Career Management

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NHRD Journal
CAREER MANAGEMENT
August 2007

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Publisher, Printer, Owner and Place of Publication

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Printed at:
Kalajyothi Process Pvt. Ltd., 1-1-60/5, RTC Cross Road, Musheerabad, Hyderabad 500020

(The Views expressed by the authors are of their own and not necessarily of the Editors or the Editorial Board, or of their organisations).

APPEAL TO CONTRIBUTORS

The National HRD Network publishes a quarterly journal each issue dedicated to a theme. So far we published on themes like “IT in HR”, “Performance Management,” and “Attracting and Retaining Talent.” The current issue is on the theme “Career Management”.

Ensuing issues with following guest editors will focus on the following themes:

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The journal publishes primarily three categories of articles:
- Conceptual and research based
- Contributions from thought leaders
- Organisational experiences in HR interventions / mechanisms

Request you to suggest potential contributors or e-mail articles in MS-Word, not exceeding 2,000 words, accompanied with an abstract of about 100 words, a brief profile of the author, and a passport size photograph to: pvrmurthy@clickitjobs.com.

Following style guidelines are recommended:
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The word Career has its origin in French "Carriere" meaning a road or racecourse, a connotation of progression or development along some course. According to the Oxford English Dictionary career is defined as "a person's course or progress through life (or distinct portion of life).” The concept of career evolved through an iterative and ongoing process of inquiry through various social science disciplines, pre-dominantly of psychological and secondarily of sociological views. As aptly summarised by Derr "During the last fifty years, the theory and research on careers have developed along two dominant, independent and sometimes conflicting streams of thought arising out of psychological and sociological perspectives .”

Organisations achieve success when people perform. In today’s environment the relationship between organisations and people is increasingly becoming symbiotic. The concept of career can thus be viewed as an exploration of this symbiotic relationship. As defined by Dalton "It is this very interplay between the individual and the organisation that makes career theory unique - and also gives it power.” Various research studies conducted in the area of career management indicate that the occupational and organisational choice adjustments and success are outcome of two distinct but interactive forces - the individual and the organisational environment in which the individual functions. It is becoming evident that optimal career outcome for both the individual and the organisation can best be facilitated through a congruence between individual characteristics and the demands, requirements and rewards of the organisational environment. Therefore career management systems are becoming more flexible, pluralistic and more supportive of individuality.

In the current scenario, there is an urgent need to design innovative career management practices that fulfil the diverse internal career anchors of individuals. In Indian organisations, where professionals have much more choices today, it becomes imperative that HR managers play a significant role in ensuring that career management practices are designed to cater to pluralistic career orientations of individuals. It is expected that the HR professionals in Indian industry to have a more pragmatic and pluralistic view of career diversity among professionals and accordingly design suitable career management plans, which will address the diverse career needs of professionals and reduce the usually high attrition prevalent today in the industry.

In this issue we have put together articles from three different perspectives of Career Management. The first one is from Career trends and aspirations of careerists today. Kannan based on his extensive research hypothesizes future paradigms in career management. He therefore argues that in order to achieve success organisations must align to individual visions of career success with strategic business goals and objectives.

Srinivasan argues that given the entry of a large number of educated youth into the workforce in India over a very short period of time, fulfilling their career aspirations has emerged as one of the greatest challenges for organisations. Dr Premarajan shares the findings from a survey aimed at understanding the state of the practice of career development interventions in India. Madan Padaki relates the first stage of career management and analyses the inherent issues faced by the fresh talent pools at this stage and proposes a workable solutions involving all stake holders to overcome challenges in enhancing employability. Lastly we have reproduced an interesting analysis from Mercer on how ageing is going to impact the global labour market which definitely will have an impact on job and careers of individuals.
The second perspective is from the Career Anchor, an occupational self-concept for individuals. We have an article from Dr. Edgar Schein, the career guru from MIT where he talks about significance of career anchor in the present time. Dr. Pallab argues that the driver for career is changing from an external to internal perspective and becoming more pluralistic. Therefore he suggests developing HR interventions in organisations based on career anchors of individuals to enhance individual-organisation integration and thereby reduce attrition. Skyrme contends that majority of jobs today are knowledge jobs and challenges the employees as to what extent they are utilising this knowledge. He proposes a new model of knowledge anchor in the line of career anchor.

The third perspective is from the work done at India on career management. We have two organisational case studies on career management practices one from large PSU like HPCL and other one from a very large MNC bank like Standard Chartered Bank presented in this issue.

In addition to articles related to career management we have also included articles which are of interest to our readers on basic aspects of HR. Dr. Satish Kalra argues that human potential management (HPM) is a more acceptable term to employees than HRM as treating employees like any other resources is demeaning to them. Daniel Jebasingh argues that HR have a critical role to play in IT security of all the companies along with the technical people.

Dr. B.N. Srivastava argues that a well-considered job selection or retention decision should be based after conducting various analyse like Personality and career stage, job opportunities, Person-organisational fit, compensation/remuneration, interpersonal processes at work and organisational change.

In our endeavour to capture rich experiences of senior HR professionals and share with the younger professionals, we have been capturing their thought processes on HR in each issue. In this issue we have featured Pratik Kumar of Wipro. Finally we have started a book summary/review section from this issue and put forward some well appreciated HR books picked up randomly. From the next issue we are planning to present book reviews in alignment with the focal theme for that particular issue.

Dr. P V R Murthy  
Aquil Busrai  
Dr. Pallab Bandyopadhyay (Guest editor)
Long ago, Peter Drucker (1997) was asked how he could predict the reunification of Germany when no one else did so. He replied: I never predict. I just look out of the window and see what is visible but not yet seen. In today’s world, with the career management landscape changing faster than most of its architects can anticipate, it throws all of us back to Drucker’s reply. In our attempt to understand the challenges and imperatives of Career Management for the future, we need to look outside the window.

The knowledge economy is changing the way people work. New entrants into the job market can expect to experience a succession of jobs in a number of industry sectors during their working lives. They may have concurrent part-time jobs at one time and work periods will be interspersed with periods of learning, either full or part time perhaps while working at one or more jobs.

Consequently, the support needed for working individuals to continuously assess themselves and acquire skills that are required to effectively manage oneself throughout one’s career span is becoming increasingly critical. The challenge is to help individuals learn how to choose wisely and commit to ongoing self-improvement for rewards of satisfaction and self-fulfillment in the near-term contingency planning in the longer term. Building a career is no longer about finding the right job and keeping it, but about making continual career choices in response to a rapidly changing job market. Thus the knowledge economy demands a new approach to career management.

Career Management would involve planning and navigating workforce progression and movement within the organisation by aligning their preferences and expectations in-line with the resourcing needs of the organisation. Career management needs to take into account the needs of both the organisation and the individuals within. The key challenge is in striking the right balance.

A closer look at some of the emerging trends in the workforce scenario in our country would justify the pressing need for a National framework for Career Management for the future as an imperative. India is suffering from a massive shortage of skilled manpower. India has 4 million-plus unemployed graduates at a time when employers are desperate for talent. The problem lies in quality and not quantity of manpower. Almost every industry from IT, retail, finance, telecommunication, healthcare, manufacturing and biotechnology is struggling to find skilled manpower.

The results of several Research studies on the effectiveness of Career Development programs show that a higher level of satisfaction with such program produces correspondingly higher levels of quality of working life, job satisfaction, professional development and productivity.

According to industry estimates only a quarter of all graduates are employable and about 80% of job seekers in employment exchange are without any professional skills.

“There are signals of manpower shortages already in the horizon. Our estimates show that manufacturing sector will be hard hit.”-PHDCCI statement.

R. Kannan, CEO, Careers India Pvt. Ltd, a workforce assessment services company. An alumnus of XLRI with 23 years of experience in HR. Worked with companies like Crompton Greaves, Hindustan Lever and Murugappa Group; Authored a book on career planning ‘Taking Charge of your Career’ published by Penguin India.
Consequently the choices for individuals with appropriate skills are wider than that of the past. Employees have never had it so good. In fact on most occasions it is the employee who is more likely to fire the employer! This has resulted in the war for the limited talent pool among organisations. The typical organisational response to such a phenomenon has resulted in higher wage costs, higher attrition levels, high employee poaching rates all of which have proved detrimental to the longer term growth and development of the industry.

According to a 2005 McKinsey study, only 25 per cent of our engineering graduates, 15 per cent of our finance and accounting professionals and 10 per cent of professionals with any kind of degrees, in India, are suitable for working in multinational companies.

The challenge for the organisations today is to balance the ever changing needs of individuals in order to meet their resource requirements. It is in such a context that the need for a credible and comprehensive career development and management system has emerged not merely as a necessity but more as a business imperative. The new career management paradigm recognises that career development is a life-long process of skill acquisition and building through a continuum of learning, development and mastery. This process enables people to be in charge of their own careers, having enough focus and direction for stability and enough flexibility and adaptability to allow for change along the way.

Career management does not seek to help people the “right” choice the first time. It equips them to make good choices, time after time, year after year, for the rest of their lives.

"In today’s workplace, the need for continuous assessment and analysis of the changing needs and expectations of the workforce at all levels of the organisation needs to be the core objective of all career management initiatives. Unlike in the past, it is not only a few high performers who are susceptible to be weaned away by other organisations. Most employees are constantly being faced with the plethora of alternative career options to pursue on a continuing basis. If you’re not talking with your people about their careers, you can bet somebody else probably is.”

A generic framework for initiating a Career Management initiative in the organisation would involve these process steps:

- Conduct a career development audit to assess career development needs and organisational climate and identify any existing career development tools such as job posting, tuition reimbursement, work force assessment services such as competency profiles, training needs, employee engagement studies, attrition analysis studies, and other programs that may be currently available to employees, and examine their correlation with overall job satisfaction levels.
- Develop a preliminary career development statement for the organisation which addresses the needs, priorities and rationale for committing to a career development initiative.
- A majority of organisations appear to follow a ‘partnership’ model when managing employees’ careers. Organisations generally advocate individual ownership for career management, but also agree that individuals need advice, support and training in how to manage their careers.
- Convene a career development project team; comprising a cross section of representatives through all levels of the organisation, to fine-tune the career development statement, generate ideas and approaches for services, and assess organisational goals, time lines and budgets. The barriers to effective career management appear to be practical ones: lack of time and resources; career management being seen as optional or peripheral; and lack of senior management commitment all to

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do with ‘getting it done’ rather than problems with its strategic intent.

- For effective career management, activities need to be formalised into a strategy that is linked both to business and HR strategy. Line managers and HR staff also need to be trained to deliver career support to employees.

- Gaining the buy-in and commitment of senior management is vital to ensuring that career management is given the due attention, resources and importance it needs in order to be delivered effectively to employees.

Select components for the career development program, looking at such possibilities as career management workshops, private professional consultation for employees, career coaching workshops for managers, career informational interviews, success teams for peer coaching and support, mentoring, job shadowing, skills databases and on-line career coaching.

Career management practices rated as most effective % of respondents seeing the practices as ‘effective’ or ‘very effective’

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Future Changes in Career Management practices.

1. Over 95% of respondents agree that individuals will be expected to take responsibility for looking after their own careers in the future.
2. However, over 90% of respondents also believe that individuals must be offered support in terms of advice, guidance and information by organisations for this to work effectively.
3. In the future, career management is considered to play an important role in organisational change or restructuring.

(Source: The 2003 Managing Employee Careers survey-CIPD)
A career development discussion differs from a performance review in that it is not tied to compensation but focuses on the skills and abilities needed to achieve personal career goals in the future. A broad-ranging discussion has an unlimited time frame and ideally should occur several times through the year.

That’s why a focus on career development is so important today.

To help protect human assets, organisations today must provide the tools and resources employees need to manage their careers, to align individual visions of career success with strategic business goals and objectives.

As we scan the environment for those straws in the wind that may portend major shifts or change, in the backdrop of our introspection are some messages from our career management practices of the past with powerful implications for the future. Almost all thought leaders on this subject remind us to be people focused to keep a human face on human resources.

Summary and Conclusion
The emerging trends in the Indian workforce scenario substantiate the pressing need for a National framework for Career Management as crucial to its future progress. India is suffering from a massive shortage of skilled manpower. India has 4 million-plus unemployed graduates at a time when employers are desperate for talent. The problem lies in quality and not quantity of manpower.

According to a 2005 McKinsey study, only 25 per cent of our engineering graduates, 15 per cent of our finance and accounting professionals and 10 per cent of professionals with any kind of degrees, in India, are suitable for working in multinational companies.

As a result the choices for individuals with appropriate skills are wider than that of the past. This has resulted in the war for the limited talent pool among organisations. The typical organisational response to such a phenomenon has resulted in higher wage costs, higher attrition levels, high employee poaching rates all of which have proved detrimental to the longer term growth and development of the industry.

The challenge for the organisations today is to balance the ever changing needs of individuals in order to meet their resource requirements. To face this future challenge, Organisations need to reflect on the following –

- A credible and comprehensive Career Development and Management system.
- Plan and navigate workforce progression and movement within the organisation by aligning their preferences and expectations in line with the resourcing needs of the organisation.
- Support working individuals by providing them opportunities to continuously assess themselves and acquire skills that are required to effectively manage oneself throughout one’s career span.
- Enable people to be in charge of their own careers, providing enough focus and direction for stability and enough flexibility and adaptability to allow for change along the way.

In conclusion the new career management paradigm recognizes that career development is a life-long process of skill acquisition and building through a continuum of learning, development and mastery. This process equips people with the power to make good choices, time after time, year after year, for the rest of their lives.

References
The objective of the Totus Study was to Provide Insights Into:

1. Industry trends and specific actions taken to address career aspirations.
2. Some of the best practices in career development.
3. Some of the problem practices and subsequent learnings

In the Course of Our On-going study, we Observed the Following Seven Industry Trends Evolving:

1. Employees being persuaded to take responsibility for career development.
2. Career progression based on competencies and not tenure.
3. A competency assessment process becoming essential either through assessment centres or the manager's assessment.
4. Organisations attempting to push promotion time lines.
5. Mobility within the organisation through open job posting systems and not through traditional job rotations.
6. Creating cross-business opportunities for people across the larger organisation.
7. Workforce planning systems that drive career development keeping in mind business needs

We also gained the following insights into some of the best practices that helped organisations provide meaningful careers and retention for their key talent:

1. A well -- articulated Employee Value Proposition
2. Multiple career ladders to cater to different expectations of people
3. The career counselor role to facilitate career development
4. Tracking of top talent
5. Educational opportunities and competency-based development programs for employees
6. Qualifying development programs that are mandatory before promotion
7. Workforce planning systems that drive career development keeping in mind business needs

We also observed some Problem Practices Across Organisations:

1. Relying solely on assessment centres in lieu of manager judgment leading to weakening of the manager's position.
2. High aspiration development programs leading to issues of morale and inclusion within the organisation.
3. Multi-layering to manage expectations leading to disillusionment.
4. Guidelines on promotion time lines leading to time-based expectations.

We will discuss all of the above in more detail.

Emerging trends

1. Employees Being Persuaded to Take Responsibility for Career Development.

There is a clear shift from the earlier paternalistic ‘push’ strategy (whereby career development was the organisation’s responsibility) to an employee driven ‘pull’ strategy where the individual is being persuaded to take responsibility for managing his/her career.

In today’s external environment, all organisations do not think it is possible and do not want to offer a value proposition that includes lifetime career development in exchange for tenure / loyalty. Organisations believe that the employee value proposition...
in the "new deal at work" is to give transparent career development opportunities to those with potential and performance in exchange for the optimum application of their skills and knowledge till such time they are with the company.

So while the focus is on creating a self-development culture, organisations seem to take the responsibility for setting expectations, creating growth paths and communicating the framework to the employees.

Career management and development is hence seen as a partnership between the organisation and the individuals, and it is in both parties' interests to collaborate. The organisation's responsibilities in this "new deal at work" are:

- To set the right expectations while hiring employees
- To adopt a participative approach to career development
- To develop a career development framework that caters to the high potential / high performance employees
- To articulate the competencies required for different roles for employee self development
- To communicate and be transparent with career opportunities within the organisation

The Individuals' Responsibilities Are:

- To take onus for managing their own careers
- To take efforts to educate themselves on the competency framework and the career development framework
- To continuously assess themselves and make the efforts to consciously develop their competencies
- To use organisational initiatives for employee development to further develop and themselves
- To plan their careers for the short term & long term keeping in mind possible opportunities that the organisation makes available

By doing this, organisations are conveying a clear message to their employees that they are empowering and supporting them in their career development, but they are not responsible for their career development.

2. Career Progression Based on Competencies and not Tenure.

There has been a significant shift to use competencies as the basis for career progression thereby moving away from tenure or time-based promotions.

To do this, organisations have had to define the competencies required at various levels and articulate them with clarity in terms of its behavioral indicators. The competency framework is not just the foundation for career progression but also linked to the many other development initiatives of the organisation.

3. A Competency Assessment Process becoming essential either through assessment centres or the Manager's Assessment.

All organisations in the study have implemented some kind of a process to assess employees on competencies which subsequently have been used for career progression decisions.

