate behaviors or traits the individual wishes to emulate, or predominantly "negative," that is, illustrate attributes the individual wishes to avoid. Second, rather than assume that individuals seek traditional role models, these studies tend to find that individuals differ to the extent that they seek a "global" role model, one from whom they can adopt a wide repertoire of attributes, versus seeking a "specific" role model who provides an exemplar of a relatively narrow trait.

Third, individuals use the role model attributes they observe as clues to creating their "ideal self"—the self they would like to become. Role models are particularly

helpful in imagining this ideal self because by observing role models, individuals can provisionally try out different styles or behaviors to see which ones best suit their developing style. Finally, these processes must be understood as dependent on time. While attention paid to role models may be most intense during the early career stage, as individuals mature in their organizational career, they do not necessarily stop looking for role models. Rather, their role models tend to change, often from more positive to more negative and from more global to more specific.

The lack of conceptual clarity surrounding role models has produced a puzzling result: The idea of role models is widely and popularly known, but this wide knowledge masks a superficial understanding of how important role models actually are in career development. While research based on the traditional view suggests that having role models is better than not having them, the research lacks compelling links to dependent variables such as satisfaction, performance, and commitment. Research emphasizing role models as cognitive constructions might offer new hope for expanding our understanding of role models.

This research might provide the conceptual clarity that leads the way to new answers about this widely known yet paradoxically little understood concept.

—Donald E. Gibson

See also Identity, Mentoring, Self-concept

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SABBATICALS

Sabbaticals, which were first introduced at Harvard in 1880, have become a form of paid leave offered to faculty by nearly all United States universities, more than 80 percent of four-year colleges, and 60 percent of two-year colleges. Sabbaticals, derived from the Hebrew *Shenath shabbathon*, or year of rest, commonly are defined as paid leaves of absence for purposes of personal and/or professional development. These leaves may be granted for varying periods of time, usually with full or partial compensation and continued benefits. Historically, the primary purpose of the sabbatical has been to increase scholarly productivity. In addition, sabbaticals serve as a reward for tenured faculty who have given good service to the university and as an incentive to energize and improve faculty performance. Sabbaticals are considered to be an important part of academic life because faculty are expected to continue to develop as scholars, researchers, and professionals throughout their careers. In recent years, the sabbatical concept has been broadened to include opportunities for personal renewal as well as professional development, with the goal of enhancing the value of the faculty member to the institution.

A unique feature of sabbaticals is that they typically are characterized by a complete disengagement from regular work responsibilities. Release time relieves faculty of specific day-to-day responsibilities so that they can concentrate their time and energies in chosen scholarship, teaching, or service activities. Eligibility requirements for sabbatical leaves typically

require formal application and approval for the sabbatical, at least one year of service at the institution following the sabbatical, and a report on sabbatical accomplishments. In addition to individual faculty benefits, sabbaticals also have been reported to benefit institutions through improved faculty morale, increased scholarly output, and improved teaching.

During the past few years, organizations outside of academia, such as public schools, businesses, and health care, have recognized the potential merit of sabbaticals for their employees. Sample titles of articles published in business publications clearly indicate interest in nonacademic sabbaticals (e.g., “Time for a Sabbatical,” “Sabbaticals Gain Popularity,” “Why Sabbaticals Make Sense”). Articles on sabbaticals also have appeared in such diverse publications as the *Journal of Accountancy*, *British Medical Journal*, *Family Practice Management*, *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, *Bioscience*, and the *Journal of Education for Business*.

Most faculty report using their sabbaticals for research (49 percent) or writing (21 percent). Other reported benefits of sabbaticals include burnout prevention; increased job satisfaction; personal and professional growth; time to develop new projects, areas of interest, or skills without normal interruptions and responsibilities; new perspectives and attitudes; travel and networking; improved mental and physical health; and increased energy and enthusiasm for career. Clearly, these kinds of reported benefits may accrue to employees in other careers where sabbatical-type opportunities are offered.

Even within academic settings, there is some evidence that the sabbatical experience may differ for

faculty from different disciplines. In one study, counselor educators reported placing a higher priority on personal and social development than noncounseling faculty and perceived themselves as more motivated, more enthusiastic, and better institutional citizens postsabbatical. Critics of sabbaticals have questioned the effectiveness of release time, citing a lack of substantial evidence to support their effectiveness. Thus a continued challenge is to document sabbatical accomplishments in ways that are meaningful to and valued by administrators and other supervisors.

—James M. Benshoff and David A. Spruill

See also Flexible work arrangements, Wellness and fitness programs

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SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION

As the concept of lifelong learning is embraced by more and more people, *school-to-work (STW) transitions* are now likely to occur many times over the course of an individual's lifetime. The school-to-work transition discussed here, however, will focus on only one of these transitions, the non-college-bound student's entry into full-time employment after high school. Relative to other countries (Germany, for example), the United States has only recently turned attention to this important stage in a youth's life, spurred in large part by the perception of the failure of many of its public schools, particularly those located in urban and rural areas. As evidence of this failure, critics of the secondary educational system in the United States point to increased dropout rates and a growing pool of high school graduates who are inadequately prepared for today's more demanding entry-level positions. For the non-college-bound high school student, then, the transition to work lies at the nexus of what some have portrayed as a failing

educational system and a dynamic, increasingly complex business community, whose entry-level jobs demand a knowledgeable and highly skilled workforce.

An early warning sign of the deteriorating quality of primary and secondary education in the United States was reported in *A Nation at Risk*, published in 1983 by the National Commission of Excellence in Education. This report brought to light the widespread illiteracy rate among adults and children, as well as the significant academic gap between majority and minority group members. To remedy these failings, the report recommended school reforms that emphasized a more rigorous, academic-based curriculum to help prepare more students for postsecondary education.

This recommendation to improve the academic preparedness of U.S. high school students set the stage for enhancing the focus on educational programs for students who traditionally did not pursue postsecondary education, that is, for students considered to be in the "forgotten half" (as termed in a report by the William T. Grant Foundation) or classified as "at risk" (of dropping out of school). Unlike reforms focusing on high-achieving students, school reforms for the students in the lower half focused greater attention on vocational preparation than academic achievement.

To some, this focus on vocational preparation was a way to further institutionalize a tracking system in educational institutions, one that is based on, and perpetuates, a rigid partitioning of students by social class, offering little opportunity for future growth. These critics claimed that the reforms for the forgotten half meant that students from lower socioeconomic classes are steered into less academic, vocational programs, while students from higher socioeconomic classes continue to be given opportunities to prepare for postsecondary education. Since education is an investment in human capital with a return in the form of lifelong earnings, this system may act as a further constraint on academic and career choices for those students from lower socioeconomic classes.

Despite these misgivings, emphasis in programs for at-risk youth continued to be placed on vocational, rather than academic, objectives. Federal legislation played a major role in funding many of these school-to-work programs. One of the more influential pieces of legislation in the STW movement was the Carl D.

Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act, which was signed into law in 1990. The Perkins Act continues to provide federal funding for vocational-technical education programs that prepare high school students for occupations that do not require an advanced or baccalaureate degree. At its heart, this act promotes active partnerships between businesses and education, incorporating both school-based and work-based learning.

While the Perkins Act continues to make federal funds available to state-sponsored school-to-work programs, the legislation that had perhaps the most influence in the proliferation of STW programs in the United States was the School-to-Work Opportunities Act (1994-2001). The intent of this act was to create a national framework for linking school and work, in lieu of what it called a lack of a “comprehensive” and “coherent” system facilitating youths’ transitions into full-time employment. The funding mechanism under this act provided that federal funds be given directly to the states, a mechanism that allowed states considerable freedom to create their own programs linking school and work. Programs were eligible for funding under the act as long as they included three basic elements: work-based learning, school-based learning, and activities that connected the two. Since states were given the freedom to create their own programs, a number of different school-to-work models have been funded under this legislation. For example, in 1996, 64.2 percent of all U.S. high schools offered some type of school-to-work activity. While this act, then, offered flexibility to address local issues and helped these programs grow, it could be argued that by funding different STW program models, the act failed to create a comprehensive U.S. system to facilitate the transition of high school youth into the workforce.

Given the scope of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, it isn’t surprising that many different activities and models fall under the umbrella of school-to-work. These activities may last from as little as one-day job-shadowing experiences, to work and educational experiences that may last up to six years. These include such activities as job shadowing, mentoring, internships, registered apprenticeships, youth apprenticeships, cooperative education, tech prep education, and career academies. Since the sunset of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, perhaps the most widespread SWT programs are the tech prep and career academy models.

Tech prep programs were funded by the School-to-Work Opportunities Act and continue to be eligible to receive funding under the Perkins Act. These programs are planned courses of study in technical fields that use 4 + 2, 3 + 2, or 2 + 2 formats. The “+2” designation indicates that the program lasts two years beyond secondary education and culminates with an associate degree or certificate. As such, they incorporate both academic rigor and technical development and competence, responding to the claim that career prep programs often limit educational achievement. These programs focus on technical preparation in engineering technology, applied science, mechanical, industrial, or practical art or trade, agricultural, health, or business. As of 2004, there were over 700,000 students participating in tech-prep programs across the United States.

The career academy model began in 1969 and has grown nationwide since that time. Academies were first developed by members of the business community in Philadelphia to meet increased demands for qualified, entry-level employees. Although many school districts in the United States have incorporated the academy model, the Philadelphia Academies is one of the few organizations that continues to operate as an independent, not-for-profit liaison between the schools and business. Career academies are organized as small learning communities (“schools within schools”), focus on a particular career theme, such as business, technology, law, or health care, and offer students employment preparation along with a college prep curriculum. Academies also actively pursue partnerships with the business community in order to offer employment to students while in school and provide developmental activities such as employment interview training and mentors. Career academies, as recognized by the National Career Academy Coalition, are now located in over 1,500 U.S. high schools and serve a significant number of students, over 10,000 in the Philadelphia area alone.

The extent of the business community’s involvement in school-to-work activities is the subject of a growing number of research studies. These studies have generally shown that larger organizations are more likely to participate in these activities than smaller ones. One study reported that 170,000 private organizations (each employing more than 20 people) were active partners in formal school-to-work partnerships. Of these, over 91 percent reported they offered work-based learning activities for high school or

community college students. Researchers have speculated on employer motivation for their participation. One reason may be corporate altruism, as many employers report their desire to help their communities was the main reason for their participation. However, some researchers have argued that the most important reason employers participate in these programs is for economic benefit. First, employers may receive positive publicity in their communities as they actively engage in STW programs, which may generate additional business for them. Second, participating in these programs can also help employers fill short-term job openings with inexpensive labor, as well as to help them meet their longer term labor needs by hiring graduates of the programs.

While research on employers has identified multiple motives of employer participation, the impact of these interventions on students is more difficult to determine, given the complexity of isolating the effects of an academic program on a student's motivation to participate in the program, learn, and achieve academically. Ideally, combining work-based and classroom-based learning should enhance student motivation to learn, as it allows the students to see the relevance of what they learn to their job performance and, longer term, to their careers. Some research has, in fact, made a connection between student participation in work-based learning programs with academic and employment outcomes. In one of the more rigorous studies of career academies, for example, a nationwide, longitudinal review showed evidence that participating in a career academy program had a positive, significant effect on future earnings of the young men in the sample that was studied. This same study showed that these earnings effects were not achieved by sacrificing academic performance, as the researchers found no significant differences in graduation rates between academy and nonacademy students in their sample.

In addition, research has also reported a positive relation between participating in adult-youth, work-based mentoring programs in urban settings with academic performance and attitudinal changes. One study showed evidence that participating in such a mentoring program was positively associated with GPA and school attendance. Furthermore, students who reported having a mentor at work had higher levels of self-esteem, compared to students who did not work, and students with mentors in formal mentoring programs held stronger beliefs that school was

relevant to work, relative to those who worked without a mentor.

However, questions have been raised over the extent to which learning in a work environment takes place in school-to-work programs. Often, educators assume that learning will take place as a consequence of the student's mere presence in a work environment. In some programs, however, experience has shown that students are placed in environments and hold positions that do not require the acquisition of knowledge or the development of new skills. Some employers are also not interested in making the effort that is required to integrate academic and work-based learning, a critical step to ensure that learning takes place on the job. In addition, detailed lesson plans are not developed by the schools, nor are specific learning goals established at the outset of the program, making assessment of what is learned problematic. School personnel may also fail to follow up with the students about their work experiences. The multiplicity of these requirements and the need to carefully coordinate activities across school and work boundaries add to the challenge of creating successful STW programs.

Research has also provided useful insights into the nature of a youth's STW transition, which can be helpful to administrators designing and managing STW programs. For example, there is evidence of an association between postgraduation employment outcomes and early (12-15 years of age) educational experiences. Specifically, a positive relation has been found between academic self-efficacy (confidence in one's ability to do well in school) and academic performance at this early age, with job satisfaction and the likelihood of later employment (21 years of age). This reinforces the importance of focusing on both academic and vocational objectives in STW programs.

Additional research of the transition into the workforce has also shown changes in the youth's sense of self, explicitly an enhanced self-confidence, an increased valuation of one's personal life outside work, and increased ambition. Research has reported evidence of a dynamic interplay between personality development and work experiences that may also be useful to administrators of STW programs. While personality characteristics may be a factor in the student's choice to enter an STW program, as well as the type of work chosen by the youth, the experience in the program may also have an effect on the youth's personality. This interaction between personality and work

experience is consistent with what is known as the corresponsive principle, that is, that work experiences are likely to deepen the personality factors and characteristics that led the person to that experience in the first place. For example, a student who enjoys taking charge of things may be more inclined to enroll in an STW program because it offers work opportunities that allow for autonomy and the chance to influence and lead others. The student's experiences in this position may then reinforce that original desire to take charge.

U.S. public policy toward STW transitions may best be described as a loose combination of activities and pedagogical models bridging the worlds of school and work. These programs are created and administered at the state and local levels and, in general, have not been subject to careful, rigorous assessment of their effectiveness. However, this lack of sound research evidence should not imply that there is little need to focus attention on this transition and provide resources to facilitate it. Many school districts and communities continue to be plagued by low academic achievement of its youth and high dropout rates, particularly among youth from lower socioeconomic classes, and employers continue to question the qualifications, skills, and abilities of those in the entry-level labor pool. As such, STW programs remain crucial to help prepare students not only for the increasingly complex work environment but to offer opportunities for all youth to lead productive, satisfying lives and become positive contributors to society.

—Frank Linnehan

See also Apprenticeships, Cooperative education, Internships, Low-income workers and careers, Socioeconomic status

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SELF-AWARENESS

Awareness is a central concept in career development. It has been defined as a relatively complete and accurate perception of individuals' own qualities and the characteristics of their environment. The two types of awareness identified in the literature are self-awareness and environment awareness. *Self-awareness* refers to the realistic and accurate perception of one's interests, values, skills, limitations, and lifestyle preferences. In its most basic form, self-awareness requires individuals to take the time to develop insights into themselves and assess what is meaningful to them in their lives. Both self-awareness and environment awareness are inarguably important for successful career decision making and career management. Different theorists have used different constructs to refer to self-awareness such as self-concept, self-image, vocational identity, and self-observation generalization.

ROLE OF SELF-AWARENESS IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT

All major career development models have attempted to explain how individuals obtain and utilize self-knowledge to make career choices and shape their career development. A fundamental assumption that has guided most, if not all, major theories of career development is that self-knowledge is essential

for making career progress and developing satisfying careers. Similarly, most of the models of career management subscribe to the notion that career success and satisfaction will most likely be achieved by individuals who develop insights into themselves and their work environments. Self-awareness also plays a critical role in self-management models. Simply put, self-management has been described as a process of influencing oneself. It encompasses self-assessment, self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and other related processes.

In order to fully appreciate the role of self-awareness in career development, it is important to first understand the nature of contemporary careers. There have been a number of environmental changes that have had a profound influence on the basic foundation of personal and career development. For example, it has been widely documented that the rapidly changing workplaces, combined with organizational, technological, and social transitions, have left few external benchmarks of effective career development and have fostered the trend toward self-managed careers.

Furthermore, with changes in the psychological contract and traditional organizational opportunity structures, changes in the meaning of career success, and greater awareness of the impact of family and lifestyle issues on one's career, employees have been compelled to design their own personal and career development plans. This has been accompanied by limited assistance from organizations for the development and management of these career plans. In such rapidly changing and uncertain times, there has been an increased pressure on employees to develop a set of career competencies that would enable them to develop insights into themselves and their environment. Such career competencies are believed to be important in achieving career success and satisfaction.

Self-awareness is important for career development for reasons other than the ones identified above. Self-awareness, conceptualized as both a personality trait and a skill, has been argued to be critical in regulating individual performance and achieving managerial excellence. A thorough awareness of one's interests, values, talents, and lifestyle preferences enables individuals to set appropriate career goals, develop appropriate career strategies, and regulate their behavior successfully.

Support for the notion that realistic career goals are likely based on accurate self-assessments and self-awareness comes from several studies on students and

working professionals. Researchers have found that students who reported extensive self-awareness were more likely to develop satisfying and appropriate occupational goals than those who were relatively unaware of themselves. Similarly, self-awareness has been found to be an important factor that enabled individuals to develop realistic job expectations, attain higher levels of job satisfaction, and a greater degree of fit with their chosen work environments.

Research suggests that individuals can develop self-awareness by engaging in self-assessments and self-exploration. Employees at all organizational levels frequently make such self-assessments. For example, when individuals enter organizations, are transferred, or cope with organizational change, there is a pressing need to appraise, evaluate, and/or assess oneself.

Similarly, engaging in self-assessments may become even more important when individuals experience greater ambiguity about environmental demands such as those encountered during career transitions or experienced during personal or family crises. This does not mean that self-assessments are important only during times of dramatic change in people's lives. Rather, it is equally important for individuals to be sensitive to changes in themselves even during less momentous periods in their lives. Such ongoing assessments of oneself, reflected in self-awareness, enables individuals to achieve their goals in an organization—whether the goals are basic survival, good performance, rapid advancement, or something else. It also enables them to be flexible enough to make career decisions that are more in tune with, and reflective of, their emerging selves.

IMPORTANCE OF SELF-EXPLORATION IN ENHANCING SELF-AWARENESS

To develop an accurate and realistic awareness of oneself, it is important to engage in self-exploration. Engaging in self-exploration requires individuals to seek information about a variety of personal qualities, such as interests, values, talents, abilities, shortcomings, and any attitudes that are relevant to career decision making. Work is not the only significant role in people's lives, and it is important to examine a variety of nonwork interests and values. Hence, self-exploration also requires individuals to understand what they want from their nonwork roles, what significant values, interests, and talents can be satisfied through nonwork pursuits, and what their lifestyle preferences are.

The first step in any self-exploratory activity is to collect data and information about one's values, interests, abilities, and lifestyle preferences. There are a number of well-established techniques that are available to help individuals perform self-exploration. These techniques can be broadly categorized as individual assessment instruments, organization-sponsored self-exploration programs, and informal means of self-assessment.

TECHNIQUES FOR SELF-EXPLORATION

Individual assessment instruments, as the name suggests, help individuals gain a better understanding of their interests, values, personality factors, aptitudes, and lifestyle preferences. These instruments are intended to serve as a general guide to informed career decision making and are not meant to provide a conclusive answer to one's career direction. Some of the most widely used individual assessment techniques are the Strong Interest Inventory, the Vocational Preference Inventory, the Self-Directed Search, the General Aptitude Test Battery, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, the Rokeach Value Survey, and the Life Style Inventory.

Some of the assessment tools such as the Strong Interest Inventory, the Vocational Preference Inventory, and the Self-Directed Search provide specific information on an individual's pattern of interests that are suitable for certain occupation types. The other assessment tools identify general thinking and value patterns that are useful for career decision making. In general, the various interest inventories, aptitude tests, and personality and lifestyle measures offer helpful insights to individuals who are faced with the task of making an initial career choice or those who seek to change their career direction. These self-assessment tools are not intended to serve as a definitive guide to career selection.

In addition to the above individual assessment techniques, a variety of organization-sponsored self-exploration programs are also available. These programs are typically offered through career management or assistance centers. They offer individual self-assessment opportunities through career planning workshops, career workbooks, and assessment centers. Career planning workshops involve a structured group format in which participants interact with one another to formulate, share, and discuss personal information that leads to self-analysis and eventual

self-awareness. Career workbooks are structured to accomplish the same objective as career planning workshops except that these workbooks are self-paced, self-directed, and designed to be completed by individuals themselves. Finally, assessment centers are used to provide feedback on individuals' personality styles, strengths, and shortcomings. In addition to aiding self-awareness, this feedback can also be used to guide individuals' career planning process.

Employees can also obtain self-information through other formal and informal feedback sources and mechanisms. Performance appraisals are one example of a formal feedback mechanism that can contribute to employees' self-exploration process by providing them with information on their strengths and weaknesses. In situations when feedback is not spontaneously provided or is somewhat constrained, employees may solicit feedback or infer it from a variety of informal cues by engaging in active feedback-seeking behaviors. Active feedback-seeking is an important component of the self-assessment process. It is also an integral part of the self-regulation process in which individuals monitor the opinions and expectations of their superiors, peers, and subordinates.

In addition to the above self-exploration techniques, individuals can also engage in informal self-exploration activities such as writing a diary, analyzing their highs and lows in life, fantasizing about their ideal jobs, and conducting other exercises designed to provide self-insights.

Despite the availability of a variety of self-exploration instruments and programs, self-exploration is not always effective and does not always produce an enhanced and accurate self-awareness. The next section describes some of the challenges that accompany any type of self-assessment or self-exploration activity.

ACCURACY OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS

It is widely agreed that accuracy in self-assessments is a desirable goal. However, the question that has confronted employees and researchers alike has been whether accuracy in self-assessment is an attainable goal. This is a particularly important area of inquiry because self-exploration entails using the self as the source of feedback. Some studies have shown that the self is the most available and trustworthy source of feedback, while others have shown that self-assessments are prone to a variety of errors and

misjudgments. Recently, research has begun to address the reasons why individuals' assessments of themselves might or might not be accurate and the ways in which these assessments may deviate from accuracy. There are a number of barriers to effective self-exploration that have been identified in the literature, and these obstacles are discussed next.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE SELF-ASSESSMENT

Because people live and work in environments that are changing and are also often complex and ambiguous, it is no surprise that inaccuracies in self-assessments occur. Inaccuracies in self-assessments have been shown to arise from three broad categories of problems that individuals face. The first one deals with the information problem and relates to either too much or too little information. Individuals' environments may contain a surfeit of complex cues that need to be interpreted accurately. Faced with this abundance of cues, individuals' perceptual processes may get constrained, which may distort their self-assessment accuracy and eventually their quality of awareness. To compound these problems, some environments contain cues that are ambiguous, which may lead to multiple interpretations for every cue. This might happen commonly in organizations that are undergoing a transition, causing them to give off ambiguous cues regarding what is appropriate and expected behavior. Self-assessment inaccuracies are only natural and to be expected in such an environment.

Another set of challenges that can impede self-assessment proficiency deal with individuals' own personality factors such as their self-esteem and their level of anxiety. Because self-exploration and self-assessment activities involve information about oneself, the process of acquiring and using such information can cause anxiety and be a threat to one's self-esteem. Researchers have pointed out that anxiety can be a serious threat to self-assessment accuracy. Because highly anxious people focus on their anxious feelings rather than the information at hand, they may not be able to benefit from much self-exploration. In addition, highly anxious people may get defensive about any threatening self-related information and may distort, dismiss, or misinterpret that information, resulting in an inaccurate self-assessment.

Further complicating this picture is the influence of self-esteem on self-exploration and self-assessment processes. Individuals with low self-esteem tend to

distort ambiguous cues in ways that are consistent with their low self-images. They also tend to underestimate positive evaluations from others and generally tend to accept more negative feedback than those with high self-esteem. It has been suggested that individuals need to balance their desire for accurate assessment with their desire to maintain a positive self-image. However, when the balance is tipped toward creating or maintaining a particular self-image—whether positive or negative—inaccuracies in self-assessments are bound to occur.

Related to this issue is the problem of self-presentation that unfavorably influences self-assessment accuracy. The self-presentation problem refers to the dilemma that individuals face in seeking information while protecting their images as self-assured, confident people. It has been suggested that individuals who experience such self-presentational pressures are constrained in their self-assessment activities not by their environment but by their own perceptions of the costs involved to their self-image. Some researchers point out that the primary cost of seeking any information or help is that it exposes the seeker's uncertainty and need for help. As a result, such individuals tend to rely more on their own self-observations and seek only limited amounts of feedback and other information, which has the effect of contributing to a lopsided understanding of oneself.

The previous discussion highlighted some of the inaccuracies that may occur in the self-exploration and self-assessment processes and the underlying reasons for these inaccuracies. In examining self-assessment inaccuracies, there are three questions researchers have had to grapple with. First, what is the cost of these inaccurate self-assessments for both individuals and organizations? It has been suggested that since self-assessments involve judgments about the self, they tend to have a strong impact on both psychological and behavioral processes. For example, self-assessments, whether accurate or not, may affect individuals' self-efficacy expectations, their persistence at a task, and in some cases, even their future aspiration levels. Furthermore, because self-appraisals tend to serve as guides for future action, it is possible that individuals with inaccurate self-views would either hastily act on something (e.g., a career goal), mistakenly quit tasks, or fail to alter their behavior when the environment demands it.

The information on the organizational costs of individuals' inaccurate self-views tends to be less clear.

However, it has been shown that inaccurate self-views, particularly inflated self-views of organizational leaders, might lead these leaders to commit themselves and their financial resources to a losing course of action.

The other two questions that have challenged researchers studying self-assessment accuracy have been more philosophical ones but have pragmatic implications. One of them deals with the extent to which accuracy in self-assessment is a desirable goal to strive for. This issue challenges the basic usefulness of accurate and realistic self-awareness and questions whether there might be a greater value in seeking information that is self-enhancing rather than being merely accurate. The second question asks us to think about the criteria that would constitute self-assessment accuracy. In other words, is accuracy in the eyes of the beholder (the person engaging in self-exploration), or does some outside observer determine the accuracy of one's self-assessment? These issues have generated much debate, but conclusive guidelines are yet to emerge.

In conclusion, researchers interested in understanding the nature of self-awareness continue to fine-tune the questions they ask and are broadening their focus to examine a variety of contextual and interpersonal pressures that influence the exploratory activities leading up to self-awareness. We know about some of the important outcomes of self-awareness, and researchers continue to investigate other immediate and long-term outcomes of self-awareness.

—Romila Singh

See also Career decision-making styles, Career exploration, Career indecision, Environment awareness

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SELF-CONCEPT

Throughout the history of career development, ideas about the *self-concept* have played a critical role in theory development, research, and counseling practice. Scholars in career development and humanistic psychology have developed perhaps the most commonly used definition of self-concept. In short, the self-concept is thought to refer to conceptions of oneself—in other words, the "I" or "me." The self-concept includes both affective dimensions (such as self-esteem) as well as content dimensions. In addition, the self-concept has been understood from various conceptual and theoretical perspectives, reflecting recent innovations in career development theory.

HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE SELF-CONCEPT

Self-concept and its roots are best understood in the context of the history of career development and vocational psychology. Within these fields, the idea of person-environment fit set the stage for research and practice throughout the century. The earliest ideas about the self-concept emerged as a logical outgrowth of initial ideas about maximizing person-environment fit. In order to help individuals learn about themselves, counselors increasingly used tests and other measurement tools to provide clients with information about their interests, skills, and personality. One means of integrating these observations about individuals was to embed the intrapersonal attributes of an individual under the rubric of the self-concept.

Other contributions to the notion of self-concept grew out of humanistic psychological traditions. In this conceptual perspective, client-centered therapy was used to help individuals move toward a more positive and achievable self-concept in contrast to an unobtainable and idealized sense of self-concept. The goal of psychotherapy, according to this perspective, was to help individuals gain knowledge and insight about their experiences, which in turn would lead to a better understanding of their identity and enhance the clarity and confidence of their self-concept.

Building on an integration of early conceptual contributions from humanistic psychology and person-environment fit perspectives, scholars in the career development field began sustained research into the nature of the self-concept. Using life span development ideas as an organizing rubric for theoretical advances, life experiences related to work and career were seen as integrally connected to overall psychological functioning. Scholars suggested that by looking at an individual's context (i.e., family, history, social relationships, economic factors, psychological functioning), we can better understand how one's sense of vocational identity and self-concept begin to unfold.

These pioneers promoted the idea that it is important for people to know themselves in order to be satisfied in their work lives. One way of understanding this self-knowledge and other internal aspects of an individual is through the construct of the self-concept. According to the tenets of this construct, satisfaction in work roles is related to the degree to which people can implement their self-concept.

THE SELF-CONCEPT IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT THEORY AND PRACTICE

The role of the self-concept as a key element of career development theory and practice is evident in most of the major theoretical positions and counseling approaches. For example, the self-concept has been described as a matching theory by which individuals simultaneously consider their personal attributes and the attributes desired by certain occupations. The self-concept is understood as having multiple dimensions, including developmental, psychological, personal, and social aspects. Upon closer examination, the self-concept has been described as being composed of dimensions and metadimensions by leading career development theorists. Dimensions are considered to be the components of personality or the traits that

people assign to others and themselves. Metadimensions of the self-concept are described as the characteristics of the traits that people attribute to themselves. In other words, metadimensions can be used to explore the tone and similarities among personality traits.

Self-esteem is one such metadimension that has affective characteristics. Self-esteem is characterized by evaluative and affective aspects of the self-concept that relate to one's subjective sense of self. The degree of self-esteem associated with a trait or the degree of clarity or abstraction associated with a self-description (such as, "I am moderately good at math") is a prime example of how metadimensions can illuminate an exploration of an individual's self-concept. The ability an individual possesses to integrate interpersonal evaluations with the self-concept contributes to the consistency and accuracy in one's self-esteem in addition to one's level of self-confidence. The level of one's self-esteem in relation to the self-concept is important in career decision making, as research has demonstrated a connection between the self-concept and occupational preferences. For example, a young woman may view herself as a good student in math and science; however, due to the impact of sex role socialization, she may attach negative affect to these self-perceptions, thereby inhibiting her capacity to construct a meaningful and maximally rewarding career.

Within the career realm, individuals may have a more circumscribed occupational self-concept, which reflects a subdimension of the overarching self-concept. The occupational self-concept refers to the translation of general beliefs and feelings about oneself to the working context. The individual described in the previous paragraph may have an occupational self-concept that reflects a strong avoidance of math and science with a corresponding self-concept that suggests more "feminine" attributes, such as caregiving and nurturing. However, the process of career development and matching between an evolving self-concept and evolving situations is never truly complete. In the example above, the woman with a self-concept that has sought to disavow her interests in science and math could change due to life experience and/or counseling.

Career development is thought to be characterized by developing, synthesizing, compromising, and implementing self-concepts. These self-concepts result from an interaction of inherited aptitudes, physiology, opportunities to play various roles, and evaluation of the extent to which the roles gain approval of superiors and peers. Furthermore, the self-concept has

been described as the glue that might cement global theories of career development with well-assembled segments of preexisting theories.

The self-concept develops over time through interactions and experiences with aptitudes, physical qualities/skills, and opportunities to observe various work roles. Although the self-concept starts to develop in childhood and further crystallizes in late adolescence, it can change and transform over time due to one's experiences in the world. One prominent way of understanding the development of the self-concept is based on a three-tiered stage model: formation, translation, and implementation. The formation stage is devoted to differentiation of the self from others and identification with those who can serve as models. The translation stage builds upon the previous stage in that an adult role model may be used for reality testing. Individuals evaluate the extent to which their available role models are similar or dissimilar to them and the extent to which their own attributes would be suitable for a particular occupation. An example of this might be a male adolescent considering a career in teaching that would follow in his mother's footsteps. Over time, that individual would learn about the skills required for this occupation and in turn would conduct a self-assessment to determine if this occupation would be congruent with his self-concept. This analysis may lead to commitment or rejection of the teaching occupation. The implementation stage of this model occurs as this individual activates his plan through pursuing higher education or employment in the chosen occupation. In the present example, this adolescent may have had a summer job teaching swimming, and he determined through feedback from others in addition to his own self-assessment that teaching would be an ideal occupation. His next step would be to attend college so that he could implement his professional plan, reflecting an implementation of his general self-concept into an occupational context.

Another informative approach utilizes four sequential stages to describe ways in which the self-concept changes as one moves through the career decision-making process. This model includes awareness, planning, commitment, and implementation. The awareness stage is characterized by an increased awareness of place in time in regard to an individual's present state, the past, and speculation as to where an individual is headed. The self-appraisal within the awareness stage can lead to satisfaction with current circumstances or, alternatively, anxiety over past decisions that have resulted in dissatisfactory present circumstances.

The planning stage involves exploration and crystallization of career decision making. Through exploration, an individual is able to expand alternative scenarios for the decision at hand and then assesses the relationship between these scenarios and his or her self-concept. Once an individual is able to settle upon a specific option through gathering more information on alternatives and/or increasing self-knowledge of relevant values and priorities, he or she can transition into the commitment stage.

The commitment stage begins within an individual's internal resolution to commit to a decision. Next, the individual cautiously shares this decision with close friends or family members to elicit feedback. Once the commitment has been openly stated and encouragingly accepted by an individual's close family, friends, and colleagues, one's self-concept is then further consolidated. Implementation is the last stage of this four-step process and occurs when an individual successfully establishes contingency plans, internalizes the positive aspects of the decision, and reduces the negative aspects of the decision.

This four-step model of career decision making was established with the college population in mind. Consequently, the decision to major in a certain subject is a relevant illustration of this model. As an individual enters college, self-awareness peaks in regard to a student's past, present situation, and future aspirations. In some cases, the decision to major in a certain subject takes place prior to the start of college, with the awareness and planning stages occurring during high school. A female high school student who has received strong encouragement and praise for her mathematics and science skills from her teachers and family members might have easily arrived at a decision to major in engineering before stepping foot on her college campus. For this individual, college begins with the commitment stage as she determines which courses are necessary to implement her decision to major in engineering. There is a possibility of regression to the planning and even awareness stage if this student discovers extreme dissonance in her chosen major in regard to her self-concept (i.e., this intended engineering major finds out that she is most interested in the business and strategic side of technology as opposed to engineering concepts). The planning and awareness stages are revisited, and a new major, such as business, may be established as she tests her new ideas on her close friends and colleagues and against her evolving self-concept. While this model is

sequential, it is not static; rather, it is a dynamic process by which an individual will move forward and backward through the stages as necessary.

Self-concept theory is flexible and malleable, much like the career trajectories of those it seeks to describe; different parts will be applicable to different individuals at different points in time.

THE CULTURAL AND RELATIONAL CONTEXTS OF THE SELF-CONCEPT

There are several new advances in self-concept theory and research that focus on the role of context in shaping the formation and expression of one's self-concept in the world of work. Context is typically understood as contemporary and historical factors relating to familial, relational, social, cultural, political, and economic influences that affect an individual's development across the life span. Current contextualist research in career development includes in-depth explorations of the interface of work with relational and cultural factors.

Recent movements to contextualize career concerns have explored the connections between interpersonal relationships and work. Relationally oriented theorists have proposed that individuals achieve a sense of self-concept that is created and re-created in multiple contexts (including the work world) principally through their social interactions and relationships. According to this view, the self-concept is rooted in a relational matrix in which the individual's past and current relationships are viewed as having the potential to inform individuals about their own attributes and to nurture their self-esteem and sense of inner cohesion.

Research advances regarding the cultural context of self-concept development view the self as both defined and embedded in an array of relationships within Western and non-Western cultures in different configurations and extents respectively. Culturally prompted constructions of the self-concept evoke a multitude of implications and outcomes, involving motivational, cognitive, and emotional processes as they relate to the world of work. Such explorations raise further questions regarding the degree to which the self-concept is established through culture and historical forces and its impact on work and career development.

The field of career development benefits from a growing understanding on how the self-concept develops and functions within a relational and cultural matrix. Career development practitioners and scholars

are better able to assist individuals in work and career objectives with more explicit consideration of cultural and relational aspects of context.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Many of the theoretical advances on the role of the self-concept in career development occurred at a time when career trajectories were fairly stable, at least for a very visible (although not inclusive) cohort of the workforce. What, then, are the implications of the self-concept as careers become more complex, less orderly, and at times unpredictable? A close look at the research and theory on the self-concept suggests some plausible answers to this question. First, the notion that the self-concept can shift, based on contextual influences, is an integral notion that is common in most theoretical statements in career development. Second, the knowledge that the self-concept is multidimensional is also critical.

Considering these two observations in tandem suggests that many core aspects of the self-concept, such as values, interests, and beliefs about oneself, may function to provide a sense of coherence in a changing world. At the same time, the observation that the self-concept is malleable offers theorists and practitioners optimism about how individuals can cope with rapidly changing norms about career development. For example, individuals who lose their information technology jobs due to outsourcing may in fact be able to hold on to the fact that they are competent, capable, and talented workers with great skills and interests in computer technology. Yet at the same time, they may have to shift some of their interests perhaps to secondary areas, which they might not have considered in the past, in order to adapt to the changing world of work.

The scholarship on the self-concept has functioned as a bridge to unite many theories in career development. Moreover, the self-concept serves each of us as a coherent span that links our self-perceptions, attitudes, and feelings about ourselves. Hopefully, as more and more people across the globe have opportunities to construct their own careers, the wonderful privilege of being able to implement one's self-concept in the world of work will become an expected part of the transition to adulthood.

—David L. Blustein, Alexandra C. Kenna,
Kerri A. Murphy, and Julia E. DeVoy Whitcavitch

See also Identity, Person-environment fit (P-E fit), Self-awareness, Self-esteem

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SELF-DIRECTED SEARCH (SDS)

According to the publisher, Psychological Assessment Resources, the *Self-Directed Search* (SDS) developed by Dr. John L. Holland is the mostly widely used career interest inventory in the world. It has been translated into over 25 different languages. The SDS is based on Dr. Holland's RIASEC theory that both people and work and study environments can be classified according to six basic types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional (RIASEC). The SDS enables users to choose occupations and fields of study that best match their self-reported skills and interests. It is based on the idea that people whose job and work environments most closely match their personal style and interests tend to consider themselves satisfied and successful with the occupational choices they have made.

The SDS Form R (SDS:R) is the most common version of the instrument. In its assessment booklet, users answer questions about their occupational aspirations in a Daydreams section, which can be scored separately to yield a vocational aspirations code, or expressed interest code. Sections with lists of activities, competencies, and occupations follow the Daydreams section. The final section includes ratings for ability self-estimates across the six RIASEC areas. These latter five sections of the SDS:R can be self-scored to produce a three-letter summary code that designates the three personality types an individual most closely resembles. This is called the assessed code.

The SDS is both a stand-alone career planning simulation that imitates an interest inventory as well as a psychological test. The original paper-and-pencil SDS:R has been revised four times, most recently in 1994, and includes the *Assessment* booklet, the *Occupations Finder* (1,335 occupations employing 99 percent of U.S. workers and updated with additional information on technology occupations in 1999), and the *You and Your Career* booklet, which discusses the scientific ideas supporting the SDS, how to interpret the scores and codes, the personality characteristics associated with codes, and some suggestions for successful career planning. Normative data for the 1994 edition of SDS:R were derived from a nationally representative sample of 2,602 students (high school and college) and working adults in the United States.

While most counselors have basic information about the SDS:R paper version, the other varied SDS formats and versions are less widely known. A computer-based version of SDS:R provides for faster administration and more efficient use of the inventory. The computer generates a 10- to 12-page *Interpretive Report* for users based on SDS summary scores and a 1- to 3-page professional summary for counselors.

Besides these various formats of SDS:R, other versions of the SDS include Form E (Easy) for persons with poor English language or reading skills, SDS: Form CP (Career Planning) for adults working in organizations, and SDS: Career Explorer for middle school students. These alternative formats of the SDS have the same basic features of SDS:R.

EXPRESSED INTERESTS

In his writings, Holland has urged counselors to pay close attention to what persons say about the occupations they are considering. Occupational

aspirations are equal to or exceed predictions of future occupational activity available in standardized inventories. In other words, persons' expressed interests may be just as predictive of future occupational activity as their assessed interests.

An important innovation in the measurement of aspirations in the SDS Daydreams section was the coding of aspirations using the RIASEC typology. This procedure enables a counselor to examine not only the occupation named but also its RIASEC code. When the first two or three aspirations belong in the same RIASEC category, the predictive power of the first aspiration equals or exceeds the efficiency of an interest inventory.

MEASURING ASSESSED INTERESTS

The SDS has been described as a career planning simulation because it provides an opportunity to observe a career planning event under controlled conditions that might occur in real life. In this case, the SDS *Assessment* booklet provides a way for counselors to observe how persons may be engaging in educational and career decision making. The SDS is also a standardized assessment instrument. The items in the *Assessment* booklet have desirable psychometric properties and are based on RIASEC theory. The SDS has been subjected to the same rigorous test development standards as other professionally published tests, and the SDS manuals describe a complex, theory-based test development process begun in 1970.

The Activities section of the SDS:R *Assessment* booklet consists of 11 items for each of the six RIASEC types, and they cover hobbies and activities that are done for fun or leisure, and users can endorse them as "like" or "dislike." These items are included in the SDS because they effectively measure interests in relation to RIASEC theory.

In the Competencies section, users describe their skills, the kinds of things they had learned to do in the past, as well as discuss the skills they might want to develop in the future. This kind of information is practically important, because it is reasonable to believe that persons completing a career assessment will consider their history of skills and education or work-related accomplishments. The Competencies section of the SDS:R includes 11 items that are marked "yes" or "no" for the six RIASEC areas.

The next section of the SDS:R is Occupations. Longer than the previous two sections, it includes 14

items (occupational titles) that are endorsed "yes" or "no" for each of the RIASEC areas. Holland included this section because he wanted to make sure he obtained a good measure of the person's RIASEC typology and because he wanted to get a picture of the positive and negative feelings the person had for various occupational titles.

The final section of the SDS:R *Assessment* booklet is Self-estimates. It includes the six RIASEC scales, which are rated twice (from 1 to 7) with respect to ability and skill. Users are asked to rate themselves "as you really think you are when compared with other persons your own age."

SUMMARY

When the SDS was first introduced, some critics viewed it as "simplistic." However, more recent reviews have noted that the use of Holland's inventories is "extensive." The SDS is unique in several ways: (a) It is self-administering, self-scoring, and self-interpreting; (b) it is based on Holland's theory; and (c) it is supported by extensive research. The SDS is an inventory with desirable psychometric characteristics that incorporates a person's history of vocational daydreams, which can be used to increase predictive validity and to form an impression of a person's goals and background that encourages the immediate preliminary exploration of more than 1,000 occupations. Because it is self-scored and can be interpreted by most people, it encourages a person's active participation in the resolution of career problems and questions.

—Robert C. Reardon and Janet G. Lenz

See also Holland's theory of vocational choice, Interests

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SELF-EFFICACY

The concept of *self-efficacy*, as originated by Albert Bandura of Stanford University, has become one of the major variables used in understanding and facilitating individual career development and is also becoming important in the study of organizational and team effectiveness. As originally proposed, self-efficacy expectations refer to a person's beliefs concerning his or her ability to successfully perform a given task or behavior. These efficacy beliefs are behaviorally specific rather than general. The concept of self-efficacy must therefore have a behavioral referent to be meaningful. We could refer to perceived self-efficacy with respect to mathematics, initiating social interactions, using a computer software program, or teaching children to read. Because self-efficacy expectations are discussed in reference to a specific behavioral domain, the number of different kinds of self-efficacy expectations is limited only by the possible number of behavioral domains that are important for some defined purpose.

Self-efficacy expectations are postulated to have at least three important behavioral consequences: (1) approach versus avoidance behavior, (2) quality of performance of behaviors in the target domain, and (3) persistence in the face of obstacles or disconfirming experiences. More specifically, low self-efficacy expectations regarding a behavior or behavioral domain are postulated to lead to avoidance of those behaviors, poorer performance, and a tendency to give up when faced with discouragement or failure. If, for example, mathematics self-efficacy expectations were low in a given individual, we would expect that person to avoid mathematics course work and math tasks, to perform poorly on math exams or job-related materials based on mathematics, and to give up readily when faced with difficult math tasks and problems.

The first behavioral consequence, approach versus avoidance behavior, has a profound impact on career development because approach behavior describes what people will try, while avoidance behavior refers to things they will not try. It thus encompasses both the content of career choice, that is, the types of

educational majors and careers an individual will attempt, and the process of career choice, that is, the career exploratory and decision-making behaviors essential to making good choices.

The effects of self-efficacy expectations on performance can refer to effects such as performance on the tests necessary to complete college course work or the requirements of a job-training program. Finally, the effects of self-efficacy on persistence are essential for long-term pursuit of one's goals in the face of obstacles, occasional failures, and dissuading messages from the environment, for example, gender- or race-based discrimination or harassment in the workplace.

Research over the past 25 years has shown that self-efficacy is, indeed, important in relation to career behavior, including choices, performance, and persistence. Reviews of this research are well beyond the scope of this entry, but it is fair to say that self-efficacy expectations regarding both career activities and the processes of career decision making and job search have an important relationship to the nature of educational and career choices and the effectiveness of career decision-making behaviors. Self-efficacy is also an important concept in understanding and facilitating the functioning of employed individuals.

The next section briefly mentions domains of self-efficacy that have relevance to initial career choices and the effectiveness of career decision making. Domains to be mentioned include occupational self-efficacy, including self-efficacy for scientific/technical careers, mathematics self-efficacy, self-efficacy with respect to basic activity dimensions of career behavior, and career decision-making self-efficacy.

SELF-EFFICACY IN INITIAL CAREER DECISIONS

A number of researchers have studied perceived self-efficacy with regard to specific content domains of educational and career choices—because self-efficacy is postulated to influence approach versus avoidance behavior, and domain-specific self-efficacy expectations help us to understand the nature of people's choices and, if appropriate, provide a means of increasing the range of possible career options.

The earliest studies of career self-efficacy used efficacy beliefs regarding specific occupations, for example, law, engineering, teaching, and sales. Typical categorizations of occupations as traditionally male dominated (e.g., engineer) and traditionally

female dominated (e.g., social worker) occupations were used. A number of studies have shown significant gender differences in self-efficacy with respect to these occupational groups and, more important, that low self-efficacy expectations reduced perceived career options. Thus, low self-efficacy with regard to male-dominated occupations has been found useful in explaining women's continued underrepresentation in these career fields.

A related area of research has employed a more focused set of occupational titles, specifically those in scientific and technical careers. Research has shown that high versus low scientific/technical self-efficacy is significantly predictive of grades in science and technical courses, in persistence in an engineering major, and in range of career options in the sciences and engineering. Research has shown that Bandura's hypotheses hold not only in unselected groups of students but among those who have made tentative career choices.

Other researchers have examined a more fundamental aspect of consideration of scientific and technical careers, and that is mathematics self-efficacy. Twenty years of research on this construct have suggested its vital importance to educational achievement and career options. Measures of math self-efficacy, using everyday math tasks (e.g., balancing a checkbook), self-efficacy for math course work (e.g., calculus), and self-efficacy for solving math problems, have consistently shown large gender differences in math self-efficacy, with males being significantly more confident than females. Empirical research has also supported the predictive relationship of math self-efficacy to math performance and achievement and the importance of math self-efficacy to the science- or math-relatedness of career choices.

There are now also a number of measures of self-efficacy for important dimensions of vocational activity, for example, artistic, business, and social areas. Other inventories assess self-efficacy with respect to narrower domains of vocational activity. These domains include such activity areas as science, teaching, helping, leadership, mechanical activities, sales, data management, and using technology. Overall, research using such measures suggests that they too predict educational aspirations and occupational group membership. Also increasingly useful in career research and counseling are parallel measures of self-efficacy and vocational interests in research and career counseling. The most common paradigm for

this would be assessment of both self-efficacy and interests with respect to one or more domains of vocational activity; for example, both interests in science and perceptions of self-efficacy for science would be assessed. Those activity domains for which there is both high interest and high self-efficacy are targeted for career exploration. However, those areas where there is interest but low efficacy may be brought into the realm of career possibility if self-efficacy can be increased through interventions based on Bandura's theory (see next section). Thus the concept of self-efficacy can help to increase the range of career options open to a given individual.

In addition to career self-efficacy measures designed to predict the type of options considered versus avoided, or the nature of the choices made, self-efficacy theory has also been applied to the process of career decision making. There is now strong evidence to support the importance of self-efficacy in evoking exploration of the self and environment as they pertain to educational and career options. One of the most popular concepts is that of self-efficacy for making career decisions. A frequently used measure assesses self-efficacy with respect to five groups of tasks necessary to making career decisions: (1) accurate self-appraisal, (2) gathering occupational information, (3) goal selection, (4) making plans for the future, and (5) problem solving. A number of studies have shown career decisional self-efficacy to be related to indicators of educational and career adjustment, including career indecision, vocational identity, whether or not students have declared college majors, career exploratory behavior, and academic and social adjustment. Other researchers have developed and examined measures of self-efficacy relative to aspects of the processes involved in the career search. Also, and not surprisingly, there is evidence that self-efficacy for social interactions is significantly related to overall career decision self-efficacy and decisional progress. This makes sense if one considers that some level of social confidence may help in the process of gaining occupational information as well as in the job search process itself—even the most highly skilled job candidates may jeopardize their chances of employment if they perform poorly in a job interview.

Thus these examples of behavior domains studied should illustrate the broad applicability to career development of the self-efficacy construct. Self-efficacy can now be considered one of the major variables influencing the nature and effectiveness of career

choice behaviors. In addition, however, the concept has a very useful feature of having embedded within the theory the means of increasing behavior-relevant self-efficacy expectations via four types of experiences, which Bandura called sources of efficacy information. He theorized that our initial learning of efficacy expectations derives from these sources of information and that they can also be used to increase self-efficacy expectations at any time subsequently. The sources of information are (1) performance accomplishments, that is, experiences of successfully performing the behaviors in questions; (2) vicarious learning, or modeling; (3) verbal persuasion, for example, encouragement and support from others; and (4) lower levels of emotional arousal, that is, lower levels of anxiety, in connection with the behavior.

Past performance accomplishments serve as indicators of capability and are the most influential sources of efficacy information. Bandura has indicated that success promotes strong beliefs in one's personal efficacy. Failure weakens beliefs of personal efficacy, especially if the failure occurs before efficacy beliefs are firmly established. In addition, once a moderate level of self-efficacy develops, establishment of a strong, resilient sense of personal efficacy requires succeeding on difficult, rather than easy, tasks. Succeeding only on easy tasks is unlikely to teach the perseverance necessary in most worthwhile real-world endeavors.

The second source of efficacy information is vicarious learning, or modeling. Observing another person successfully engaging in a behavior can increase the efficacy of the observer, though observing failure in a model can likewise reduce perceived self-efficacy.

Social persuasion from others can be effective in enhancing and sustaining a sense of personal efficacy if the target behavior is within realistic boundaries. That is, social persuasion that is well beyond what the individual is actually capable of doing will not be effective, as the negative results of the individual's inadequate performances will constitute more powerful feedback than will unrealistic social persuasion. Rather, persuasion and encouragement should be focused on realistic challenges rather than impossible tasks, failure on which will be detrimental to perceived efficacy.

The fourth source, emotional arousal, refers to somatic information conveyed by physiological and emotional states. Physiological indicators can refer to

indices of autonomic arousal such as sweating and fast heartbeat or physical indicators such as fatigue or windedness. Anxiety is the most commonly discussed type of emotional arousal. Self-efficacy can be enhanced by reducing the extent to which the individual experiences these indicators, for example, by managing stress and anxiety responses and by increasing physical fitness levels.

There is now research showing the effectiveness of theory-based interventions in increasing self-efficacy. Specifically, there is evidence that using Bandura's four sources of efficacy information in an integrated treatment program can increase individuals' self-efficacy with respect to targeted behavioral domains.

Finally, Bandura's original theory postulated the existence as well of outcome expectations, which refer to the expected consequences of successful behavior. That is, successful performance is not always followed by a desired outcome, and individual beliefs regarding the predictability of desired outcomes can also differ. Social cognitive career theory integrates self-efficacy and outcome expectations, as well as vocational interests, in a comprehensive model of career choice behavior.

ORGANIZATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY AND COLLECTIVE EFFICACY

In addition to many useful inventories of self-efficacy related to career choice and decision making, the concept of self-efficacy has been found to be very useful as well in studying the career development and adjustment of employed individuals. Usually self-efficacy is conceptualized as relevant to some task or set of tasks required in the workplace. Research has shown that the higher the self-efficacy, the more likely one is to engage and persist in task-related activity. Research has also shown that higher self-efficacy predicts more positive job attitudes, training proficiency, and job performance, and that higher self-efficacy serves as a buffer of the potentially negative effects of stresses on overall psychological well-being.

Another important area of research is that on managerial self-efficacy. The general task faced by managers involves gathering and processing large and often complex pieces of information so that effective decisions can be made. Research has suggested that people high on managerial self-efficacy are more able to remain task focused, rather than self focused, and efficient yet creative in their decisional processes, in

the face of organizational setbacks. Studies using manipulations to threaten the efficacy beliefs of otherwise talented managers have shown progressive deterioration in their performance. They were inflicted with increasing self-doubt and became more erratic in their thinking processes. Poorer organizational outcomes and an increasing tendency to blame others for performance decrements were observed. Conversely, managers whose efficacy beliefs were strengthened set increasingly challenging goals and were able to use efficient and creative-thinking processes to reach them. Not surprisingly in the latter case, organizational outcomes were enhanced. Finally, other research has shown that managers' self-efficacy with respect to technical, human relations, administrative, and conceptual managerial tasks were related to the success of managers as gauged by promotions, increased responsibilities, and salary.

Although much organizational research has focused on self-efficacy for a given individual, there is increasing interest as well in generalizing self-efficacy to group levels of analysis. Bandura defined collective efficacy as a group's shared perception of its collective capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce a given level of achievement. Collective efficacy has been shown to be related to group motivation and performance. Some current research is examining the antecedents of collective versus individual efficacy. A particular focus as an antecedent of collective efficacy is the leadership climate within the organization, and some research findings now suggest that leadership climate does influence collective efficacy.

A more specific use of the overall concept of collective efficacy is that of "team efficacy." Collective efficacy can refer to the collective belief systems of teams, departments, or entire organizations, whereas team efficacy refers to beliefs within a defined work team. Furthermore, team efficacy, like collective efficacy, refers to more than just the sum of the self-efficacy beliefs of the team members; rather, it describes a shared belief in the capabilities of the collective operating as a unit. Research on team efficacy suggests that it, like collective efficacy more generally, is positively related to group performance. Again, specific research on the antecedents of team efficacy is under way.

In summary, the concept of self-efficacy has broad applicability to the understanding and facilitation of career development and organizational behavior and

functioning. Self-efficacy and collective efficacy are some of the most interesting and useful concepts in the career development literature.

—Nancy E. Betz

See also Self-esteem, Social cognitive career theory

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SELF-ESTEEM

Self-esteem is of central importance to the psychological health and well-being of individuals in Western cultures. This importance is well documented, as self-esteem has been implicated in a vast array of phenomena, including depression and suicidal ideation, loneliness and peer rejection, academic achievement, and life satisfaction. When scholars and laypeople use the term *self-esteem*, they generally are referring to people's self-esteem level. In recent years, however, it has become clear that self-esteem is a multifaceted construct of which only one component is its level. We describe these various components later in this entry. For now, we focus on self-esteem level, which refers to the extent to which people's global feelings of self-worth, liking, and acceptance typically are

positive (high self-esteem level) or negative (low self-esteem level). We use the term *self-esteem* more generally to refer to global feelings of self-worth, liking, and acceptance.

DISTINGUISHING SELF-ESTEEM LEVEL FROM RELATED CONSTRUCTS

People encounter the term *self-esteem* frequently in everyday conversation, novels, newspaper and magazine articles, television and radio programming, and so forth. Self-help books heartily proclaim to have the secret to improving your self-esteem and that of loved ones. Unfortunately, although everyday usage of a scientific term can buttress laypeople's knowledge of the construct, in the process the scientific term itself often becomes much less precise, sometimes to the point of total ambiguity. This ambiguity can be costly, as two people using the term may be doing so in extremely different ways and therefore draw very different, perhaps opposite, conclusions. Two terms with which self-esteem often is confused are *self-confidence* and *self-evaluations* (self-appraisals).

Self-confidence refers to the expectations that individuals have regarding whether or not they can bring about desired outcomes. For example, individuals high in social self-confidence have positive expectations that most other people will like them or that audiences will be attentive to them when they are giving a presentation. These positive expectations may emanate from positive self-evaluations of their own speaking ability and/or from the belief that most people are friendly and easy to get along with. Conversely, individuals who are low in social self-confidence expect that others will not enjoy conversing or listening to them. Recall that high self-esteem level reflects people's own feelings of self-worth, liking, and acceptance. Whether people like and accept themselves need not relate to their expectations that others will share in those feelings. Although high self-esteem and high self-confidence often go hand-in-hand, it is easy to think of people who possess a great deal of self-confidence (in the social domain, or in other domains, such as achievement or athleticism) yet who do not like or value themselves very much. In fact, high self-confidence with respect to a given activity (such as expecting to get away with cheating) may also produce decreases in one's feelings of self-worth.

Self-evaluations refer to people's judgments or ratings of their standing along specific dimensions that comprise their self-concepts. Frequently, self-evaluations

are made of one's physical attractiveness (one's body or facial characteristics), intelligence (global or more specific components, such as mathematic or writing ability), social skills (how funny one is), and so forth. Given that these appraisals have a "good versus bad" quality to them, some researchers have taken to referring to these self-appraisals as domain-specific self-esteem. We think that this is wrong, because in so doing, people are giving short shrift to both self-evaluations and self-esteem. Each is a meaningful construct, with differing antecedents, structural and functional properties, and consequences. Moreover, the relation between specific self-evaluations and global self-esteem is a matter of some consequence. Over the years, several different viewpoints have emerged.

The first view is that global self-esteem is not separable from specific self-evaluations; instead, it is reducible to the total of an individual's success/aspiration assessments. This view, made famous by William James in 1890, asserts that self-esteem reflects the ratio of one's "successes" to one's "pretensions" or aspirations (i.e., what is important to the person). Stated differently, self-esteem is a summary evaluation that reflects the sum total of these success/aspiration assessments (i.e., "How well am I doing in those domains that are important to me?"). While this summary evaluation will certainly be informative with respect to the person's achievements, it is not the same thing as a person's feelings of self-worth, liking, and acceptance. A second view maintains the distinction between self-evaluations and self-esteem and holds that specific self-evaluations comprise the building blocks of individuals' global self-esteem. An empirically driven approach, this bottom-up perspective says that we can best predict global self-esteem from specific self-evaluations when we weight them by qualities such as importance to the person's self and the certainty with which the person makes the evaluation. Although not without controversy, research generally supports some of the contentions of the bottom-up perspective. However, strong associations between self-evaluations and self-esteem do not mean that they are substitutable for each other, nor does it mean that they each possess the same functional significance. A third view suggests that global self-esteem spreads out and affects domain-specific self-evaluations (a top-down approach) and not vice versa (a bottom-up approach). For example, a top-down approach suggests that if people generally like themselves, they will tend to rate themselves positively across a wide variety of specific domains.

Our view, shared by others in the field, is that both top-down and bottom-up directions of influence can occur, and that which direction of influence is more powerful varies from person to person and dimension to dimension. Regardless of one's stance on the directionality issue, we believe that it is crucial to maintain the distinction between specific self-evaluations and global self-esteem (feelings of self-worth, liking, and acceptance). A couple of examples highlight this distinction. For example, it is easy to think of individuals who dislike and generally are unhappy with themselves, despite being very competent and proficient in a number of aspects of their lives; conversely, other people are very happy and content with themselves despite not being "superstars" at anything. Consequently, we believe that it is confusing and misleading to claim that someone has low self-esteem in some domains (school achievement) but high self-esteem in others (e.g., social acceptance). Rather, we argue that the correct terminology is that people have domain-specific self-evaluations, some of which may be high and some of which may be low.

MEASURING SELF-ESTEEM LEVEL

Self-esteem measures generally consist of a series of potentially self-descriptive statements. The number and content of specific items, as well as what form responses take, vary considerably from measure to measure. Typically, respondents indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each statement or the extent to which each statement is true or characteristic of them. Two of the most widely known and used self-esteem measures are Susan Harter's Self-perception Profile for Children and Morris Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale.

The Self-perception Profile for Children is designed to measure both global levels of self-esteem and specific self-evaluations (i.e., scholastic and athletic competence, social acceptance, physical appearance, and behavioral conduct). Researchers frequently use it in research involving elementary school children in Grades 3 and higher. One of its valuable features is that it allows researchers to examine whether self-evaluations relate to global self-esteem. Research and theory indicate that, in general, self-evaluations of competence, social acceptance, and physical attractiveness relate to global self-esteem.

The Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale is the most commonly used instrument to assess self-esteem levels in

adolescents and adults. Examining its items reveals a considerable strength of the measure as well as a potential weakness (shared by all self-esteem measures). Its strength is that it is very brief, consisting of only 10 items that clearly tap global feelings of self-worth and satisfaction. A potential downside is that the items' obviousness may prompt people to give responses reflective of psychological health even if these responses are not accurate self-descriptions.

THE NATURE OF LOW SELF-ESTEEM

Considerable research and theory suggest that low-self-esteem individuals are generally unhappy and dissatisfied with themselves. However, some researchers have suggested that rather than having an intense dislike for themselves, low-self-esteem individuals are uncertain and confused individuals whose self-feelings are predominantly neutral. Data from numerous studies suggest that low-self-esteem individuals typically give responses on self-esteem inventories that hovered around the midpoint of response scales (which therefore on average seemed to reflect neutral self-feelings). Very few low-self-esteem individuals in these studies consistently endorsed statements reflecting clear dislike or dissatisfaction with themselves.

Moreover, other influential research showed that low-self-esteem individuals possessed self-concepts lacking in internal consistency and temporal stability, which they held with little confidence (i.e., low-self-concept clarity). Still other important work showed that low-self-esteem individuals had pockets of favorable self-judgments, which seemed inconsistent with the idea that believing that one possessed no redeeming qualities is a core characteristic of low self-esteem.

The view that low-self-esteem individuals possess neutral self-feelings seems to contradict longstanding findings linking low self-esteem to depression and suicidal tendencies, especially among children and adolescents. Moreover, it seems inconsistent with clinical observations that portray the therapeutic setting as heavily concerned with issues of poor self-worth and negative self-concepts.

How, then, is the controversy to be resolved? One possibility is that only a small percentage of people in the general population truly have low self-esteem. A second possibility is that pressures to present oneself in a positive light mitigate against individuals giving extremely negative responses on a self-esteem

measure. Stated differently, self-presentational concerns may temper the negativity of low-self-esteem individuals' public responses but not their actual personal feelings of self-worth. Additional research is needed to assess the validity of these explanations.

THE NATURE OF HIGH SELF-ESTEEM

Considerable theory and research on self-esteem reveals that high self-esteem confers many benefits to individuals and that it relates to many positive psychological outcomes. Increasingly, however, it has become clear that high self-esteem also has a dark side, as it sometimes relates to maladaptive outcomes such as heightened aggressive behavior. Therefore, it is extremely important to determine when high self-esteem relates to positive psychological functioning and outcomes and when it does not. One critical factor is the extent to which high self-esteem is fragile or secure. Individuals with fragile high self-esteem appear willing to go to great lengths to preserve, maintain, and enhance their positive, yet vulnerable, feelings of self-worth. Defensiveness and other maladaptive processes characterize these individuals. In contrast, individuals with secure high self-esteem like, value, and accept themselves, "warts and all." They have well-anchored feelings of self-worth and generally display healthy psychological and interpersonal functioning.

Recent theory and evidence suggest several ways to distinguish between secure and fragile high self-esteem that employ theoretical distinctions between various kinds of self-esteem. Importantly, existing research indicates that these constructs behave in parallel fashion across studies, suggesting that they are tapping a broader construct reflecting fragile versus secure self-esteem.

STABLE VERSUS UNSTABLE SELF-ESTEEM

One way to distinguish between secure and fragile high self-esteem involves the extent to which a person's current feelings of self-worth fluctuate across time and situations. These short-term fluctuations in one's immediate, contextually based feelings of self-worth reflect the degree to which one's self-esteem is unstable; the greater the magnitude of fluctuations, the more unstable one's self-esteem. Stability of self-esteem is conceptualized as distinct from self-esteem level, which reflects the positivity of one's typical or general feelings of self-worth.

Unstable self-esteem reflects fragile and vulnerable feelings of self-worth that are subject to the vicissitudes of internally generated and externally provided positive and negative experiences. Moreover, people with unstable self-esteem are highly ego-involved in their everyday activities, that is, they experience their self-esteem as continually "being on the line." Researchers have examined a number of implications of this characterization. For example:

1. Daily negative events have a greater adverse impact on individuals with unstable as opposed to stable self-esteem. Individuals with unstable self-esteem have especially adverse reactions to daily hassles, as reflected in the greatest increases in depressive symptoms.
2. Everyday positive and negative events have a greater immediate impact on the self-feelings of people with unstable rather than stable self-esteem.
3. People with unstable self-esteem have a weaker sense of self than do people with stable self-esteem. Researchers found that the more individuals' self-esteem was unstable, the more they regulated their goal strivings in terms of external pressures and guilt avoidance and the less in terms of personal importance and interest, the less confident they were in their self-knowledge.

Importantly, a growing body of research supports the usefulness of distinguishing among high-self-esteem individuals based on how much their immediate feelings of self-worth fluctuate. That is, people with unstable high self-esteem are more defensive and self-aggrandizing than are their stable high-self-esteem counterparts. For example, unstable as compared to stable high-self-esteem individuals are more prone to anger and hostility and increased depression in the face of daily hassles, and they report increased tendencies to "get even" in response to hypothetical partner transgressions. Moreover, the more high-self-esteem individuals' feelings of self-worth are unstable, the lower their psychological health and well-being. These and other findings indicate that whereas unstable high self-esteem can be characterized as fragile, stable high self-esteem can be characterized as secure.

CONTINGENT VERSUS TRUE SELF-ESTEEM

A second way to distinguish between fragile and secure high self-esteem is to determine the extent to

which individuals' feelings of self-worth are dependent upon the attainment of specific outcomes or the matching of interpersonal or intrapsychic standards of excellence. Individuals with contingent high self-esteem are preoccupied with their standings on specific evaluative dimensions (e.g., "How smart am I?"), how they are viewed by others ("Do people think I am attractive?"), and they continually engage in setting and meeting evaluative standards to validate themselves. High self-esteem that is contingent is fragile, because it remains high only as long as one is successful at satisfying relevant criteria. Moreover, the strong need for continual validation drives the person to seek more and more successes. Should these successes cease, the person's self-esteem likely will plummet. In contrast, true high self-esteem reflects well-anchored and secure feelings of self-worth that neither depend on the attainment of specific outcomes nor require continual validation. Theorists speculate that true high self-esteem develops when one's actions are self-determined and congruent with one's inner core self rather than a reflection of externally imposed or internally based demands. Activities are chosen and goals are undertaken because they are of interest and importance and feelings of self-worth arise naturally out of these activities. In contingent self-esteem, pursuing self-esteem is the individual's "prime directive." In true self-esteem, feelings of self-worth are the by-product of pursuing one's interests and developing one's skills in a self-determined manner.

