

# Concept of career in the context of career development perspective essay sample

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**QUESTION 1: Explain the Concept of Career in the Context of Career Development Perspective. Discuss Various Individuals and Organisational Strategies for Career Development**

Career development represents the entire sequence of activities and events related to an individual's career (1). It involves managing one's career either within or between organizations (2). It also refers to the lifelong process of getting ready to choose, choosing and typically continuing to make choices from among many occupations available in a society (3). It includes learning new skills and making improvements to help one in his career (2). Career development encompasses acquiring educational qualifications and certifications, career path, self actualization as individual, shifting of careers, and career growth, learning curve, family life, accomplishments and recognitions or felicitations (1). However, other scholars favour a dynamic definition which encompasses the individual, the environment, interaction and change as representing the key elements of a definition of career development (3).

#### Individual strategies for career development

Various individual strategies for career development include clarifying one's values, determining one's occupational aptitudes and interests, realizing one's options, creating a career development plan, using career-development resources and being realistic about career development (4). One strategy is to use available resources for career development. These resources include online resources for career development assistance, mentors, network of professional contacts such as "LinkedIn", information from one's human resource department, and professional associations. For illustration, online services offer substantial information about occupational opportunities and

outlooks, job hunting, vocational aptitude and preference listing and value clarification. As part of an individual strategy for career development, one must note that it takes years to build a career. This will prevent one from setting unrealistic aspirations and more become impatient about career progress. There is therefore, the strategic need to create a career development plan which acts as a blue print for putting the pieces of a career together. And there should be a systematic plan for charting the course of one's career (4).

Career development can start with the creation of a career development plan in which one sets goals and objectives for their own personal career growth (2). The plan should contain what one would be doing in both a short and long term range such as now to five years and ten years into the future. This will suggest what skills, experiences, education or training accomplished now would pave the way for reaching one's career goals (4). Integral to a career development plan is goal setting and milestones based around well-defined objectives (1).

An ideal career development plan should be flexible enough to account for crisis situations, mid career blues, relocation possibilities, career shifts and other exigencies (1). This ensures that one is in control with his or her own career.

Realizing the need to take control of one's own career future is the first step to career growth and job satisfaction (2). It is important for an individual to be clear about his life priorities. This will enable that individual to know how

work fits into one's life priorities. Doing this will enable one point out of challenge, excitement, stability, responsibility, freedom, money , titles, or chances for advancement is a priority or not.

Planning for career development should involve knowledge of jobs one is interested in. An industrial psychologist assessment centre and standardize tests can help one to determine his or her occupational aptitude and interests (4). A vital strategy is to realize ones options. This calls for being aware of opportunities and market one's skills through networking with friends, trends and projects. It requires a discussion of career interests and goals with superiors in order to stay of options through job posting, reorganization, relocation, job redesign or project management. It is useful to join placement bureaus of professional associations, check classified advertisements and circulate credentials to recruiting firms. The individual's strategy must note that career development can be captured in 5 stages which are preparation of work, organizational entry, early career, mid career and late career. These stages are characterized or with major tasks. For example, the task of the early career stage is to learn organizational roles and norms, learn jobs, choose right occupation and organization, increase competences and pursue goals (5).

Hence an individual generally decides, shapes and manage his or her career development (1). Lack of an individual strategy for career development is as a result of leaving ones career development future in the hands of the employer, hoping that one will get promotion or pay raise. This misconception also leads to job dissatisfaction and resentment (2).

## Organizational strategies for career development

Various organizational strategies for career development include encouraging managements-employee discussions of career pathing, practicing job enrichment, practicing job rotation, providing opportunities for project management, providing education and training for career development and offering access to career counselling specialist (4).

A realistic career is developed by an employee as a result of a manager or executive sharing information about organizational career opportunities. The shared information challenges the employee to attain a career goal through a strive and occupation of those positions. Another strategy organizations promote career development is by enriching the job responsibilities of an employee. They do so by adding new responsibilities that an employee find appealing. Alternatively they can increase the authority of the employee to develop their career. Increasingly, managers and subordinates are negotiating job enrichment for employees. Horizontal moves of a staff in an organization offers that staff member a new challenge, development of new skills which can eventually help that individual meet his or her career goals. These examples of horizontal moves are moving from one department to another without a change in position, vertically. Another example is that of a staff working in various departments of an organization. This provides employee generalist skills and tests the capability of the employee.

Career development is attained by an organization, if it places key organizational personnel in charge of a project. By heading the project an employee can develop technical knowledge, enhance planning and problem

solving abilities and produce leadership and commitment skills. This represents another career development strategy (4).

To maintain their staff and be competitive, some organizations provide their employees with opportunities for them to learn about new developments in their field, to retool, to master a new skill or to branch into a new area.

Moreover, the organization can sponsor training on relevant topics, this way they contribute significantly to career development.