The assessment is administered by the supervising manager of the employee or by an internal panel or by an external agency through trained assessors.

Some organisations also use performance ratings, peer assessments or 360 degree feedback to corroborate the Assessment Centre result.

In organisations where the people managers assess their employees, the competency assessment forms part of the performance management system focusing on three aspects:

- Goals and objectives
- Job skills the functional and technical skills that one requires to carry out their role
- Leadership competencies the behaviors that are required for the future

The organisation uses the performance appraisal discussion for assessing the above three areas and helping the employee and the manager to understand what experiences the employee needs to go through in order to grow and build a career.

The advantage of this integration is that assessment of performance and competency is completed at the same time. However, there are two potential dangers of merging competency assessment with the performance appraisal process.

1. Firstly, the linkage or perceived linkage with rewards makes objective self-assessment by the employee tougher.

2. Secondly, the parameters of assessment for the purposes of development and progression could vary a development objective would require assessment of competencies applicable to the current level, while a progression objective would require assessment of competencies applicable at the next level. Some companies resolve this issue by assessing employees...
on additional competencies either through an assessment centre or in a separate discussion with the manager.

4. **Organisations attempting to push promotion time lines**

In the early stages of the BPO industry there was an urgent need for people at different levels, especially the need for people managers. Employees in their early 20’s with just 2 + years of experience were seen as "veterans" in the industry and were quickly promoted and given people management responsibilities. Similarly, even in the IT industry, many employees became project managers quite early in their careers.

As the industry is maturing and a base level of talent is available, Organisations are increasingly pushing promotion time lines, reflecting the emergence of a more realistic opportunity scenario.

5. **Mobility Within the Organisation Through Open Job Posting Systems and not Through Traditional Job Rotations.**

Many of the organisations we surveyed have discontinued their job rotation system of the past and have moved to an open job posting system. They seem to have encountered two challenges with the traditional job rotation system:
- It was not benefiting the organisation directly since it did not help in filling up existing vacancies
- It was placing onus on the organisation in creating opportunities for employees.

Having said this about job rotation, there are mixed trends observed with the Open Job Posting (OJP) since the transformation has not necessarily been smooth. The successful organisations seem to have good support systems that have enabled the OJP system to work as a well oiled machinery. Some others have pursued the profession development path where it becomes a planned movement of employees and is through a consensus of the manager and the employee.

While the OJP has the lofty goal of "providing careers within rather than outside", its execution has been plagued by some major obstacles:
- Finding timely replacement of talent in place of the employees opting out through the OJP has become a challenge. It requires great planning and effort on the part of the manager to ensure smooth transition.
- Employees working on projects at customer sites especially in the IT industry, have a problem of moving out primarily because of the familiarity with the customer and the customer’s insistence on continuity. Given the business sensitivities, these moves get stalled and the organisation is seen as not living up to the commitments of the OJP system.
- The manager is not prepared to let go of his talent and risk his deliverables as finding trained replacements have become a Herculean task given the tight external labour market.
- On the employee’s part the re entry if unsuccessful is not necessarily a very pleasant experience. This ends up creating a fear of failure.

In organisations where the OJP system has matured, Managers pro actively counsel their employees to apply for internal movements and it is further facilitated by Career Counselors and or skip-level Managers.

A critical success factor in implementing an OJP is the positioning of lateral career movement as a positive opportunity even as the Broad banding system and the business requires the flexibility of moving employees across more frequently as and when the need arises. In all this, there is a phenomenal task for HR to communicate that job enrichment is also a means of building careers for employees.

6. **Creating cross-business opportunities for people across the larger organisation**

The larger global organisations seem to have the benefit of offering global opportunities and are increasingly doing this through the global OJP system. This is a win win as Indian talent has now become increasingly recognised as globally valuable. It also helps retention in a big way.

**Best practices**

We give below some the organisational practices that are worth examining closely for adoption:

7. **A well -- articulated Employee Value Proposition**

An Employee Value Proposition simply stated, is the organisation’s compelling answer to the question “Why would a talented person choose to work for this organisation?”

There are well - articulated EVP such as "adding vitality to life." All the communication efforts at every stage emphasise this message. All initiatives, including Career Development, are aligned to this proposition. Another example of an EVP would be to offer abundant opportunities across the organisation and to make sure that EVP of mobility stands the test of time in the organisation. This becomes the core around which HR rallies many of its programe to ensure its success.
Organisations with a well articulated EVP seem to have a distinct edge.

8. **Multiple Career Ladders to Cater to Different Expectations of People**

While the majority of employees perceive that the only way to progress is by taking on people management responsibilities, there are some who value technical specialisation.

The approach of creating multiple career ladders caters to the varied needs of people. Multiple career ladders are alternative ladders to the people-management ladder.

Depending on the business, these ladders could be technical, functional domain-related or support to core operations.

Multiple career ladders send a clear message that the organisation is committed to creating different and distinct value-added roles for employees based on business needs and people aspirations. The ability to create technical specialists and experts is seen by many organisations as an important building block towards securing future competitive advantage.

9. **The Career Counselor Role to Facilitate Career Development**

Some organisations have institutionalised career enabler roles, typically designated Career Counselors, who interface with the manager, the employee and HR to ensure that career development processes are administered effectively.

Employees who aspire to move to a particular role can first discuss with their Career Counselor to get a holistic view of the role and understand the pros and cons of the move into the role as well as the competencies required to perform the role. This helps employees make a well-informed choice.

Career Counselors also network with managers and other career counselors in different parts of the business so that they can promote informal discussions about possible roles and competencies. Individuals who perform the role of career counselor are often selected from within the business and in some cases on a part-time basis. The intention of the Career Counselor role is to complement the career discussion process between managers & employees and is not meant to replace it.

10. **Tracking of Top Talent**

Some organisations believe that while they are responsible for offering career development opportunities to all, they also need to bring special focus on their key talent by developing career strategies that will help develop and retain this group of employees.

The Top Talent Programe in organisations typically involves:

1. A transparent system of identifying talent
2. Assessments to further identify the strength, leadership potential and so on
3. Focused development programs
4. Identifying opportunities and career progression
5. Retention strategies: Pay, rewards and recognition, ESOPs
6. Attrition risk analysis

The Top Talent program is constantly reviewed by the senior management team and HR plays a major role in driving this initiative.

11. **Educational Opportunities and Competency Based Development Programe for Employees**

The BPO industry has created a large number of jobs for people who enter the labour market immediately after their graduation. Through exit interviews and attrition analysis, it has been found that many of these people leave for higher education. This analysis suggests that young graduates consider higher qualifications to be of great value.

Organisations have responded to this need by providing education opportunities to their employees by partnering with educational institutions and also by giving the necessary time off for this.

Organisations are also implementing learning initiatives to develop specific competencies. These programs have high learning effectiveness as they focus on developing the behaviors associated with the competency. This is in contrast to general programs which do not promote the critical behaviour that the organisation expects.

While most of the organisations run these programs for all people moving to a particular level of responsibility, a few organisations have chosen to make them more aspirational in nature. In the latter cases, the participants are chosen based on a combination of assessment, performance ratings and nominations by managers.

12. **Qualifying Development Program That Are Mandatory Before Promotion**

Many organisations have found it necessary for their people to go through structured learning programe and qualify/certify themselves before they progress to the next
level. This is a requirement especially for those progressing to people manager responsibilities.

13. Workforce planning Systems that Drive Career Development Keeping in Mind Business Needs

Organisations are developing robust systems of workforce planning (despite the vagaries of the market) to ensure that career development happens in the context of business needs. Planning how many people are needed in the next year, by roles/positions and competencies, enables the organisation to work towards getting those people through the career development process.

Organisations have established functional resource committees for all key functions. These committees lead discussions to identify the new requirements, vacancies and opportunities in their respective functions. This then gets fed into the career development system and the top talent management system. The OJP system is also integrated into the workforce planning process. Since the OJP depends on vacancies in various processes, workforce planning helps the organisation estimate the likely number of vacancies keeping in mind business growth, estimated attrition within the process and estimated career development through and out of the process.

These organisations believe that workforce planning is a critical success factor for the OJP to work successfully.

Problem Practices

We also observed a few problem practices among organisations. Relying solely on assessment centres in lieu of manager judgment leading to weakening of the manager’s position.

Some organisations have relied more on assessment centres for career progression, without giving due consideration to the manager’s assessment. These organisations have resorted to this practice with the intention of ensuring objectivity in the process. However, this has led to multiple issues:

The organisation has unintentionally sent out a message that it does not trust managers’ judgment of employees. Assessment centres at times are externally driven without much involvement from managers. Further the performance management system and competency system has been undermined.

The managers do not have adequate opportunities to practice their assessment & feedback skills. This has only led to greater leadership challenges.

While an assessment centre might seem more objective to the organisation, some employees continue to think that the results are biased if they are not as expected.

Also communicating development needs of employees assessed have posed challenges.

The Assessment Centre only simulates a work environment and is not the same as observing work place behaviour. There are therefore limitations to the methodology.

1. High Aspiration Development Program Leading to Issues of Morale and Inclusion Within the Organisation

Some organisations have created extremely selective development program where Managers are selected based on a battery of assessments and tests.

While the positioning and stringent criteria of these program make them highly aspirational, there have also been some unintended consequences.

- There are motivation issues among those not selected for the program.
- The expectations of outcomes of those selected and participating in such programs have become difficult to manage resulting in attrition.

2. Multi-layering to Manage Expectations Leading to Disillusionment

Many BPO organisations surveyed have created multiple levels (with no distinction in role) to satisfy the compensation and designation aspirations of employees.

For example, some organisations have 2 to 3 levels (Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3) within the lowest Band of individual contributors. These levels did not differ in terms of the role being performed.

Career progression at this level therefore relates to vertical movement within these three levels. A salary increase accompanies the change in level and is meant to retain employees.

However, this level of multi-layering is not seen as healthy in the long-term. Attrition often follows after the employee gets disillusioned by the lack of enhancement in role on promotion. While this short-term retention strategy worked in the early stages of the industry, going forward a more long-term approach would be required.


Some organisations surveyed have defined time lines for promotions. These are typically the minimum tenures.

In reality however, in the face of attrition and resultant pressure on managers, they inevitably promote most of their
people at the minimum time line established. Organisations
that have institutionalised time lines for promotion have
found it difficult to subsequently enforce the discipline of
being competency-based in career progression.

Summary

Given the way organisations are designed and
positioned for the future, career development will succeed
only when it is integrated with the needs of business.
The New Deal at Work emphasises employability rather
than long term employment. Employees are also
beginning to view their career as a series of small steps
taken one at a time rather than as a long-term plan. These
changes in the recent past have significantly impaired
the very fabric of careers. Despite such contrasting factors
some organisations have innovated and succeeded in
offering compelling value propositions to hold and grow
talent. The moral of the story is that organisations need
to innovate constantly to make career development
happen in a meaningful way.

This article on organisational approaches to fulfilling
career aspirations is based on the findings of a qualitative
research carried out by totus covering organisations in
the IT/ITES, manufacturing and FMCG sectors. This
article also draws from our insights from over 150 client
engagements across varied industry sectors over the past
seven years. This is an on-going study and the findings
presented here are illustrative and by no means
conclusive or comprehensive.

Totus consulting, a strategic HR consulting firm is deeply
committed to thought leadership and makes significant
investment in furthering this commitment through its
research and publication efforts.

Food For Thought:

"Remember, If you don't know where you're going, it doesn't matter how you get there." -- The Flying Karamazov
Brothers

Acknowledgments

The Editor gratefully acknowledges:

- the support from all the article contributors, and from Edgar Schien, David Skyrme, Mercer, Satish Kalra for permitting us to reprint their articles
- ardent support from the board of NHRD Network particularly from Anand Nayak, Arvind Agrawal, Dr. Santrupt Mishra, Satish Pradhan, Marcel Parker, Dwarakanath and my editorial colleagues Dr. Pallab Bandyopadhyay and Aquil Busrai, Bimal Rath
- and finally the editorial support we received from Chennai-from David Nallathambi, RShantaram and Devika Dharmaraj

Erratum:

Name of author in case of article on ‘Helth Care: HRD Prespective’ in the previous (issue no.3, vol.1) was inadvertently
mentioned as K. Krishna Kumar and should be read as Kumar Krishna Swamy, Group Head of HRD for the Wockardt
Hospital Group.

Error is regretted - Editor
ORGANISATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA: STATE OF THE PRACTICE
RK Premarajan

Abstract
The author shares the findings from a survey aimed at understanding the state of the practice of career development interventions in India. The survey also attempted to understand the context in which career development occurs in India such as the type of organisations where it thrives the most, the characteristics of various development systems, the drivers of career development and organisational attitudes and philosophy.

Introduction
Organisational career development - consciously linking employee’s career plans with the organisation’s workforce needs- has blossomed in the last several decades as a strategy for improving workforce effectiveness. In spite of the state of flux in most organisations that is widely held to have led to the abandonment of attempt to manage careers in organisations, there is a strong case to be made that now more than ever it is advantageous for an organisation to play a part in the management of careers. If career paths are necessarily ambiguous and if an organisation’s competitive advantage lies in its use of human resources, then the organisation’s task is to provide a context where employees can learn to manage their own careers in conditions of change and uncertainty. Therefore, what is needed is not abandonment of career development practices, but a shift in focus of these practices from the traditional organisational centric approach to that of an individual centric approach.

While the state of the organisational career development practices in different countries has been well documented the same cannot be said of Indian scenario. It was felt that what we need is a comprehensive picture of the state of the practice of career development. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly we must have a benchmark data against which the changes could be compared later as well as the present state could be meaningfully contrasted with that existing elsewhere in the world.

The survey that is being discussed here, therefore, was aimed at finding out the state of the practice of career development interventions in India. The survey also attempted to understand the context in which career development occurs in India such as the type of organisations where it thrives the most, the characteristics of various development systems, the prompts or “drivers” of career development and organisational attitudes and philosophy.

Survey methodology and results
About 500 leading organisations operating in India were identified with the help of annual business directories of magazines such as Business India, Business Today, Business World, etc. The survey questionnaire consisted of rating, ranking, multiple choice as well as descriptive types of items. At the end a total of 120 (24%) usable forms were returned. The hundred and twenty companies had a good geographical spread across the country.

The following tables detail key results of the survey, on various parameters. Further sections will discuss the implications of these results.

Demographics
Sectoral Representation
In each respondent organisation, senior level HR personnel were approached in order to ensure the validity of responses as well as to clarify responses to some of the open-ended questions in the survey. Wherever possible, this was done in person.

The prevalence of career development in India

Availability of a Career Development System (CDS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No CDS available</th>
<th>Instituting a CDS currently</th>
<th>CDS in existence already</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Including one company that discontinued its CDS

Vintage of CDS (of those in existence already)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>More than 6 years</th>
<th>3 - 4 Years</th>
<th>Less than 1 year</th>
<th>No response / others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top 3 reasons for having a CDS
1. Organisational commitment to career development : 33%
2. Desire to develop talent, or promote from within : 23%
3. Desire to keep up with competitors’ practices : 8%

Top 3 reasons for not having a CDS
1. Organisations need not align with the CDS : 22%
2. Insufficient support from Top Management : 17%
3. Lack of manager or supervisory interest : 13%
It is heartening that a significant majority of the respondents have or expect to have some form of a CDS in their organisations. This indicates a strong awareness of the need for such a system. Together with the finding that more than a quarter of the respondent organisations have been using a CDS for over 3 years, this indicates the existence of a strong foundation of practitioner knowledge that can be leveraged for industry at large.

In terms of the specific manpower resources made available to oversee the Career Development Systems, 18% of the companies did not have a full time staff to perform career management activities. 15% had designated two to four staffs.

The survey results further highlight the need for Top Management to commit to, and support the CDS, if it needs to take root and succeed in the organisation. Such commitment and support will also insure that the CDS has a strong bond with the overall strategic direction of the organisation’s growth. This is corroborated by these themes repeating in the top reasons for not having a CDS.

Other reasons for not implementing a CDS include insufficient budgetary resources (4%), and the relative youth of the organisation.

### Linkage of CDS with Other HR Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HR System / Practice</th>
<th>Present in (% of respondent organisations)</th>
<th>Linked to CDS (% of respondents where system is present)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance Appraisal</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency Framework</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured Recruitment</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotions &amp; Transfers</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary Administration</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Description &amp; Evaluation</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources Planning</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Strategic Planning</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Assistance Program</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation Design</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Reservation Systems</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Career development systems functioned in the context of other HR systems and were linked with these systems in varying degrees. Performance appraisal, promotion and transfer practices, competency framework, recruitment practices were active in most of the firms and were linked with career development.

### Implementation of Career Development Program in India

In this section an attempt has been made to look at some of the survey results that were related to implementation - the Who, How, Where and What of career development practices.