Researchers have developed several measures of contingent self-esteem that promise to be useful in fleshing out its relation to various aspects of psychological functioning and well-being. For example, people with highly contingent self-esteem (similar to individuals with unstable high self-esteem) react especially strongly to potentially threatening events. Moreover, researchers have provided evidence that individual differences exist in the specific contingencies on which people base their high self-esteem. Whereas some people base their self-esteem primarily on outcomes related to competence and performance, other people base their self-esteem on outcomes related to their physical attractiveness or social acceptance. Researchers have shown that the particular domains on which self-esteem is based influence people's behavioral choices, goal strivings, and emotional reactions. For example, among medical school applicants, the daily self-esteem of individuals whose self-esteem was contingent on academic competence

was especially likely to rise with news of acceptance and decline with news of rejection.

IMPLICIT SELF-ESTEEM

Another way to distinguish secure from fragile high self-esteem involves a consideration of both explicit and implicit feelings of self-worth. Researchers generally characterize implicit self-esteem as relatively automatic emotional or evaluative associations with the self that involve little or no effort or conscious guidance. A similar definition is that implicit self-esteem involves self-evaluations that occur unintentionally and outside of awareness. Explicit self-esteem involves deliberate, consciously held self-evaluations that are measured by self-reports.

Several different procedures have been used to examine implicit self-esteem and its implications for psychological functioning. One procedure, called the Implicit Association Test (IAT), involves the use of reaction time methods to assess the strength of associative links between self-defining or non-self-defining terms and various positive and negative stimuli. A second procedure, the "name letter task," involves comparing people's ratings of letters in their names with ratings of letters not in their names.

A number of recent studies have focused on discrepancies between implicit and explicit self-esteem and defensiveness or self-promotion. Findings from this research warrant several conclusions. First, both the IAT and the name letter effect appear to be reliable and valid measures of implicit self-esteem. Second, discrepant explicit/implicit self-esteem appears to reflect fragile high self-esteem. Using the name letter effect measure, a team of researchers reported that heightened compensatory self-enhancement (i.e., unrealistic optimism, claiming that a highly flattering personality profile is self-descriptive) was observed among individuals with high explicit/low implicit self-esteem. Using the IAT, a different research team found that individuals with high explicit/low implicit self-esteem scored highest on a measure of narcissism and were especially defensive (exhibited high in-group bias and dissonance reduction), compared to individuals with high explicit/high implicit self-esteem. Thus, a growing body of research suggests that whereas high explicit self-esteem coupled with low implicit self-esteem is fragile, high explicit self-esteem coupled with high implicit self-esteem is secure.

SUMMARY

The foregoing review reinforces the view that self-esteem has multiple components and that to understand fully its place in psychological functioning we must understand these components. Although they differ in their specifics, all are based on the conviction that there is more to self-esteem than whether it is high or low. Importantly, existing research supports the contention that each component reflects an aspect of self-esteem fragility and/or vulnerability. Moreover, researchers increasingly are finding interrelations among these various constructs. For example, measures of unstable and contingent self-esteem are significantly correlated. In short, evidence attesting to the interrelations among these various "fragility" components is quickly accruing, much of it within the past few years. We hope that future researchers will ride this wave of activity and push toward the direction of a complete understanding of complex self-esteem processes.

—Michael H. Kernis, Whitney Heppner, and Chad Lakey

See also Personality and careers, Self-awareness, Self-concept, Self-efficacy

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SELF-LEADERSHIP

One of the primary aims of *self-leadership* is to achieve higher performance and effectiveness through behavioral and cognitive strategies that individuals use to influence themselves. It is a comprehensive view of self-influence that considers behavior to be a result of factors both internal and external to the individual.

Considered to be an advanced form of the self-influence process, self-leadership reflects three important premises. First, leadership is considered as an ongoing dynamic. Second, what an individual thinks and does is not without consequences. Third, all individuals have the ability to, and do, exercise leadership, at least over themselves, although they may not be skillful in their self-leadership practices at a given point in time.

Self-leadership theory is grounded on two main areas of psychology. First, social cognitive theory explains human behavior in terms of the reciprocal interactions between the individual and the environment, as well as human abilities to learn through social action, to perceive effectiveness, and manage and control oneself. Second, intrinsic motivation theory maintains that motivation is particularly potent when individuals engage in activities that they enjoy and/or consider meaningful.

More precisely, the concept of self-leadership builds on the notion of self-management, which is the ability of individuals to manage their own behaviors, and on the recognition of values and beliefs in work situations as sources of natural motivation. While self-management is primarily concerned with control, self-leadership is also interested in values. Furthermore, while self-management is concerned with the question of how to achieve a goal or standard, self-leadership is also interested in what the goals and standards should be and why they are worthy of pursuing.

Control systems include both organizational-control and self-control systems, where the first originate from organizational values and culture and where the latter originate from individual values and beliefs. Individuals largely govern their own values (which they objectify through standards), and individual values significantly guide behavior. Therefore, people tend to be moved to modify or create the situations where they are involved, by acting to reduce the level of perceived discrepancy between their own values and those of the organization.

In other words, the management of the interface between the two levels of control systems (organization and self) is largely determined by individuals. This is because, even though individuals may not have control of organizational values, they are the ones who largely decide their own values, which in turn influence their own behavior and determine how they may have an impact on the environment. Therefore, individual action is not completely submissive to the

organization. Indeed, when individuals decide upon their own values, they are influencing their own behavior, that is, they are exercising self-leadership.

Furthermore, individuals who manage their own behaviors have less need for formal leaders in the traditional sense because they are exercising leadership themselves. Self-leadership may constitute a substitute for leadership because self-leadership strategies such as self-planning, self-direction, self-monitoring, and self-control may replace otherwise needed supervision. This implies that self-leadership is closely related to empowerment in organizations, the sharing of power between the leader and the follower, and organizational structures that allow power sharing.

This close relationship among organizational forms, power, and leadership has been widely discussed. It is suggested that the flattening of traditional organizational structures leads, inevitably, to empowerment strategies and distributed decision-making processes, giving way to more organic types of organizations. Such organizational practices characterize new, nontraditional leadership approaches where the relationship between leadership and power gains a renewed impetus.

The exercise of self-leadership involves both behavioral and mental activity that enhance the effectiveness of the mind and body through the interplay of four main types of strategies, each targeted at different areas: world-altering and self-imposed strategies, natural rewards strategies, redesign of one's mental world, and team self-leadership.

Self-leadership scholars are also concerned with work ethics simply because their interest in the relation between behavior and values recognizes that value systems of organizations and employees may differ. The concern is that despite the potential hopefulness implied by complete optimal self-leadership in a given high-performing work system, one should be aware that it may not always be feasible to achieve high levels of self-leadership. Thus, more than being interested in efficiency and performance at work, self-leadership is also concerned with the moral and ethical aspects of how that may be attained.

Commentary on self-leadership would not be complete without addressing the view that the "self" consists of all conscious and unconscious states of a person. This notion introduces the (un)consciousness dimension of the self into the leadership debate. As such, the concept of self-leadership might be described more precisely as the noticeable and unnoticeable

processes of influencing oneself. One may ask, If these processes occur in unconscious ways, how can individuals be fully aware of the consequences of their own thoughts and actions? Moreover, to what extent can researchers themselves be fully aware, explain, and understand actual leadership phenomena? While it is beyond the scope of this discussion to elaborate on these questions, they are offered here for consideration and reflection by leadership scholars.

Given that the notion of self refers to conscious and unconscious aspects of the mind and body, self-leadership views that account only for the conscious aspects of the leadership process leave out issues that may be essential for its full understanding. Addressing unconscious aspects of self-leadership might help explain, for instance, why optimal self-leadership may not be possible for every employee and why there are limitations in measuring self-leadership.

In conclusion, based on distinct philosophical assumptions that guide self-leadership theory, this research stream constitutes a valuable framework for understanding personal and social development, and in particular with regard to career development. First, it recognizes that personal values may have an important role in shaping thoughts and actions, including those related to professional careers. Second, it provides specific strategies and techniques that may help individuals to select career paths that fit their personal values and lead to natural motivation in work. Third, it signals that achieving complete convergence of organizational and individual values as well as power sharing may be difficult, if not impossible, organizational objectives. Last, self-leadership provides a distinctive lens for debating and reflecting on leadership ethics.

—José C. Alves and Charles C. Manz

See also Leadership development, Social cognitive career theory, Values

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SELF-MONITORING

Self-monitoring refers to the extent to which one attends to social cues and attempts to adapt behavior to control the image one presents to others. First introduced by Mark Snyder in 1974, this construct identifies individual differences in how people react to their social environments. Snyder believed that people differ in the extent to which they rely on their environments to guide their behaviors versus relying to a greater degree on their inner beliefs or states. Self-monitoring is typically assessed through the use of a 25-, 18-, or 13-item true-false, self-administered questionnaire consisting of such items as "I would probably make a good actor/actress," "I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them," and "In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons." Several subscales of the self-monitoring scale have been identified, such as Acting, Extraversion, and Other-Directedness, although the majority of studies consider the scale as a whole.

Individuals high in self-monitoring are considered to be "social chameleons," better able to understand their social environment, more flexible and skillful in their use of expressive behaviors, and acting more in anticipation of the outcomes of their own behavior than individuals low in self-monitoring. Low self-monitors, on the other hand, tend to show greater behavioral stability across social situations, displaying behaviors that they believe are consistent with the images and beliefs they hold about themselves, and focusing less on the consequences that might be associated with the display of those behaviors.

It is possible for individuals to attempt to manage the impressions they make on others at all levels of career development. For instance, prospective employees may attempt to market themselves to interviewers, interviewers may attempt to impress interviewees in

order to draw the best candidates, workers may attempt to impress their bosses and sell products to their clients, and so on. Typically, job selection involves matching one's own skills and abilities to the jobs available; therefore, it is not surprising that researchers have found significant correlations between self-monitoring and job search preparation. Specifically, studies indicate that high self-monitors engage in greater analysis of their own interests and abilities and conduct more research on the companies with whom they wish to work than low self-monitors. In relation to job choice, low self-monitors indicate a preference for jobs that are compatible with their personalities, while high self-monitors show a preference for jobs involving well-defined roles and responsibilities. This information should be of interest to recruiters; the more clearly they can specify the attributes necessary for a job, the better high self-monitors can determine their abilities to meet the requirements and low self-monitors can determine the extent to which their personalities are consistent with the job requirements.

Once job seekers have identified careers of interest, they must engage in interviews. These interviews provide ample opportunity for job seekers to manipulate images of themselves. Although limited, research indicates that high self-monitors may be more likely to tailor the images they present in interview situations, expressing greater positive emotions and hiding negative emotions. These differential emotional presentations have been linked to higher ratings of competence by mock interviewers. Although low self-monitors may also manipulate their self-presentations, some research indicates that when low self-monitors attempt to create false images for interviewers, they feel greater amounts of stress and lower self-esteem than high self-monitors, who actually feel more successful following their self-presentations.

Interviewers can also differ in their level of self-monitoring, and research indicates that these differences are related to the types of information about candidates they deem important, as well as hiring decisions. Generally speaking, high self-monitors seem more willing than low self-monitors to form stereotypes and use them in rating interviewees' appropriateness for jobs. For instance, high self-monitors are more likely to select an applicant for a job whose appearance fits the image expected for the position, whereas low self-monitors are more likely to select an applicant whose personality and qualifications seem appropriate for the job.

Most occupations involve a great deal of interpersonal interaction on a daily basis; therefore, it is not surprising that self-monitoring is linked to differences in job performance and promotion. Low self-monitors attend to more internal cues while working, while high self-monitors attend to external cues, including the expectations of coworkers and bosses. High self-monitors exhibit stronger communication abilities and perceived persuasive ability. Job level has also been shown to be associated with self-monitoring, particularly when the job involves interacting with different types of people. For instance, individuals high in self-monitoring have shown greater success in boundary-spanning positions (jobs requiring employees to serve as go-betweens, filtering information between parties) as compared to individuals low in self-monitoring, even independent of job experience. Low self-monitors, however, may perform better in relatively homogenous groups, in occupations with lesser amounts of interpersonal contact, and in jobs requiring a great deal of self-motivation and direction. Finally, there are some findings of significant correlations between leadership and self-monitoring such that individuals with higher self-monitoring scores are perceived as more effective leaders, although these findings have primarily been for female rather than male managers. It has been suggested that in many fields, leadership behaviors are perceived as primarily masculine; therefore, females high in self-monitoring may benefit the most from their abilities to adapt to specific occupation expectations.

As with the interviewing processes, those making the ratings of job success may also be influenced by their own levels of self-monitoring. Some studies indicated that high self-monitors are more lenient and inaccurate in their ratings of coworkers, and seek to manipulate information to justify their ratings more than low self-monitors, especially in situations in which there are obvious consequences contingent on the ratings.

The final stage of career development that has been studied for its relationship to self-monitoring is organizational commitment and retention. High self-monitoring has been linked to lower levels of interpersonal commitment, less stable social bonds, and less organizational commitment and retention.

In addition, although high self-monitoring is related to greater occupational success for some types of jobs, this success may come with a price. High self-monitoring is associated with greater occupational stress and more

stress-related illnesses such as high blood pressure. The constant monitoring of their behaviors and situational cues may cause high self-monitors to experience more physical and psychological distress than their low self-monitoring counterparts.

Any situation involving the opportunity for people to strategically present themselves may be impacted by the interactants' levels of self-monitoring. A weakness of the research regarding self-monitoring and career development overall, but most particularly in regard to job interviews, is its overreliance on college students as both the source and the target of evaluation in many of these studies; however, increasing numbers of field studies are examining the relationship of self-monitoring to workplace issues, increasing the external validity of these findings.

—Sara Pollak Levine

See also Impression management, Self-awareness, Self-leadership

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SEX DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination refers to a person's behavior toward another based on the other's social characteristics, such as age, sex, ethnicity, or national origin. Thus, *sex discrimination* is differential treatment of women and men. Inappropriate discrimination (for example, excluding workers from certain jobs or offering them lower wages based on their sex) is a topic of importance to the study of careers.

Discrimination is usually distinguished from prejudice, which may be defined as a negative attitude

toward a social group and members of that group, usually based on a faulty and inflexible generalization or stereotype. Discrimination against women (or men) does not necessarily involve prejudice toward women (or men). While being prejudiced is not illegal, discriminating in favor of one sex and against the other sex may be illegal under certain circumstances in a number of countries.

Thus, the study of sex discrimination is typically concerned with negative and potentially illegal behavior that may or may not be based on prejudice and has the effect of disadvantaging and sometimes denying certain rights because of a person's sex. Furthermore, while individuals may discriminate against one sex by treating them differently from the other sex, institutions may also discriminate based on sex through their policies and procedures. For example, decades ago many airlines had a no-marriage policy for female flight attendants, and they would terminate them if they married or when they turned a specific age, typically about 35. Policies may also appear sex neutral on their face but differentially affect the sexes. For example, the practice of laying off employees with the least seniority will usually result in higher layoff rates among women than men, as more women than men may have interrupted their work history to have and raise children or tailor their career to the needs of their spouse's career. Requiring managers to spend a certain number of years working in different locations, including different countries, in order to advance to senior management positions is also likely to have the effect of discriminating against women. Whether such practices may be considered illegal depends on whether or not they are based on a business necessity, a condition that itself may be open to debate.

In the United States, there are two different kinds of illegal sex discrimination: disparate treatment and disparate impact. Requiring female but not male flight attendants to quit their job when they marry is an example of disparate treatment. Policies that result in lower pay for jobs held predominantly by women that are of comparable worth to those held predominantly by men is an example of disparate impact. Finally, sexual harassment is treated as a type of sex discrimination under the law in the United States, based on the notion that except in the rare instance of so-called equal opportunity harassers, harassment is based on the target's sex, whether the harasser is engaging in heterosexual or homosexual sexual harassment.

WHY DOES SEX DISCRIMINATION EXIST?

Some economists and other social scientists argue that sex discrimination cannot exist because the discriminatory employer (i.e., one who has a "taste" for discrimination) would have to forgo qualified women and pay higher wages to hire all men, thereby raising labor costs. Higher labor costs would make that employer noncompetitive and should be driven out of business. There are many problems with this argument. For example, if all employers have the same taste for discrimination, then they are all equally competitive. In addition, what constitutes a job qualification is a messy process. Furthermore, if most CEOs and all U.S. presidents are men, it may appear that men are more qualified by virtue of being male. Customers, coworkers, managers, and executives may treat women differently, and/or they may devalue the work done by women. If people believe that our society is more or less a meritocracy, they may wonder why would there not be more women in those jobs if there were as many qualified women as qualified men. In addition, women's occupational status may go unacknowledged. How many women managers or female faculty have been mistaken for secretaries or administrative assistants? How many male nurses have been mistaken for doctors? Virtually all societies exhibit some task specialization by sex, complicating the issue of sex discrimination.

Social scientists have used several concepts to explain sex discrimination, including sex-role spillover, stereotyping of people and jobs, tokenism, a lack of fit, and homophilous social networks, described below.

Sex-role spillover is an outgrowth of role theory. When the expectations associated with being male or female trump the expectations associated with a particular job (or work role), sex-role spillover occurs. Thus it is the carryover to the workplace of gender-based roles that are usually inappropriate or irrelevant to work, and it occurs when, for example, female managers or professors are expected to be more caring and nurturing than male managers or professors. Sex-role spillover also occurs when men are expected to conform to a stereotype—to assume the leadership role in a mixed-sex group or pay the bill at a business lunch with a female colleague. Sex-role spillover occurs because gender is a more basic social category than any particular job that men or women hold. It is rare to forget a person's gender, less rare to forget that person's occupation. In the past, job titles were themselves gendered (e.g., steward vs. stewardess, actor vs. actress,

waiter vs. waitress). Because gender is such a visible characteristic and sex roles are strongly reinforced, both sexes may feel more comfortable behaving in accordance with sex roles than in violating them.

Stereotyping is another process that helps to explain sex discrimination. Gender stereotypes consist of a set of beliefs about the characteristics that men and women are likely to possess. Both people and jobs are subject to stereotypes. Research has shown, for example, that the stereotype of manager is more similar to the stereotype of men than it is to the stereotype of women. Furthermore, some traits viewed as positive in men (e.g., competitiveness) may be viewed less positively in women; thus the claims that “he is assertive; she is a bitch.” Similarly, characteristics valued in women such as sensitivity may be viewed negatively and considered a weakness in a man. Thus when a job calls for nurturing behavior, some may turn to women workers, and when firmness is needed, a woman may be passed over in favor of a man who is assumed—based on stereotype—to possess more of it than a female colleague.

Tokenism occurs when someone with a visible social characteristic is relatively rare in a work group or organization. The lone female executive or male secretary is an example. Token status increases stereotyping because being different from others in the work group makes it easier to stereotype. In addition, because the token is visibly different from others in the same job or work group, tokenism creates performance pressures. When the solo woman makes a mistake, it is visible and may reflect on all women, whereas if one man among many men makes mistakes, it will be viewed as his problem, not a shortcoming of all men. Token status also leads to polarization, or an exaggeration of differences between men and women.

The concept of lack of fit helps to identify the conditions under which gender discrimination might flourish. A woman will be viewed as being a poor fit in a job held mostly by men, and a man will be viewed as being a poor fit in a job held mostly by women. Lack of fit is more likely in jobs that are numerically dominated by one sex or the other, require activities (like being outdoors) that are associated more with one sex than the other, and/or attributes viewed as critical for success are more strongly associated with one sex than the other. Where ambition and firmness are required, men will be viewed as a better fit than women; women will be viewed as a better fit in jobs requiring warmth, nurturing, or dealing with annoyed

customers. A lack of fit may help account for the fact that women, particularly those in nontraditional jobs, sometimes have a more difficult time than men in finding a mentor.

Social networks consist of the people with whom one interacts in any given domain, such as work. Social networks are characterized by gender homophily, that is, people tend to interact with others of the same sex. One explanation for the underrepresentation of women in top management positions is that they do not hold key positions in occupationally related social networks. An individual’s worth in relation to a specific network is referred to as his or her “social capital” for that network. Individuals holding key positions in important networks have high social worth or social capital. If women are not valued as much as men, they have less social capital, leading to possible exclusion from the important networks that would help to propel them into upper level management positions.

EVIDENCE FOR SEX DISCRIMINATION

The evidence shows considerable disparities between men and women: in pay, in promotion rate, in level in the organizational hierarchy. The basic question is, To what extent are these differences caused by sex discrimination? Although there is considerable research bearing on this issue, particularly with respect to pay, the results are apparently not compelling enough for many people to rule out possible competing explanations.

According to U.S. Census data, in 1999 the median earnings of the 83 million full-time, year-round (FTYR) workers in the United States was \$33,000; the mean was \$43,000. About 10 percent of earners made more than \$75,000 a year. For full-time workers in 2002, the average woman earned 77 percent of the wage of the average man, an increase in 5 percentage points since 1999. This reduction is partly due to the decline in the number of relatively high-paying skilled and semiskilled blue-collar jobs held mostly by men. Among the highest paying occupations, the gender gap is bigger. For example, among physicians and surgeons, full-time, year-round women make 63 percent of the wages of comparable men. This “cost of being female” persists no matter how one defines earnings or income, in all race and ethnic groups, across educational levels, over the life cycle, within detailed occupational categories, across cultures, and in the past as well as in the present.

Researchers have attempted to account for these pay disparities, primarily using a statistical technique known as regression analysis. Typically, they attempt to include all factors that might legitimately explain the fact that the average man has a higher income than the average woman. Invariably, after these “legitimate” variables (e.g., education level, hours worked, experience) are taken into account, some wage disparity remains. Whether that amount can rightfully be attributed to discrimination, or whether some legitimate but unmeasured factors can account for the difference, is debated, with some researchers convinced that discrimination is the explanation while others hold out for some other unmeasured factors. Others may provide explanations like gender differences in negotiating behavior or level of expectations, where research typically shows that women have lower pay expectations than men. Of course, gender differences in pay expectations may simply reflect reality (since women’s pay is on average lower than men’s in the same job) or an underlying gender difference that disadvantages women, or both. Similarly, researchers have tried to account for other gender differences such as in performance ratings. One study found that, controlling other variables, women received relatively lower performance ratings than men when the proportion of women in a work group was small.

ALLEVIATING SEX DISCRIMINATION

One area of research focuses on the success or failure of attempts to alleviate discrimination faced by working women, including the impacts of laws and other programs aimed at providing equal opportunity, addressing affirmative action, establishing the comparable worth of jobs, and eliminating sexual harassment. Researchers have identified more than 100 different mechanisms that might assist organizations in reaching these goals. These activities can be divided into two types: identity-blind activities (such as formal mentoring programs, flexible work schedules, and employee assistance programs) or identity-conscious activities that consider one’s sex or race. These include targeting women (or other underrepresented groups) in hiring and promotion considerations, targeting women for management training, establishing a women’s interest group in the workplace, and the like. In general, the identity-blind practices and policies are more common and preferred by most people. It is the identity-conscious practices,

however, that are effective in that only they result in high levels of employment status for minority and majority women and minority men. Thus, working environments that target activities for women result in better outcomes for women. Some research shows, however, that if others believe women and minorities were hired or promoted only because of their sex or race, preferential treatment can lead others to believe those women and minorities were not qualified.

Laws are not the only approach to alleviating problems of sex discrimination. Mere information can counter stereotypes and reduce sex-role spillover. Thus providing relevant information, such as information about a worker’s qualifications or performance, can constitute a deterrent against sex discrimination. More generally, the type of solution sought depends on the way the problem is defined. Four models of problem definition and some problem-solving strategies that follow from them can be identified. They are (1) the individual-deficit model wherein the problem is defined as problem people, (2) the structural model wherein organizational structures and policies hamper women, (3) the sex-role model wherein social roles and role expectations and role stereotypes hamper women, and (4) the intergroup model wherein men and women are viewed as opposing groups fighting over a limited amount of desirable jobs, power, and influence. Perhaps because they are the cheapest and easiest to implement, most proposed solutions fit the individual-deficit model. These solutions also fit people’s beliefs in strong and pervasive gender differences. Women and men are assumed to prefer different job attributes (with men preferring power and recognition and women preferring good coworkers and an opportunity to help others). A meta-analysis of this literature found only limited support for this view. Furthermore, that research showed that women’s aspirations were more similar to men’s as gender barriers to opportunity declined in the 1980s and 1990s. Yet, most “solutions” to gender inequality aim to correct women’s “deficits” through training and self-help materials targeted at them. Examples include assertiveness training and how to write a business plan or obtain venture capital. Increasingly, men too are targets of training aimed at sensitizing them to issues like sexual harassment and sex discrimination.

Overall, the topic of sex discrimination has attracted substantial research attention over the past 25 years or so. While the field is not bereft of theory, much of the research continues to be descriptive, an

approach well suited to a topic that is fraught with misperceptions and misinformation.

—Barbara A. Gutek

See also Racial discrimination, Sexual harassment, Stereotyping of workers, Tokenism

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is behavior of a sexual nature that harms those exposed to it. The behavior may be intentional or unintentional, aimed at an individual or group, initiated by an individual or group, initiated by employees or outside parties such as customers, initiated by men or women, and targeted at men or women. Many countries have laws designating certain

forms of sexual behavior at work as illegal sexual harassment. Although both men and women can be targets of sexual harassment, women are overwhelmingly more likely than men to be targeted. Estimates of the sexual harassment targeted at women range from 40 percent to 85 percent, whereas estimates for men are around 15 percent. It is important to note, however, that while most harassers are men, most men are not harassers. Individuals who experience sexual harassment often suffer negative emotional consequences (such as fear) and psychological consequences (such as depression).

Sexual harassment often has a substantial impact on career development. The career development of targets of harassment can be affected in a variety of ways. For example, targets of harassment may become less dedicated to their job, be denied promotions or wage increases, leave an organization voluntarily to escape the behavior, or even be fired from an organization for failure to comply with sexual advances or for reporting such advances. The career development of sexual harassers may also be affected negatively. For example, harassers working in organizations with a low tolerance for sexual harassment are likely to be disciplined, up to and including termination. Furthermore, in organizations that do not have adequate investigative procedures for dealing with complaints of sexual harassment, individuals accused but not guilty of sexual harassment may suffer negative career consequences.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT FROM THE LEGAL PERSPECTIVE

Two Types of Sexual Harassment

Discrimination in employment on the basis of gender is prohibited under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (as amended). Since sexual harassment is based on gender, it is prohibited under Title VII. In accordance with U.S. law, there are two types of sexual harassment: quid pro quo and hostile environment. When sexual conduct is made a condition of employment or used as the basis for employment decisions, it is classified as quid pro quo ("this for that" in Latin). An example of quid pro quo harassment would be a supervisor firing an employee for refusing sexual advances. Another example would be a supervisor increasing the pay of an employee only if unwelcome sexual advances were accepted. The effect of sexual

harassment on career development is obvious in such cases of quid pro quo harassment.

Hostile environment sexual harassment is the second form of illegal sexual behavior in the workplace. Such behavior has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. An example of hostile environment sexual harassment would be one coworker repeatedly telling sexually graphic stories to another who did not want to hear them. Another example would be an employee repeatedly sending pornographic e-mail (e.g., pictures, jokes, or discussion) to other employees who did not want to see it. Most sexual harassment is hostile environment harassment between coworkers. This makes sense in terms of organizational structures: There are many more nonsupervisory employees than there are supervisory employees. Thus quid pro quo situations are less likely to occur.

UNWELCOME BEHAVIOR

In order for sexual behavior in the workplace to be considered sexual harassment from a legal perspective, it must be unwelcome. Therefore, not all behavior of a sexual nature at work is illegal. For example, many organizations allow employees to engage in consensual workplace romances. One potential problem with these romances is that if the romance ends, one of the parties may continue to make sexual advances, which, although previously welcome, are now unwelcome by the other party. In general, the courts have been reluctant to label targets of harassment as welcoming the behavior. When employees complain about the behavior, stating that it is unwanted, the behavior is considered unwelcome unless there is extensive evidence proving otherwise. Therefore, determining if the sexual behavior meets other criteria is essential in determining if it is illegal.

SEVERE OR PERVASIVE BEHAVIOR

In addition to being unwelcome, sexual behavior must be severe or pervasive to be considered sexual harassment. In other words, asking coworkers to go on a first date when they are not interested, telling one a sexually explicit joke, or making a few comments on a coworker's sexuality are not likely to be considered severe or pervasive by the courts. However, sexual behavior does not have to result in a nervous breakdown to be considered harassment either.

The experience of Kimberly Ellerth at Burlington Industries, however, demonstrates behavior that is severe and pervasive, thus constituting hostile environment sexual harassment. Ms. Ellerth was subjected to several comments of a sexual nature by her supervisor. For example, he made remarks about her breasts, told her to "loosen up" because he "could make life very hard or very easy" for her, and said that he didn't have time to talk to her over the phone about a business issue unless she told him what she was wearing. Finally, while rubbing her knee during a promotion interview, he told her that she was not "loose enough." Hostile environment harassment often results in harassed employees leaving the organization in which the harassment occurred. This can be problematic in terms of career development because it may appear that the employee lacks stability, and thus is not a viable candidate.

EMPLOYER LIABILITY

An employer is liable for sexual harassment when it "knew or should have known" about the behavior and did not take appropriate action to remedy the situation. It is relatively easy to determine if an employer knew of a behavior. For example, a waitress at one restaurant told her manager that she did not want to wait on a particular table because the customers were sexually crude with her. He told her to wait on them anyway; when she did, they sexually assaulted her. In this situation, the manager clearly knew about the behavior yet did nothing to change it. In fact, it was allowed to escalate. It is more difficult to determine if an employer "should have known" about sexual harassment. In cases where organizations have not made clear the process for employees to report sexual harassment, they will be less likely to report it. Since such organizations do not receive complaints of harassment, they may claim that harassment does not occur there. However, if there were an effective reporting process, targets would be more likely to report their experiences; thus the organization would know about them. For example, several employees had reported sexual harassment to a manager in the organization, but this manager did not believe it was his duty to either make others in the organization aware of it or address it himself. Essentially, the "should have known" phrase means that employers can still be liable for sexual harassment even when they are ignorant of the harassment.

CAUSES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Microlevel Explanations

There is very little research on the topic of initiators of sexual harassment. What little research there is, however, indicates that certain types of people are likely to engage in sexual harassment in certain types of situations. For example, men who have a higher likelihood to sexually harass tend to believe in rape myths and hold traditional gender stereotypes. However, despite an inclination to harass, these men typically refrain from doing so when their behavior results in negative repercussions for them such as a written warning or potential for termination. It also appears that sexual harassers can be classified into different categories. For example, some harassers cast a wide net and harass multiple targets on multiple occasions. At the other extreme are harassers who are genuinely interested in pursuing a consensual relationship but do not have the social skills to do so. It should be noted, however, that it is not the harasser's intention that counts but rather the effect of the behavior on the target or others in the workplace.

Research indicates that sexual harassment is more frequent in occupations in which one gender is in the majority. Examples of predominately male occupations include firefighters, police officers, and blue-collar workers. White-collar professions such as law and investment banking are also male dominated. One explanation for the high levels of sexual harassment in these occupations is that since there are so few women in the occupation, gender becomes a defining characteristic of the workforce. Expectations of women outside the workplace are then carried into the workplace. An example would be that to the extent that women are considered sex objects or passive outside of work, they will be considered as such on the job as well. Thus sexual behavior that might be acceptable in a nightclub or fraternity house is seen as acceptable on the job. Another theory is that sexual harassment in predominately male occupations is a method for maintaining a masculine social identity. Sexual harassment is used to communicate that women are not welcome in the profession, that is, as a method for protecting turf. Sexual harassment can also be used to get women to quit their jobs or to keep them from entering the occupation in the first place.

Recent theorizing on sexual harassment conceptualizes it as a specific form of workplace aggression. Sexual harassment occurs "because of sex"; thus it does

not have to be sexually motivated. For example, incidents like those described previously do not occur out of sexual interest but rather as a means of intimidation and often with the explicit intention to harm. Workplaces characterized by sexual harassment often exhibit other forms of aggression such as threats and verbal abuse.

Macrolevel Explanations

One theory regarding sexual harassment is that the power and status differences between men and women in society are carried over into the organizational setting. Accordingly, sexual harassment can be used to maintain the status quo in society. To the extent that sexual harassment hinders the career development of women, women will have less power and status and therefore will be less likely to improve their lot in society.

As stated earlier, employees who are inclined to engage in sexual harassment are more likely to do so in situations allowing them to avoid negative repercussions. Research indicates that cultural aspects influence the occurrence of sexual harassment. For example, if a norm of the organization is for employees to boast about their sexual exploits over the past weekend, employees who are new to the organization are likely to conform to this practice. Similarly, the behavior of top management sets the tone for behavior of other organizational members. Therefore, if top management uses sexual slurs, other employees receive the message that such behavior is accepted, if not encouraged, by the organization.

Structural aspects of organizations, such as hierarchical reporting relationships, have been proposed to contribute to sexual harassment. This theory is plausible because men are more likely than women are to be at higher levels within organizations and to be sexual harassers. Quid pro quo harassment is made possible through organizational hierarchy because it establishes a system in which higher-level employees are responsible for making employment-related decisions regarding lower level employees reporting to them. This structure often offers no system of checks and balances.

RESPONSES TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Organizational Responses

Structural aspects of organizations can be modified to minimize sexual harassment. An essential element

is to have a strong communication program regarding the issue. Many employees are confused by the concept of sexual harassment. Some believe that merely telling coworkers that “they look nice today” is harassing, while at the other extreme some believe that sexually explicit language is fine as long as there is no physical touching involved. Indeed, a reading of the case law on sexual harassment indicates the complexity of this topic. For example, it is not completely clear at what point sexual behavior at work becomes “severe or pervasive.” Given the intricacies of sexual harassment, employees should receive training on the types of words and behaviors prohibited in the organization. However, they must also be made aware that there is no exhaustive list of behaviors to avoid.

Organizations trying to create structures that minimize sexual harassment should also establish proper processes for reporting claims of sexual harassment and ensure that all employees understand these reporting mechanisms. It is essential that employees be provided with a variety of reporting channels, because they may not feel comfortable speaking about the harassment to a particular individual. Employees reporting harassment should always be allowed to report to someone other than their supervisor, because the supervisor could be the source of harassment. Finally, it is essential from both a legal and career perspective that employees are not retaliated against for reporting sexual harassment.

In addition to ensuring a fair process for employees claiming that they have experienced sexual harassment, it is also essential to ensure a fair process for those accused of harassment. Detailed procedures for investigating sexual harassment complaints must be developed and communicated. Organizations with zero tolerance policies for harassment must be especially thorough when conducting investigations, because employees found to be harassers will be terminated. This job loss may impact the future career development of such employees.

Target Responses

Despite organizational efforts to minimize sexual harassment, it still occurs. Thus targets of harassment must respond to it in some way. Most targets do not want to see their harassers punished; they simply want the harassing behavior to end. The most common response is to ignore the behavior or try to laugh it off. Another passive response is to avoid the harasser.

Both ignoring the behavior and avoiding the harasser can have career-related implications. For example, if the behavior is ignored, it is likely to continue. Harassment becomes more stressful as the number of occurrences increases over time. Exposure to consistent stress can result in increased sick leave, inability to concentrate at work, and decreased productivity. Furthermore, such harassment eventually begins to have negative consequences for others in the work area in addition to the intended target of harassment. Rather than ignoring or avoiding the situation, some targets seek social support from friends or relatives. Social support helps alleviate some of the stress of harassment whether or not the target takes further action, but it does not remedy the situation.

Confronting the harasser or reporting it to management or an outside organization is the least common response. Many targets are embarrassed by the situation, intimidated by the harasser, think that their complaint will not be taken seriously, or fear retaliation for reporting. Targets who report their harassment tend to experience higher levels of stress than those who do not. This may be due to the process of going through the investigation and possible rejection by other members of the organization for coming forward. Alternatively, it may be that targets only report the most serious forms of harassment, which are more likely to result in high stress levels. In other words, it is not clear if the harassment leads to stress, which then leads to reporting, or if harassment leads to reporting, which then leads to stress. In conclusion, sexual harassment is a stressful event for those experiencing it regardless of how they respond to it.

—Lynn Bowes-Sperry

See also Civil Rights Act of 1964, Gender and careers, Hostile working environment, Sex discrimination, Workplace romance

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SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND CAREERS

Although gay men and lesbians constitute between 4 percent and 17 percent of the workforce, a larger proportion than many other minority groups, they remain an understudied population that is often "invisible" in the careers literature. It is important to understand the unique challenges faced by lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals in the workplace and to appreciate how these challenges influence their career decisions, paths, and processes.

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) workers face at least three unique challenges that influence their careers and workplace experiences. First, since sexual orientation is not visible, LGB workers face the ongoing and often stressful decision about whether or when to disclose their sexual identity in the workplace. Although many LGB employees fully disclose their sexual identity in the workplace, the majority of them conceal their sexual identity to some degree at work. Some may choose to avoid the topic, while others may "pass" as a heterosexual. In some extreme cases, LGB workers may counterfeit a heterosexual

identity in order to avoid the negative repercussions they fear may occur if their true identity was revealed.

It is important to recognize that disclosure of a gay identity is not an all-or-none decision but occurs on a continuum ranging from full disclosure to nondisclosure. Individuals may disclose their sexual identity to various degrees in both work and nonwork settings and may selectively disclose their gay identity to coworkers, supervisors, friends, and family. In general, the decision to disclose, or "come out of the closet," occurs with each new social interaction and is conducted on a careful case-by-case basis that weighs the risks and benefits associated with disclosure in that relationship.

The disclosure decision is complicated by a number of factors. One complication is that since sexual identity is not visible, LGB workers are often assumed to be heterosexual. Although some LGB workers may desire to keep their sexual identity private, coworkers' assumptions about their sexuality often force the issue and make LGB workers choose between immediate disclosure of their identity or implicitly "passing" as a heterosexual by letting the assumption of a false identity continue. The expectation that LGB workers should not discuss their sexual orientation in the workplace fails to recognize the effects of this assumption of heterosexuality or the fact that heterosexual workers regularly reveal their heterosexual orientation through casual reference to a spouse, a family picture, or a wedding ring.

Another complication in the disclosure decision is that LGB workers may lose control over the disclosure process. For example, they may confide their sexual identity to a few trusted coworkers, but this information may be spread to others in the organization, including those who hold negative views toward homosexuality. As a consequence, LGB workers are often uncertain as to who knows and who doesn't. In addition to this uncertainty, LGB workers face the ongoing threat of having their sexual identity intentionally or unintentionally disclosed by others (e.g., being outed). The decision to disclose a gay identity in the workplace is therefore a complex decision that is often a source of stress for many LGB workers.

The second challenge that affects the careers and workplace experiences of LGB workers is that discrimination against LGB employees who are gay, or simply appear to be gay, is legal in most workplaces in the United States and abroad. As a consequence, LGB employees are particularly vulnerable to

discrimination, and existing research indicates that between 25 percent to 66 percent of gay and lesbian employees face discrimination in the workplace. However, this estimate is generally recognized as conservative, as a sizable proportion of LGB employees do not reveal their sexual identity and are therefore unlikely to be the direct target for sexual orientation discrimination in the workplace. Because discrimination against LGB workers is widespread and fierce, the stakes involved with disclosure are steep. Disclosure of a gay identity has been found to result in social rejection, job termination, and even physical assault. LGB citizens are targeted for hate crimes in both work and nonwork settings, and the fears associated with disclosure of a gay identity in one setting can create a general state of stress that spills over into other settings.

The third challenge to LGB workers' careers is that they encounter significant barriers to obtaining developmental relationships that provide career support, guidance, and assistance. Mentors, peers, and social networks provide important career resources for heterosexual employees, but these relationships may be limited or severely restricted for LGB workers. Many heterosexuals hold negative attitudes toward homosexuality, view homosexuality as morally wrong, are psychologically threatened by LGB workers, or are simply uncomfortable interacting with or engaging in social activities with LGB workers. These individuals may avoid developing relationships with openly gay workers or they may only develop relationships with gay workers who conceal their sexual identity. This severely limits the pool of individuals who can provide career assistance to LGB workers. This situation is worsened by the fact that LGB workers may avoid entering developmental relationships with heterosexuals, or may keep a social distance after entering these relationships, for fear of negative reactions or rejection if their sexual identity is disclosed or involuntarily revealed. Finally, even in relationships characterized by disclosure and acceptance, many heterosexuals simply cannot fathom the challenges faced by their LGB colleagues and may give them career advice that may be more effective for heterosexuals than for gay men and lesbians. One outcome of this situation is that the gay community becomes an important source of support for LGB workers, and LGB workers may look to other gay colleagues for mentoring, networking, and career support. However, the lack of openly gay and lesbian executives (e.g., the

"lavender ceiling") suggests that the power base associated with these developmental relationships may constitute a limitation in their effectiveness.

These three unique challenges—the decision to disclose a stigmatized identity, the intense vulnerability to workplace discrimination, and the restricted access to effective developmental relationships—combine to have a significant impact on the careers of LGB workers. These challenges have not been adequately addressed in the careers literature. Since most career theories were developed on heterosexual samples, they fail to explain some of the core career challenges and processes experienced by LGB workers. In particular, two processes central to the careers of LGB workers that have not been addressed include the role of discrimination in career choice and the role of sexual identity in career development processes.

Discrimination may play a central role in the careers of LGB workers. Traditional theories of career choice hold that workers chose careers or organizations based on the degree of fit between the requirements and attributes of the occupation or position and the individual's skills, values, interests, and abilities. The role of discrimination in career and occupational choice is not addressed in traditional models of career choice. However, LGB workers' vulnerability to discrimination, combined with the force, prevalence, and potency of this discrimination, makes sexual orientation discrimination a central factor in career decisions for many LGB workers. Their choice of careers, occupations, and workplaces may be driven not only by their perceived fit between their skills, values, and abilities and the environment but also by the fit between their group membership and the climate of the organization or occupation. LGB workers may seek safe haven environments that protect them from discrimination and, by allowing them to disclose their sexual identity at work, help them avoid the stress associated with hiding their sexual identity or maintaining different identities in work and nonwork settings.

Safe haven environments may enter into a cycle that supports "gay friendly" workplace climates and occupational climates. Safe havens attract new LGB workers, who may become a critical mass that becomes visible in the organization, occupation, or profession. As they become more visible, LGB workers may take an active role in institutionalizing inclusive climates and developing practices and policies that support the careers of LGB employees (e.g., domestic partner benefits, inviting gay partners to

company social events, developing professional organizations for LGB workers within an occupation, including sexual orientation in diversity policies, practices, and training). These environments also offer greater opportunities for LGB workers to break through the lavender ceiling by reaching positions of power, which in turn places them in the position of being able to sustain and protect safe haven cultures.

Once an LGB worker finds a safe haven, he or she may be reluctant to leave the organization or occupation, even for a career opportunity that provides more opportunities, resources, or a better fit with their individual career interests and aptitudes. LGB workers may also be reluctant to leave safe havens because these environments are more likely to foster developmental relationships involving both gay and heterosexual mentors and peers. Heterosexuals who select to work in safe havens are often more comfortable working with LGB colleagues and may be more sensitive to the challenges faced by their gay colleagues. Safe haven environments also increase the pool of gay men and lesbians who are able to assume mentoring and career coaching roles with their younger and less experienced colleagues.

Safe havens may be particularly valued among LGB workers who have experienced sexual orientation discrimination in the past and among those who have disclosed their sexual identity in their current workplace and are simply unwilling to go back "into the closet" in a new position, even if the position offers greater career opportunities, benefits, or compensation. The relative scarcity of safe haven environments also means that once an LGB worker finds a safe haven, he or she may remain in that organization for a relatively long period of time. Future research is needed that examines the long-term effects of this process on career plateaus and career satisfaction among LGB workers.

Career choice of LGB workers is not only influenced by discrimination and the presence of safe havens but also by the development of their sexual identity. The development of a gay identity occurs in stages that unfold over time. While some LGB individuals recognize their sexual identity very early in life, others may not come to terms with their sexual identity until much later in their lives. This means that some LGB workers may choose careers that are not receptive to their sexual orientation (e.g., occupations associated with day care and primary school education, law enforcement, criminal justice, politics, the military, and some religions) before they self-identify

as gay. Coming to terms with their sexual identity may therefore create a career crisis in which LGB workers may either hide their newly discovered sexual identity or change their occupation. This career crisis is simply not encountered among heterosexual workers.

In fact, most theories of career development are based on heterosexual models of adult identity and life development and may therefore have limited applicability to LGB workers. These theories assume that sexual identity is stable and consistent over the course of an individual's adult life. They hold that identity issues are resolved by early adulthood, thus allowing individuals to focus on career-development issues in their early adulthood. While these assumptions hold for heterosexuals, they do not capture the experiences faced by LGB individuals, who may be in the middle of their lives, careers, and even heterosexual marriages before they recognize their true sexual identity. This recognition does not happen immediately; the development of a gay identity usually unfolds over stages involving denial, awareness, testing, acceptance, and finally integration as the individual gradually accepts and discloses his or her sexual identity across life domains. This identity transition may occur at any time in the life of LGB individuals and can create disrupted and nonlinear career paths and even derail the careers for many LGB workers.

In addition to disrupting careers, the recognition of a gay identity may result in the loss of established developmental relationships as well as other relationships that provide personal, social, and career support. Mentors, social networks, peers, friends, and even family may be lost before the LGB individual has developed other supportive relationships that take their place. Moreover, the loss of these developmental and supportive relationships often occurs at the precise time in which they are needed the most: a life transition involving changing perceptions of self, career needs, and career fit. This situation may lead to a turbulent career crisis, and increases the potential for disrupted or derailed careers.

These sexual identity processes require using a longitudinal lens when viewing the careers of LGB workers. Instead of the discrete linear career stages experienced by heterosexuals, LGB individuals may encounter recursive career stages that involve continual reevaluation based on their stage of sexual identity development and the availability of supportive developmental relationships and safe havens. In fact, there may be a complex interplay between stages of identity

development, career satisfaction, and organizational or occupational choice. For example, LGB individuals who are in the early stages of identity development and have not self-identified as gay may select organizations and occupations based on criteria unrelated to their sexual identity and may experience career satisfaction even in organizations that do not support their identity and/or protect LGB workers from discrimination. However, LGB individuals who are at the integration stage of their sexual identity development may feel a strong internal need to disclose their identity in their workplace and may experience acute career dissatisfaction and identity stress if their organization fails to meet their developmental need for identity integration. This may lead to a recursive career state in which they reassess their career needs and goals, as well as their organization and occupational choices, in light of their emerging sexual identity. In essence, LGB workers who were satisfied in their careers and workplaces may face career and psychological conflict as their sexual identity unfolds and the lack of fit between their identity and their environment emerges.

In conclusion, LGB workers face unique career and workplace challenges not encountered by their heterosexual counterparts. The career decisions and processes of LGB workers need to be viewed within the broader context of the longitudinal development of their sexual identity, their decisions to disclose their identity, and the organizational and occupational environments that either support or stigmatize their identity. The impact of sexual orientation on the careers of LGB workers is not a function of a single event but is a result of multiple internal and external factors that unfold longitudinally over the course of a career. We have just begun to examine the careers of LGB workers and uncover the assumptions of heterosexuality that permeate existing theory and research on careers. Future investigations will help scholars, students, career counselors, and human resource management professionals in understanding the career and workplace challenges encountered by LGB workers.

—Belle Rose Ragins

See also Diversity in organizations, Identity, Occupational choice, Sex discrimination, Sexual harassment

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SINGLE PARENTS AND CAREERS

By the mid-1990s, 1 of every 4 families in the United States with children under 18 was a single-parent family, up from 1 of 10 in 1970. Oddly enough, no plausible explanation for this increase has been found, either within distinct subgroups or in an overall sense. The career development of single parents cannot be considered as intentional, as most single parents have not actively chosen that status. For the most part, the

career development of single parents begins in the same way that it occurs with other individuals, but the status of single parenthood disadvantages them in the labor force as soon as that status is reached. In particular, a lone mother has less time than a couple does, both to care for children and to advance her career.

Single mothers of young children work more hours than married mothers with young children. Moreover, as married working moms have decreased their participation in the labor force in the past decade, many single moms have increased their working hours, although there are data to suggest that some are actually working fewer hours than they did in 1970. Single parenthood is becoming increasingly common, and it is estimated that more than half of all children will spend some time without two parents at home. Furthermore, most single parents, especially mothers, are economically disadvantaged, having to hold jobs without much career potential. Lone mothers typically occupy the bottom rungs of income distribution in the United States, Great Britain, and Norway, as well as other affluent nations. Indeed, single-mother-headed households are more likely than any other family households to live in poverty. For many low-income mothers without access to low-cost day care, the question of whether work is worthwhile or provides opportunity for advancement is relevant.

Single parents can be displaced homemakers, adolescent mothers, or single fathers. Single parents are not solely defined by their marital status, nor are all single parents alike within that status. For instance, divorced fathers with sole custody do not have the same backgrounds as unwed adolescent mothers, and so it is difficult to talk about career development for single parents per se. As Susan Whiston and Briana Keller have pointed out, career development is context bound. Individuals who become single parents earlier in life are more disadvantaged with respect to educational, career opportunities, and acceptable standards of living than those who have had the chance to get adequate training and work experience before they became single parents. Moreover, women with college educations are more likely to postpone childbearing than women with less education. Even when women are adequately trained, however, the careers they enter are likely to pay less than men's careers, and when they enter the same careers as men do, they are paid less. As recently as the mid-1990s, female accountants earned less than 75 percent of male accountants' salaries. This difference in salary holds for many other traditional male occupations.

Beyond the economic issues facing single parents, little is known about single parents' attitudes and role conceptions. In a unique study of Air Force officers and enlisted personnel, Terri Heath and Dennis Orthner found that single men and women did not differ much in their adaptation to work and family responsibilities. They did, however, find that men and women differed in their compartmentalization of roles. Organizational satisfaction was women's most important predictor in their ability to manage work and family role; career stage was more predictive for men. In addition, prior research has found that although single female parents experienced higher role strain than their married counterparts, they displayed equivalent levels of job motivation, performance, and absenteeism, and higher levels of job satisfaction.

Attitudes toward single parents (mostly mothers) continue to be remarkably negative, irrespective of how these households are constituted. Female college students raised in traditional households hold more negative attitudes than those raised in single-parent families. Employer attitudes toward single parents have been found to be problematic as well.

In short, the career development of single parents can be difficult if they become single parents before they have college educations, if they cannot find affordable child care, if they work in environments hostile to their status, or if they work in occupations with little room for career advancement. If, however, single parents are college educated and employed in middle-class careers, their attitudes toward work and multiple roles are not particularly different from their married counterparts.

—Patricia M. Raskin

See also Culture and careers, Family background and careers, Low-income workers and careers, Socioeconomic status, Workforce 2020

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SIXTEEN PERSONALITY QUESTIONNAIRE (16PF)

The *Sixteen Personality Questionnaire (16PF)* is one of the oldest commercially available measures of normal adult personality. It is used in a variety of settings, including personnel selection, counseling, career development, and outplacement consulting. The inventory has also been utilized extensively in academic settings to advance the understanding of personality structure, its roots, and predictive power. Over 1,200 articles and book chapters involving the 16PF have been published to date, and many new studies are under way.

The 16PF was created by Raymond B. Cattell who, at the time, was a professor of psychology at the University of Illinois. Cattell's main research interest was to identify the primary elements of human personality. He called those elements traits—entities whose organization and dynamic interrelationships lead to the behaviors one can observe or wishes to predict. Rather than adhering to some a priori theory, Cattell used a mathematical technique called factor analysis to identify basic traits among a large set of behavioral observations. He started with the list of approximately 4,500 adjectives describing human behavior that was developed in 1936 by Gordon W. Allport and Henry S. Odbert. Cattell then successively reduced this list to 171 terms representing synonym groups, 35 surface-trait variables, and finally, 16 primary traits that formed the basis of his future personality questionnaire. Specifically, Cattell factor analyzed empirical data from two sources, peer ratings (observations of people in everyday situations) and self-reports (questionnaire responses to a large number of behavioral statements), in an attempt to determine which primary traits would be identified similarly from the respective sources. The results generally converged to a 16-dimensional structure that was used as the basis for the first edition of the 16PF questionnaire published in 1949. Since then, four revisions have been conducted to improve and refine the instrument, which is now copyrighted and distributed by the Institute of Personality and Ability Testing (IPAT).

PSYCHOMETRIC STRUCTURE OF THE 16PF

In 1993 the 16PF was revised to produce the fifth edition. The best items from the five forms of the fourth edition (Forms A, B, C, D, and CAQ Part 1), as

well as a number of new items, were combined to create an improved form. The items were designed to meet criteria, such as a lowered reading requirement (fifth grade), increased item-scale correlations, and the elimination of items with overt gender, race, or social desirability biases.

The fifth edition 16PF contains 185 items, which can be completed in 35-50 minutes in the paper and pencil mode, and 20-35 minutes when administered via computer. The first 170 items utilize a three-option response format (endorse, cannot decide, and not endorse) and ask a respondent to decide whether each statement is true of his or her behavior. Each item is designed to measure 1 of 15 primary personality traits or to detect socially desirable responding (aka impression management or faking). Consequently, the items can be divided into 16 relatively homogeneous scales that are traditionally labeled by a word descriptor and by a capital letter from the English alphabet: Warmth (A, 11 items), Emotional Stability (C, 10 items), Dominance (E, 10 items), Liveliness (F, 10 items), Rule-Consciousness (G, 11 items), Social Boldness (H, 10 items), Sensitivity (I, 11 items), Vigilance (L, 10 items), Abstractedness (M, 11 items), Privateness (N, 10 items), Apprehension (O, 10 items), Openness to Change (Q1, 14 items), Self-Reliance (Q2, 10 items), Perfectionism (Q3, 10 items), Tension (Q4, 10 items), and Impression Management (IM, 12 items). Note that the IM scale is not part of the 15 personality factors but was added to the inventory as a check on response distortion. Respondents receiving high scores on the IM scale would be flagged as possibly attempting to enhance their scores.

The last 15 items in the inventory utilize a multiple-choice format (verbal or math question stem followed by several response options) and measure a factor called Reasoning (designated by the letter B). The inclusion of this factor, which essentially represents cognitive ability, differentiates the 16PF from most other personality questionnaires. Whereas developers of subsequent personality inventories viewed Reasoning as something conceptually distinct from personality (i.e., part of a separate cognitive ability domain), Cattell's decision to include the Reasoning scale in the 16PF actually makes the inventory more useful for career development, because most occupational counseling applications require knowledge of one's general cognitive ability as well as one's vocational preferences. It is recognized that this unique feature of the 16PF can cause confusion among test

users and students regarding the number of personality factors the inventory actually assesses. In accordance with the current perspective that personality and cognitive ability are indeed conceptually distinct domains, the 185 items of the 16PF fifth edition actually assesses 1 general cognitive ability factor, 15 personality factors, and 1 impression management/social desirability factor.

Recent psychometric studies of responses to the fifth edition 16PF items have shown that the 15 personality scales (commonly referred to as Primary Factors) are unidimensional and can be combined, if desired, to form five second-order factors (i.e., Global Factors). These five Global Factors closely correspond to the Big Five personality dimensions, which are relatively stable traits describing one's behavior over a wide range of social and work situations. Because the Big Five taxonomy is now effectively the dominant view of normal adult personality, it is used in many selection, counseling, and career development applications. The ability of the 16PF to estimate Big Five's scores is thus advantageous for current and future applications.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

The psychometric properties of the fifth edition of the 16PF are well documented in its technical manual. The mean test-retest reliability (aka coefficient of stability) for the Primary Factor scales over a two-week and two-month period are 0.80 and 0.70 respectively. The internal consistency-reliability (aka coefficient alpha) averages 0.76. Reliability coefficients for the Global Factor scales are higher, because they are aggregates of several positively correlated Primary Factors. Given the length and breadth of the scales, the reliability estimates are considered sufficiently high to provide meaningful personnel and career guidance.

Validity studies reported in the technical manual and in the research literature provide a considerable amount of evidence regarding the construct and criterion-related validity of the primary and global 16PF scales. Many studies have found high correlations between trait scores for 16PF scales and those of other well-known personality inventories (i.e., the Personality Research Form, the California Psychological Inventory, and the NEO Personality Inventory). This suggests that the 16PF scales do indeed assess the traits they are purported to measure. Occupational and social psychologists have also found 16PF scales to be good

predictors of a number of important social outcomes, ranging from leadership effectiveness to drug use to creative achievement. As indicated by a recent comparative study of several major personality instruments, the 16PF was among the best in predicting a number of behavioral acts.

MEASURING INTERESTS WITH THE 16PF

A majority of theoretical and empirical writings view basic and vocational interests as conceptually distinct from personality and cognitive ability traits. In essence, it is believed that interests primarily influence the motivation to attempt an activity, while ability and personality determine the likelihood of effectively completing an activity. Yet despite this distinction, there is usually a moderate degree of correspondence between interests, abilities, and personality. Thus because the 16PF already measures both personality and ability, it is possible to generate interest scores from responses to the 16PF Primary scales by way of multiple regression.

Several research projects have been conducted in an effort to develop 16PF prediction equations for a variety of vocational preference indicators. Two studies warrant specific attention. In the first study, 233 adults were given the 16PF fifth edition along with the Campbell Interest and Skills Survey (CISS) and measures of leadership qualities and preferences for structured environments. The CISS is one of the most widely used tools in career development programs, and it is therefore natural that it was used as the initial basis for the 16PF's career development applications. The main outputs from the CISS are its seven Orientation Scales depicting broad areas of one's interests (i.e., influencing, organizing, helping, analyzing, etc.), 29 Basic Scales reflecting interests in broad categories of work fields (i.e., Management, Sales, or Social Service), and 58 Occupational Scales representing the most narrow aspect of vocational interests (i.e., Architect, Musician, or Psychologist). Using scores on the 16PF Primary Factor scales, researchers were able to predict with a relatively high degree of accuracy the following: 7 CISS Orientation Scales, 17 CISS Basic Scales, and 57 CISS Occupational Scales. Scores on all these scales are reported in the Personal Career Development Profile (PCDP), which is a computer-generated report based on responses to the 16PF. To avoid duplicating the CISS terminology, the Orientation, Basic, and Occupational scales are referred in PCDP as Career Activity Interest, Career Field

Interest, and the Occupational Interest scales respectively. In addition, the PCDP also contains scores on Broad Patterns scales and Leadership-Subordinate Patterns scales that were derived from other measures administered in the study.

A second notable multiple regression project involved the Strong Interest Inventory (SII) and was aimed at augmenting the 16PF's ability to predict broad behavioral patterns as well as career and occupational interests. This study involved 385 adults who were administered the SII together with the 16PF Fifth Edition. Using 16PF Primary Factor scores, researchers were able to predict the following: 4 SII Personal Style scales, which in the PCDP classification are placed into the Broad Patterns section of the report, 22 SII Basic Interest scales, and 69 female-normed, and 66 male-normed SII Occupational scales. Note that because 12 of the 22 SII Basic scales had content very similar to the CISS Basic scales, only 10 nonoverlapping SII Basic scales were actually added in the PCDP report.

In sum, the results of various research projects have shown that the 16PF fifth edition reasonably predicts many criterion scale scores of the CISS, SII, and other instruments used to measure vocational interests. These predicted scale scores are organized into 10 Broad Patterns Scores, 10 Leadership-Subordinate Role Patterns, 7 Career Activity Interests, 27 Career Field Interests, and 98 Occupational Interests. Predicted scores on Occupational Interests are reported in reference to three different norms: males and females, obtained from the SII, and combined gender, based on the CISS. Further details of these studies are described in the 16PF's technical manual and in the Personal Career Development Profile manual.

USES OF THE 16PF IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

The 16PF Basic Interpretive Report and the 16PF Personal Career Development Profile Report provide information that can be used in career development applications. Specifically, the Basic Interpretive Report generates scores on the Primary and Global Personality Factors, six Holland Theme scores (these are generated from equations developed by regressing scores from the Self-Directed Search onto 16PF Primary Factors), and several predicted criterion scores, such as leadership and creative potential. The Holland types on which the respondent scores highest are discussed in several

interpretative paragraphs and are accompanied by a brief list of relevant occupations.

The Personal Career Development Profile Report first presents an extended narrative that describes a respondent's problem-solving, stress-coping and interpersonal interaction styles, work settings preferences, and career/lifestyle activity interests in a user-friendly, nontechnical manner. The narrative is followed by several detailed score reporting pages, which discuss one's standing on the Primary and Global Factor scales, Broad Pattern scales, Leadership-Subordinate Role Pattern scales, Career Activity Interest scales, Career Field Interest scales, and Occupational Interest scales. This information is reported numerically and graphically (horizontal bar graph). The wealth of information provided has proven helpful to both professional counselors and individual test takers. According to the technical manual, the main uses of the PCDP report are the following:

- Selection and placement (finding the right person for the right job)
- Assessment centers (identifying hidden talents of employees and training them to further their careers)
- University-, company-, and consultant-sponsored career development and management programs
- Outplacement consulting programs (assisting displaced persons in undertaking career transitions and job searches)
- Career and personal development counseling (providing career guidance and advice for selecting specific educational or training programs)

CONCLUSION

In the past two decades, the workplace environment has changed from largely "manufacturing-style" organizations, characterized by hierarchical structures and well-defined jobs, into "service-style" organizations with flat structures, fluid jobs, and the extensive use of teams. The development of new technologies and increased global competition have added additional layers of uncertainty to what is already an unstable job market. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that many of today's workers will experience a career-related crisis or transition at some point in their work lives and that a large proportion of workers will encounter prolonged periods of unemployment or find it necessary to change careers more than once. To deal with these potential pressures in advance, organizations and employees are increasingly turning toward

career development programs that use personality, cognitive ability, and interest information to provide career advice. In this regard, the 16PF is a highly useful instrument because of its unique capacity to provide information regarding all three of these individual difference variables in a single test administration. To our knowledge, no other instrument currently provides such an integrative approach to psychological assessment.

—Oleksandr S. Chernyshenko and Stephen Stark

See also Big Five factors of personality, California Psychological Inventory, Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2), Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Personality and careers

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SOCIAL CAPITAL

An inclusive understanding of the concept views *social capital* as the potential resources derived from

an individual's social relationships as well as valued resources available from the organization of that social network of relationships. Individuals or groups exchange social capital to gain access to needed resources from others in the social system or to enhance image through association with the social system. An individual in good standing in a group has social capital to request assistance from members of that group or could mention association with the group to impress others and gain access to otherwise unavailable opportunities. In the business environment, a greater number of promotions and salary increases are samples of benefits for employees with social capital, and searches for a new job are facilitated by the use of social capital.

The value of social capital varies with the task for which it is needed. Resources needed for careers include information, trust, status, sponsorship, and opportunities for development or visibility. Social capital extracted from work organization relationships is more valuable for promotions, while social capital derived from external networks is more valuable for a career shift to a new profession. The lack of social capital can result in constrained opportunities and accomplishments. The bottom line for careers is that one wants social capital for the help it provides in reaching career goals.

EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

How often do you call on others to fix a computer glitch? Understand a customer's problems? Identify the best company or job for you? These are examples of information resources available because of connections through a social network due to the exchange of social capital. Such connections can help the individual accomplish what otherwise might be difficult, time consuming, or impossible. Having the ability to get timely information from others, such as a company's difficulties while job seeking or a new boss's personal format preferences for compiling a report, can help an individual avoid career setbacks. Investment in relationships and the social structure of those relationships provides social capital that can be used to acquire specific information when needed.

An individual who invests time in maintaining a strong relationship with a mentor can exchange social capital from that investment for resources from the mentor. Mentors can provide information about political traps not readily seen by a newcomer in an

organization or by someone new to a position in the hierarchy. They can also provide constructive feedback for personal development, sponsorship for advancement opportunities, and moral support in times of difficulty. Association with the mentor can lead to higher status in an organization. Not surprisingly, someone who has one or more strong mentoring relationships will have more social capital to draw on for career development and advancement. The mentor also builds social capital from the relationship, since the organization is benefiting from the mentor's investment in the protégé. The mentor can exchange social capital with the organization for leadership opportunities.

There are three dimensions of social capital: relational, structural, and cognitive. The relational dimension of social capital involves trust between the parties, norms of behavior within the group, expected obligations among the group's members, and identification with the group. A work organization with hierarchical relationships contains status differences that facilitate or constrain access to others. A senior executive, for example, is likely to have more immediate access to the expertise of individuals throughout the company than a floor manager. The status provides authority, which is social capital that has value. Status and status symbols, such as job titles, are social capital because of the impressions of success they create. Thus where one is positioned in the network increases or decreases the social capital derived from that network.

Social capital also lies in the structure of the network itself. The structural dimension of social capital includes the number and nature of relationship ties, the network configuration, and the organization of the network in terms of its practices. The size, location, diversity, and closeness of ties within the network can make it easier or more difficult to access relationships and, consequently, affect the amount of social capital one has available to exchange for needed resources. A large, dispersed network makes it more difficult to identify and to reach the needed resources. For example, a business executive has access to a wide number of people, including employees in the work organization, customers, and fellow members of professional organizations, as well as associates in personal networks affiliated with the executive's family, neighborhoods where the executive has lived, schools, and religious and social organizations. This network of relationships consists primarily of weak ties with many people. If the executive's child wants to go to a particular

college and needs a recommendation from an alumnus of that school, sorting through all the personal connections could be time consuming. However, a large, diverse set of relationships increases the likelihood of finding someone with the needed resources for different situations. In this manner, social capital can be utilized for a greater variety of tasks.

On the other hand, the closeness of relationships creates greater trust, facilitates the sorting process, and increases the possibility that the other person will feel inclined to help. This is possible because more is known about those with close ties and the closer relationships allow for stronger trust. Yet closer relationships are more often found among similar individuals, and networks of similar individuals might not provide resources needed for changing needs.

A third dimension of social capital, the cognitive dimension, includes shared narratives, language, and codes. As an illustration of this aspect of social capital, consider the terminology that MBAs develop through their studies. They form a kindred group that shares case study examples and metaphors of leadership and organizations. Members of this group have social capital at their disposal for exchanging information.