Career planning workshops help participants clarify their values and goals as well as pinpoint their aptitudes and interests and identify organizational options for career development, with respect to staff members. In addition, workshops inculcate in a staff insights of career dynamics, decision making involved in personnel selection, appraisal, promotion and termination. These insights gained from workshops organized by an organization equips participant to strategize to achieve career goals.

Access to career counselling specialists is provided for employees in an organization dedicated to career development of their staff. These are organizations that have financial resources to engage a full time career counsellor or consultant who provide self assessment and information sources and training to employees leading to their career development.

Accordingly various organizations have career development programs in place (2). These programs are for employees to help their employers match their needs, goals and abilities with organizational job demand and rewards (5). They ensure that there is a match between employee's career goals and

organizational needs (4). Ultimately, the various ways in which organizations assist their employees benefit the companies themselves (4).

QUESTION 2: Define and Describe The Objectives and Psychological Basis for Rewarding System. Briefly Discuss Various Aspects which Reinforce Desired Behaviour, High Performance and Values The objectives of a rewarding system are as a result of a number of reasons. First, it is a mechanism by which employers aim to elicit effort and performance. Second, the actual payment system may require adjustment to develop motivation; and third it is often a significant part of the employer's financial strategy (6). This approach ties well with the HRM ideal, which sees policies designed around strategic choices rather than simply reflecting environmental pressures. However, there are various varieties of reward systems and different elements in the reward package (1). The keys to developing a reward program are as follows (7):

- Identification of company or group goals that the reward program will support
- Identification of the desired employee performance or behaviours that will reinforce the company's goals
- Determination of key measurements of the performance or behaviour, based on the individual or group's previous achievements
- Determination of appropriate rewards
- Communication of program to employees

Hence reward systems have a motivational impact and can be integrated with the corporate behaviour being sought by an organization (8). In addition, reward systems that provide benefits to long suffering staff and

more likely to shape the existing culture into one where loyalty is seen as central to the corporate ideology. Reward is an operational concept for describing the positive value an individual ascribes to an object, behavioural act or an internal physical state. Natural rewards include those that are necessary for the survival of species, such as eating, drinking, sex, and fighting. The functions of rewards are based directly on the modification of behaviour and indirectly on the sensory properties of rewards. For instance, altruism may induce a larger psychological reward, although it doesn't cause sensations (9).

Various aspects which reinforce

Psychological basis for rewarding system is described by Maslow's 1940 hierarchy of needs approach to motivation. A rewarding system with a psychological basis is this example of employees on low, and consequently operating at the lower end may see money as very important and can be psychologically motivated by it (8). Rewards systems can influence a number of HR process and practices, which in turn impact on organizational performance as influencing recruitment, and retention, employees seeing reward systems as signally importance employer places on various activities or behaviours (2/328).

There are various aspects which reinforce desire behaviour, high performance and values. For example, as supervisor can help workers to adopt or internalize the needs of an organization as congruent with the workers personal needs (10). Here behaviour is being reinforced. This is achieved when employees are told exactly what outcomes can be expected



if performance standards are met. They must know the performance standards and the outcomes of satisfactory performance. However, the same psychological reinforces are not equally valued by all people (10).

Commissions are another variation of individual incentives that boost the performance of sales people. The commission which is a bonus budgeted out of sales goal is a sales incentive. Such incentives increase productivity (10). But, reinforcing values of different primary reinforces varies due to multiple factors such as experience.

QUESTION 3: Define HRD Audit. How Can HRD Audit be used as an OD Intervention in an Organisation? Briefly Describe the Significance of HRD Score-Card of a Firm Human resource development (HRD) audit refers to the act of developing a plan of area responsibility (11). The notion of audit stems from the established practices of accounting audits. Looking at employees as human resources focused attention on the potential for more efficient use of that pool of talent and ability and for longer term innovation –potential that earlier management methods and styles hand neglected (12).

HRD auditing is a basic tool for the management of a company. Its objective is not the control and quantifying of results, but also the adoption of a wider perspective that will aid in defining future lines of action in the HRM field.

HRD audit is a type of functional audit.

This audit can be used as OD intervention in an organization in terms of identifying skills deficiencies and planning to remedy theses deficiencies through recruitment. Organizational development (OD) is a planned,

organization wide effort to increase an organizations effectiveness and viability (13). It is also referred to as response to change, a complex educational strategy intended to change the belief, attitude, values and structure of organizations so that they can better adapt to new technology, marketing and challenges and the dizzying rate of change it self.

Audit involves planning a meeting involving key staff persons and senior mangers; examination of pertinent available information, interviews with key manager's form operating units etc, additional information such as business plans, budgets etc. The various inputs are synthesized to present an integrated picture of current activities, priorities, staff resources, and the problems identified. Normally, the results of the audit are discussed in a series of meetings involving both the mangers and the staff professionals (14).