Fast track or high potential employees (usually the future general managers) remained the most common target group. While 66% respondents favored these employees, 39% targeted new management trainees and a good 55% considered that career development would be effective for new employees. This indicated that organisations were still banking on the traditional concept of recruiting young talents and then concentrating on those with high potentials. 13% favored women employees, and only 11% targeted employees from the minority community for CD program. Besides these 17% have targeted others like junior managers.

### Attitude Toward Career Development in India

The participants were asked a series of questions related to their overall attitudes about career development. The items fell into four categories: (1) general management attitudes, (2) perceived effect on supervisory responsibilities, (3) perceived general effects, and (4)
attitudes about administration of career development program.

Expected Benefits of a CDS (Top 3)
1. Allows improved utilisation of employee talents: 78%
2. Equips employees to use HR systems more effectively: 74%
3. Enhances the job performance of employees: 68%

Supportive of the above findings, 60% strongly disagreed that such a program strains the capacity of other human resources systems. The results were further strengthened when 54% disagreed with the idea that turnover increases as a result of employee participation in career development program. Around 42% of the respondents strongly disagreed that career development increased personal anxiety. Again a significant 68% had strongly disagreed to the idea that career development disrupts an organisation. The finding has further supported that managers’ attitude towards career development was positive since 72% had agreed strongly that career development is an important part of employee development. This indicated that participants do have a positive attitude towards the effectiveness of career development practices. And it would be a success if individual employees could nurture a realistic view regarding the outcomes of such program.

Practices & Effectiveness of the CDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Popularity (% respondent organisations using)</th>
<th>Effectiveness (% respondent organisations)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>External Seminars &amp; Workshops</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Rotation</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-house training &amp; development program</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The traditional process of interview as organisational potential assessment process had also been favored. Job assignments, internal placement systems, replacement or succession planning, tuition reimbursement, etc., also featured significantly in the list of CD practices. The respondents had also shown an increased interest on supervisor & line managers for individual counseling or career discussions. 13% of the respondents reported that they were planning to do career workshops, another 12% were looking forward to initiate replacement and succession planning while 9% were planning to conduct assessment centres.

A few companies informed that they have discontinued conducting certain program, for instance, organizing career-planning workshops and providing career information handbooks due to administrative overhead, ineffectiveness of the method, lack of orientation, or insufficient time on the part of the employees to attend meetings.

Perceived effectiveness of overall CDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Neither Effective nor Ineffective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tools used to gather feedback on CDS program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal Verbal Feedback</th>
<th>Assessment Questionnaires</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
<th>Participant Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Totals more than 100% due to multiple tools used

When the respondents were asked to report their attitude toward the administration of career development programe, 58% had agreed that employees should be able to keep confidential their records or other outputs of career planning activities. 42% had strongly disagreed with the idea that information about career and job requirements need not be provided in a career development programe thus supporting the fact that without those information such a programe would be ineffective.
Ownership of career development

Career development being a shared responsibility, the organisation and individual employee both shared equal responsibility for the development of the system. When respondents were asked to indicate whether their organisation’s career development efforts focussed on the individual, on the organisation, or somewhere in-between, 28% placed the focus in the middle of the continuum (Individual 0-25-50-75-100 organisation) while 23% inclined their scale towards organisation.

On being asked how they would divide responsibility for career development amongst employee, manager and organisation, participants considered the responsibility of the manager as the most important (33%), next was of the employee (27%) and the third one was of the organisation (23%). This indicated that managers being the head of the program played a leading role in conducting career development program.

Respondents viewed career development as 33% manager’s responsibility, 27% employee’s responsibility, and 23% organisation’s responsibility.

Though the finding suggested that the responsibility for career development was mainly of the manager’s, it should be remembered that all the three i.e. employee, manager and the organisation should put forward equal efforts to make such system a success. Then only career development would ensure organisational as well as individual growth.

Assessing career development: A glimpse of the changes

Open-ended questions like how the participants would describe the major impacts of organisations career development efforts had provided positive answers like such a system has increased motivation and initiative on employees part along with high loyalty and productivity, establishment of sound appraisal system, increasing involvement of top management and supervisors in the process, reduced turnover, spotting talent within the organisation, better employee retention, providing internal growth opportunities, employee job opportunities, employee job satisfaction, better coping with the changing business scenario and better employee performance and the ability to keep up with the competitors.

When asked what they would have done differently with their career development program, the respondents suggested more application of skill inventories and skills audit, replacement and succession planning, conducting career-planning workshops, introducing competency based career development, learning to cope better in the dynamic job market, more training of employees and making the system more organised and objective and building it as a separate department.

As far as their future plans were concerned regarding the activities of the system, companies suggested, doing more competency mapping, introducing multi-rater system, establishing assessment centers, systematising the whole process to the degree that it works independently of people, planning to work out competency framework model for future career development, preparing people for performing roles or functions which they would require to perform in future while going up in the organisational hierarchical ladder, focusing more in aligning industrial goals with organisational objectives, looking after individual aspirations, and adapting the CD plans in line with the market pressures.

According to the respondents, changes in career development had taken place in the last decade. Of these changes the noted once are introduction of job analysis and evaluation, introduction of competency mapping, development of assessment centers, increased systematisation of CD programme and more commitment to meet organisational goals.

Summary

Even though career development in India is a relatively new concept, a good number of organisations have taken up the programme. This could partly be because of the fact that almost fifty percent of the organisations were serving the international markets and hence were multi-national companies. Many of them probably are subsidiaries of US and UK based organisation. These organisations must be borrowing many of the practices prevalent in the parent organisations. However it was also true that even in equal number of companies serving national market, the Career Development System is rather flourishing. In short, the future of career development in India appears promising and we see organisations entering into a more assertive partnership with employees in the career development process.

At a time when HR is increasingly trying to align itself with the Business strategy of the organisation, it is rather disappointing to note very few organisations reporting a direct linkage between their career development practices and business strategy. Perhaps, this is more a reflection of the overall state of HR practice in the country and not just career development alone. One would expect to see in the coming years many more organisations linking their career development systems with business strategy. The career development practices till now adopted are those, which are traditional like training, seminars, etc. Nevertheless the implementation of Career Development System has forced many Indian companies to consider it as an important part of their organisation. That such a system can be beneficial from the point it reduces employee turnover, identifies potential employees, increases employee motivation, has also been understood by them.
THE BABY STEPS OF CAREER MANAGEMENT: ISSUES OF TALENT POOLS AND EMPLOYABILITY

Madan Padaki

Abstract
The author relates the first stage of career management and analyses the inherent issues faced by talent pools at this stage. The article diagnoses this problem and proposes workable solutions involving all stakeholders to overcome challenges in enhancing employability.

"Analysing what you haven't got as well as what you have is a necessary ingredient of a career."
-- Orison Swett Marden

The above statement is a truism in the entire spectrum of career growth. The progression of a career can be categorized as a hierarchy. At the basic stage is the acquirement of skills necessary to embark on a career; the second stage consists of career growth and the final stage being one of stability. The build up of a career depends on the success at the basic level where considerable management is required to entrench a strong base for success. This base has to be built on a series of feedback and interaction to align interest, inherent skills to career options and job.

Though this process seems to be a natural conclusion to be followed readily, present facts in the job market do not seem to indicate to it. The basic groundwork in career management has not been undertaken, especially in India, which has also affected the succeeding stage of job acquisition. All portents point to this neglect and the lack of employability is supported by data collected on candidate skills and readiness for careers through the deployment of scientific assessments.

The Problem With the End Product
India has been recognized the world over for being a knowledge hub providing talent to match global expectations. The talent argument has been instrumental in driving the growth of knowledge industries in India and in attracting top companies to India.

The explosive growth witnessed in various industries has entailed large-scale recruitment of talent other than the top tier. And an issue being faced by companies has been the employability potential of this talent.

This hypothesis has been validated by recent reports developed by MeritTrac on talent pools and can be clearly demonstrated through data on two major education streams - engineering and management. These streams are the vital talent sources for industries across domains and provide impetus for business growth.

Demand as can be seen in data captured from various sources has seen a serious increase. Authorities point to a serious demand-supply gap even with the quantum of talent churned out of colleges today. This situation is exacerbated by the non-availability of quality talent.
Shortfall of Employable Young Professional Engineers (YPE)

This huge shortfall of employable talent is proving to be a cause of concern for all stakeholders involved right from the consumers (the industry) to the suppliers (academia) and other stakeholders. The root cause for this malady has been the lack of focus on employability as a driver in talent growth. This lack of focus on equipping candidates with employable skills has resulted in an alarming drop in conversion rates across the board for candidates wishing to join the industry. This alarming drop is captured by the recorded below for engineering and management graduates in assessments conducted across companies. Throughput rates of engineering graduates on abilities like verbal, analytical and attention-to-detail

The overall throughput rate stands at 49.5%; which means that about half the candidates that took the abilities test succeeded in clearing it. The overall throughput from the MBA talent pool on both abilities and communication skills is 21%.

This lacuna can be traced back to mismanagement at the basic level of building a career. All stakeholders including the industry, academia, government and students with the help of other catalysts like assessment organisations and industry bodies need to introduce measures to enhance talent at the basic stage in career management. This improvement needs to be based on the recognition of inherent aptitude and skills and talent at an early stage with feedback loops built at each successive level to groom talent.

Workable Solutions for the First Stage

Making talent pools career ready can be driven on the basis of a two-pronged approach.

One is a short-term approach which deals with "Employability Enhancement" initiatives. These can always be only remedial or curative in nature and are viewed from a "Quality Control" perspective to enhance the employability of the already-existing pool of graduates.

The other is a long-term approach which involves identifying the inherent abilities of an individual in terms of the aptitude and interests at the school level itself, so that they can map it to the various career options available and use this critical feedback to provide them a direction towards their possible future path. Today we work at the graduation levels because it is just one step before employment. However if we could work at the basic building block level, the result may not be immediately visible, but will definitely be effective in reaching the objective of an industry ready talent pool.

Decision life cycle in education and employability enhancement initiatives

In an Individual's education life cycle, there are various points where he/she has to make a decision with re-
Role of Industry:
Industry can play a major role by sharing current expectations, likely trends & future developments and by stating the desired skill-sets (hard and soft). There is a need for the industry to collaborate with academic institutions and faculty to orient a curriculum that instills the requisite skills in students. The industry must actively allow more industry-student interaction through hands-on experiences to give a glimpse into what the industry is seeking from a potential employee. One of the instances of such collaboration was in partnership with a leading technological University, MeritTrac and the industry. An industry panel defined its requisite skill sets, all the students were assessed on these skills and those who cleared them were immediately interviewed and offers were made. All the candidates were given feedback on their areas of improvement. This kind of feedback provides a clear direction for an individual to work towards on his strengths and weaknesses.

Role of Academia:
One of the failings of the Indian knowledge eco-system has been the lack of industry-academia collaboration. It is essential to make education more relevant to today’s needs. An overwhelming majority of students go into the employment market armed with only educational qualifications. Without the Government’s whole-hearted support, the concept of employability enhancement will not get the required amount of acceleration and commitment. One of the very important initiatives taken by the government in collaboration with the educational institutes is ‘finishing schools’. Finishing schools work towards enhancing employability by training graduates on the specific skill sets required by the industry. Here again catalysts took an initiative, to ensure that the concept is refined, by taking the effort to test the candidates on the skill sets pre and post the course. It was done to see whether the industry-defined skills have been developed by the individual and that they are now career ready or not.

Talent Pool Catalysts:
In this huge web weaved by the industry, government and the academia there are other niche bodies, such as MeritTrac, that facilitate interactions and work towards creating a platform where all the stakeholders including the students can come together and explore the opportunity reducing the gap between supply and demand of the talent pool. The students through these catalysts can identify their skills and abilities, their strengths and weaknesses and areas of improvement. This feedback then becomes very crucial in assisting them to train themselves on the requisite skills and become career ready.

The criticality of a strong base in the entire process of building and managing careers cannot be over emphasised and it is therefore not singular effort which will work towards building successful career management plans for talents. A combination of short-term and long-term initiatives by these several stakeholders will ensure that every individual who graduates is, by default “Career-Ready”!!
The world is at present in the middle of a looming crisis as the world’s population is ageing rapidly at an ever accelerating pace. The ageing workforce, coupled with declining birth rates, is set to create a huge demand for talent and spark off a myriad of human capital management issues. In other words, it will pose a myriad of challenges for global social security systems. Apart from compelling organisational changes, it will also impel countries to increased permissiveness in global immigration policies. Solutions will have to be arrived at to achieve higher levels of sustained growth which in turn will bring in additional demand for productive employment.

This article aims at examining the different issues and challenges that this demographic trend will bring in its wake and how the ageing workforce will impact global labour markets in particular.

**Ageing Trends**

The total number of people aged 60 and above is exceeding all the other age groups. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) reports that between the years 1950 and 2050 the world’s ageing population will rise from 200 million to 2 billion. This trend however varies from region; while developed countries have a far more accelerating pace, developing countries are relatively young in their demographic break up. Given on the next page is a table that will show how developing countries are considerably behind the developed countries in raising an alarm over their ageing population.

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An ageing workforce implies a reduction in the active working population and a higher dependency ratio. This high dependency ratio also brings down significantly the savings potential in the economy because when an active working population is more than the dependent population, the economically active population has more potential to set aside some part of the discretionary income. However, when the reverse happens, the income earned is used to tend to the several needs of the dependents.

How countries seek to walk this tight rope will affect how they achieve economic growth, while ensuring the constant supply of labour in the market at all times. Given below are a series of graphs that clearly highlight how each country will be impacted by this demographic trend. Data for this analysis has been taken from the Food and Agricultural Organisation Stat Database on Population 1969-2050 projections. We have arrived at a working force percentage figure by dividing the working age population of any given country by the total population of that country. We have shown mainly for analysis purposes a clear line at the 0.5 mark to indicate that when the working age population falls below this mark, the said country becomes a potential labour trouble spot.

Data drawn from FAO’s Population Database shows that in most parts of the world, except for a few countries in Asia, the working age population will fall below 50% by the year 2050. This implies that the dependency ratio will be above 0.5, meaning that there will be more people to be taken care of when compared to the number of people who can take care of them. The working age population, for our analysis purpose, is considered as being from age 21 to age 60. For the same purposes, we assume that working age population is economically active.
In Europe, almost all the countries are quickly ageing, as the dependency ratio is foreseen to fall below 0.5 from 2050 onward. In Italy and Germany, the fall is steep. In America and in Canada, the population is ageing fast, but the slope of the dependency ratio is falling below 0.5 at a slower rate. Brazil and Mexico are set to have very slow ageing populations until 2050.

In Asia, in Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore and South Korea, the ageing population is increasing at a faster pace than India, Malaysia or Philippines. The former countries at present have more than 55% of the population. China and Australia also have 55% of the population of working age population which will reduce to less than 50% of the population of working age by 2050. Moreover, China has a bigger population base, and hence it can still supply most of the workforce to the labour market. The labour market in India, Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia is set to flourish as the working age population remains young for next five decades. Since India has a bigger population base, it is definitely the potential supplier for most of the labour markets in the world. The threat that applies to the other potential trouble spots such as Europe, Americas and countries in Asia such as Japan, South Korea and Singapore to some extent does not apply to India and such a threat seems remote.

A spiraling demand in the labour market will compel a whole new equation of possibilities within the realm of retirement as well as attitudes toward such a concept.
Organisation are today undergoing a metamorphosis. Whether one thinks of it as "downsizing," "rightsizing," "flattening," becoming a "learning organisation," or simply as "transformations" into something as yet unknown, no one would challenge the fact that profound changes are occurring worldwide. These changes in the occupational environment have implications for career development in the future. Will there even be such a concept as an "organisational career" or will careers become a more fragmented set of jobs held together far more by what I have labeled the "internal career." By the concept of internal career I mean the subjective sense of where one is going in one's work life, as contrasted with the "external career," the formal stages and roles that are defined by organisational policies and societal concepts of what an individual can expect in the occupational structure (Schein, 1978, 1990)? In studying careers longitudinally it became evident that most people form a strong self-concept which holds their internal career together even as they experience dramatic changes in their external career. I called this self-concept a "career anchor" and found that an understanding of it helped to illuminate how people made career choices. But will the concept of "career anchor" still be applicable in this rapidly changing world and what are the implications for career development as we look at several future scenarios of how the world might evolve further in the 21st Century (Malone & Scott-Morton, 1995)?

Career Anchors: Some Speculations on their Evolution

A person’s career anchor is his or her self-concept consisting of 1) self-perceived talents and abilities, 2) basic values, and, most important, 3) the evolved sense of motives and needs as they pertain to the career. Career anchors only evolve as one gains occupational and life experience. However, once the self-concept has been formed, it functions as a stabilizing force, hence the metaphor of "anchor," and can be thought of as the values and motives that the person will not give up if forced to make a choice. Most of us are not aware of our career anchors until we are forced to make choices pertaining to self-development, family, or career. Yet it is important to become aware of our anchors so that we can choose wisely when choices have to be made.