HOW SOCIAL CAPITAL PROVIDES VALUE

The norms and purpose of a social structure will affect the amount of social capital that can be extracted from the relationships of that social network. Family relationships can carry stronger expectations for supporting one another than professional relationships. This is seen in the advancement of family members over others to senior-level positions in a family owned business. In such a case, there are expectations of keeping the business family owned and run and that family members will rise to the occasion to keep the firm in business. It is an expectation based on trust, beliefs, and obligations: trust in the capabilities and motivations of family members to perform well, the belief that family members are privileged, and the obligation to give family members advancement opportunities and support. In contrast, two people who have met briefly through professional encounters will not feel compelled to help each other with a business problem if they see each other as business competitors. However, they may exchange information about their graduate programs. There is an expectation for showing pride in your alma mater but also an expectation of confidentiality surrounding specific business issues as well as

sanctions for violating confidentiality. The old adage, “Don’t air dirty laundry in public,” is relevant here and implies that certain types of information and modes of behavior can be shared within a specified network but not beyond. Groups with strong ties among its members are said to have a strong “bonding” form of social capital.

There are two schools of thought about how network structure affects social capital. One view asserts the value of rich, closed networks where everyone is connected and shares freely within the network. A family business is an example. Here this bonding form of social capital within the family is maximized when the network has strong enough ties to understand the specific needs of individuals and has built trust among the members to exchange social capital. This closed network type of social capital is used to explain how groups of individuals such as racial groups are advantaged or disadvantaged. For example, being a member of a company golf league where the latest news about impending company changes is shared may provide social capital for an executive, putting nonmembers of the league at a disadvantage. Obviously, country clubs hosting the league that do not allow women or racial minorities disadvantage those groups in the company. A less obvious aspect of this example is that women and certain minority groups are less likely to have acquired the game of golf in their younger years to play well enough to join the league. The construction of the league itself exacerbates the gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged groups and limits their available social capital relative to the league members. Moreover, this network might have been closed to particular individuals earlier in life than may be apparent. Members of the golfing community form a bond of relationships with its own vocabulary and ways of viewing the world.

The other school of thought, structural holes theory, purports that positioning within a network where one can supply needed information from personal networks not available to others creates more social capital. The person who always knows somebody who can help is seen as having a great deal of social capital. Furthermore, that person can choose to use that social capital as a bargaining tool, such as exchanging introductions for a choice project assignment. Again, the strength of the relationship affects the social capital that can be extracted from the ties. If the boss’s son is a fan of your friend who plays in a rock band, an introduction can become a bargaining tool for career advancement opportunities. The tie with the boss only needs to be

strong enough to know about the boss’s son’s fondness for your friend’s band and strong enough to provide the opportunity for you to express career ambitions to the boss. The tie with your friend needs to be strong enough to impose a favor. The ability to act as a liaison between other networks is what establishes the value of social capital according to structural holes theory. This type of social capital is referred to as bridging and is used to explain the competitive advantage that some have over others because they have social capital to exchange in groups that are closed to others.

Social capital is an asset that with investment grows to yield greater possibilities for future benefits. It has value because it can be traded to obtain other valued assets. Since social capital is derived from a social system, it is dependent on the collectivity of that system. If the structure fails, or if the members change norms, or if the level of trust one is granted within the system falls, social capital will be affected negatively. Withdrawing capital from the social network or structure comes with an expectation of future payback with an uncertain time horizon. If there is a violation of reciprocity, the group member will receive sanctions and lose social capital.

When the concept of social capital is applied to the organizational level, there are reciprocal implications at the individual level due to the “collectivity” nature of social capital. Just as an individual can use an organization’s reputation to build social capital, so too can an organization use the visibility of an associated prominent individual to improve its reputation. In both cases, the relationship is exploited for gain. For this reason, social capital is referred to as appropriable when used between or within levels of analysis. Negative perceptions from associations are also possible, and they decrease the value of social capital.

Social capital can be a complementary form of capital. For example, an entrepreneur with limited funding for a growing enterprise can call on friends and family for free support or advice. Similar to physical and intellectual capital, social capital needs maintenance. The activity of maintaining social capital is staying connected with one’s network and attending to the members’ needs. A strong level of trust may minimize the amount of maintenance needed.

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND CAREERS

The career competencies framework of knowing-why, knowing-how, and knowing-whom can be used

to examine the value of social capital to careers. The identity exploration competency of knowing why is enhanced by constructive feedback from others that can be obtained with the use of social capital. Social learning is one example of how using social capital to get closer to experts assists the development of job-related capabilities, or knowing-how. Social capital buys access to relevant people, or knowing-whom, and thus presents access to opportunities as well as resources and information for personal skill development and identity sense making.

Social capital helps individuals find educational and developmental opportunities to qualify for more career options. It can also facilitate job searches through a greater awareness of opportunities and with introductions to prospective employers. Social capital is associated with greater career success, whether success is defined as the number of promotions, level of salary, or career satisfaction. Career success is achieved through the exchange of social capital for information, resources, and sponsorship.

Entrepreneurs have an extensive list of needs, and social capital can facilitate the process of starting a business by providing access to information and resources. The goodwill of others can be tapped to provide goods and services in the early stages of a start-up when one has social capital.

Career success may not be associated exclusively with individual exchanges of social capital. The combination of individual and organizational level exchanges can promote career success. Exceptional team or organizational performance can draw attention to an individual's capabilities. Social capital facilitates group effectiveness that can lead to individual career success by providing access to resources outside the group through bridging behavior. Also, the bonding form of social capital helps the group utilize its internal resources. A high-performing organization leads to an impressive résumé and notoriety that can open doors for individual opportunities.

Finally, other types of human capital that lead to career success can be enhanced by social capital. Intellectual capital, for instance, is increased when social capital is used to gain more information and resources that lead to the creation of greater knowledge than possible without assistance. Companies that recognize the connection screen for social capabilities and networks as well as intellectual abilities in job interviews, given the complexity of organizational life and the resulting need for teamwork.

BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL FOR BUILDING A CAREER

Simply put, the sources of social capital are relationships and the network structure of those relationships. Another saying, "Network, network, network," applies here. Much of career building is associated with competitive advantage, so weak ties to a variety of networks are especially valuable. Professional organizations in one's functional area offer continuous development and connections to current opportunities. The development of a mentoring relationship outside one's current work organization gives one social capital that is more applicable across situations. In addition, spending time with coworkers throughout an organization develops trust and sets the stage for bonding through the development of shared stories and language. This bonding creates a market for the use of social capital derived from external networks to create a competitive advantage for career advancement within the organization.

Building social capital entails the development of strategically significant relationships and maintaining those relationships. Barriers may exist to entering some groups, and identification with certain groups may constrain behavior (e.g., religious and cultural groups). However, the formation of weak ties such as professional relationships may be possible with some well-developed skills.

The development of certain cognitive and social skills can improve the ability to build and use social capital. Aspects of emotional intelligence help an individual interact with others effectively. The ability to think strategically and to identify political coalitions helps an individual identify strategic opportunities to use social capital. These are skills that are developed through practice. Even though some people are endowed with more social capital from birth, the skills needed for increasing one's stockpile of social capital can be learned, so building social capital is theoretically possible for everyone.

—Susan M. Adams

See also Career investments, Human capital, Impression management, Networking

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SOCIAL COGNITIVE CAREER THEORY

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) is a relatively new theory that is aimed at explaining three interrelated aspects of career development: (1) how basic academic and career interests develop, (2) how educational and career choices are made, and (3) how academic and career success is obtained. The theory incorporates a variety of concepts (e.g., interests, abilities, values, environmental factors) that appear in earlier career theories and have been found to affect career development. Developed by Robert W. Lent, Steven D. Brown, and Gail Hackett in 1994, SCCT is based on Albert Bandura's general social cognitive theory, an influential theory of cognitive and motivational processes that has been extended to the study of many areas of psychosocial functioning, such as academic performance, health behavior, and organizational development.

Three intricately linked variables—self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and goals—serve as the basic building blocks of SCCT. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's personal beliefs about his or

her capabilities to perform particular behaviors or courses of action. Unlike global confidence or self-esteem, self-efficacy beliefs are relatively dynamic (i.e., changeable) and are specific to particular activity domains. People vary in their self-efficacy regarding the behaviors required in different occupational domains. For example, one person might feel very confident in being able to accomplish tasks for successful entry into, and performance in, scientific fields but feel much less confident about his or her abilities in social or enterprising fields, such as sales. SCCT assumes that people are likely to become interested in, choose to pursue, and perform better at activities at which they have strong self-efficacy beliefs, as long as they also have necessary skills and environmental supports to pursue these activities.

Self-efficacy beliefs are assumed to derive from four primary sources of information: personal performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences (e.g., observing similar others), social persuasion, and physiological and emotional states. Personal accomplishments (successes and failures with specific tasks) are assumed to offer a particularly compelling source of efficacy information, but the nature of the social models and reinforcing messages to which one is exposed, and the types of physiological states one experiences while engaged in particular tasks (e.g., low levels of anxiety), can all affect one's self-efficacy regarding different performance domains.

Outcome expectations refer to beliefs about the consequences or outcomes of performing particular behaviors (e.g., what will happen if I do this?). The choices that people make about the activities in which they will engage, and their effort and persistence at these activities, entail consideration of outcome as well as self-efficacy beliefs. For example, people are more likely to choose to engage in an activity to the extent that they see their involvement as leading to valued, positive outcomes (e.g., social and self-approval, tangible rewards, attractive work conditions). According to SCCT and the larger social cognitive theory, persons' engagement in activities, the effort and persistence they put into them, and their ultimate success are partly determined by both their self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations.

Personal goals may be defined as one's intentions to engage in a particular activity (e.g., to pursue a given academic major) or to attain a certain level of performance (e.g., to receive an A in a particular course). In SCCT, these two types of goals are, respectively,

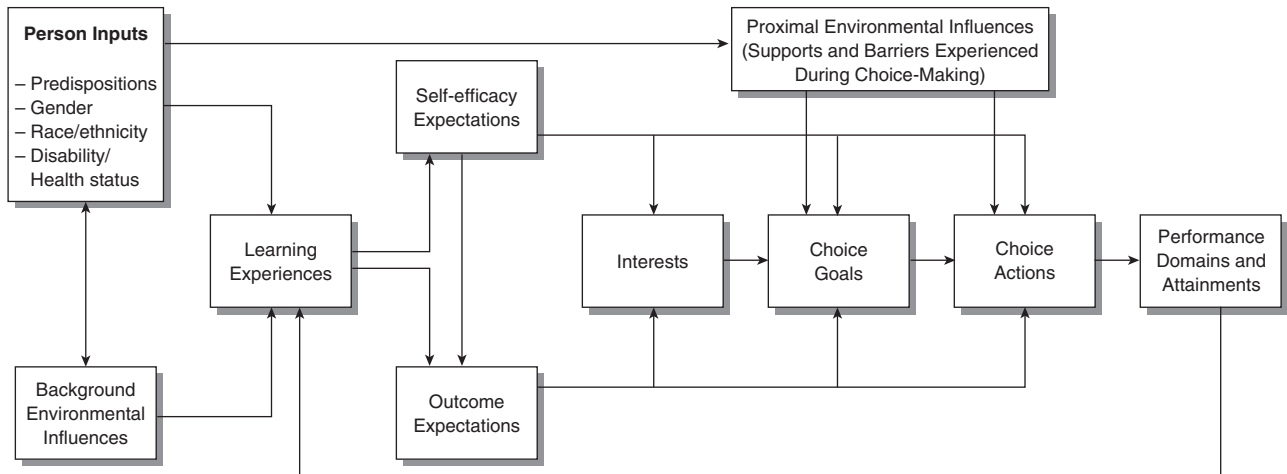


Figure 1. A Simplified View of How Career-related Interests and Choices Develop over Time, According to SCCT

SOURCE: Adapted from Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D. and Hackett, G. 1994. "Toward a Unifying Social Cognitive Theory of Career and Academic Interest, Choice, and Performance" [Monograph]. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 45:79-122.

referred to as choice goals and performance goals. By setting goals, people help to organize and guide their own behavior and to sustain it in the absence of more immediate positive feedback and despite inevitable setbacks. Social cognitive theory posits that goals are importantly tied to both self-efficacy and outcome expectations: People tend to set goals that are consistent with their views of their personal capabilities and of the outcomes they expect to attain from pursuing a particular course of action. Success or failure in reaching personal goals, in turn, becomes important information that helps to alter or confirm self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations.

SCCT'S INTERESTS MODEL

Self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals play key roles in SCCT's models of educational and vocational interest development, choice making, and performance attainment. As shown in the center of the figure above, interests in career-relevant activities are seen as the outgrowth of self-efficacy and outcome expectations. Over the course of childhood and adolescence, people are exposed, directly and vicariously, to a variety of occupationally relevant activities in school, at home, and in their communities. They are also differentially reinforced for continuing their engagement, and for developing their skills, in different activity domains. The types and variety of activities to which children and adolescents are exposed is

partly a function of the context and culture in which they grow up. Depending on cultural norms, for example, girls are typically exposed to and reinforced for engaging in different types of activities than are boys.

Through continued activity exposure, practice, and feedback, people refine their skills, develop personal performance standards, form a sense of their efficacy in particular tasks, and acquire certain expectations about the outcomes of activity engagement. People are most likely to develop interest in activities at which they both feel efficacious and from which they expect positive outcomes. As people develop interest in an activity, they are likely to develop goals for sustaining or increasing their involvement in it. Further activity involvement leads to subsequent mastery or failure experiences, which, in turn, help to revise self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and, ultimately, interests within an ongoing feedback loop.

Interest development may be most fluid up until late adolescence, the point at which general interests (e.g., in art, science, social, or mechanical activities) tend to become fairly stable. At the same time, data on the stability of interests suggest that interest change does occur for some people during their postadolescent years. SCCT posits that such changes, when they do occur, can be explained by changes in self-efficacy beliefs and/or outcome expectations—more precisely, by exposure to potent new learning experiences (e.g., parenting, technological advances, job training or

restructuring) that enable people to alter their sense of self-efficacy and outcome expectations in new occupational and avocational directions.

In sum, people are likely to form enduring interest in an activity when they view themselves as competent at performing it and when they expect the activity to produce valued outcomes. Conversely, interests are unlikely to develop in activities for which people doubt their competence and expect negative outcomes. Furthermore, SCCT posits that for interests to blossom in areas for which people have talent, their environments must expose them to the types of direct, vicarious, and persuasive experiences that can give rise to robust efficacy beliefs and positive outcome expectations. Interests are impeded from developing when individuals do not have the opportunity to form strong self-efficacy and positive outcome beliefs, regardless of their level of objective talent. Indeed, findings suggest that perceived capabilities and outcome expectations form key intervening links between objective abilities and interests.

SCCT'S CHOICE MODEL

SCCT's model of the career choice process, which builds on the interests model, is also embedded in the figure above. Arising largely through self-efficacy and outcome expectations, career-related interests foster particular educational and occupational choice goals (e.g., intentions to pursue a particular career path). Especially to the extent that they are clear, specific, strongly held, stated publicly, and supported by significant others, choice goals make it more likely that people will take actions to achieve their goals (e.g., seek to gain entry into a particular academic major, training program, or job). Their subsequent performance attainments (e.g., successes, failures) provide valuable feedback that can strengthen or weaken self-efficacy and outcome expectations and, ultimately, help to revise or confirm choices.

As illustrated in the same figure, SCCT also emphasizes that choice goals are sometimes influenced more directly and potently by self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, or environmental variables than they are by interests. Interests are expected to exert their greatest impact on academic and occupational choice under supportive environmental conditions, which enable people to pursue their interests. However, many adolescents and adults are not able to follow their interests either unfettered by obstacles or with the full support of important others. The choice making of these persons is constrained by such

experiences as economic need, family pressures, or educational limitations. In such instances, people may need to compromise their interests and, instead, make their choices on the basis of such pragmatic considerations as the type of work that is available to them, their self-efficacy beliefs ("Can I do this type of work?"), and outcome expectations ("Will the job pay enough to make it worthwhile?"). Cultural values (e.g., the degree to which one's choices may be guided by elder family members) may also limit the role of personal interests in career choice.

SCCT posits conditions that increase the probability that people will be able to pursue their interests as well as conditions where interests may need to be compromised in making career-related choices. Collectively labeled "environmental influences" in the above figure, these conditions refer to the levels of support (e.g., family financial and emotional support), barriers (e.g., lack of finances, inadequate levels of education), and opportunities available to the individual. Simply put, SCCT hypothesizes that interests will be a more potent predictor of the types of choices people make under supportive rather than under more restrictive environmental conditions. Under the latter conditions, one's interests may need to be bypassed or compromised in favor of more pragmatic, pressing, or culturally acceptable considerations.

SCCT'S PERFORMANCE MODEL

SCCT's performance model is concerned with predicting and explaining two primary aspects of performance: the level of success that people attain in educational and occupational pursuits and the degree to which they persist in the face of obstacles. SCCT focuses on the influences of ability, self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and performance goals on success and persistence. Ability (as reflected by past achievement and aptitudes) is assumed to affect performance via two primary pathways. First, ability influences performance and persistence directly. For example, students with higher aptitude in a particular subject tend to do better and persist longer in that subject than do students with lesser aptitude. (Ability or aptitude may be thought of as a composite of innate potential and acquired knowledge.) Second, ability is hypothesized to influence performance and persistence indirectly through the intervening paths of self-efficacy and outcome expectations.

In other words, performance involves both ability and motivation. SCCT emphasizes the motivational

roles of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and performance goals. Specifically, SCCT suggests that self-efficacy and outcome expectations work in concert with ability, in part by influencing the types of performance goals that people set for themselves. Controlling for level of ability, students and workers with higher self-efficacy and more positive outcome expectations will be more likely to establish higher performance goals for themselves (i.e., aim for more challenging attainments), to organize their skills more effectively, and to persist longer in the face of setbacks. As a result, they may achieve higher levels of success than those with lower self-efficacy and less positive outcome expectations. Thus favorable self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals help people to make the best possible use of their ability.

It should be emphasized that self-efficacy is seen as complementing, not substituting for, ability. Indeed, SCCT does not assume that self-efficacy will compensate for inadequate task ability. It does, however, predict that the performance of individuals at the same ability level will be facilitated by stronger versus weaker self-efficacy beliefs. For example, academically able adolescents who underestimate their academic talents, compared to their equally able peers with more optimistic self-efficacy beliefs, are likely to set lower goals for themselves, experience undue performance anxiety, give up more quickly in the face of obstacles, challenge themselves less academically, and consequently experience less academic success.

Social cognitive theory notes that large overestimates of self-efficacy can also be self-defeating. For example, job trainees whose self-efficacy drastically overshoots their current skills are likely to set unrealistically high performance goals and to take on job tasks that are beyond their current grasp, which may occasion failure and discouragement. According to Bandura, self-efficacy beliefs that modestly exceed current capabilities are probably optimum because they are likely to lead people to set challenging (but attainable) performance goals and to engage in activities that stretch their skills and that further strengthen their self-efficacy and positive outcome expectations.

EMPIRICAL SUPPORT AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

A substantial body of research has accumulated suggesting that SCCT and its major elements offer a useful framework for explaining educational and

vocational interest development, choice making, and performance. Sufficient data have, in fact, accumulated to yield several meta-analyses relevant to SCCT. Meta-analysis is a research strategy that can be used to integrate findings and draw conclusions about the strength of hypothesized relations among variables. Meta-analyses of SCCT's interest model have revealed substantial support for its major hypotheses. In particular, self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations have each been found to account for a sizable amount of the variation in vocational and educational interests.

Meta-analyses have also supported SCCT's choice hypotheses. For example, it has been shown that career-related choices are strongly predicted by interests and, to a lesser extent, self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations. Consistent with SCCT's assumptions about the importance of environmental and cultural influences, some recent research also suggests that interests may play a smaller role in the choice-making process of adolescents and young adults from particular cultures. Specifically, those from a culture characterized by collective decision making were more inclined to choose a career path that was consistent with the preferences of their family members and with their self-efficacy beliefs rather than one that necessarily fit their personal interests. Other research supports SCCT's hypotheses that interests are more likely to translate into goals, and goals are more likely to promote choice actions, when people are faced with choice-supportive environmental conditions (e.g., relatively low barriers and high supports for their preferred educational/occupational path).

Meta-analyses relevant to SCCT's performance hypotheses have found that self-efficacy is a useful predictor of both academic and occupational performance. Research on the sources of information, or learning experiences, from which self-efficacy beliefs are assumed to derive has found that performance accomplishments typically show the strongest relations with self-efficacy in corresponding activity domains (e.g., successful performance in math-related classes is associated with higher math self-efficacy). The other (vicarious, persuasion, emotional) sources have also been found to relate to self-efficacy, although typically to a more modest degree than personal accomplishments.

Finally, SCCT has sparked a number of efforts to design and test interventions aimed at various facets of

career development. In particular, SCCT suggests a number of targets at which educational and career programs can be directed. These include efforts to expand interests and nurture career aspirations in children and adolescents, facilitate career goal setting and implementation in adolescents and young adults, and promote successful work adjustment (e.g., satisfaction, performance) in adult workers. Reflecting the central role that SCCT accords to self-efficacy and outcome expectations, the interventions that have been proposed or tested to this point tend to rely heavily on experiences that promote these expectations (e.g., exposure to personal mastery experiences and support, access to accurate information about work conditions and outcomes). Extensions of the theory to a number of subpopulations (e.g., women of color, gay and lesbian workers, persons with disabilities) have appeared, and the theory has been applied to the study of career behavior in a number of countries and cultural contexts.

—Robert W. Lent, Steven D. Brown, and Gail Hackett

See also Interests, Occupational choice, Self-efficacy, Social learning theory of career development

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SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM

Social constructionism is a postmodern perspective that emphasizes the socially constructed nature of knowledge. Underscoring the linguistic and relational nature of all knowledge, it emphasizes personal, social, and cultural processes that inform, and limit, the development of knowledge. In contrast to modernist notions of reality as singular, stable, universal, and nonhistorical, social constructionists emphasize that what is taken to be real represents consensually agreed-upon knowledge that results from coordinated, relationally contingent discourses. What is taken as knowledge or truth is therefore contextually and temporary bound; what is true in one time context or culture may not be true in other times, contexts, or cultures.

Social constructionists place a premium on understanding processes of knowledge construction because they emphasize that what is known is inseparable from the processes of inquiry that give rise to knowledge. The role of dialogue, broadly understood as coordinated actions among people, is central to the construction of knowledge. Given the relational embeddedness of knowledge, social constructionists blur the boundary between the personal and social domains, challenging traditional notions of individuality or the self.

THE SELF AND CAREER CONSTRUCTION

A social constructionist position carries significant implications for transforming traditional notions of vocational and career psychology. Career choices, for example, are understood as coordinated forms of discourse and relational enactment, rather than as products of rational, cognitive, or individual decision making. The traditional supremacy of rational processes, as reflected in concepts such as "career decision making," "self-efficacy," or "career interests," cede to relational and contextual processes that are understood as informing, scaffolding, or facilitating the emergence of given careers or career enactments, rather

than as determining or causing the choice or selection of a given career by a given person. Because career discourses are viewed as relationally, culturally, and temporally bound, career choice is viewed more as an artifact of communal interchange than as a reflection of a “correct,” “preferred,” or “effective” decision or selection on the part of the individual. From a social constructionist perspective, the “I” does not exist outside of language or discourse; it is in and through language that the “self” is constructed, together with his or her vocational options and career possibilities.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND NARRATIVE

The concept of the career narrative reflects many of the central tenets of social constructionism as applied to the area of career choice and vocational development. Individuals’ stories, their ongoing narrative accounts of their lives and experiences, play a central role in a constructionist account. Individual stories have crucial constructive roles in creating and maintaining relational dialogues at individual, social, and cultural levels. Within the context of these narrative constructions, individual accounts are no longer seen as personal instantiations of self-concepts, self-efficacy, vocational dispositions, decidedness, or development. Instead, the person is understood as drawing from and being constituted by the broader culture in which he or she operates. An exclusive privileging of self-agency is counterbalanced by attention to issues of social, institutional, and cultural context. An individual’s career narrative is understood as emerging from, and being supported by, broader narratives that are available from within the culture and society. The interplay between personal and institutional and cultural contexts necessarily introduces the role of political, social, and cultural forces in forging individual career choices and vocational development. The “choices” that individuals make are therefore bounded by the broader social and cultural metanarratives available in any given time and place, which situate career decision making more as an act of social and relational negotiation than as an act of personal choice and rational decision making.

As a result, social constructionism would position the career narrative that an individual tells about his or her vocational interests, experiences, decisions, and developments within a broader context. As such, it does not represent *the* career account so much as *one possible account*, a single voice abstracted from a

chorus of voices that jointly constitute the overall and ongoing performance of a career over time. The individual’s narrative is nested within a family system that operates within a given culture, within a particular society, economy, time, and place. An individual’s narrative regarding the pursuit of a career in medicine, for example, is understood as being developed in relation to the narrative accounts of his or her family (e.g., grandparents, parents, siblings, children), as well as accounts that follow from forces acting on global and local economies, developing technologies, and a range of cultural discourses regarding health care, social justice, and the meaning of a career itself.

CONSTRUCTIVE PROCESSES

Social constructionism highlights the constructed nature of knowledge, including the construction of such traditional concepts as vocational interests, traits, factors, career decidedness, self-efficacy, or self-concept. In each case these concepts are viewed as constructions that reflect emergent processes of coordinated action, consensually agreed-upon concepts that have no reality, truth, or value outside of themselves or the context that gives rise to them. Attention is turned from characteristics that a person *has*, to what a person *does*; in short, from *traits* to *processes*. Career itself is viewed not as a static entity, but as a dynamic, ongoing, and necessarily relational process. And it is the continuing coordination of relational action that supports the very existence of a career, as well as an individual’s participation within that career. Both the emergence of new careers and the disappearance of old ones underscore the dynamic nature of what can be called careers. Broader social, cultural, and historical forces continually work their influence on the world of work, supporting an ongoing fluidity in the nature of careers and the accounts that are forged in relation to them.

—Greg J. Neimeyer and Marco Gemignani

See also Career construction theory, Social cognitive career theory, Social learning theory of career development

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SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

People work at an incredibly wide number of jobs. A major question is How can we explain how people find their way into working at one occupation rather than another? The *social learning theory of career development* (SLTCD) is one of a number of theories that help explain how individuals make occupational choices. The SLTCD attributes occupational placement to an uncountable number of learning experiences, some planned but most unplanned, that influence the path through the occupational maze. Unlike traditional career counseling models, which aim to assist clients in making a decision about a career path, the SLTCD welcomes indecision as a sensible approach to a complex and unpredictable future. Career counselors can help clients reframe indecision as open-mindedness.

The world is extremely complex. No one knows what the future will hold. No one knows how interests will change, how new occupations will arise, or how new opportunities will be created. The SLTCD states that people should not expect to know exactly what they will be doing nor where they will be doing it in the future. Instead it advocates that people can create opportunities by their own actions. Individuals may not know in advance how their actions will generate opportunities, but it is quite clear that doing nothing creates nothing. Unexpected events arise when action is taken. New people are met, new activities are tried, and feedback is gained from every activity that is tried.

PLACING GREATER VALUE ON HAPPENSTANCE

Unplanned events and chance encounters often determine the paths individuals take both in their personal and their professional lives. In the SLTCD, happenstance is seen as more than random occurrences; it

is an outcome of earlier decisions and behaviors, and it is a valuable tool that prompts clients to take actions or make decisions that may have life-altering effects.

The SLTCD recognizes that many circumstances and events in clients' lives are out of their control. Genetic and environmental factors that influence clients' lives are good examples of circumstances in which they have little, if any, control.

GAINING GREATER CONTROL OVER HAPPENSTANCE

The SLTCD acknowledges that, although many events are out of clients' control, clients can actually create, recognize, and take advantage of these unplanned events. Counseling clients to keep an open mind and to recognize the opportunities afforded them when they encounter unexpected events can make a dramatic difference in the direction their career paths will take.

Take Thomas, for example. He was born into a large, loving family that taught him to be honest, hard working, and respectful of others. His parents did not have much money; however, they emphasized the value of learning. Thomas developed an early interest in mathematics. He learned how to count to 100 before he reached the age of 3, and by the time he was 10 years old, he was ahead of his entire math class and often found the class boring. In the fifth grade, Thomas's teacher realized that he needed a greater challenge and asked if he would like to tutor a few of his classmates during the weekly independent study hour. Thomas learned that he enjoyed helping his classmates master new mathematical skills.

It is not known why Thomas excelled in mathematics. Maybe his parents taught him to count at an early age. Maybe there is some genetic origin. He was fortunate to have a teacher who saw his potential and asked him to tutor. He seized that opportunity and found that he liked teaching others.

REFRAMING UNPLANNED EVENTS AS CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

The SLTCD orients clients to view past experiences as lessons for present actions. Unplanned events can be seen as career opportunities—not just unexplained accidents. Explicit attention should be paid to the client's desire for a satisfying life. Since each

person defines a satisfying life in different ways, it is important for career counselors to listen carefully to clients and encourage them to describe activities, both past and present, that energize them. Career counselors can teach clients that they need to recognize the potential opportunities in unplanned events.

Once clients understand how all of their experiences in life affect their decisions, they will see how each decision opens up the potential for new, often unexpected, events. Career counseling is much more complex than merely identifying a suitable occupation for a client. Career counseling today, in a time of uncertainty due to mergers, acquisitions, downsizings, and outsourcing, requires clients to embark on a journey of self-discovery and lifelong learning.

TRANSFORMING ACTION INTO LEARNING

Learning can be defined as either instrumental or associative. Instrumental learning occurs when a person takes action and observes the consequences of that action. Consequences might include comments from other people, observable results, or impact on others. Thomas learned that excelling in math had positive rewards. He enjoyed seeing his classmates improve as a result of his tutoring, and he felt good about the recognition he received from his teacher.

Associative learning occurs when a person makes connections between two phenomena or stimuli. Learning results from observation and conditioning; for example, watching and listening to other people and observing the positive rewards or punishment they receive from certain actions. Thomas observed that competence and enjoyment seemed to go together. He noted that some of his classmates could start out hating math while getting poor grades but then learned to like it after they understood it.

RECOGNIZING THE INFLUENCE OF GENETIC FACTORS AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Genetic factors and environmental conditions, such as physical attributes and abilities (or disabilities), talents, aptitudes, birth family, birth location, and family resources work together with learning experiences to form a client's individual task approach skills. These skills include the ways in which clients cognitively process the world around them, including their beliefs, values, attitudes, feelings, work habits, goals, and expectations.

As a result of Thomas's early experiences tutoring his peers, he developed the ability to communicate technical information in a way that was easy for others to understand. Thomas came to value the relationships he fostered, and he developed respect for people who desired to learn.

MAKING SELF-OBSERVATIONS AND EVALUATIONS

A lifelong journey of learning depends upon self-observation and evaluation. Clients make generalizations about their performance in relation to the performance of others or in relation to their own past performance. In addition, clients evaluate whether they fulfilled or exceeded their own personal expectations or standards. Clients also generalize about their interests based on the activities they find enjoyable or challenging and about what is important to them and what brings them the most personal satisfaction.

Generalizations may be contextual, that is, dependent on the situation or others present when a learning experience occurred. Self-observation generalizations may or may not be accurate or consciously expressed. Thomas made the accurate self-observation generalization, "I am very good at math." After dropping one fly ball while playing baseball, he might have generalized inaccurately, "I am a terrible athlete." These self-observation generalizations can have a powerful effect on subsequent actions.

By the time he reached high school, Thomas generalized that he was excellent in math and was encouraged by his high school counselor to apply to a math and science college. He applied and was accepted at MIT. However, his math teacher told Thomas that the competition would be greater at MIT because almost all the students were excellent at math and science. Thomas began to worry about whether he could succeed at college.

ESTIMATING PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS IN SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONS

Learning experiences and the generalizations they engender enable clients to make estimates, rightly or wrongly, about the probability of succeeding or enjoying a specific career. From their experiences and interactions with others, clients develop interests, coping strategies, ethics, values, and standards. Clients' limited exposure to the world of work may lead them to

assume that certain occupations value or require skills and interests that they may, or may not, have developed. Consequently, clients may initiate an education program or take a job that may, or may not, satisfy them. Career counselors need to help their clients think about their actions as experiments. If the first educational major or work experience is not satisfactory, then the career counselor can encourage clients to take alternative actions.

RECOGNIZING THAT ENVIRONMENTS AND INTERESTS ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING

Unlike previous generations who remained at the same job with the same company until retirement, today's workers often make multiple career changes during their lifetime. When companies unexpectedly merge, for example, persons who had initially expected to have secure employment may find that their jobs are no longer required or that there is an overlap with jobs in the other company. As a result some people will either have to leave or move into new positions. Unplanned events are a common occurrence in life, and how clients respond to them will determine whether their lives are filled with opportunity and adventure or with obstacles and disappointment.

The constant advancement of technology is producing new and unexpected products and services. Occupations that once existed, for example, elevator operators or typewriter repairpersons, are now virtually obsolete. However, people previously employed in one of these occupations can generate new interests and learn how to adapt their skills to fit into current employment needs.

Interests are learned and new experiences provide opportunities for people to discover new interests.

During his first semester, Thomas was invited by one of his professors to join the math club. Through membership in the math club, Thomas met an impressive scholar who introduced him to the complex world of computer science. After learning more about computers and how they are designed, Thomas changed his major from mathematics to electrical engineering.

EMPHASIZING LIFELONG LEARNING

Clients must not see their lack of a career plan as indecision but instead celebrate it as open-mindedness. People have a variety of learning experiences, both

planned and unplanned, as a result of the happenstance events they encounter. Career counselors must prepare clients for a counseling process that embraces happenstance as a necessary component. Counselors should ask clients to identify past instances of happenstance in their lives, examine specific actions that created these unplanned events, and then initiate new actions to generate further unplanned events. Clients should be encouraged to see unexpected events as opportunities for learning and exploration. Career counselors should point out that clients can initiate action that will actually create more chance events using their successes with prior happenstance events as evidence that the clients already know how to do it.

Specific client actions that might lead to career opportunities include researching a job opening or company, volunteering to work at a nonprofit organization, attending a seminar or training program, talking with friends or relatives about job concerns and aspirations, and interviewing or job shadowing someone employed in a field of interest to establish new contacts. Actions like these can be meaningful ways of learning more about interests and generating unexpected valuable information. Counselors need to support client action and, if necessary, address any blocks that may inhibit clients from taking risks.

Genetics and environmental factors combine to produce clients' perceptions of how the world is changing and how those changes produce career opportunities. Clients make generalizations on the basis of their observations of their own performance—both past and present. They use these generalizations to estimate their chances of success in various fields of endeavor. Since environments and client interests are constantly changing, career counselors need to help keep clients from becoming stuck in an initial job that may no longer be satisfactory and to see the opportunities that unexpected events create.

Thomas earned his PhD and was subsequently hired to teach engineering at a midwestern university. After 10 fulfilling years of teaching, Thomas's father became ill and passed away. Thomas took a sabbatical leave and returned to his hometown to help his mother with the family farm. Thomas found that he enjoyed the outdoor life and experienced a sense of purpose and pleasure while gardening. When the owner of a local market asked Thomas if he would be interested in selling some of his organic produce, Thomas took advantage of the opportunity. Within a year, Thomas expanded his organic garden and

began teaching others how to grow healthful produce using natural fertilizers and pest control.

Although Thomas had been very satisfied with his teaching career, the unexpected death of his father required that he make changes in his life. Thomas returned to his family farm with an open mind and soon discovered an interest in gardening. From the time Thomas was a young boy, he knew that he enjoyed teaching. However, Thomas could not have predicted that one day he would be teaching others how to garden.

By remaining open to new learning experiences and by making self-observations, Thomas found a second career that was satisfying to him and beneficial to the members of his community.

—John D. Krumboltz and Jeanne M. Jacobs

See also Career construction theory, Social cognitive career theory, Social constructionism

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SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Socioeconomic status (SES) is the relative position of a family or individual along a hierarchical social structure, based on access to, or control over, wealth, prestige, and power. It is used to measure social class and social status. It is usually operationalized as a composite measure of income, level of education, and occupational prestige. Although these indicators of SES are separable, they tend to be correlated. In many ways, SES categories are archetypal "status groups"—categories of people with unequal amounts of prestige.

The status-attainment model, in stratification research, generally estimates the effects that individuals' socioeconomic origins, and other attributes, have on their life chances, specifically on occupational status. The model provides a parsimonious summary of the ways in which socioeconomic origins affect socioeconomic outcomes.

The model was initially developed by Peter Blau and Otis Duncan in their classic 1967 work, *The American Occupational Structure*, in which they demonstrated that SES of family of origin serves as a foundation for future occupational achievement. Family SES was found to affect the quality and quantity of education received, which affected career beginnings, and ultimately, occupational achievement. Subsequent studies validated and expanded on these findings. Later work also identified or explored limitations; for example, the model does not fully explain the gender wage gap, and family SES has been shown to have limited returns for African Americans.

COMPONENTS OF SES: WEALTH AND HOUSING

Wealth is an important component of SES but has often been overlooked in empirical research. Wealth confers advantages by providing a base of financial security, protecting against downturns in incomes, covering brief periods of unemployment, and helping to avert business losses (for example among struggling entrepreneurs). Up to 80 percent of capital accumulation can be attributed to intergenerational transfers of wealth. This is greater than the effect of parental income.

Owning one's home is the primary mechanism of equity accumulation for most families in the United States. Parents may use wealth, often in the form of property, to finance their children's educational and professional credentials. Housing is an important material mechanism by which socioeconomic advantage is passed on from one generation to the next. Home ownership is also salient to educational attainment in that the quality of the local school district is determined by the local tax base. Equity in a home may play an important role in financing postsecondary education (e.g., by providing a second mortgage to pay for college). Home ownership is also often cheaper in the long run than renting, so funds are freed up to finance education.

LINKS BETWEEN SES AND OCCUPATIONAL OUTCOMES

Norms

The cultural environment, including the immediate family environment and the surrounding community, influences norms and values. The environment provides norms and practices that affect entrance to and progression in professional careers. It has been shown, for example, that students who attend high SES schools are less likely to drop out of high school, and that girls who attend high SES schools are less likely to have a child before graduation, than are students with the same family background who attend low SES schools.

Human Capital

Human capital includes the cumulative educational, personal, and professional attributes and experiences that might enhance an employee's value to an employer. The children in disadvantaged environments tend not to realize their potential for intellectual development, an important component of human capital. Disadvantaged environments tend to suppress the influences of heritability.

Level of education is the most heavily researched human capital attribute. Blau and Duncan concluded that the impact of family background on SES works largely through the schooling system. Research from the careers literature indicates that returns from educational attainment in terms of pay and promotions are significant. Schooling increases the human capital attribute of intellectual development and therefore the earnings of even those children with the lowest ability levels. However, not only is the quality of schooling important to later career success, but so is the timing of the education.

Life-course-timing differences in educational attainment help explain wage differentials by midlife. Advantaged social origins lead to early postsecondary completion of degrees, which in turn yields higher wages. Advantaged men and women have parental, social, and economic resources that facilitate entry into high-quality postsecondary school tracks early in life for their children or enable their children to remain in educational institutions long enough to earn bachelor's and graduate degrees prior to market entry. This process is sequential and cumulative in its effects on wage gains. A pathway of cumulative disadvantage is

also evident: the least advantaged exit schooling early in life, do not return as adults, and earn low wages.

Social and Cultural Capital

SES is linked to social capital. Social capital is defined as the social networks, the reciprocities that arise from them, and the value of these reciprocities for achieving mutual goals. Children benefit from continued exposure to the social connections that parents have with others outside the family group, such as neighbors, school personnel, or work colleagues. For example, youths with well-connected parents and teachers tend to have choices in selecting work. If a youth's relatives are unemployed and their teachers lack job contacts, their choices are restricted to other kinds of contacts (such as peers) that do not lead to long-term earnings benefits.

An educational institution may confer three types of capital on its graduates: scholastic capital, which is one type of human capital and represents the amount of knowledge acquired; social capital in the form of personal contacts and network ties; and cultural capital or the value of its prestige. Ivy League schools, which represent very high-status schools in the United States, are beneficial in conferring social and cultural capital on graduates. It is also possible that graduates from these schools in the United States benefit from nepotism or favoritism.

COMPENSATING FOR LOW SES

Childhood social class differences cannot be completely overcome or compensated for by later life course circumstances, so a recommendation is to increase the transfer of social resources targeting children. Public policies responsible for early intervention programs such as Head Start are believed to make the social environment of these children more conducive to intellectual development. More accessible and higher quality job information and placement centers could also enhance employment and income.

Families could improve their SES and raise their children's chances of upward mobility if public policy and practice expanded opportunities for long-term financial gains in wealth. These opportunities could include increased education about investment opportunities, more extensive investment incentives, wider use of pension plans for companies and businesses, and increased home-buying incentives.

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS VERSUS SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS

The links between SES and career-relevant indicators are typically based on studies that measure occupational status. These measures of occupational status are based on the prestige standing of occupations, the educational levels of occupational incumbents, and the income levels of occupational incumbents. By contrast, there is an extensive career development literature that measures career success using subjective measures such as satisfaction with career and with facets of the current position. While these studies offer a finer textured, intraindividual understanding of the experience of career development and success than stratification studies, they typically do not include SES as a predictor. At this point, then, there is little information on the link between SES and subjective career success.

—Katherine Giscombe

See also Career investments, Family background and careers, Impression management, Occupational prestige, Social capital

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SPECIALTY CHOICE

For several professions, the initial career choices are followed by the need to choose a specialty within that profession. For example, physicians-in-training need to decide whether to specialize in pediatrics, orthopedics, psychiatry, or some other field. However, much of the career development literature has focused primarily on the initial career choice of a profession with relatively little attention to *specialty choice*. To provide an overview to the concept of career specialty choice, the tools available for the assessment of specialty choice in business and medicine are reviewed in this entry. References for the instruments reviewed in this entry can be found in the Frederick Leong and Elke Geisler-Brenstein article published in 1991.

SPECIALTY CHOICE IN BUSINESS

Students who have chosen a career in business can specialize in a variety of functional areas (e.g., finance, marketing). Edgar Schein identified a series of career anchors and developed an instrument to measure these career anchors for individuals who are pursuing business careers. In conducting a qualitative-longitudinal study of MBA students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Schein identified several constellations of values and needs that tend to direct and anchor the individuals with regard to functional specialties within their business careers. In conducting this research, Schein developed an instrument called the Career Orientations Inventory in order to identify individuals' career anchors. Career anchors are viewed as a combination of values, needs, and interests. These career anchors include Technical/Functional Competence, Managerial Competence, Autonomy and Independence, Security/Stability, Service/Dedication, Pure Challenge, Lifestyle Integration, and Entrepreneurship.

The next instrument is not really a separate instrument as much as it is a special scoring of the Strong Interest Inventory to provide information on business specialties. These assessments are called the Strong Topical Reports, and there are three of them: the Leadership Management Style Report, the Organizational Specialty Report, and the Leisure Report. The instrument of most interest with respect to making a specialty choice is the Organizational Specialty Report, which was developed by Pierre Mayer. This report identifies whether individuals would be interested in working in a series of business areas of specialization within an organization. These specialty areas include administrative services, communications, finance and control, general management, human resources, legal, informational systems management, manufacturing management, research and development, marketing, and sales.

Another recent development in the assessment of business specialty interests is David Campbell's new instrument called the Campbell Work Orientations Scales (CWO). The CWO consists of three separate surveys. Of the three surveys within the CWO scales, the Campbell Interest and Skill Survey is the most relevant to specialty choice. The Interest and Skill Survey provides information on 29 interest scales, which are organized into nine clusters: agriculture, mechanics, military/athletics, science/mathematics,

art/music/travel, social/medical services, leadership/politics, management/finance, and advertising/marketing. Of the nine clusters, the first three are of most relevance to business career specialties: (1) public speaking, law/politics, leadership; (2) management, office practices, financial services; and (3) sales, advertising/marketing, and fashion.

SPECIALTY CHOICE IN THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

Three primary instruments have been used to assist physicians-in-training in selecting a medical specialty. Each of the instruments explores somewhat different personality aspects. The Medical Specialty Preference Scales (MSPS) developed by Harrison Gough assesses occupational interests in terms of different school subjects, occupational titles, and types of people based on items of the Strong Campbell Interest Inventory (SCII). George Zimney's Medical Specialty Preference Inventory measures students' preferences for specific medical activities and settings. Finally, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator indicates a student's psychological type along four fundamental dimensions of personality.

For the development of the MSPS, the Strong Vocational Interest Blank (an earlier version of the SCII) was administered to 956 freshman medical students at the University of California School of Medicine in San Francisco. Their scores were examined for discriminant validity after the students had started practicing medicine. Ten criterion groups were established: anesthesiology, eyes, ears, nose, and throat (EENT), obstetrics and gynecology, surgery, family medicine and general practice, pathology, radiology, internal medicine, psychiatry, and pediatrics. The MSPS is scored by the vendor, Consulting Psychologists Press. Together with a computer-scored printout, the student also receives a four-page interpretive guide with general instructions on how to plot the raw scores on a profile for males or females as well as with information regarding how to interpret the profile.

The Medical Specialty Preference Inventory (MSPI) was developed with the dual purpose of providing medical students with information about their personal specialty preferences as well as providing students with information regarding various aspects of the medical specialties themselves. The instrument assesses preferences for six specialties: internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, psychiatry,

surgery, and family practice. Unlike the MSPS, the MSPI was developed based on the ratings of practitioners. A national sample of over 1,000 board-certified physicians in each of the six specialties rated each of 199 items directly related to the practice of medicine to indicate how characteristic they were of the general clinical practice in their specialty. The MSPI comes in the form of a 10-page booklet with 199 questionnaire items relating to the different aspects of medicine. Students rate each item in terms of how desirable it is for them in the practice of medicine.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is widely used in career counseling. A large database of type preferences of medical students has provided type information for a large number of medical specialties and may prove useful to students in the process of medical specialty choice. Type tables compiled for large samples of medical students show that all types are represented in the medical field. An examination of type distributions in individual specialties, however, shows that certain types are more likely to be attracted to one specialty than to others. For example, introverted, intuitive thinkers were more likely to be found in pathology (INTJ and INTP), while extroverted, sensing-thinking types with a preference for orderly functioning (ESTJ) were more likely to be found in general practice.

—Frederick T. L. Leong

See also Career as a calling, Customized careers, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Occupational choice, Occupational professionalization

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SPIRITUALITY AND CAREERS

Although the desire to experience and express spirituality in one's work appears to be on the increase, there are two difficulties encountered as soon as one tries to discuss spirituality. The first is the fear that spirituality is inextricably linked to organized religions so that a particular religious focus will try to be imposed. The second is the sense that spirituality is so personal that no one can define it in a way that makes sense for

another. This entry therefore begins by tackling those two big issues: the definition of spirituality and the relationship of spirituality to religion. Following those sections, research and observations on the relationship between spirituality, work, and career are explored.

A DEFINITION OF SPIRITUALITY

There have been a number of studies in which people have been asked to define what spirituality means to them. Although these studies have ranged from large-scale explorations of many people's ideas to small, targeted studies, the answers have a remarkable similarity. They include the following ideas: a sense of connection to other people, a relationship to the environment or universe, feelings of guidance or purpose from within, connection to a transcendent power, a sense of harmony, and a sense of calling. These phrases have a common core of meaning: the self, the self in relationship, and a resulting sense of what to do or how to be. Therefore, the definition of spirituality that is used throughout this entry has two parts. It is as follows: Spirituality is a sense of connection to something beyond oneself and deep within oneself, a connection that informs the search for meaning, purpose, and integration in life.

RELATIONSHIP OF SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION

Much of the research that served to define spirituality also explored the relationship between spirituality and religion. This research has been based primarily in the United States, although studies have also been conducted in Australia and New Zealand. The results of this research can generally be viewed on a continuum. On one end of the continuum are people who identify spirituality and religion as one and the same. At the other end of the continuum are people who see themselves as "individual seekers" involved in a highly personal journey, whose spirituality is not necessarily tied to religion. This personal journey might include practices such as prayer or meditation, activities that some would associate with religion. Research in the 1990s and into the twenty-first century suggests that Americans are moving more toward the latter end of the continuum. However, organized religion, personal spiritual searches, and what might be described as practices drawn from religion are intertwined for many people.

In *A Generation of Seekers*, Wade Roof described the many aspects of spiritual seeking, including career implications, particularly among the baby boomers, the generation born between 1946 and 1964.

The difference between religion and spirituality in the workplace is particularly important to Americans. In their research, Ian Mitroff and Elizabeth Denton found that employees in companies that they consider to be spiritual are more productive and less likely to leave. They also found that people wanted companies to honor spirituality and act in accord with the values of relationship and connection embodied in spirituality, but they did not want companies to be linked to particular religions. This observation supports the findings of other research that attempts to introduce spirituality into the workplace require a gentle touch that is imbued with both an understanding of and respect for diversity and differences.

SPIRITUALITY AND WORK

There are limited studies on the relationship of spirituality to work. However, those studies show outcomes for both the individual and the organization. Leaders describe their spirituality as keeping them focused on the values and needs of others. Furthermore, individuals who have explored their spirituality benefit their organizations through increased creativity, more ethical behavior, and team building.

Because spirituality is about both relationships with others and about a sense of purpose and meaning, it is strongly linked to the individual's value systems. Individuals may find that their values are more or less congruent with those of the organization for which they are working. Some research shows that individuals disengage from aspects of the work or leave the jobs completely when their spiritual values are no longer aligned with those of the organization. On the other hand, a recent study showed that congruence in spiritual values between individuals and organizations is positively associated with commitment to the organization.

SPIRITUALITY AND CAREER DECISION MAKING

Since spiritual congruence can lead either to commitment or to disengagement, it is clearly a factor in career decision making. Career purposes that have been linked to spirituality include developing oneself, developing unity with others, and expressing oneself. The

search to fulfill each of these purposes affects individual career decision making. In seeking to develop oneself, career decisions regarding integrity and growth affect career choices. In seeking to develop unity with others, career decisions around shared values or a sense of belonging are associated with career choices. The search to express oneself may be seen in career choices around issues of creativity, achievement, or influencing others to express themselves.

Perhaps the most familiar concept associated with spirituality and career decision making is the concept of calling. Sometimes calling, or vocation, is seen as being limited to religious occupations, but calling could be defined as recognizing one's gifts and using them in productive work. People who recognize and respond to their calling describe their work as fulfilling, even at times blissful. They express a sense of connection between themselves and their work. Identification of one's calling is often part of the spiritual journey, that is, calling is not necessarily evident early in life, nor is it static.

In sum, the essence of spirituality is the sense of oneness experienced with the self, with others, with work, and with the transcendent. Recognizing the difficulty of holding on to this transitory sense of unity, Deborah Bloch and Lee Richmond identified seven connectors uniting spirituality and career.

1. *Change*: Being open to change in yourself and the world around you
2. *Balance*: Achieving balance among the activities of your life such as work, leisure, learning, and family relationships as well as balance between the old and new
3. *Energy*: Feeling that you always have enough energy to do what you want to do
4. *Community*: Working as a member of a team or community of workers
5. *Calling*: Believing that you are called to the work you do by your particular mix of talents, interests, and values
6. *Harmony*: Working in a setting that harmonizes with your talents, interests, and values
7. *Unity*: Believing that the work you do has a purpose beyond earning money and in some way serves others

The seven ideas above can be seen as attempts to connect to the ineffable sought in the mysteries of the trinity, the One of Judaism, the Om of Buddhism, the

Oneness of Allah and the Hindu Vedas. In addition, for some the connections are evident in what appears to be a grand design emerging from discoveries in quantum mechanics and chaos and complexity science.

There is limited research at this time on the links between spirituality and career, the methods for incorporating spirituality in career counseling, and the outcomes of doing so. However, spirituality often incorporates knowing by intuition, and intuition is leading respected members of the field to recommend the incorporation of spirituality into counseling practice.

—Deborah P. Bloch

See also Ethics and careers, Family background and careers, Multicultural organization, Religious discrimination

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STANFORD-BINET INTELLIGENCE SCALE

The *Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale* is an individually administered assessment of intelligence and cognitive abilities. The Stanford-Binet has a wide variety of uses, including school placement, determining the presence of a learning disability or developmental delay, and tracking intellectual development. Although undergoing various revisions, this assessment tool is the oldest and most influential test of its kind.

The test was originally developed in 1905 by Alfred Binet, a French psychologist, along with his colleague Theodore Simon, as a mechanism to identify schoolchildren who were in need of special education in France. The test consisted of 30 tasks of increasing difficulty that assessed such factors as attention, memory, and verbal skills. The test, referred to as the Binet-Simon scale, was revised in 1908 and 1911. In the revised version, tasks were clustered by the age at which most children could successfully complete them. The number of tasks successfully completed measured the child's level of intellectual performance, which Binet referred to as "mental age." To allow for a broader age range, adult tasks were added in the revision.

In 1916, the first U.S. revision was completed by Lewis Terman at Stanford University. Terman recognized the limitations of using the Binet-Simon scale in the United States because the research was based on a different population. While Terman employed many tests from Binet's scale, he incorporated new tests based on his own methodical research. His research provided a better representation of the population and included a higher and lower age range. The test was commonly referred to as the Stanford-Binet Scale.

The Stanford-Binet Scale was carefully standardized, based on extensive research by Terman and his team of graduate students. The test's organization, administrative procedures, and scoring instructions were made clearer. The most important aspect of Terman's revision was incorporating William Stern's concept of intelligence quotient (IQ). IQ was defined as the ratio of mental age to chronological age multiplied by 100. The concept of IQ replaced Binet's "mental age."

After over two decades, Terman and his colleague Maud Merrill released another revision in 1937. This revision addressed the limitation of the 1916 single-form version by developing two carefully equated scales: Form L and Form M. Each form consisted of 129 tests that contained more performance-based tasks and less verbal testing. The test covered Ages 2 through adult, and the test integrated the use of toys to keep younger test takers interested.

For their third revision, Terman and Merrill published Form L-M, which consolidated the best items from the two previous forms. The use of the traditional IQ was eliminated and replaced with Deviation IQ, which was based on a standardized score. In 1973, revised norms of the Stanford-Binet were released by Robert Thorndike.

The Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, fourth edition, was released in 1986 by Thorndike, Elizabeth Hagen, and Jerome Sattler. This revamped version used a point-scale as opposed to the age-scale from previous forms. The point-scale is an arrangement of tests into subtests with items organized by type and presented by varying difficulty. The subtests, which provided a score for each area, focused on the following: general intelligence, verbal reasoning, abstract/visual reasoning, quantitative reasoning, and short-term memory. The vocabulary section was used to help the administrator determine where to begin testing.

The most recent version of the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, the fifth edition, was released in 2003 by Gale Roid. This edition uses both the point-scale and the age-scale format. The age-scale was reintroduced to keep the examinee engaged in the testing experience. In addition to the vocabulary test, the fifth edition uses both a verbal and nonverbal test to help the administrator determine where to begin testing. The 2003 revision continues to measure general intelligence and quantitative reasoning and adds knowledge, fluid reasoning, visual-spatial processing, working memory, and verbal and nonverbal IQ. Correcting upon a limitation of the previous version, the fifth edition allows for early recognition of individuals with developmental delays or cognitive difficulties by expanding the low-end items of the test. The high-end items were also expanded to allow for the identification of highly gifted individuals. Normal intelligence can still be assessed.

The most recent edition of the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale preserves the work from the early creators, including Binet, Simon, Terman, and Merrill, yet uses the modernized contributions of the more recent authors, Thorndike, Hagen, and Sattler. The revisions of the Stanford-Binet were necessary to stay current with recent trends in assessment tools and their uses. They are used in business and industry for placement and employee selection and in schools to identify children's scholastic strengths and weaknesses. Given the long history and continuing popularity, the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale will continue to be a useful instrument in the future.

—Kristen Dee Wilson

See also Intelligence, Multiple intelligences, Wechsler Intelligence Scales

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STEREOTYPING OF WORKERS

Stereotypes are beliefs about the characteristics of a group of people, which lead to expectations about what individual members of that group will be like and how they will behave. Stereotypes are usually formed on the basis of membership in visible social categories such as race, gender, age, and disability status. Although the content of the stereotypes about groups varies, the process by which stereotyping influences how people are perceived remains the same. Stereotyping is a cognitive process that occurs when individuals are judged and evaluated on the basis of group memberships, rather than information about them as individuals.

People rely on stereotypes for cognitive reasons. Stereotyping simplifies the task of observing and understanding people. When a new person is encountered, it is expected that he or she will have characteristics that are consistent with the stereotype and will behave in a manner consistent with the stereotype. This process usually occurs automatically, outside of conscious awareness. Once activated, stereotypes influence the information about a person that is attended to, how that information is interpreted, and the impression that is formed about that individual. While stereotypes result in more efficient processing of information, they have potentially deleterious costs in terms of fairness and accuracy of judgments. Relying on stereotypes of a group to make judgments about an individual's behavior results in the perceiver glossing over the individual's actual characteristics and behavior.

Stereotyping of workers in organizations is a well-researched phenomenon. In the workplace, people are frequently called upon to make judgments and evaluate others for hiring decisions, promotions, job assignments, and salary increases. Research has demonstrated that stereotypes play a role in these decisions and result in biased evaluations of certain groups. The manner by which many of these decisions

occur in an organizational setting is through a matching process in which the attributes of an individual worker are compared to the attributes thought to be required for a specific job. When the worker's perceived attributes match the attributes thought to be required for a job, then that individual is expected to succeed. However, if the worker's perceived attributes are not seen as matching the attributes thought to be required for a given job, that individual is expected to fail. The perceived attributes of workers have been demonstrated to be heavily based on stereotypes, rather than information about them as individuals. This can then lead to erroneous expectations of success for some groups and failure for others. For example, it has been shown that high-level managerial, executive jobs are thought to require typically male attributes such as achievement orientation and aggressiveness. Thus when women (or the elderly, or African Americans) are evaluated for these types of jobs, they are not seen as a good match because the stereotypes of these groups are not seen as matching the typical male attributes required for the job. This perceived lack of fit between the attributes of the individual and the requirements for the job result in expectations of failure and biased evaluations of performance. When White men are evaluated for these types of jobs, they are seen as matching because of the overlap between the stereotype of males and the attributes required for success in managerial roles. This perceived fit between these attributes of the individual and the requirements for the job result in expectations of success and positively biased evaluations of performance. Thus, stereotypes lead to expectations of failure or success that result in biased evaluations in organizational settings. This has been found to be the case not only for women on male-sex-typed jobs but also for the elderly on young-typed-jobs, for African Americans on White-typed-jobs, and for people with disabilities for jobs thought to be physically demanding.

Stereotypes have also been shown to impact targets of a stereotype, as well as perceivers. Research has demonstrated that individuals who belong to groups to which a negative stereotype applies are likely to worry about confirming that stereotype and thus perform worse on a given task. For example, women were found to negotiate less well than men when the stereotype that women are not effective negotiators was primed; however, there were no differences in negotiation performance when the stereotype was not

primed. Thus stereotypes can negatively impact work outcomes for individuals through their effect on biased evaluations of performance by others and through their effect on the actual performance of stereotyped individuals.

There has been a great deal of research examining how to minimize the impact of stereotyping on organizational decision making. People are capable of overriding automatically activated stereotypes and making careful decisions based on individual behavior when given the time, incentive, and information to do so. Research has identified factors that allow for this type of careful decision making. First, organizational decision makers are less likely to rely on stereotypes when they have access to job-relevant information about the individual. Research has demonstrated that people are less likely to rely on stereotypes when there is unambiguous information about how successful or qualified an individual is, when it is clear that it is the individual that is responsible for the success, and when there are no alternative explanations available as to why the individual was successful. Thus one way to minimize the impact of stereotypes is making success and failure information explicit. In addition, it is critical to ensure that decision makers have enough time available to make careful decisions. Research has demonstrated that decision makers are more likely to rely on stereotypes when they are busy and distracted by other work. Finally, another important factor that minimizes the extent to which decision makers will rely on stereotypes in making judgments is whether or not the decision maker is motivated to make an accurate decision. Thus organizations that hold people accountable for accurate decision making, provide sufficient time for decision making, and provide sufficient information to decision makers are less likely to have decision-making processes biased by stereotypes.

Another important factor in minimizing the impact of stereotypes of workers is to change the way that jobs are seen. One of the most important factors in determining who is seen as a good fit for a job is the characteristics of job incumbents. If job incumbents are mostly White and male, then White males will be seen as having matching characteristics for this type of job. If job incumbents vary in terms of social groups, then it is more likely that organizational decision makers will have to examine individual characteristics of workers, rather than rely on stereotypes to determine who is a match for a given job.

The effects of stereotyping workers in organizations are tenacious, because stereotypes come to mind automatically. Stereotypes influence both perceivers and the targets of the stereotype. One of the most important things that an organization can do is to simply acknowledge the effects of stereotypes so that individuals can actively work not to rely on them when making judgments.

—Caryn J. Block

See also Age discrimination, Occupational stereotypes, Racial discrimination, Sex discrimination

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STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (SHRM)

Organizational strategy refers to the overall positioning and competitive approach of an organization in the marketplace. Strategic management is the deliberate effort to align the organization's long-term direction with organizational strategy. Good strategic management integrates organizational functions into a strategic plan so that all organizational units operate in a coordinated fashion in support of the overall strategy. *Strategic human resource management (SHRM)*, then, is the process by which an organization's management integrates its human resource plans and programs with the strategic plan of the organization. SHRM stands in contrast to traditional human resource management (HRM), which contributes to an organization at the

operational level. For example, the traditional human resource (HR) concern of selecting job applicants who display skills that are predictive of good job performance may only be implicitly related to the strategic objectives of the organization.

A key feature of SHRM is the linkage formed between management and HR to align the functions of HR with the direction of the organization. SHRM links human resources vertically and horizontally as well as in present and future time frames. Vertical linkages entail connecting HR practices with the strategic management process of the organization, while horizontal linkages involve the coordination of various practices within HR through a patterned or planned action. HR strategies are linked to organizational plans, anticipated HR needs, and to HR programs that will be implemented to meet those needs. SHRM involves multiple HR processes, such as recruiting, selection, performance management, employee and career development, succession planning, retirement, and termination. Each of these can be linked to an organization's strategic objectives. For example, a planned business expansion into Eastern Europe could be supported by strategic employee development (e.g., providing language and cultural training to key employees to prepare them to meet business needs) or by strategic recruitment and selection (e.g., hiring Eastern European employees prior to the expansion).

STEPS IN SHRM

SHRM involves three steps: forecasting, strategy formulation, and implementation. Forecasting is the attempt to predict future events that will impact the organization and its needs through the analyses of the organization's internal and external environments (e.g., mission statement, goals, labor markets, opportunities, and threats). HR strategy formulation—that is, strategic human resource planning (SHRP)—involves the development of initiatives that are aligned with the organization's mission statement, strategic objectives, strengths and weaknesses, and opportunities and threats. Finally, HR strategy implementation involves putting the HR plan into action with HR programs that support the organization's overall strategy.

Forecasting

Predictability and control increase the precision of forecasting. Predictability is the degree to which one

can estimate the occurrence of an event, and control is the ability to orchestrate the likelihood of an event occurring. Greater control implies greater predictability, although some events over which one has little or no control are predictable. Predictability and control have important implications for how forecasting should be approached. Forecasting is more effective when forecasting techniques are compatible with levels of predictability and control. For simplicity, it is appropriate to distinguish among four levels of predictability and control. The first consists of events over which an organization has control, for example, closing outdated plants and scheduling layoffs. The second level involves events over which the organization has little control but which are nevertheless predictable. For example, in some countries, organizations can predict retirements with a high degree of certainty because of government-mandated retirement ages. The third level consists of events that are probabilistic. Although they can be anticipated by extrapolating from historical trends, they involve a low to moderate degree of certainty because extraneous factors often alter previous patterns and because the limits to human rationality constrain the degree to which such events can be predicted. An example would be predicting skill sets that could have strategic implications. The fourth level involves events that are unknown, unanticipated, or random. These can include, for example, the unexpected death of a CEO or the introduction of new technologies that dramatically change labor requirements.

To be most effective, forecasting techniques should be congruent with the degree of uncertainty in a system. The greater the predictability and control of events, the more specific predictions can be. Techniques that use productivity ratios (i.e., the ratio of labor to output) to forecast labor demands are appropriate for predictable situations because they are based on straightforward prediction equations and they forecast specific numbers of workers for given conditions. However, in situations with less predictability and control, it is not possible to make specific predictions, and therefore the most appropriate forecasting techniques are those that provide general information. Forecasting in less predictable situations might, for example, involve looking at historical cycles in workforce demand and supply or at trends in demand for skills sets. Finally, in situations where future events are unpredictable, planning for any particular outcome is unwise. When forecasting is not

possible, a diversity (or variation) strategy is the best approach. As financial analysts have known for years, a diverse investment portfolio is the best hedge against losing money due to the uncertainty of the stock market. Similarly, SHRM activities that focus on variation are the best insurance against uncertain futures. A diverse HR portfolio increases the probability that one of the variants may prove useful for unexpected contingencies. Examples of HR programs that foster variation include allowing employees to choose a certain proportion of their yearly training courses; randomly selecting job applicants from a generous short list of those who meet basic qualifications; formalizing structures that encourage frequent informal interaction; instituting more lenient performance management policies that do not punish employees who work in nontraditional ways and who think unconventionally.

HR Strategy Formulation

The HR strategy formulation phase is a complex process that involves making decisions about HR activities based on forecasts, organizational strategy, and the anticipated effects of HR programs on strategic objectives. An important process in SHRP is linking HR functions to other processes in the organization. The goal of linking is to establish a closer relationship between management and HR and therefore increasing the likelihood of developing HR policies that are congruent with the organization's strategic objectives. Linkage is related to the amount of contact among the organization's strategic planners, the HR department, and the managers who will be responsible for executing the plans. Linkages can range from minimal (groups working independently) to full integration (groups working interdependently), but they are typically blended. For instance, information pertaining to hiring may flow both ways, whereas information regarding funding of projects might be handed down from the top management to HR. The appropriate degree of linkage depends on the business climate, organizational needs, and corporate strategy; however, some linkage between HR and management is generally necessary. A disconnect between planners and managers can easily derail the planning and implementation processes.

The probability of successful SHRP can be enhanced by starting with a simple plan (for example, forecasting the number of anticipated hires needed the following year based on typical levels of attrition at a

given site). As leaders gain experience using simple forecasting models, and as those models provide useful data that integrate with and help guide strategic business planning, the level of sophistication of the SHRP may increase. In some cases, however, it may never progress beyond a basic attrition-based replacement model; that may be all that's required under the circumstances. In other cases, complex algorithms based on multiple data sources may generate the needed (and useful) data. The point for HR to keep in mind is to use only what works and is needed—not more, and not less.