My original research in the mid-1970's showed that most people's self-concepts revolved around five categories reflecting basic values, motives and needs:

1. Autonomy/independence
2. Security/stability
3. Technical-functional competence
4. General managerial competence
5. Entrepreneurial Creativity. Follow-up studies with a wider range of occupations in the 1980's revealed three additional anchor categories
6. Service or dedication to a cause
7. Pure Challenge
8. Lifestyle.

These categories and brief descriptions of what each implies are shown in Table 1. Additional research has not as yet revealed any other anchor categories.

As careers and lives evolve most people discover that one of these eight categories is
the anchor, the thing the person will not give up, but most careers also permit the fulfilling of several of the needs that underlie different anchors. For example, as a professor I can fulfill my need for autonomy, for security, for technical/functional competence, and service. I was not able to discover that my anchor was autonomy until I had to assess how I felt about being a department chairman and whether or not to become a candidate for a deanship. It is when we face a job shift through being promoted, fired, moved geographically or functionally that we confront our self-image and become aware of our career anchors.

For most of the 1970’s and 1980’s when we administered the career anchor self-analysis exercise we obtained fairly consistent results with roughly 25 percent of our populations anchored in “general management,” another 25 percent in “technical/functional competence,” 10 percent each in “autonomy” and “security” and the rest spread across the remaining anchors. (Schein, 1990b). We found a broad distribution of anchors in every occupation even though one might imagine that some occupations would be highly biased toward a given anchor. Even management students who might be expected to have primarily a general management anchor are spread across the whole spectrum with only about 25 percent in that category. And even with middle managers and senior executives it rarely goes above 50 percent.

The concept of career anchor becomes especially applicable in today’s turbulent world as more and more people are laid off in the frenzy of down-sizing and are having to figure out what to do next in their lives. One might also expect that the content of the anchor will have shifted in the 1990’s and will continue to shift as we speculate about the 21st century. What will those shifts be, and do we see evidence of such shifts already occurring? Are we already getting different results from our basic populations such as the various management students that attend the MIT’s Masters, Sloan Fellows, Management of Technology, and Senior Executive Programe?

Shifts in the Content and Structure of Career Anchors

Participants who analyze their career anchors still find the exercise meaningful and consider it very important to complete, but there has been a marked shift in what they identify their anchors to be. The results reported below are of necessity somewhat impressionistic but they allow one to examine each anchor category and report both what changes have already become visible and what changes might be anticipated as we look ahead to the 21st century. We begin with those anchor categories that have shown the most dramatic shifts in structure and content.

Security/Stability

Individuals anchored in security/stability experience the most severe problems because of the shift in organisational policies from guaranteeing “employment security” to touting “employability security.” This shift implies that the only thing the career occupant can really expect of an organisation is the opportunity to learn and gain experience, which presumably makes him or her more employable in some other organisation. What this means internally to the career occupant is that the base of security and stability has to shift from dependence on an organisation to dependence on oneself.

Self-reliance and self-management are becoming dominant requirements for future career management. Therefore, individuals who oriented themselves initially to finding a good employer and staying with that employer for the duration of their careers have to develop a new way of thinking about themselves and locate new external or internal structures on which to become dependent. Symbolically what most reinforces this new image is the breaking up of “Ma Bell” into dynamic baby bells and ultimately even staid AT&T breaking up into three units, laying off thousands of people as part of that process. Similarly, the government bureaucracy as a lifetime employer can no longer be relied upon as pressures mount toward decentralization, reducing the size of government, and making government more efficient. It is not at all clear where the security anchored person of today can find his or her niche.

Autonomy/Independence

Individuals anchored in autonomy find the occupational world an easier place to navigate. The autonomy anchor is aligned, at least for the present, with most organisational policies of promising only employability. The self-reliance that may be needed in the future is already part of the psychological make-up of this group of people. They may well become the role models for future career incumbents. In tracking our various populations it is also evident that for many people, as they age, their autonomy needs increase, leading to fantasies of opening up their own businesses, becoming a consultant, working
part-time, and, in other ways, reducing their dependency on any particular organisation or job.

What is not clear is whether the ability to be autonomous depends upon a baseline of security that we take for granted. The retiree with a good pension can afford to think creatively about next career steps, but the laid off mid-life worker or manager without adequate life savings or a well endowed retirement program may continue to seek secure positions even though his or her anchor is autonomy. The members of this group who have already built autonomous careers will be well adapted to the future, but those who have depended upon secure jobs while planning to break out may be highly vulnerable to the current restructuring of the labor market even though their anchor is in line with future options.

**Life Style**

It is this anchor which has shown the most change since the original research of the 1960’s and 1970’s. In the original research the security anchor was broken into two components: economic security and/or geographic stability. Most people in this anchor group thought of economic security but a few talked of stabilizing their life pattern by settling into a given region and refusing to be moved by their company every few years. In the various follow up studies done in the 1970’s it became evident that these two components were really different anchors. There were still those who defined their career in terms of economic security. But there was a growing number who were in dual career situations and who therefore defined their career as being part of a larger "life system." They had to integrate two careers and two sets of personal and family concerns into a coherent overall pattern, best described as a particular life style. As the number of dual careers increased we also saw social values in the U.S. shifting toward more autonomy and concern for self resulting in pre-occupation with life style in most career occupants. For example, whereas our executive students would have been primarily technical/functional or general managerial in the 1960’s and early 1970’s, we sometimes had classes in the 1980’s and thereafter in which as many as 50 percent of the executives considered their career anchor to be life style. They were impatient with the restrictions of their organisational careers and were looking for ways to break out.

The trend toward autonomy and life style as anchors is, of course, a healthy development given the way the world is going. As noted above, the occupational structure is increasingly moving toward a different concept of the employment contract in which organisations owe their career occupants less and less. Organisational position and advancement is increasingly defined in terms of what one knows and what skills one possesses and based less and less on seniority or loyalty. But knowledge workers are also more mobile and able to be autonomous. To retain their best employees organisations must therefore be able challenge them and meet their needs. No longer is it desirable or feasible to use golden handcuffs or promises of life time security. Both the organisation and the individual are gradually getting adjusted to the notion that they have to look out for themselves, which means that organisations will become less paternalistic and individuals will become more self-reliant. To the extent that more and more individuals will be in dual career situations, they will think, plan, and act more as a social unit and organisations will have to consider how to maintain support systems for such units in the form of child care, job sharing opportunities, part-time work, sabbaticals, and other adaptive modifications of the traditional 9 to 5 job. Even the way work is defined will gradually change as the boundaries between jobs, between organisations, and between work and family become more fluid and ambiguous (Bailyn, 1995?)

**Technical/Functional Competence**

This group is gradually becoming aware of the increasing importance of knowledge and skill but is confused because it is not entirely acceptable in today’s world to settle for that as one’s publicly announced anchor. Hence most of the people who will admit privately that they enjoy being “somebody” because their competence is valued, nevertheless espouse publicly that they want to get into management and “climb the ladder” because that is where the big rewards are perceived to be. At the same time this group is of necessity also worried because knowledge and skill become rapidly obsolete in a dynamically changing technological world and it is not clear who will guarantee continued education and retraining.

The world will always need craftsmen and experts in specific functions and, as technological complexity increases, the need for technical experts will increase. But, as technologies in all the functions themselves
change more and more rapidly, experts will become obsolete more and more rapidly. In other words, to remain technically/functionally competent will require constant updating and relearning in an organisational world that will not bear the costs in terms of money and time for this up-dating process. Will individual career occupants have to plan and budget for their own learning, or will private and/or public organisations take on some of this burden because it will ultimately be to their advantage as organisations?

We may also see an acceleration of the process of out placing obsolete people and replacing them with younger more up to date talent. The burden of re-learning will then fall more and more on the individual career occupant but as that becomes less and less feasible financially, we may see the growth of industry consortia who will share the burden of retraining with universities. Supplemental funds may well come from government, creating alliances between several sectors of the society as was the case with the retraining of the engineers from the big aerospace layoffs in the 1970’s. It is easy to predict that the organisation of the future will be a knowledge based organisation. It is another matter to design such an organisation and figure out how knowledge based careers will work out in a rapidly changing technological environment.

General Managerial Competence

This anchor category continues to attract its share of career occupants who understand what is really involved. It is also a category that is publicly espoused because of the great rewards that are presumed to go with high level general management jobs, but increasingly the technical/functionally anchored person recognises that the skill set and emotional make-up that is needed for such jobs is fundamentally different. One must be highly motivated to exist in the increasingly political environment, one must have analytical and financial skills, high levels of interpersonal competence to function in teams and in negotiations, and, most important of all, one must have the emotional make-up to make highly consequential decisions with only partial information.

The need for general management will unquestionably increase and will be pushed to lower levels in the organisation. As work becomes more technically complex it requires greater coordination and integration at lower and lower levels. As we can see in today’s organisations, whole layers of management are being cut out and organisations are being flattened and re-designed around multiple shifting project teams. Often those teams are described as self-managed, implying that centralised controls will be reduced to fewer and fewer functions. The skills of general management, i.e. analytical, interpersonal, and emotional competence, will therefore be needed at lower and lower levels. Team managers, project managers, and programme managers will have to have general management and leadership skills above and beyond their technical understanding of the tasks at hand. Whereas in many organisations today one does not become a general manager until one is at department or division level, and promotion to general management implies a big status jump on the organisational ladder, in the future those skills will have to be present so much lower in the organisation that the status of general management will become much more variable. Managerial ladders as such may become much fuzzier and status will be defined more by the number of skills a given manager has than by position in a hierarchy.

General management, like leadership, may cease to be a role or a position, and become more of a process skill that will be needed in all kinds of roles and positions. From being a noun, it will become a verb, and the skills may come to be distributed among the members of a group or team rather than residing in a single individual. Everyone will be expected to become somewhat competent at management and leadership. The career occupant with a general management anchor will be forced to examine once again what he or she is really after—power, glory, responsibility, accomplishment of a task, the ability to build and manage a team, or various combinations of these.

Entrepreneurial Creativity

More and more people are drawn to the idea that they can develop their own business and, as the world becomes more dynamic and complex, the opportunities for individuals with this anchor will increase dramatically. The need for new products and services deriving from information technology, bio-technology, and as yet unknown new technologies will continue to increase. The increasing mobility that is available in the world today will make it more and more feasible for the entrepreneur to go to whatever part of the world is most hospitable to
his or her ideas. The dynamic complexity of industry will put a premium on creativity, and it is creativity that is at the core of this anchor.

It is the new companies created by this group that will be the major source of new jobs for the other anchor groups. Maintaining an economic, political, and cultural environment that is friendly and encouraging to entrepreneurship therefore becomes a major issue for society. For example, one can imagine that the political issues around tax reform should be analyzed primarily from the point of view of not destroying the economic incentive for entrepreneurs. At the same time, business and management schools should recognize the importance of training people for both entrepreneurship and more autonomous careers.

**Service/Dedication to a Cause**

The number of people showing up with this anchor is increasing. More and more young people as well as mid-life career occupants report that they are feeling the need not only to maintain an adequate income, but to do something meaningful in a larger context. As the world becomes more conscious of large scale problems such as the environment, the growing gap between the developed and the underdeveloped world, the problems of race and religion, product safety, privacy, overpopulation, and social responsibility issues around health and welfare, new kinds of organizations and careers are being created to address these issues. The information technology explosion has made all of the world’s problems highly visible and thus drawn the attention of the more service oriented. The service anchor combined with the entrepreneurial anchor is already creating new organizations devoted to recycling, to privatising health care and welfare, to managing the environmental problems through products that use less energy, to waste management and so on. Such organizations will, in turn, absorb a lot of the technologically unemployed as well as attracting some of the best and brightest of the new generations.

**Pure Challenge**

There has always been a small group who defined their career in terms of overcoming impossible odds, solving the unsolved problems, and winning out over one’s competitors. It is my impression that this group is growing in number but it is not clear whether more people are entering the labour force with this predisposition or whether it is an adaptation to the growing challenges that the world is presenting to us. In any case, there will not be a shortage of challenges to be met, so long as this group is willing to become active learners as well since the nature of these challenges will itself evolve rapidly with technological change.

In summary, what we have seen so far is that each of the anchor categories still attracts a set of people, but that the working out of a given anchor can become problematic as the world of work and organizational structure becomes more turbulent. The main effect is that people will have to become more self-reliant and figure out where their particular anchor best fits into the emerging occupational structure. The ability to analyze oneself as well as the ability to figure out what kind of job is available and how that job will evolve become crucial skills.

**The MIT 21st Century Scenarios and Career Anchors**

In thinking about the 21st century, a group of MIT researchers concerned with organization design has developed some possible scenarios as a way of identifying some of the primary issues that may face organizations (Malone, Scott-Morton, et al, 1995). These scenarios are not meant to be predictions of what will happen. Rather, they are designed to focus thinking on some of the critical dimensions which may determine the future evolution of organisations. A group of faculty worked for over a year identifying the dimensions and thinking through their implications. Organisational size and degree of centralization emerged as two such critical dimensions leading to the following scenarios. In one scenario one can imagine the world becoming more and more dominated by a small number of very large organisations who will centralise a few key functions and develop broad policies toward careers and employment that will cover very large numbers of people. Such global organisations could then be joined as a life time proposition and one’s basic career identity would be defined by the global super-unit, but the actual career moves would still allow for a lot of variety because the organisation would have many sub-units doing different things.

The other major scenario is that the world will increasingly break up into smaller and more varied kinds of organisations that will constantly change their shape,
their personnel, and maybe even their missions and primary tasks. One would join such organisations on a temporary and perhaps part-time basis and would never define one’s career in terms of any one of these organisations. There would be no common policies regarding pay and benefits, and individuals would manage their economic affairs themselves. Externally defined careers would become rarer and rarer, and the need for clear internal career definitions would become psychologically more and more important.

A third possibility is that both of the above scenarios will materialise, that there will be a few super-organisations operating on a global scale and a great number of smaller organisations many of whom would operate as sub-contractors to the large units. The individual career occupant would have to make choices early in the career as to whether to link to the large global organisations or move among the smaller and temporary systems that will evolve.

The large units clearly offer a new basis for career security so long as the person is willing to maintain the skill levels needed and be willing to be moved in response to the organisation’s needs. Managerial ladders will, of necessity, continue to exist in these organisations though with many fewer rungs. Technically/functionally anchored careerists will find broad opportunities in such organisations but may get stuck either in jobs that do not remain challenging or, alternatively, in jobs in which learning new skills will be a perpetual requirement. The career occupants with entrepreneurial, autonomy, service, pure challenge or life style anchors will find the smaller organisational sets more receptive to the kind of work they want to do. In each of the scenarios there are opportunities for all of anchor types, but the sorting out and matching process will be more difficult and will require more self-management of the career. In all three scenarios another major implication is the need to develop more skills in analyzing and designing the work itself.

**Job/role Planning as the Key to Future Career Matching**

In my original analysis of organisational career systems I asserted that

1. organisations needed to do a better job of analysing and designing the work that they asked job incumbents to take on—hence the development of the job/role planning exercise (Schein, 1978, 1993).

Job/role planning adapts the general model of open-systems planning to a given organisational role or job. If, for example, one takes the job of plant manager as the focus, one would analyse

2. who the stakeholders are for that job,
3. what those stakeholders expect of a plant manager,
4. how the environment will change the priorities for those stakeholders as one looks ahead for a few years,
5. how, as a consequence, their expectations for the plant manager will change, and
6. what the implications of those changed expectations are for developing future plant managers.

Jobs are increasingly becoming dynamic rather than static, so job descriptions are relatively useless unless they become a regular part of a dynamic job/role planning process.

In reviewing the trends cited above, it should become clear that job/role planning will become an ever more critical task for everyone. As technologies change, as organisations attempt to become more competitive, as information technology makes new organisational forms possible, and as social values shift priorities, it is becoming more and more difficult to discern what a given job should consist of and how one should hire and train people for the ambiguous and changing roles that will emerge.

Organisational design will be the design of work and coordination will be the meshing of different tasks into coherent outputs. Hiring and training people will be primarily a matter of communicating this complexity so that the job occupants can manage for themselves how to communicate with each other and coordinate their activities. The jobs will be too complex for any given individual in a managerial role to encompass all the elements, but a perpetual process of planning and reviewing leading to learning will become an essential organisational activity (Michael, 1993; Senge, 1990). In fact, one could speculate that the essence of what we are today calling “organisational learning” will really be learning to redesign work and coordination systems to deal with changing complexities.
Food For Thought:

Mahatma Gandhi was an extraordinary career manager. He had the knack of finding the right person for the right job. Around 1917 two young lawyers approached him and expressed their keen desire to work for him. Both were approximately 25 years old; both were almost equal in stature and both came from Gandhi’s native state (Gujarat). Gandhi looked at them, assessed their true interests and asked one to be his Manager of Logistics and the other to serve him as his Private Secretary.

Despite innumerable obstacles in their ways, both performed extraordinarily in their respective functions and stayed with Gandhi all their life.

One died in 1945 while in jail with Gandhi and the other outlived Gandhi. Experts say that had their functions been reversed, they would have performed disastrously.