Implementation

Strategy implementation involves the integration of the larger organizational strategy into the HR functions of the organization, and it is arguably as—or more—complex than strategy formulation. Employee recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, and labor and employee relations may all have to be altered by HR in order to integrate with the organizational strategy. Unlike the formulation process, implementation is an organizational intervention; and organizational interventions require assistance—at the very least, cooperation—from members of the organization.

Unfortunately, resistance to the planning process and to the strategic HR plan is a common outcome of planning, and therefore it must be managed appropriately. Resistance on the part of any group can be detrimental for strategy implementation. Resistance may stem from internal organizational politics, and it may influence the accuracy of the data that managers provide in the forecasting and planning stages. For example, managers interested in protecting turf or enhancing their unit's power may inflate their estimate of the number of new employees they need. In other cases, managers may just not respond to requests from HR for planning because of heavy workloads, competing business priorities, and uncertainty about future needs. Managers may view the outcome of SHRP as being of little value—because they view it as providing insufficient information to guide policy or business decisions (e.g., number of hires is given for a region, rather than an individual location or country; the types of skills, experience, or education required are not described), or because they view it as so detailed that implementing it would be too burdensome (e.g., a plan calling for master's-level chemical engineers, with at least at a 3.27 grade point

average, who have worked in the United States doing polymer chemistry to be split evenly across five sites in Southeast Asia). In these cases, calls to implement the plan will probably be resisted or simply ignored.

Strong relationships with business leaders, a good understanding of the business, and a willingness to modify plans where necessary are helpful in implementing strategic HR plans. Given the possibility of pushback from business leaders and lack of utilization of SHRM processes and plans, HR must take an active role in ensuring that the SHRM process is relatively painless and provides truly useful data to assist in business planning. Understanding what information business leaders need, what is actionable, and what is realistic are keys to making SHRM work. A strategic HR plan that is not, or cannot be, implemented is of no use to the organization.

COSTS AND BENEFITS INHERENT IN SHRM

If the success of any type of strategic planning is measured by the accuracy with which actual plans and forecasts come to pass, then the success rate of strategic planning is rather dismal. In most situations, managers and HR professionals cannot accurately forecast how the environment will change in the future and what specific HR capabilities will be needed to perform effectively in future environments. Planning involves assumptions about the environment and about the future. As environments become more complex, uncertainty increases and assumptions are more tenuous, and most organizations typically operate in complex social, political, and economic environments.

Fortunately for practitioners, empirical studies show a positive relationship between the use of SHRM and bottom-line outcomes, such as stock share price and employee productivity. In contrast, there does not appear to be a relationship between competent performance of technical HR duties and organizational performance. This underscores the importance of strategic, rather than technical, human resource management. These successes of strategic planning may be due to a number of factors. One is that organizations may be tailoring their planning processes to uncertainty levels—planning more generally in more uncertain environments, which in turn produces adaptive outcomes (not all of which can be predicted). In addition, the planning process may be just as important, if not more important, than the plan itself. Organizations that engage in strategic HR planning are likely to have

processes that require frequent interaction among executives, managers, and HR professionals. This means that the right people are talking about the right things at the right time. Plans themselves inevitably need updating and modification as circumstances dictate. Processes that modify and update plans help to ensure that plans stay relevant and useful.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Globalization, technology, and diversity are recent developments that have had a significant impact on the process and use of SHRM. Globalization has brought with it increased competition and uncertainty, making future planning critical but increasingly difficult. The movement of people between countries has increased because of free trade agreements and visa programs. No longer is an organization limited to local hiring programs. Organizations can (and often should) consider regional, or even global, talent pools. Multinational organizations must plan not only for the needs of one country but must consider the cumulative impact of events in all countries in which they operate. Recent discussions of offshoring highlight the need to think about a company's talent management and planning in global terms.

Technology has enabled instant, electronic collection of SHRM data and development of complex models to better predict human capital needs. However, it has also given rise to new forms of work (e.g., telecommuting, globally distributed teams, 24-hour operations) and new skills (e.g., computer literacy) that have added a layer of complexity to the SHRM process. The increasing importance of skilled human resources in information-age economies and diversity of employee populations are increasingly important issues in planning. Skilled employees are as important as capital and technology in high-tech and sophisticated service organizations. Acquiring, developing, and retaining high-talent employees cannot be done by seat-of-the-pants methods that use little or no planning and that do not integrate HR programs with strategic plans.

Diversity has become important because of equal opportunity and affirmative action laws, which are no longer limited to the United States but are becoming widespread internationally (e.g., Brazil, South Africa, India, Canada, Malaysia). In addition, matching employee demographics to the demographic makeup of the regions in which the company does business is

now a critical ingredient of successfully competing in a global marketplace. Diversity of thought, style, and experience is also a growing consideration in the planning and implementation processes based on the premise that greater diversity leads to greater innovation, productivity, and company value.

CONCLUSION

Organizations now operate in an increasingly global, technologically sophisticated, and interdependent world, which has intensified competition among organizations. This, in turn, increases the importance of human resources and makes viable SHRM processes all the more critical to organizational survival and effectiveness. Without processes to explore organizational needs, create and modify plans to meet those needs, and align human resource management practices with the strategic objectives, organizations will increasingly be at a competitive disadvantage.

—Stephen M. Colarelli, Monica Hemingway,
and Matthew Monnot

See also Human resource information systems (HRIS), Human resource planning, Human resource support systems, Personnel selection

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STRESS AT WORK

Stress is an experience that disrupts a person's emotional and physical state, such as having too much work that causes someone to become overtired or getting into an argument with a coworker that results in anger. Life itself is inherently stressful, so it should be no surprise that stress is an integral part of the workplace, and in fact a great deal of a person's stress comes from work. Studies have shown that stress occurs often at work, with most people able to recall at least one stressful incident in the prior month, and 10 percent to 15 percent of employees saying they had experienced *stress at work* in the prior day.

Job stress researchers distinguish stressors (factors at work that disrupt a person's emotional and physical state) from strains (a person's reactions to stressors). Stressors can involve the nature of the job itself, interactions with other people, and rewards. Strains are classified into behavioral reactions (e.g., calling in sick when not ill or drinking alcohol), physical reactions (headache or heart disease), and psychological reactions (experiencing anger or anxiety). People vary in their ability to cope with stressors, and different people may react in different ways. For example, when assigned a difficult task, one person might work extra hours the next day to successfully complete it, whereas another might call in sick.

The basic job stress process involves the reaction of people to the work environment. During the day at work, people are aware of circumstances and events that are occurring. Some events will be perceived and interpreted by an individual as a stressor in that it will cause a disruption to the daily routine. The person might see the event as a challenge to be met or a threat to well-being. Most likely the disruption will first result in an emotional reaction such as getting angry at a rude customer or anxious over being asked to take on an unfamiliar task. The emotional response will be accompanied by physical changes to the body, which over time could result in physical symptoms such as a headache or stomach distress. Finally, the person might take some sort of action that might be constructive (e.g., seeking assistance for the unfamiliar task) or destructive (e.g., insulting the rude customer).

There are many additional factors that help determine whether a given event will be perceived as stressful and whether or not the stressor will lead to particular strains. Perhaps the most important element is an individual's control over the situation. If a person feels in

Table 1. Most Commonly Studied Stressors

<i>Stressor</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Interpersonal conflict	Getting into arguments and fights with others that might include insulting, nasty, and rude behavior
Organizational constraints	Conditions of work that interfere with people being able to do their job, such as defective materials or unreliable equipment
Role ambiguity	Uncertainty about what people's responsibilities are and what they are supposed to accomplish at work
Role conflict	Incompatible demands such as being asked to be in two different locations at the same time
Work overload	Either too much work or work that is too difficult for the person to do

control, an event is less likely to be perceived as a stressor, and a stressor is less likely to result in strains. The person's personality is also important, as some people are more prone to experience stressors and strains than others. Finally, assistance and emotional support from other people can reduce the impact of stressors.

STRESSORS AND STRAINS

Much of the scientific research on job stress has been devoted to determining the conditions and events at work that are perceived by employees to be stressors and how those stressors result in strains. A series of studies have been conducted in which people were asked to relate an incident at work that was stressful, and these incidents were analyzed to look for recurring patterns. These studies have been done not only in the United States but also in Asian countries (e.g., China and India) as well. What they show is that there are certain universally experienced stressors, some occupation-specific stressors, and some stressors that are culturally determined. For example, having conflicts with coworkers and supervisors and having too much work to do are universal stressors experienced by employees across different occupations and countries. Not having enough control at work is mainly an American issue not often mentioned by Asians. However, not being given enough direction by the supervisor is an issue for Asians but not Americans. In terms of occupational differences, engineers find having their time wasted to be particularly stressful, whereas nurses find dealing with patient death to be a problem for them.

Most research on job stress has used a survey approach, asking employees to indicate the level of stressors and strains they experience on the job. The

table above contains a list of the most commonly studied stressors and their definition.

Each of these stressors (to be discussed in detail below) has been linked to strains. Table 2 lists commonly studied job strains that have been linked to stressors, in the categories of behavioral, physical, and psychological. Most of these are immediate responses to stressors, although some such as heart disease can take many years of continual exposure to stressors.

INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

As noted above, when asked about stressful incidents at work, interpersonal conflict is often mentioned. Getting along with coworkers, supervisors, and others at work is an important aspect of well-being. Working people spend a great deal of their waking hours at work, and so getting along at work is important. Individuals who find themselves isolated from others, in conflict with others, and the brunt of abusive and nasty acts will experience emotional reactions, such as anxiety and sadness that in some cases can be extreme, and they can in turn lead to both behavioral and physical strains such as headaches and stomach distress. This can lead employees to avoid work by calling in sick and taking overly long breaks.

Conflict with supervisors can be particularly problematic, because the supervisor has control over much of the employee's work life, such as rewards and work assignments. Furthermore, it can be difficult to avoid or ignore a supervisor, resulting in continual unpleasant encounters and possibly the experience of retaliation by the supervisor.

It is not uncommon in organizations for certain individuals to be singled out for bullying by one or

Table 2. Commonly Studied Job Strains That Have Been Linked to Stressors

<i>Category of Strain</i>	<i>Strains</i>
Behavioral	Avoiding work, e.g., calling in sick, taking long breaks Drinking alcohol or taking drugs Getting into fights Poor job performance Smoking Starting arguments
Physical	Dizziness Headache Heart pounding Stomach distress Heart disease
Psychological	Anger Anxiety Bad mood Frustration with job or people Poor job attitude

more coworkers and supervisors. This can include being the brunt of nasty comments and practical jokes, being excluded from positive social interactions such as going to lunch, and being given no assistance by others. Extreme cases of bullying have led to emotional breakdowns requiring hospitalization. This occurs often in European countries, where job mobility has prevented the individual from switching jobs.

Another possibility is that conflict among employees can escalate into physical violence. Most instances of employee-to-employee violence is mild, consisting of pushing and shoving, but extreme cases of assault with a weapon do occur. Rare cases of homicide are typically featured in the national news, such as the rather well-publicized multiple murders in the U.S. Postal Service. For example, after experiencing months of bullying and harassment by supervisors and then being fired for insubordination, Thomas McIlvane returned to work on November 14, 1991, and killed four supervisors and then himself.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONSTRAINTS

Constraints in the workplace are things that interfere with an employee's ability to perform the job well. This can include insufficient physical resources

such as equipment or supplies, inadequate training, missing information, or lack of time. It seems obvious that constraints would result in poor job performance, but they are also experienced as stressors. Most employees wish to perform their jobs well, and conditions of work that make this difficult will result in strain. Although not as severe as interpersonal conflict, constraints can lead to anger and frustration over the job being made unnecessarily difficult or the inability to perform well. This also can lead to poor job attitudes and avoidance of work.

ROLE AMBIGUITY AND ROLE CONFLICT

Although role ambiguity and role conflict are different kinds of stressors, most researchers have studied them together. Role ambiguity is the lack of clear direction and guidelines about an individual's responsibilities at work. It is not uncommon for an employee, particularly at professional or supervisory levels, to be given only ambiguous and vague directions about areas of responsibility. Thus within an office it might be unclear about who is to make decisions in some areas; for example, an assistant manager might not be certain whether the purchase of particular items needs to be cleared with his or her superior. Thus there might be anxiety produced over not being sure if he or she should ask permission and risk being seen as indecisive or place the order and risk being accused of exceeding authority.

Role conflict includes a variety of ways in which there can be conflict about responsibilities and tasks. Some conflicts can arise because of incompatible demands by the same supervisor, for example, to work faster but be more accurate. Other conflicts occur because of incompatible demands by two or more individuals; for example, two supervisors ask that their task be done by the end of the day when there is only time to complete one of them. Finally, work/family conflict occurs when there are incompatible demands made between work and non-work, such as having to take a sick child to the doctor on the day of an important work meeting. In the United States and other industrialized countries, there has been a trend toward more single-parent households, households with both parents working, and households with elderly dependents. Such circumstances have produced increased family demands on working people that can produce work/family conflict.

Both role ambiguity and role conflict have been linked to strains, although more to psychological than the other varieties. Both of these variables (with the

exception of work/family conflict) have not been found to be often mentioned by people when noting stressful incidents at work, and they have not been found to be as severe as other stressors. On the other hand, work/family conflict has been shown to be important, with links to both physical and psychological strains. For example, individuals experiencing high levels of work/family conflict will tend to experience physical symptoms, poor job attitudes, negative mood, and symptoms of depression.

WORK OVERLOAD

There are two types of work overload: being asked to do too much work and being asked to do work that is too difficult. Too much work can arise because of organizational constraints that prevent efficiency, insufficient numbers of staff members to share the load, or inequitable distribution of work, where some individuals have heavier workloads than others. It can also arise because an individual is unable or unwilling to handle what should be a reasonable workload, thus putting an extra load on others. An individual might not have the skill to perform the job efficiently or might have low motivation and waste a great deal of time making it difficult to complete tasks. Work that is too difficult can arise because the job is poorly designed, making it difficult for anyone to perform, or because the individual doesn't have the necessary skills. The solution for work overload depends on the cause and whether it resides in the organization or employee. On the organization side, reduction of overload might require redesign of the job, reduction of constraints, hiring of more employees, or reducing the amount of work to be done. On the employee side, it might require selection of individuals better able to handle the load, particularly if the work is too difficult, or training employees to increase their efficiency and skill.

Work overload is a stressor frequently noted by people across countries and occupations. It has been linked to a variety of behavioral, physical, and psychological strains, although reactions to work overload can be different than to other stressors. Whereas other stressors may produce high levels of emotional distress, overload produces fatigue that in the long run can have detrimental effects on health and well-being.

WORKING HOURS

Related to work overload is the number of hours a person works within a day and within a week. Often

working hours arise from heavy workloads, but it is possible that an organization produces work overload by requiring more work within the same amount of time. The standard 8 hours per day, five days per week is being increasingly replaced by longer work days (e.g., 10 hours per day) and longer workweeks that can exceed 50 hours. Long workweeks are a particular problem in organizations that have engaged in downsizing, where the survivors are expected to complete the work of those who have left the organization. Long workdays have not been shown to produce particular strains other than fatigue with some jobs. However, long workweeks have been linked to heart disease when people are required to work in excess of 48 hours per week and wish to work less and when they don't get extra compensation for extra work. In part this had led to working-hour restrictions in the European Union, but such restrictions have not been adopted elsewhere in the world.

CONTROL

A critical element in the connection between the environment, perceptions of stressors, and strain is the control employees have over their work situation. Certain environmental events, such as the assignment of a difficult task, are not automatically perceived as stressors, and stressors don't automatically result in strain. These connections are affected by the control the employee has over the situation. For example, if the individual is able to refuse the assignment without penalty, or influence how, when, and where the assignment will be completed, it is much more likely that the event will be seen favorably as a challenge to be met rather than unfavorably as work overload.

There are different ways in which employees can have control over workplace stressors. Employees may have control over tasks, being able to choose which ones are to be performed, the procedures by which they are performed, and the scheduling of tasks. This enables employees to regulate stressors by finding approaches to tasks to reduce strain, taking breaks to reduce strain, or avoiding stressful tasks entirely. They might have control over other people, for example, the ability to avoid working with a particularly quarrelsome individual. Employees might be able to choose their own work schedule or their own location. This helps eliminate role conflict as well as avoid individuals at work with whom the employee has conflicts.

For control to be effective, an individual must perceive that he or she has control over the stressor. Just

giving an employee control that the employee does not recognize is not effective. Although it might seem that control is clear cut, in many organizations employees are not certain how much control they are allowed to exert. This can be part of role ambiguity when organizational policies are ambiguous about how much latitude an employee is permitted.

Jobs differ considerably in the amount of control they allow. For example, an assembler working in a traditional factory is required to perform a particular operation, such as attaching the wheels to an automobile. There is relatively little latitude that can be allowed, as the speed of the line and the task demands specify what needs to be done and when. A middle-level manager, on the other hand, has a job with tasks that are much less defined, allowing a great deal of employee control.

Research on control has shown that it relates to both psychological and physical strains. Employees with low levels of control tend to have poor job attitudes and experience emotional distress at work. They also experience physical symptoms, and research has even linked low control to heart disease. However, the link between control and strain is complex, as will be discussed in the following discussion of the demand/control model.

DEMAND/CONTROL MODEL

The demand/control model states that control buffers the effects of stressors that are termed demands. Specifically, it suggests that when an employee has low control, a demand (stressor) is likely to lead to a strain. When control is high, demands will be seen more as challenges and not lead to strain. Put another way, when control is low, as demands increase in frequency and severity (e.g., arguments with others or workload), strain will increase as well. When control is high, increased demands will not lead to strain.

Jobs by their nature may tend to be high or low in both demands and control. Jobs that are of relatively low demand do not cause concerns about strains, and so for those sorts of jobs, control might not be important. However, other jobs by their nature may be high in demands, and for those jobs, low control can be a problem. Thus it is recommended that jobs with high levels of demands be given high control.

Research on this model has not been entirely supportive, suggesting that the interplay between control and demands is likely more complex than the model suggests. Nevertheless, there is evidence that control can serve as a buffer with a variety of physical and

psychological strains, some of which might be related to heart disease.

MACHINE PACING

Most jobs allow employees to pace their own tasks, although hovering supervisors might put pressure on individuals to maintain the workload. However, some tasks are regulated by machines, for example, with assembly lines or computer systems. Many traditional factories have products move down a conveyor belt with employees lined up to perform a series of assembly tasks. Since the tasks must be done in order, the conveyor belt controls the pace of work. Individuals have little latitude to control pacing, since new items appear at a fixed interval, for example every eight seconds. If the person leaves his or her station, the entire process breaks down, so breaks must be carefully scheduled. Some computer systems work similarly in that the employee is given a fixed amount of time to complete each task, with the system prompting the employee to move on to the next task at the required time. Still other systems track response time, for example, for a telephone operator, and will give feedback if the person is taking too long to answer or is spending too long on the phone with a customer.

Research on machine pacing has clearly shown that it can be stressful and that it is linked to strains. Studies that have compared machine pacing to self-pacing have found it to be associated with anxiety at work, poor job attitudes, and physical symptoms. A series of studies at the University of Stockholm have linked machine pacing to physiological responses of employees. In these studies, employees' urine samples were assessed for the presence of stress-related hormones. Machine pacing was found to be associated with elevated levels of adrenaline, noradrenaline, and cortisol. The first two hormones are associated with effort and likely reflect that it was a harder task to keep up with the machine. Cortisol is associated with distress, and these results suggest that employees found the machine pacing to be a strain. Of particular concern is that elevated levels of cortisol have been linked to heart disease, suggesting that long-term exposure to machine pacing might contribute to this serious illness.

COPING AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

Employees are not passive recipients of stressors, but rather they actively engage their environments,

adapting the workplace to themselves and themselves to the workplace. As noted earlier, control allows the individual to avoid and modify stressors, thereby regulating to some extent the frequency and severity of exposure. However, not all stressors can be controlled, so individuals may have to make personal adjustments to deal with them. Both the nature of the situation and the person determines how stressors are addressed.

Coping refers to the means by which employees deal with stressors, by either making adjustments to the workplace or to themselves. *Problem-focused coping* is an approach by which the individual attempts to change the stressful situation. For example, if the stressor is a heavy workload caused by an additional assignment, the person might work out a plan to increase efficiency to complete the work within the allotted time, ask a coworker for assistance, or negotiate the postponement of other tasks until the assignment is completed. If the stressor is a conflict with another employee, the person might attempt to reach a resolution, either by trying a different approach with the other employee or asking a supervisor to mediate the conflict. Problem-focused approaches are most likely when individuals perceive control over the situation and are confident that they can be successful in dealing with the stressor.

Emotion-focused coping, on the other hand, deals with the person's own strain reactions rather than the stressor itself. This might entail attempting to reduce the strain through distraction (e.g., playing a game of tennis after work), drinking alcohol or taking other substances that might reduce the emotional response, or talking things over with a family member or friend. Both means of coping can be effective in dealing with strain, but problem-focused coping is considered more effective. Furthermore, people are not limited to one or the other, and often both forms of coping are used. For example, an employee might successfully deal with a stressful situation at work (problem-focused) but then go the gym afterwards to work out the frustrations of the day.

Social support is the assistance people (e.g., coworkers, including supervisors, friends, or family members) give one another in dealing with stressors. Paralleling coping, social support can be material in helping the person deal with the stressor, or it can be emotional in helping the person deal with the strain. Material support consists of help with doing tasks or dealing with issues related to stressors. With workload, for example, a coworker might agree to help with some tasks. With work/family conflict, the supervisor

might agree to reschedule a meeting so that the employee can take a child to a doctor's appointment. Emotional support is lending a sympathetic ear to the person who wants to talk about their work problems, or spending time with the person doing activities (e.g., playing tennis) that help cope with work stress.

Although social support can be effective in helping an individual cope with stressors, the same individuals who provide support can also be a significant source of stressors. The coworker who today helps with a task might tomorrow expect the same help, and the family member who today is sympathetic might tomorrow be a source of conflict. However, social support in combination with control can be an effective means for employees to deal with stressors at work, either by helping to reduce them or by helping to reduce strain responses.

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

People differ tremendously in their responses to the workplace. Given the same situation, for example, a difficult job assignment, one person might perceive it as a stressor, whereas another will perceive it as a wanted challenge. If the former person is unsure of his or her abilities, the assignment might seem overwhelming and threatening. If the latter person is ambitious and anxious to show the boss what he or she can do, the assignment is a long-awaited opportunity. The former person might experience anxiety and frustration, whereas the latter person will be enthusiastic and excited.

Three personality variables are particularly relevant to stress, two because of their link to perceived control and one because of its link to emotions. Locus of control refers to people's belief about whether or not they can control rewards at work, and self-efficacy is people's belief in their own abilities. People with an internal locus of control believe they are in control. People with an external locus of control believe outside forces are in control, such as powerful others (e.g., supervisors) or luck and fate. Because they see the workplace as controllable, those with an internal locus of control are less likely to perceive stressors than their external counterparts. When they do see stressors, those with an internal locus of control will be likely to attempt problem-focused coping strategies to deal with them directly. Thus internals perceive fewer stressors and experience less strain.

Similarly, those who have high self-efficacy believe they have the capability to do their jobs effectively. Particularly when it comes to task-related stressors

(e.g., workload), those high in self-efficacy will be less likely to perceive stressors than those low in self-efficacy. Rather, they will see challenging situations they believe they can effectively address. If they do perceive stressors, they will be more likely to engage in problem-focused coping approaches to directly deal with them.

People differ in their tendencies to experience negative emotions, as reflected in their level of negative affectivity (NA). Those high in NA tend to frequently experience anxiety and other negative emotions and can be quite sensitive to the environment. Such individuals have been shown to be predisposed to perceive stressors and respond emotionally. They exhibit high levels of psychological strains and physical symptoms associated with strong emotions, such as headaches and stomach distress. By contrast, those low in NA will be less sensitive to both stressors and strains and will likely experience negative emotions far less frequently.

STRESS INTERVENTIONS

High levels of job stress can produce negative consequences for both individuals and their employing organizations. For the individual, it can adversely affect both physical and psychological health and well-being. For the organization, it can adversely affect employee attitudes and job performance. The management of job stress can have positive outcomes for both employees and employers.

There are three approaches one can take to the control of job stress. Primary approaches focus on the stressors themselves. Appropriate workloads, reasonable working hours, clear expectations, and coordination among managers to avoid conflict can all help reduce job stressors. However, even under ideal circumstances, job stressors cannot be completely avoided. They can be an inherent part of many jobs, such as a paramedic or police officer. This makes it essential to have additional strategies.

Secondary approaches are designed to assist employees in dealing with stressors, either through problem-focused or emotion-focused strategies. Most of these techniques involve training to either enhance job skills or stress management skills. Job skills can be helpful in dealing with stressors inherent in tasks. Greater job skills can help employees work faster and thus get their jobs done in less time. It can also reduce the effort required. Stress management training teaches employees strategies for dealing with stressors or

controlling strains. Stressor training concerns techniques for handling stressors, such as how to avoid conflicts with others. When strain is experienced, emotional reactions can be controlled through relaxation techniques, such as exercise, meditation, or yoga.

Tertiary approaches are used when the person has experienced sufficient levels of strains that they are causing significant problems that interfere with the ability to do the job. Employee assistance programs are available in most large organizations for employees who are having emotional or personal problems, which are often associated with stress both on and off the job. Clinical psychologists and other mental health professionals can provide treatment for individuals who are in need of this level of assistance.

SUMMARY

Job stress is an integral component of the workplace, as it comes with the territory in most occupations. The job stress process involves both job stressors in the environment and job strains experienced by employees. Common job stressors can reside in the job itself, such as workload, or in the social environment of work, such as conflict among employees. Strains that are responses to stressors can be physical, psychological, or behavioral, and often all three can occur together. In order to maintain both a healthy workforce and organization, job stress needs to be managed by both employees and their employers. Although it can't be eliminated, job stress can be kept at an acceptable level so that it doesn't distract employees from doing their jobs and doesn't adversely affect their health and well-being.

—Paul E. Spector

See also Burnout, Careers and health, Employee assistance programs

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STRONG INTEREST INVENTORY

The *Strong Interest Inventory* (SII), typically referred to as the Strong, is a self-report measure of vocational interests and one of the most widely used psychological inventories in research and practice. Information obtained by the SII is used to inform important life decisions related to vocational choice and career development for individuals in educational, industrial or organizational, rehabilitation, and private practice settings. The SII has the longest history of any vocational interest inventory currently available, and the scores provided by the instrument are supported by strong evidence for reliability and validity.

HISTORY

The SII has been under continuous research and revision since first published by E. K. Strong Jr. in 1927. To select items for his inventory, first called the Strong Vocational Interest Blank (SVIB), Strong used

an innovative approach to scale construction now commonly referred to as the empirical method of contrast groups. This approach compared item responses provided by satisfied members of a particular occupation with those of an "in-general" group of employed individuals representing a wide range of occupations. Only items on which the two groups responded differently were retained for the scale that corresponded to that occupation. Thus, the resulting scores for each occupational scale measured the degree to which an individual's pattern of likes and dislikes was similar to that of happily employed members of that particular occupation. This approach assumed that members of a specific occupation have similar interests and that a person who shares those interests would likely find satisfaction if she or he entered that occupation. The original SVIB, developed using all-male criterion samples, consisted of 10 Occupational Scales (OSs). The first SVIB for women was published in 1933. Seven comprehensive revisions of the instrument—approximately one per decade—have been completed since then, each expanding the number of OSs. The most recent revision of the Strong provides scores for OSs representing 122 occupations.

The late 1960s saw the addition of the Basic Interest Scales (BISs) to the SII. The BISs were constructed using procedures to identify highly correlated items; they measure a single interest factor (e.g., athletics, science, and sales) per scale. In 1974, six General Occupational Theme (GOT) scales were added to the inventory. The GOTs measure the six broad areas of interests (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional) in John L. Holland's theory of vocational types and also provide the organizational structure of the SII profile. The 1974 revision also introduced the first combined-gender form of the instrument. Since then, women and men have responded to the same items, although separate norms for women and men continue to be used because of clear differences in response patterns between genders. In 1994, the Personal Style Scales (PSSs) were added to the SII. These scales measure preferences for specific features of the work environment, such as working with people versus things or learning in a hands-on versus traditional academic manner. The additions of the BISs, GOTs, and PSSs helped clarify the interpretation of OS scores. They also significantly expanded the uses of the SII to include identifying leisure interests, preferences for being around different types of people, and comfort with working or living in a variety of environments.

The most recent revision of the Strong became available for use in 2004. Developers of this revision

(a) reduced the overall number of items by 10 percent and modified their response format, (b) added or relabeled scales to reflect changes in the world of work, (c) introduced an improved index for identifying inconsistent or atypical response patterns, and (d) reformatted the profile on which scores are displayed. However, the inventory remains fundamentally similar to earlier versions of the Strong.

ITEM BOOKLET AND PROFILE

The booklet for the 2004 revision of the SII contains 291 items, divided into six sections: (1) Occupations, (2) Subject Areas, (3) Activities, (4) Leisure Activities, (5) People, and (6) Your Characteristics. In the first five sections, respondents indicate their degree of interest in each item by responding to a five-point scale ranging from *Strongly Like* to *Strongly Dislike*. Items for the sixth section use a five-point scale ranging from *Strongly Like Me* to *Strongly Unlike Me*. The Strong item booklet can be administered online or in paper-and-pencil form.

The nine-page basic profile presents (a) descriptive information to introduce the instrument and each set of scales; (b) scores for the six GOTs, 30 BISs, 122 OSs normed using the respondent's gender, and five Personal Style scales; (c) administrative indices that include an item response summary and a scale to identify atypical response profiles; and (d) a summary page that highlights high scores on the profile. Other available profile options include an expanded interpretive report, profiles with added interpretive content targeting the developmental needs of college or high school students, and a profile that provides supplementary scales designed to measure skill estimates for the six Holland types.

GOTs

GOTs provide the most global view of interests on the Strong. The six homogenous scales contain items selected to represent each of Holland's six vocational types. The items for the GOTs were selected using statistical evidence such as their intercorrelations, their popularity among occupations representing designated Holland types, and their correlations with scale scores.

On the SII profile, GOT scores are represented using standard *T* scores, with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10. These scores provide a comparison of the respondent's interest level for each of Holland's types to that of a large norm group of employed women and men. Scores are displayed in rank order using a bar

chart, and the first letters of the Holland types corresponding to the highest three GOT scores are used to assign a Theme Code to the individual. The Theme Code aids in the interpretation of other scale scores on the SII and helps integrate SII scores into Holland's theory of career choice and development.

Figure 2 displays the GOT scores for Amelia Sample Client, a 27-year-old female employed as a medical social worker for a large hospice organization. Her high scores are on the Artistic and Social scales, with her Conventional score above average but in the moderate range, and her other three scores below the mean for women and men in general. Her Theme Code of ASC is a shorthand classification of her interests. Holland's theory suggests that a work environment consisting of like-minded coworkers—that is, those with Artistic, Social and Conventional preferences—is likely to be experienced by Amelia as satisfying.

BISs

BISs were designed to measure 30 specific interest factors, representing a higher level of specificity compared to the GOTs in measuring interest domains. Similar to the GOTs, the BISs are constructed using homogenous item content, which makes them fairly straightforward to interpret. The names of the 30 BISs on the 2004 Strong were assigned to describe their item content and the interest factor measured by each scale (e.g., Protective Services, Medical Science, Performing Arts, Teaching and Education).

The BISs are organized on the SII profile based on their respective Holland types, which were assigned by identifying the GOT with which each BIS has its highest correlation. This gives the BISs the appearance of measuring subdivisions within the GOTs. The BISs also are presented using standard *T* scores (mean of 50, standard deviation of 10) but are computed using separate-gender norms, such that female respondents receive a profile with scores normed on a women-in-general sample and male respondents receive a profile with scores normed on a men-in-general sample.

As Figure 3 depicts, all four of Amelia's BISs under the Artistic theme are one standard deviation or higher above the mean. Under the Social theme, Religion & Spirituality (72), Counseling & Helping (63), and Teaching & Education (60) are high scores, while Office Management (65) and Nature & Agriculture (61) represent Amelia's high scores under the Conventional and Realistic themes respectively. These scores were consistent with Amelia's self-perceptions and also are

YOUR HIGHEST THEMES	YOUR THEME CODE
Artistic, Social, Conventional	ASC

THEME	CODE	STANDARD SCORE & INTEREST LEVEL					STD SCORE
		<30	40	50	60	70>	
Artistic	A				VERY HIGH		66
Social	S				HIGH		63
Conventional	C			MODERATE			52
Realistic	R			MODERATE			46
Investigative	I			MODERATE			46
Enterprising	E		LITTLE				39

The charts above display your GOT results in descending order, from your highest to least level of interest. Referring to the Theme Descriptions provided, determine how well your results fit for you. Do your highest Themes ring true? Look at your next highest level of interest and ask yourself the same question. You may wish to highlight the Theme descriptions on this page that seem to fit you best.

Figure 2. General Occupational Themes

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illustrative of the ability of the BISs to measure leisure interests as well as career-related interests. For example, her Counseling & Helping and Teaching & Education scores clearly fit Amelia's career interests as a social worker, while other elevated scores are consistent with her enjoyment of singing in her church choir, cooking for her family and guests, and maintaining a plot in her community garden.

OSs

OSs on the SII provide the highest level of specificity among scales on the instrument. The OSs on the 2004 Strong were constructed using the empirical method of contrast groups, essentially the same procedure that E. K. Strong Jr. used to construct the earliest SVIB. Specifically, for the 2004 SII, a set of occupations was first selected for possible inclusion among available OSs. After this, occupational criterion samples were formed, with each sample consisting of employees who were recruited and screened to represent an accurate characterization of their respective occupation. Contrast samples of people-in-general containing members of a large number of occupations were then formed for each gender; these consisted of 1,125 women and 1,125 men respectively. Response percentages for each item were then calculated for both the occupational criterion samples and the women- and men-in-general samples. Comparisons were made between percentages for a

particular criterion sample and each "in-general" sample to identify items (on average, 28 per occupation) that differentiated the two. The last step involved obtaining raw scores for each occupational criterion sample on its own OS and using these scores to establish *T* scores for that OS. The resulting OS scores represent the degree to which the pattern of interests expressed by the individual respondent is similar to the likes and dislikes of workers representing 122 different occupations.

The SII profile displays the OS scores in bar chart form across three pages, with scores presented in descending order and clustered under the GOT on which each occupation's criterion group scored highest. The OSs also are assigned a Theme Code with one, two, or three Holland types based on the pattern of GOT elevations for each occupation's criterion group.

Figure 4 displays the OS scores under the Artistic and Social Holland Themes for Amelia. The interpretive rule-of-thumb described on the profile suggests that scores of 40 or higher indicate shared interests with satisfied employees in those occupations. (An OS score of 40, at one standard deviation below the mean, indicates similarity to 84 percent of the occupational criterion sample used to construct that particular scale.) Amelia's scores of 68 on the Social Worker scale and 61 on the Musician scale suggest that she shares many likes and dislikes with satisfied female employees in these occupations. This level of similarity, it is assumed, suggests that Amelia would find satisfaction if she entered these

The Basic Interest Scales represent specific interest areas that often point to work activities, projects, course work, and leisure activities that are personally motivating and rewarding. As with the General Occupational Themes, your interest levels (Very Little, Little, Moderate, High, Very High) were determined by comparing your scores against the average scores for your gender.

As you review your results in the charts below, note your top interest areas and your areas of least interest, and think about how they relate to your work, educational, and leisure activities. Take time to consider any top interest areas that are not currently part of your work or lifestyle and think about how you might be able to incorporate them into your plans.

YOUR TOP FIVE INTEREST AREAS

1. Religion & Spirituality (S)
2. Performing Arts (A)
3. Office Management (C)
4. Culinary Arts (A)
5. Counseling & Helping (S)

Areas of Least Interest
 Computer Hardware & Electronics (R)
 Mechanics & Construction (R)
 Entrepreneurship (E)

ARTISTIC — Very High

BASIC INTEREST SCALE	STD SCORE & INTEREST LEVEL					STD SCORE
	<30	40	50	60	70>	
Performing Arts					VH	70
Culinary Arts				H		64
Visual Arts & Design				H		62
Writing & Mass Communication				M		60

REALISTIC — Moderate

BASIC INTEREST SCALE	STD SCORE & INTEREST LEVEL					STD SCORE
	<30	40	50	60	70>	
Nature & Agriculture				H		61
Athletics				M		54
Military			M			43
Protective Services			M			41
Mechanics & Construction			L			36
Computer Hardware & Electronics			L			36

SOCIAL — High

BASIC INTEREST SCALE	STD SCORE & INTEREST LEVEL					STD SCORE
	<30	40	50	60	70>	
Religion & Spirituality					VH	72
Counseling & Helping				H		63
Teaching & Education				H		60
Social Sciences				M		57
Healthcare Services				M		54
Human Resources & Training				M		48

INVESTIGATIVE — Moderate

BASIC INTEREST SCALE	STD SCORE & INTEREST LEVEL					STD SCORE
	<30	40	50	60	70>	
Medical Science				M		51
Science				M		47
Mathematics				L		37
Research				L		37

CONVENTIONAL — Moderate

BASIC INTEREST SCALE	STD SCORE & INTEREST LEVEL					STD SCORE
	<30	40	50	60	70>	
Office Management				H		65
Programming & Information Systems				M		46
Taxes & Accounting				M		46
Finance & Investing				L		38

ENTERPRISING — Little

BASIC INTEREST SCALE	STD SCORE & INTEREST LEVEL					STD SCORE
	<30	40	50	60	70>	
Marketing & Advertising				M		47
Politics & Public Speaking				M		45
Law				M		44
Management				L		40
Sales				L		38
Entrepreneurship				L		37

INTEREST LEVELS: VL = Very Little | L = Little | M = Moderate | H = High | VH = Very High

Figure 3. Basic Interest Scales

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occupations. The fact that she currently is a social worker—and is largely satisfied with her work (even if not with her employer)—demonstrates anecdotally the validity of the scale scores. In contrast, her low score on the female Architect scale suggests that her pattern of interests differs considerably from that of female architects. It is likely that if Amelia had the necessary ability to pursue a career in this field and had chosen to do so,

she would describe herself as an atypical architect in terms of interests and may report correspondingly low levels of satisfaction.

PERSONAL STYLE SCALES

The five Personal Style Scales measure preferences for, and comfort with, more specific aspects of the

ARTISTIC - Creating or Enjoying Art, Drama, Music, Writing

THEME CODE	OCCUPATIONAL SCALE	DISSIMILAR			MIDRANGE		SIMILAR			STD SCORE	
		10	15	20	30	40	50	55	60		
A	Musician										61
ASI	ESL Instructor										57
ARE	Photographer										52
AI	Editor										51
AE	Broadcast Journalist										49
ASE	Art Teacher										43
AE	Advertising Account Manager										42
A	Librarian										42
ARI	Graphic Designer										41
AR	Artist										37
ASE	English Teacher										36
AI	Urban & Regional Planner										36
A	Attorney										34
A	Translator										34
AES	Corporate Trainer										32
A	Reporter										32
AIR	Technical Writer										28
AIR	Medical Illustrator										26
AE	Public relations Director										23
AER	Public Administrator										9
ARI	Architect										8

Similar results**(40 and above)**

You share interests with women in that occupation and probably would enjoy the work.

Midrange results (30-39)

You share some interests with women in that occupation and probably would enjoy some of the work

Dissimilar results**(29 and below)**

You share few interests with women in that occupation and probably would not enjoy the work.

SOCIAL - Helping, Instructing, Caregiving

THEME CODE	OCCUPATIONAL SCALE	DISSIMILAR			MIDRANGE		SIMILAR			STD SCORE	
		10	15	20	30	40	50	55	60		
SA	Social Worker										68
SA	Speech Pathologist										62
S	Elementary School Teacher										59
SE	Special Education Teacher										59
SAE	Foreign Language Teacher										58
SA	Recreation Therapist										57
SAR	Occupational Therapist										53
SAI	Rehabilitation Counselor										53
SE	Parks & Recreation Manager										52
SA	College Instructor										51
SE	Community Service Director										48
SIR	Physical Therapist										45
SE	School Counselor										45
SCE	Licensed Practical Nurse										41
SAR	Minister										41
SEA	Social Service Teacher										41
SI	Registered Nurse										36
SEA	School Administrator										31
SRC	Physical Education Teacher										20

Figure 4. Occupational Scales

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work environment itself. The Work Style and Learning Environment scales were developed using the empirical method of contrast groups, similar to the OSs. The Leadership Style, Risk Taking, and Team Orientation scales were developed using item inter-correlations, similar to the BISs.

The Work Style scale measures the degree to which respondents prefer working with ideas, data, and things (low scores) or people (high scores). The Learning Environment scale measures the extent to which the respondent prefers applied, hands-on training (low scores) versus traditional academic learning environments (high scores). Scores on the Leadership Style scale indicate the extent to which respondents prefer leading quietly by example (low scores) or assuming leadership of others (high scores). The Risk Taking scale measures comfort level for taking emotional, financial, and physical risks. Finally, the Team Orientation scale measures preferences for accomplishing tasks independently versus collectively. As Figure 5 displays, Amelia's scores on the Personal Style scales suggest clear preferences for working with and helping people (Work Style score of 60) and for making careful decisions and playing it safe (Risk Taking score of 40). Her other scores are closer to the mean for working women and men, and indicate moderate preferences for being an independent contributor, learning in traditional academic fashion, and leading by example rather than taking charge of others.

USES OF THE SII

Practice

The Strong is commonly used in career-counseling contexts to inform client decisions related to educational (e.g., college major) and career (e.g., occupational field) pursuits. Often, scale scores are used to steer clients toward career fields in which they express high levels of interests, although practitioners may also use SII scores to identify areas of interests that are less familiar to clients and that could be explored further. The SII can be used with individuals as young as 13 or 14 years old to introduce them to the process of career decision making, and is commonly used with young adults preparing to choose a career. However, the Strong also is useful in promoting the career development of adults after they enter the workforce. In some cases, SII data may provide adults

with ideas for new career paths, but others benefit from using interest scores to identify possibilities for modifying their current jobs to make them "a better fit" and thus more satisfying. Still other individuals find that their scores on the SII confirm that the career choice they made initially was in fact a good one for them. Adults in the workforce who might benefit from the SII include those who are looking for more challenging positions, who are questioning their initial career choices, who are experiencing career plateaus, who are anticipating layoffs and outplacement, or who are preparing for retirement.

Organizations typically use the SII along with measures of personality, abilities, and work history data to inform selection, classification, and placement decisions. The assumption guiding the use of the Strong in this context is that for individuals with the appropriate personality characteristics and ability profile, high levels of interest in a particular job area serve as intrinsic motivation to perform that job at a high level. Many organizations provide the SII or other interest assessments through employee assistance programs (EAP), human resource (HR) services, or occupational health psychology (OHP) programs.

Research

Establishing evidence for the reliability and validity of scale scores on the SII has been a major priority in the field of interest measurement and is a legacy of the Strong tradition. Reliability evidence for the 2004 SII suggests that the homogeneous scales on the instrument have high levels of internal consistency and that respondents tend to obtain similar scores on the various SII scales upon retesting at intervals of up to 23 months. This is testament to the stability of SII scales but also to the stability of the construct of interests over time. Evidence for validity has been investigated using multiple approaches and is generally strong. For example, scale scores tend to be highly correlated with scores on other inventories designed to measure the same constructs, and homogeneous scales (e.g., GOTs, BISs, PSSs) tend to separate occupational groups in predictable ways (e.g., elected public officials and school administrators tend to score high on the Leadership Style scale, while foresters and production workers tend to score low). For the Occupational Scales, considerable evidence exists to suggest that scores are effective predictors of satisfied occupational membership. For example, between 54

The Personal Style Scales describe different ways of approaching people, learning, leading, making decisions, and participating in terms. Personal Style Scales help you think about your preferences for factors that can be important in your career, enabling you to more effectively narrow your choices and examine your opportunities. Each scale includes descriptions at both of the continuum, with scores indicating your preferences for one style versus the other.

Your scores on the Personal Style Scales were determined by comparing your responses to those of a combined group of working men and women.

YOUR PERSONAL STYLE SCALES PREFERENCES

1. You are likely to prefer working with people
2. You seem to prefer to learn through lectures and books
3. You probably prefer to lead by example
4. You may dislike taking risks
5. You probably enjoy the role of independent contributor

Clear Scores (Below 46 and above 54)
 You indicated a clear preference for one style versus the other.

Midrange Scores (46-54)
 You indicated that some of the descriptors on both sides apply to you.

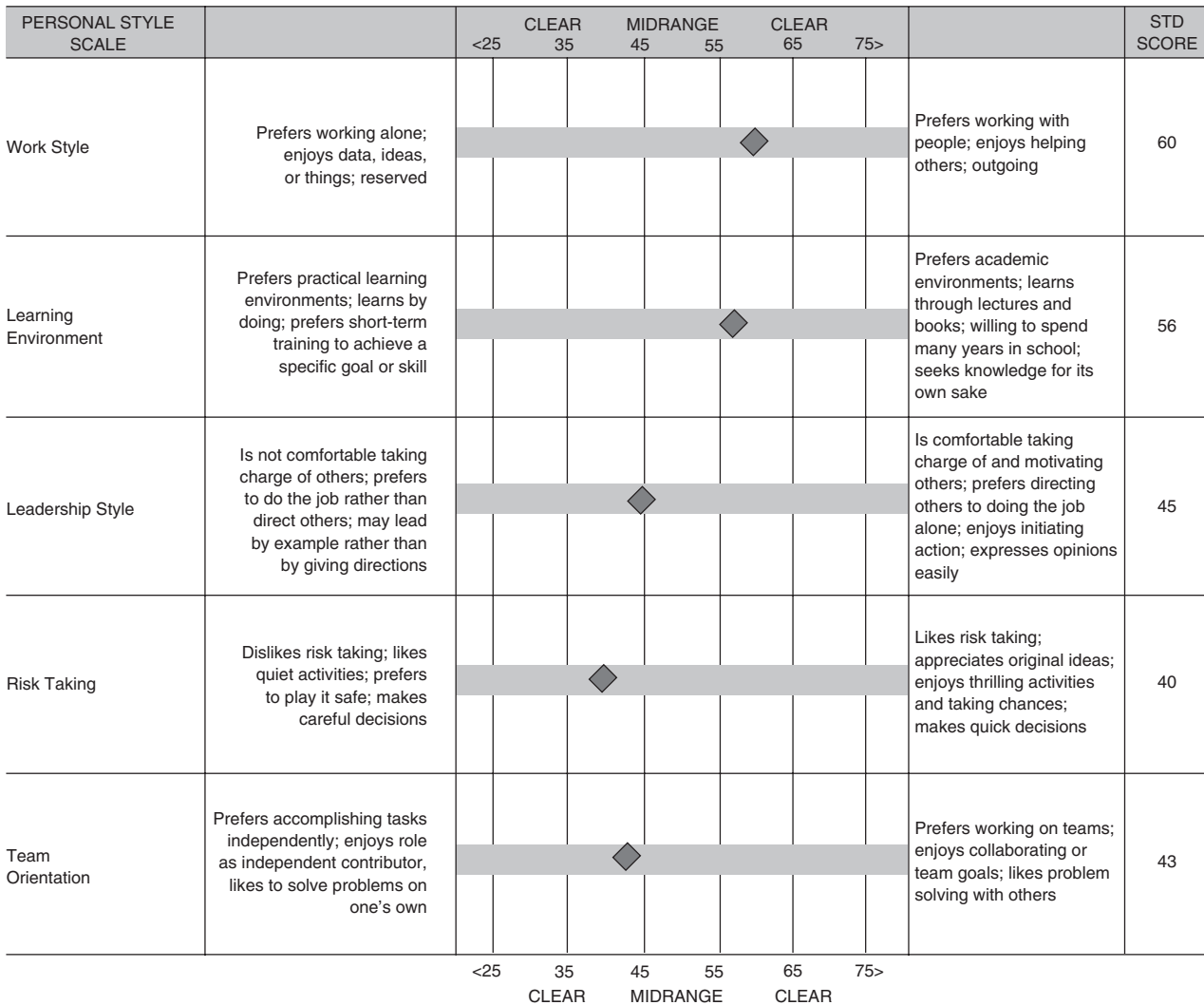


Figure 5. Personal Style Scales

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percent and 74 percent of respondents across studies enter occupations predictable from earlier OS scores, even at intervals of longer than a decade.

Effective use and interpretation of any test requires an understanding of its validity across gender, age, and diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. Studies of gender differences reveal that women and men do report differing levels of interests in some areas (e.g., women generally express higher Artistic and Social interests, whereas men generally express higher Realistic and Investigative interests). Evidence suggests that these differences are stable and robust at the item and scale score level over periods as long as 50 years, indicating consistency even through considerable societal change. For this reason, the SII continues to use separate-gender norms for most of its scales. Most investigations of the appropriateness of the SII across age have focused on differences between adolescents and adults. In general, evidence suggests that the level of interest scores tends to increase slightly as teenagers progress toward adulthood and that interests tend to be transitory until roughly age 17 or 18 for most individuals. Investigations of cultural differences on the SII have commonly examined mean differences in interest scores and differences in relationships among GOT and BIS scores across racial and ethnic groups. Results from such studies suggest that Strong scores have comparable validity across diverse groups. It is also notable that on the 2004 Strong, the standardized scores are computed using a normative sample of employed adults of which nonmajority groups comprise approximately 30 percent. Of course, effective use of the SII requires careful consideration of societal stereotypes and prejudices, language barriers, level of acculturation, assumptions about testing, family influences, and developmental needs of respondents.

Finally, the SII has been instrumental in basic research on the construct of interests and the role that interests play in career choice and development. For example, the Strong has been used to build the knowledge base related to the development of interests, the stability of interests, the structure of interests, the relationship of interests to other constructs (e.g., ability, personality, values, self-efficacy), and the degree to which interests predict important work-related outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The SII, carefully constructed at its origin with substantial attention to generating evidence for reliability

and validity, has been continuously refined over its long history. Currently, the Strong is the standard for sophisticated, empirically grounded, and practically useful interest measurement. Whether used for career counseling or for selection and placement, the Strong provides information that is useful in helping respondents make informed choices to develop their potential.

—Bryan J. Dik

See also Holland's theory of vocational choice, Interests, Kuder Career Assessments

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SUCCESSION PLANNING

Succession planning refers to an effort by organizations to select and develop future leaders who are prepared to replace current leaders. As such, a literature search will typically include articles that refer to analogous terms, such as the following:

- Replacement planning—to plan who will replace which key leaders in the firm

- High potential management—to select and develop persons who have the potential to replace the top 50 to 150 leaders
- Management and leadership—to put in place programs that develop future development leaders, not only for specific positions but, also, as a general talent pool. Sometimes succession planning refers to top-level leaders, whereas leadership and management development refer to lower level leaders
- Career and individual—to have a process and program for helping future leaders manage their own careers so that they qualify for key leadership positions

SUCCESSOR SELECTION

Personal traits that are often considered in potential appraisals are

- Good interpersonal skills
- Oral and written communication skills
- High intelligence
- Client orientation
- Achievement motivation or drive
- Results orientation
- Dealing successfully with adversity and hardship
- Operational effectiveness or resource management
- Ability to relate issues to business strategies
- Ability to get things done without being overbearing or disrupting the organization (political skills)
- Ability to organize, plan, and be efficient
- Ability to select and develop key staff
- Stress management

Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman maintain, based on their leadership skills studies, that a future leader must have the minimal acceptable amount of each of these characteristics: an ability to learn from mistakes and develop new skills, interpersonal competency, being open to new ideas, taking personal responsibility for results, and an ability to take initiative. To not have an adequate amount of even one of these is to have a “fatal flaw.” Researchers agree that some very bright people have fatal flaws that, unless they are corrected, disqualify them for future leadership positions, what Morgan McCall has called “derailers.”

Beyond this, say Zenger and Folkman, it is important for leaders to build on and develop combinations of strengths in the following areas: leading change, having excellent people skills, being competent in your area of expertise, driving for results, and displaying high integrity and ethical character. Other

researchers agree that those choosing successors must consider a full range of leadership criteria, including “soft” skills and integrity, not just the ability to work hard, produce results, and be brilliant. Being able to accept risk and learn, and not only perform, is a foundational idea.

There is also a literature on the efficacy of various methods for selecting successors based on organizational criteria. Some of these methods include performance appraisals, boss recommendations, assessment centers, 360-degree feedback, psychological tests, competency profiles, kind of educational degree, place where the degree was received, and difficulty of the job assignments.

One critical problem is how to select a future successor (or leader). Some characteristics looked for in succession planning profiles are known to be stable for a long period of time (e.g. intelligence); however, the practice of identifying a future leader for an unknown business environment based purely on currently acceptable skill sets and current performance ratings may be flawed. As observed by Jon Briscoe and Douglas T. Hall, some metacompetencies that are sometimes cited as future-oriented are ability to work across boundaries, flexibility and willingness to change, team effectiveness, technical competency, and global mind-set.

Finally, it can be argued that what successful managers and professionals do at one career stage is not comparable to the knowledge and skills needed at higher level leadership stages. One must be able to acquire the advanced knowledge and skills at each relevant level or career stage to be considered a future leader.

SUCCESSOR DEVELOPMENT

Another critical issue in succession planning is how to train, develop, evaluate, and fine-tune future successors. As with selection, each industry and company has its own specific set of requirements.

In general, four models for the leadership development of successors have emerged, and while some companies use only one of these, many employ an amalgamation of them.

Model 1: Job Rotation

Numerous organizations believe that there exists an ideal portfolio of job experiences that future leaders

need before assuming top-level positions. They develop successors by transferring them, every 18 to 36 months, across a variety of positions: working in different functions (e.g. marketing, supply chain), working for a key people developer or mentor, working in a significant line or decision-making capacity working globally.

There are numerous problems with this approach. First, the average tenure of a talented person is much shorter today than it was in the past, so future leaders must be developed quicker and there is less time for extensive job rotation. Second, some of the most talented people are geographically bound and cannot easily accept job transfers. Third, it is unclear if occupying current jobs is good training for unknown future work or even if the position one occupies today will exist 5-10 years later.

Model 2: Talent Pool

Another option is to train future leaders more generally as part of a talent pool from which to draw successors as needed. Using this approach, the organization encourages its talent to accept various projects, enroll in courses, and take advantage of various opportunities that develop metacompetencies. Any assignments that include cross-boundary teams, “stretch” jobs, cutting-edge technology, key networking opportunities, or unusual personal growth are encouraged to prepare an individual for an unknown future leadership opportunity.

The problem with this approach is that it is difficult to retain upwardly mobile and talented future leaders when there are no visible paths or concrete signals leading toward upward mobility. Conversely, it is easy to raid another organization’s underutilized talent pool.

Some companies have found ways to integrate succession planning and leadership training so that future leaders are more generally developed but still able to understand the variety of future opportunities and what is necessary to be a candidate for each position.

Model 3: Buy Talent From the Market

Some advocate that it is more efficient to seek key talent from the labor market, where they have already been trained and developed by others. This is different from recognizing that it is impossible to promote from within for all leadership positions, because it is impossible to always find the best person within the

organization. Or as Kees Krombeen, former director of management development at Philips Electronics, told the author, “We grow our own trees but sometimes a job calls for a rare wood that we just don’t have.”

Boris Groysberg, Ashish Nanda, and Nitin Nohria argue that many “stars” from the outside are more like sputtering comets in their new jobs. The authors believe that the best successors have demonstrated inside the organization’s own culture how to be an effective business leader. They conclude that companies should raise their own stars and then take sufficient actions to retain them.

Model 4: Smaller Is Better

One of the surprising recent findings of Jon Briscoe and Brooklyn Derr is that numerous Fortune 200 companies now carefully develop their future successors using a mix of Models 1 and 2 above. However, they plan to shrink their successor pools and include only those who have both the talent to become high-level future leaders and who appear that they will remain with the company, if treated well, long enough to make a leadership contribution. This means that instead of a future leader talent pool of 800-1,000, the new successor pools are 200-300.

Methods used to develop talent for future leadership are internal and external coaching, mentoring programs, internal and external courses, assessment centers, project task forces, cross-boundary teams, international assignments, hardship assignments, and turnaround assignments.

Some researchers have also pointed out that different cultures have different paradigms and assumptions about successor profiles and how to develop future leaders. It is important to note here that this entry is discussing the models used by large multinational corporations and by organizations in the United States.

SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE

Succession planning is managed in a variety of ways. One approach to succession planning asks the human resources or management development departments to develop procedures for selecting and developing future leaders at various levels and to then propose to top management at least two possible successors for every key position. This is a kind of replacement planning. Another succession planning system ensures that

there are two to three people from the general talent pool who are being developed and could be candidates, along with outsiders, for the key leadership posts.

Robert Guenther points out that after 172 corporate vice presidents perished in the World Trade Center disaster of September 11, 2001, many firms began taking their succession planning more seriously. The current population demographics, where lots of the leadership population is now over 55 years of age in the economically advanced nations and where there is scarcity in the under-30 age group, only seem to accelerate this felt need. Many companies are experiencing high turnover among senior leaders.

Most companies have a system to ensure that talented future leaders are recognized, selected, trained, developed, evaluated, and either eliminated or advanced at various critical stages. Whether formal or informal, open or secret, focusing only at the top, or going further down the hierarchy, there is normally some recognition that it is important to have “a leadership pipeline” and “leadership bench strength.”

A variety of models of succession planning have been suggested in the literature. One is the Inverted Funnel model, which looks at succession as selection, development, and fine-tuning over time. Another approach is the Rotary Model, which focuses on shorter tenure and on more fluid and faster in-and-out talent pool movement relevant to the new world of work. The Manager-Once-Removed (MOR) system focuses on developing an individual to move up two levels, whereas the Four Stages Model describes developmental issues for professionals and managers at four periods in the career based on learning competencies appropriate to each experience level or career stage.

CRITICAL ISSUES

Some critical issues have been highlighted in succession planning:

- What are the new leadership criteria for the twenty-first century? Subsequently, what are the necessary key competencies?
- How do we prevent top leadership from selecting successors who are their clones? The future may require very different leaders from the present.
- How do we ensure that the best people reach the top, not only those who have arranged their lives to perform continuously, move whenever necessary, and demonstrate company loyalty? Having motivation and stamina may not be the same as having talent.
- A related concern: How do we prevent burnout in the future leader group as they go from stretch to stretch assignments? How do we keep them from self-selecting off the succession track?
- Also related: How can talented women (and men), concerned about having and rearing children or being involved in elder care, take time-outs for caretaking without completely losing their opportunities?
- Another critical issue in succession planning is how to make selection competency based (not just cronyism, traits, and style).
- How do we prevent the “Hawthorne Effect” on designated successors moving along under the limelight but not adequately challenged or questioned?
- How can we focus not only on short-term performance but also on learning? Some very developmental assignments (e.g., global assignments) may be fraught with cultural frustrations and performance failures but high in learning potential.
- How do we keep managers from hoarding their best talent and preventing them from undertaking developmental assignments or job rotations? If these high potentials are allowed to leave, the managers are likely to be judged less productive.
- With the change in organizational structures in so many industries, how do we give greater emphasis to nonmanagerial leadership development (e.g., becoming a key team leader)?

CONCLUSION

Succession planning is currently one of the top five topics in human resource management. This may be due, in large measure, to the unique demographics (explained above) at this moment in time. Another perspective, however, is that preparing future leaders to succeed current leaders is one of the major responsibilities of any top management group.

—C. Brooklyn Derr

See also Center for Creative Leadership, Fast-track career, Leadership development

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SUPER'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT THEORY

Donald E. Super's (1910-1994) *career development theory* is perhaps the most widely known life-span view of career development. Developmental theories recognize the changes that people go through as they mature, and they emphasize a life-span approach to career choice and adaptation. These theories usually partition working life into stages, and they try to specify the typical vocational behaviors at each stage.

In the 1950s, when Super began to formulate his theoretical conceptions, differential psychology and the trait-and-factor theory permeated vocational counseling. The dominant assumption was that differing abilities and interests were crucial in determining occupational choice and success. For this reason, vocational counseling was seen primarily as a process of helping individuals match their abilities and other traits with those required by accessible occupations. By applying the matching model, practitioners of vocational guidance assisted their clients in choosing the "right" vocation, that is, the one that is well matched or congruent with an individual's abilities, interests, and personality traits. Super recognized the valuable contribution of the trait-and-factor theory and the matching model to vocational theory and guidance practice. But he also

believed that they were too static and insufficient in explaining the complexities of vocational behavior. Super proclaimed that occupational choice should be seen as an *unfolding process*, not a point-in-time decision. Therefore, he proceeded to supplement the trait-and-factor approach by constructing a comprehensive career theory in which (a) career development is seen as a lifelong process unfolding in a series of developmental stages and (b) career selection is not a one-shot decision but the cumulative outcome of a series of decisions.

In his attempts to shape a comprehensive career theory in the 1950s through the mid-1990s, Super complemented the traditional individual-difference approach to vocational guidance with three additional perspectives: (1) developmental perspective focusing on the life course of vocational behavior and stressing continuity in career development, (2) phenomenological perspective emphasizing the role of self-concept in the development of an individual's career, and (3) contextual perspective bringing forward the importance of multiple social roles and their interaction across the life span.

DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE: UNDERSTANDING CAREERS IN THE LIFE SPAN

While traditional vocational guidance focused on occupational choice and the prediction of occupational success at some later point in time, Super stressed the need to understand and predict a *career*. He defined a career as a sequence of occupations, jobs, and positions held during the course of a lifetime, including also prevocational and postvocational activities. Super asserted that what was actually needed in vocational guidance was a *career model*, which takes into account the sequence of positions that an individual occupies during her or his working life. Interest in understanding careers led Super to look into peoples' *career patterns*, which portray one aspect of vocational development—the sequence of changes in occupational level and field over a period of time. Although initially "set out" by the individual's parental socioeconomic level, patterns are also determined by individuals' abilities, personality traits, and the opportunities to which they are exposed. The analysis of career patterns supported the view that the life cycle imposes different vocational tasks on people at various times of their lives. Drawing on the work of developmental psychologists and sociologists who

independently studied stages of life and work, Super and his colleagues outlined five major *stages of career development*, with each one characterized by three or four appropriate *developmental tasks*:

Growth (roughly age 4 to 13), the first life stage, the period when children develop their capacities, attitudes, interests, socialize their needs, and form a general understanding of the world of work. This stage includes four major career developmental tasks: becoming concerned about the future, increasing personal control over one's own life, convincing oneself to achieve in school and at work, and acquiring competent work habits and attitudes.

Exploration (Ages 14-24) is the period when individuals attempt to understand themselves and find their place in the world of work. Through classes, work experience, and hobbies, they try to identify their interests and capabilities and figure out how they fit with various occupations. They make tentative occupational choices and eventually obtain an occupation. This stage involves three career development tasks. The first one, the crystallization of a career preference, is to develop and plan a tentative vocational goal. The next task, the specification of a career preference, is to convert generalized preferences into a specific choice, a firm vocational goal. The third vocational task is implementation of a career preference by completing appropriate training and securing a position in the chosen occupation.

Establishment stage (25-44 years) is the period when the individual, having gained an appropriate position in the chosen field of work, strives to secure the initial position and pursue chances for further advancement. This stage involves three developmental tasks. The first task is stabilizing or securing one place in the organization by adapting to the organization's requirements and performing job duties satisfactorily. The next task is the consolidation of one's position by manifesting positive work attitudes and productive habits along with building favorable coworker relations. The third task is to obtain advancement to new levels of responsibility.

Maintenance (45-65) is the period of continual adjustment, which includes the career development tasks of holding on, keeping up, and innovating. The individuals strive to maintain what they have achieved, and for this reason they update their competencies and find innovative ways of performing their job routines. They try also to find new challenges, but usually little new ground is broken in this period.

Disengagement (over 65) is the final stage, the period of transition out of the workforce. In this stage,

individuals encounter the developmental tasks of deceleration, retirement planning, and retirement living. With a declined energy and interest in an occupation, people gradually disengage from their occupational activities and concentrate on retirement planning. In due course, they make a transition to retirement living by facing the challenges of organizing new life patterns.

Super's model demarcates the stages both with age bounds and task markers. Originally, Super viewed the stages as chronological, but later he also acknowledged an age-independent, task-centered view of stages. For example, individuals embarking on a new career in their middle adulthood might go through exploration and establishment stages. Thus the five stages spreading across one's entire life span, or the "maxicycle," might also be experienced as "minicycles" within each of the maxicycle stages. Individuals cycle and recycle throughout their life span as they adapt to their own internal changes or to changed opportunities to which they are exposed.

Super assumed that not everyone progresses through these stages at fixed ages or in the same manner. This notion led him to develop and elaborate on the construct of *career maturity* (initially called vocational maturity), which denotes the readiness of the individual to make career decisions. Operationally, it is defined as the extent to which an individual has completed stage-appropriate career developmental tasks in comparison with other people of the same age. Super and his colleagues devoted much effort to define this construct and develop appropriate measures. They identified five primary dimensions of vocational maturity: "planfulness" or awareness of the need to plan ahead, readiness for exploration, informational competence (comprising knowledge about work, occupations, and life career roles), decision-making skills, and reality orientation. Super believed that a young person should be mature enough to benefit from career assessment and counseling. In adults, where recycling through career stages is less dependent on age, Super suggested that readiness for career decision making should be referred to as *career adaptability*.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE: THE NOTION OF OCCUPATIONAL SELF-CONCEPT

In his account of vocational behavior, Super incorporated in his developmental perspective the idea that people base their career decision on beliefs about their own abilities and other self-attributes. He saw career

choice as the process of implementation of self-concepts, work role as a manifestation of selfhood, and career development as an active process of improving the match between one's self-concept and the occupational environment. Self-concept can be defined as the way the person sees herself or himself. For example, a young woman might believe that she is bright and creative, self-confident, spontaneous in behavior, and unwilling to assume responsibility. This composite of her beliefs about her own abilities, traits, and values make up her self-concept. Since the self-concept is a subjective phenomenon or an appearance in experience, this perspective is often denoted as phenomenological.

Super accepted the view that self-concept is central for understanding a person's behavior. It is the product of the interaction of a person's inherited characteristics, neural and endocrine makeup, opportunity to play various roles, and resulting outcomes of role-playing success. Formation of self-concept begins in infancy when a sense of identity is developed. As they grow, individuals develop a personal image of their own abilities, personality traits, values, and roles. They then compare this subjective picture of themselves with what they get to know about the world's occupations, and they then try to translate their self-concept into an occupational perspective. The outcome is the occupational self-concept, defined by Super as a constellation of self-attributes that are vocationally relevant for the individual. The occupational self-concept eventually may transform into a vocational preference. Super believed that the career development process can be guided, among others, by aiding subjects to develop and accept their occupational self-concepts.

Thus the process of career choosing and development is basically that of developing and implementing a self-concept. The degree of satisfaction people attain from the work role is, according to Super, proportional to the degree to which they have been successful in their endeavor to implement self-concepts. This endeavor, however, requires a continuous personal adjustment; self-concepts develop and change throughout people's lives as does also their living and working environments. This makes the career choice and adjustment a continuous process.

CONTEXTUAL PERSPECTIVE: SOCIAL ROLES AND THEIR INTERACTION ACROSS THE LIFE SPAN

The third segment of Super's theory brings forward a contextual perspective, that is, the view of career

development in the context of all life roles enacted by an individual. The work role, albeit of central importance for many people in our culture, is only one among many life roles that an individual occupies in his or her life. None of the roles can be properly understood without taking into account the whole constellation of roles.

Already in his early theoretical writings, Super referred to work as a way of life and noted that satisfactory vocational adjustment is possible only when both the nature of work and the way of life complement an individual's aptitudes, interests, and values. However, this interdependency of various spheres of life is more completely addressed in Super's later writings, when he developed his life-span, life-space view to career development and portrayed it graphically in his popular Life-Career Rainbow.

Super conceives life space as a constellation of social functions arranged in a pattern of core and peripheral roles. People play a variety of roles during their life. Some of them begin early in the life course (e.g., that of child), others later (e.g., that of student), or still later (e.g., that of pensioner). At some life stages, a number of simultaneous roles (e.g., that of worker, spouse, homemaker, parent, and citizen) may constitute an individual's life structure. However, usually two or three roles are salient or relatively more important than others. The salient life roles constitute the core of a person; they are fundamental for the person's identity and essential for life satisfaction. The fact that people play several simultaneous roles means that roles interact and impact one another. The interaction among the roles can be supportive, supplementary, compensatory, or neutral. It can also be conflicting if some of the roles absorb too much of the available time and energy. As a matter of fact, for most people the interpenetration of different spheres of life is inevitable in some life stages. By combining the life space with the life-span or developmental perspective, the Rainbow model shows how the role constellation changes with life stages. As Super noted, life roles wax and wane over time.

This simple account was indeed needed to clearly emphasize an all-too-often forgotten point—that peoples' careers cannot be understood outside of their social context. To fully understand an individual's career, it is necessary to explore the whole web of his or her life roles. After all, according to a more recent view of Super's, it is the constellation of role interactions that constitutes the career.

CONCLUSION

Perhaps the most important single idea of Super was his tenet that occupational choice should be seen as an unfolding process. Interestingly enough, his theory building was also an unfolding process; he continued to augment and refine his theory throughout his life. Thus his theory also evolved through various stages that can be traced in their name modifications: from the original Career Development Theory to Developmental Self-Concept Theory, and then to the currently prevailing Life-Span, Life-Space Theory.

Super incorporated the ideas of many predecessors in his attempt to compile an integrative body of knowledge that comprises various perspectives on career development. The result was a comprehensive but also fragmental theoretical account. Super himself admitted that disparate segments of his theory need to be cemented together more thoroughly. He hoped that this task will be eventually accomplished by future theorists. However, in spite of his reluctance to present a more parsimonious and coherent theoretical statement, his theorizing was most appealing. Together with his followers, he has had, and continues to have, a major impact upon career development research and counseling.

—Branimir Šverko

See also Career maturity, Crystallization of the vocational self-concept, Erikson's theory of development, Life-Career Rainbow, Self-concept

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SWEATSHOP LABOR

Sweatshop labor describes work performed under conditions that violate normal standards of minimum wage, employment, worker treatment, and workplace health or safety. It is an issue of great concern to human resource professionals charged with implementing employment laws and policies. While the term is most often associated with globalization and the movement of relatively low-technology jobs offshore by U.S. apparel manufacturers, sweatshop conditions can exist anywhere, including somewhat higher-technology firms or even in service industries. It can involve domestic operations hiring the unskilled, agricultural migrants, recent immigrants, or undocumented aliens. Particularly since the mid-1990s, controversy exists on many fronts regarding whether sweatshops assist or restrain the economic development and welfare of citizens where they are present. At the individual level, important ethical issues still remain for human resource professionals.

A good early example of sweatshops, at least by current standards, is the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, where 146 mainly women and girls working in deplorable conditions died on the lower east side of Manhattan. This fire still ranks as one of the worst losses of life in U.S. workplace history. While the Triangle fire resulted in public outrage and passage of several antisweatshop laws, it was not until 1938 that President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Fair Labor Standards Act, which, at least on paper, outlawed

sweatshop production. Yet in September 1991, 25 workers died and 56 were injured in a Hamlet, South Carolina, chicken-processing plant fire. And Homeland Security checks following the September 11, 2001, tragedy in New York revealed several cases of Chinese immigrant workers still enduring sweatshop conditions in Manhattan garment district factories.

Sweatshops provide cost advantages in cases where labor wage differentials exist or can be created; these may involve immigrants (such as Triangle and post-September 11, 2001, garment district), women and girls (Triangle again, and current Vietnamese and Chinese export market garment and textile factories), and lower wage, less-developed countries. Legal restrictions on sweatshops make the practice more difficult but not impossible; but weaker legal frameworks often are involved. The practice is often easier to accomplish in areas where labor unions are either weak or nonexistent. The cost advantages from labor cost reductions become more important in cases of manufacturers of branded products, which typically require very high marketing expenses. As an example, Nike exhibits all types of wage differentials, with its branded sports and sportswear products manufactured by close to 500,000 people in 35 countries. An alternate example involves call centers in Bangalore, India, where almost universal literacy among the populace provides a labor pool that will work answering customer service phone calls for a fraction of the wage it would be necessary to pay in the United States or Western Europe.

In the late 1990s, public opinion began to mobilize against sweatshops. One example is the Clean Clothes Campaign, begun in Holland in 1989, which is a broad-based coalition of unions, consumer organizations, solidarity groups, and world shops in nine European countries. A more recent example is the United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS), formed in 1998, which links student activists at over 200 university campuses. The USAS succeeded in forcing Nike in October of 2000 to disclose the locations of 42 plants in 11 countries that make its college apparel. This same group campaigned in fall of 2003 to oppose discussion of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), a potential expansion of the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA). A group of student activists was also successful in forcing Nike in April of 2000 to make public its audit of labor practices at

600 related global manufacturing locations and in 2001 helped uncover the use of child labor by sports equipment manufacturers contracted by Nike.

International trade groups have also joined the sweatshops issue. The Japanese Federation of Economic Organizations adopted an updated Keidanren Charter for Good Corporate Behavior on December 17, 1996. In 1997, the Apparel Industry Partnership, created by the Clinton administration and including such well-known apparel companies such as Nike, Liz Claiborne, and Patagonia, publicized its Code of Conduct. As a result, many multinationals, including Nike, produced updated codes of conduct requiring contractors to fix harsh or abusive worker conditions. The International Labor Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work was adopted in 1998, covering most major abuses of sweatshop-type operations. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) adopted Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises at its Ministerial Meeting in 2000. More recently, Adidas-Salomon, Eddie Bauer, GEAR for Sports, Liz Claiborne, Reebok, Nordstrom, Nike, Patagonia, Phillips Van-Heusen, and Zephyr Graf-X all agreed to independently monitor and submit to external audits of their factories under the Fair Labor Association program. In April 2004, Reebok became the first apparel and footwear manufacturer accredited by the Fair Labor Association after establishing a compliance program that included both internal and external monitoring visits.

Other than the obvious ethical issues inherent in proper treatment of workers, economists and public policy researchers disagree about the overall impact of sweatshops on the economic development and welfare of the areas where they operate. Some say that no one is better off when workers receive only a minuscule share of the price for which these manufactured products retail and that consumers must unite to demand higher prices to allow for paying living wages to factory workers. Others argue that the antisweatshop movement is mistaken in its assessments. This group presents data that indicates that the comparatively higher economic proceeds earned by sweatshop workers allow them to found their own businesses and become independent contributors to the local economy. An example of this controversy is the economic participation of women and girls in Vietnamese export manufacture.

—Michele A. Govekar

See also Low-income workers and careers, Multinational organization, Outsourcing and offshoring

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TEAM-BASED WORK

For an increasing number of jobs, the future belongs to teams. Due to the complexity of tasks, the need to integrate multiple perspectives and disciplines into work products and services, and/or the sheer volume of work, more people than ever will find themselves working in teams. For the many who have not been well trained for collaborative effort, the thought of this future can be unsettling. The United States, in particular, is a highly individualistic society where the traditional value of independence in thought and action may clash with the reality of a future of work in interdependent teams.

The research literature often differentiates between work groups and teams. Simply defined, a *team* is any group of people who engage in interdependent actions in the service of task accomplishment. This definition suggests a number of important points.

First, not all groups are teams. Collectives in which people can work independently with minimal coordination, or with coordination provided outside of themselves through management or other individuals, are not teams. Organizational departments are work groups but are rarely true teams. The need for interdependent effort defines a team and creates boundaries for team membership. Those who need to coordinate their efforts know who is part of their team and who is not. Vendors, suppliers, and contractors can support teams by providing resources or even by doing discrete parts of the work, but if they function independently, they are not part of the team.

Second, teams have a mission or goal that channels their efforts toward an outcome or outcomes. People

idly chatting around the coffeepot are not teams, nor are colleagues within the same work unit who work on different projects without the need for significant integration. Third, teams exist apart from organizations as well as within them. Preparation for team-based professional careers may take place through experiences with teams in educational or community settings.

All teams are not alike. Some teams are composed of peers doing similar work that needs to be integrated effectively to create value. They might be peers assigned to a project team on a particular assignment at work or to reach a decision, such as a jury. Other teams are cross-functional, where members have been trained in different disciplines or specialties and come together with others of different specialties to produce a unified product or service. Orchestras, or organizational decision-making teams composed of individuals from different professional specialties such as finance, sales, and human resources, are examples of such teams. As technology expands and organizations become more global in scope, virtual teams are becoming more common. In a pure virtual team, interaction may be conducted entirely through electronic means, including e-mail, teleconferences, and videoconferences, with a total absence of face-to-face contact. The work still requires interdependence, but coordination must be accomplished at a physical distance, which creates additional challenges.

Each of the types of teams described above may be short- or long-term in duration, comprising all or part of a person's work program. Although each type of team may require different skills for successful performance, two general sets of competencies are important for team members. First, they need competency in

their own area(s) of responsibility, whatever that may be, as do others engaged in individually based work. However, in team contexts, a second set of competencies involving the ability to work effectively with others rise in value. Models of team effectiveness typically include a component dealing with team process, that is, how a team combines their individual resources into a product through means of effective coordination, communication, decision making, and conflict management. Though the best of team processes may not be able to overcome a lack of requisite individual member skills, most models suggest that teams may fail to reach their potential if those skills are not effectively integrated through good process.

Effective team processes may be affected by characteristics and behaviors of individual members. In terms of the classic psychological Big Five personality characteristics, the importance of both agreeableness and conscientiousness might be expected to be more prominent in team settings. The ability to get along with others, and for others to be able to depend on you, is critical to the development of trust and cohesion in teams. For characteristics such as extraversion, however, the distribution of a trait across the members may be most important to success. It is good to have at least some people willing to talk, but too many voices actively vying for airtime might be counterproductive. Organizational citizenship behaviors such as pitching in as needed or contributing to non-work-related activities that promote social harmony and liking can also be valued team behaviors. The willingness to not only do one's own job but to look out for the team's needs and back up other members can make the difference between success and failure for a team effort.

Team members can also benefit from learning to handle conflict constructively. Coordination with others should produce differences in views that lead to better and more informed decisions. Yet to achieve these superior results, destructive conflict and turmoil within a team needs to be minimized. Individuals need to learn different ways to manage conflict and, where appropriate, to learn to seek integrated, so-called win-win, decisions that address the needs of all parties considered. Team members need to listen to others and be willing to extend themselves to understand the perspectives of diverse others for mutual benefit. In addition, as electronically mediated communication increases in both co-located and virtual teams, the importance of being able to write clearly and succinctly also increases.

Preparation for team-based work can include analyzing one's own success in team environments and modifying one's behavior as needed. Prior or in addition to organizational experiences with teams, people can experiment with their own behavior in teams. Getting opportunities to lead teams, to serve as members of effectively performing teams, and even to participate in ineffective teams can all help people better understand the requirements of team-based work as well as their own team skills. Fortunately, schools are increasingly aware of the need to develop team skills and are incorporating team projects into classroom activities, and opportunities to learn better team skills through volunteer work in the community are plentiful.

Even in individualistic cultures, working in teams like these can bring great satisfaction. Anyone who has ever watched a winning sports team celebrate has seen the intense joy and fulfillment that can emerge from collective success. With some additional thought and experience, even those who have been taught to seek and value independent effort and achievement can learn strategies to be successful in team-based work.

—Lynn R. Offermann

See also Big Five factors of personality, Organizational citizenship behavior

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TECHNOLOGY AND CAREERS

Over four decades ago, Alvin Toffler predicted that our society would be affected by the Information Revolution due to technology provided by the computer. Clearly, this has occurred. We have moved from

an agricultural society to a factory/assembly line/manufacturing society, to an automated/knowledge-based society. There are few occupations that are untouched by technology. Whether an individual is involved with producing tangible goods or providing a service, technical advances have reshaped work and lifestyles. Today, employees' primary activities are gathering, creating, manipulating, storing, and distributing information related to products, services, and customer needs.

Technology has had a powerful effect on the nature of work and what jobs are currently in demand. In fact, jobs that were never even imagined 20 years ago are being created today. In the past, there were stable, clearly classifiable jobs (blue collar, white collar), while today there are many rapidly changing types of jobs (multitiered, technical, professional, executive jobs). Career preparation, choices, and objectives are different now than they were years ago. For example, today many individuals are targeting smaller firms, skill-contracting agencies, or starting their own businesses rather than working for larger firms. In addition, career objectives have changed from simply climbing prescribed organizational ladders to more personal development in areas of expertise. Individuals are less likely to work their entire careers at the same firm and instead are employed at various firms and by contracting agencies.

Almost all aspects of an employee's career are influenced by technology. From the time they are hired and selected (via Web site applications), trained (using online learning), mentored (via e-mentoring), evaluated (by computerized performance appraisals), as well as the type of work they do and where they do it (e.g., telework, virtual teams), they are exposed to some form of technology. Thus technology has also impacted how individuals apply for jobs, strategies used by employers to find employees and train them, and services provided by career counselors. Technology has also impacted vocational psychology and career guidance services. Counselors can provide future workers with a skills approach to their careers, thus enabling individuals to be transformed from powerless victims into knowledgeable, creative, self-initiated workers who can anticipate career shifts and plan for new career directions.

HOW TECHNOLOGY HAS CHANGED THE NATURE OF WORK AND SKILLS REQUIRED OF WORKERS

Changing Skills

Technology is considered to be one of the most widely recognized forces affecting work and how it is

changing. The technology of microelectronics, robotics, and computer-integrated manufacturing along with the explosion of digital telecommunications due to the growth of the Internet and the World Wide Web have brought the world to the verge of a transformation similar to an industrial revolution. It is expected that the Big Four information technologies—computer networks, imaging technology, massive data storage, and artificial intelligence—will continue to have revolutionary effects on shaping today's occupations.

Computerization and the emerging information highway are transforming the American economy. Computers are changing the composition and distribution of labor, improving labor efficiency, and creating new markets and new forms of organizations. Technology shapes what people do and how they do it. Technological change often creates new occupations (e.g., computer scientists, programmers) and reduces or eliminates some existing occupations (e.g., telephone operators). In addition, digitization has changed the types of skills needed on jobs. It has increased the analytic and information-processing skills required on some jobs and decreased the manual and sensory-based skills of others.

Today, brainpower is replacing manual labor, and future workers must continually educate themselves and increase their skills to maintain their value in the workplace. Technology has reduced the number of workers required to maintain and operate high-tech factories and workplaces, has given rise to the need for "knowledge workers," and has elevated the general education required for work. Few emerging occupations exist for people who cannot read, write, and do basic mathematics. Thus people who have weak educational backgrounds are likely to be increasingly vulnerable to unemployment. In fact, the growth of computer use is associated with increased employment of college graduates and decreased employment of high school graduates. In some industries, advanced technology has eliminated the need for some unskilled and semiskilled jobs and even some middle management jobs that tended to be the positions that collected and analyzed data for decision making. For future jobs, greater emphasis will be placed on cognitive, communications, and interactive skills.

With 76 million baby boomers heading toward retirement over the next three decades and only 46 million Generation Xers waiting in the wings, corporate America is facing a potentially large talent crunch. Labor-saving technology and immigration may help fill the gap, but by 2010 there may be a

shortage of 4 to 6 million workers. Not enough Americans are trained for these jobs, since they lack computer literacy, leadership, critical thinking skills, and communication skills.

Technology has also made workplaces more information dependent in order to operate machines (e.g., robots, aircraft) for quality control and for decision making about inventory management and tracking distribution of products shipped. Employees at all levels of the organization have greater access to information and greater opportunities to make work decisions. For some jobs, computers have given employees more autonomy in their work. For others, the need for continuous data entry to computers and monitoring them to meet customers' needs has imposed a new form of assembly line. In some cases, employees have greater concerns about invasion of privacy as managers use more sophisticated surveillance techniques to monitor productivity.

24/7 Work

With the increasing technological advances, workers are able to do their jobs almost anywhere. Laptops, fax machines, cellular phones, networks, e-mail, and voice mail have made it possible for workers to essentially work 24 hours, seven days a week. Work can now be done without regard to space, time, or political boundaries. Americans, as a group, now work harder and longer than almost any other people on earth. Some studies have indicated that people have less free time and feel more pressed for time as compared to those in the past. Information technology (IT) is now used in 64 percent of women's jobs, and by 2000, women using IT in their jobs worked 3.4 hours per week longer than nonusers. The economy, globalization, and 24-hour demand for goods and services have busted capacity in the 40-hour work week. Now, no longer are just police officers, nurses, taxi drivers, delivery personnel, factory employees, and security guards working at night. Today, all types of employees (e.g., stock brokers, building contractors, account reps, software fixers) are working at night. In fact, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2000 it was estimated that 23 million people worked night, evening, or split shifts, up from 3.5 million working the night shift in 1997.

Changing Workplaces and Telework

Today, more workers are telecommuting. In fact, the innovations of telework and virtual teams are

experiencing an annual growth rate of 5 percent to 10 percent. Telecommuting is the use of computers and telecommunications equipment to work at home or in other locations away from a conventional, centralized office. Careers and jobs are increasingly being seen as boundaryless, flexible, and virtual.

Telework has the benefits of allowing people to work from home (saving commuting time and costs as well as office space costs) and is purported to help employees better balance their home and work lives. However, some workers feel isolated and are worried that less visibility might negatively impact their career progression. In addition, work and home roles often become blurred, which can lead to greater role conflict and stress among workers. Given the 24/7 nature of many jobs, it becomes increasingly more important for employers to work with individuals to create jobs that meet the life needs of employees as well as the organization's needs.

HOW TECHNOLOGY HAS CHANGED VARIOUS TYPES OF JOBS

Technology has altered the nature of various types of jobs and the mix of skills that are required to do them. The cognitive complexity of work appears to be increasing for blue-collar and service workers. A major effect of information technology on blue-collar work has been to replace physical activity with mental and more abstract forms of analysis. The predominant trends in blue-collar work are for computer-integrated manufacturing technologies and team-based work, which increases the degree of control and task scope and requires higher cognitive and interactive skills and activities. It is estimated that one-third of the blue-collar workforce is changing in this way. Some of the blue-collar jobs that have undergone the greatest transformations have been the steel industry, auto industry, and the apparel industry. It should be noted that what is most important, however, is the combination of computer usage by blue-collar workers with innovative work practices and cooperative labor-management relations (i.e., computers alone do not improve productivity).

Service work (e.g., personal service, clerical and administrative support, sales) has also changed due to technology. Automation and routinization of work has expanded from the back office (typists, data processors, operators) to the front office (customer service and sales employees). Call centers now exist for

telemarketing operations, banking, telecommunications, and insurance. There is also evidence of an overall increase in technical skill requirements, computer usage, and cognitive complexity of service jobs.

Managerial workers consist of managers, executives, and administrators. It is expected that increased computer power may lead to a fall in managerial employment, since expert systems have reduced the need for some types of managers. Managers are more likely to be project managers than functional managers. Thus they manage the process and flow of work, rather than people. This means that they need greater skills in coordinating tasks and working horizontally across the internal and external boundaries of organizations.

Professional and technical workers (e.g., engineers, scientists, computer occupations, social scientists, lawyers, religious workers, teachers, counselors, health occupations, writers, artists, entertainers) continue to expand in the labor force. This is due to corporate growth, technological changes, demographic changes, and the commercialization of scientific knowledge. Technological changes have shifted the workforce by creating new occupations (e.g., computer operators, analysts, programmers, air traffic controllers, nuclear technicians). In addition, some occupations are experiencing greater autonomy, while at the same time, some are experiencing bureaucratic controls (e.g., health care physicians who are subject to restrictions by managed care firms). Technical and professional work has always entailed high cognitive content, but interpersonal interactions (e.g., communications, problem solving, negotiation skills) are becoming more important in many of these jobs.

JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that 8 of the 10 fastest-growing occupations between 2000 and 2010 will be computer related. These include jobs such as computer and information systems managers, computer programmers, computer and information scientists, computer system analysts, computer hardware and software engineers, computer support specialists, database administrators, network and computer systems administrators, and data communications analysts. Jobs requiring information technology skills are in high demand for the future, especially for the military, aerospace, and federal agencies. One important consideration is that because the skills in

these jobs can become obsolete much faster than in other jobs, it is increasingly important for employers and government agencies to make it easier for IT professionals and those in computer-related fields to keep their skills current by lifelong learning efforts. In addition, some have suggested that soft skills such as communication and presentation skills are increasingly more important for IT professionals due to the greater need for them to explain technical issues to nontechnical people. It is also important for schools to attract more women to IT and computer-related fields, since traditionally few women express interest in IT or pursue these degrees. In addition, it is well documented that women often face barriers when pursuing academic careers in science, math, engineering, or technology.

TECHNOLOGY AND HEALTH IN CAREERS

The technological evolution of the office environment has produced many benefits, yet it has also brought with it some negative outcomes. These include both physical health concerns as well as psychological concerns. Employers will need to continue to examine the impact of technological advances on the physical and psychological health of their employees and to make adjustments as needed.

The most commonly reported physical issues are byproducts of increasing technological sophistication (increased work pace, noise, mental demands, repetitive movements), which can lead to musculoskeletal disorders (e.g., carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, back injuries). According to the U.S. Department of Labor, approximately 1.8 million people report work-related musculoskeletal disorders. These disorders are costly and long term. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, musculoskeletal disorder costs total more than \$50 billion a year and are the third most frequent reason for disability and early retirement. In addition, they can lead to job loss, depression, and family disruption.

In addition to physical problems associated with increased technology in workplaces, there are also psychological health concerns. These come from office noise, changing work demands, a lack of control on the job (e.g., technological equipment breakdowns that they do not know how to fix), isolation from others, and reductions in privacy (e.g., increased electronic monitoring by supervisors). Research has linked most of these technology-related variables to psychological stress, which can then lead to other

negative outcomes (strains, negative attitudes, anxiety, depression, low job satisfaction, mood disturbances).

THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON CAREER AND DEVELOPMENTAL PRACTICES

Today employers note that finding, attracting, and developing quality workers has become a top priority as they try to combat labor shortages, meet changing worker expectations, upgrade their workforce, and build innovation and creativity into internationally competitive organizations. Employers and applicants are increasingly relying on the Internet as part of the job search process.

Individual Job Search Strategies

With the advent of the Internet and computer-assisted career systems, individuals have greater control over their own career search strategies and progress. According to applicants, the use of the Internet for job searching is seen as a less effective strategy than personal networking but far superior to using newspaper ads and cold-calling to find jobs. In fact, most new college graduates view the Internet as a major source for help in locating job opportunities. Popular career sites such as Monster.com, Hotjobs.com, Headhunter.net, and Dice.com are busy not only at their peak times on Monday and Tuesday afternoons but also during off hours (between 1 and 2 a.m.). College students, in particular, are known for pulling all-nighters to hunt for jobs online. Individuals often use these sites to view job listings and apply for jobs.

Despite the popularity of the Internet, there are some reported problems associated with using it to search for jobs. These include less personal contact, less accuracy with regard to the job's description, difficulties finding companies' Web pages or navigating through them, problems submitting résumés according to specific Web specifications and receiving an acknowledgment or follow-up call from company representatives once a résumé is submitted.

Employers' Use of the Internet to Hire Employees

Employers are increasingly relying on career and job Web sites to recruit and select employees. In fact, the job of the recruiter has changed such that candidates can be identified, screened, and recruited all

online. Given the intense competition among employers for qualified employees, many recruiters are working late at night to look for potential résumés. Nocturnal Web surfing is now common practice among recruiters. Determined headhunters snap up hot résumés before dawn, contacting candidates by e-mail and sometimes even by phone. Many recruiters stay up past 2 a.m. examining job sites, surfing chat rooms, digging out fresh résumés on personal Web pages, posting help-wanted ads and sending e-mails. This is particularly true when recruiters are trying to hire overseas workers due to the time differences. Candidates with technical skills that are in high demand find themselves bombarded with calls and e-mail within minutes of posting a résumé online. Thus from an employer's perspective, online recruiting has tremendous potential benefits for corporations. These include reducing the time needed to hire someone, less costs relative to using headhunters and external search firms, reduced costs on mailings, brochures, and on-site interviews, and the ability to reach a more diverse applicant pool.

THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON EMPLOYEE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Due to the dynamic quality of work and work organizations, people will likely engage in seven or more jobs in their work lives. They will also have to frequently be retrained in order to remain competitive and manage their own career development. Some workers may become "world workers," moving among nations in pursuit of suitable work. Thus there is a shift from developing "career maturity" and toward "career adaptability" (that is, being able to change to fit new or changed circumstances).

The corporation of the future will have accumulated knowledge and innovative potential of its workers as its single greatest asset. Thus training and continual learning is in demand as employees need greater skills to move more rapidly across jobs. Employees also need technical training and must learn how to operate with discretion in an open information environment. Retraining is increasingly important due to obsolescence of knowledge and skills among technical and professional workers. That is, as a result of the fast pace of technological advances, many workers lack the up-to-date knowledge and skills needed to maintain effective performance in their current or future work roles. This problem may intensify with an increasingly aging

workforce. Thus retraining the expanding older technical workforce is a major challenge facing the country. In addition, as firms downsize or restructure their workforces, they will need to retrain current employees to do other jobs or provide outplacement counseling so that those employees can find jobs in other organizations. For retraining efforts to be successful, it is important that there is top management support for retraining programs and that retraining is voluntary. It is also helpful if specific jobs are assigned to the employee prior to retraining so he or she can see the relevance of learning new skills.

Technology has not only impacted the importance of retraining or continual learning, but it has also influenced the type of training that can be used with employees. The methodologies used to train employees have changed due to advances in computer-based training and online methods. E-learning is gaining in popularity, since it allows individuals to continue their learning in a self-paced fashion. Thus it is immediately available to them and is not limited by travel time or costs (to attend training sessions). Likewise, distance learning programs are in great demand in firms. Some organizations (e.g., Federal Express) have implemented a corporate-wide computer system that handles most of the human resource functions of the firm (e.g., recording training completed for employees, posting job descriptions for hirings) as well as online training programs to help employees develop on their jobs.

WEB-BASED OR E-MENTORING

Advances in technology have created new opportunities for how the mentoring of individuals is conducted. Traditionally, mentors and protégés rely on face-to-face meetings to discuss issues and build a relationship. E-mentoring refers to the process of using electronic means as the primary channel of communication between mentors and protégés. The key distinction between electronic mentoring and traditional mentoring is reflected in the face-time between mentors and protégés. E-mentoring takes advantage of technology to broaden the definition of mentoring relationships by relaxing the constraints of geographical location and time. Thus individuals with alternative work schedules (telecommuters, flextime workers) may still access mentors without altering their work arrangements. In addition, those who have traditionally had less access to mentoring relationships

(e.g., women, minorities) may have greater opportunities to get mentored with e-mentoring.

THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON THE ROLE AND SERVICES PROVIDED BY CAREER COUNSELORS

History of Technology and Career Counseling

Vocational psychology faces a number of challenges in the next century from the globalization of economies to the changing nature of work and the workforce. Many of the changes come from the explosion of communication technologies in the last 20 years. The increased use of computers and the Internet in vocational psychology has been a major development for practitioners. It has led to the availability of more systems and approaches to career guidance and has essentially changed the job and role of the career counselor. In particular, with the larger number of jobs that people are expected to have over their lifetime due to advanced technology and longer life spans, counselors will be in more demand to provide career assistance. Vocational counselors will need to be prepared to deal with the changing needs and demands of both individuals and employers. For example, with the aging of the baby boomers, counselors will need to assist them in changing careers and updating skills.

The use of technology to assist individuals with career planning had its genesis in the late sixties, when early developers first used the computer to assist with career planning. The early systems that were used stored a personal record for each user in order to monitor a person's progress through the career planning process. The results from the assessment were then linked to occupational options for the user. Some of the early systems were precursors of later systems such as SIGI PLUS and DISCOVER, which are described below and are still prominent in schools and other settings today.

In the 1970s, career information systems were developed due to the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee. These systems were comprised of search strategies through databases of occupations, schools, financial aid, and military programs. From the early seventies until 1999, there was a steady growth of customized versions of commercial career information systems in the states. With the advent of common access to the Internet in the early 1990s, career planning changed dramatically.

Several of the computer-based career information systems moved from stand-alone delivery to delivery via the Internet. Web sites devoted to career information or planning began to proliferate at an astounding rate and with a wide range of quality.

Today, individuals can take a more active role in their own career progress, since the Internet provides a rich source of career and job information that is accessible to almost anyone. This means that the counselor's role/job has changed. Today, often the counselor's primary role is to help clients access information on the Internet and other computer-assisted programs in an efficient and helpful manner. Of course, it is still important for counselors to meet with clients and provide career guidance. The best combination is using computers for assessment and then offering counseling with a vocational practitioner. Interestingly, cybercounseling has emerged, that is, the provision of face-to-face counseling via the Internet.

As noted, a number of different tools are used by career counselors today. These include computer-assisted career guidance systems (e.g., DISCOVER, SIGI (or the System of Interactive and Guidance Information), CHOICES, CDSS (or Career Decisions Software Solutions) and online information systems (Internet).

Computer-Assisted Career Guidance Systems

Computer-assisted career guidance (CACG) systems are often designed to help high school or college students make informed and educated decisions about their future. For example, CHOICES offers information about vocational technical schools, education and training, state and local information, and financial aid. Most computer-assisted career guidance systems offer occupational information, information about postsecondary institutions and technical/specialized schools, financial aid information, interest inventories, and decision-making skills. They might also include ability measures, value inventories, job search strategies, information on job interviewing, and local job information files. O*NET, or the Occupational Information Network, was recently developed as a replacement for the Dictionary of Occupational Titles. It is a comprehensive system that describes occupations based on at least 60 years of research and knowledge on the nature of jobs and work.

Two commonly used CACG systems are DISCOVER and SIGI PLUS. Both systems provide multiple online

assessment devices to assist users in establishing links between their interests, values, abilities, and skills and the occupations that should best meet their needs. Counselors should do the following when using computer-assisted career guidance systems:

- Assess needs—assess the client's needs to determine which parts of the career program to use.
- Orient the client—explain the purpose and goals of the program and the mechanics of the system.
- Offer assistance—provide individualized help when the client's needs are determined.
- Provide online assistance—provide help when different stages are explored during the process.
- Follow up—encourage, motivate, set goals, and interpret outcomes to the client.
- Evaluate—monitor the effectiveness of the computer-assisted system.

As noted by Nadene Peterson and Roberto C. Gonzalez, computers provide a number of benefits to career counselors as noted below:

- A more efficient use of time for practitioners
- Immediate access to assessment results
- Greater accuracy of administration and scoring
- More opportunities for research
- Popularity with clients, especially self-motivated clients

There are, however, some potential problems such as the following:

- Loss of client/practitioner interactions
- Assumption of a certain level of client cognitive functioning and self-motivation
- Potential loss of privacy

Regardless of which computer system is used, it is important for counselors to know the client's needs and tailor the technology to his or her needs. It is also desired that counseling assistance be provided in addition to using the computer system, since most computer systems were not designed to be stand-alone. Furthermore, it is critical that career counselors receive additional training to keep pace with changes in technology as well as changes in the needs of a more diverse client population.

Career Guidance and the Internet

Today, the fastest growing source of information about careers, jobs, and related areas is on the

Internet. The Internet is an international linkage of computers, telecommunications, graphics, and knowledge bases from sites around the world, making comprehensive information accessible to persons in any setting or geographic location. Some of the major sources of information about careers and jobs include the Web sites for

- Department of Labor (www.dol.gov)
- Career Counseling Resources (www.hawk.igs.net/employmentplanning/)
- Career Counselors Consortium (www.careercc.org)
- National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (www.profiles.iastate.edu/idid/ncdc)

The Internet will continue to play an important role providing career services, because not everyone has the time or money to seek face-to-face assistance from career counselors. The primary ways in which the Internet assists individuals is by (a) administering career assessments, (b) providing information on a variety of career planning topics (e.g., occupational descriptions, job databases), (c) serving as a conduit for cybercounseling (where the client and counselor can see each other on computers to conduct their meeting), (d) serving as a forum for group communication or networking between clients and school alumni or employers or support group members, (e) enabling the creation of virtual career centers (Web sites that integrate skills or interest assessments with training required for various jobs and job openings), and (f) facilitating individual participation in virtual reality technology so that clients can explore potential work activities.

Some of the benefits of using the Internet for career services include the following:

- Service can be available to adults 24 hours a day 7 days a week, wherever they have access to the Internet.
- Multiple users can connect (alumni, employers, clients).
- Career services might be more accessible and affordable for some populations.

While online services can provide valuable information to individuals, there are a number of concerns, including the following:

- The accuracy, relevance, and timeliness of information
- The usefulness of the information
- Adequate preparation for the user to know how to process the information, since in some cases the information is disjointed or not integrated

- Opportunity for follow-up to correct or confirm the information
- Confidentiality and privacy
- Potential for violation of copyright law
- Ethical exchange of information between sites and users
- Lack of training of counselors with the technology
- Addressing issues of informed consent, trust, and protecting the identity of participants when conducting research

SUMMARY

Technology has had a dramatic impact on the nature of work itself, individual applicants and employees, employers, and career counselors. It has changed the nature of work and the types of jobs that people do today. It has altered the knowledge and skills individuals need to be effective workers. It has transformed how employers recruit, select, and train applicants and employees. It has also changed how individuals gather occupational information and how career counselors work with their clients. As a result, individuals, employers, and career counselors will need to keep pace with advancing technology and be adaptable and responsive to change in order to continue to be successful to meet the challenges of the next century.

—Joyce E. A. Russell and Dane W. Redman

See also Career counseling, Careers and health, Internet career assessment, Stress at work, Telecommuting

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TELECOMMUTING

Telecommuting is a flexible work arrangement in which organizational employees work from an alternate location, usually the home. This variant of flexible work has been growing at a tremendous rate, which may be attributed to demands from employees, organizations, and society. First, employee demands for flexible work arrangements have arisen from substantial changes to the family structure. The growth of dual-career and single-parent families and increasing elder care responsibilities have resulted in individuals trying to balance the demands of both work and family. Telecommuting allows employees to eliminate their commute and have more flexibility, allowing them to meet both work and personal demands. Organizations also benefit from flexible work options.

Due to demographic changes, organizations need to make accommodations to attract and retain employees. Providing an option to telecommute, even one day a week, is attractive to many employees. Since employees can continue to work at times when it is not possible for them to be physically located at the traditional work site, telecommuting provides the organization with a means to deal with disasters or to accommodate disabled employees. Finally, telecommuting benefits society by reducing the number of people commuting to work, which contributes to less traffic congestion and pollution.

The growing power, sophistication, and portability of technology have made telecommuting a viable

work option. Technological developments, such as portable hardware, high-speed Internet access, and collaborative software have contributed to making work less geographically dependent. Individuals are now able to share software, information, and ideas from remote locations. Yet there is the potential for negative outcomes to telecommuting. Employees who work out of the office may become isolated, which could have an adverse effect on their career advancement prospects. Some employees may find telecommuting to cause additional stress.

The flexibility afforded by telecommuting may allow employees to diminish some aspects of work-family conflict but may increase others. Flexibility allows an employee to deal with time-based work-family conflict. For example, when working from home, a parent could take a break to attend an event at school. There are, however, some aspects of work-family conflict that may actually increase by working within the home. Blurring the boundary between work and home may increase behavioral-based work-family conflict, because an employee is forced to change roles and behaviors quickly. Strain-based work-family conflict, the spillover of strain from one role into another, may also increase, because the employee no longer has the commute to psychologically adjust from home to work and vice versa.

The research that has been done on the work outcomes of telecommuting has many contradictions. A number of books and articles suggest that telecommuting will increase job satisfaction and productivity and reduce employee stress and absenteeism. Conversely, other authors have insinuated that telecommuting has negative outcomes for employees, including loneliness, isolation, exploitation, increased stress, and limited career advancement prospects. It is likely that these contradictions are a result of the various ways telecommuting has been defined and examined. The concept of telecommuting has been explored under a variety of names, including telework, flexiplace, and homework. Despite years of study, there is still no clear, inclusive, accepted definition of this work arrangement. Location, employment relationship, telecommuting structure, and level of participation are suggested as factors to be included in the formulation of a complete definition of telecommuting.

Although most researchers have considered telecommuting to take place only from the home, others have suggested it may occur from a variety of

locations, including a satellite work center, customer's office, hotel, or airport. Location is an important consideration, since the experiences of individuals who work alone at home could be very different from the work experiences of employees working at an alternative work location.

Distinctions between home-based employees and home-based self-employed contractors must be made consistently by state and federal agencies to protect employees from becoming exploited. It is also necessary to consider the employment relationship with the organization in developing a complete definition of telecommuting. Some researchers have included self-employed individuals working from home in their definition and samples. Work experiences that may be impacted by telecommuting, such as career advancement and autonomy, would be expected to differ for self-employed and organizational employees.

Telecommuters may be either substitutors or supplementors. Substitutors are organizational employees who spend part or all of the work week at a nontraditional site in lieu of the traditional workplace. Supplementors work additional "overtime" hours at home, often to be able to concentrate and catch up on extra work. The work experiences and outcomes for substitutors and supplementors may vary substantially. Supplementors have been found to work more hours yet still devote the same amount of time to family responsibilities, suggesting they sacrifice their personal time to do additional work. Not surprisingly, supplementors have been found to experience more role conflict and work-to-family spillover. Substitutors, by not being in the office during traditional hours, may be limiting their visibility. This may result in less positive perceptions from supervisors and a reduction in career advancement opportunities.

Most of the literature suggests there should be a balance between telecommuting and working in the traditional office environment. Productivity studies have shown that working at home three days per week is optimum, with working more or less at home resulting in lower productivity. Other research has found that telecommuting one day per week did not have an adverse impact on career advancement prospects. Higher levels of telecommuting may lead to more isolation and, consequently, less career advancement.

Although varied definitions of telecommuting make it difficult to compare the current literature, numerous pilot studies have proven that when properly structured, there are a number of benefits to this

flexible work arrangement. It is imperative that researchers continue to explore the potential effects of this work arrangement on the organization, the individual, and the family. Ultimately, this research should guide organizational policy so that the benefits of telecommuting are maximized and the limitations are minimized.

—Donna Weaver McCloskey

See also Family-responsive workplace practices, Technology and careers, Work-family conflict

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THEMATIC APPERCEPTION TESTS (TAT)

Although rarely used by career counselors and practitioners, traditional projective techniques are experiencing a renaissance because they provide a

long-tested method of assessing stories and narratives, which are becoming the focus of career and narrative practitioners. These approaches, long overshadowed by quantitative methods, are providing new ground for exploration and explanation of individuals' career trajectories and concerns.

The *Thematic Apperception test* (TAT) is one such established projective technique. The TAT was initially developed by Christiana Morgan and Henry Murray in 1935 as a performance measure of personality. The TAT uses a projective narrative technique to elicit stories from individuals and then provides practitioners with a wide variety of interpretive methods. The test uses ambiguous stimuli in the form of pictures of drawings or photographs to assist people in producing stories. Numerous scoring systems have been developed to measure specific variables of interest to researchers. The most famous scoring system developed by Murray in 1943 assesses for the needs of achievement, affiliation, and power. Research indicates that these TAT-based motive measures provide a valid prediction of real-world behaviors and life outcomes. Though various systematic scoring models have been developed and validated, the current interest of career counselors and practitioners focuses upon the narrative and thematic interpretation of the TAT stories.

Narratives or stories are currently viewed as the main vehicle individuals use to express who they are and how they see the world. Narratives give us insight into the intentional actions of a person and are the platform individuals use to translate events and impose structure on their experiences. Individuals often repeat story lines in multiple variations, and a careful listener or reader will be able to recognize a unity and consistency revealed across each of an individual's narratives. Narratives in this context are not important as historical truth, but because they express the way in which people explain their experiences and indicate how they may cope with experiences. Narratives commonly become an extension of the person or reflect a picture of how the person would like to be. Interpretation of the TAT, therefore, has to be approached with a narrative sensitivity that understands the tendency of narratives to represent an extension of the person. This reflection of the individual into the narrative also can be referred to as projection.

Projective narratives like the TAT often allow access to an individual's personality in a way that direct questionnaires and interviews cannot. When

individuals engage in telling stories about the self or others, subconscious material often slips out even when the individual does not want it to. Individuals taking the TAT frequently project onto the pictures their own anxieties, motives, and desires in the narratives that they produce. This unconscious projection is facilitated through the external focus of the TAT session. The TAT pictures and the instructions associated with the pictures are focused externally and tend to draw the attention of the individual away from personal concerns to focus on the creative task of developing a story. The externality of the TAT fosters narrative responses that are projective in nature and provides the context for their interpretation.

The TAT pictures serve as the primary context to produce these narratives. Different TAT cards have been shown to result in or pull out consistent themes. Within the traditional 16 TAT cards, 3 cards, including (1) boy with violin, (2) young woman with books, (3) older man and younger man, tend to foster stories related to occupation, aspirations, and family dynamics. Stories written in response to these cards tend to produce themes that influence career concerns and trajectory. The specific techniques and instructions of the TAT administration help to facilitate expression of these individual narratives.

In the administration of the TAT, individuals are usually instructed to write or orally share a story about each picture, being told to answer these general questions: What is happening in the picture? What happened before? How are people in the picture feeling? What are they thinking? How does everything turn out at the end? Written responses tend to produce stories that are more autobiographical in nature and provide a more accurate written record that can be reviewed later by the practitioner and respondent. The TAT picture is held up for 10 seconds, and then the individual is given 5 minutes to write a story for the picture before the next picture is held up. The process is repeated until all cards have been reviewed, and then the responses are collected. Every response to a TAT picture, therefore, produces a brief and complete narrative that can prove useful to career counselors.

A case study may be demonstrative of the current efforts and use of the TAT for identifying narrative themes that influence career. The individual responded to the three TAT cards reviewed above with the following stories. To the first card, of the boy with a violin, the individual wrote that the child hated practicing his instrument and wished to be outside with friends

playing baseball. The child, however, remained inside to practice but always hated playing the instrument. To the card showing a young woman with books, the story was about the girl and her love of school but how she was feeling torn between going to college and staying home on the family farm. The girl eventually chooses to stay home and works on the farm. The story of the third card indicated that the picture was of a father and his son. The father wanted the son to take over the family shoe store, while the son wanted to go to college to pursue law. The son gives in to the father's wishes but ends up feeling miserable. A consistent theme of family conflict over career expectations is found in all three stories. The practitioner would want to highlight, verify, and investigate this theme and others with the client. The TAT and other projective measures, therefore, can provide the opportunity to express and explore otherwise unspoken narratives that are active in an individual's life and facilitate more effective career counseling.

—Mark C. Rehfuss

See also Career motivation, Personality and careers, Self-awareness

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THREE-HUNDRED-SIXTY-DEGREE (360°) EVALUATION

The use of *360° feedback* (also called multirater or multisource feedback, full-circle appraisal, and group

performance review) became highly popular in the mid-1990s and is currently being used by organizations of all sizes. This type of feedback or appraisal is used to obtain performance information from sources "in a circle around" the individual being rated—thus the term *360° feedback*. Those who provide *360°* performance feedback on the individual being assessed can include customers, coworkers, team members, supervisors, subordinates, and the person being rated (this is called self-assessment or self-appraisal). Rather than the more typical method of top-down appraisal, *360°* evaluation provides focus on the customers, both internal and external.

The traditional method of performance appraisal, where a supervisor evaluates a subordinate's work, is primarily a one-way or one-sided system. The conventional performance appraisal may allow a supervisor to be overly (and therefore unfairly) subjective when evaluating the employee, which could lead to rater error. There are several types of rater errors that can occur when a manager alone assesses an employee's performance.

USEFULNESS OF 360° FEEDBACK

Obtaining feedback using the *360°* or multirater model is useful because it allows employees to see a bigger picture of their performance, and with more detail. It also centers attention on the internal and external customers of the individual being assessed. Companies have also found that multirater feedback allows for a greater focus on the organization's mission, goals, and strategic plan more effectively than traditional appraisal methods. It can further place attention on coworker relationships and team building and can promote individual initiative in a hierarchical corporate environment. It permits employees to participate more in decision making, allows greater self-reliance, and gives them personal responsibility for their interactions with others. Moreover, it contributes to employee career development and growth, since feedback can be used to create individual career development plans that help employees better understand their own strengths and weaknesses. Because the feedback comes from many sources, it lessens the probability of discrimination that may be present with only one rater, who is usually the immediate supervisor. The primary positive results are the creation of a high-involvement corporate culture and increased personal responsibility.

Another positive aspect of multirater feedback systems is that if the organization chooses a Web-based assessment tool, it is easier for employees to use (no paper and pencil), and it can compile the data for results on each employee. Web-based systems can also be customized based on organizational goals and individual employee competencies.

USE OF 360° FEEDBACK

In 1995, approximately 40 percent of organizations employed 360° feedback, and by 2000 it was up to 65 percent of companies and growing. Many experts and researchers of multirater systems find that there are several best practices in the field. Experts suggest that multisource feedback be used only for individual development of employees, not for succession planning or compensation purposes. A good system will assess knowledge of the job, the industry, and the organization and its goals; the skills needed to be proficient in the employee's specific role; and behaviors such as being positive or having energy. Experts recommend that the system should not be used to assess personality traits, only competencies for the job being performed.

Researchers recommend that 360° feedback be linked to the strategic goals and objectives of the business. All users of this system should be well trained, and the process monitored closely. It is further advised that the organization's leaders be used as role models for others using the system and that the company invests in the process. The results of the process should be acted upon by creating a plan for employee development. Experts also advocate ongoing evaluation of the process to ensure that it is adding value to the business.

Researchers also say that unless those participating in a multirater feedback program are trained in the art of giving and receiving this type of feedback, the process can lead to conflict among team members. Differences between raters and their interpretations of the assessment questions can lead to errors in validity and reliability of the instruments being used. That is why importance must be placed on proper use of the feedback system. Other problems cited by researchers are that 360° feedback takes more time and effort than traditional appraisals, that it can assess competencies unrelated to the business goals, and that there is a lack of follow-up with so many different appraisals to review and consolidate. Differences among the various

raters will obviously cause problems for the manager who is responsible for developing a cohesive performance plan.

Researchers have also found that a supervisor is the most accurate assessor of an employee's performance and that employees are the least accurate raters of their own performance. Employees tend to give themselves higher ratings than others in the feedback loop. Lower performers tend to rate themselves more highly, and the best performers tend to underestimate their performance in comparison to supervisory ratings.

Another issue with 360° feedback is confidentiality. Studies have shown that confidential feedback tends to be more honest and to provide a more realistic assessment when the employee being rated does not know the exact identity of the appraiser. In other words, raters worry about retribution from the employee, so they offer higher ratings if the appraisal is not anonymous. Experts contend that the best practice is to use confidential, anonymous feedback.

Multirater assessment tools can be costly, but organizations should purchase an instrument that has been professionally developed and validated. Feedback instruments should include well-researched items that are directly related to employee responsibilities and competencies. Experts further recommend that 360° feedback be used only for performance improvement and employee development—not for performance appraisal or pay considerations. Moreover, they contend that multirater feedback should be an organization-wide initiative, not just for some employees who need development, but for all employees, including the organization's leaders. So that managers will not be expected to deal with feedback on all employees at the same time, authorities on this topic also conclude that such a program should be ongoing throughout the year on a rotating basis. If a supervisor has a large number of reports, this initiative could be too large a time commitment over a short period like an annual performance cycle.

An organization considering 360° feedback should answer several questions before pursuing such a program: (a) Is it clear why the organization is going to use this system rather than the traditional appraisal format? (b) Is the company "mature" enough to correctly and effectively collect and use 360° feedback, that is, does the culture support this type of feedback, (c) Is there a commitment from the corporate leaders, (d) Are the managers going to use the data toward the development of individual employees? (e) Are the

employees going to utilize the feedback for their own development and performance improvement?

BASIC STEPS IN THE PROCESS

The steps in the 360° feedback process can seem daunting, so considerable thought and research before launching the initiative is recommended. First, the organization must determine whether it is ready for such a program. After reviewing the questions listed above, if the answer to these questions is yes, the next step is to conduct research and select the appropriate feedback tool and process to be used. This might also mean selecting a consulting firm or external subject matter expert to assist the organization with the initiative. Consideration should be given to who will create the assessment form and what it will include. For whatever tool is selected, the organization should confirm that the assessment tool has statistical validity and reliability and should ensure that the questionnaires are directly related to the employee's job and competencies and to the company goals. Once the process is formulated, the next step is to determine who will provide the feedback and how it will be obtained. Again, the organization should answer several questions: Will it be internal only? Will it include suppliers and external customers? Will computers be used in completing the assessment? Is the computer system secure?

After the feedback is obtained, the next step is to compile it into a useful report that the employee can review and understand and then use to create an individual development plan. Supervisors should be prepared to provide ongoing and consistent communication about the process and the follow-up plan. The organization should have a strategy for how the feedback results will be shared with staff. Following the creation of employee development plans, the entire process should be evaluated. This entire process should be renewed every 6 to 12 months for the employees. The company needs to also consider whether the feedback system met the organization's expectations and whether employee performance improved, based on the feedback obtained via the process.

There are several issues to consider before an organization makes a decision on whether to use 360° feedback. First, they need to assess the costs of the program, both from a financial and a staff time standpoint. Next, they should consider whether this method is going to provide more focus on the mission, goals, and strategic plan of the company than the current

appraisal or employee development system. Also, companies should keep in mind that an initiative like this must have top-down support where corporate leaders are willing to give 360° feedback their full backing. Ideally, use of the system should begin with the leaders. Once the leaders and managers have been part of the process, they will be better able to explain it to their direct reports. The leaders, having been through the process, will confirm for employees its importance to the organization.

Another consideration is training the users of the 360° feedback system. All employees, customers, suppliers, and any other users will need proper training on the correct and fair application of the feedback system. The organization needs to be prepared to create an individual development plan for each employee once the feedback is gathered. This part of the process is essential and should be taken seriously. And finally, the company should also be prepared to continuously evaluate and adjust the system based on problems or issues that arise.

CONCLUSION

An organization should consider all the pros and cons of 360° feedback before making the decision to use such a system. The organization must be prepared for such an initiative from the top down. They must also employ effective planning and implementation processes. By carefully applying the strategies and best practices recommended by the experts, an organization will be successful with its 360° feedback initiatives.

—Shelly Prochaska

See also Executive coaching, Human resource support systems, Leadership development, Performance appraisal and feedback

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TOKENISM

Rosabeth Moss Kanter's 1977 book *Men and Women of the Corporation* contributed to filling the gap between broad sociological and individualistic psychological approaches to organizational theory and research by taking a social psychological look at interpersonal relations within work groups. Specifically, Kanter described the on-the-job experiences of "token" women working with a "dominant" group of male sales managers in a Fortune 500 company. She attributed the heightened visibility and resulting performance pressures, marginalization, and role entrapment these women reported to "numbers," that is, their proportional representation as less than 15 percent of their "skewed" work group. These three outcomes and the role of skewed proportions rest at the heart of what has become known as *tokenism* theory. Empirical support for Kanter's conclusions across case studies representing a wide array of occupations and manipulative experiments is strong for women tokens. For example, research with military cadets found that women were readily visible, even in uniform; that women in basic training scored even higher than men on tests measuring psychological stress; that women felt socially isolated and disapproved of by peers; and that women reported role conflicts between masculinized expectations for cadets (e.g., "command" voices) and stereotypes for themselves as women (e.g., fragile).

Subsequent research undermined tokenism theory's gender-neutral reliance on proportions alone. There is solid evidence that the negative consequences associated with proportional underrepresentation did

not extend to White male tokens in female-dominated occupations, including nurses, social workers, librarians, teachers, and flight attendants. Although the perceived masculinity and work attitudes of token men may be threatened, token White men were advantaged with pay and promotion. However, this presumed glass escalator may reflect universal male advantage rather than benefits associated with token status itself. What Kanter attributed to proportions alone really resulted from token proportions intertwined with a stigmatized status, most commonly operationalized as being female in a male-dominated and masculinized context. Indeed, token proportions themselves may be an indicator of lower status. Token women, whose lower status as women and tokens was intentionally elevated, held fewer negative expectations about their interactions with dominant men. Moreover, solo women leaders (that is, women who were not only a token minority of less than 15 percent but also the sole woman in the group) facilitated group performance successfully when their expertise was legitimated.

Research extending these patterns beyond gender to race/ethnicity is minimal and may be culturally specific. A study of African American elite leaders found evidence of depression and anxiety as well as loss of Black identity, multiple demands, felt isolation, and pressures to confirm one's competence. The subjective experience of distinctiveness is especially strong among African Americans who commonly find themselves in positions as solos, an extreme form of tokenism. Indeed, stigmatizing effects of distinctiveness are generally associated with solo status across many subordinated groups. Studies of women firefighters highlighted how role entrapment, drawing on different stereotypes for African American and White women, occurred for both groups but in qualitatively different ways that overburdened Black and underburdened White women. Given that the fundamental basis for tokenism effects is difference between tokens and dominants, further research exploring race/ethnicity and the intertwining of multiple identities is warranted.

Researchers have explored a wide range of outcomes of proportional underrepresentation beyond those originally documented by Kanter. On the one hand, men, whether tokens or not, were advantaged consistently over women in both wages and promotions, making the broader gendered subtext of favoring men more influential than tokenism's work group proportions. On the other hand, and consistent with tokenism theory, career aspirations, job satisfaction,

and organizational commitment were negatively impacted by women's token status. Laboratory research documents that women who anticipated being a token in an upcoming group sought reassignment to a nontoken group. Furthermore, vignette studies, which described token settings and recorded readers' expectations, paralleled actual tokens' experiences, suggesting that job choice may be affected by negative expectations for token women. Token women more commonly reported sexual and gender harassment, probably used by dominants as mechanisms for boundary heightening, that is, for simultaneously tightening bonds among in-group dominants and boundaries excluding out-group tokens. Subjective performance evaluations from dominants were more negative for token women compared to women in groups with both higher female representation and all men, with some of these differences disappearing when raters were held publicly accountable for their assessments.

Recent research on stereotype threat has clarified the impact of tokenism on actual individual performance. Stereotype threat occurs whenever a negative task-relevant stereotype is activated for a member of the stereotyped group who values performance in the tested domain. For example, simply being a high-achieving solo woman taking a math test in the presence of two men led to poorer performance, both when test results were public or private, than that of women randomly assigned to same-gender test groups. A strong, developing body of research on stereotype threat merges with tokenism research to argue that the effects of token status extend beyond performance pressures to actual performance decrements. These studies raise serious questions about what it takes to level the playing field of work group interactions.

Another strand of research moved away from the simple documentation of negative impact to explore ways to facilitate tokens' success. Given Kanter's emphasis on proportions, the most obvious panacea became increasing numbers themselves. The benefits of numbers remain unclear, with some research reporting more favorable outcomes when proportions exceed 15 percent and with contrasting research highlighting intensified boundary heightening in the face of intrusive numerical increases. The inconclusiveness in this literature may well rest in the clearly established understanding that tokenism effects themselves are produced by more than skewed proportions.

Another line of research has followed successful tokens, comparing them to both less successful tokens

and similarly successful dominants. Successful tokens drew on good records of accomplishment, nurturing relationships, proactive management of their own career, mentoring, and developmental job assignments. Successful tokens typically were co-opted into the higher status group, declining to support and identify with their still disadvantaged out-group of origin. These findings are not surprising, given that such individual boundary crossing fails to challenge the core structure of tokenism.

The promise of tokenism theory when it was first introduced came from its focus on social context and situational barriers rather than on individual accountability with its potential for victim blaming. Individual tokens may persist and succeed, further directing attention away from the core tenet of tokenism theory, that is, that social context involving work group composition and its intersection with sexism, racism, and other forms of social oppression matters.

—Janice D. Yoder

See also Racial discrimination, Sex discrimination, Stereotyping of workers

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TOLERANCE FOR AMBIGUITY

Tolerance for ambiguity can be defined as the degree to which an individual is comfortable with uncertainty, unpredictability, conflicting directions, and multiple

demands. In essence, tolerance for ambiguity is manifest in a person's ability to operate effectively in an uncertain environment. The extent of ambiguity may vary greatly and is generally linked to the underlying cause for uncertainty. Some people may be born with a natural predilection toward tolerance for ambiguity, while for others it develops over time through education and experience. And there are some who strive daily to simply eliminate ambiguity in their lives. However, ambiguity exists in different degrees and for varying periods of time within corporations and organizations around the world. It may arise when questions are posed that have no single answer or that generate a number of new questions. Perhaps the initial question was ambiguous. Occasionally there is ethical uncertainty, and the line between right and wrong becomes blurred. How one deals with uncertainty and the stress of an ambiguous situation is an important consideration in the world of work.

Tolerance for ambiguity was first recognized as a personality variable in the early 1960s. Since then, psychologists, sociologists, project managers, human resource development professionals, software developers, business consultants, educators, and others have examined tolerance for ambiguity to better understand how people deal with uncertainty in their lives, whether in family situations, in the workplace, or in social settings. In general, people who have a high degree of tolerance for ambiguity tend to be able to see and appreciate multiple perspectives and thus are not so quick to rush to judgment. They ask more questions and look at more possibilities when trying to solve complex problems. Thus, tolerance for ambiguity often indicates a person's ability to be creative and to think critically.

The American Council on Education cites the ability to function effectively in an ambiguous, complex, and rapidly changing environment as a critical skill corporate recruiters look for in a pool of applicants. The job interview might include questions to determine whether the applicant simply copes with uncertainty, tolerates ambiguity, or embraces it as an exciting element of the world in which we live and work. For example, a job applicant may be asked to cite an instance in which he or she had to deal with an unexpected event or abrupt structural change at work. Where one's propensity for dealing with uncertainty falls along the continuum may be seen as an indicator of other attributes, such as a tendency toward flexible thinking, a preference for swift and independent decision making, or a positive attitude toward risk taking.

Business leaders highlight some of the talents they look for that go beyond the technical expertise needed in any particular field. These include excellent communication skills, successful teamwork, flexible and creative thinking, ease working with people of diverse backgrounds, understanding of implications associated with the global nature of business today, high ethical standards, and ability to deal with ambiguity in the work environment. One can readily see the connection among several elements in the forgoing list. For example, it is difficult to truly understand people from another culture if communication efforts are hampered by impatience derived from low tolerance for ambiguity. This in turn influences open-mindedness and the possibility of discovering creative solutions to complex issues.

Sources of ambiguity in the workplace vary. In the current milieu of international corporations and global organizations, it is likely that there will be multiple cultural perspectives to be considered. Studies indicate general cultural traits (sometimes referred to as sociotypes) within large ethnic communities. Eastern, African, and Iberio-American cultures tend to be more cooperative, while the Western orientation is more competitive. Similarly, the Western communication style is generally more direct than that of other cultures. In some instances, what is acceptable in one culture might be entirely inappropriate in another. Thus, a high level of tolerance for ambiguity is advantageous in multicultural settings.

At times, a business may experience rapid change that borders on the chaotic. Indeed, slow and steady improvement as a mechanism for organizational change is uncommon. Agility is important in today's fluid business climate as well as in the public sector. In times of rapid change, the way one deals with uncertainty becomes critical to individual success, thus influencing the success of the organization. In the frenzy associated with change and upheaval, those who are able to navigate the ambiguity are often seen as management material and have advancement potential within the organization.

Another source of uncertainty in the workplace may be a lack of clarity in expectations and in the long-term goals of the organization. This is usually due to ineffective management and may be a contributing factor to the type of chaotic change just described. Senior officers of the organization might be sending mixed signals to employees, or there may be dissension among those in upper management. When

faced with a high degree of uncertainty, individuals can simply try to cope with the situation, or they can try to maintain a low profile to “stay out of the way” of management ambiguity. A person who is adept at tolerating ambiguity and can still maintain a high level of productivity in the unstable climate is likely to continue to be an effective contributor in the work setting. Although they are probably few in number, there are those who fully embrace ambiguity, who see it as an opportunity for personal development and creative organizational change.

The world of work continues to grow increasingly complex. In businesses and organizations, those who are called upon to solve complicated problems and make good decisions must rely on more than factual knowledge. Dealing with uncertainty may evoke feelings of ambivalence or, in the extreme, paralysis and helplessness. Moving too quickly to decisive action, however, can lead to disaster. Employees and senior officers alike need to recognize uncertainty as a source of creative energy and therefore encourage a tolerance for ambiguity.

—Nancy S. Huber

See also Person-environment fit (P-E fit), Personality and careers, Proactivity

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TOXIC LEADERSHIP

Toxic leadership exists in virtually every arena of social life. It takes a special toll, however, in the workplace, where workers frequently feel particularly constrained to acquiesce to employers and managers

whom they perceive as controlling their professional and economic destinies.

Toxic leaders in the workplace inflict serious and lasting harm on their employees, their colleagues, their organizations, and stockholders, even their customers and clients. They do so by virtue of their destructive behaviors and dysfunctional personal qualities. The garden variety “difficult boss” does not qualify as a toxic leader. Only those leaders who leave their followers and organizations measurably worse off than they found them—sometimes even totally destroying them—fall within this definition of toxic leaders.

Toxic leadership represents a social/psychological phenomenon, whose complexity is reflected in the fact that the same individual may be viewed as noxious by some and heroic by others, as toxic in certain situations and nontoxic in others, as intentionally damaging in particular circumstances but unintentionally harmful in still others. Consequently, understanding and defending oneself and others against various forms of toxic leadership require a multidimensional framework, one that takes into account both toxic leaders as well as their intended and unintended victims.

THE TOXIC LEADER'S SIDE OF THE EQUATION

At least six dimensions of the *leader's* decisions and actions need to be considered. These include *intentionality*; *intensity* and *duration* of the harm; nature and number of *destructive behaviors* and *dysfunctional personal characteristics*; and significance and impact of the *outcomes*.

In terms of *intentionality*, leaders who deliberately injure others or knowingly enhance themselves at great cost to others we consider intentionally toxic. Leaders who inadvertently cause substantial harm to others by careless or reckless behavior or faulty character structure, including incompetence and cowardice, we categorize as unintentionally toxic. *Intensity* of the leader's toxicity may vary considerably, as may the *duration* of harm; however, both intensity and duration must have a sufficiently significant *impact* to warrant the diagnosis of toxicity.

Behaviors of Toxic Leaders

Space limitations permit only an abbreviated list of *destructive behaviors* that qualify for inclusion in the

toxic leader's repertoire. Among the most destructive behaviors that toxic leaders use are the following:

- Violating human rights, by eliminating or destroying individuals through undermining, incapacitating, humiliating, intimidating, demoralizing, seducing, isolating, disenfranchising, and/or firing them without just cause
- Stifling constructive criticism and enforcing compliance with the leader's decisions through inappropriate means
- Weakening and/or destroying the organizational systems intended to promote truth, excellence, and equity, and otherwise engaging in deceitful, unethical, illegal, and/or criminal behavior
- Setting followers against one another, identifying scapegoats, and/or inciting disdain or other mistreatment of those the leader perceives as his or her opponents
- Deliberately creating the illusion that the leader is the only one through whose special gifts the followers can succeed, thereby increasing the leader's power and decreasing the followers' self-confidence. This behavioral strategy may involve stimulating the followers' most primitive fears and needs, including those for safety, material well-being, self-esteem, and meaningfulness
- Ensuring that the cost of unseating the toxic leader simultaneously destroys the organization.

This necessarily incomplete list of destructive behaviors combines with various character flaws to define toxic leaders.

Character Flaws of Toxic Leaders

Toxic leaders frequently exhibit a variety of dysfunctional personal qualities or character flaws, from lack of integrity to cowardice. Here too the following qualities represent only a partial catalogue:

- Deficient integrity that renders the leader untrustworthy
- Excessive ambition, lust for power, and/or greed that result in ruthless self-aggrandizement
- Outsized ego, disproportionate narcissism, and/or arrogance that blind toxic leaders to their own shortcomings, thereby limiting any capacity for self-correction and positive growth
- Amoral behavior that limits the toxic leader's capacity to differentiate between right and wrong
- Inadequate empathy and compassion that prevents toxic leaders from grasping the actual impact of their actions

- Lack of intellectual and other relevant competencies that leads to misdiagnosing problems and failing to create appropriate solutions
- Cowardice that inhibits toxic leaders from taking necessary difficult decisions and actions.

THE FOLLOWERS' SIDE OF THE EQUATION

An adequate conceptual framework for toxic leadership also requires a complex understanding of those whose lives the toxic leader affects. In the workplace, this refers primarily, but not exclusively, to those individuals who work under the direction or authority of the leader. Although most followers, or in this case employees, would deny it, we often tolerate, prefer, and sometimes even create toxic leaders. As targets of toxic leaders, we followers respond in terms of three major components: our *psychological and existential needs and fears*; the *sociohistorical context* in which we exist; and the *interaction* between our *individual capacities and experiences*, on the one hand, and the *environment* in which we live and work, on the other.

Psychological and Existential Needs

Employees bring to the workplace the *psychological* needs and fears that stem from their individual psyches, as well as *existential* concerns that emanate from their common experience as human beings. Psychological forces that predispose individuals to seek out leaders include the need for reassuring authority figures to provide parental direction; the need for certainty, physical safety, and economic security in an uncertain and turbulent world; the need for approval and inclusion in some human group; the need to feel chosen and special, which may provide access to important centers of action; and the fear of one's personal inability to challenge a toxic leader. Toxic leaders manipulate these needs and fears to bend followers to their will.