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What Drives People's Careers?

It was the month of June 1999, when I first met Vijayan* at an interview. Vijayan had all the qualities required for the position. An under graduate degree in Electronics and Communication Engineering from one of the premier engineering colleges in the country, followed by a Master's from a much sought after US university and then about five years of relevant working experience in Silicon Valley with well known semiconductor companies. I was very much impressed with his clarity of thought when he answered my questions, especially those related to his career. Then he made an unusual request. He wanted to be employed part time in IT industry. I was not prepared for this because I had always thought a middle level job in an IT company has to be full time. But he was very firm in his decision. He said half the day he would like to work for an NGO committed to uplift the living standards of village artisans. Vijayan finally joined another good product company and over a period of time, he emerged as one of the most successful project leads in the company. However, he continued to work for half the day. Over time, I gradually came to know about him as a person, his views about many things in life and his ambitions in his career. I realised that the primary objective in life was not to become a successful IT manager, but to help make the world a better place to live in.

It was sheer coincidence that I met Sarita* during the same period of time. She had an MBA in HR from one of the premier institutes of the country. She was then looking for an organisation which could give her opportunity to work part time in the HR team. I interviewed her and found her very competent in her area of expertise. I offered her a part time job as a consultant in the HR team. She was so good at her job that I offered her a permanent position in the team with regular managerial responsibilities. She was very clear - she would accept the manager’s role but still would like to continue working part time.

I realised that she valued her family and personal life equally to that of her professional career and organisational achievements and was not ready to give up one at the cost of the other.

I was much wiser by then and I offered her a part time managerial job with a team of full time HR professionals. She not only excelled in her job but also was well accepted by her team members.

Raviram* was a co-speaker at a conference. We became good friends over a period of time and started meeting regularly to exchange ideas and discuss subjects of mutual interest over weekends. Raviram was working for a multinational IT company as the software engineering head and was doing exceedingly well. He was being considered for a CXO role for a major product initiative in the South East Asia region. Suddenly, at one of our meetings, he confessed his intention of leaving his job. He sought my advice. However, when I heard the passion with which he explained his future plans to start his own organisation, I knew he had already made
up his mind. As I had guessed, despite advice to the contrary from almost all his close friends and relatives, he decided to quit and started his own company.

These three real life incidents convinced me that many of the traditional theoretical concepts for explaining career phenomena seem less valid today than they did earlier.

There were three significant changes that I was witnessing through these experiences. The first was the de-coupling of the concept of career to any one organisation (so entrenched in my mind set) and even from its exclusive association with paid employment. Second, the departure from the usually accepted notion of career as regular progressions through ladder like job sequences. Third was the broader understanding of career that goes beyond organisations and encompasses family, life-interests and personal accomplishment.

All the three real life examples that I have narrated above gave me a thought-provoking insight into the hither-to less explored field of careers and career success in the IT industry. Whereas in traditional industries, professionals contend with the organisational view of career and career success, at least a handful of IT professionals do look for a self-defined view of career and the career success. Therefore, I felt it was important for me to understand the crucial building blocks that defined career and career success for these professionals. At the same time there was another thought that was bothering me as an HR professional working in the IT industry. This is the high turnover rate and the usual responses from HR managers in IT Industry to address this important issue. Since demand consistently exceeds the supply of quality IT professionals, HR managers, tend rely more and more on offering financial sops to retain them without looking at any other meaningful HR interventions. Expanding more on these thoughts, I also discovered existing literature on turnover that talks about combining individual with organisational and opportunity structure variables in order to predict one of the most important outcomes - the decision to quit or not to quit (Mobley et.al.1979).

Career Anchor and Attrition:

Pursuing this train of thought, I realised that if we, the HR professionals in IT industry continue to take a purely transactional view of individual-organisational relationship, see as any individual as largely replaceable in terms of skill set, and view all non-work interest as strictly the individual’s business unless they infringe on his/her daily work schedule, we will be focusing as usual with the organisation-driven objective and external perspective of career and ignoring the individual-driven, subjective and internal perspective of career. Therefore I asked myself, could we not address internal career needs of these IT professionals in organisational context and thereby arrest the high turnover?

Organisations create conducive environments for its people through innovative HR practices. Hence, it was logical that different sets of HR practices could be instrumental in meeting diverse internal career needs of the individual. The concept of career anchor emerged as a way of explaining the pattern of self-perceived talents, motives and values that served to guide, stabilise and integrate individual careers in organisational context. It was therefore logical that career anchor would influence individuals to prefer a certain set of HR practices compared to others. Incongruence in this preference in terms of what they prefer versus what they actually get from their respective organisations could give rise to significant dissatisfaction in IT professionals. This dissatisfaction can lead to several negative situations in their job. I wondered if this dissatisfaction arising out of individual-organisation expectation mismatch would create lower organisational commitment and thereby higher turnover among IT professionals.

In the backdrop of such realities, perhaps there is a need to re-examine the shift in the meaning of the term career itself; the silent evolution that has already taken place in the West and has now begun in India, especially among IT professionals.

Career Anchor for organisation-Individual Integration:

The new meaning of career signifies the emergence of a new breed of contract between the individual and the organisation, which is predominantly psychological in nature. The term “Psychological Contract” originally identified Levinson (1962) and further broadened by Schein (1965) and Rousseau (1995) defines these contracts as a set of natural expectations, often implicit which are held between the organisation and the individual in the employment relationship. Shepherd (1984) described this as a new career contact, which is not a pact with the organisation but more of an agreement with oneself and one’s work. According to him, “these are the things that you can or potentially could do with excellence, which are fulfilling in the doing of them, so fulfilling that if you also get paid to do them, it feels not like compensation, but like a gift.”

In this psychological contract, nothing is written down; but the mutual expectation between the individual and the organisation function like a contract in that if either party fails to meet the expectations, the impact could be serious leading to de motivation, turnover, lack of advancement or termination (Schein, 1978).
It has thus become important for researchers and practitioners to understand the internal career needs of IT professionals, especially those which when fulfilled lead to strengthen this psychological contract. As a first step, it may therefore be logical, to explore career anchor as a way to understand these unique individual need.

Unfortunately, research work examining internal career issues of IT professionals, even in the US and Europe have been far from adequate. Sumner (2001) reported importance of career development as one of most important interventions to arrest the high turnover of IT professionals. According to a study conducted by Ginzberg and Baroudi (1988), a comprehensive career planning process is not very common in practice for most of the IT organisations. They called for an examination of issues pertaining to the internal career, focusing on self-concept and career values. They also reported that internal career desires must be satisfied and that organisations must attempt to provide work conditions to match underlying internal career anchor.

In the Indian context, the response from IT organisations have been somewhat different at least in terms of making an effort to retain IT professionals by addressing their internal career needs. All India Management Association (AIMA), while conducting a national survey on retention management (Business Today, 1999) found “achieving a match between individual and organisational goal” as one of the important retention strategies in India. However despite this finding, most Indian organisations have done hardly anything to address internal career needs of IT professionals. As a matter of fact, career planning as an HR intervention in Indian organisations has always been neglected. According to Bandyopadhyay (1999) apropos the Indian IT industry “HR managers hardly attempt to make any value addition, by putting into place innovative HR interventions that strengthens individual-organisation integration...Needless to say career development never figured in their priority list of HR interventions.”

Schein’s (1975, 1978) development of the “Career Anchor” concept in assessing career orientation of individuals is a breakthrough in the direction of career research, in terms of shifting its focus from external to internal careers of individuals. According to Schein (1978), a person’s “Career Anchor” is his or her occupational self-concept consisting of the following:

1. Self-perceived talents and abilities, (based on actual successes in a variety of work settings)
2. Self-perceived motives and needs (based on opportunities for self tests and self-diagnosis in real situations and on feedback from others)
3. Self-perceived attitudes and values (based on actual encounters between self and the norms and values of the employing organisation and work setting)

The most important thing to note here is that the anchor is a “stabilising force” the values, motives and needs that an individual will not give up, if forced to make a choice.

Career Anchor based HR Practices - Are you ready to experiment?

Schein (1978) defined Career Anchor as the self-concept of an individual comprising his/her self-perceived skills and talents, needs and motives and values and attitudes. It may therefore be imperative that an individual will always try to realise these values and attitudes and the opportunity to utilise his/her talents in the context of the organisation. According to Schein (1996), the metaphor of ‘anchor’ signifies that stability will be achieved in one’s career if he/she is in an organisational environment that provides an opportunity to realise the components of his/her career anchor. Organisations create a conducive environment for its people through innovative HR practices. Hence, it would be a logical conclusion that different HR practices could be instrumental in meeting diverse internal career needs of the individual. By the same logic, it can be argued that individuals with different career anchors will look for different types of HR practices in their organisation to enable them to realise their preferred values and needs as part of their anchor. For example an individual with autonomy as career anchor may value flexible time or autonomous work teams, whereas another with a technical career anchor might like the concept of technical ladder in the career growth in the context of organisation: for those with security as career anchor, life-time employment policy could be the instrument for satisfying his/her needs.

In this prevailing scenario, there is an urgent need to design innovative HR practices that fulfill the diverse internal career orientations of individuals. Especially in IT organisations, where professionals have so many choices, it becomes imperative that HR plays a significant role in ensuring that HR practices are designed to cater to pluralistic career orientations of individuals. Dave Ulrich (1998) while writing on a new mandate for human resources referred to this as “championing for employee’s cause” and included this as one of the emerging roles of successful HR management. His statement “the new HR should be the employees’ voice in management discussions, offer employees opportunities for personal and professional growth”, summarises the paradigm shift that is required for HR professionals to address internal career orientation of IT professionals.
As Schein puts it, the metaphor of ‘anchor’ denotes the tendency to pull the individual back if he/she is in an environment that does provide an opportunity to realise the components of his/her internal career orientations (career anchors). In an organisational set up, it goes without saying that an appropriate set of HR practices would be crucial to create such an environment. It is therefore possible for organisations to identify certain sets of HR practices against each of these career anchors. With the assumption that diverse set of internal career needs of individuals need to be fulfilled by different set of HR practices it would make organisations more focused in planning their HR practices. It is in this context HR professionals need to re-look at career management practices in their respective organisations and can try to design HR practices based on career preferences of IT professionals manifested through their dominant anchors. There could be an innovative way to think through and then focus on the variation in the preference of HR practices by individuals with different career anchors.

It is also expected that outcome of this exercise may enable the HR professionals in IT industry (a) to have a more pragmatic and pluralistic view of internal career diversity among IT professionals and (b) accordingly design suitable strategic HR plan and practices, which may address the internal career needs of IT professionals and reduce the usually high voluntary turnover prevalent in the industry.

In this changing scenario, IT organisations in India need to realise that the work force is turning more pluralistic, where fulfillment of individual’s needs is as important as the external ones imposed by the organisation. Success in this industry will therefore depend on the extent to which organisations adopt creative and unorthodox HR practices that can effectively address internal career needs of IT professionals and create an emotional bonding between individuals and the organisation. This pluralistic framework of career recognizes that there are markedly different ways of defining career success for an individual in the context of the organisation, and consequently markedly different approaches to career management to retain highly mobile IT professionals.

**Dear HR professionals, are you ready to experiment?**

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- Real names have not been used to keep the anonymity

**Food For Thought :**

"I love Mickey Mouse more than any woman I've ever known."
- Walt Disney
What is a Knowledge Job?
Most of us these days do work that is knowledge-intensive. The nature of this work varies greatly, depending on the domain of knowledge, the tasks involved, the organisational context etc. Much of it is relatively unstructured, not easily lending itself to automation. Sure, we use computers as information retrieval and processing tools, but it is as humans who normally decide how to go about a task and which knowledge we shall and shall not use. However, because we are in a 'job', our employer and boss 'pigeon holes' us into a role, and quite often determines what we should do.

A 'job' is a set of work tasks associated with a role. Because the nature and volume of work tasks is increasingly dynamic, and the skills needed for successful execution vary task by task, the chances of having the right person in the right role for the right task at the right time is quite low; it requires expertise in work scheduling and pattern matching to mesh available human resources to required tasks. As consulting and other project-based organisations know, matching tasks with people and human resource scheduling is a core competency that allows them to put together temporary teams selected for the tasks in hand. Unfortunately too many organisations still think in terms of jobs within business functions, since that's the way their organisation is designed. This means that too often, individuals are stuck doing tasks they don't enjoy and organisations are not carrying out their portfolio of work in the optimum way.

A large number of individuals are indeed moving away from the job scenario as are organisations moving towards more flexible work arrangements. These individuals do temporary work assignments that fit in with their lifestyle interests and patterns. They are 'free agents' who decide which work packages interest them. Of course, many people stick to 'jobs', even when unhappy, because of stability, financial security and pension rights, but even these certainties are getting flimsier daily.

So the first point to consider when you are considering your next career move, is do you want a job, or do you really want a certain type and mix of work assignments? Do you want to fit into an existing job or create your own job? What I am suggesting is that for many people seeking a knowledge 'job' could be a constraint on your career, compared to exploiting your knowledge anchors (see below).
Knowledge Anchors

People perform better at those tasks that interest and stimulate them and for which they are competent. Obvious really, but it often takes people many years to fully understand their inner drives and core capabilities. Indeed, in terms of careers, Edgar Schein suggested that it was often mid-life (late 30s and 40s) before an individual’s career anchor becomes clear. Our anchor is the "dominant motivator" that guides us into the type of work we want to do. Schein in his book 'Career Anchors: Discovering Your Real Value (1990)' identified 8 main anchors that are found in different people. These are technical/functional, general management, autonomy/independence, security/stability, entrepreneurial/creativity, service/dedication (to a cause), challenge and lifestyle. Most people find that one anchor is dominant. By analogy, I suggest each of us has just a few types of knowledge anchor, which determine the type of knowledge work that motivates us.

I propose the following:

- The expert - you have expertise in a domain of knowledge or a particular skill. You enjoy honing your knowledge and exercising your core skills. You are the recognised "expert" and stay with your chosen knowledge domain over many years.
- Knowledge analyst - you love assimilating knowledge from many sources. You have many of the attributes of the expert (but are perhaps not as self-opinionated or self-promotionalist) and also of the packager. Others respect your views and like your 'rational' knowledge to support their arguments.
- Knowledge leader - you have a broad area of knowledge and build bridges between knowledge (and people) in different domains. You are a generalist, not a specialist. You see the big picture and how knowledge supports organisational objective. You’re the future CKO or CEO.
- Knowledge networker - you are a knowledge broker and connector. You connect people to people and people to knowledge. A hybrid of expertise and leadership - you’re scope is not too broad and you have a large address book. You don’t know all the answers yourself, but you know a person who does.
- Knowledge custodian - you like everything to be in its proper place. You love classifying knowledge and organising content into taxonomies. You get upset if knowledge renegades upset the system. You’re probably the knowledge center manager.
- Knowledge creator - you’re an ideas person. Always thinking of new things to do, you never seem to have time to see them through to implementation. Your thinking goes off in several directions but you do come up with breakthrough ideas and innovative approaches.
- Knowledge entrepreneur - you may not have the best ideas yourself, but you do recognize those that have potential. You are the bridge between the creator and the packager. You have a good story to tell and are committed to making a difference.
- Knowledge packager - if you didn't do knowledge work you would probably be an engineer or mechanic. You assemble all the knowledge components to make something worthwhile. You help knowledge creators realise their dreams.
- Knowledge visualiser - you like pictures, so you get away from those boring bulleted Power point slide shows. You make your points in images, diagrams and perhaps even cartoons and music.
- Knowledge activist - you are committed to a cause and will marshal the knowledge you need to support your case. You can also be a knowledge maverick, questioning the status quo and raising doubts in others about the efficacy of their hard-won knowledge. Although an irritant to the powers that be, it is often you who initiates change.
- Knowledge seeker - ever curious, you are always asking "why" and seeking new knowledge. Even after you retire, you will go on knowledge delivery cruises to new exotic locations. The pursuit of knowledge for your personal fulfillment is your key driver. You couldn’t care less if it’s useful to others or not, but are always willing to share it enthusiastically.
- Storyteller - you cut into the bullshit and encapsulate knowledge into highly memorable stories. You have a strong imagination and look for analogies and metaphors. The fact that storytelling is now a tool for corporate knowledge management means that you should have a bright career ahead - even if you did get turned down for the Edinburgh Festival fringe!
Anchors Away
You probably recognise some of your traits in the above anchors. Once you’ve clarified which two or three are your primary anchors - the kinds of knowledge role in which you excel and are motivated - you have the knowledge to frame or hone your knowledge proposition. You don’t have to be seeking a job or work to do this. Just as it’s wise to keep your CV up to date for any eventuality, its a good discipline to have your knowledge proposition components ready for whatever situation might arise, with clients, business partners or peers.