The circumstances of our human existence heighten our vulnerability to toxic leaders. Perhaps the most critical *existential* force is our awareness that we inevitably shall die under conditions we currently cannot foresee. The suppressed angst, or existential anxiety, that such awareness provokes sends us on an endless search for safety, certainty, and the meaning of our lives. This existential dread initiates our quest to escape death, at least symbolically, by achieving immortality through heroic deeds. Toxic leaders

attract us with promises of security, certainty, noble enterprises, and heroic opportunities for immortality.

Our External Environment: The Sociohistorical Moment

The external environment pummels us with incessant change, turbulence, and uncertainty. Natural disasters, scientific and technological catastrophes, as well as social and political crises, unsettle followers. While uncertainty and change open the door to previously unavailable freedom, they also stimulate followers to reach for reassurance from the nearest source. In such perturbing circumstances, followers accept leaders who offer to restore order and safety.

Each culture also inculcates clear social norms and behavioral expectations. It articulates what constitutes outstanding achievement, a standard that sets the stage for heroic action. Moreover, each historical moment offers new challenges, from walking in space to discovering the cure for some dreaded disease.

The Individual's Experience in the External World: Psychosocial Forces

We measure ourselves against the achievement standards set by society and its various institutions, including work organizations. When, by dint of our own capacities and opportunities, we meet society's norms for achievement, our self-esteem rises. When we exceed those norms, we find ourselves acclaimed as heroes and leaders (since the culture rarely distinguishes carefully between the two). When we fall short, however, we often seek alternative routes to bolster our self-esteem. One common path entails joining the ranks of those already acknowledged as leaders so that we may share vicariously in their status.

Our perception that the leader (or the "boss" in the workplace) has special gifts, greater than our own, plays an important role in maintaining our acquiescence. This belief enforces our acceptance, even when the leader's behavior crosses the toxic line. When the corporate culture reinforces the external culture's criteria for leadership, we increasingly believe that employers or managers who meet or exceed those standards are worthy recipients of our respect and support. Such circumstances also undermine our personal confidence to challenge their decisions and actions. When leaders use toxic means—such as

unwarranted threats to our employment—to ensure compliance, we are intimidated all the more.

Toxic leaders in the workplace rarely need to expend much effort or resources controlling those individuals who work under their authority. Rather, those in the grip of toxic leaders tend to keep themselves under control. Individuals daunted by toxic leaders convince themselves through a set of *rationalizations* that they *cannot* resist because they lack the skills and talents to do so successfully. Eventually, these rationalizations harden into a web of *control myths* that persuade the followers they *should not* defy the toxic leader, because that individual deserves to be in control by virtue of his or her strengths and the followers' needs.

DEALING WITH TOXIC LEADERS

Although many employees who work under the aegis of toxic leaders silently endure their suffering, certain circumstances may induce resistance. For example, individuals tend to speak out against a toxic leader when they are sufficiently close to the toxic action to be aware of the serious harm being caused. When they identify with the individual or group being injured, followers are more likely to feel motivated to challenge the toxic leader. Moreover, when the costs of not speaking out outweigh the benefits, followers may feel compelled to oppose the leader, either privately or publicly. Occasionally, the emergence of a protestor and/or a critical event can galvanize previously silent sufferers and/or onlookers.

Various strategies can be used to control or unseat a toxic leader, although the risks can be substantial. All strategies for deposing a toxic leader require careful planning. Such planning includes gathering relevant intelligence not only about the toxic leader but also concerning others who might assist or undermine the effort. Keeping an evidentiary journal or log of the leader's toxic behavior is essential, since such documentation will help to induce others to act. Additional steps include identifying and collaborating with associates who not only recognize the harm being done but who also are willing and able to take measures to curtail the damage. Consulting trustworthy, experienced colleagues and opinion makers within the organization, as well as the toxic leader's peers or advisers, can assist challengers in developing an effective operational plan.

Personal Strategies and Policy Options

Personal strategies and *policy options* exist for dealing with toxic leaders. At the individual level, *personal* strategies involve taking action on one's own or in collaboration with like-minded colleagues. Acting alone is fraught with risks to the follower. Coalitions tend to be more successful than lone rangers in confronting toxic leaders.

Low-key approaches tend to work best when there is reason to believe the leader is both able and willing to change his or her toxic ways. Offering to counsel the leader, aided by a positive action plan with specific guidelines and benchmarks for change, can be a useful first step. If the leader responds positively, a schedule for future discussions and progress evaluations can be developed. "Keeping one's cool" at every stage in the process is imperative to a successful outcome.

When toxic leaders are unable or unwilling to change their behavior and/or control their character flaws, then employees may work quietly to limit, offset, or, if possible, undo the damage caused by the leader. If that option fails, followers may take action to undermine the leader; however, this strategy presents serious moral dilemmas that must be carefully weighed.

If the harm to the organization warrants removing the toxic leader, resisters should join with others, particularly the most senior and respected members of the organization, to undertake this mission. The participation of the board is critical, but since the board usually was responsible for selecting the leader, opening the board's collective eyes to the leader's shortcomings often proves to be a delicate undertaking. One strategy involves individually approaching key board members either directly or through their trusted associates. Once a sufficient number of board members perceives the need for collective action, a meeting of the executive committee or the full board is in order.

If the board refuses to act, then informing the media offers another recourse. Since the media frequently face their own organizational and political constraints, this strategy must be undertaken in an informed and cautious manner. Finally, when it is evident that none of these strategies will work, or if the harm is limited to you, then leaving the organization may be the most realistic way for an individual to deal with a toxic leader.

At the organizational level, *policy options* can be developed for preventing the emergence and/or limiting

the damage wreaked by toxic leaders. The selection process is key to spotting potentially toxic leaders. The selection process should identify the largest possible cohort of qualified candidates, who then must be screened by multiple layers of reviewers from various sectors of the organization. Intensive due diligence should weed out toxic candidates. The selection process should be as transparent as possible. Once they have been selected, leaders at every level should be reviewed regularly with input from the total role set with whom they interact.

Followers should insist upon selecting leaders who do not offer them illusions of safety and grandeur. Leaders who expect them to participate in the governance and conduct of the organization are less likely to require submissive followers. Followers, for their part, must confront their own anxieties and fears to ensure that candidates cannot manipulate them through proffering unrealistic visions for the organization and its members.

Maintaining open and democratic policies and practices throughout the organization provides a bulwark against toxic leadership. The requirement for leaders to conduct periodic accountability sessions with large segments of the organization to explain critical decisions that they have taken is another useful policy option for keeping toxic leadership at bay. Term limits tend to prevent or reduce toxicity by reminding leaders of their future return to the ranks of followers or their timed exit from the organization. Finally, in organizations that create respectable departure options, such as a transition period with organizational support, leaders are less likely to cling to power beyond their reasonable usefulness to the organization.

—Jean Lipman-Blumen

See also Antisocial work behaviors, Leadership development

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TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Training and development (T&D) activities identify and ensure, through planned learning programs, the development of key competencies that enable individuals to perform to the best of their ability, aptitude, and attitude on the job. The T&D functions have evolved to contend with and respond to social and economic events, as well as being highly influenced by changes in management trends and philosophies. Effective training provides opportunities for people to perform in new functions and to be promoted into new situations.

Training should be distinguished from education. Education is instruction in more general knowledge such as history, philosophy, economics, or mathematics. Training teaches the learner how to do a specific task or function (i.e., manage their time, change a behavior, or run a machine). Being more technically oriented, training is more applicable to the adult learner who brings different experiences and psychological predispositions to the workplace.

T&D has evolved from simple apprenticeship programs to a blend of instruments, including classroom-based instruction, systematic job instruction, team building, simulation, Web-based individualized instruction, and many others. Before industrialization,

training focused primarily on direct instruction and apprenticeships. Initially, as factories began to emerge in the Industrial Revolution, the first-line supervisor was normally assigned responsibility for training the workforce. Rationalization of work, division of labor, and routinized production created workers who became the keepers of the machinery. Due to this specialization, apprenticeships and on-the-job training were the training methods employed.

As the Industrial Revolution gained momentum, the number of factories increased and grew larger, and it became necessary to hire more employees directly from the farming communities who had little or no manufacturing experience. Unable to keep pace through one-on-one apprenticeships or on-the-job assignments, training moved into the classroom with assigned "trainers," enabling several people to be trained simultaneously with minimal disruptions to the production line. "Vestibule" training was developed for jobs requiring skill development on particular equipment away from the pressures of a production schedule.

By the first decade of the twentieth century, the United States had become a fully industrialized society with modern management, higher wages, and low unemployment. America's involvement in World War I created a widespread labor shortage, especially in skilled worker categories, because of the sudden need for production of wartime armaments, draft to government service and the military, and restrictions on immigration. Training departments were established in many companies to answer the call for faster and more efficient training methodology. A just-in-time method was developed, consisting of a four-step process that enhanced the teaching of repetitive, manipulative skills in a fast-advancing, automated world.

In the four decades after World War I, especially after World War II, the United States experienced unparalleled economic growth. While the industrial world was in full development mode, philosophers and psychologists were in the wings analyzing group dynamics and the learning processes. In the training arena, it was quickly recognized that not all workers were equal in their ability to learn and retain information. Given the numbers to be trained, the classroom was still the training site of choice, although it became necessary to rethink the way training was delivered, to incorporate techniques that would allow for the disparity of abilities and not hold back the more advanced learners. Self-paced learning and individualized training programs were developed to meet these needs.

The three decades between 1960 and 1990 brought continuing prosperity, an increased demand for services, a growing use of information technology, and an opening of global markets and competition. This was an equally tumultuous time for training departments as they tried to stay on top of the computer age while realizing that service jobs are labor intensive and not particularly amenable to automation. Moreover, the skill sets needed in a service society were less mechanical and more intellectual and behavioral, hence more difficult to define in precise training terms.

One answer in an ever-changing work environment was the development of a training system called job support, which did not require the employee to learn every process step by step, instead, to know where to find the information. Second, communication issues and interpersonal concerns in a more diverse workplace became prime issues. A third development was the incorporation of behavioral role modeling, which stressed the use of observation, modeling, and vicarious reinforcements to change human behavior. Multi-million-dollar training facilities endowed with computer-based training and technological innovations were built to meet these challenges.

Business theorists recognized that employees represented a vital resource as important as capital and thus should be managed and developed to facilitate competitive advantages. Gaining a competitive edge by managing people more effectively became increasingly important, thus leading researchers to rethink old training theories and reframe them in a modern context. However, a diverse workforce facing more complex problems made this a difficult task. Teams—their size, composition, dynamics, diversity, and processes—became the central focus of training initiatives. The *22nd Annual Training Industry Report* published by *Training* magazine indicated that the market was utilizing a cross array of training tools from the traditional classroom to computer-delivered instruction. The single largest growing training method was self-paced Web-based courses. The fluidity of the environment and the workforce created a challenge to increase the offerings of effective and intensive T&D programs.

Technology-based training will be the means of the future, that is, Web-based training (Internet, intranet, extranet), computerized self-study (CD-ROM, DVD, diskette), and satellite/broadcast TV (videoconferencing, audioconferencing, teleconferencing). An integrated

approach of the many techniques that have been successful with new modern twists will be applied to training venues. The growing complexity of global markets and an ever-escalating number of “virtual organizations” will lead to an increased need for negotiation and interpersonal communication skills as diverse employees at all levels need to learn how to interact across organizational boundaries and treat each other with greater respect and sensitivity.

Since the beginning of time, training has been a primary way to reproduce knowledge and skills. As societies evolve and become more complex, the instructional paradigms and the skills needed by those trained must also change. Furthermore, as the pace of change accelerates, efficiency (speed and cost) must join effectiveness as criteria for successful training. T&D helps individuals and organizations meet the increasing demands of the global business arena. Successful companies in the future will be those that preserve and develop their human capital by providing high-value training and development activities within a challenging learning environment.

—Joyce Thompson Heames

See also Apprenticeships, Business simulations, Cross-training, On-the-job training

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TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

Tuition reimbursement is a popular benefit in which employers pay all or part of an employee's tuition for college courses or degree programs. Educational benefits taking the form of scholarships and grants are tax-exempt benefits under Section 117 of the Internal Revenue Code if the employee is a degree candidate and the course work is job related. Tuition reimbursements are classified as a working condition fringe benefit under Section 132 of the code and do count as gross income if the education maintains or improves job skills. In addition, educational assistance programs (EAPs), as defined under Section 127, permit companies to provide up to \$5,250 toward educational expenses without employees incurring tax liability. An EAP requires a written plan that is open to everyone but does not require the employee to be enrolled in a degree program or the content to be job related.

Surveys of both students and firms indicate that educational assistance and tuition reimbursement programs are widespread. A 1996 national survey found that 75 percent of U.S. establishments with more than 20 employees and almost all large employers offer some type of tuition reimbursement benefit. Other estimates come from surveys conducted by professional associations. These range from 67 percent of members of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), who offered graduate assistance in 2005 to 89 percent of members in the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans (IFEBP), who report having at least one education benefit program. Surveys of students also find extensive use of employer tuition aid. A National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) survey in 1996 found that 6 percent of all undergraduates and 13 percent of all graduate students received financial aid from their employers. For students who identified themselves as working, 25 percent of undergraduates and 42 percent of graduate students received employer aid. Tuition aid was strongly related to course of study; approximately one-third of all undergraduate students enrolled in business, engineering, and computer science programs received financial aid from their employers.

Although tuition reimbursement programs are common and nearly universal among large employers, the costs and structure of the programs vary widely. A 1998 Hewitt Associates survey of 460 tuition

reimbursement programs found that 77 percent reimbursed educational expenses (such as books and fees) in addition to tuition and that 14 percent placed no limits on the amount of tuition that could be reimbursed. A 2000 IFEBP survey found that the most common restrictions placed on tuition reimbursement programs were reimbursements contingent on grades, annual dollar limits, and length of service requirements before an employee becomes eligible to participate.

From the firm's perspective, tuition reimbursement programs are appealing, since they are widely seen as a good benefit by employees regardless of whether they actually take advantage of the programs. For example, *Fortune* magazine uses educational benefits in their assessment of the "Best Places to Work." In addition, costs are only incurred when employees actually enroll, and typically a much smaller portion of those employees who are eligible actually use the programs. Although there are no broad-based estimates of program participation, an IFEBP survey of 26 programs found that slightly more than half had participation rates of less than 5 percent and three-quarters reported less than 10 percent of employees. A RAND study of tuition assistance in the military found participation rates between 9 percent and 13 percent.

Company expenditures on tuition reimbursement follow the prevailing notion in the popular business press that employee development helps in recruiting and retaining quality employees. This substantial investment in employee education raises interesting questions, however, because it appears to contradict classic human capital theory as originally formulated by Gary Becker and others. This is because college classes develop "general" skills that are broadly marketable and should therefore make employees more likely to turn over. Human capital theory predicts that a firm would only invest in general skills if an employee were willing to bear the cost by accepting lower wages before or during the training. Since studies have shown that employees do not receive lower wages during training, a question is raised as to whether college educations create job opportunities and lead to turnover.

Of all the forms of company-sponsored development, college courses covered by tuition reimbursement are the most likely to be seen by employees as providing marketable skills because of the broad content and qualifications that they offer. Some organizations have recognized this potential for turnover and instituted policies that require the employee to stay for

a certain length of time or repay the cost of the classes. However, the proportion of firms that use contractual “handcuffs” to keep employees is still relatively low, with estimates ranging from 16 percent to 23 percent. This leaves open the question of why employers would provide educational assistance when the new skills would theoretically create an incentive for employees to leave.

Two recent studies have examined this question specifically and found that retention of employees while they are in school, as well as the ability to recruit better employees in general, justifies the widespread use of tuition reimbursement even though it provides employees with more marketable skills. A study of salaried employees from a manufacturing firm found that employees are less likely to turn over while enrolled in school and taking tuition reimbursement benefits. Employees who graduated with advanced degrees were then more likely to leave the company than those who were still in school, but the incentive to leave was alleviated if the employee was promoted after earning a degree. A second study found that firms with tuition reimbursement programs paid higher wages and had lower turnover than other employers using a large sample of establishments. Taken together, this research suggests that tuition reimbursement programs help to attract and retain high-quality employees despite the fact that employees gain new and marketable skills.

—George S. Benson

See also Continuing professional education, Employee assistance programs, Lifelong learning

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TURNOVER

Turnover is the separation of a member from an organization. Turnover can be categorized as voluntary (e.g., an employee voluntarily quits working at Firm A to start a new job at Firm B) or involuntary (e.g., an employee is laid off, downsized, or fired). Though in both cases the organization has one less member, the causes and consequences are highly likely to be different. In the case of voluntary turnover, most organizations are concerned about the many costs associated with the loss of needed personnel. In the case of involuntary turnover, most organizations are pleased to obtain the cost savings associated with the reduction in personnel. From the employee perspective, both voluntary and involuntary turnover have important implications for career development.

Because employers initiate involuntary turnover, it is generally assumed to be in the organization’s best interest. At the same time, this action has a major impact on the individual asked to leave. In the long term, organizational separation will likely alter an individual’s career path. After experiencing involuntary turnover, an individual may seek work in the same field and move up, stay at the same level, or move back on the same career track. However, many individuals reevaluate their career path at critical junctures, such as organizational separation, and decide to change careers.

In contrast, voluntary turnover is generally initiated by an employee and is generally assumed to be in the employee’s best interest. Many employees quit to start new jobs, to commence new careers, or to pursue personal interests. Evidence indicates that nearly all of these people expect the value of the new opportunity to be greater than the one they are leaving behind. At the same time, most organizations find voluntary turnover to be extremely expensive. They experience separation costs (e.g., exit interviews, administration costs, separation benefits, productivity declines, overtime and temporary help expense, lost revenues from turning away clients), replacement costs (e.g., recruitment, entrance interviews, testing, applicant selection, moving expenses), and incremental training costs (e.g., orientation, formal job training, off-site training, on-the-job training, inefficiency). Estimates of these costs vary by industry, position, and geography. They range from a few thousand dollars for low-skill positions to hundreds of thousands of dollars for high-skill positions.

However, not all of the consequences of voluntary turnover are bad. Resources formerly allocated to departed employees may be used to enable increased advancement opportunities for remaining employees. New employees may also bring new ideas, technology, or enthusiasm when they join the organization. Furthermore, when marginal or overpaid performers leave, employers may be advantaged, as they expect to replace them with better performers at lower wages. However, in the aggregate, research suggests that organizations that experience high exit rates underperform relative to their industry peers.

Because organizations and managers would like to have greater control over voluntary turnover, researchers have devoted a considerable amount of attention to the topic. Many theories that seek to understand the causes or antecedents of turnover have been advanced. Among the leading theories are job characteristics theory, met expectation theory, organizational demography, leader-member exchange, person-organization fit, the unfolding model, and job embeddedness. The most widely studied model of turnover is based on James March and Herbert Simon's pioneering work. They conceptualized employee turnover as a reflection of an employee's decision to participate in the activities of the organization. They explain the participation decision through the perceived desirability of movement and perceived ease of movement. Over the past five decades, the perceived desirability of movement has evolved to be defined as work attitudes like job satisfaction or organizational commitment, whereas the perceived ease of movement has come to mean perceived job alternatives or actual unemployment rates. In sum, this model posits that people leave if they are unhappy with their job and if job alternatives are available. Although valid, this model has had modest success in predicting turnover, with the variables seldom explaining more than 10 percent of the variance in turnover.

More recently, others have focused on why people stay rather than why they leave. Reflecting this different approach, researchers have drawn attention to the reasons people stay through a concept called *job embeddedness*. This concept reflects a sense of being "situated or connected in a social web." Its key considerations are (a) the extent to which people have links to other people or activities, (b) the extent to which their job and community fit with the other aspects in their life space, and (c) the ease with which links can be broken—what they would give up if they left. These dimensions are important both on and off

the job. After controlling for job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job alternatives, and job search behavior, job embeddedness explains a significant amount of turnover behavior. In sum, job embeddedness with its focus on why people stay represents an important complement to the job dissatisfaction approach that focuses on the reasons why people leave.

Many meta-analytic studies are available to help organizations understand the correlates of turnover. As would be expected, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, leader-member exchange, met expectations, and person/job fit all exhibit modest negative correlations with turnover. Important career variables also exhibit modest negative correlations with turnover, including promotions, promotion satisfaction, promotional opportunity, pay satisfaction, and performance. Turnover is positively correlated with similarly dysfunctional organizational outcomes such as lateness and absenteeism.

Because of its significant organizational consequences, turnover has received a great deal of research attention over the past 50 years. To date, the research still only explains a fraction of the variance in turnover behavior. Therefore, it is highly likely that additional work will be done in this area. Some of the most interesting areas have profound career development implications (e.g., alternative work arrangements, outsourcing, and retention of women and minorities).

—Brooks C. Holtom

See also Career interruptions, Downsizing, Job loss, Outplacement

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TWO-CAREER RELATIONSHIPS

Two-career relationships, also referred to as *dual-career families*, represent a unique variation of the larger category of two-wage relationships or dual-earner families. This entry begins with a definition of two-career relationships and how this family form differs from the larger category of dual-earner families. Described next are factors related to its emergence and increased prevalence as a family form, characteristics of two-career relationships, challenges faced by partners in these kinds of relationships, and factors associated with successful career development and family life for individuals and partners. Because changing views about gender are central to the emergence of this family form, and to its ongoing evolution, special attention is given to this factor. Finally, it should be noted that the focus is on two-career heterosexual relationships; relatively little information is included on important distinctions associated with race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

DEFINITION OF TWO-CAREER RELATIONSHIPS

The term *two-career relationships* has primarily been used to describe a unique and enduring form of heterosexual marriage. In 1969, Rhona and Robert Rapoport first used the term “dual-career family” to describe what they considered to be an unusual and “revolutionary” type of dual-wage heterosexual family that emerged as the result of complex social changes. Revolutionary from their perspective was the dual-career family’s apparent inconsistency with respect to traditional notions of gender in marriage. In contrast to traditional marriage, in a dual-career marriage both partners pursued a lifelong career, relatively uninterrupted, and also established and developed a family life together that often included children.

The emergence of the heterosexual two-career family represented dramatic changes in conceptions of love, enduring relationships, and social structures in our society. Foremost among these were changes associated with assumptions of male superiority and male authority over women, and assumptions of female destiny being tethered to fertility and caregiving roles. Social changes had brought about an evolution in normative roles for adult women who married and broadened these roles to include occupational

pursuits. Traditionally, heterosexual women, even those who had prepared for lifelong careers, were expected to put careers secondary to marriage and caring for husbands and children. Husbands’ careers were viewed as primary and were to be interrupted minimally by family demands; women’s were not. Today, some 50 years later, the situation is quite different. Many women and men prepare themselves for careers with the expectation that their partner will support their career pursuits and that they and their partner will integrate occupational work with family life. This in turn has brought about changes in men’s roles and in societal views about what is needed to support the normative life roles of women and men.

TWO-CAREER, SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS

Two-career homosexual families also challenge assumptions about love and enduring relationships, but these are largely associated with attitudes and values about individuals of the same sex entering into a committed relationship. As is described later, occupational and family roles converge in many of the same ways for same-sex and heterosexual couples, and both experience similar stresses and challenges associated with their combining occupational work and family life, but there are also important differences. Some of these differences are described later in this entry.

TWO-CAREER RELATIONSHIPS AS COMPARED TO THE LARGER CATEGORY OF DUAL-WAGE RELATIONSHIPS

Two-career relationships are quite prevalent today, but two-earner families are far more numerous and in fact are the norm in the United States. Two factors are generally thought to distinguish the two-career family from the larger category of two-earner families: (1) the meaning of career and the opportunity for career development and (2) views of gender within a committed relationship.

In two-earner families, one or both partners are employed full or part time in jobs for which special education and training may not be needed. Historically, in comparison to careers, jobs involved less commitment to the work involved, required less training, paid less, and lacked clear developmental stages and accumulation of experience. This contrasts to partners in two-career families who are employed in positions requiring special education and training

and undertaken or engaged in as a lifework. Typically such positions require a high degree of commitment and provide the person with a sense of consecutive, progressive achievement, be it through promotions or other recognition of one's accomplishments and skills. In recent years, the distinction between what constitutes jobs and careers also includes whether an individual views involvement in full-time occupational work as reflecting that person's self-concept and life goals as a career. For example, some individuals view teaching, administrative positions, or practicing law as careers, and others consider these positions as nine-to-five jobs.

With regard to gender, on average, there is less gender-role specialization and less traditional authority differences between partners in two-career families than in two-earner families. Individuals enter two-career relationships with the expectation that both partners will pursue careers relatively uninterrupted and be involved in family life. Male partners appear less defined by the traditional "good provider role" long associated with male privilege and power and enter into marriages that view women and men as partners in love and work. This arrangement differs from more traditional relationships in which occupational work is viewed as the purview of men and considered separate from women's home and family responsibilities, even when female spouses are employed.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE EMERGENCE AND INCREASED PREVALENCE OF TWO-CAREER RELATIONSHIPS

Historically, careers and occupational work defined men socially and economically but not women who worked only to benefit the family. Women were defined socially by their husband's (or father's) occupation and socioeconomic standing. This situation began to change after World War II. The women's movement of the 1960s largely concentrated on how to provide increased and more equitable educational and career opportunities for women in comparison to men. By the 1980s, the women's movement had expanded its focus to include the culture of work and changes needed to accommodate occupational work and family life. Another important change had to do with men as partners. By the 1990s, national time-surveys began to document a significant shift toward

more sharing of housework and child care between spouses.

Thus, contemporary two-career relationships are built on very different assumptions than were traditional relationships. The single most important factor bringing about this difference is women's increased access to education, good career opportunities, laws to protect them from discriminatory practices, and a status and meaning separate from their affiliations with men. Currently, women and men graduate from high school and college in about the same proportion. Approximately 84 percent of both women and men are high school graduates, and 28 percent are college graduates. Women are entering and graduating with advanced degrees from fields such as law, medicine, the life sciences, and business administration at a rate similar to men. Forty percent of college-educated women earn as much or more than their spouses, and married women on average provide 40 percent of their families' income. Finally, for both women and men, the age of first marriage is increasing, and the number of children in families is decreasing. The fact that more women view occupational work in professional fields as central to their self-identity increases the number of families with partners who both consider themselves in careers, as opposed to women moving in and out of the workforce depending on family needs. This is the larger context of two-career relationships today.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TWO-CAREER RELATIONSHIPS

The emergence of the two-career relationships marks a significant shift in views of women's roles. This family form not only recognizes women as engaging in influential occupational positions that had historically only been open to men but also acknowledges women as participating in careers as well as marriage. Because the dual-career family form signaled profound social change, a good deal of research has focused on this family form. The following characteristics describe the variations as well as the commonalities among two-career relationships.

Patterns of integrating career and family vary from quite egalitarian to quite traditional. These variations and patterns depend to a large degree on partners' attitudes and values, relative incomes, availability of child care, employers' views and policies, and their current employment situation. Women, more than men, who prepare for careers assume and push for the

“revolutionary” two-career family envisioned by the Rapoport. Although women on average still do more of the family work, men are increasingly involving themselves in home roles and parenting. Studies indicate that at least one-third of heterosexual two-career families and most lesbian and gay partners have established egalitarian role-sharing arrangements, although many families who are not role sharing describe their situation as equitable in the context of their work and family situation.

Career-family issues are adult life issues. Women and men both experience conflict between their career and family roles and desire more flexibility in their work schedules and more time with their families. Although household work and parenting remain unevenly divided in many two-career marriages, the distribution of income and participation in family roles is much more equitable than in past decades. Husbands’ participation in housework increases when wives earn more of the family income and when husbands participate more in the care and nurturing of their children.

Partners engage in their various roles within the context of workplace policies and practices. Both the implicit and actual practices of employers and what is required for career success in particular fields significantly influence how partners live out their lives despite their individual or family preferences. For example, if success in a field requires a great deal of travel, or if using flextime or paternity leave to spend time with children is viewed negatively for career advancement, the choices of individuals in two-career relationships are impacted.

Career and family are mutually enhancing. Research findings are clear that under most circumstances, engaging in both family and occupational roles is beneficial to women and men, as reflected in indices of physical health, mental health, and relational health. Many studies support this conclusion. In contrast, research findings provide scant support for theories that assume marital stability is derived from women and men engaging in specialized, sex-segregated roles.

Career and family issues differ along dimensions of sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity. The cultural histories of various groups within our society and past or current discriminatory practices among various groups bring still another dimension to the career and family issues in two-career relationships. Partners in same-sex families and the biological children of

same-sex partners, for example, often are not entitled to the same health benefits as heterosexual partners. Similarly, societal views of male economic success and power have extended less to men of color than to White men.

Gender matters. The personal lives of individuals are always played out within the constraints of societal norms and values and social institutions, and these remain influenced by conventional notions of sex and gender. Indeed, if any one factor potentially affects women’s and men’s careers and their ability to satisfactorily and successfully integrate their careers and their family life, it is assumptions and processes associated with sex and gender.

CHALLENGES FOR TWO-CAREER RELATIONSHIPS

Men’s and women’s lives are very much linked. Significant changes in women’s lives bring about significant changes in men’s lives and vice versa. As already mentioned, the revolutionary aspects of two-career relationships had to do with fundamental changes in views of women’s roles and abilities. Thus many of the specific challenges being faced by two-career relationships are associated with assumptions about gender. Change can be difficult under the best of conditions, but contemporary society in many ways remains rigid in its assumptions of male prerogative and female accommodation, making change perhaps more complicated than the Rapoport may have anticipated in 1969.

SEX, GENDER, AND GENDER PROCESSES

Gender refers to the psychological, social, and cultural features and characteristics that have become strongly associated with the biological categories of female and male. Individuals are not born with gender but rather learn to be women or men within the context of their historical and cultural circumstances, including race, ethnicity, and other sources of social identities. That is, their gender identities are negotiated and developed over time. According to gender theory, many of the traits and behaviors assumed to be determined by biological sex have become constructed by the social reality of the lives of individual women and men. Thus women who are socialized to build their lives around the romantic experience of being with a man and being taken care of by a man,

and have few other choices, act in accordance with this social reality, regardless of their personal interests, personalities, and abilities.

Gender theories and processes provide an important framework for considerations of two-career relationships and how partners manage their lives. Participation in a culture involves participation in its cultural stories about what it means to be a man or a woman in that culture. Traditional patriarchal power rests on the social meanings given to biological sex differences and to their reproduction as cultural stories. These cultural stories take many forms, from the sexual division of labor depicted in fairy tales, novels, and traditional marriage, to internalized norms of femininity and masculinity. These cultural stories are central to the visions women and men develop about their adult roles—what is thinkable, what is possible, and what is doable.

Several salient sociopsychological factors and external structural factors associated with gender ideology are important to recognize.

Sociopsychological Factors

Male entitlement, prerogative, and assumed superiority. Historically, careers were viewed as important for men, and women were expected to accommodate any occupational aspirations to their husbands' careers. Such views continue today to some extent and become manifest as women consciously or unconsciously defer to the careers of their husbands. For example, women in two-career relationships may work fewer hours or accept less demanding positions in order to accommodate the man's career. She may also assume more of the family responsibilities.

The privileging of the male career is cultural. Still today, relatively few men consciously plan their occupational aspirations to fit with their future views of family life. In contrast, many women pursue fields of study or career paths they view as consistent with their future responsibilities as parents and spouses. This is generally true across fields. For example, women more than men pursuing fields in the sciences and engineering feel a pressure to choose tracks that will allow them greater flexibility to balance work and family responsibilities.

Female nurturance and care. Despite men's participation in fields such as pediatric medicine and child psychology and the greater involvement of men in parenting since the 1980s, nurturing is still linked

almost exclusively to women. Increasing numbers of men actively participate in parenting, and a significant proportion of men are the primary caretakers of young children. Nonetheless, women more than men are culturally expected to be actively involved with and available to their children and responsible for their care. In addition, cultural pressures that give greater importance to mothering than to fathering may increase barriers to men's involvement in parenting.

The prioritization of a man's career over a woman's often occurs after the birth of the first or second child and the associated changes in the career-family balance established by partners. It is important to note that while some men and women make these choices, these decisions are not made in a vacuum. Subtle gender processes within the family and society may define the ways in which women, but not men, are expected to accommodate their occupational aspirations to their spouse's career and to responsibilities for children.

Views of women's and men's abilities. Central to assumptions about male superiority and female nurturance are stereotypic and inaccurate notions about inherent differences between the sexes. Despite the large volume of evidence that women and men are more similar in their abilities and personal characteristics than they are different, these inaccurate beliefs continue to be perpetuated through various socialization mechanisms.

Early socialization, for example, emphasizing the superiority of men's or women's abilities in certain areas can result in girls or boys internalizing the belief that they are less capable and less likely to succeed in that area than their other sex counterparts. A case in point is math ability. Compared to men, on average women have less confidence in their math abilities. Recent studies provided evidence that internalized gendered beliefs about mathematics achievement influenced the performance of girls and boys on math tests.

Structural Factors

Women pursuing careers still face discriminatory practices at work, both in subtle and blatant ways. These can take the form of lower salaries, invisible glass ceilings, and sexual harassment. In addition, partners in same-sex relationships may face discrimination based on their sexual orientation. Being "out" on the job can have negative repercussions for career advancement.

Occupational sex segregation and glass ceilings. Although increasing numbers of women are entering professional fields such as law and medicine, overall women and men are still found in quite different occupations, with many women still concentrated in occupations that were historically female dominated. Research also indicates that a significant percentage of women experience a glass ceiling that limits their career opportunities.

Today the highest proportion of women with a college education are primary and secondary schoolteachers and registered nurses; neither of these occupations appears among the 10 most common occupations for college-educated men. Overall, men have a wider base of power and still predominantly hold more positions of power and leadership in business organizations, government, and academic institutions. Current employment benefits and policies enable women more than men to ask for and receive the accommodations necessary for combining work and family responsibilities (e.g., maternity leaves, flexible schedules); this practice contributes to their sex segregation within their professional fields.

Gender gaps in salary. Women on average continue to earn significantly less than men, although a significant proportion of women today earn more than their spouses. Earning differences for women and men have decreased from the 59 cents for every dollar men earned in the period from 1960 to 1980, but they still persist. Women and men between the ages of 16 and 24 tend to have similar earnings, with a wage gap occurring for older women and men. The reasons for this gap are complex, but subtle discrimination is considered to be a significant contributor. A case in point concerns the status of women faculty at major research universities. Recent research reports concluded that gender discrimination in the 1990s is subtle but pervasive and stems largely from unconscious ways of thinking that have been socialized into men and women alike. The report noted that the consequences of these more subtle forms of discrimination are as demoralizing to women as were the blatant inequities and intimidation of former decades. Among other indices of inequity, women faculty earned less than what men earned in comparable positions.

Sexual harassment. Sexual harassment remains a pervasive problem in the workplace, as evidenced by research findings and the settlement of highly publicized class action lawsuits. More women than men experience sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is

an abuse of power that can demoralize women and men in careers, cause professional and psychological distress, and affect career outcomes. Individuals who experience harassment may lose out on promotions, change positions to avoid harassers, and experience reprisal for reporting their harassment.

SUCCEEDING AS A TWO-CAREER RELATIONSHIP

While partners in two-career relationships face a number of unique challenges, research has provided useful information about how these families can succeed and flourish. A number of factors have been identified as important to the success of dual-earner families. Family factors are associated with partner behaviors within the family and include fairness, communication, and mutuality between partners, and career-family balance. Particularly important to effectively managing a two-career relationship is commitment to this lifestyle, the capacity to be flexible, compromising, and realistic. Spousal or partner support and sensitivity also play a key role. Shared values and expectations as well as feelings of fairness enhance the ability of spouses to be supportive. Factors residing outside the family are also crucial and include social support and family friendly work environments.

Family Factors

Fairness. Views of fairness are central to partners' abilities to successfully combine work and family life. Both men and women must be able to move outside traditional gender role norms and become comfortable with creating norms for themselves that both partners view as fair. For example, men may need to become accustomed to preparing lunches and managing carpools and women to earning a higher income than their spouse. Partners use this sense of fairness to create adaptive strategies in accommodating the family and home responsibilities and the emotional work required to create a partnership based in equality and role sharing. This balance will most likely be achieved if partners commit to frequent times together focused on communication about such issues.

Communication, mutuality, and spousal support. The quality of the communication between partners and an ability to communicate in areas central to the relationship are very important. The importance of

partners making time for one another for communication and mutual support is well documented. Valuing time with one another and striving to keep that time a priority gives partners the opportunity to show their mutual respect and appreciation for the different ways in which each partner is supporting the other and the family. In addition, making time to express appreciation as well as to communicate about problem areas helps build a stronger foundation for the family as a whole. Communication also involves expressing interest in each other's professional activities and acknowledging each other's family involvement and support.

Discussions during courtship about how partners envision integrating their career and family roles are associated with marital stability. Particularly important areas of communication then and after marriage are whether or not to have a child, when to have a first child, and whether or when to have additional children. Partners need to discuss how having a child will affect their relationship and their careers and how they will address these changes. The timing of the first child can also influence the timeline for having a larger family. Relevant to these discussions is the availability of flexibility at both partners' places of employment and parenting-leave policies.

Communication about household and parenting responsibilities is another important area. Day-to-day tasks must be discussed, including who will do the grocery shopping and prepare meals, wake up for early morning feedings, and take off work to take the children to the doctor when they are ill. Also critical is the discussion of future issues such as options for child care. Is an extended leave possible for father or mother during the first year? Does the budget allow for in-home care of the infant? Is child care available at either partner's workplace?

Communication is also useful when things feel out of balance. Research indicates that it is not the particular division of labor and time that affects marital quality but whether both partners feel they had a say in the arrangements and feel satisfied with the outcomes.

Career-family balance. Too much time at work can cause harm to either personal or family welfare, while too little time dedicated to one's work may endanger a family's economic security. Many studies have shown the benefits of integrating career and family roles. At the same time, it is important to identify when role demands at home or at work have become

excessive and unhealthy to the relationship. Greater relationship stability occurs when partners uphold boundaries around their career demands and take responsibility to not work excessive hours, which negatively impact their home lives.

As mentioned earlier, the extent to which partners in two-career families hold similar attitudes regarding roles within the family, and act in accordance with these attitudes, moderates the career-family balance achieved. A husband who is an involved father but leaves household duties to his spouse will create stress, resentment, and a lack of balance if his wife expects egalitarian participation.

FACTORS RESIDING OUTSIDE THE FAMILY

More effective coping and greater satisfaction among partners, especially those with children in the home, invariably are associated with flexibility of work schedules, family-supportive employers and benefit policies consistent with this supportive attitude, and suitable child care.

Areas typically receiving attention from companies are dependent care, including infants, adolescents, and the elderly; conditions of work such as greater flexibility in the organization, hours, and location of work; and corporate mission or the validation of family issues as an organizational concern. Currently, for example, nearly all companies offer flexible scheduling in the form of flextime, part-time employment, job sharing, compressed work schedules, or work at home. Of the Fortune 500 companies, 86 percent have work/family programs.

Many employers offer dependent care assistance programs that help employees pay for child care with pretax dollars. Under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, companies with 50 or more employees are required to provide 12 weeks of unpaid leave for childbirth, adoption, and other family related situations. Research findings support the fact that supportive family friendly workplaces are associated with higher levels of career satisfaction among employees and more commitment to company success. Nonetheless, fewer men than women use family benefits. Should men in two-career relationships be reluctant to use these benefits, even when they are available at their places of work, it would place greater family responsibilities on their female partners and also potentially negatively affect their partners' early and mid-career development.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, succeeding as a two-career relationship is generally associated with the following conditions:

- Partners holding less traditional views of gender
- Partners discussing during courtship their plans for integrating careers and family life
- Partners affirming each other's career pursuits and aspirations
- Partners being happy in their occupational work
- Partners viewing each other's involvement in home roles as fair
- Employers of both partners having benefit policies that are family responsive
- If children are involved, both partners being actively participating in parenting and
 - Feeling comfortable sharing parenting with child care personnel
 - Being satisfied with the child care they are using.

Certain realities and accommodations come with two-career relational patterns, and partners need to be prepared for the kinds of choices they may necessitate. At the same time, what emerges from the extensive research on two-career relationships is the successful convergence of occupational and family norms for women and men who chose this family form. Two-career relationships represent an enduring family form, and their increased prevalence underscores the importance of the societal changes that have allowed the coming together of relational love and meaningful career pursuits for both partners.

—Lucia Albino Gilbert

See also Family-responsive workplace practices, Gender and careers, Sexual orientation and careers, Work-family balance, Work-family conflict, Work-family enrichment

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TYPE A BEHAVIOR PATTERN

The *Type A behavior pattern* (TABP) was introduced almost 40 years ago by Meyer Friedman and Ray Rosenman as a risk factor in explaining coronary heart disease (CHD). TABP is a stable individual difference characteristic that has captured considerable attention in medical and psychological research circles. An important series of studies has strongly implicated TABP in the pathogenesis of CHD independent of standard risk factors such as age, hypertension, diet, and heredity, generally associated with the condition.

Certain identifying elements of TABP include exaggerated expressions of achievement striving, a strong sense of time urgency and competitiveness, and an aggressive demeanor. The Type A individual is described as an unrelenting worker, dominated by the success ethic, eager to outperform others and to constantly better his or her productivity. A psychological vigilance, hurried and restless movements, polyphasic behavior, and overtones of free-floating hostility are other Type A features. Type B's are characterized as individuals displaying opposing behavioral characteristics and having a more relaxed, calmer approach to life in general. Research evidence finds that Type A individuals' risk of developing CHD and of having fatal heart attacks is approximately twice that of Type B's in the population.

It has been reported that more than 50 percent of a workforce in a large urban city would be classified as Type A. In a study of managers from 12 different companies, John Howard, David Cunningham, and Peter Rechnittzer found that 61 percent were Type A's, 44 percent of whom exhibited the highest levels of TABP. TABP has also been shown to be higher among those at higher socioeconomic status and education. TABP is likely promoted by one's work environment. It has been found, for example, to be higher in fast-growing companies, and individuals at higher levels of TABP describe their jobs as more demanding and stressful.

A number of researchers have tried to identify specific components within the Type A constellation that were particularly critical in the development of CHD. Anger, hostility, and aggression have emerged as important Type A elements in the development of CHD. Several of the Type A components encompass achievement-oriented motivations and behaviors such as ambition, competitiveness, and time urgency. These Type A components have been found to be associated with superior academic and professional performance. It seemed unlikely that the same Type A components would be related to both stronger academic and professional performance and to CHD and other health problems. That is, some components of Type A are more likely to be related to performance, while others are more likely to be related to health problems.

Analyses of the measures most frequently used to assess TABP bear this out. For example, Janet Spence, Robert Helmreich, and Robert Pred report the results of factor analyses of the Jenkins Activity Survey, the most widely used paper-and-pencil assessment of TABP. They identified two factors: Achievement Striving (AS) and Impatience-Irritability (II). In a study of university students, they found that AS and II were relatively independent; AS was associated with academic grade point average but not physical complaints, while II was associated with physical complaints but not grade point average. These findings suggest that considering the two TABP components separately has merit.

The TABP is also reflected in the workplace. As opposed to their Type B counterparts, Type A's work more hours per week, travel more days per year, take less vacation and sick time off work, and are more job involved and organizationally committed. Type A's are also more likely to experience high self-esteem at work. This encourages Type A's to be more invested and committed to their work than their Type B

counterparts. Type A's are not necessarily more satisfied in their jobs, however. Type A behavior has typically been found to bear no relationship to job satisfaction. Two questions still remain unanswered: (1) Are Type A's more productive or effective in their jobs than Type B's? and (2) Are Type A's more likely to be promoted and found at the top of organizations? The limited data that is available suggest that Type A's were in fact more likely to receive greater organizational rewards than were Type B's. In addition, Type A's were more likely to be promoted and to have higher performance ratings than were Type B's.

Ronald Burke and Eugene Deszca reported that Type A's were more likely to report mid-career experiences of personal and social alienation and pessimism, which has been referred to as career success and personal failure, than Type B's. Thus, although Type A's invest more of themselves in their work role and report greater occupational self-esteem, they are not necessarily more satisfied in their jobs and run the risk of increased feelings of personal failure later in their careers.

Type A's report less marital satisfaction and a more adverse effect of their job demands on personal, home, and family lives. Spouses of male Type A job incumbents agree with their husbands, and also report less marital satisfaction and a more adverse effect of their partner's job demands on personal, home, and family lives. Thus there probably is a link between Type A behavior and marital distress and ultimately marital dissolution. It is also likely that Type A individuals are less involved with their children. Friedman and Rosenman provide anecdotal information that is consistent with the research conclusions that Type A individuals and their partners report a less satisfying home and family life.

Most TABP research considers its effects on individuals and only sometimes on their partners. In addition, relatively little attention has been paid to the possible role of TABP in the satisfaction and performance of groups. Can Type A's and Type B's work productively together, given the stress, anger, and issues of control? How will Type A's and Type B's deal with the intragroup conflict?

Giora Keinan and Miri Koren examined TABP and the performance and satisfaction of members of work groups. They considered group performance and mutual satisfaction of Type A's and Type B's assigned to homogeneous and heterogeneous three-member work teams working on competitive and noncompetitive tasks.

Teams consisting primarily of Type A's were more productive than teams consisting primarily of Type B's, and this difference was greater on competitive tasks. In addition, both Type A's and Type B's were generally more satisfied when working with same type members.

Others have examined the effects of Type A/Type B group composition on interpersonal relationships. It has been found that Type A's promoted their own positions and attacked antagonistic positions more than Type B's; Type A's engaged in more proself and anti-other behaviors than did Type B's. In addition, Type A's prefer to work alone and doubt their partner's ability to be of help to them. Type A's also react with irritation and irritability when others interrupt or distract them. Type A's also exhibit aggressive and competitive communications and interactions and are unwilling to relinquish control to a partner even when the partner could contribute positively to successful task accomplishment and provide a benefit to both.

Given the increased use of work teams in organizations, TABP now becomes more important. And though there is some evidence that TABP is positively related to job performance, the increasing use of work teams and the importance of trust in relationships within and outside the organization may increasingly make TABP a job performance and career liability.

The research on TABP and group functioning has some practical applications. First, assigning people to teams of like individuals based on TABP scores would increase team performance. Second, assigning teams of high TABP scorers the most difficult and challenging tasks would increase team performance. Third, training individuals with high and low TABP scores to increase mutual understanding and tolerance of the two types and improve their conflict resolutions skills will reduce levels of intragroup conflict.

TABP has several direct implications for careers in organizations. Individuals scoring high on TABP run the risk of premature death from CHD. This raises issues of succession planning and the development of managerial bench strength to replace individuals dying from CHD. Individuals who survive a heart attack are also likely to require considerable time for recuperation, raising issues of job performance, organizational continuity, and temporary replacement.

In addition, TABP also affects the way individuals pursue their jobs and their careers. On the positive side, competitiveness, involvement, and energy are likely to be rewarded. On the negative side, anger,

impatience, irritation, and aggravation are likely to interfere with relationships in the workplace. These emotions and behaviors are likely to be flaws or character deficits that limit career advancement. Finally, the negative effects of TABP on marital relationships and family functioning are likely to add to the heightened levels of stress experienced by individuals exhibiting TABP.

TREATING TABP

Friedman and Diane Ulmer have shown that TABP can be changed (reduced), and those reducing their levels of TABP also reduced the onset of clinical CHD. They carried out a longitudinal experiment in which a control group received standard cardiovascular counseling while an experimental group received the same cardiovascular counseling as well as TABP counseling. All participants were postinfarction patients under the age of 65 who are nonsmokers or reformed smokers. A third group was given only an annual examination (the comparison group). Counselors received training in understanding and managing their own TABP.

Individuals receiving TABP counseling initially met on a monthly basis in small groups with a trained counselor. Efforts were made in group discussion and practice outside these group sessions to alleviate time urgency and free-floating hostility—two central and overt components of TABP. This involved drills to be completed on particular days (e.g., every Monday in June, walk, talk, and eat more slowly; every Monday in July, leave your watch off, buy a small but thoughtfully chosen gift for your spouse/partner or some other family member). In addition, individuals received feedback from their fellow group members on their TABP and support in embarking on the difficult task of changing harmful habits learned over one's lifetime. This counseling program lasted three years. TABP, as reflected in self-report questionnaires and coded interviews, dropped in the TABP counseling groups, as did recurrent heart attacks.

Type A behavior poses a threat to careers, personality, and life itself. Type A behavior threatens careers through impatience, anger, and burnout. Type A tendencies threaten personality by increasing interpersonal conflict and narrowing the possibilities for joy (limiting oneself to things that can be counted—becoming boring and dull). Finally, Type A threatens life by fostering the development of CHD. It is possible,

though challenging, to preserve the achievement-oriented components of TABP (AS) while reducing the destructive components (II).

—Ronald J. Burke

See also Burnout, Career success, Careers and health, Personality and careers

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UNBIASED HIRING SYSTEMS

Employment practices are *biased* or unfair when employment decisions (e.g., hiring, promotion, job transfer) are based on factors (e.g., race, gender, age, disability, religion, and physical attractiveness) that are unrelated to a person's ability to succeed on the job. Biased employment practices are a very important issue, because selection systems control access to jobs and such other valued outcomes as opportunities for advancement and training.

Biased employment practices result in *unfair discrimination* in that individuals who have equal probabilities of succeeding on a job have unequal probabilities of being selected for it. Viewed in terms of selection decision errors, unfair discrimination results in a disproportionate number of individuals who are the targets of bias being classified as false negatives. These are individuals who would have succeeded on the job but were not hired.

Unfair discrimination is always a concern in cases of *disparate treatment*, that is, the deliberate exclusion of individuals from jobs on the basis of their membership in targeted groups (e.g., Blacks, women). In such cases, there are overt and intentional expressions of bias or prejudice against job applicants. However, unfair discrimination may also occur in instances of *adverse impact*. In such instances, the hiring rates for members of groups differ from one another. Adverse impact is an operational, legal, and ethical concern when group differences in hiring rates are a function of factors that are unrelated to the job. Note, however, that adverse impact is not always a sign of unfair discrimination.

The employment process in the typical organization involves the five sequential steps that are listed below. Biases can arise in one or more of them.

1. *Job analysis phase.* A job analysis is performed to identify task requirements and the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other requirements (KSAOs) of job incumbents. Although its results need only reflect minimally acceptable KSAO levels, the results often serve as a basis for specifying the KSAOs of the ideal incumbent. This can introduce bias, because conceptions of the ideal incumbent are typically affected by the beliefs of dominant groups in organizations. As a result, subsequent phases of the selection process will be affected by the biases introduced at the job analysis phase.
2. *Recruitment phase.* A variety of strategies are used in the recruitment phase to advertise the job opening and attract potential applicants, including listings in newspapers, trade publications, and online recruiting. Bias can be an issue when such strategies leave potential applicants unaware of job openings, precluding them from applying. One way in which this may occur is through stereotypes of ideal job incumbents influencing where organizations search for applicants. For instance, such stereotypes may lead them to recruit at private universities that are dominated by relatively affluent White students rather than universities with ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students. Bias can also be a problem if an organization's reputation and past employment practices (e.g., a history of unfair discrimination against women and ethnic minorities) have a chilling effect on potential applicants, reducing their motivation to apply for jobs. Finally, bias can arise if recruiting strategies or materials lead potential applicants to believe that they will not fit in the organization.

3. *Job application phase.* At the application phase, job applicants submit such materials as résumés and applications. Employers screen these materials to make initial judgments about applicant suitability. This phase is particularly susceptible to biases, because there is only a limited amount of information about applicants, and decision makers may base their suitability judgments on stereotypes about and/or affective reactions to members of various groups. This may lead to negative beliefs and feelings about applicants who are the targets of bias.
4. *Testing phase.* In the testing phase, the applicant completes measures of predictors (e.g., cognitive ability tests, interviews, personality inventories, work samples) designed to assess his or her KSAOs. A key issue with such measures is their criterion-related validity. This is typically indexed by the degree of correlation between (a) the predictors and (b) job performance or other important criteria (e.g., absenteeism, turnover). Regrettably, criterion-related evidence does not guarantee that predictor measures lack bias. This is suggested by strong evidence of the adverse impact of many types of predictors (e.g., cognitive ability measures) against various groups. For example, research has shown that Blacks and Hispanics score lower on cognitive ability tests than Whites. Bias would be an issue if the test performance of targets of bias were an artifact of cultural biases in such tests rather than actual differences in their cognitive ability. Unfortunately, the existing evidence does not allow for well-founded conclusions about the degree to which cultural biases in tests are responsible for adverse impact. However, inferences about cultural bias are much clearer for certain types of predictors (e.g., personality). For instance, research shows that individuals from collective cultures (e.g., Asians, American Indians) have different personalities (e.g., as reflected in measures of values) than individuals from individualistic cultures (e.g., Anglo-Americans). In addition, as a result of differential exposure to stressors, Blacks have higher levels of neuroticism than Whites. Research also demonstrates that predictor measures that are based on subjective assessments of the attributes of applicants are highly subject to bias. For example, unstructured interviews are prone to such problems as first impression effects, contrast errors, and similarity errors. In addition, subjective assessments can be biased by an observer's stereotypes (e.g., based on the applicant's race, sex, age, disability, unattractiveness). Thus it may be better to base inferences about job suitability for many types of jobs on measures such as work samples than on measures that have high levels of subjectivity.
5. *Decision phase.* Using predictor information, the decision maker makes judgments about the relative suitability of applicants and then selects one or more individuals to be the recipients of a job offer. Although selection procedures are typically top down, they may rely on banding. In the case of *top-down* selection, individuals are rank-ordered on the basis of their standing on the predictor (single or composite), and job offers are made sequentially to those with the lowest ranks. With *banding*, individuals who have scores on the predictor that are within given score ranges (bands) are considered to be equivalent to one another, and job offers are made sequentially to those within the bands that have the highest scores.

In summary, biases may affect many phases of the selection process, resulting in unfair discrimination. However, it is vital that such biases be minimized or eliminated in the interest of providing fair employment opportunities to all qualified individuals.

—Dianna L. Stone and Eugene F. Stone-Romero

See also Age discrimination, Racial discrimination, Religious discrimination, Sex discrimination

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UNDEREMPLOYMENT

Underemployment is a multidimensional concept that refers to the underutilization of labor. The broadest conceptualization of underemployment refers to all dimensions of wasted ability of the eligible workforce. While this conceptualization would classify some of those not pursuing higher education as “underemployed” on the basis of wasted talents, most researchers adopt a narrower focus, taking the amount of human capital in the labor force as a given. Underemployment involves any combination of three related dimensions: (1) a time dimension, (2) a skills or qualifications dimension, and (3) a utilization or effort dimension. It should be noted that underemployment as referred to in this entry does not include unemployment, which could be considered the extreme underutilization of labor, where the individual is working zero hours but actively seeking employment.

TIME DIMENSIONS OF UNDEREMPLOYMENT

The time dimensions of underemployment involve different aspects of work time. First, this category includes individuals involuntarily working *fewer hours* than they would prefer to work. In general, this involuntary part-time employment refers to individuals working less than 30 hours per week, although an individual’s preference for working more hours can occur anywhere in the work time spectrum. Second, it includes involuntary *temporary or intermittent employment* that occurs generally over part of a year, as is often the case with seasonal work or limited-term contracts. Third, the time-related dimension can include *involuntary retirement* as reflected in those cases where such individuals would prefer to continue working but are inhibited from doing so perhaps because of a mandatory retirement policy in their organization.

The common aspect of these forms of underemployment is that the underemployed would prefer to work longer hours or longer periods during a given year or over their life cycle yet are not able to do so.

SKILL-RELATED OR QUALIFICATION-RELATED DIMENSION OF UNDEREMPLOYMENT

The common aspect of the skill or qualification-related dimension of underemployment is that the individual’s *skills* are underutilized. This can occur for

persons who possess surplus educational qualifications or credentials and are thus labeled as “overqualified” or “overeducated.” This terminology has been used both in relation to what is necessary in order to be hired and what is necessary for adequate job performance.

While some instances of overeducation clearly imply that a worker’s skills are underutilized, in other cases the issue is more ambiguous. For example, higher levels of formal education may serve to compensate for education of inferior quality or other human capital deficiencies such as lower literacy, ability, or work experience.

UTILIZATION OR EFFORT DIMENSION

The utilization or effort dimension of underemployment involves the underutilization of labor in general, not just of their skills or qualifications. This can occur if firms engage in labor hoarding whereby redundant workers are retained rather than laid off. The underutilization may also occur with respect to the effort dimension more generally, if workers do not have the incentive or motivation to put forth effort and they effectively shirk.

CAUSES AND IMPACTS OF UNDEREMPLOYMENT

Time-related Underemployment

Time-related underemployment generally occurs when the preferences of workers to work longer hours or longer periods during the year or over the life cycle do not correspond with the constraints imposed by employers. The extent of such underemployment may change over time, reflecting changes in the preferences of employees and the constraints of employers. For example, the growing number of dual-earner families may want shorter hours for one or both parents, in which case underemployment may dissipate if they prefer the shorter hours. In contrast, if employers increasingly want more part-time workers or limited-term contracts as part of the shift toward nonstandard employment, and this does not match the preferences of employees for such shorter work time, then underemployment will increase.

Skill-related Underemployment

Explaining skills mismatch is somewhat challenging when firms and individuals are assumed to be

optimizing agents that make full use of investments in training and education. One reconciliation of this disparity is that underemployment is a temporary phenomenon eliminated by market forces, with mismatches reflecting imperfect labor market information and job search costs. Underemployment may also be a short-term situation consistent with optimizing behavior when individuals voluntarily accept “inferior” positions under the impression that imminent promotions are likely.

Underemployment may be longer lasting, however, in the presence of labor market constraints or rigidities. For example, in the process of maximizing total family income, labor market choices of married women are often constrained by the decisions of their (generally more highly paid) husbands. Underemployment is often a long-term phenomenon for immigrant workers whose foreign credentials remain unrecognized by domestic licensing bodies.

According to job competition theory, individuals compete for scarce jobs on the basis of their educational credentials. Thus it could be rational for individuals to become “overeducated,” since those with the highest schooling are assumed to go to the front of the queue for the job openings. Furthermore, since wages are assumed to depend upon the job, rather than the forces of labor market demand and supply, there is no mechanism (i.e., changing wages) to eliminate underemployment.

From a worker’s perspective, underemployment can lead to reduced earnings, reduced job satisfaction, increased turnover, and the erosion or atrophy of skills. Some even define and measure underemployment in terms of reduced earnings relative to some reference group. Even low-skilled workers can suffer from underutilization of skills if their wages and job opportunities are adversely affected by a “bumping down” process. That is, when relatively skilled workers occupy jobs below their educational background, they “take away” jobs that could be adequately performed by less skilled workers, who are subsequently either forced into low-paying jobs or out of the working population.

Utilization or Effort Dimension

The underutilization of labor in general can occur during economic downturns when firms engage in labor hoarding whereby redundant workers are retained rather than laid off. The rationale for this is

that when the cycle reverses, the workers are available and their human capital is not lost. When they are retained as redundant workers, however, they are likely underutilized and not working at maximal effort or efficiency in order to produce the desired output. This can contribute to the productivity decline that occurs during economic downturns.

Underemployment with respect to the effort dimension may occur, for example, if the compensation system is poorly designed or if employee involvement and commitment is low. Organizational productivity may decline as a result.

MEASURING UNDEREMPLOYMENT

The measurement of some forms of time-related *underemployment* is fairly straightforward. For instance, in Canada’s monthly *Labour Force Survey* (LFS), “involuntary part-time” workers are identified. Other surveys like the *General Social Survey* (GSS) periodically ask individuals if they are involuntarily retired due to mandatory retirement. The extent of underemployment due to involuntary temporary or intermittent employment (e.g., seasonal work, limited-term contracts) does not appear to be commonly measured.

Four measures of *skill-related underemployment* are most common: (1) comparison of a worker’s educational attainment to the educational requirements for the occupation (as specified by job analysts), (2) comparison of a worker’s educational attainment with the education level that the worker believes to be necessary for either job entry or satisfactory job performance, (3) the respondent’s perception of mismatch, and (4) deviation from the average level of educational attainment within a narrowly defined occupation.

There is considerable debate as to which measurement approach is preferable. Some equate external assessment of job requirements with objectivity and hence view them as superior. On the other hand, so-called subjective measures relying on worker’s perceptions may incorporate the most accurate information about the job situation as well as the worker’s skills and credentials. Measures of underemployment due to *labor hoarding* in recessions or due to worker shirking or *lack of effort* are not done by conventional surveys. Rather, they tend to be done in periodic ad hoc studies.

—Morley Gunderson and Steven Wald

See also Employability, Organizational staffing, Part-time employment, Socioeconomic status, Unemployment

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UNEMPLOYMENT

The "misery index" of an economy refers to the sum of the *unemployment* rate and inflation rate. The inflation rate might hit zero or turn negative, but the unemployment rate will always be positive. Regardless of how rich a country is and how well the economy is doing, there will always be people out of work. The way in which unemployment affects the jobless depends upon several factors.

First, unemployment can be voluntary such as that resulting from people simply quitting their jobs, and these people may feel content with their joblessness. However, voluntary unemployment is not very common, accounting for less than 15 percent of the unemployed in the United States. Second, the duration of unemployment is relevant; the longer the period of unemployment, the greater the accrued distress and misery. Third, if the period of unemployment is transitory, such as in the case of laid-off automobile workers waiting for recall or United Airlines pilots on furlough, the prospect of reemployment reduces anxiety. Fourth, environmental factors may play a role; the more people are out of work in the neighborhood, the more bearable it is to be unemployed.

The economic cost of unemployment can be approached at both the macro and micro levels. At the macro level, the economic cost is measured by the loss of aggregate output. According to Arthur Okun's Law, each percentage point that the actual unemployment rate exceeds the natural rate of unemployment leads to a 2.5 percent gross domestic product (GDP) gap, the difference between the potential and actual GDP. The resulting waste of human resources is one form of the economic inefficiency caused by unemployment. Other problems include (a) raising the

fiscal burden leading to public budget deficits and possibly monetary instability and (b) increasing social costs caused by rising poverty, poor health, family and community breakdown, and crime.

At the micro level, the cost of unemployment is reflected in lost income, medical insurance, and other fringe benefits for those now unemployed. In addition, there are psychological costs for the unemployed as well as some negative externalities. While the former is the focus of this entry, the latter refers to the financial and psychological stress plus the pathological behavior (including child abuse) that the family members have to endure. The community at large might also feel the psychological pain of the unemployed, for example, in the threat from economic uncertainty and the prospect of crime and social unrest.

This entry focuses on how unemployment affects health (physical and mental), a vital element of the worker's productivity over the worker's career. The next section describes various sources and types of unemployment and explains the factors behind lengthy periods of high unemployment, known as *hysteresis*. The third section discusses how unemployment affects mortality/morbidity and mental health. The fourth section reviews selective economic and social psychological theories of how unemployment affects health. The last session presents the conclusions.

SOURCES AND TYPES OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND HYSTERESIS

Unemployment arises from four sources: job loss and the end of temporary assignments (42 percent), quitting jobs (14 percent), reentrants to the labor force (36 percent), and new entrants to the labor force (8 percent). The percentages indicated in the parentheses refer to the relative importance of these individual sources in the United States in 1999. The causes of unemployment can be classified into three basic types: frictional, structural, and cyclical factors. Frictional unemployment, also called search unemployment, refers to people who are between jobs or just entering or reentering the labor market. Structural unemployment is joblessness due to the mismatch between workers' skills and employers' needs or to workers' unwillingness to relocate. Cyclical unemployment arises from reductions in production over the business cycle.

While frictional employment may be voluntary and short term, structural unemployment tends to be involuntary and lasts longer due to the time involved in retraining. Cyclical unemployment reflects the extent of economic recessions and so is driven in the short term by the business cycle. The sum of frictional and structural unemployment is known as the natural rate of unemployment, which is determined primarily by long-term factors such as changes in demographics and economic structural and institutional variables.

Normally, the actual unemployment rate fluctuates around the natural rate over time. Sometimes a high level of unemployment may persist for a lengthy period (hysteresis) which, for example, Europe has experienced since the mid-1970s and which has eased off in some countries only recently. For instance, in 1994 the official unemployment rate of the European Union was 12 percent. Since 1981 the rate of unemployment has been at least 8 percent and on average 2 percent higher than the OECD average for all developed industrial countries.

The major causes of hysteresis include mismanagement of macroeconomic policies and lack of institutional flexibility. The former affects the extent of cyclical unemployment, while the latter influences the natural rate of unemployment. Valerie Symes claimed that tight monetary and fiscal contractions in the 1980s in most European Community countries rendered any expansionary strategy by individual economies impotent. The resulting demand shock reduced investor confidence and incapacitated the effective functioning of the labor markets. The institutional factors that contributed to the high natural rate of unemployment in Europe include duration of unemployment benefits, replacement ratio, expenditures on national manpower policies, union coverage, and bargaining by unions and employers.

The replacement ratio refers to gross benefits as a percentage of the most relevant gross wage. In 1985, the ratio was at least 70 percent in Denmark, Netherlands, Spain, Finland, Sweden, and Switzerland, as compared with 50 percent in the United States. The duration of unemployment benefits was indefinite in Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Austria, and Finland, as compared with six months in the United States. Expenditure on manpower policies is money spent on placement and counseling, training, direct job creation, and recruitment subsidies. The expenditure per unemployed person as a percentage of output per person in 1987 was 2.4 percent in the United States as compared to a range of 2.7 percent-34.6

percent for European countries (with the exception of Italy and Spain).

Apparently the unemployed in most of Europe obtain much more generous unemployment benefits and other public support and for a longer duration than those in the United States. Furthermore, their powerful unions also provide strong protection for their members (so-called insiders) that results in wage rigidity and the insensitivity of wages to unemployment levels.

UNEMPLOYMENT, MORTALITY, AND MENTAL HEALTH

Over the past three decades, much of the work on unemployment and health has used two empirical methodologies: aggregate time-series data and panel or micro-level data. The time-series studies built on research by M. Harvey Brenner, which documented that increases in unemployment were associated with sizable increases in mortality (including suicide), mental health admissions, and crime. However, these aggregate studies have methodological pitfalls. Because of the long time span, it is necessary to control for possible improvements in health technology and health care that have taken place over the period. If this is not done properly, the uncontrolled variables can bias the results. Furthermore, the results can also be sensitive to the particular lag structure selected to explore the effects of unemployment.

Panel data, on the other hand, avoid the pitfall of the role of some uncontrolled variables. The technique analyzes changes in the dependent variable (e.g., mental health), thereby eliminating the potential bias from uncontrolled variables that are constant over time. For example, when examining cross-sectional data on labor force participants, Anders Bjorklund found that the unemployed have poorer mental health than the employed, even though the differences are rather small. He then used panel data to show that joblessness caused deterioration of mental health.