The problem with many knowledgeable people, whether knowledge workers or knowledge job seekers is the tendency to adopt a ‘knowledge push’ strategy: here are my credentials, my CV etc. CVs and capability profiles these days are almost too predictable. Even though many are factual and good, few inspire the recipient. The ones that stand out are those that exhibit some degree of creativity and offer something of interest to potential clients. This calls for researching your targets (potential buyers, employers) and finding a proposition that is attractive to them. Don’t wait for jobs to be advertised or vacancies to come available. A good proposition that demonstrates value to the recipient will create job openings or work opportunities that were not there before (80 percent of the roles I filled in my corporate career were jobs designed by myself).

**Your approach should mirror your anchor. That way you are portraying your capabilities in a way that you do well.** For example, if you are a knowledge packager, why not send your proposition on a CD as a short HTML file with links to more in depth knowledge resources? If you are a visualizer, why not send a pictorial brochure or a video? And if you are a storyteller, don’t even bother to write anything down. Grab your target, take them into a pub and spin a convincing story - isn’t that how many dot.com companies got their seed funding?!

But there again, by suggesting you sell yourself in ways that may be unconventional, perhaps I am revealing one of my own anchors as a knowledge maverick.

**Food For Thought:**
My mother said to me, "If you become a soldier, you’ll be a general, if you become a monk you’ll end up as the pope." Instead, I became a painter and wound up as Picasso.-- Pablo Picasso

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**Seek Your Feedback:**

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Editorial Team
India is in a fast forward mode. Blessed with a young population, our present labour force of 400 million is slated to double by 2025. With literacy rate tipped to touch 80% and the largest number of English speaking people in the world by 2010, India’s human resources would be the cause for global envy. Importantly, our country’s growth is market led; an indicator to its sustainability. The above are signposts Indian organisations on opportunities for growth like never before.

With the advent of the knowledge era, the competitive edge of today’s organisations has shifted to a new capital viz. the Knowledge Capital. In today’s world an organisation’s intangibles dictate market capitalization, a large component of which is existing organisational knowledge coupled with its readiness to generate, assimilate and leverage new knowledge. Since organisational knowledge is primarily tacit knowledge to a significant extent and resides in its people, we need to invest in our people continually.

With improved econometrics, education, cultural transitions arising out of globalisation, liberalisation, the aspirations of our nation and people are rising. Opportunities for talented people in India know no bounds. Thus, today talented people are motivated to add value to the organisation only when they perceive that the organisation adds value to them.

Once people articulated their personal and organisational visions, their achievement orientation was kindled and they discovered the urge for learning necessary to achieve self and organisational objectives. Thus the all important step of career management of aligning personal development with organisational strategy came out of choice rather than compulsion.

Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited, a Government of India Undertaking is a PSU Navratna and a Fortune 500 Company. As Chairman and Managing Director of a mammoth company, I see the challenges to attract, develop and retain talent as real. In such a scenario, our HR interventions in the last 4-5 years related to career management have helped us to build organisational capability, as well as add value to employees.

The last decade has seen deregulation in the oil industry. This has brought in competition from private players like Essar and Reliance and leading Multi Nationals like Shell. Our challenges in HR were two fold:

• Develop competencies in our people to compete with the Multinationals and large private players.
• Add value to employees thru learning and growth and career in order to develop and retain them.

We, as a Public Sector Unit, enjoy low flexibility in pay package determination. However, I believe that employees can be retained more often thru work that is challenging and personally meaningful to them. The work would lead them to learn and help them to perceive their personal growth.

In early 2003, after days of deliberation the Directors and SBU heads in our company co-created the organisational vision to become customer focused, act faster than the competition and become a Learning organisation. We realised that HR interventions focused on Career Management would be the vehicle to deliver strategic objectives of the organisation while adding value to our people. Significant steps in career management process are mentioned below:

• Enabling and embracing employee choices : As mentioned earlier, the top management in early 2003, envisaged what we intended our organisation to become. I believed that such freedom of choice needs to be made available to all people. Thereafter, we invited more than 4000 of our people to articulate their personal aspirations and also take part in co-creating the organisational vision. This process has continued over the last 4 years.

Once people articulated their personal and organisational visions, their achievement orientation was kindled and they discovered the urge for learning necessary to achieve self and organisational objectives. Thus the all important step of career management of aligning personal development with organisational strategy came out of choice rather than compulsion.

• Building Balanced Scorecard :

The organisational vision was then mapped in the balanced scorecards and...
the lead indicators established. We set a road map for equipping our employees with the skill sets and competencies required for achieving our strategic objectives and vision.

• **Competency Development:**
  We first defined the job requirements in line with our strategy and the competencies required for superior performance in such jobs. Thereafter, we mapped competencies of our officers and prepared individual development plans to bridge the gap between observed and required competencies.

• **Training and Development:**
  People thereafter were allowed to opt for the training workshops and avail organisational knowledge portals to hone their behavioural competencies and skill sets that they felt were critical for improving their performance.

• **Mentoring and Coaching:** Mentors were assigned to each of our regional offices in the country. Senior officers took responsibility to coach and mentor field officers to help them improve their skills and competencies for improved performance. Mentors also helped people to identify their personal passions and offered advice towards their personal growth. This has encouraged lateral movements across streams and has led people to request a switch in disciplines such as engineers requesting to work in HR stream.

• **Building Leadership Pipeline:** Competencies such as leadership are found to be critical in handling the challenges of tomorrow. Some of the key leadership qualities that we need in all our team leaders at the refineries and in our managers include listening, being curious, ability to envision a personal and organisational vision and developing emotional intelligence.

In view of this, we organised leadership training which included imparting tools such as dialogue and listening skills in a bid to invite and embrace diversity, decision making on holistic basis and effective interpersonal skills and people management.

• **Performance Management Systems:** We have developed a performance management system which is online and has high degree of transparency. Above all, the targets are mutually co-created. These flow from team objectives which in turn are in tune with the organisational objectives. The targets are based on the balanced scorecard system which determines lead indicators of the learning, growth and process improvements required to meet financial objectives. Thus the employee is made aware of the competencies and skill sets he needs to develop.

The factor which has the greatest impact on performance is clarity of objectives. This system has ensured clarity early in the appraisal cycle and regular reviews by the supervisor provide effective feedback to the employee on his progress. This has helped the appraisal system not only to be aligned to the organisation but as a tool for individual career management and development.

• **Job Rotation:** Job rotations involving both changes in job content as well as geographical location are compulsory for all management employees even in their early years. Geographical movements ensure that the management employees develop sensitivity to cultural diversity and learn to work and leverage such diversity for more openness in their views and opinions.

• **Rotation in SBUs:** Working in different disciplines like Operations and Sales, as well as in different business streams like LPG, lubes, retail help our officers to grow with a holistic view of the organisation and enables them to take better decisions, in addition to helping build more complete managers.

**Impact of these Interventions:**

The above cited steps helped us in not only building a boundary-less organisation but has also spurred landmark innovations in our different SBUs such as lubes, refineries, LPG and retail amongst others. Additionally our efforts at Customer Delight have fetched repeated recognitions, and we have been recognised globally for our efforts to equip our people with superior skills and competencies to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

While the process benefits HPCL in the increasingly competitive world; it has also created happier and engaged employees; who have perceived their incremental worth as a shared effort between the organisation and self. In closing, I would like to say that our vision of ensuring organisational growth as a function of personal growth continues to attract, and retain the best talent.

**Food for Thought:**

"If A is a success in life, then A equals x plus y plus z. Work is x; y is play; and z is keeping your mouth shut."

- Albert Einstein
In an era where the term "war for talent" is finding its place in common parlance, organisations are faced with the onerous responsibility of being able to attract and retain talent. While there is considerable divergence on what attracts people to organisations and what causes them to stay in the same organisation, there is no doubt that providing meaningful career opportunities is a significant factor. Employees -- particularly high performing talent -- requires continuous challenge and stretch in their roles in order to remain motivated. Our experience shows that if employees see stagnation in their career graph they become restless and disengaged. The need to manage Career development is therefore a continuous prerogative for HR and the organisation.

Having outlined the need to engage continuously in career development, in practical terms the task is easier said than done. Employees have too many questions and the organisational variables do not permit certain answers. Because of the dynamic and changing nature of organisations, it is difficult to predict what roles and opportunities will be available at different points of time. Further individual's preferences and interests also change and what seems a priority today may not be the most preferred option tomorrow. HR has the difficult task of predicting the future based on a limited set of information.

In this seemingly contradictory scenario, how do organisations provide and build successful careers for their employees?

While the challenge remains and organisations resort to building innovative ways to foster career development, there are a few practical ways in which this can be done. The first step is to define, document and publish the organisational roles and the way these roles fit in the hierarchy. This helps employees see the opportunities available to them. Secondly by building a linkage between the employee's current role and the possibilities that the future holds. It is important to keep in mind that while doing this, the ground realities and the very nature of change is highlighted. If not done carefully and objectively, the exercise might create more harm than good.

A Case Study - Standard Chartered Bank (SCB)

SCB has been in India for more than 150 years and has more than doubled its employee strength in the past few years. Today the bank and its subsidiaries (excluding the BPO operations) employ more than 12000 people in India alone. The challenge is to engage and provide exciting career opportunities to all employees.

Broad Principles of Career Management at SCB

"My career is my responsibility and priority"

This credo is well articulated amongst all employees of the bank and employees are encouraged to take charge of their careers. The organisation fully supports and provides all possible assistance to enable employees to realise their career aspirations.

Growth is Both Horizontal and Vertical

Growth is usually synonymous with promotions or vertical movement in hierarchy. Contemporary organisations are moving towards flatter structures and broader bands, hence growth needs to be redefined as anything that adds value to a professional. While it may not be feasible to give promotions to employees every year, it is possible to give challenging work assignments that helps them enhance their employability and leadership capabilities.

Be Flexible and Grab Opportunities

Growth brings with it a plethora of job opportunities. It is essential that employees recognize and utilize those opportunities. Career decisions need to be swifter, logically thought through and well executed.

People do not quit "organisations", they quit their "bosses"

This is now substantially established through research findings. The supervisor is the face of the organisation to an employee. The way they treat their teams shape the employees organisational experience. Hence while HR
HR Tools and Interventions for Career Management at SCB

Strength Based Approach

As the name suggests this approach believes in the simple philosophy of building on areas of natural strengths. The assumption being that each individual is unique and has a set of unique strengths which come more naturally to them than the areas where they need to put extra effort to produce average outcomes. To use this approach the bank helps the individuals to first identify, then understand and then encourages them to use their strengths in various roles and assignments. To build a career plan an employee should be aware of his/her strengths to effectively deploy them while framing career plans.

Talent classification.

Based on the performance and potential of an employee a rigorous talent classification is done to identify the high potential employees. Given the large employee base of over 12000 employees it is essential that focused efforts are made by the organisation to identify, develop and retain high performing staff. This also helps to build a performance based culture and helps minimise subjectivity. Post talent classification in various categories the HR manager works with the line manager to identify inputs that will help the employees to develop their strengths. Career management is not a one time dialogue - it needs to be deeply embedded in the performance management and development process of the organisation.

Individual Learning and Development Programe

Structured learning and development is an effective tool to groom employees and add value to their careers. At Standard Chartered Bank the thought process is that learning and development is more than just classroom inputs. Employees learn and develop through short term assignments, cross functional business exposure, reading books and projects assignments.

Employees at the bank are required to generate an online Individual Learning and Development plan with inputs from their supervising managers. They can choose from a variety of learning courses mentioned in the online database or alternatively consult the Organisation Learning department for any specialised training. Employees make their own learning and development plan and this helps to generate greater ownership and accountability of the plan.

Job Watch Policy

With an international presence that spans 56 countries and many more cultures, one of the tenets of the bank’s Employee Value Proposition is helping build international careers. Most of the leadership roles are about people management and require managing different diversities and nationalities. All jobs (domestic and international) are advertised on the intranet and employees can take a shot at it as per the process. Each year a sizeable number of employees move into roles and locations of their choice through the Job Watch process.

Cross Functional Career Opportunities

The Bank consciously encourages employees to experiment and try out new roles and opportunities. An employee can apply for any role outside the function in which they may have been operating and the organisation is willing to facilitate such moves. Strong performance record is the underlying factor which gives the organisation confidence to take measured risks on people. Employees have moved from Human Resources to business roles and vice versa, from front line roles to operations, based on their strengths and opportunities available.

Taking Risks on People

Leadership is not a function of age or number of years of experience. Giving stretch roles to employees to draw out the best is another practice that helps build meaningful careers. Promotions are linked to performance and are not time bound. Employees are assigned to bigger roles so that they grow in the job. Deploying ready made managers in roles minimise training and coaching efforts leads to monotony and employees get bored faster. If on the other hand employee learn and grow in their roles they are less likely to get bored in a short span of time.

The bank also runs various schemes particularly at entry level to build its leadership cadre. One such scheme is the International Graduate Program. MBAs from premier colleges are recruited and put through a structured 18 to 20 months program. The purpose of the program is to “build generalist and leadership’ skills. With time as the young graduates realise their strengths and develop organisation maturity, they may opt for specialist roles than generalist ones. The organisation is open to such changes and movements.

In summary

Career management is not a one time exercise or a specific tool. It is consists of a continuous process of dialogue and interaction with the employee and taking a series concrete steps towards building skills and capabilities of employees.

If employees perceive that they are growing and adding value to themselves and the organisation they are likely to stay on.

Food for Thought:

"Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work."

Aristotle quotes (Ancient Greek Philosopher, Scientist and Physician, 384 BC-322 BC)
**HUMAN POTENTIAL MANAGEMENT:**
*Time to move beyond the concept of human resource management?*

**Dr. Satish Kumar Kalra**

**Abstract**

Presents the concept of human potential management (HPM) and argues that the old concept of human resource management (HRM) should be replaced by HPM. Argues that treating human beings as a resource to be used, utilised or manipulated like any other resource is demeaning. Further, with the increasing number of highly skilled knowledge workers, resentment of the word “resource” is likely to increase, since knowledge workers are inclined to be hostile to manipulation. They would prefer the organisation to enable them to fulfil their true potential and, in so doing, help the organisation to achieve its objectives. Also presents a definition of HPM and highlights the features which differentiate it from HRM.

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**Introduction**

In the changing economic environment, human resource management (HRM) is assuming much greater importance than ever before. HRM was conceived to be different from the traditional and conventional notion of personnel administration; however, ever since the term HRM came into currency (along with human resource development (HRD)), it has come in for much criticism, because it is generally felt that to treat human beings like any other resource is derogatory and demeaning. As Casse (1994) comments: The definition of human beings merely as resources is obsolete, demeaning and out of line with our sociological evolution. There is a strong need to re-assess our definition of the people who are part of our business workforce.

Other critics have felt that HRM is like putting old wine into new bottles, i.e. it is merely changing the name from personnel administration to HRM, yet retaining most of the traditional personnel administration functions. Apart from these criticisms, a review of the concept in the context of the changing environment and changing profile of human capital is long overdue.

Although critics of HRM have put forward some rational arguments, they have not come up with any constructive suggestion or new concept to replace HRM. This is analogous to the famous painter who once put one of his new paintings on the wall of the town hall with a note that anyone noticing any flaw in the painting should put a mark at the appropriate point. In the evening when he came to see the painting, he was pained to see his painting spoiled as it was full of marks. A few days later, he did another painting and again put it on the wall of the town hall with a note saying that anyone noticing any flaw should improve it. This time when he came back in the evening, he found his painting intact without any mark.

The moral of the story is that in the absence of any other alternative appropriate terminology, the terms HRM and HRD are still in vogue and have, in fact, become much more popular than ever before. Understanding the sentiments of the critics towards the term HRM and its disputed usage, an attempt has been made in this paper to develop a new terminology and concept for this key aspect of management. But before this, a brief examination of the words “resource” and “human” is given.

According to the concise oxford dictionary (1982), resource is a “means of supplying some want or deficiency, a stock or resource on which one can draw when necessary.” In this sense, resource is something which can be manipulated or controlled by management or the organisation at its wish and to its advantage. This itself seems to be undermining human beings, as a human is something that is “opposite to animals, machines, mere objects, etc.,” because humans have “superior mental development and power of articulate speech” (The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1982). Unfortunately, this aspect of “human” seems to be missing in the definitions of HRM, owing to both the overemphasis of the word “resource” and perhaps its connotations in traditional notions of “personnel administration”, in which personnel were “administered”.

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Dr. Kalra is a professor at The Management Development Institute, Gurgaon, India. The paper was first published in the Journal of European Industrial Training, Vol.21(5),1997, pp 176-180 and received wide international reviews. (Reprinted with permission)
Therefore, although HRM was thought to be an improvement, it still considered human beings as "resources" to be managed, perhaps because it was felt that they were incapable of self-management. In this sense, HRM deprives employees of using their "superior mental development" and full potential as it assumes that, like any other resource, human beings can be manipulated and exploited. Monday and Noe (1990) define HRM as "the utilisation of human resources to achieve organisational objectives". In this definition, it would appear that the term "utilisation" does not exclude utilisation through coercion. In this sense, therefore, utilisation could lead to demoralisation and to a lack of motivation and, ultimately, be counter-productive to organisational growth and development. This means that the concept of HRM is still about treating human beings not only as a means to achieving organisational objectives, but also as being peripheral to the organisation. With this kind of mindset, organisations are likely to see employees as just cogs in a wheel.