The association between unemployment and health (mental and physical) has long been recognized, but the critical question is whether the unemployment causes ill health or whether the ill health leads to unemployment. In general, the empirical findings about the causal relationship between unemployment and health are inconsistent. Overall there are three major qualifications that should be noted about the causal relationship between unemployment and health:

1. *Overestimation of the impact of unemployment on health.* Even though individual-level surveys have shown that the employed are healthier than the unemployed, there is a possibility that people who are in poor health may be more prone to become unemployed. I. P. Spruit reported that, before becoming unemployed, the unemployed had more often been sick on the job, more inclined to have work accidents, and more often changed jobs due to their health problems. In addition, individuals with poorer health may be more likely to remain unemployed. This selection problem may lead to overestimation of the impact of unemployment on social costs.
2. *Job insecurity and health.* In analyzing the effect of unemployment on psychological health, Brendan Burchell claimed that job insecurity rather than unemployment per se causes psychological stress. This conclusion was based on his empirical studies of the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) scores of the employed and unemployed. One employed group, labeled as "male descenders," had all experienced a job change in the past to a lower type job. They were more likely to have been unemployed, lacked job security, and were dissatisfied with their jobs. These male descenders had similar GHQ scores as those of the unemployed.
3. *Recessions may be good for health.* Recent empirical findings have claimed that some public health indices improve during recessions. Using longitudinal data from 50 states plus the District of Columbia for 1972-1991, Christopher Ruhm reported that state unemployment rates were *negatively* related to total mortality and 8 of 10 specific causes of fatalities, with suicide representing an important exception. Ruhm also employed microdata to show that consistently higher joblessness was associated with reduced smoking and obesity, increased physical activity, and improved diet.

ECONOMIC APPROACHES AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES OF MENTAL HEALTH AND UNEMPLOYMENT

The mechanism by which unemployment affects health has been explored using two approaches: economic and social psychological.

ECONOMIC APPROACH TO UNEMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH

While economists have recognized health as one component of human capital and have documented

the link between human capital and individual earning capacity, the specific impact of unemployment on health has been somewhat neglected. However, the determination of health in home production may shed some light on the link between unemployment and health.

The idea is based on Michael Grossman's formulation of the demand for health, which is derived from the way in which an individual consumer's satisfaction with consuming health services and other commodities changes over time. As employment generates income, it facilitates the home production of gross investment in health, which in turn produces health services that give rise to the individual consumer's satisfaction over time. Joblessness, on the other hand, reduces or interrupts the capacity of the unemployed to undertake gross investment in health. Thus, as a lesser amount of health services is produced from home production, the consumer's satisfaction diminishes over time.

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH

After the dire experiences during the Great Depression in the 1930s, several social psychological theories were proposed to illuminate the way in which unemployment influences the mental health of individuals, including (1) the stages model, (2) Jahoda's functional model, (3) Warr's vitamin model, (4) agency theory, and (5) the status passage model.

1. *The stages model.* When becoming unemployed, in response to such a stressful event, people go through a progression of specific psychological stages. For instance, based on a large British survey of unemployed youth, J. Hill identified three stages in their response to joblessness: a period of optimism, followed by increasing stress, and finally a state of tolerance and depression.
2. *Jahoda's functional model.* Marie Jahoda proposed that unemployment deprives an individual of the benefits associated with employment such as structured time, shared experiences with coworkers, provision of goals and purposes for life, personal status and identity, and enforcement of activity.
3. *Warr's vitamin model.* Peter Warr proposed nine environmental factors analogous to vitamins that influence mental health, including opportunity for control, opportunity for skill use, externally generated goals, variety, environmental clarity, availability of money, physical security, opportunity for interpersonal contact, and valued social position. The central

theme of this model is that a reduced level of these environmental vitamins results in a lower level of mental health. Unemployment will affect negatively these environmental vitamins and therefore the mental health of individuals.

4. *Agency theory.* Both Jahoda's and Warr's models focus on the benefits of work for the employed and fail to explore the link from the perspective of the unemployed. In agency theory, Burchell argues that the negative psychological consequence of joblessness is caused by its abrupt disruption to the individual's plans and strategies rather than anything intrinsic to the work itself.
5. *Status passage model.* Status passage refers to individuals' movement into different social structures that reflects changes in their identity, their social status with respect to one's influence or power, and thereby their behavior. Applying this concept to interpret the impact of unemployment on the individual, Douglas Ezzy suggested that job loss leading to unemployment is a divestment passage that emphasizes separation from a status. The unemployed often face an extended transitional phase of uncertain duration, and the effects of this divestment passage result partly from the inability to maintain a consistent positive image about themselves, which is at the root of the eventual psychological disturbance observed in some studies.

Stage theory shows descriptively how the unemployed go through different psychological stages, but it does not explain why the emotions arise. Both Jahoda's functional model and Warr's vitamin model focus on the connection of work and the individual by emphasizing the social support and institutional setup that employment can provide, in addition to financial remuneration to individuals. However, there is lack of focus in both on the perspective of the unemployed.

Agency and status passage models share a basic theme that it is the interruption by unemployment of the strategies or plans that the unemployed have that causes the psychological distress. The major difference between the two models is that agency theory focuses on the impact of unemployment at a single point in time, while status passage emphasizes the dynamic transition experiences triggered by the shock of joblessness. Thus the status passage model offers an additional perspective on the connection between the individual and the external community.

CONCLUSION

Unemployment is always greater than zero in an economy, a reflection of the natural rate of unemployment. Thus there is always some segment of the population that is unemployed and faces unemployment problems. The impact of unemployment has been well researched since the Great Depression. Brenner was the first to document the direct association between unemployment and mortality, mental health admissions and crime. Later, both time-series and panel data were used to explore the causal link between unemployment and health. The major qualifications of link are the following: (a) the selection issue may cause an overestimation of social costs of unemployment, (b) the core of the causal relationship may lie in job insecurity rather than unemployment, and (c) recessions reduce mortality, especially certain types of fatalities.

While economics has recognized the economic cost of unemployment in the loss of aggregate output, it has rarely explored the effects of unemployment on mental health. The only theoretical framework that may shed light on the issue is the demand for health in which income is a means of purchasing inputs for the consumer's home production of gross investment in health. Thus, unemployment results in less gross investment in health, thereby diminishing the consumer's satisfaction over time.

Over the years, social psychologists have developed several theories explaining the path by which unemployment affects the mental health of the unemployed. These theories offer insights into the perspective of the unemployed and also how individuals are psychologically connected to work and the external environment. These insights should be taken into account when economists venture into this field to explore further how unemployment affects physical and mental health so that macroeconomic policy can be proposed, with supportive public programs that ease the financial, physical, and psychological stress that the unemployed, their families, and their communities experience.

—Bijou Yang Lester

See also Careers and health, Job loss

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V

VALUES

Values constitute a pervasive and comprehensive concept, variously defined and elusive to comprehend. Philosophers and social and behavioral scientists have long considered values across the broad spectrum of human experience as overarching life goals and guiding principles for determining what constitutes desirable outcomes and modes of behavior. Together with attitudes, needs, norms, interests, and traits, values reside within a constellation of psychological constructs posited to affect individual adjustment to the social world. Applied psychologists in the early part of the twentieth century turned to studying values as a primary element motivating human behavior and developed psychometric instruments to operationally define the construct.

Beginning with the efforts of developmental vocational psychologists in the 1950s, notably Donald E. Super, and fueled by advances in work adjustment theory led by René Dawis and Lloyd Lofquist, general human values have been examined within the specific domain of occupations in the form of *work values*. Values in this regard have been promoted as principal guideposts of vocational behavior and career development, as well as one of the four preeminent individual differences variables involved in work motivation, along with the “big three” of abilities, interests, and personality traits. The present analysis considers the nature of values and their use in career development, assessment, and counseling.

THE NATURE OF VALUES

Broadly construed, values represent beliefs about qualities of human life or modes of behavior that individuals deem important and worthy of attaining, upholding, and pursuing. As evaluative beliefs, values indirectly guide selection and appraisal of behaviors and events. Narrower in conceptual reach and fewer in number than beliefs and attitudes, values relate to a wide array of (a) cognitive processes, such as decision making, and career choice beliefs; (b) emotional states, including satisfaction, happiness, anger, or detachment; and (c) behaviors such as relational style, vocational choice, and work adjustment. Reflecting the utility and range of the concept, researchers and theorists have considered values across multiple levels of human experience in terms of personal, family, societal, and cultural values and across multiple domains, including environmental, economic, and political.

Job satisfaction research prompted conceptualizing values specific to the work domain. Work values constitute particular aspects of jobs and occupational life, such as income, hours, advancement, relationships, and security, which proffer and relate to satisfaction because they hold substantial meaning for the individual worker. As guideposts of vocational behavior, values are thought to influence *how* an individual practices an occupational choice rather than *what* occupation an individual chooses. For example, one person makes the occupational choice of physician to realize altruistic values, whereas another does so to realize lifestyle values. The importance individuals

ascribe to the worker role relative to roles in other domains such as family, leisure, and community reflects in large measure the values they maintain.

Values are widely purported to endure with stability across context and time, although little research supports this claim. Constructed hierarchically, people prioritize values in order of relative importance and use them to explain, coordinate, and justify behavior. Typically, values remain outside an individual's conscious awareness. Only when conflict ensues between or among highly prized values, such as personal success versus promoting the welfare of others, do they become activated, enter consciousness, and guide behavior. Considered within the context of career development, values figure prominently in outcomes related to occupational choice, job satisfaction, work style, conflict-of-interest management, career commitment, lifestyle, and workplace structure.

VALUES, NEEDS, AND INTERESTS

Values have been equated with needs and interests, which are closely interrelated concepts. Yet values differ from needs and interests in that values represent beliefs about desired goals to be achieved, ideals to be upheld, or courses of action to be taken rather than thoughts, feelings, or behaviors to be expressed or satisfied. Needs denote wants that activate or energize individual movement. Interests serve as links between personal preferences and environmentally situated activities or social roles that guide movement. Values signify goals or desired outcomes of movement. In this way, for example, a need for recognition prompts an individual to develop interest in the occupation of lawyer to realize a value of social status. Needs, construed in terms of what is necessary or unnecessary, come closest to human desires for growth and survival. Interests, a narrower concept than values construed relative to liking or disliking, most nearly approximate actual behaviors. Values, considered in terms of importance or unimportance, reside closest to beliefs about what constitutes personally or socially preferable ends or means to ends and thereby approximate a philosophy of life.

Whereas needs may be construed as innate and objective, values constitute subjective, learned adaptations transmitted within cultures and across generations. Milton Rokeach's argument that humans and animals differ to the extent that both may be said to have needs, whereas only humans have values, perhaps

most clearly illuminates the distinction between these concepts. Values likewise differ from personality traits, including interests, which accumulating evidence suggests are largely endogenous and fixed. Grounding values firmly in a social context underscores the view that values are negotiated and expressed through relationship and interaction with the social world and provide frameworks for decision making.

VALUE TYPES

Two commonly construed categories differentiate fundamental value types. One category comprises terminal, social, or extrinsic values that reflect desired goals sought from an activity. A second category, termed *instrumental, personal, or intrinsic values*, signal preferred ways of achieving desired goals. Stated simply, extrinsic values represent preferred outcomes of an activity, whereas intrinsic values constitute means of satisfaction inherent in an activity itself. Job security, compensation, and social status exemplify extrinsic work values, whereas service, creativity, and variety typify intrinsic work values.

At the level of culture, cross-cultural social psychology distinguishes individualistic and collectivistic (IC) value orientations as broad social patterns of beliefs, norms, attitudes, and behaviors. Individualism promotes personal goals over those of the group, whereas collectivism gives priority to group goals. Research indicates that IC predicts social behavior and relates to specific personal attributes. IC provides a useful construct for elaborating the cultural dimensions of values in career development, especially with regard to diverse groups. For example, IC likely relates differentially to specific work values such that significantly stronger positive associations might be expected between collectivism and extrinsic work values that stress relationship to others (e.g., altruism, associates, and supervisory relations). Similarly, significantly stronger positive associations might be expected between individualism and intrinsic work values that emphasize personal gain (e.g., achievement, independence, and lifestyle).

VALUES STRUCTURE

Theory and empirical research has considered the structure of values generally and within the context of work. In their work on values, Gordon Allport, Philip

Vernon, and Gardner Lindzey built upon six personal value dimensions termed theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political, and religious. Rokeach identified 18 terminal values, such as salvation and world at peace, and 18 instrumental values, including honest and imaginative. The theory of integrated value systems advanced by Shalom Schwartz offers a general values model of increasing contemporary predominance and ambitiously researched to support a comprehensive set of different motivational values types identified across 41 countries. Arranged in a circular structure and encompassing representative goals and single values, the model includes the following 10 value types, which have been considered within the work domain:

Power: Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources

Achievement: Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards

Hedonism: Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself

Stimulation: Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life

Self-direction: Independent thought and action—choosing, creating, exploring

Universalism: Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature

Benevolence: Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact

Tradition: Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self

Conformity: Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms

Security: Safety, harmony, and stability of society, relationships, and self

In addition to considering the structure of personal values, theorists and researchers have also specified the structure of work values. The momentous multinational Work Importance Study led by Donald Super identified five main work value orientations—Utilitarian, Individualistic, Self-Actualization, Social, and Adventurous—with specific underlying work values ranging from prestige and lifestyle to ability utilization and risk. The theory of work adjustment

proffers and empirically supports six broad value orientations of Achievement, Comfort, Status, Altruism, Safety, and Autonomy derived from factor analyses of psychometric data. Underlying these 6 broad work values are 14 second-order work values ranging from accomplishments and variety to associates and job security.

VALUES IN CAREER ASSESSMENT AND COUNSELING

Values assessment has long been conducted within career development and counseling contexts to appraise work importance. Researchers and practitioners use psychometric scales to operationally define and measure values globally, with scales such as the Rokeach Value Survey and the Study of Values. Instruments such as the Work Values Inventory, which scales 15 values, the Minnesota Importance Questionnaire, which scales 6 primary and 15 secondary values, and the Values Scale, which assesses 21 values, measure values specific to the work domain. The Salience Inventory measures value expectations of work and other life roles. Values appraisals also exist within various computer-assisted career guidance programs such as DISCOVER and SIGI. Qualitative assessments, particularly in the form of card sorts, permit subjective evaluations of work values. Considering values as both an important individual differences or person variable and an emerging cultural context or environment variable enhances the usefulness of values in career assessment and counseling contexts to promote occupational exploration, choice, and adjustment.

VALUES AS A PERSON VARIABLE

Career choice and development theories and counseling approaches converge on values as an important person variable that influences vocational choice, job satisfaction, and work adjustment. Values rest at the core of career construction and other developmentally grounded theories, as well as work adjustment theory, and the values-based model of career choice and development. The RIASEC model of vocational personality types holds that particular personality styles maintain specific values. For example, Artistic types are thought to more highly value beauty and creativity, whereas Conventional types presumably more highly value security and comfortable work surroundings. The learning theory of career counseling proposes

that learning events shape values, which in turn guide individual behavior. Social cognitive career theory characterizes values within the notion of outcome expectations. The cognitive information processing approach to career problem solving and decision making includes valuing as a central component of the theory.

Typically, counselors appraise and consider values within various theoretical contexts as a person variable, in the mode of abilities, interests, and personality traits. As such, values lend readily to both psychometric assessment to promote person-occupation matching and qualitative assessment to foster personal meaning making of work and career. In the classic matching paradigm, counselors appraise work values to help individuals identify occupations that may best allow them to realize their values, clarify what outcomes they seek from the work role, and how they wish to practice in a chosen occupation. For match-making, counselors may use both global and work-domain-specific values scales, which have proven useful for general life design, values clarification, and initial occupational decision making. By eliciting personal stories, counselors may assist individuals to identify and contextualize the personally construed meaning of their values as they construct their life careers. Considering values in service of meaning making concerns assisting individuals to elaborate on the significance of the role of work in their lives and offers an area ripe for theory development, research investigation, and counseling practice.

VALUES AS A CONTEXT VARIABLE

Considered as an environment variable, values take on added relevance in career assessment and counseling contexts. Values represent a prominent contextual variable having inherent cultural dimensions. Cross-cultural psychology articulates values as a fundamental element of subjective culture, which constitutes the meaning, beliefs, norms, and values within a society. A theme that surfaces in the multicultural career literature concerns values as a culturally situated variable crucial for fully comprehending the meaning of work and career in the contexts of people's lives. Placing attention more squarely on value sets and IC dimensions is particularly of potential use in cross-cultural career assessment and counseling because it helps to comprehend how broader cultural value orientations may shape specific work values.

CONCLUSION

Long overshadowed by abilities, interests, and personality, in part because of their seemingly nebulous nature, values hold particular promise for the long-term future of career development, both as an individual differences variable and an environment variable. Broadening the construct of values as conceived in career development to incorporate its cultural dimensions might enrich values as a context variable that can be considered relative to individual career exploration, choice, and adjustment. Values have been examined broadly across national, group, and individual levels of human experience. Yet values remain incompletely understood and have received relative research inattention compared to the big three constructs of abilities, interests, and personality. Values remain understudied despite the fact that principal career development theorists and researchers have long articulated a central role for values in explaining and predicting vocational behavior—particularly vocational choice satisfaction—and supported such a role with, albeit modest, empirical data. Because career commitment is a function of values and not interests, values may offer a more valid and reliable predictor of how an individual enacts an occupational choice or role. Contemporary streams in science and practice increasingly recognize the importance of values in career development contexts and bode well for the prospects of values in career theory, assessment, and counseling.

—Paul J. Hartung

See also Career anchors, Interests, Needs, Work values

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VIRTUAL EXPATRIATES

A "traditional" expatriate is an executive or employee of a company who relocates—often with his or her family or significant other—to the country in which the expatriate assignment is located. In contrast, a *virtual expatriate* does not physically relocate to the host country. Instead, the virtual expatriate manages the responsibilities of the assignment through frequent business trips and the use of teleconferences and electronic communication. A virtual expatriate assignment differs from a traditional expatriate assignment not only in the physical location of the expatriate but also in the cost and the duration of the assignment.

The concept of a virtual expatriate is new and offers logistical flexibility that a traditional expatriate assignment does not provide. Perhaps the most significant benefit of the virtual expatriate assignment is that the partner and/or children of the expatriate are not uprooted from their jobs and schools. This concern is becoming more relevant with the increased prevalence of dual-career families. Another significant cause of stress in the traditional expatriate arrangement is the adjustment of the expatriate's family to the new country's culture. Some employees have refused expatriate assignments because they prefer not to move their families. The virtual expatriate assignment allows the significant other or family member to remain in the home country while the expatriate travels to the assignment location.

Traditional expatriate assignments are costly to organizations. They typically include cost of living allowances and housing allowances in addition to compensation that would be competitive in the home country. Generally, it costs a company two to four times more to place an expatriate in a role than it would cost to place a host country employee in the role. Despite the extensive travel required to manage the responsibilities of virtual expatriate assignments, they tend to be less expensive for employers compared to traditional expatriate assignments.

Virtual expatriate assignments also tend to be shorter in duration than traditional expatriate assignments. Virtual expatriate assignments often last between two and four years, whereas traditional assignments often last up to five years.

Because the virtual expatriate is not on location in the host country on a continuing basis, a potential drawback of this approach is that the expatriate may have difficulties becoming integrated with his or her work team. This situation could lead to relationship-building issues with the host country employees.

The concept of a virtual expatriate is relatively new. Moreover, there is little theoretical or empirical research on virtual expatriates. As a result, the long-term benefits and drawbacks of the virtual expatriate assignment for companies and employees are yet to be determined.

—Krista Norden

See also Globalization and careers, International careers, Multinational organization

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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Vocational education in its broadest sense prepares individuals for their primary adult activity, usually paid employment. Preparation for entry into an established

occupation such as the law, nursing, construction, or teaching usually presupposes a sustained engagement with it over a period of years. Vocational education will have, as one of its primary objectives, preparation for an occupational career. In a sense, anyone who is educated and wishes to use their education as a preparation for employment undertakes education for vocational aims, even if they are not specifically inscribed in the educational program. Thus, to the extent that one needs to be literate and numerate at work, elementary education involves a vocational element. However, the vocational element of education usually grows more explicit and specialized as schooling progresses. This entry examines vocational education in the high school or secondary school, the home, the college, and the workplace.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AT SCHOOL AND HOME: PREVOCATIONAL EDUCATION

One of the aims of school education is to promote young people's knowledge of their interests, what they are good at and what they find most worthwhile. Without such self-knowledge, it is difficult for them to choose an occupation that is suitable for them in adult life. School and home must play an important role in promoting self-knowledge through general education but also through introducing young people to the kinds of knowledge, skills, and character attributes that they may expect to need in the workplace. If they do not know what is expected of them, it is difficult to know whether they can meet those expectations. Since one of the major options that young people wish for is to establish whether practical activities in the workplace are what they are most suited to, schools need to provide a range of such practical activities. On the other hand, it is not the role of schools to provide preparation for particular jobs. Their role, rather, is to give young people a good basis on which to make their choices. Thus, they need to know the general skills needed for work in an industry, whether they are capable of developing the necessary skills and whether they have the temperament and interest to succeed in it. In other words, they need to be able to make meaningful choices about their employment futures. Essentially, this is the job of prevocational education: for a young person to find out in general terms what they are suited to and what interests them. In order to do this, though, they need specialist staff, buildings, and equipment; this does not come cheap.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AT COLLEGE OR IN THE WORKPLACE

Postschool, the issues are different. Unless students are moving to higher education or on to further academic study, they are going into a form of education that is a direct preparation for work at a particular job or occupation. This type of training is properly called *vocational education*, and is properly so-called. Some of this vocational education can take place directly in the workplace, through a form of on-the-job training or instruction. This is usually most suitable for jobs with fairly low levels of required skills, responsibility, or theoretical knowledge. When the job requires a higher level of skill and knowledge, however, such work-based training is unlikely to be sufficient. The necessary knowledge to be applied will need to be taught in tranquil and safe surroundings and will have to be taught and practiced in safe conditions. Thus vocational education involves the acquisition of skills through classroom learning, exposure to a simulated work environment (so that skills are practiced safely), and often probationary practice, where skills are practiced under operational conditions but with supervision and occasional advice when necessary. Such complex educational processes need good organization, clear curricula, and robust and reliable assessment procedures if they are to work effectively. In many countries, such systems are formally regulated, often by the state.

APPRENTICESHIP AND ALTERNANCE

The relationship between instruction and work is central to vocational education. The traditional way of educating craftspeople has been through apprenticeship, where young people are employed as junior workers at a low wage, which reflects their current low productivity. In return, the apprentice receives instruction and training. The employer is compensated for training the apprentice by paying low wages and by obtaining a skilled worker at the end of the process; the apprentice is compensated for low wages through skill acquisition. Traditionally, apprenticeship took place within self-regulating occupational institutions called guilds, which also socialized the apprentice into the values, traditions, and ways of dealing with society and customers that formed the core of the guilds' place in society.

Some version of the institution of apprenticeship still exists in some countries, notably the

German-speaking ones, but it is at least as common to find a different approach to managing the work-classroom interface, known as *alternance*. Here trainees are students rather than cadet workers and spend part of their time under instruction and supervision in the workplace. On completing the program of study, the student enters the labor market, usually with a qualification.

CONTINGENT VOCATIONAL PREPARATION

Such systems are to be distinguished from cases where classroom instruction or workplace training takes place for a very specific need. All workers undergo such contingent preparation at some point in their working lives, and it is clearly an important aspect of job preparation. It should, however, be distinguished from the longer term educational processes described above.

OCCUPATIONAL ENTRY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CAREER

Apprenticeship and alternance-based systems of vocational education usually prepare young people for a career within an occupation, which will consist of a series of jobs. Occupational mobility is much less common than job mobility and is often confused with it. Both alternance- and apprenticeship-based systems usually provide the novice with a wide-ranging set of occupational as well as job-specific knowledge and skill. This poses a problem for employer-based systems of vocational education, as it is certain that occupational knowledge will help to make apprentices employable in other firms within that occupational structure. Any form of vocational education that involves direct expense by the employer and includes an element of occupational and not merely job preparation runs this risk. Such systems therefore either require a degree of employer solidarity or some compulsory pooling of resources, so that training does not become an insoluble coordination problem for employers. Vocational education as opposed to job training is therefore more a matter of occupational and industrial preparation than it is preparation for a specific job and is, in that sense, preparation for a career.

—Christopher Winch

See also Apprenticeships, Career education, Cooperative education, On-the-job training

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VOCATIONAL PREFERENCE INVENTORY (VPI)

The *Vocational Preference Inventory* (VPI) is one of two inventories operationalizing John L. Holland's person-environment fit theory. The other inventory, the *Self-Directed Search*, is intended to simulate the vocational guidance experience, whereas the VPI is intended to be a personality-interest inventory. The item content of the VPI consists of 160 occupational titles. Respondents choose either "like" or "dislike" to each of the occupations. A fundamental assumption that guided the construction of the VPI is that occupational preference is an expression of a person's motivation, personality, knowledge, and ability. Furthermore, it is assumed that occupational preferences also indicate the favored methods of coping with interpersonal and environmental problems.

The purpose of the inventory is fourfold. First, it can be used as a brief assessment of personality with high school and college students as well as employed adults. Second, it can be a useful complement to other personality assessment instruments. Third, it provides a means of assessing vocational interests. Fourth, it can be used to assess the vocational behavior in the context of Holland's theory.

The inventory can be used with people at least 14 years old and of normal intelligence. Generally, most people complete the inventory in 15 to 30 minutes, and hand scoring takes about a minute. The VPI has been used with diverse populations, including high school and college students, prison populations, employed adults, and psychiatric patients.

The VPI contains 11 scales that provide information regarding the test taker's interests, self-conceptions, interpersonal relationships, and coping behaviors. Six

of the scales represent Holland's conceptualization of vocational personality types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. These six scales make up what is commonly referred to as the RIASEC hexagonal dimensional model of personality and environments that is central to Holland's theory. While the VPI is primarily used as a personality inventory, scores from the aforementioned scales can be used to derive a person's vocational personality profile and hence used to identify potentially suitable occupations. This is accomplished by examining the three highest scores among the scales and matching them against occupational codes found in the *Dictionary of Holland Occupational Codes* or the Self-Directed Search Form R *Occupations Finder*.

The five other scales tap into other aspects of personality that career counselors would find helpful in interpreting results: Self-Control, Masculinity-Femininity, Status, Infrequency, and Acquiescence. On each scale it is assumed that high scorers have the traits associated with each scale and that low scorers possess the opposite of the traits associated with each scale. Brief conceptual definitions of each scale are offered below.

1. Realistic scale: This scale represents traits associated with being pragmatic and conventional. Those with high scores tend to be described as being mechanically or technically inclined, interpersonally reserved, candid, and obstinate and are lacking social skills.
2. Investigative scale: This scale represents traits associated with being rational and intellectual. High scorers tend to be scientifically inclined and are scholarly, curious, shy, and independent.
3. Artistic scale: This scale represents traits associated with expressiveness and creativity. High scorers tend to be inclined toward artistic endeavors, and are sensitive, imaginative, emotional, open to new ideas, and unconventional.
4. Social scale: This scale represents traits associated with friendliness and social responsibility. High scorers tend to be inclined to help others, and are extroverted, amiable, and dependent.
5. Enterprising scale: This scale represents traits associated with social dominance and adventurousness. High scorers tend to be inclined to lead or persuade others, and are energetic, extroverted, and enthusiastic.
6. Conventional scale: This scale represents traits associated with conformity and orderliness. High scorers tend to be inclined toward organizational or computational activities, and are practical, cautious, and traditional.
7. Self-Control scale: This scale represents traits associated with impulse control and responsibility. High scorers are inclined to be inhibited, insecure, cautious, and passive.
8. Masculinity-Femininity scale: This scale represents identification with stereotypical male and female roles. High scorers typically prefer traditionally male occupations, whereas low scorers prefer traditionally female occupations. High scorers are also typically characterized as being asocial, competitive, and shrewd.
9. Status scale: This scale represents a person's concern with prestige. High scorers generally prefer occupations that are high in social status and reflect a degree of self-confidence or desire for upward mobility.
10. Infrequency scale: This scale represents a person's preference for unpopular occupations. High scorers may have unsuccessful work histories and may view themselves in disparaging terms.
11. Acquiescence scale: This scale represents a person's degree of yea saying. High scorers tend to report liking many occupations. Extremely high scorers may represent lack of self-knowledge or someone with multiple interests and abilities.

The scales of the VPI generally have good internal consistency reliability estimates, with a few notable exceptions being the Masculinity-Femininity, Status, and Infrequency scales, which are quite low and should be interpreted with some caution. The scales that represent the RIASEC typology have demonstrated a moderate degree of predictive validity with high school and college students in terms of selection of an academic major and choice of occupation. The remaining scales show a moderate degree of convergence with similar scales on other personality inventories.

Users of the VPI should consider the person's age, education, area of vocational training, and occupational status. For the purposes of vocational guidance, the RIASEC scales should be examined for their degree of differentiation and consistency. Differentiation refers to the magnitude of difference between the highest and lowest scores on the RIASEC scales. The greater the difference, the more clearly a person resembles one type and less like the others and hence should be more predictable in terms of appropriate

vocational choice. Consistency refers to the degree of relatedness between personality types as represented in the hexagonal model. The closer the types on the hexagon, the greater the degree of overlap in terms of interests and traits. The other scales may provide additional information that can either reaffirm or elucidate score meaning of the RIASEC scales and may serve as additional information to help clarify a person's self-concept and how it relates to choice of an occupation.

—Brian J. Taber

See also Holland's theory of vocational choice, Self-Directed Search, Strong Interest Inventory, Vocational psychology

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VOCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Vocational psychology, a specialty within applied psychology, is the study of vocational behavior and its development across the life cycle. Emerging in the first decade of the twentieth century as America became heavily industrialized, vocational psychology originally concentrated on the fit between a worker's abilities and interests and a job's requirements and rewards. The outcome of a good match between a person and position is job success and satisfaction, with failure and frustration being expected from a poor fit. This paradigm, once called trait-and-factor, is now called person-environment fit. It rests on the contributions of differential psychology, that is, the measurement and study of individual differences in personality traits and cognitive abilities.

Vocational psychology crystallized as a specialty in the second decade of the twentieth century, promulgated in 1916 by Hollingworth's book titled *Vocational Psychology*. Until World War II, vocational psychology concentrated on two functions. The first functioned applied the matching model in vocational guidance to help individuals choose jobs. The second function applied the matching model in personnel selection to help companies choose

workers. The same person, a personnel and guidance psychologist who counseled individuals and consulted with companies, performed both functions. Following World War II, personnel psychologists began to concentrate on either guidance or selection, with guidance becoming the hub for counseling psychology and selection becoming the hub for industrial psychology. While today they are distinct, both disciplines remain interested in vocational behavior. Vocational psychologists study vocational behavior from the perspective of the worker, while industrial/organizational psychologists study vocational behavior from the perspective of the employer. Because of its concern with the individual rather than the organization, vocational psychology research serves as the basic science for the profession of career counseling.

Contemporary vocational psychology encompasses two domains, one sphere of activity is concerned with vocational choice by high school and college students and the other sphere of activity is concerned with work adjustment by adults. Spanning both choice and adjustment, a second model to augment that of person-environment fit became popular during the middle of the twentieth century. It was called the *vocational development model*. This paradigm popularized the term *career*. For example, *career development* replaced *vocational development* as a rubric. Viewed objectively, career is the series of positions that an individual occupies from school through retirement. Viewed subjectively, career is the imposition of meaning on vocational behavior. Individuals construct their careers by using subjective meanings both to guide their selection of occupational positions and to make their work roles matter to themselves and others.

Vocational psychology's unique contribution to psychology continues to be the conceptualization and measurement of vocational interests. Other important topics include vocational choice, career indecision, career intervention, school-to-work transition, organizational commitment, work adjustment, mentoring, and work-family balance. Research on these topics can be found in vocational psychology's three main journals: *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, and *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. Regular updates about research and reflection on vocational behavior appear in the serial volumes of the *Handbook of Vocational Psychology*.

—Mark L. Savickas

See also Holland's theory of vocational choice, Super's career development theory, Vocational education

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WECHSLER INTELLIGENCE SCALES

The *Wechsler Intelligence Scales* consist of the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI), the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC), and the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS). These are the most widely taught, used, and researched contemporary measures of human intelligence. Each Wechsler test consists of extensive interaction between a test taker and an administrator who assesses various cognitive abilities through a diverse array of standardized exercises. Because adult intelligence is of greatest direct relevance to career development, and because all three Wechsler scales possess a similar overall structure, the present discussion is limited to the WAIS. Research concerning the adult scale—currently in its third edition (WAIS-III)—supports its value as an indicator of intellectual ability and potential. However, decisions concerning the use of the WAIS in career assessment will depend on situational needs and constraints.

The WAIS-III conceptualizes intelligence as a general capacity for effective reasoning and behavior. This capacity is measured by performance on 11 to 14 subtests administered by a trained proctor, who adheres to a highly structured testing protocol. These tests vary considerably: some are timed, others not; some are strictly oral, others involve visual stimuli; and still others require physical manipulation of objects. The WAIS measures a person's general intelligence level, along with more specific capacities, such as verbal and performance ability. Verbal intelligence involves verbal memory, general fund of factual

knowledge, and capacity to reason with words, numbers, and other abstract symbols. Performance intelligence is visual-spatial-motor ability, including the capacity to process, integrate, manipulate, and discriminate among objects and visual stimuli (i.e., shapes, patterns, and pictures). Various WAIS subtests also measure other specific mental abilities, such as working memory and processing speed.

Because of the WAIS's long history and widespread contemporary use in psychological assessment, scholars have produced a substantial body of supporting research. Evidence from these studies indicates that (a) there is such a thing as general intelligence, (b) intelligence is an effective if imperfect predictor of academic and job performance, and (c) the WAIS-III is a reliable and valid measure of this mental property. WAIS research has also supported its value in the assessment of specific cognitive problems, such as memory loss, attention disorders, and cognitive developmental disabilities. Particularly in career-development-related cases where such cognitive disorders are suspected, the WAIS-III is of great potential use.

Nevertheless, despite the WAIS's obvious rigor and validity, some scholars question the sensibility of using it in career assessment of nonclinical populations. Past grades, standardized achievement test scores (e.g., the ACT), and related information can often be used in career guidance to make reasonable predictions about one's capability of acquiring job-related skills. Similarly, in employment selection, grades and demonstrated job-related skills may be a fair indicator of potential. To the extent that these alternative sources of information are available, the

added benefit of a formal intelligence score may not justify the cost and effort of administering the WAIS. Moreover, when a formal measure of general intelligence is desired, there are other available research-based assessments that are sufficiently valid and significantly more cost and time efficient.

—Robert O. Hartman

See also Abilities, Intelligence

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WELFARE-TO-WORK PROGRAMS

Welfare clients are highly aware of the stigma attached to welfare reliance and express a strong commitment to self-sufficiency. Employers need a productive and reliable workforce, and many employers recognize that former welfare clients may help them meet this need. The transition of former welfare clients into the workforce is a critical issue that affects not only former welfare clients and employers but also customers, taxpayers, and society in general. Employers provide a key to the success of this transition and, through their human resource management practices, can make a difference in the job retention of former welfare clients.

Welfare reform in the 1990s has increased the urgency of the transition from welfare to work by attaching work requirements to the receipt of welfare payments. In the United States, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 abolished the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program and established Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) in its place. TANF included work requirements for welfare clients deemed able to work and provided funds for support services such as child care and transportation. In addition, TANF imposed a five-year lifetime limit on the receipt of welfare benefits. As governments around the world have embraced capitalist globalization and

implemented policies of deregulation, privatization, and social austerity, assistance to persons living in poverty has increasingly become linked to work requirements. These policy changes have increased pressure on welfare clients to make the transition to work.

But how able are welfare clients to achieve self-sufficiency through work? To answer this question requires examining the population of welfare clients and their life circumstances. In the United States, Black and Hispanic individuals historically have been more than twice as likely as Asians or Whites to live below the poverty level. In 2003, Blacks and Hispanics constituted about 13 percent and 14 percent of the U.S. population respectively, and 1,376,000 Whites, 618,000 Blacks, and 505,000 Hispanics aged 15 years and older were on TANF. In the United States, welfare clients are predominantly women with children. Being less educated, being unemployed, and having a work-related disability are all positively associated with using welfare assistance.

Many clients go off welfare on their own, but for many others, TANF supports for training, child care, and transportation assistance are critical for easing the transition from welfare to work. Job skills training, job readiness training, and other supports for helping welfare clients enter paid employment are generally not provided directly by the government in the United States. Rather, consistent with the philosophy of privatization, private for-profit and nonprofit agencies contract with the states to provide such services to welfare clients. One study of welfare clients receiving these services in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, showed that the average client was a 32-year-old, non-White woman with between three and four children who had been on welfare for 32 months with skills equivalent to an eighth-grade level in reading and a sixth-grade level in math.

Given the importance of human capital endowments for escaping poverty and avoiding reliance on welfare, the profile of the average welfare client receiving job readiness assistance indicates important challenges. The jobs available to someone whose skills are below that of a high school graduate are unlikely to pay a sufficient wage to support a family of three or more. When TANF-related child care benefits end, wages must cover day care and afterschool care expenses. In addition, demonstrated differences in earnings between White and non-White women when skill levels are controlled indicate possible

employer discrimination and reluctance to hire women of color. The relatively low wages associated with jobs likely to be available to women, combined with substantial family care responsibilities, low skills, and possible employer discrimination, create a formidable set of barriers to self-sufficiency for women on welfare.

These challenges mean that employers play a critical role in the transition from welfare to work. Some employers choose not to hire former welfare clients because of concerns about productivity. However, numerous employers have successfully employed former welfare clients and gained competitive advantage through this source of labor. Former welfare clients are generally in ample supply, enabling a firm to better handle periods of tight labor markets. The jobs that former welfare clients hold, in occupations such as food service and child care, often involve front-line interaction with the firm's customers, and continuity of service and care may critically affect revenue and reputation. The employment of former welfare clients can also be an image boost for an employer, further impacting the bottom line.

Job retention is the critical indicator of a successful transition. If the experience of employers and former welfare clients is a revolving door, then neither benefits. Research has identified several employer human resource management practices that contribute to retention. Perhaps foremost are good wages and financial and health benefits. While it may be possible for an employer to hire former welfare clients at low levels of compensation, paying more than necessary may be a good investment that pays off in future retention and productivity. Development opportunities are also important. Research indicates that practices such as mentoring and career coaching enhance retention even during the first six months of employment. This period of the transition to work may be the most difficult. Even good wages may not make ends meet, and child care and other challenges can lead to discouragement. Development plans may provide the hope necessary to survive this period. Family-friendly benefits, such as paid time off and subsidized child care, also can contribute to retention by accommodating the needs of former welfare clients during this transition.

Numerous societal stakeholders, including employers, their customers, taxpayers, and welfare clients themselves, have an interest in making the transition from welfare to work successful. Governments, non-profit agencies, and researchers need to continue to

find ways to support welfare clients and employers in this transition.

—John R. Deckop and Alison M. Konrad

See also Career transition, Low-income workers and careers, Single parents and careers, Socioeconomic status

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WELLNESS AND FITNESS PROGRAMS

Wellness and fitness programs sponsored by and conducted in organizations have historically aimed at enhancing individual health, providing health risk screenings, avoiding the burden of suffering associated with distress, health, and safety problems, and reducing the organizational costs of distress at work. Because cardiovascular disease continues as the leading cause of death for men and women in the American workforce, many wellness and fitness programs have been designed around aerobic or cardiovascular fitness. However, in the workplace itself, the greatest health risks for men are industrial accidents and for women are incidents of homicide. This has been true through much of the twentieth century. Therefore, early health promotion programs in industry focused on workplace safety and later gave way to ergonomic programs that focused on worker-environment fit. These two early health initiatives were followed by the advent of wellness and occupational health promotion

programs, many based on an allopathic medical model. This medical model gave way to a preventive medicine one as used, for example, in the Duke Executive Health program.

To examine the current state of the practice and science of wellness and fitness programs, we look first at the early foundations for wellness and fitness programs. Second, we turn to positive health versus health-risk management. Third, we consider a three-level typology of wellness and fitness programs. Fourth, we examine the impact of these programs. Finally, we identify success factors for wellness and fitness programs.

EARLY FOUNDATIONS OF WELLNESS AND FITNESS PROGRAMS

The health of a workforce is of concern for both humanitarian and utilitarian reasons, and there is interdependence between the health of the employee and the health of the organization. Hugo Munsterberg's turn of the twentieth-century research on industrial accidents brought attention to the importance of workplace safety in America. Throughout the century, workplace safety was a concern in manufacturing and industrial work environments. The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OSHA) of 1970 brought forth a wide variety of regulations and practices that advanced safety practices in the workplace. The focus in these programs was problem avoidance as opposed to health enhancement and was very compatible with the broadly accepted allopathic medical model that is symptom and disease oriented. Thus early wellness and fitness programs that grew up during the 1970s and 1980s often emphasized addressing unhealthy behaviors, such as smoking, substance abuse, poor diet, and lack of exercise. In addition, the emphasis was on individual behavior in contrast to characteristics of the workplace. With the advent of Kenneth Cooper's preventive approach through aerobic exercise in the 1970s, the broader increasing emphasis on preventive medicine at the same time, and the impact of the osteopathic medical model, the early approaches to wellness and fitness promotion gave way to new ideas, approaches, and practices in health, wellness, and fitness.

POSITIVE HEALTH VERSUS HEALTH-RISK MANAGEMENT

Wellness and fitness programs typically focus on the promotion of positive health and/or the prevention and resolution of health risks. Inherent in these

themes are the perspectives of health as the presence of positive states or health as the absence of illness. Both psychology and medicine have historically focused primarily on preventing health risks and healing disease and illness, and consequently, early wellness and fitness interventions followed within this tradition. Recent calls have been made, in contrast, for a focus on health defined as the presence of the positive in both mind and body. The positive psychology movement, pioneered by Martin Seligman and colleagues, emphasizes psychology as a science of human strengths, some of which lead to flourishing and others that act as buffers against illness.

Reflecting this movement toward a more positive view of both physical and mental health, wellness and fitness programs are increasingly including components that promote resilience and positive health as well as the management and identification of health risk factors. Thus the content of these programs includes both health-enhancing activities as well as health risk management activities that encompass health in its broadest definition. Among the goods that are essential to positive human health are having a purpose in life, quality connections to others, and positive self-regard. Aristotle long ago proposed that the highest of all human goods was the realization of the individual's true potential, which he described as eudaemonia. Wellness and fitness programs thus belong squarely within the realm of career development, as the career facilitates all of these goods. Development of these goods requires the effort of both individuals and organizations.

In addition, the emphasis on health has grown to include not only individual health but also organizational health, as articulated in the preceding section. Healthy organizations consider multiple levels of health (individual, group, and organization). They promote organizational congruence, or fitness, between the organization and its external environment, and between components within the organization.

In summary, a broader, more positive view of health has evolved. This comprehensive view emphasizes positive health, along with health-risk management, and encompasses both healthy individuals and healthy organizations.

TYPES OF WELLNESS AND FITNESS PROGRAMS

As the broader conceptions of health and wellness have evolved, so too have the typologies of interventions

offered by organizations. An early typology offered by several researchers proposed three levels of health programs:

Level I: Awareness programs, including newsletters, health fairs, screening sessions, education classes, and other activities that raise individual awareness of the consequences of unhealthy behaviors

Level II: Specific programs for lifestyle modification, including fitness programs, back exercises, and the like, characterized by active employee involvement in adopting health-promoting behaviors

Level III: Programs that create environments in which individuals can sustain healthy lifestyles over the long term, including the provision of fitness centers at the workplace, making healthy food available, and removing unhealthy food from the workplace.

From these three levels, fourth-generation programs evolved, variously referred to as total health programs, comprehensive health promotion programs, or health and productivity management programs. Johnson & Johnson's Live for Life program represents one of the earliest comprehensive wellness programs. Three key components of the J&J program are health risk assessment, creative educational units, and physical fitness training. Health risk assessments may include analyses of stress management, fitness, nutrition, safety, and ergonomics, and the assessments are used to identify the individual's strengths and weaknesses. In the educational units, a wide variety of media is used to deliver education on such topics as weight management, smoking cessation, women's health issues, and blood pressure management, among other health-related subjects. In J&J's physical fitness training, programs are tailored specifically to individual needs. Evaluations of the Live for Life program have indicated positive effects on exercise, health behaviors, and employee work attitudes.

Kimberly-Clark Corporation's Health Management program is also a benchmark comprehensive program, initiated in 1977. The program reflects the company's culture and its belief that well-informed, healthy employees are happier, safer, more productive, and have better attendance records, and that these factors produce lower health care costs for the organization. Integrated, multidisciplinary teams provide health screening, primary care, exercise programs, nursing care, and employee assistance programs at Kimberly-Clark's various locations. Fitness facilities include indoor running tracks, Olympic-size pools, nature

trails, weights, and aerobic equipment. Preventive and educational services are provided, which include family wellness, nutrition education, CPR training, and sport-specific workshops, among other programs.

Health and productivity management programs (HPM) have three basic goals: (1) to provide integrative services that promote employee health or assist with injury, illness, or work-life balance, (2) to increase productivity and morale, and (3) to manage medical benefits, risk management, employee assistance programs, and other services such that they promote health and productivity. Keys to the success of HPM programs include health promotion and wellness staff who serve as models of healthy lifestyles, employee empowerment, and self-responsibility. The distinguishing factor of HPM programs is the tie to the mission of the business and articulation of the links between individual health and business operations.

POSITIVE IMPACTS ON INDIVIDUALS, CAREERS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

There are five positive impacts that proceed from wellness and fitness programs in organizations that have effects on individuals, careers, and organizations: (1) employee physical and psychological health, (2) employee engagement and involvement, (3) health care cost avoidance, (4) reduction in absenteeism, turnover, and injury, and (5) high performance on the job and morale at work.

Physical exercise programs that address the employee's cardiovascular fitness, muscular flexibility, and muscular strength lead to improvements in employee physical health and well-being with a number of associated improvements in psychological health. The latest research suggests that the most positive physical effects of exercise occur at the low-impact, low-intensity level rather than at the high-impact, high-intensity level. The aerobically fit employee has a lower resting heart rate, lower blood pressure, lowered stress-reactivity, and, when combined with flexibility and weight training, improved muscular flexibility and tone. Psychologically, exercise lowers anxiety, helps to metabolize anger and other potentially toxic emotions, and improves mental acuity. Thus employees' overall physical and psychological health improves.

Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz have found that adopting some of the lessons from high-performance athletes by corporate executives and employees can enhance health, well-being, and performance. A central tenet in their approach is the management of

energy in contrast to the management of time. Thus employee engagement in work and nonwork activities is balanced by strategic disengagement, during which time energy recovery occurs. Balancing energy expenditure in productive activities, on or off the job, with energy recovery through personal renewal activities, leads to both improved health and improved performance. These benefit both the individual and the organization while contributing to sustained energy for longer term career progress and success.

Wellness and fitness programs have been shown to lead to health care cost avoidance. Johnson & Johnson pioneered the approach to health care cost reduction through their health and fitness programs in the J&J family of companies. Because wellness and fitness programs take a systemic view of health, they can lead to overall health improvements in employees, thus reducing a range of health costs for physical, psychological, and behavioral disorders and problems.

Wellness and fitness programs have broad, positive effects throughout a workforce even for the nonparticipating employees. This appears to be due to an osmotic effect that occurs as some nonparticipating employees begin to model the positive health attitudes, behaviors, and actions of the wellness and fitness program participants. This overall improvement in workforce health has positive effects on work attendance and retention while leading to reduced absenteeism and turnover. In addition, overall physical and psychological fitness has been associated with reduced injury rates on the job, which continues as a serious workplace problem for both men and women.

Finally, the net effect of wellness and fitness programs can lead to high performance on the job, coupled with high morale on the part of employees. This is good for individual employees, for their careers, and for the organization as a whole. Thus improved individual employee health has positive effects on organizational health and vitality. The caveat is that wellness and fitness programs should not be aimed at improving employee health and well-being as an intermediate step to increasing work pressures and demands on employees. As stated earlier, in addition to the utilitarian reasons for health concerns at work are humanitarian reasons.

EMPLOYER-SPONSORED PROGRAM SUCCESS FACTORS

If employer-sponsored wellness and fitness programs are to be successful, a number of factors should

be considered by management. These program success factors include, but are not necessarily limited to, (a) top management commitment, (b) program goals and objectives, (c) a quality staff of wellness and fitness professionals, (d) appropriate recruitment of participants, and (e) a feedback and evaluation strategy for the program.

Top management commitment to wellness and fitness is essential to the success of any program, as is the case for almost all employer-sponsored programs of any kind. This may mean that senior executives actively participate in the program, as is the case for PepsiCo Chairman and CEO Steven Reinemund, who considers wellness and fitness essential components of leadership development. Alternatively, senior executives provide the resources and other support elements to ensure the success of the program.

Because employees, supervisors, professional staff, and senior management may have different motivations, agendas, and perspectives on wellness and fitness, it is important to use a multidisciplinary approach to the articulation of program goals and objectives. This planning component of the program serves as an important element of feedback and evaluation of the program.

A quality staff of professionals is a third program success factor. This staff may well need to be multidisciplinary in nature so as to include professional expertise in exercise science, behavioral psychology, medical health, risk management, and even social work.

The recruitment of appropriate program participants is a fourth key to success. Early program participants are the leading edge of embedding the program successfully within the organization. *Thus influence leaders* in the company, to include senior executives, can be very influential in both attracting other participants as well as effecting positive health behaviors more broadly throughout the organization.

Finally, yet critically, it is important to have a systematic feedback and evaluation strategy for the wellness and fitness program. This strategy begins in the planning stage of the program with a clear statement of program goals and objectives. The strategy should include the systematic collection and evaluation of both quantitative data (e.g., percentage of workforce participating) and qualitative data (e.g., participant description of benefits, such as personally, professionally, and for career enhancement).

—James Campbell Quick and Debra L. Nelson

See also Careers and health, Stress at work

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WHITE-COLLAR WORK

White-collar work is perceived as being corporate level or business-oriented and is performed in an office setting or at a desk using technical and electronic resources such as computers. Whereas some organizations may be solely composed of positions defined as white-collar work, others have a variety of work to include white-collar, blue-collar, and service-level positions. Every industry is different, and organizations within industries may find that there is a need for a combination of workers. However, industries saturated with organizations performing white-collar work are more likely to have workers who have strong intellectual capabilities and are paid a salary

based on their level of intelligence and ability to perform complex or complicated work. More than likely, white-collar work is not paid on an hourly basis. Consequently, organizations pay white-collar workers a high salary for the performance of work that is indefinite in quantity and quality. White-collar work brings to mind work performed by an employee who has an advanced degree acquired after years of study at a college or other educational institution.

Employees at the white-collar level include professional, administrative, technical, and clerical staff. While managers and supervisors are not always included in this category, they can be technical managers and supervisors, performing the work in addition to giving oversight to the work being performed by others. This grouping (professional, administrative, technical, and clerical) is referred to as PATC by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The concept of white-collar work was derived from the studies of criminologist Edward Sutherland, who coined the term "white-collar crime." The crimes committed by white-collar workers are defined as nonviolent crimes. The crimes generally take place within a corporation by professional, administrative, technical, or clerical workers in the course of performing their business duties. Sutherland's studies introduced a different thought process or direction of criminal activity in which crime is performed at a higher level. Some of the criminal activity identified includes tax evasion, insider trading, computer fraud, forgery, unfair labor practices, bribery, embezzlement, false advertising, financial theft, and/or fraud (as in securities dealing).

White collar is indicative of white-collar, button-down shirts worn by workers performing less physical work; they perform desk work. Workers have the flexibility to wear professional clothing because they do not perform hard labor—work requiring a significant amount of movement or that would cause them to exert much energy. The work is not dirty work or work that would get their clothing soiled. The work performed is nonmanual in nature, not laborious. White-collar work requires practical knowledge, the use of learned experience, thought process, mental engagement, problem solving, analysis, and task orientation. Another perspective would be that white-collar work requires advanced knowledge and the ability to perform work that is principally intellectual in context, requiring consistent exercise of discretion and judgment. The advanced knowledge is customarily

acquired by an extended course of specialized intellectual instruction.

White-collar work is viewed as nonroutine mental operations or processes based on particular information or on dealings with individuals. Due to the nature of white-collar work, it is almost impossible to track, observe, and evaluate the work. For example, white-collar workers apply their knowledge of management, health care, or human resource management to a variety of individual situations such as dealing with workflow processes, assessing the health of a patient, performance management and other forms of employee relations, interpreting or applying relevant laws and regulations, and supervising and evaluating employees. The ability to do this type of work is learned through experience and acquired education. Some organizations may also offer training in the workplace to support the performance of effective white-collar work. White-collar work requires intellectual ability to learn such skills. Organizations traditionally assume academic ability and education to affirm a worker's ability to learn and perform white-collar work. Organizations rely on this experience as a valid premise to recruit and allocate workers to perform white-collar work.

White-collar work is sought after by individuals as an entry or starting point to their career development. This inroad would lead to opportunities for personal growth and development in a professional field of work. As employees thrive in the performance of white-collar work, they are able to take on more expansive levels of white-collar work. If there were degrees of white-collar work, one could gauge or chart a path of progression by degree. For example, this potential could occur through advancement within an organization from grade level to grade level—denoting an upward progression. Advancement could also come in the form of lateral progression in that white-collar work hones skills that are transferable in nature. For example, professional skills such as analysis can be utilized in different departments or divisions within an organization. The skill level would offer the opportunity to move within the organization laterally from one white-collar position to another outside of the initial department or division. This level of achievement would come as an employee reaches an employer's expectation of preferred performance or feels the need to redeploy its intellectual capital. White-collar work can be achieved as a progressive or developmental process for individuals who may not have secured an educational background to support direct entry into white-collar work.

The benefit of white-collar work as a form of career development draws on an employee's intellectual knowledge base, viewed by organizations as intellectual capital. Also, it sets employees apart and distinguishes their capabilities within the workforce. Its challenging level of work pushes employees to draw on their past experience, educational background, ability to discern, analyze, assess, measure, and derive answers in order to respond to work issues. White-collar work is perceived as work that challenges the intellect of employees who are capable of handling advanced-level work.

—Dyane Johnson Holt

See also Blue-collar workers, Knowledge work

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WONDERLIC PERSONNEL TEST

The *Wonderlic Personnel Test* (WPT) is one of the most widely used tests of general cognitive ability (g). A recent search of an automated database located over 1,000 references to the WPT. The current form is the result of more than 60 years of research and development. Wonderlic Inc., the WPT's publisher located in Libertyville, Illinois, states that the test is used by business and government organizations for evaluation of applicants for employment and training. Both paper-and-pencil and computer-administered versions of the test are available. Equivalence of the administration methods has been substantiated by research. There are also large print, Braille, and audio versions for special needs populations.

There is a well-written test user's manual with documentation that contains important criteria used to judge the merits of the test. Wonderlic acknowledges

the more than ample research on the efficacy of general cognitive ability as a predictor of important occupational criteria. The user's manual also notes that the WPT does not measure noncognitive constructs such as interests, motivation, or personality.

The WPT forms have 50 questions constituting a wide variety of content areas, including verbal, numerical, and spatial. In keeping with good professional practice, the questions are arranged in order of increasing difficulty, and the publisher states that a sixth-grade reading level is sufficient for test comprehension and completion. Knowledge of basic mathematics, U.S. monetary units and currency, and frequently used units of measurement (e.g., foot, yard) are required. Administration of the paper-and-pencil version takes about 20 minutes. The exact testing time is 12 minutes; the other 8 minutes are for administrative procedures such as distributing forms, answering questions, providing instructions, and collecting the forms. There are guides for the proper administration, age adjustment, and retesting on an alternate form. Complete scoring instructions and a single overall score are provided. The publisher can provide scoring, if desired.

Reliability

Several measures of reliability are reported. The publisher has been careful to identify the type of reliability such as test-retest, KR-20, or alternate forms. Depending on the study cited, the reliability has ranged from 0.73 to 0.95. The publisher also addresses the question of test score differences by reference to the Probable Error of Measurement (PEM), also called the standard error of measurement. PEM estimates for the WPT are given as between 1.3 to 1.8, and interpretations of differences are provided.

Fairness

The WPT user's manual presents a thorough discussion of the fair use of tests and the WPT in particular. It is recognized that assessment of test fairness and fair use of tests is a complex and statistically sophisticated issue. External researchers are cited as having found the WPT, as a professionally developed cognitive ability test, to be free of bias.

Score Tables

Numerous tables are provided, including population norms. The 1992 normative population includes

118,549 participants and is available as number-right scores. Among the useful tables is one showing the score distribution in the adult working population, high school graduates from 16 to 30, and college graduates aged 20-30. Number-right scores and their cumulative percentiles are provided. Tables are included that show the effects of sex, age, and education on test scores. Tables also show score distributions and effects for ethnicity for Whites, African Americans, and Hispanics. There are interpretive guidelines for various classes of occupations as well as scores achieved by samples of applicants for numerous occupations ranging from "packer" to "attorney." In addition, there is a table with suggested minimum test scores for selected occupations. However, the knowledgeable counselor or human resources specialist will remember that these are just suggestions, and both legal and scientific rigor requires the development of appropriate minimum scores for the situation.

Validity

The WPT user's manual shows the results of numerous validation studies. Construct validity is addressed by providing correlations with other tests. The manual includes information on tests the WPT has been correlated with, the citation of source studies, and the provision of information about sample size. Tests with which the WPT shows a high correlation are well characterized as tests of general cognitive ability such as IQ tests and achievement tests. The WPT shows an especially high correlation with the Wechsler individually administered IQ tests. Adding to the construct validity, there are low correlations reported with measures of personality, social judgment, interest inventories, and emotional adjustment. This provides a proper nexus of correlations for a construct validation.

Empirical validations also are reported, and the sample size is shown for each study. For each of the validity coefficients, the business occupational category such as General Office, Blue Collar, or Supervision is provided. Specific positions are reported, ranging from bank tellers to utility crew, and from first-line production supervisors to bake shop managers. Validity studies are also cited for the non-business categories, including Decision Processing, Engineering, and Professional. Validity coefficients also are provided for Vocational Training Programs.

Criteria, validity coefficients, and a citation are given for each study. Criteria range from annual pay

increase to the supervisor's rating of performance. Validity coefficients are reported in the form of correlations. The validity coefficients tabled in the user's manual are consistent with studies of other similar tests and are in the expected range in the many meta-analyses of general cognitive ability as a predictor of training and job performance.

LANGUAGE VERSIONS

The WPT has been translated into several languages. The most useful may be the Spanish language version, which has gone through translation from English and other development activities. The publisher has conducted research and development activities so that the Spanish version has evolved into a measure equivalent to the English version.

The WPT is a well-documented, widely used measure of general cognitive ability. It is available in both electronic and paper-and-pencil forms in several languages. The WPT is appropriate for both theoretical and practical applications. Furthermore, the WPT has demonstrated that solid psychometric properties (reliability, validity, fairness) and norms are available for many subgroups.

—*Malcolm James Ree*

See also General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB), Intelligence, Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, Wechsler Intelligence Scales

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WORK ETHIC

Members of the business community often express concerns that the *work ethic* among employees has diminished. This perceived decline is often linked to lower levels of job performance and increases in turnover, absenteeism, and counterproductive behavior in the form of unauthorized breaks and theft on the job. Others, however, maintain that the work ethic is not in decline but that what it means to be committed to the value and importance of hard work has simply changed over the years. Regardless of one's point of

view on this issue, the work ethic is still clearly important to employers. For instance, in one survey of 150 managers, it was found that nearly 60 percent ranked work ethic as the most valued characteristic to consider when hiring an employee for an administrative position, assuming that the applicant had the requisite skills necessary to perform the job. Indeed, work ethic was viewed as being more important than intelligence, enthusiasm, and education. In another research survey, it was discovered that more than 50 percent of hiring managers expressed greater concern for a job candidate's attitude than aptitude.

HISTORY OF THE WORK ETHIC

While contemporary views toward the work ethic are quite favorable, such was not the case throughout the history of civilization. For instance, the ancient Greeks and Romans disdained manual labor and held individuals that engaged in this activity in low regard. It was not until the Protestant Reformation, led chiefly by religious leaders Martin Luther and John Calvin in the sixteenth century, that attitudes toward manual labor changed greatly. Luther espoused the belief that all vocations, no matter how menial, served God and were therefore useful. Individuals were encouraged to apply themselves diligently in their given profession (known as their "calling") to which they were placed by birth and society. To attempt to change one's calling in pursuit of higher goals was considered a transgression against God, as he alone determined one's place in the world.

Extending Luther's doctrines, the French theologian John Calvin introduced the concept of predestination—the belief that one's ability to attain eternal life was predetermined by God. The selected few, known as the elect, would find their place with God, whereas others would be damned for eternity. What made the concept of predestination most disconcerting was that there was no way to tell for sure if one was a member of the elect. People reconciled this fact by subscribing to the belief that economic success was evidence of being chosen by God for eternal salvation. Thus hard work was a vehicle toward economic success, and economic success was a sign of salvation.

DEFINITION OF WORK ETHIC

Modern formulations of the work ethic construct stem from Max Weber's two-part essay "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" written

in 1904 and 1905. Weber argued that capitalism's introduction and rapid expansion in Western Europe and North America was greatly influenced by the Puritan value of asceticism (i.e., scrupulous use of time and strict self-denial to achieve personal discipline) and the belief in a calling from God. He argued that other Protestant faiths shared common theological underpinnings that stressed the value and importance of work for its own sake; thus the term *Protestant work ethic* came into being.

Despite being originally conceived as a religiously oriented concept, research in the area has failed to find differences in work ethic beliefs among members of differing faiths. This is not surprising, given that all major religions have espoused the importance of work. Thus it is more appropriate to refer to the work ethic without its original religious connotation.

Aligned with Weber's position, current conceptualizations tend to view work ethic as an attitudinal construct pertaining to work-oriented values. An individual espousing a high work ethic would place great value on hard work, independence, fairness, wise and efficient use of time, delay of gratification, leisure activities that serve a rejuvenating function, and the intrinsic value of work.

THE FUTURE OF WORK ETHIC

While what is viewed as the traditional work ethic has been highly valued in the United States, the argument may be made that the meaning people hold of this construct should be revisited due to the influence of factors such as workforce diversity, unscrupulous corporate behavior, and corporate downsizing.

The attitudes and beliefs that one adopts about work, as well as a host of other issues, are clearly impacted by one's cultural upbringing and generational cohort. Given the vast diversity represented in our nation's workforce, it is likely the case that there is not a universally accepted work ethic. Specifically, the work-related values held by one group may differ from that of another. This has important implications when one seeks to understand not only the meaning of work ethic to different people but also how it is reflected in behaviors in the workplace.

The recent spate of corporate misdeeds, fraud, and unethical activities has caused people to have a diminished trust in employers. This lack of trust has likely affected the levels of commitment and devotion employees feel toward their place of work, which in

turn influences their job-related behavior. Furthermore, corporate restructurings, mergers, and downsizings have led to a large percentage of the workforce being laid off at one time or another—often to remain unemployed for considerable periods of time. Associated with these activities is the rise of jobs that are part time or nonpermanent in nature. Notwithstanding the obvious financial challenges with which many people have been confronted, individuals also must deal with the psychological effects of having one's work role arbitrarily taken away and the impact of being unemployed or underemployed. Such events would likely impact levels of dedication, commitment, and loyalty to future employers.

In summary, while interest in the work ethic has withstood the test of time, it should not be assumed that its meaning has ceased to evolve. Future research and discussion should address the impact, if any, that the aforementioned variables have on the meaning of work ethic in our society. An understanding of these issues will serve to advance knowledge of the work ethic construct and its implications in the workplace.

—Michael J. Miller

See also Career motivation, Job involvement, Work values

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WORK VALUES

In career development theory and counseling, vocational fitness is generally accepted to be the result of

congruence between the characteristics of occupations and the individual differences among people. Abilities, skills, and interests were the individual differences traditionally thought to be most salient. Recently, a third set of personal variables has been entered into career theory: *work values*, or preferences for aspects of a job, occupation, or career. Many other kinds of values are of interest, tapping such constructs as respect for others, the primacy of family, honesty, living frugally, and the like.

ASSESSING WORK VALUES

Over the years, there have been many inquiries into the nature of work values in counseling and industrial psychology. The concept of work values harkens back to the early studies of job satisfaction, in which it was found that job characteristics such as pay, safety, or working hours could be valued differentially and summed into a single index of satisfaction. It followed naturally to inquire into differential valuing of various attributes of an occupation or a career.

Two lines of conceptualization and research on work values are currently prominent: Rene Dawis and Lloyd Lofquist's Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) and Donald Super's multinational Work Importance Study (WIS). Dawis and Lofquist assembled a measure of 21 "needs" to which diverse attributes of jobs or work are responsive. They are all positive in tone, such as achievement, variety, and creativity. The developers' extensive research with workers at many levels of the employment strata found that values are robust predictors of job satisfaction and that different jobs and occupations offer satisfaction to different combinations of needs.

Factor analysis of the 21 needs yielded six combinations, which they labeled as values. They are as follows:

1. Achievement: feeling of accomplishment, using one's abilities
2. Comfort: comfort on the job, absence of stress
3. Status: recognition, dominance over others
4. Altruism: helping others, doing good
5. Safety: structure in the job, predictability
6. Autonomy: independence, being in command

Satisfaction, derived from the correspondence of workers' values and job reinforcers, combined with

"satisfactoriness" derived from the correspondence of workers' skills and abilities and job performance requirements, result in workers' tenure, being retained, promoted, or terminated.

The parallelism of the terms *need* and *value* in the two lines of research led Super to attempt to differentiate them. He viewed the two concepts as two sides of the same coin—needs representing something lacking and seeking satisfaction, and values representing the satisfactions that are sought. He believed that both lead to the activities in which needs or values are satisfied, which is to say, interests.

In a multinational study, the WIS team of researchers formulated 18 values adaptable to any work role. Having been derived from some of the same sources, 12 are identical or very similar to those of the TWA. Of interest is their inclusion of "risk," which is not in the same positive frame of reference as the remainder of their list and is not of the TWA set. Factor analysis reduced the 18 values to five factors, which were identified as follows:

1. Utilitarian: achievement, prestige, ability utilization
2. Self-actualization: personal development, ability utilization
3. Individualistic: autonomy, lifestyle
4. Social: social interaction, social relations
5. Adventurous: risk, authority

The WIS found a remarkable degree of consistency for these factors in the value set across the 11 countries on five continents included in their study. Of more importance was the finding that the most prevalent values across all nationalities were personal development, ability utilization, and achievement, or in sum, self-actualization. Super and Branimir Sverko are careful to point out that all of their subjects had attained some degree of education, which in many of the countries they studied would be indicative of valuing self-actualization. On the other hand, willingness to take risks, as well as valuing prestige and authority, were of little importance.