All this also raises an ethical question, i.e. should organisations manipulate human beings by creating systems and structures which undermine the superior mental ability of human beings? Casse (1994) feels that it is ethically wrong to equate people with resources and says, "people often resent being described in such terms."

Elaborating on this point further, he says:

The expression HRM immediately relegates people into the category of corporate resources ... It implies that the corporation's sole mission is to produce and sell goods and services in order to make a profit, this goal to be accomplished by means of its various resources - among them, the human beings. HRM conveys the idea that people are employed in order to be used, that their raison d'être is not to enjoy but to serve.

The question then is: should organisations continue to treat people unethically or should they utilize their employees' (or partners') superior mental ability for their enhancement and through this achieve organisational growth?

In fact, with improvements in education, skill levels and the overall standard of living, the concept of utilizing the potential of partners (replacing the word "employee" with "partner" may itself help to change the organisational mindset) is assuming increasing importance; however, the concept of HRM does not go far enough to reflect this changing economic and social environment. Casse (1994) also points out that "the knowledge partner cannot simply be treated as a piece of equipment that the company and its senior executives move around according to their needs." Therefore, there is a need to create a new concept which fits in with present-day reality.

Although the concept of HRM was undoubtedly an improvement on the traditional concept of personnel management which assumed "that human beings are primarily motivated by comforts and salary and necessary attention may be given to rationalize these so that people do not get dissatisfied" (Pareek and Rao, 1981) and the HRM movement did make progress away from this traditional view towards treating employees as human beings with their own needs, motivation, expectations, etc., which, as a result, made organisations look into these aspects to achieve their objectives by satisfying some of these needs, organisations still treated employees both as a means or a resource which needed to be "oiled" the same as any other tool or machine, and as: a great asset in the organisation. They are not merely necessary evils to be reckoned with, but they can contribute a great deal to the achievement of organisational goals (Pareek and Rao, 1981) [emphasis mine].

The term "not merely necessary evils" still implies that, for organisations, human resources are unavoidable evils and if they had any other option, they would avoid using them. The move towards a greater degree of automation in the workplace is a step in this direction. Moreover, it is generally observed that whenever there is a resource crunch in the organisations, its first axe falls on human resources in terms of retrenchments, cuts in manpower development and training budgets.

In view of this, as long as organisations continue to look on human beings as resources (in effect, necessary evils), they will aim to cut costs by reducing these very resources, just as they try to reduce any other resource. The term resource creates a mindset which undermines the value of human beings to that of assets for whose good the organisations are created. In that sense, it provides a blinkered view of human beings. In view of this, employees as partners need to have a central focus in organisations and should not be marginalized - not even at the mindset level, because it is the mindset which can gradually change the whole focus. Labelling theory suggests that terminology plays a vital role here. Casse (1994) makes this point:

Promoting the statement, "people are not mere resources", is more than just a semantic issue - it is indeed a conceptual one. For, if a corporate leader defines the people who are working for the organisation as human resource then there is good chance that they will be treated merely as "resources".
The shift from personnel management/personnel administration to HRM itself was a step in this direction, but as mentioned before, it is time to move a step forward to keep in tune with the changing socio-economic reality. The next section attempts this by developing the concept of human potential management (HPM) to replace that of HRM.

**Human Potential Management**

As indicated above, the term resource, when used in the context of human beings, creates a different kind of mindset and thus a different kind of attitude and perception about human beings in organisations; therefore, it is suggested that the term resource be replaced by “potential” and the new concept of human potential management be created, whereby human beings are the focus and are not seen as a mere resource.

According to the concise oxford dictionary (1982), the term “potential” means “capable of coming into being or action.” Human beings by nature are full of energy, capable of thinking and equipped with superior mental abilities; therefore, they are capable of being proactive as opposed to being reactive; their latent energies can “come into being.” In fact, the dictionary definition of potential also takes into account latent energy. By using their potential, human beings are capable of taking charge of themselves. They need not be directed by external influences. In fact, external influences could actually kill potential (if not in all cases, at least in many cases).

With the increase in the number of knowledge workers, employees today would most likely be inclined to develop and exploit their own potential unconditionally. This is reinforced by the results of a recent study (Tampoe, 1993). The findings of this study indicate that the biggest motivational factor for knowledge workers is “personal growth” followed by “operational autonomy” and then by “task achievement.” Among the four major motivators, money was the least motivational factor. Personal growth is referred to as “the opportunity for individuals to realise their potential”, and operational autonomy is defined as “a work environment in which knowledge workers can achieve the tasks assigned to them within the constraints of strategic direction and self-measurement indices” (Tampoe, 1993, p. 51).

Bower (1994) points out that “The successful companies of the 1990s will be those which they can achieve their full potential and thus facilitate the attainment of organisational objectives.” The findings of this study indicate that the biggest motivational factor for knowledge workers is “personal growth” followed by “operational autonomy” and then by “task achievement.” Among the four major motivators, money was the least motivational factor. Personal growth is referred to as “the opportunity for individuals to realise their potential”, and operational autonomy is defined as “a work environment in which knowledge workers can achieve the tasks assigned to them within the constraints of strategic direction and self-measurement indices” (Tampoe, 1993, p. 51). Bower (1994) points out that “The successful companies of the 1990s will be those which they can achieve their full potential and thus facilitate the attainment of organisational objectives.”

The above definition of HPM has the following distinctive features:

- **HPM focuses on self-management.** It has an underlying belief that if human beings are provided with opportunities to use their potential, they can manage themselves. This is contrary to the belief system underlying HRM which says that human beings have to be managed (utilized/used) to achieve organisational objectives.
- **HPM does not use human beings as a resource, but recognizes their potential and enables them to utilise their potential.**
- **HPM is an integrative and continuous process of enhancing human capabilities and capacities.** In this sense, it is different from HRM, which does not essentially see various interventions as integrative and as a whole the focus is on the use of human beings as a resource; therefore, most of the interventions are more often than not seen as strait-jacketed applications of HRM or HRD. In that sense, HRM has

This assumes much more importance in view of the greater professional knowledge, skills and competence of today’s workforce, making them more loyal to their profession at a time when organisational loyalty is likely to be more dependent on the organisation’s ability to provide and create opportunities for the use and development of their potential. In other words, they are less likely to be motivated or remain motivated by salary, comforts, expectations, etc., alone. Modern-day organisations continuously have to look beyond these and create conditions for their partners (employees) in which they can achieve their full potential and thus facilitate the attainment of organisational objectives. Organisations have to adopt the approach of HPM rather than that of traditional HRM.

The following definition of HPM further crystallises the concept: human potential management is an integrative and continuous process of enhancing human capabilities and capacities by enriching human beings’ existing potential and helping them to discover and tap their latent potential through micro-level human development interventions and macro-level systems and policy interventions to create and sustain an environment that facilitates individuals in achieving their full potential to their own as well as the organisation’s advantage.

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more of a "maintenance" kind of mindset, whereas HPM follows a continuous-growth-oriented approach.

- HPM focuses more on turning employees' potential to their own advantage, thereby leading automatically to the organisation's advantage. In this sense, HPM underplays the organisation's advantage by implying that if employees' potential is taken care of, it is likely to enhance employees' sense of responsibility towards organisations and create a feeling of organisational ownership (partnership), which could automatically lead to the achievement of organisational objectives/goals.

- Given the current dynamic environment, HPM also focuses on the continuous updating of organisational policies, structures and systems in such a way that it helps employees to achieve their full potential and to contribute their best to the organisation.

Given these distinctive features, HPM is a step forward from Miles' (1975) three alternative theories of management and provides a fourth model or theory. In terms of assumptions, policies and expectations, it can be added as a fourth model as shown in Table I (Presented in last page of this article).

**Conclusion**

Based on the above discussion, a review of the whole concept of HRM is long overdue. Owing to recent rapid global technological changes, a large percentage of working population already seems to have reached the threshold where rapid technological and economic development have led to the satisfaction of their comfort-oriented needs and expectations through improvement in economic status. This is also reflected in Tampoe's (1993) study in which he points out that:

Significantly lower importance placed by the respondents on monetary rewards ... is due in part to the fact that they all earned well above the national average wage and that money in its varying forms must be considered as having little incremental value as a motivator, even if it is related to individual performance, unless the potential earnings are very significant.

In general, Tampoe's (1993) observation can be seen as a trend-setter in this direction and also a pointer towards the fact that with improved quality of working life and quality of life in general, factors such as personal growth and operational autonomy are gradually likely to play a vital role in motivating tomorrow's more skilled and knowledgeable workforce. Employees are less likely to see themselves as resources who could be used, utilised or manipulated to achieve organisational objectives. They would be more inclined to work in enabling organisations that will, in turn, empower them to achieve their full potential. This will happen only if organisations start treating people as partners. According to Casse (1994), "the time has come to look at people in the corporation not as mere resources but as real partners." Hence, it is time to move from HRM to HPM and help organisations to change their mindset towards. HPM in this sense has to play a proactive role and this, itself, is the challenge for the HPM professional in the present-day dynamic environment.

**References**


Food for Thought:

There is joy in work. There is no happiness except in the realization that we have accomplished something.

- Henry Ford
Work is inherently distasteful to most people. What workers do is less important than what they earn for doing it. Few want or can handle work which requires creativity, self-direction, or self-control.

People can tolerate work if the pay is decent and the boss is fair. If tasks are simple enough and people are closely controlled, they will produce up to standard.

**Alternative theories of management**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions</th>
<th>Human relations model</th>
<th>Human resources model</th>
<th>Human potential model</th>
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<td>Work is inherently distasteful to most people. What workers do is less important than what they earn for doing it. Few want or can handle work which requires creativity, self-direction, or self-control.</td>
<td>People want to feel useful and important. People desire to belong and to be recognised as individuals. These needs are more important than money in motivating people to work.</td>
<td>Work is not inherently distasteful. People want to contribute to meaningful goals which they have helped to establish. Most people can exercise far more creative, responsible self-direction and self-control than their present jobs demand.</td>
<td>People have much more potential than generally visible at surface level and they want to use their full potential for their own and their organisation’s growth and development. Most people look for the fulfilment of their potential and can be self-directive in meaningfully achieving their organisation’s objectives through their won self-fulfilment.</td>
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**Policies**

The manager’s basic task is to closely supervise and control his subordinates. He must break tasks down into simple, repetitive, easily learned operations. He must establish detailed work routines and procedures and enforce these firmly but fairly.

The manager’s task is to make each worker feel useful and important. He should keep his subordinates informed and listen to their objections to his plans. The manager should allow his subordinates to exercise some self-direction and self-control on routine matters.

The manager’s task is to make use of his “untapped” human resources. He must create an environment in which all members may contribute to the limits of their ability. He must encourage full participation on important matters, continually broadening sub-ordinate self-direction and control.

Managers’ basic task is to facilitate their colleagues (people/partners) in enabling them to achieve their full potential. Managers must create an environment which facilitates people taking charge of themselves and using their full potential. Managers must facilitate people discovering and tapping their latent potential, so that they continuously enhance their capabilities and capacities to their own as well their organisation’s growth and advantage.

**Expectations**

People can tolerate work if the pay is decent and the boss is fair. If tasks are simple enough and people are closely controlled, they will produce up to standard.

Sharing information with subordinates and involving them in routine decisions will satisfy their basic needs to belong and to feel important. Satisfying these needs will improve morale and reduce resistance to formal authority- subordinates will “willingly co-operate”.

Expanding subordinate influence, self-direction, and self-control will lead to direct improvements in operating efficiency. Work satisfaction may improve as a “by-product” of subordinates making full use of their resources.

leadt to enhancement of individuals’ sense of responsibility and organisational ownership. Self-direction and self-control achieved through continuous enhancement of potential may lead to increased sense of satisfaction, commitment and worth among people in organisations and thus may help organisations in achieving their goals/objectives.
The forces of globalisation, the revolution in information technology and the emergence and evolution of new industries have posed managerial challenges across all functions. This is no less for human resource (HR) managers and consultants dealing with job recruitment and placement.

While discussing the dynamics of job selection and retention, we must recognise the following facts (realities?) of the current business environment.

(a) Temporary Jobs
The transient nature of jobs is by far the most significant consequence of the economic, industrial, technological and organisational transformation. Permanent jobs are few and many jobs may not continue for long even in the Government sector. The employment scenario and HR environment suggest that only two classifications of jobs remain - permanently temporary jobs and temporarily temporary jobs. This implies that job turnover and retention problem will continue to remain bothersome and may become more acute in the coming years.

(b) Educational Opportunities
Educational opportunities in many parts of the country have grown - especially engineering and management education (even though the quality of education is perceived to be less than desirable). Similarly, rapid economic and industrial growth is creating higher demand for qualified graduates. Thus demand and supply of HR (skilled personnel?) will continue to put pressures on companies, headhunters and job aspirants alike.

(c) Ineffective Placement Processes at Colleges
Placement processes are less than effective at engineering and management colleges. The rules for placement are neither satisfactory to students nor to the recruiters. Such rules create artificial pressures on companies as well as graduating students resulting in less than optimal selection process.

(d) Internet Use for Job Search
The Internet is increasingly being used for the recruitment industry and working population are fast becoming used to job search through Internet. This is not just true for young graduates but also for senior executives, who are getting equally adapted to Internet use for job search. With greater job opportunities and offers filling the mailboxes of working executives, job change is difficult to resist.

(e) Widening Slabs of Industry Salaries
Salary ranges for most job profiles have widened considerably within as well as across industries. This is obviously due to market competition to attract better talent as well as due to demand for experienced employees created by new companies.

(f) Downsizing and Poor Image of Public Sector
Restructuring or downsizing of public sector companies as well as their image has directed fresh graduates from all branches to look for jobs in new industries in the burgeoning services sector – even when the job has no relevance to their specialisation.

Abstract
The author argues that a well-considered job selection or retention decision should be based after conducting various analysis like personality and career stage, job opportunities, person-organisational fit, compensation/remuneration, interpersonal processes at work and organisational change.
(g) High Growth in Job Creation and Turnover

There is tremendous growth in terms of new job creation. As a direct corollary, job turnover and attrition is no less significant. Certain industries may have as high as 30% attrition. So headhunters will have no respite as they will have to work throughout the year handling demands of recruitment.

We present here a model of the dynamics of job selection and retention combining the various antecedents of job change as well as the moderating and mediating factors influencing job change or retention and other organisationally valued outcomes. (See Figure 1).
Work is one of the critical avenues through which people seek satisfaction from life. Work provides the opportunity to test and shape one’s potential, competencies and interests. Work also brings new relationships. The job is thus a major source of satisfying one’s needs, interests and aspirations. From youth to maturity, the human personality undergoes many stages of life, which demand adjustment in work and relationships. Young adult, adult, middle age and maturity – each stage of life necessitates changes in needs, capacities, interests and aspiration levels.

**Life Stage Changes** at various stages of life indirectly affect job retention, and other organisational outcomes such as organisational identification, job involvement and commitment. Changes in individual needs, capacities, interests and aspiration levels also indirectly affect the job retention and the commitment processes. We find that a large number of employees and managers do not change jobs more than two or three times in a lifetime while there are others who might have had five job changes in five years. This is largely explained by individual differences in personality or due to change in needs, capacities, interests and aspiration level at different stages of life.

**Passive and Active Job Search**

The job change search process is initially passive, i.e., in the form of wish fulfillment or contemplation or preparatory steps before actual job search. Active job search makes it incumbent on the individual to actually exchange information, mail resumes and attend interviews. The extent of passive or active job search is moderated by two factors – market opportunities and the individual’s history of past job changes. New or expanded market opportunity makes the search process and effort rather easy and results in feelings ranging between excitement and disappointment. History of the individual’s past job changes may limit the nature and type of job change. Also, the business world develops certain stereotypes and attributions relating to the individuals hunting for jobs as well as to organisations seeking managers. Thus changes in individual need, capacities, interests and aspiration levels interact with market opportunities and individual’s history of past job change leading to passive and active job change search.

**Job Choice and Selection**

The nature and adequacy of job search leads to availability of job choices and finally results in job selection. Final selection of job is moderated by the nature of job offers and future prospects or job promises, which in turn is based on market opportunities and industrial/economic growth. The most attractive offer is one that satisfies both current needs and aspirations as well as offers promises of a good future. The availability of job choices and final job selection is further moderated by the individual’s history of past job changes. History of past job changes may indicate consistency in career orientation, life stage appropriateness and motivation/commitment level.

The individual manager or employee holding a job/position is always in touch with market opportunities and tends to continually appraise and re-appraise these even if having made a recent employment move.

**Job and Life Satisfaction Levels**

Another moderator of job/appraisal and re-appraisal of job opportunities is the level of job and life satisfaction. A person highly dissatisfied with his current job may start re-appraising opportunities even soon after joining a new organisation. This may indicate that that either the earlier job selection was either not very well considered or was a hasty decision. Also sudden spurts in new opportunities may also create cognitive dissonance leading to re-appraisal of current job and fresh opportunities. However, a person growing into a higher stage of life requirement may take longer to re-appraise opportunities as he/she is more propelled by the needs of his/her life stage than the glitter of a new job offer.