ASSESSING WORK VALUES IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The two streams of research on work values have fostered two career development applications of their two assessments. The values survey used in the Super

and Sverko study was published for use in career counseling, but has unfortunately gone out of print. A precursor, Super's Work Values Inventory (SWVI-R) has been revised by dropping three scales thought to be redundant with interest constructs and lengthening the remainder. It is available for use in career applications. Donald Zytowski cautions that occupations are not as homogenous for value orientation as they are for interests, so a work value profile should not be applied exclusively to select an occupational objective. At middle and secondary school levels, the inventory is probably best used to illustrate the utility of developing a concept of one's values and to help individuals identify attributes of work and occupations that might be of greatest importance to them. With college students and adults, value assessment might be profitably applied to prioritizing or selecting among several "interesting" possibilities.

The WIS values assessment has been adapted for counseling use as the Work Importance Locator (WIL). It uses a card-sorting procedure with 20 of the original needs to rank-order the importance of six values. One is hand scored and includes a list of occupations that are responsive to each value orientation. The other version is administered online and scored automatically. Users of both the WVI and the WIL can access the master list of occupations that are responsive to their value orientations in an O*NET Occupations Master List. This online document lists 15 to 20 O*NET occupations at five educational levels for each value orientation. The instructions for application of the list cautions that it should not be used for hiring or employment decisions but is most appropriate for career exploration and counseling purposes.

—Donald G. Zytowski

See also Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values, Interests, Needs, Values, Work Values Inventory

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WORK VALUES INVENTORY

Competent career planning is generally understood to rest on a tripod of interests, skills or abilities, and values. Interests and skills or abilities have a long assessment history; assessment of work values has only recently emerged. One of the original assessment tools is Donald Super's *Work Values Inventory* (WVI).

Generally speaking, work values can be defined as the qualities that people seek in their work, occupation, or career. In contrast, interests may be defined as the *activities* through which valued qualities are realized. For example, valuing independence may call for one to be interested in managerial activities.

Super's inventory was devised originally as a research tool in the Career Pattern Study of the late 1940s. After extensive further development, the inventory was made available to the profession in 1970, though by 2000 it was virtually out of print. It assessed 15 values, such as achievement, prestige, esthetics, and economic returns, using a five-point scale to rate the importance of each to the respondent.

THE REVISED EDITION

Super's Work Values Inventory-Revised (SWVI-R) is currently published exclusively online as part of a comprehensive career planning system at www.ncasi.com. In this edition, three scales, Altruism, Esthetics, and Management, were dropped owing to their conceptual similarity to scales on its accompanying interest assessment. Scales were lengthened to five items each, but the five-point rating scale was retained. New norms were created from samples of 5,000 each of male and female inventory takers from middle and high schools and postsecondary institutions distributed among 21 states in the United States. Scale reliabilities and intercorrelations were found to be similar to those of the original edition, although factor analysis revealed only two factors, "intrinsic," such as independence, and "social validation," such as lifestyle.

Applications

Super stated the WVI was to be used to assist in the choice of an occupation as well as a work setting. The revised edition does not fully endorse this position, on the grounds that a single occupational family may not be homogeneous with regard to a single type of work.

For example, there are strong rewards for an individual who highly values a high income in an assortment of contrasting occupations. For example, high income and rewards can be achieved in such occupations as rancher, pharmaceutical researcher, advertising executive, university president, business executive, or comptroller, but these occupations vary significantly in their job content.

With individuals who are about to enter the workforce in their chosen interest, the SWVI-R would be effectively employed to help evaluate the potential of a given job or employment opportunity

A resource for exploring occupations in the framework of work value orientation is the O*NET Work Importance Locator Master List. It contains from 75 to 100 jobs and occupations at five educational levels that are a response to each of six general values that correspond to certain clusters of SWVI-R scales.

—Donald G. Zytowski

See also Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values, Crystallization of the vocational self-concept, Needs, Values, Work values

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WORK-FAMILY BALANCE

There are two general perspectives on what *work-family balance* is, both of which are rooted in role theory. The traditional view comes from theory on interrole conflict and defines work-family balance as an absence of conflict between work and family roles. Role conflict occurs when the demands of the two roles are incompatible, such that participation in one role makes it difficult or impossible to fulfill the obligations of the other role. The view of work-family balance being the absence of work-family conflict recently was augmented to include the extent to which one role (work or family) provides skills and experiences that are helpful in carrying out the demands of the other role. This is referred to as facilitation, enrichment, enhancement, or positive spillover. According to this perspective, work-family balance exists when there is

low work-family conflict and high work-family facilitation. Imbalance, then, is characterized by high conflict and low facilitation. Both conflict and facilitation can occur in two directions: when work role demands interfere with or enhance family role demands (work-to-family conflict/facilitation) and when family role demands interfere with or enhance work role demands (family-to-work conflict/facilitation).

Most research on work-family balance—indeed, most research on the work-family interface—has focused on work-family conflict, with facilitation processes and outcomes only recently being investigated. Also, like most work-family research, a great deal of the studies conducted have been atheoretical in nature, relying instead on the empirical findings of prior research to inform new hypotheses. Only recently has work-family balance been conceptualized affirmatively rather than as something that it is not (i.e., conflict).

This second perspective is grounded in theory on role balance and defines work-family balance as the extent to which a person is equally engaged in and satisfied with his or her work and family roles. Work-family role balance has three components: time, involvement, and satisfaction balance. People achieve balance when they spend equal amounts of time in each role, are psychologically involved to the same extent with each role, and are equally satisfied with each role. This perspective conceptualizes work-family balance as existing along a continuum, ranging from extreme role imbalance that heavily favors work or family over the other, to perfect balance that puts the two roles on equal footing. Two types of balance are possible: positive balance and negative balance. Positive balance occurs when the amount of time, involvement, and satisfaction are *equivalent and high* for both the work and family roles. Negative balance occurs when the amount of time, involvement, and satisfaction are *equivalent and low* for both the work and family roles. For example, a person who spends little time in both the work and family roles, is psychologically withdrawn from both roles, and is dissatisfied with both roles has achieved negative balance in all three dimensions. This distinction highlights the idea that not all balance is necessarily helpful or adaptive.

This understanding of work-family balance differentiates it from work-family conflict and from other conceptualizations that are used to understand how the work and family domains are connected to each other. For instance, these two life domains have been

thought of as accommodating each other; draining resources from each other; and compensating for, spilling over to, and enriching each other. In each case, something that happens in one sphere of life (work or family) then affects the other sphere of life, sometimes positively and sometimes negatively. Rather than concentrating on how the two roles iteratively affect each other, this second conceptualization of work-life balance focuses on the equivalence of engagement and satisfaction across roles.

Research using this formulation of work-life balance is sparse but has indicated that when people spend a large amount of their total time and total psychological investment in their work and family roles, and when they are imbalanced in favor of the family role, people experience the least stress and work-to-family conflict and, in turn, the highest quality of life. Those who are imbalanced in favor of the work role experience the most stress and work-to-family conflict and, in turn, the lowest quality of life. Those who are balanced fall in between. Similar results were found with respect to satisfaction with life roles. The least work-to-family conflict and stress and, in turn, the highest quality of life were found for those with greater family than work role satisfaction, followed by those who were equally satisfied with their roles, then by those who were more satisfied by their work roles.

When people invest little time, involvement, or satisfaction in their work and family roles, balance does not predict quality of life. Specifically, individuals who are generally disengaged and dissatisfied with both their work and family roles tend to report a low quality of life, regardless of the degree of role balance or imbalance they have achieved. This supports the idea that negative balance may not be desirable. Overall, this research indicates that imbalances favoring work over family roles tend to result in lower quality of life because they create greater work-to-family conflict and more stress.

Such results call into question the assumption that has been made in most work-family research that balance is desirable. From an individual outcome point of view, this may not be the case. Research is needed that investigates how the three components of work-life balance are related to organizational outcomes, such as organizational commitment, productivity, and performance quality.

There remains an intuitive appeal to the idea of achieving balance between work and family roles, perhaps because moving toward balance would, for

many people, involve moving away from the problematic imbalances favoring work over family roles. Many organizations now offer employee-friendly benefits designed to help people negotiate the conflicting demands of their work and family roles more successfully. For instance, companies provide child care programs, elder care assistance, telecommuting options, and flexible work hours. The extent to which employees perceive their organizations as being responsive to their work-family issues has been associated with greater job satisfaction, organizational commitment, work functioning, and family functioning, as well as less work-family conflict and lower turnover intentions. Researchers have not yet determined how well such offerings help employees reduce the problematic life role imbalances that favor work over family.

—Stacy McManus

See also Work-family conflict, Work-family enrichment, Workaholism

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WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT

Work-family conflict refers to a situation where the demands and responsibilities from work roles and family roles are mutually incompatible in some respect. In other words, participation in the work role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family role, and participation in the family role is

made more difficult by virtue of participation in the work role. According to this definition, work-family conflict can occur in two directions: family life can interfere with work life (*family-to-work conflict*) and work life can interfere with family life (*work-to-family conflict*). For example, parents might experience family-to-work conflict when a deadline is missed because they need to take time off from work to stay home with a sick child. Alternately, a spouse or parent might experience work-to-family conflict when his or her work schedule makes it impossible to attend a family function or complete household chores. Work-family conflict also has been referred to as work-family interference, work-family tension, and negative work-family spillover.

A number of societal changes occurred over the latter half of the twentieth century that have made the issue of work-family conflict salient to employers, employees, and policymakers. The most important societal change has been growth in the proportion of households, especially those with children, that have two wage earners. Another change has been an increase in the proportion of single-parent households, and especially an increase in the proportion of single parents who are employed. A third change, due to the aging of society, is the growing proportion of working adults who are responsible for the care of elderly family members.

Although the result of these societal changes is that many working adults have more to do, does this mean that they actually experience conflict between their work and family lives? Results from several national studies conducted in the United States during the 1990s suggest that they do. Among adults between the ages of 25 and 54 who work at least 20 hours per week and have some form of immediate family (i.e., a spouse, live-in partner, or at least one child under 18 years old), roughly 40 percent report experiencing work-to-family conflict, and about 12 percent report experiencing family-to-work-conflict. A consistent finding is that work-to-family conflict is more prevalent than family-to-work conflict. Said differently, family roles appear to encounter higher levels of cross-role interference than work roles. In general, research fails to show robust and consistent differences between men and women in exposure to either type of work-family conflict or in the predictors and outcomes of work-family conflict.

The predictors of work-family conflict can be grouped into three general categories: work environment, family environment, and person characteristics.

Research shows that the two categories of environmental predictors have differential relations to the two types of work-family conflict. In other words, characteristics of the work environment are causes of work-to-family conflict, whereas characteristics of the family environment are causes of family-to-work conflict. For example, higher levels of time devoted to family responsibilities, higher levels of psychological importance attributed to family, and the experience of family stressors (e.g., parental demands, marital problems) are associated with higher levels of family-to-work conflict. Also, higher levels of family-related social support are related to lower levels of family-to-work conflict. In contrast, higher levels of time devoted to work responsibilities, higher levels of psychological importance attributed to work, and the experience of work stressors (e.g., work overload, conflicting demands at work) are associated with higher levels of work-to-family conflict. Also, higher levels of work-related social support are related to lower levels of work-to-family conflict. Person characteristics are generally related to both types of work-family conflict. For example, negative affectivity, which represents a general predisposition to experience negative moods, is positively related to both work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict. Time-management preferences, such as the tendency to set priorities and be organized, are negatively related to both types of work-family conflict. The fact that person characteristics are common predictors of both types of work-family conflict is not surprising when one considers that they represent intrinsic characteristics that are brought with the person into both work and family settings.

The outcomes of work-family conflict can be grouped into three general categories: work outcomes, family outcomes, and personal outcomes. Research shows that work and family outcomes have differential relations with the two types of work-family conflict. In other words, work-to-family conflict is predictive of adverse family outcomes, such as lower levels of family satisfaction, family work performance, and family participation. Family-to-work conflict is predictive of adverse work outcomes, such as lower levels of job satisfaction, work performance, and work attendance. Although family-to-work conflict is generally related to poorer behavioral outcomes at work, research shows that it is work-to-family conflict that is associated with intentions to quit a job or career and actual job or career turnover. This makes sense if one views turnover as a

coping mechanism. Changing jobs or careers may eliminate or reduce the extent to which work interferes with family life (i.e., work-to-family conflict). However, because one's family situation remains unchanged, changing jobs or careers is unlikely to reduce the extent to which family interferes with work life (i.e., family-to-work conflict). Finally, because both types of work-family conflict represent stressors, they each have been predictive of adverse personal outcomes, such as poor psychological health (e.g., depression), poor physical health (e.g., somatic symptoms), and poor behavioral health (e.g., heavy alcohol use, smoking).

The management of work-family conflict can be approached through personal initiatives and organizational initiatives. The personal initiatives that individuals can invoke to manage work-family conflict include seeking out and developing appropriate social support at work and at home, reducing or reorganizing the time devoted to work or family demands, reducing the psychological importance of work or family roles, and developing strategies to reduce or better cope with the sources of stress at work and at home. However, work organizations also can help. As many as 30 to 40 organizational initiatives have been discussed in the literature, which can be classified into several general groups: flexible work arrangements, paid and unpaid leaves, dependent-care assistance, and general resource services. Although many personal and organizational initiatives can be identified, little evaluation research has attempted to determine which personal and organizational initiatives, and which combinations of them, actually reduce conflict between work and family life.

It is useful to point out that work-family conflict is a source of stress that affects more people than implied by overall prevalence rates. In other words, work-family conflict affects more than just the individuals experiencing it. It also may directly or indirectly affect family members, coworkers, supervisors, organizations, and communities. Work-family conflict often has been viewed as a problem to be resolved by the affected employees. However, given the potentially severe consequences and the broad impact of work-family conflict, it represents a social issue best tackled with collaboration from employers, employees, and governments.

—Michael R. Frone

See also Family-responsive workplace practices, Work-family balance, Work-family enrichment

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WORK-FAMILY ENRICHMENT

Although work-family research has typically focused on the difficulties of participating in both work and family roles (i.e., work-family conflict), there is a growing awareness that there are also beneficial effects of combining work and family roles. These beneficial effects have been referred to as *work-family enrichment* and may have positive implications for career development, which is a function of one's work and nonwork experiences.

Work-family enrichment and work-family conflict are conceptually distinct constructs. Thus it is possible that an individual can experience high (or low) levels of both conflict and enrichment at the same time or high levels of one and low levels of the other. Similar to work-family conflict, researchers have conceptualized work-family enrichment as consisting of two directions: work-to-family enrichment (where one's work experiences benefit his or her family life) and family-to-work enrichment (where one's family experiences benefit his or her work life). Each direction

of work-family enrichment may be associated with unique antecedents and outcomes.

The dominant theoretical perspective used to explain the linkages between work and family has been role theory. The two predominant perspectives within role theory for describing the relationships between work and family roles are the scarcity hypothesis and the enhancement hypothesis. The scarcity hypothesis suggests that a person has a limited amount of time and energy and that strain is normal and inevitable, given the overdemanding nature of engaging in multiple roles. This hypothesis forms the basis for much of the research on work-family conflict. In contrast, the enhancement hypothesis proposes that occupying multiple roles can result in a variety of benefits such as the development of new skills, increased self-complexity, a larger social network, and increased monetary resources. This hypothesis forms the basis for research on work-family enrichment. It is believed that the net effect of these benefits facilitates the integration and management of work and family roles, leading to fewer negative outcomes and more positive outcomes.

Although ideas about the benefits of combining multiple roles have been around for decades, there remains a need for construct clarification, theory building, and measurement tool development. Recently, constructs such as work-family positive spillover, work-family facilitation, and work-family enrichment have been introduced to describe the theoretical relationships and associated mechanisms that enable work and family to benefit one another. Because the distinctions among these constructs are not well understood, all of them are categorized under the general rubric of work-family enrichment. The following is a brief discussion of the differences and similarities between these various constructs.

The term *positive spillover* has been used in the literature since the early 1980s. Spillover refers to the transfer of affect (i.e., emotion), skills, behaviors, and values from one domain to the other, such that there is a positive relationship between experiences in the two domains. Spillover has been broken down further into positive (i.e., beneficial) spillover and negative (i.e., problematic) spillover.

A term that has been used more recently to describe the benefits of combining work and family roles is *work-family facilitation*. Work-family facilitation has been defined as the extent to which an individual's participation in one role enhances functioning

in another role. Although both positive spillover and facilitation are concerned with how individual participation in one domain (e.g., work) is beneficial for the second domain (e.g., family), positive spillover involves the transfer of characteristics (or personal gains) of a person such as affect, skills, behaviors, and values from one domain to another, thereby benefiting the second domain. In contrast, facilitation is proposed to occur not just through personal gains but through capital gains as well (e.g., money, benefits, and social contacts). Therefore, positive spillover may be considered one mechanism by which facilitation may occur.

Work-family enrichment is a recent term used to refer to the process by which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role. Given this definition, constructs such as work-family positive spillover, and even work-family facilitation (at times), can be broadly categorized under the rubric of work-family enrichment. The process of work-family enrichment begins when resources are generated in the originating role (e.g., work) that can potentially be utilized in the receiving role (e.g., family). Examples of resources that may drive enrichment include skills (e.g., interpersonal skills), perspectives (e.g., respecting individual differences), psychological resources (e.g., self-efficacy), physical health, social capital, and material assets.

These resources may improve the quality of life in the receiving role through one of two paths: the instrumental path or the affective path. The instrumental path describes a situation in which resources are transferred directly from the originating domain to the receiving domain, resulting in a direct increase in performance in the receiving domain. For example, an individual may apply a skill learned in the family role (e.g., listening attentively to one's child or spouse) to his or her role as a supervisor at work, thereby boosting his or her performance at work. The affective path occurs when resources gained in the originating role promote positive affect or emotion in that role, which then produces increased performance in the other role. The direct transfer of resources through the instrumental path may occur either intentionally or unintentionally, whereas the affective path is believed to be predominantly unintentional.

Factors that produce family-to-work enrichment include both personal and family-level characteristics. Personal characteristics such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and use of constructive

coping mechanisms have been linked to high levels of family-to-work enrichment. Family-related characteristics such as marital quality, lack of family conflict, and high levels of family support have also been associated with increased family-to-work enrichment.

Factors that produce work-to-family enrichment include both personal and work characteristics. Personalities high in desire for growth, extraversion, and openness and low in neuroticism have been linked to high levels of work-to-family enrichment. The work-related factors of job complexity and autonomy are also related to high levels of work-to-family enrichment.

To date, very little research has examined the outcomes of work-family enrichment. The research that does exist has linked enrichment to better mental and physical health and decreased problem drinking. Increased levels of work-family enrichment are also related to both greater job satisfaction and effort and greater family satisfaction and effort.

In addition, research has found significant crossover relationships between work-family enrichment experienced by a spouse and a decrease in his or her partner's depressive symptoms one year later. This finding demonstrates that not only does work-family enrichment benefit individuals, but the benefits may extend to other family members. Furthermore, these benefits are posited to impact individuals' career development over time.

—Leslie B. Hammer and Ginger Hanson

See also Work-family balance, Work-family conflict

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WORK/LIFE LITIGATION

Work/life litigation refers to legal action taken against employers for discriminating against a worker or workers due to their family responsibilities. Among the most common types of work/life litigation are cases charging employers with pregnancy discrimination, creating a hostile work environment, unequal pay, disparate treatment, disparate impact, violations of the Family and Medical Leave Act, and violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The majority of cases are filed by women, but men are increasingly becoming plaintiffs as well.

When careers of parents derail for reasons seemingly unrelated to performance, the culprit may be a form of gender bias and stereotyping against workers (men as well as women) who play the feminine role of primary caregiver. When women hit the "maternal wall," they suffer from job penalties once they become mothers. The maternal wall typically is triggered at three points: when a woman gets pregnant, returns from maternity leave, or adopts a flexible work arrangement to accommodate family demands. Men too have sued successfully when denied leaves that are routinely granted to women. Though most suits involve child care, some large judgments have emerged from cases involving workers caring for elders or ill partners.

Women have won maternal wall cases in which, once motherhood becomes salient, their performance reviews drop precipitously, they are held to higher standards than their coworkers, or (often as a result of these practices) they are denied or not considered for promotions or are terminated.

Several different kinds of gender stereotyping emerge in maternal wall cases. Hostile prescriptive stereotyping involves statements that mothers should not be employed. Hostile prescriptive stereotyping seems to be common: People seem to know that it is not appropriate to say "We don't hire women" but not that it is equally inappropriate to say that mothers belong at home. Also common is "benevolent stereotyping," which polices women into traditional gender roles in a kinder, gentler tone of voice, as when employers fail to consider a mother for a promotion

because they assume (without asking) that she will not want to relocate or travel.

The most common type of work/life litigation is a lawsuit brought under the basic federal antidiscrimination statute, Title VII. Among Title VII cases involving caregiving, the most common type is a disparate treatment suit in which a mother alleges that she has been treated worse than a similarly situated man or that she was penalized by gender stereotypes. In addition, plaintiffs often sue under state antidiscrimination statutes, many of which are more pro-plaintiff than the federal law. Government workers can sue under the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution.

Successful lawsuits also have been brought under Title VII disparate impact theories, alleging that a facially neutral employment practice, for example, disallowing use of sick leave to care for dependents, has a disparate impact on women not justified by business necessity. Additional Title VII theories include (a) when a plaintiff alleges a hostile work environment based on sex, (b) when an employee alleges that she was treated so poorly that she has no choice but to quit (*constructive discharge*), or (c) claims that an employer retaliated against the plaintiff for asserting her legal rights. Maternal wall cases also are filed under the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination against a worker caring for a disabled family member.

Many cases involve substantial damage awards. Most are not reported, because successful cases settle, and settlements are rarely disclosed. Yet more than a dozen awards over \$100,000 are public, most of them over \$400,000. These numbers dramatize the growing potential for liability if work/family issues are not handled well.

Flexible scheduling, a policy some companies adopt to respond to employees' work/family conflict, has been featured in several lawsuits. In *Lovell v. BBNT Solutions* (2003), the court held that an employer risked violating the Equal Pay Act when it paid a woman a lower pay rate than other predominantly male workers because she worked a 30-hour, instead of a 40-hour, week. Another case, which was settled, asserted that a systematic refusal to promote people on flexible work arrangements had an illegal disparate impact on women (*Goldstick v. The Hartford Inc.*, 2002). In another case not involving caregiving, a court allowed a suit to go forward when a woman sued over her employer's abolition of a job sharing arrangement (*Tessmer v. Nationwide Life Insurance Co.*, 1999). Specific types of stereotyping and bias tend

to occur in the context of flexible work arrangements. One, which social psychologists call *leniency bias*, occurs when the rules are applied leniently to members of the *in group* (usually career-focused employees without caregiving responsibilities) but rigidly to the *out group* (usually those on flexible work arrangements). A second form of attribution bias occurs when actors attribute their own behavior and that of in-group members to legitimate causes while making very different assumptions about the behavior of the out group. Thus a woman who works part time and is not in her office may be assumed to be tending to her children even when she is at a business meeting, whereas (predominantly male) full-timers may be assumed to be on business even if they are coaching a soccer game.

Work/life litigation is adding a new urgency to employers' need to handle work/life issues fairly and effectively. While progressive employer policies have been traditionally viewed as optional benefits that companies have discretion to use—or eliminate—at will, case law suggests that workplaces without well-managed work/life policies and practices may run a risk of litigation.

—Joan C. Williams, Mary C. Still,
and Cynthia Thomas Calvert

See also Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Sex discrimination, Stereotyping of workers

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WORKAHOLISM

Although the popular press has paid considerable attention to *workaholism*, very little research has been undertaken to further our understanding of it. It should

come as no surprise, then, that opinions, observations, and conclusions about workaholism are both varied and conflicting. Some researchers, such as Marilyn Machlowitz, view workaholism positively from an organizational perspective, finding workaholics to be satisfied and productive. Others, such as Barbara Killinger and Gayle Porter, view workaholism negatively, equating workaholism with other addictions and depicting workaholics as unhappy, obsessive, tragic figures who are not performing their jobs well and are creating difficulties for their coworkers.

Wayne Oates, generally acknowledged as the first person to use the term *workaholic*, described a workaholic as someone with such an excessive need for work that it creates a disturbance with the workaholic's physical, psychological, and social well-being. Kimberly Scott, Keirsten Moore, and Marcia Miceli proposed three elements of workaholism: the extent to which an individual (1) spends discretionary time in work activities, (2) thinks about work when not working, and (3) works beyond organizational requirements. Finally, Janet Spence and Ann Robbins describe the workaholic as a person who is highly involved in work, feels "driven" to work because of internal pressures yet experiences relatively little enjoyment at work. Most writers view workaholism as a stable individual characteristic, and there have been suggestions that workaholism may be increasing.

Some researchers have proposed the existence of different types of workaholic behavior patterns, each having potentially different determinants and different effects on job performance and other work and life outcomes. Scott, Moore, and Miceli suggest three types of workaholic behavior patterns: compulsive-dependent, perfectionist, and achievement oriented. They propose that compulsive-dependent workaholism will be associated with high job performance, high job satisfaction, and high life satisfaction; that perfectionist workaholism will be associated with high stress, extensive physical and psychological problems, hostile interpersonal relationships, low job satisfaction, low job performance, and voluntary turnover and absenteeism; and that achievement-oriented workaholism will be associated with physical and psychological health, high job and life satisfaction, high job performance, low voluntary turnover, and pro-social (altruistic) behaviors.

Spence and Robbins found three workaholic patterns—Work Addicts, Work Enthusiasts, and Enthusiastic Addicts—based on their three workaholism components (work involvement, feeling driven

to work, and work enjoyment). Work Addicts were highly involved in work, felt driven to work, and were low on work enjoyment. Work Enthusiasts were high on work involvement and work enjoyment and low on feeling driven to work. Enthusiastic Addicts were high on all three components of workaholism. The existence of different types of workaholic patterns might help reconcile the conflicting observations and conclusions in the literature.

There has been considerable speculation regarding the work behaviors likely to be exhibited by workaholics. This list includes an extensive number of hours worked per week, a high level of job involvement, extensive job stress, nondelegation of job responsibilities to others, high levels of interpersonal conflict, and a lack of trust.

Most studies of workaholic behaviors have compared the three workaholism types identified by Spence and Robbins. In general, there are no differences between Work Addicts, Enthusiastic Addicts, and Work Enthusiasts in the number of hours worked per week (although the three workaholism types work more hours than nonworkaholics). Work Addicts report greater job stress than Enthusiastic Addicts, and both report greater job stress than Work Enthusiasts. Both Enthusiastic Addicts and Work Enthusiasts report greater job involvement than Work Addicts, and Work Addicts have a greater unwillingness to delegate than the other types. Enthusiastic Addicts not surprisingly are more perfectionist than Work Enthusiasts.

Three potential determinants of workaholism have received some conceptual and research attention. Two of these, family of origin and personal beliefs and fears, are the result of socialization practices within families and society at large. The third—organizational support for work-personal life balance—represents organizational values and priorities.

FAMILY OF ORIGIN

Bryan Robinson has written about work addiction as a symptom of a diseased family system. Work addiction, similar to other addictive behaviors, is intergenerational and passed on to future generations through family processes and dynamics. In this view, work addiction is seen as a learned addictive response to a dysfunctional family of origin system.

PERSONAL BELIEFS AND FEARS

Ronald Burke examined the relationship of personal beliefs and fears with workaholism. Beliefs and

fears are a reflection of values, thoughts, and interpersonal styles. He found that Work Addicts scored higher than Work Enthusiasts and Enthusiastic Addicts on this measure and concluded that workaholism emerges in response to feelings of low self-worth and insecurity.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

Organizations differ in the extent to which their culture supports work-personal life balance. Burke compared perceptions of the supportiveness of organization culture across the three Spence and Robbins workaholism types. He found that Work Addicts saw their workplaces as less supportive of work-personal life balance than both Work Enthusiasts and Enthusiastic Addicts.

It is likely that different types of workaholics will report varying work and career satisfactions. In support of this, Scott and her colleagues found that Work Enthusiasts and Enthusiastic Addicts were more satisfied with their jobs than Work Addicts, and Work Enthusiasts perceived brighter career prospects than Work Addicts. Not surprisingly, Work Addicts had a stronger intention to quit their organization than Work Enthusiasts.

There is considerable consensus in the workaholism literature on the association between workaholism and poor psychological and physical well-being. Work Enthusiasts have fewer psychosomatic symptoms—and more positive lifestyle behaviors—than both types of Work Addicts, and Work Enthusiasts and Enthusiastic Addicts have more favorable emotional well-being than Work Addicts.

A number of writers have hypothesized that workaholism is likely to impact negatively on family functioning. The comparisons of the workaholism types on three measures of life or extrawork satisfactions have provided moderate support for the hypothesized relationships. First, Work Addicts were less satisfied with their family lives than the two other types. Second, Work Addicts were less satisfied with their relationships with friends than Work Enthusiasts. Third, Work Enthusiasts experienced greater satisfaction with their community than did Work Addicts and Enthusiastic Addicts.

The relationships between specific workaholism components (work enjoyment, work involvement, feeling driven to work) and various types of outcome variables are interesting and complex. Work enjoyment

was the only component related to all work outcomes. Employees reporting greater work enjoyment also experienced more job satisfaction, more optimistic future career prospects, more career satisfaction, and a lower intent to quit their organization. Moreover, both work enjoyment and feeling driven to work were related to indicators of psychological well-being but in opposite directions. Individuals reporting greater work enjoyment and lesser feelings of being driven to work reported higher levels of psychological health.

There is a large speculative literature suggesting ways to reduce levels of workaholism. One part of this work focuses on individual and family therapy, and a second part emphasizes organizational and managerial interventions.

INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING

Workaholics Anonymous chapters have sprung up in some North American cities. These groups, patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous self-help groups, endorse the 12-step approach common to the treatment of a variety of addictions. Killinger and Robinson include chapters outlining actions an individual might pursue to reduce levels of workaholism.

FAMILY THERAPY

Robinson, consistent with his clinical and consulting perspective, focuses on treatment, both individual and family. This is not surprising, given the central role he gives to both family of origin and current family functioning in the development, maintenance, and intergenerational transmission of workaholism. The treatment recommendations Robinson offers are similar to those offered to alcoholic families.

Denial is common among workaholics and their family members. Workaholics define their behavior and symptoms in a favorable light, and family members are reluctant to complain. Parental expectations of children, often unrealistic, should be addressed as should family members' collusion with the workaholic parent. Family members need help in expressing their negative feelings to the workaholic. Families also need to learn to set boundaries around the amount of time they work together and talk about work. Family members can set goals regarding communications, roles, and expressions of feelings to improve family dynamics.

WORKPLACE INTERVENTIONS

How can employers help workaholics and help workaholics help themselves? Employers should pay attention to the performance and work habits of employees and be alert to warning signs of workaholism. They should ensure that employees take vacation time away from work. Finally, job insecurity, work overload, limited career opportunities, and lack of control can make employees feel compelled to work longer. If these factors exist, employers should try to minimize their impact on the atmosphere within the organization.

Robinson also highlights the role that managers can play in assisting their workaholic employees to change. Workaholic employees should be referred to an employee assistance program or a recovery program to start treatment processes. Managers should help prioritize projects for employees as long-term and short-term assignments. Workaholics must be encouraged and helped to delegate their work. At the end of each day, the manager should meet with the employee to discuss what has been accomplished during that day and to plan (down to short intervals) for the following day. The employee should be given specific times to take breaks and to leave work. It may also be possible to reduce the negative effects of workaholism (particularly on impaired well-being and poor health) through stress management training. The development of workplace values that promote new, more balanced priorities and healthier lifestyles will support those workaholics who want to change their behaviors.

—Ronald J. Burke

See also Employee assistance programs, Job involvement, Stress at work, Type A behavior pattern

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WORKER ADJUSTMENT AND RETRAINING NOTIFICATION ACT OF 1992 (WARN)

The *Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act* (WARN) of 1992 was passed by the U.S. Congress in part to provide workers with an early warning of layoffs and plant closings so as to limit the amount of disruption in the workers' lives as much as possible. Given that so many companies continue to reorganize and lay off workers, this continues to be an important act for both employers and workers to understand.

In general, this law requires employers who have at least 100 employees to provide at least 60 days' notice to affected employees in the event of a mass layoff or plant closing. A mass layoff means a reduction in the workforce that results in an employment loss at a single site for any 30-day period for at least 33 percent of the active full-time employees and is equal to at least 50 full-time employees, or at least 500 full-time employees regardless of the percentage of employees affected. An employment loss is further defined as a termination of employment, a layoff of six months or more, or a decrease in work hours by more than half over a six-month period.

Notice to affected employees must include name and address of the plant closing location, the job(s) being terminated, the date of termination, any "bumping" rights that may exist, a telephone contact number, and a statement indicating if the layoff is temporary or permanent.

However, there are a number of conditions under which employers have no duty to provide notice to affected workers. These include waiver of one's rights, exemptions allowed under the law, a faltering company, unforeseeable business circumstances, natural disaster, independence of operations, sale of a

business, single-site issues, bankruptcy, bridge banks, and a statute of limitations.

WAIVERS

The courts have allowed employees to waive their WARN rights under various federal and state laws, so long as consideration is provided for the relinquishment of the right and the person(s) did not waive their rights under conditions of fraud or duress.

LEGAL EXEMPTIONS

Those employees who are hired with the knowledge that their employment is for a limited period have no notice rights under the WARN Act. In addition, employers are not expected to provide notice for any layoff or plant closing that occurs as a direct cause of a strike or a lockout.

Organizations can escape WARN provisions under the faltering company clause so long as it is actively seeking capital or new business that would prevent a layoff or plant shutdown. Firms must demonstrate that they were acting in good faith and actually seeking capital or additional business to qualify.

There are other adverse business conditions that occur from time to time that are unforeseeable. These are also excluded under the law. For example, despite prior warnings from the government, a prominent defense contractor was able to qualify for this exemption when the government suddenly cancelled one of its defense contracts.

Even a casino that was unexpectedly unable to renew its license was able to avoid complying with WARN provisions. Layoffs' and plant closings' notice requirements are also waived for natural disasters that might occur such as floods and hurricanes.

Businesses may also steer clear of WARN provisions under the independence of operations clause. In effect, this means that parent companies may avoid liability if they do not exercise control over day-to-day operations of subsidiaries or other companies that they own or to whom they have lent money. Other considerations in this determination include common ownership, common directors or officers, common personnel policies originating from a single source, and dependency of the operation(s) on the higher-level unit.

Whenever there is a sale of a business to another firm, the seller is only liable for any layoff prior to the date of sale. After that date, the buyer, even if the

seller's name is still on the lease, is liable for any failure to provide notice to workers in the event of a layoff or plant closing.

Single-site issues are the most complicated part of the WARN Act. Basically, buildings that are next to each other and owned by the same employer are not covered by WARN provided they have separate management, produce different products and services, and have separate workforces. Consideration is also given to employee rotation between sites and sharing of staff and equipment. The greater the distance between buildings or sites, then the less likely they are to be ruled to be a single site. Courts have found buildings as close as 20 yards apart to be separate sites when they were managed by independent management teams or had independent workforces.

Those businesses that have filed for bankruptcy are also excluded from WARN requirements. The courts have determined that companies in bankruptcy are not engaged in commercial activities, which is a fundamental requirement of having a business. In a related situation, banks that fail are often operated temporarily by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) through the use of bridge banks. The courts have also found these bridge banks to be excluded from WARN provisions.

STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS, PENALTIES, AND AWARDS

The WARN Act does not have a time limit for filing for any violations. However, the Supreme Court has ruled that when a law is silent on the period for filing a claim, then generally the most analogous state law is to be used. Victims can receive up to 60 days of back pay. Companies that fail to comply with the WARN Act can also be assessed up to \$500 a day.

CONCLUSION

The fundamental purpose of the WARN Act is to provide workers with notice of layoffs or a plant shutdown to minimize the impact on their families and lives, but achieving this objective has become quite complex in its application. While there are a variety of legal snares that may trap the most well-intentioned organization, there are also many ways to avoid the act's requirements. Studies have shown that many companies are able to steer clear of the act's legal demands. As a result, it appears that the WARN Act is generally failing to live up to its intended purpose.

Despite the relative ease of dodging its rules, many companies choose to provide workers with notice even if the layoff or plant closing is not covered by WARN. This practice is not only smart management, but it is also the humane thing to do.

—Henry M. Findley

See also Downsizing, Job loss, Outplacement

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WORKFORCE 2020

The workforce research of the Hudson Institute has consistently emphasized the role of "shaping forces." The research took its most influential form in the organization's high-selling volumes *Workforce 2000*, published in 1987, and *Workforce 2020*, published in 1997. In the Hudson Institute's treatment, their shaping forces determined the trends and challenges that would affect human resources planning and workforce development in the years ahead. Critically, the forces described in the research have had a futurist component, giving corporations and policymakers a measure of long-term perspective for their human resources and workforce development planning.

The shaping forces most frequently stressed in Hudson's research have been technological change and demographic transformation. The former has

typically been less detailed and of less impact. *Workforce 2020*, written in 1995 and 1996, largely disregarded or failed to predict the key technological changes that came in so many ways to define workforce change over the 1990s, for example.

The demographic analysis within the research received widespread attention, however, and continues to be quoted extensively despite the time since the last book's publication. The first volume focused heavily on the future of racial and ethnic diversification. *Workforce 2020* updated these projections and extended them, while adding a stronger focus on population and labor force aging.

As 2005 approached, Hudson Institute again decided to renew its workforce research. This included updating the trends in racial and ethnic diversification and aging covered by its earlier work. In addition, just as *Workforce 2020* had done relative to *Workforce 2000*, the research added new points of emphasis to account for the changes occurring in the world of work. Out of this has grown the concept of the global workforce.

THE GLOBAL WORKFORCE

As the 1990s drew to a close, the importance of immigrant labor to U.S. population and workforce growth had become obvious. U.S. universities and "knowledge industries" rely heavily on skilled or educated immigrants to compensate for shortfalls in the native population. Hispanic immigrant populations of varying skill and knowledge levels had spilled out of their traditional geographic targets in the East Coast and the West and Southwest and had come to drive significant shares of population growth in the South, Midwest, and Plains states. Moreover, rapid growth in these regions' Hispanic populations occurred in both urban and rural areas.

The strong labor markets of the mid- and late-1990s quelled much of the popular disaffection with high immigration levels that had surfaced in the 1992 elections. This somewhat marginalized immigration as a core explanation for change. Globalization, on the other hand, remained a central narrative. The role of globalization in job loss was, again, a focus of the 1992 election. This role received less attention as unemployment rates fell, but international trade and the dynamics of global financial markets seemed to become more frequent topics of media and popular discussion as both the United States and global economies continued to grow.

Yet labor markets are in truth found in the bedrock of even these changes to the global economy. The 1990s thus saw a rapid expansion of two workforce trends: increasing numbers of workers (immigrants) coming to the United States and increasing numbers of new jobs going to foreign locales, particularly in the less developed world. This two-way labor market exchange—increasing numbers of less developed world workers coming to the United States and increasing numbers of jobs going to the less developed world workers—is the expression of the global workforce. It has its roots in two shaping forces. The first is technological change that facilitates the international consumption and production of goods and information. The second is the accelerating collapse of the developed world as a contributor to global population and labor force growth.

TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE AS A SHAPING FORCE

Workforce 2020, like much of the contemporary technological discussion, highlighted the geometric growth of microchip power or speed in its analysis of technological change and the effect on computer pricing. Moore's Law and the increase in optical storage density have certainly been important. When *Workforce 2020* was published, Intel's new Pentium promised clock speeds of 200 MHz. By mid-2004, the Pentium 4 offered clock speeds as high as 3,400 MHz. In the five years between 1997 and 2002, the number of personal computers in the United States had nearly doubled, from around 110 million to almost 200 million.

The manner in which these additional, more powerful computers communicate with each other turned out to have been the more important evolution, however. The ability of computers to exchange data has obviously changed the U.S. economy and culture. It has also created entirely new possibilities for the global organization of work.

The effect of technological change is best understood in terms of the growth of less developed world labor markets. However, it is not an unimportant aspect of immigration. The improving ability of migrants to communicate with the social networks they have left behind has reduced the opportunity cost of emigration. The role of information technology in expediting remittances, or the transfer of earned money to migrants' home countries, which totals over \$60 billion worldwide, cannot be denied.

Still, the effect of information technology on foreign workforces is larger than its role in migration. Far-flung multinationals can now organize global production far more effectively and cheaply as a result of the Internet. Businesses can coordinate the exchange of goods with lower transactions costs. Information itself has become an easily tradable commodity across national borders.

The networking of computers is the critical change to global work, but the growth in computers' power should not be ignored. The radically improved ability to bundle different types of data—qualitative, quantitative, graphical, and aural—lessens the importance of distance in international coordination, particularly within the operation of a single corporation. The importance of language barriers can also be reduced to a degree, and in an occasionally controversial effect, the barrier itself is disappearing in many instances as English increasingly dominates electronic communication.

The rise of foreign labor forces is typically discussed in terms of international wage differentials. The lower wages found in the less developed world are an important consideration. Yet less developed workforces have always worked for lower wages than are found in the wealthy nations. The key driver of change has been information technology that allows foreign workforces and firms to be more closely and cost-effectively integrated into the global economy.

As policymakers and corporate planners look to the future effect of IT in integrating global workforces, the emergence of wireless communication is of prime importance. In middle- and low-income countries, the ability of wireless communication to circumvent problems of infrastructure has favored the rapid adoption of wireless devices. The rate of adoption has been especially fast in middle income countries, where there are now more cellular phone subscriptions than telephone main lines. This suggests an accelerated expansion of global workforce integration.

In addition, the introduction of wireless connectivity and digital processing capability into a host of "everyday" goods promises to inject a new source of relative value that has virtually no mass that would incur transportation costs. Coupled with information technology's impact on trade in the form of miniaturization, improved logistics efficiency, and new categories of tradable economic goods such as information, the advantages of internationally dispersed work to the developed world should grow more rapidly in the future than they have even in the recent past.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE AS A SHAPING FORCE

The effect of IT in realizing the potential of a global workforce comes at a historic turning point in global history. The present decades are witnessing the end of the developed world's responsibility for driving global population growth. The speed with which this is occurring is stunning. Between 1950 and 1970, the world's developed regions accounted for roughly one-fifth of the world's population increase. After 2020, the developed regions will effectively cease growing in population as a group and begin to decline.

The effect on the ratio between developed and less developed labor force growth follows the changes in population dynamics. Developed region labor force growth between 1980 and 1990 was approximately 9 percent. The forecast for the 2000 to 2010 period is 3 percent. As a result, the developed regions are projected to contribute just 4 percent of global labor force growth over this decade. The contribution will continue to drop as developed world population growth continues to decelerate or turn negative. The world's "new" workers will increasingly come from its less developed areas. The adjustments this change will require will cement the concept of the global workforce.

While this general conclusion about the widening gap between the developed and less developed worlds in driving global population and labor force increase is critical, there are important distinctions that should be noted. The increasing responsibility of the less developed world for population growth does not mean that the less developed world itself is growing more rapidly. The rate of change in Latin America, for example, is becoming much smaller. However, growth in Africa and the Middle East will remain fairly strong through mid-century.

Within the developed world, most of its larger nations face an eventual period of absolute population decline. The United States, on the other hand, will experience healthy growth in comparison to most of its wealthy peers. The population of Eastern Europe is projected to decline from 2005 to 2020, while Western Europe's is projected to increase by just 1 percent. U.S. population growth over the same time period is forecast to be 15 percent.

However, the relative strength of U.S. population growth is only that: relative. It will not escape the difficulties associated with a rapid slowdown in population and labor force growth. Moreover, projections of

positive population growth are no sign that the United States will not be reliant on an infusion of immigrant labor to augment workforce rolls. Instead, they are a result of U.S. reliance on immigrant labor in the past decades and the present. Immigration in recent years may be as high as three times their 1980s' levels. High immigration levels are a significant component of the comparably stronger U.S. outlook.

Absent even higher levels of immigration, there is no way to avoid a keen reduction in labor force growth. This is likely to become most noticeable as the present decade draws to a close, when baby boomers begin to retire in larger numbers. The problem will reach its nadir as the United States approaches 2020. The rate of labor force growth in the year 2000 was nearly as great as what is projected for the entire 10-year period between 2015 and 2025.

As stated, the historic U.S. response to tighter labor markets has been to tolerate increased immigration, both of the lower and higher skilled variety. The extent to which the United States dominates the global market for migrant labor is dramatic. Nearly half the annual flow of migrants from the less developed to developed regions is absorbed by the United States. The advantage appears to be even more pronounced among more educated migrant stocks. In a 1998 study of migration patterns to select OECD nations, the United States absorbed 57 percent of the total measured migration. It absorbed 76 percent of the migrants with tertiary education.

There are a variety of factors that account for U.S. immigration levels relative to their developed world peers, but it must be noted that these factors are by no means immutable. As other developed nations have begun to confront the demographic fate that awaits them, many have aggressively targeted immigration to meet the challenge. This is especially true of the more highly educated and skilled members of the global workforce. In addition, there are signs that changes to some aspects of U.S. policy vis-à-vis temporary immigrant status, as well as improving opportunities in less developed nations, are putting pressure on U.S. success in attracting the world's best and brightest. The data on these points are not yet conclusive, however. Increasing educational attainment could also potentially offset a lower propensity to migrate among less developed world populations.

The trends that make such issues critical—decreases in native population growth only partially offset by high levels of immigration—will create a

rapidly diversifying U.S. population and labor force. The White non-Hispanic share of the labor force will drop by 11 percentage points between 2005 and 2020. The Hispanic share will climb to 17 percent. By 2050, White non-Hispanics will comprise just 50 percent of the labor force, non-Hispanics of other races 25 percent, and Hispanics 25 percent. Hispanics will drive more than two-thirds of overall labor force growth between 2020 and 2050.

As the composition of the workforce changes, ensuring that it remains capable of responding to the need for greater skills, education becomes a major policy priority. There are wide gaps among races and ethnicities in both high school diploma and college degree attainment. Improving attainment and lifelong learning opportunities for groups that lag behind will be the only way for the United States to meet the historical superiority of its workforce relative to skills and education.

In both the public policy and corporate realms, this clearly brings up the role of diversity management and practice. Its scope and the rationale behind diversity policy will necessarily evolve in response to the far tighter labor markets now forecast. Diversity strategies that target only race and ethnicity will be insufficient. Notions of fairness will be coupled with the need to attract as wide a spectrum of the U.S. labor force as possible to survive in the face of a population that is changing in its growth rate and its composition.

Race and ethnicity will obviously remain important components of diversity policy in the years ahead. So will cultural background or preferences and nationality in the era of a global workforce that constantly transfers workers and jobs across national borders. So, very critically, will age be a factor in diversity.

A population that is growing more slowly is almost always one that is aging. The outlook in the developed world is stunning. Again, the United States will not bear the worst brunt of this change. Among the most challenging situations will be Japan's. By 2050, one in two members of its population will be over 50, one in three will be over 65, and one in six will be over 80. In the United States, only about one-third of the 2050 population will be over 50.

The relative growth of various U.S. age cohorts has important implications for work, however. Between 2000 and 2020, the population aged 50-74 will swell by 34 million. The population aged 25-49 will grow by roughly 1 million over that time period. The challenges that will confront policymakers and corporate

HR departments from these trends will be enormous. The population that has traditionally been the bedrock of the workforce will barely change in size. The population that has traditionally had a high propensity to retire will explode. Developing strategies to integrate these older workers into a work environment that is increasingly international in its concern and decreasingly tolerant of obsolete skills may well be the most important diversity challenge that lay ahead. The success or failure of these strategies will be an inescapable determinant of corporate and national prosperity.

—Justin A. Heet

See also Diversity in organizations, Globalization and careers, Technology and careers

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WORKPLACE ROMANCE

The workplace has become a common and natural place for romantic relationships to evolve. It is where most employees spend the majority of their waking hours, and those who work closely together often have a lot in common—they are likely to have similar interests, values, educational and socioeconomic backgrounds, and job pressures. In addition, today's high interaction, team-based organizational structures are

particularly conducive to the formation of romantic relationships in the workplace. Thus researchers have become increasingly interested in *workplace romances*, or mutually desired romantic relationships between two members of the same organization. To date, researchers have explored (a) the antecedents of workplace romance, (b) how romances evolve, as well as the different types of romantic relationships in organizational settings, (c) the consequences of workplace romances, and (d) managerial responses to such relationships.

Antecedents to the formation of romantic relationships in the workplace include proximity, the intensity of the working relationship, organizational culture, work group norms, and autonomy. For example, employees who interact with each other more frequently, due to either the closeness of their work areas or longer work hours, are more likely to form romantic relationships. The development of workplace romances is also more likely when working relationships are intense or involve feelings of excitement that come from the pursuit of similar work goals or from completing tasks successfully. Conservative organizational cultures, which endorse traditional values, are less conducive to the formation of workplace romances, whereas organizational cultures characterized by creativity and innovation have more flexible norms regarding appropriate employee behavior and thus are more supportive of workplace romances. The level of independence or autonomy employees have in their work could also influence the development of romantic relationships. For example, those in tightly knit work groups could experience peer pressure as to the appropriateness of such behavior, possibly limiting their involvement in such relationships. However, those who hold jobs that are more autonomous may be more likely to participate in a workplace romance because they have more freedom with regard to making decisions about their work and interacting with others at work.

Research suggests that the three most common types of workplace romances are true love, a fling, and a utilitarian romance, each occurring with approximately equal frequency. True love is when each partner has a sincere love motive, whereas a fling is when each partner has an ego motive (e.g., excitement, ego satisfaction, sexual experience). A utilitarian romance is when a lower-rank employee has a job-related motive (e.g., advancement, security, power, financial rewards) and a higher-rank employee has an ego

motive. It should also be noted that participants' motives for being involved in a workplace romance may change over time, with each partner feeling more or less satisfied with or committed to the relationship than he or she was in earlier phases.

The consequences of a workplace romance can be positive, negative, or neutral (i.e., no impact). For instance, theorists have suggested that positive feelings experienced from a workplace romance can spill over into other aspects of work, increasing the romantic couple's level of job satisfaction. Other examples of positive changes include improvements in productivity, work motivation, and job involvement. However, research suggests that the consequences of a workplace romance are more often negative than positive. Examples of negative consequences include one or both participants having increases in absenteeism and tardiness, being more preoccupied, making more mistakes, missing meetings or other commitments, and having decreases in productivity. If one participant continues to pursue a romantic relationship that the other participant no longer desires, there may be complaints of sexual harassment, stalking, or physical violence.

Additional negative consequences are possible in hierarchical romances (those involving a superior and subordinate) such as ignoring complaints about the subordinate's performance or showing favoritism toward the subordinate in task assignments, pay raises, and promotions. If the romance sours, the subordinate may retaliate by claiming sexual harassment, or the supervisor may discriminate against the subordinate by blocking further rewards. Either situation could lead to litigation against the employer.

Since most couples who work together are unsuccessful at keeping their romance hidden, workplace romances also tend to have consequences for the work environment. Coworkers' reactions may vary from approval or tolerance to outright objection, complaints of favoritism or hostile work environment (especially if the participants involved in the romance exhibit public displays of affection), blackmail (e.g., threatening to tell a participant's spouse about the romance), ostracism of participants, decreases in work group morale and productivity, and turnover (coworkers leave what they feel is an intolerable work environment). At a minimum, workplace romances stimulate gossip among coworkers. Overall, romances that are hierarchical, extramarital, more visible, and job motivated (e.g., exploitation is perceived to have

occurred) are likely to elicit the most negative gossip from coworkers and have the most negative effect on group morale and productivity.

While it is legal in most states for a company to establish and enforce policies that prohibit dating (as long as the employees are forewarned and the policy is applied consistently), survey research suggests that few organizations have written or unwritten policies about workplace romances and that managerial inaction is the most common response. Most companies have realized that it is impossible to prevent people from being attracted to one another and that strict rules merely force employees to go underground with their relationship. Thus a common recommendation in the literature is that workplace romances should be managed or discouraged but not prohibited, and that management should intervene only when exploitation of one romantic partner has occurred or when there has been, or there is potential for, a workplace disruption.

The workplace romance literature has focused on three kinds of management interventions: no action, punitive action (e.g., reprimand, warning, transfer, demotion, termination), and positive action (e.g., open discussion, counseling). Another more recent intervention known as a "love contract" is being used as an alternative to the forced resignation or transfer of one or both employees involved in a supervisor-subordinate romance. These contracts state the voluntary nature of the relationship, affirm the existence of sexual harassment policies and procedures, and may also ask the parties to agree to resolve any differences that might occur using alternative dispute resolution rather than resorting to the courts.

Because of the sensitive nature of workplace romances, conducting rigorous empirical research has not been easy. Even though these relationships have become increasingly common and their potential for causing negative outcomes is great, there is still much that is unknown. Studies investigating the typical duration of workplace romances, the effects of a dissolved workplace romance on all parties, and the relative effectiveness of various managerial interventions would not only add to the academic literature but also help organizations in their efforts to better manage the impact of workplace romances.

—Katherine Ann Karl

See also Sexual harassment

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WRONGFUL DISMISSAL

The term *wrongful dismissal* (or discharge) describes those instances where an employer illegally chooses to terminate (including a constructive discharge, forced resignation, elimination of the job, permanent layoff, or failure to recall or rehire) the employment of an employee. There are a number of factors to take into account in attempting to determine whether the dismissal of an employee is illegal. Many of the issues relating to wrongful dismissal depend on whether the employee is working under an employment contract or not. In situations where the employee has an employment contract, questions may arise as to what constitutes "good cause," "just cause," or simply "cause," under the terms of the contract. The law provides that an employment contract for a definite term may not be terminated without cause before the expiration of the term, unless the contract provides otherwise. Where a union is involved, collective bargaining agreements generally contain prohibitions on discharge except for just cause. However, courts in nonunion situations have generally ignored the extensive body of arbitration agreements that have addressed this situation in collective bargaining.

Generally speaking, just cause may be of two types: (1) economic reasons unrelated to the employee or (2) employee misconduct or inadequate performance. Just cause may be established for economic reasons if the employment agreement does not have a definite term and the reason for termination is a bona fide reduction in force, plant closing, or reorganization. If the agreement does have a definite term, these situations may not establish just cause, unless the contract defines it as such. The second type, employee-based reasons, may include inadequate performance or misconduct, such as providing fraudulent background

information, sexual harassment, or mistreatment of customers.

If the employee does not have an employment contract, the so-called at-will doctrine applies. Under the modern interpretation of this doctrine, absent an agreement to the contrary, the common law gives employers the legal right to dismiss employees without having a good cause, or any cause at all, except if one of the exceptions to the doctrine applies. These exceptions are (a) the termination was contrary to an important public policy, (b) the employer broke an implied contract of continued employment, or (c) the termination violated an implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing.

The roots of this doctrine can be traced back more than 100 years. In the nineteenth century, jobs were plentiful, labor was scarce, and national prosperity was thought to depend on the elimination of all barriers to the process of free exchange. This background led American courts, toward the latter part of that century, to adopt the at-will doctrine. Horace Wood, an author of legal textbooks, is generally regarded as the authority upon which courts relied for creation of this doctrine in 1877. In his *Treatise on the Law of Master and Servant*, he consolidated the legal presumption in the United States that an indefinite contract was terminable at will and without notice, for any reason or no reason at all. Gradually, the courts refined the doctrine to the modern understanding discussed above.

PUBLIC POLICY EXCEPTION

The major exception to the at-will doctrine is the public policy exception. Courts have typically held that it is illegal, even where employment is for an indefinite term, for an employer to discharge an employee when the employer's intent is to violate an important and clearly mandated public policy. The public policy exception is generally interpreted narrowly. So, for example, as set forth in *Stephenson v. Litton Sys., Inc.*, (646 N.E. 2d 259), an employee who was discharged for reporting to police that it was likely that his or her superior was going to be driving while intoxicated was illegally discharged in violation of the public policy exception, since the policy was sufficiently clear and compelling and the employee had a reasonable basis for their suspicion. The policy involved must be clearly defined and involve an important public purpose and not merely a private or proprietary interest. Courts try to balance the interests

of employers, employees, and public. Not all socially desirable duties are protected. A discharge is not illegal merely because an employee's conduct is praiseworthy or because the public may have derived some benefit from it. The infringement must be a substantial one on an important public policy.

Public policy may be found in state or federal constitutions, statutes, regulations, judicial decisions, and sometimes in ethical codes. The judge usually determines whether the plaintiff-employee has identified an important public policy. Once identified, it is up to the fact finder, usually a jury, to determine whether a discharge violates the particular policy. States vary in terms of permissible sources for public policy. For example, Illinois has a fairly broad interpretation of public policy and may include the state constitution, statutes, and some judicial decisions. By contrast, however, some states, such as California, limit their interpretation of public policy to statutes or constitution (see, for example, *Gantt v. Sentry Ins.*, 1 Cal. 4th 1083, 1992).

Although there are many types of public policy exceptions, most of the cases fall into four major categories: (1) refusal to perform unlawful acts, (2) reporting illegal activities, (3) exercising a right under state law, and (4) performance of a civic duty. Almost all states recognize an exception to the at-will doctrine when an employee is discharged for refusing to commit a criminal act. A seminal case, *Peterman v. International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 396*, illustrates this exception. In this case, the employer ordered an at-will employee to give false testimony at a legislative hearing, that is, perjure himself, and then fired the employee for refusing to do so. Notwithstanding the above delineation, the term *public policy* remains ill defined.

The second major category of public policy exception relates to employees who are discharged because they have reported illegal or improper activity (e.g., whistle-blowing). About three-fourths of states have some sort of statute protecting employee whistle-blowers. However, even where no statute exists, a number of states permit employee whistle-blowers to bring retaliatory charges against employers. In these cases, the courts seem to afford much more protection to so-called external whistle-blowers who report illegal employer activities to organizations outside the employer; courts are much more hesitant to protect employees who report employer wrongdoing only within the organization, so-called internal whistle-blowers.

The third type of public policy exception involves exercising a right provided to employees under state law. Generally, the courts interpret this right to relate specifically to the employee's right as an employee (and not as a right as a citizen). A frequent case of this type involves workers' compensation claims. Almost all states recognize protection for employees terminated for filing a proper claim under workers' compensation laws. A number of state statutes permit employees the specific right to file suit for retaliation if the employer terminates them for filing such a claim. Where such a statutory right does not exist, the courts in the remaining states almost always permit the employee to file a claim under the public policy exception. However, few states protect employees who claim that they were fired *in anticipation of* filing a workers' compensation claim.

The final type of public policy exception involves performance of a civic duty. When courts have found in favor of employees for employer violation of this type of public policy exception, it has generally been when the employee is involved in some sort of obligation with respect to a legal proceeding, including such particular examples as jury duty or obeying the terms of a subpoena.

IMPLIED CONTRACT EXCEPTION

A second exception to the at-will doctrine is triggered when an employer breaks an implied contract of continued employment. Sometimes, even in the absence of an express (written or verbal) employment contract, an employee is able to argue that the termination was in violation of a contract that should be "implied" because of the employer's conduct (words or actions that a reasonable person would rely upon). If such conduct exists, the legal issue then becomes whether those expectations can be enforced as an implied-in-fact promise. A number of cases in this area involve employer letters to employees strongly suggesting (i.e., implying) a specific term of employment, which is later violated when the employer terminates the employee. For example, in a classic case, the court held for the employee when the employer wrote a letter to the then prospective employee saying that the corporation would employ and compensate the employee for two years (*Hillman v. Hodag Chem. Corp.*, 96 Ill. App.2d 204, 206, 238 N.E. 2d 145, 147, 1968). Sometimes seemingly minor details can be construed by the courts to infer an implied contract.

As an example, a court held that a letter to a prospective employee indicating that half of his moving expenses were to be paid immediately and the other half one year later indicated an implied contract of at least one year (*Miller v. Community Discount*, 228 N.E. 2d 113, 1967).

GOOD FAITH AND FAIR DEALING

The final major exception to the at-will doctrine involves violation of an implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing during an employee dismissal. In these cases (which, by some accounts, about a fifth of states recognize), courts take the position that the employer should not be allowed to deprive employees of benefits already earned. For example, it has been used to prevent an employer from firing a 25-year at-will salesperson the day after it received a \$5 million order from a customer in that employee's sales territory. The court concluded that the dismissal was an attempt to avoid paying a commission to that employee (*Fortune v. National Cash Register Co.*, 364 N.E. 2d 1251, 1977). However, most states do not permit enforcement of this exception to the at-will doctrine under the theory that its adoption would impose a "just cause" standard for at-will employment, which would be an inconsistency.

STATUTORY PROTECTION

In addition to protection afforded directly by the courts (at-will protection), various legislative branches have provided protection for employees wrongfully dismissed for various reasons. Perhaps the most frequent protection claimed by employees in this regard is that provided by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991. If a worker believes they have been discriminated against (basically, treated differently) because of membership in a "protected group," they can file a charge with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) or, in many cases, with similar state or local agencies. Generally, protected class membership is based on some demographic characteristic such as race, sex, national origin, or, in separate statutes, age and disabilities.

Certain dismissals for employee activities that a reasonable person would consider as involving a privacy interest may also be protected. For example, dismissals based on private items seized by an employer from areas the employee intends to keep private (such as a locked drawer in a locked office) may provide an

employee with a remedy. Moreover, dismissals based on false information that damages an employee's reputation might also lead to grounds for recovery under defamation.

REMEDIES

In terms of compensatory damages (basically, damages to compensate the injured employee for the damages sustained because of the injury), the remedy for wrongful discharge depends on whether the court infers there to be a contract between the employer and discharged employee. If the court determines there was an actual or implied contract, then they would likely award the employee with damages equivalent to those necessary to complete the contract. So, for example, if an employee were terminated after three months and the court determined there to be a one-year contract for \$40,000, the employee would get \$30,000 (plus perhaps some miscellaneous charges). However, if the basis for the court's award to the employee were not based on a contract claim (e.g., public policy), then it would award what is called "tort" remedies. Of states that recognize the implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing, most would permit only contract damages. Frequently, but not always, tort remedies can be greater than contract remedies. A major difference between contract and tort remedies is that contract remedies do not permit recovery for emotional distress and punitive damages (both of which can, at times, be substantial).

In either case, the employee can recover back pay to the extent that will put the employee in the same position her or she would have been in had the employer not engaged in the wrongful dismissal. Back pay would include compensation (wages, salary, commissions, or other payments, plus fringe benefits) the employee lost because of the wrongful dismissal. On the other hand, the employer has the right to have the amount of the back pay reduced (mitigated) by the amount of other compensation received by the terminated employee until the date of the trial. Plaintiff-employees often also seek compensation for future damages for periods beyond the trial date. Often this is based on inference of a "just cause" relationship based upon reasonable expectation of continued employment grounded in assurances in an employee handbook or other enforceable promises.

Occasionally, employees claim damages not directly based on their compensation but based on a

reasonable reliance on promises from the employer, which later hurt them. For example, an employee who sold his house, bought a new house, and took out a loan was awarded damages equal to the losses when the court held that he reasonably relied upon the employer's assurances of continued employment (*Pearson v. Simmonds Precision Products, Inc.*, 160 Vt. 168, 624 A.2d 1134, 1993).

As noted, for those legal grounds based on tort recovery, courts permit recovery for emotional distress and punitive damages. Emotional distress involves not merely employer conduct that hurt the employee's feeling or made them upset; it must involve intentional or reckless conduct by the employer that must also be extreme or outrageous. Punitive conduct, if awarded, can result in large amounts of money to a plaintiff-employee. In part, this is the case, because, at least in theory, it is not related to the harm the employee suffered but to the outrageousness of the conduct by the employer. It is intended to punish the wrongdoer-employer and to discourage such conduct in the future.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONSEQUENCES

Beyond the threat of employee reprisals and claims, wrongful dismissals have significant performance implications for organizations and the employees who remain. Social science researchers have identified the effects of employee distrust and organizational reputation on employee performance, recruitment, and well-being. Workers often react strongly to wrongful acts by employers, and these reactions may have long-term financial consequences for companies that engage in wrongful dismissal.

Any unjust act by an employer, and particularly one that strikes at the heart of the employee/employer relationship such as a dismissal, may be a violation of the psychological contract between the organization and worker. A psychological contract can be defined as an expectation of an organization to attend to the employee's psychological needs in return for meeting the organization's requirements. Employees invest time, effort, skills, and trust in an organization and expect compensation in addition to pay in the form of respect and fair treatment.

Psychological contract violations are related to decreased trust in an employer. Trust is forward looking and involves a willingness to be vulnerable, and once that trust is lost, employees no longer feel bound

to live up to their end of the psychological contract. Fundamental violations of trust by organizations have been shown to lead to negative expectations of future employer conduct and to employee cynicism. Moreover, researchers have found a consistent relationship between employee perceptions of unfair treatment (also known as injustice) and reprisals and claims by employees. This line of research has focused primarily on employee perceptions of three types of organizational justice: distributive justice, the fairness of outcomes; procedural justice, the fairness of procedures that lead to outcomes; and interactional justice, the fairness of interpersonal treatment.

Closely aligned with distrust and perceived injustice, cynicism has been defined as an attitude associated with disillusionment and negative feelings toward an organization. Psychological contract violation has been viewed as a primary determinant of employee cynicism. Cynicism develops through the failure of organizations to meet employee expectations and the subsequent disillusionment that results. Cynicism carries a host of attitudinal and behavioral consequences, including poor effort and performance, a lack of willingness to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors, resistance to change, emotional withdrawal, absenteeism, job hunting and turnover, worry, stress-related health problems, and possible future protests, retaliations, and claims against the employer. As well, research has shown that worrying about future job insecurity leads to negative work attitudes and lack of trust in organizations.

As wrongfully dismissed employees, and the surviving employees who witnessed such dismissals, communicate with or move on to other firms, an organization's reputation can be quickly tarnished with customers, suppliers, and potential applicants. Researchers have suggested that organizations that behave unethically may find themselves headed down a dangerous fiscal path, as damaged reputations are difficult to repair. Successful supply chain performance, for example, is based on trust between supply partners. An organization with a reputation of dealing with its own employees in an unfair or unlawful manner may find it difficult to persuade potential partners to enter into interdependent agreements.

A further casualty of damaged reputation is recruitment. Attracting highly skilled, qualified employees is an important component in an organization's competitive advantage. Many companies use their reputation for employee treatment and social responsibility to attract quality applicants. Researchers have demonstrated that there is a positive and significant relationship between corporate reputation and job seekers' intention to apply for positions and accept job offers in an organization. As well, firms with poor reputations for fairness may entice the wrong kind of employees: those who aren't concerned with organizational trust because they expect to have no allegiance to the organization and consider it simply a short-term source of income and experience.

—Barry M. Goldman and Matthew J. Pearsall

See also Employment-at-will doctrine, Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

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