**HR Policies**

Change in company policies and HR practices is another mediating factor causing individual to re-appraise the current job/position. New company policies and HR practices may render a job position more or less attractive in terms of authority, responsibility, job profile description and benefits/compensation. Also, changes in company policy may indicate different rates of growth for different types of individual. Job retention and other corporate objectives such as organisational identification and commitment are typically the result of an individual’s decision to terminate or job search after a number of job change efforts. This usually leads to a career in a given organisation with a high degree of organisational identification and commitment. As explained earlier, human personality and life stage changes influence the turnover or job retention by individuals.

Job and life satisfaction levels also affect the extent and duration of job retention and organisational loyalty.
Job retention, organisation identification, and commitment are equally influenced by change in company policies and its HR practices. Such policy changes not only affect economic outcomes for the individual employee and manager but also affect psychological outcomes. The individual may feel that not only a legal or economic but also a psychological contract has been violated. Such changes in company policies and practices are likely to lead to increased search for job change and eventual attrition. Change in company policies and HR practices may make the fit between the individual and the organisation non-viable, which is a strong reason for decreased commitment and higher turnover of individual employees and managers.

**Implications for HR Managers and Consultants**

As explained by the above model, there are some psychological, market/economic and organisational factors affecting and moderating the job selection and retention decision.

A well-considered job selection or retention decision should therefore be based on the following analyses as far as possible failing which individual employees or managers, or the recruiting organisation will suffer the negative consequences. These analyses include:

(a) Personality and career stage analysis
(b) Job opportunities analysis
(c) Person-organisational fit analysis
(d) Compensation, remuneration analysis
(e) Analysis of interpersonal processes at work
(f) Organisational change analysis

Further, organisations should on an ongoing basis:

(a) Conduct job, career and life satisfaction surveys of employees and managers annually to assess their satisfaction levels,
(b) Undertake organisational climate and culture surveys to assess changes in perceptions of employees and organisational climate dimensions, and
(c) Benchmark the HR policies and practices with best-in-class companies and in tune with market changes.

HR consultants should help design some simple frameworks for such analyses and surveys and some more elaborate tools, which can be adapted to specific organisational needs.

**Food for Thought:**

Diamond is nothing but carbon that has been placed under great pressure.

- R. Gopalakrishnan, Tata Sons
The advent and evolution of Information Technology - in the last two decades or so - has shrunk global boundaries, opened up an unending universe of knowledge, turned communication into a blessing and helped businesses flourish. Like all things good, there is nevertheless a flip side to this rosy story. Organisations have been and continue to grapple with the issue of Information Security. Information Security isn’t something you can just tack on and if it’s not integrated into the design of your business, it could mean potential disaster for the organisation.

It is imperative and critical to protect your organisation’s information assets - market data, proprietary research, client lists and their business information, business plans and financial information. The best way to protect it is to limit access to only employees, put a hard wall around them and monitor everything to ensure that the fort is in tact.

According to Vishal Dhupar, Managing Director of Symantec India, 54% of data loss happens from inside the companies. Take a look at some of the available statistics - more than 15% of the CVs submitted are bogus and they misrepresent facts; according to UGC there are more than 26 fake universities and colleges in India: the Consumer On line Foundation has identified more than 200 companies which are non-existent. The problem is quite acute - on the one side HR has the responsibility and challenge of continuously hiring to meet business needs, on the other hand limited infrastructure coupled with paucity of time makes it that much more difficult to verify and validate the integrity of the new recruits.

"Top management sees security not just as a differentiator but as a basic necessity for winning business," says Mehta, Vice President of NASSCOM. He has been working closely with both the IT and ITES-BPO industry to create an Information Security culture, aligned to global standards. One of the key aspects of NASSCOM’s information security initiative is to strengthen the capacity of the Indian criminal justice system, including the police, prosecutors and judicial officers.

Like most other business systems, Information security also revolves around three key dimensions - People, Technology, and Processes. Within any organisation, people are the weakest link in the security chain. It becomes imperative therefore that HR should pro actively partner in developing and administering a strong information security approach. The primary objective of IS systems would be to ensure that each entity safeguards the confidentiality, integrity and availability of intellectual Property.

Information Security Issues in Service Sector

When asked about challenges and points of concern in creating and nurturing an "Information Secure" workplace, HR Professionals from IT and BPO companies, responded by citing the following areas:

- Mass hiring and lowering the bar to meet the numbers
- High attrition and absconding employees - access card, password, manuals
- Sensitive client information (credit card number, SSN etc)
- Employees poached by competitors
- Team Leads, managers who share the password with team members and peers
- Internet access, electronic gadgets provided to employees that can be misused
- Lack of coordination between IT and other functions
- Meeting rooms which have no walls!
- Contract employees and temp staff
- Telecommuting
Developing and Implementing Written Policies

Some of these policies include -

- Access to electronic information, Internet usage, usage of mobile phones and electronic gadgets at work, public relations and external communications, client relations and electronic communication
- Training and employee awareness
- Identifying, reporting, investigating and responding to security incidents
- Sanctions for security violations
- Data destruction, which would include the handling of electronic resources used by terminated employees.

Getting Started - HR Leader’s Check List

Most organisations resort to obtaining certifications that reinforce the deployment and adherence of IS practices aligned to certain standards. Some of these globally acknowledged certifications include the BS7799 and BS 15000. In its own realm, HR can play the role of a catalyst in creating an “Information Secure” work culture. A few areas where this can be effectively done is listed below:

- Job definition and resourcing - wherever appropriate Security responsibilities should be addressed at the recruitment stage, included in contracts, and monitored during an individual’s employment
- KRAs - Security responsibilities must form part of KRAs
- Employee verification - all necessary verifications and background checks must be carried out at the time of job applications.
- Confidentiality agreements - to provide legal safeguards.
- User training -- appropriate training ensures that users are aware of information security threats and concerns, and are equipped to support organisational security policy in the course of their normal work.
- Disciplinary process -- violation of organisational security policies and procedures by employees shall be dealt with through a formal disciplinary process.

Food for Thought:

Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young.
The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young.
- Henry Ford
Q1. What do you think are the three key strengths a person should possess to be successful as a HR person?
Speaking from my own experience - sensitivity, strong sense of ownership and keen sense of judgment seem to be fairly uniform traits in HR professionals I have looked up to and admired.

Q2. What do you see are the three gaps in competencies of current generation HR professionals?
The changing environment makes new demands on us. Most often, our inability to keep pace with these environmental changes is the cause of the gaps you mention. Having said that, I see gaps today more often in areas of: a) Employee Advocacy attribute, b) Negotiations/Influencing skills and finally c) Execution skills. Let me explain the first observation - I think it is necessary that we bring the balance back between business focus and employee advocacy. While the former is a necessary awareness need, the latter is the primary role of HR professionals. I think the needle has swung wildly on this count and the balance needs to be restored.

Q3. During the last decade, you might have experienced a drastic change in the role of HR, addition of new roles and some outsourced, how do you visualise the role by 2020 and what do you think are the key competencies required to play that role successfully?
It is certainly difficult to visualise 2020 perfectly! However, seeing the trends, I think the implications for HR professionals would be significantly on change and continuity management, leveraging technology that will fast dissolve traditional boundaries around work and learning to leverage HR work both within the organisation as well as across alliances/external partners.

Q4. We often hear about the dearth of high quality HR persons, how do you think the function can attract better talent?
The issue is not merely about quality but also of severe under-supply. There is no one silver bullet for this. The way the organisations perceive the function is the way the function perceives itself. Thankfully that is changing and it is clearly getting reflected in quality and profile of people entering as well as transitioning into this function. We have to be the ‘role-quotient’ to inspire new generation of HR talent. There is no room for cynics within HR - they can be hugely damaging.

There is also this hope that realisation will dawn on the policy makers to promote institutions focused on building the HR talent pipe-line. Currently, this pipeline has only been due to the effort of private institutions and those are extremely few.

Q5. What role do you think the academic institutions, professional bodies like NHRD network, senior HR professionals can play in grooming the talent?
Academic institutions are the starting point; but the process of learning, as we know, doesn’t stop there. This is where the role of professional bodies like NHRD becomes so essential in assimilating and disseminating learning. It requires tremendous involvement and support from senior HR professionals. They not only have to be the ‘role-quotient’ but also be the voice which several aspiring professionals listen to. They have a role in keeping the function ‘current’ as well as relevant.

Q6. There seems to be very few women HR leaders at senior levels, what do you think are the reasons and how do you think they can be groomed?
This is a curious phenomenon considering this is one function which has a very healthy ratio of women HR professionals. In my personal view - this is not an function debate but something which can be said about organisations in general. I also do not subscribe that we need to do anything special or out of the way - that is kind of patronising which doesn’t fit in well, at least in my thinking. It really boils down to attitudes of the organisations and aspirations of individuals. There is a need for change in both - and I see more examples of that happening today which can have a huge positive impact.
Q7. In a similar vein, most of the senior HR managers are retiring as heads of HR and very few are growing in to CEO roles. What do you think are the reasons and how does HR play a critical role?

Tell me, what's wrong with remaining in HR profession? It can be hugely fulfilling. I understand that the world views becoming a CEO as pinnacle of success; but that to me is a big stereotype. I would rather see it as one's desire to play another role and if one has the capability and desire - opportunity will seek you out. I do not want to see it as a point of arrival which is what drives many to aspire and many to feel denied. Frankly we need more senior HR professionals to continue to serve the function. The biggest transformation opportunities to make a difference to the organisation are within HR. We need to fulfill this first. Give me a good HR professional than an average CEO, any day.

Q8. What is your advice to the budding HR fraternity?

This is a great time to be in this profession - but play for the long haul. Have courage, be passionate about the profession and display a sense of ownership.....the rest, believe me, will follow.

Book Summaries

Brand From the Inside: Eight Essentials to Emotionally Connect Your Employees to Your Business . Libby Sartain and Mark Schumann, branding experts who helped to build employer brands at Southwest Airlines and Yahoo!, describe this secret weapon for a business. The book gives leaders across an organisation step-by-step instruction on how to motivate employees to consistently deliver the experience the customer brand promises. By building the employer brand from inside the business ensuring consistent authenticity, substance, and voice throughout the business any organisation can unleash a powerful tool to emotionally engage employees and recruit and retain the best people. By: Libby Sartain & Mark Schumann

Successful executives today think like entrepreneurs as today’s economy places great value on the performance of the individual. Being aware of their own strengths and weaknesses they work continuously to adjust and improve their performance. According to the author there are basically four types of people in the workplace today: Workplace Warriors-- are the backbone of any large organization. They stay in cubicles and follow orders, rarely straying from their own comfort zones.

Management Mavericks-- are often perceived as rogues in an organization. They take risks and implement actions without the support of internal and external customers.

Entrepreneurs-- They understand the value they create in a company. They have well-defined personal competitive advantage and work hard to leverage their talents/skills to be the best at certain tasks and make a difference for the company and their customers.

Entrepreneurs-- are value creators for their customers. They often start as aggressive, passionate individuals committed to the success of their careers.

To start a great career, one needs making an attitude adjustment by assuming responsibility and taking control by letting Fears go, by Challenging oneself, by Practicing result oriented Thinking and by harness one’s Imagination. The author also suggests rules of the Road to successful career.

By David V. Lorenzo “Ogman Press Inc, 2006’213 pages

Today’s environment becoming tougher and tougher every day, David F. D’Alessandro shows you how to stand out from the crowd by developing your own ‘personal brand’; and provides valuable lessons in the etiquette of reputation building. D’Alessandro offers “10 Rules for Creating a Killer Brand.’ With trademark flair, crisp content and humor he shows how to create a “brand first” culture where “brand” takes priority over every other business consideration.

Personal branding is a way you manage your career or business. It is a way of communicating that makes you different and special. By using these qualities you can distinguish yourself from your peers so that you can expand your success.

The 10 rules to follow for building a successful personal brand and keeping it are:

Try to Look Beyond Your Own Navel - Like It or Not, Your Boss is the Coauthor of Your Brand - Put Your Boss on the Couch - Learn Which One is the Pickle Fork - Kenny Rogers is Right - It’s Always Show Time - Make the Right Enemies - Try Not To Be Swallowed By the Bubble - The Higher You Fly, the More You Will Be Shot At - Everybody Coulda Been a Contender; Make Sure You Stay One Career Warfare “10 Rules for Building a Successful Personal Brand and Fighting to Keep It”

By David F. D’Alessandro McGraw-Hill, 216 pages
The result of a five-year study of companies that rose to the top and stayed there, GOOD TO GREAT identifies the characteristics that lead to success in business. Collins, also the author of BUILT TO LAST (2002), offers ways that companies can plan and change in order to make the climb with confidence over the long term. Eleven companies – out of the original 1,435 examined - are discussed in detail, including Wells Fargo, Fannie Mae, Walgreens, and Kimberley-Clark.

BUILT TO LAST, showed how great companies triumph over time and how long-term, sustained performance can be engineered into the DNA of an enterprise from the very beginning. Over five years, Jim Collins and his research team have analysed the histories of 28 companies, discovering why some companies make the leap and others do not. The findings include:
Level 5 Leadership: A surprising style, required for greatness.
The Hedgehog Concept: Finding your three circles, to transcend the curse of competence. A Culture of Discipline: The alchemy of great results. Technology Accelerators: How good-to-great companies think differently about technology.
The Flywheel and the Doom Loop: Why those who do radical restructuring fail to make the leap.

Why Some Companies Make the Leap.... Others Don’t Good To Great

The book personifies four decades of rich experience of the author as a professional manager. It draws powerful lessons from ‘nature’ for the managerial profession. The book is organised in five sections as follows:

i) A discussion about analysis and intuition.
ii) A pragmatic view of how intuition works for a leader’s success.
iii) How come one build intuition through various experiences and relationships.
iv) Building intuition through contemplation and reflection.
v) Building intuition through sensing and perceiving beyond the obvious.

In today’s context where management science is once again leaning towards systems and processes, the book reminds us the value and importance of inclusive, intuitive and humane side of management. Comparisons with apt lessons from nature leave lasting impact on readers’ mind through making him or her introspect.

While Mr. Ratan Tata in his foreword says that he is pleased to recommend this book in particular to aspiring entrepreneurs and managers seeking to emerge as tomorrow’s leaders, I as book reviewer recommend this book also as a reading material in all business schools and as part of Management and Graduate Engineer’s Induction programmes as the powerful examples cited in the book will make “reflection and introspection” part of their career personality right from the beginning of their careers.

By: Libby Sartain with Martha I Finney
Published by: AMACOM
Hardcover, 253 Pages

The book has lots of personal stories from the authors, written authentically and from the heart, challenging a lot of HR mental models, and asks why HR has an obsession with sitting at the executive table, reporting to the CEO, and queries why the profession has a need to label everything with tiresome buzzwords.

This book is about reflecting on HR career and taking charge of it.
The author with rich experience (VP HR for Yahoo! and Southwest Airlines) suggests that every great HR career should promote HR values and profess the six essential ingredients as follows:

· Release your company from the tyranny of too many policies
· Cultivate powerful relationships
· Trust your own judgment and stand up to the so-called experts
· Evaluate tantalizing, but potentially misleading, job offers
· Brand and sell your department and its value to the organization
· Be a best employer for the right reasons, not for the PR
· Be a leader in your organization in good times and bad

As Dave Ulrich in his review comments, “This book touches not only the heart, but the mind and soul of the HR profession”.

Food for Thought:

· The man who doesn't read good books has no advantage over the man who can't read them. Mark Twain US humorist, novelist, short story author, & wit (1835 - 1910)
· Books are the quietest and most constant of friends; they are the most accessible and wisest of counsellors, and the most patient of teachers. Charles W. Eliot, The Happy Life, 1896
**APPEAL TO CONTRIBUTORS**

The National HRD Network publishes a quarterly journal—each issue dedicated to a theme. So far we published on themes like “IT in HR,” “Performance Management,” and “Attracting and Retaining Talent.” The current issue is on the theme “Career Management”.

En ensuing issues with following guest editors will focus on the following themes:

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The journal publishes primarily three categories of articles:

- Conceptual and research based
- Contributions from thought leaders
- Organisational experiences in HR interventions / mechanisms

Request you to suggest potential contributors or e-mail articles in MS-Word, not exceeding 2,000 words, accompanied with an abstract of about 100 words, a brief profile of the author, and a passport size photograph to: pvrmurthy@clickitjobs.com.

Following style guidelines are recommended:

1. Use British spelling.
2. Indicate figures in thousand, million and billion.
4. For the end references, use alphabetical order (last name first) and complete all bibliographical details. Examples:

For any further clarifications, Please Contact: The Editor

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**Editorial Team (NHRDN)**
NHRD Journal
August 2007 Volume 1 Issue 4

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