The significance of HRD score card of a firm is illustrated with an example of an operation manager. Audit with an operation manager of a firm can be in the form of questions on a card which can be scored. In this example, the score card for the operation manager will bear these questions: what would you say are the objectives of your plant? What are major responsibilities of managers? Have there been important changes in these over the years? What are important problems or difficulties? Have you got any HRM goals for the year?

On community relations, an audit question can be: what have you done about community relations? On communication, questions that can be posed

are: How do you keep people informed? , what are your regular communication activities? (11).

The HR score card assesses and communicates the effectiveness of HR or HRD efforts of an organization. It should focus on leading indicators, identify the difference between HR doable and HR deliverables demonstrate HR's contribution to strategy implementation and to the company's bottom line. In addition, it should help HR managers focus on and manage their strategic responsibilities, encourage HR flexibility and change as well as encourage customers of HR to become more self sufficient and provide focus for HR.

An audit provides a comprehensive perspective on correct practices, resources, and management policies regarding human resources management and identifies opportunities and strategies for redirecting these (14). Such audits are not exhaustive, but may focus on particular functions such as training and development, benefits, compensation or information systems.

QUESTION 4: Explain the Concept of Knowledge Management. Briefly Discuss Various Approaches to Knowledge Management with Suitable Examples

There is no clear definition of the term knowledge management and it has been variously described as intellectual capital or property, amongst a variety of other different attempts to explain its purpose and worth (15). The concept of knowledge management can be seen as one of the key factors of organizational development. Knowledge management recognizes that information and ability are among the most valuable assets of an

organization processes. In the past, organizations have not been able to quantify or recognize. It is aspect as being one of their prime assets; as it is intangible knowledge. The key concern of human resources is the retaining of individuals who are able to impart knowledge as an essential function other relationship with a business (15). Knowledge management comprises a range of strategies and practices used in an organization to identify, create, represent, distribute and enable adoption of insights and experiences (16). Noted strategies included the push strategy, which involves actively managing knowledge; individuals making knowledge requests of experts associated with a particular subject on adhoc basis (pull strategy), rewards and knowledge fairs.

#### Approaches to knowledge management

Various approaches to knowledge management include questions as to how to share knowledge, how to find it, how to use it and how to covert it or transfer it from one individual to another. Knowledge management efforts should typically focus on organizational objectives such as improved performance, competitive advantage, and innovation, sharing of lessons learned, integration and continuous improvement of the organization (16). Suitable examples of knowledge management efforts are social software such as wikis, social book marking, blogs etc. Knowledge repositories (databases, bookmarking engines are all examples of knowledge management efforts.

QUESTION 5: Write short notes on the following:

a) Re-Organisation of work

- b) Value-anchored HRD process
- c) Need for competency mapping
- d) Systems Theory and Human Performance
- e) Vertical re-skilling

#### Re-organization

This is an approach taken by firms to organizational transformation to high performance work systems. It involves self managed work teams and a flexible job design in the context of new high performance work systems. There are benefits to restructuring and flexible job design to employees and unions (17). The effort of re-organization of work is the deliberate, purposeful planning of the job including any or all its structural or social aspects.

Re organization of work entail components of content of the work, methods, tools or technology used, continued effects of job on the people, relationships with people at work (interpersonal contact).

Importance of re-organization of work is its impacts on performance (motivation) affects job satisfaction, has effect on physical and mental health, ensures matching characteristics of people with job characteristics (person/job fit).

Re organization of work strategies are job simplification, job enrichment, job rotation and job enlargement. Job enlargement broadens the scope by expanding difficult tasks to be performed. It increases task variety by combining two or more tasks previously assigned.

Generally, it increases job performance and satisfaction. Job rotation is the process of increasing task variety by periodically shifting workers among job involving different tasks. Job enrichment is the practices of building motivating factors into job content, expand job content by adding some of the planning and evaluating duties normally performed by a manager to the subordinate's job, increasing the depth of employee responsibilities.

#### Value- anchored HRD process

These processes are related to organizational climate, self renewal, impact organizational change and organizational development (18). It embraces competences for job performance, commitment, motivation, frustration and stress of individuals in an organization.

The individual is the basic constituent of an organization and self management, effectiveness, competence building and leadership are expected of them. Thus, they can work in organizations through teams and groups emphasizing communication, feedback, conflict resolution, collaboration and resource utilization

#### Need for Competency Mapping

Competency mapping is needed because it enables one to establish what is required to carry out a role in terms of behavioural competencies (Soft skills) and technical or functional competencies (hard skills). Behavioural competences refer to how people are expected to behave in order to perform their work well. On the other hand, technical competencies refer to

what people are expected to know and be able to do to perform their work well.

Competency Mapping is a process of identifying key competencies for an organization and/or a job and incorporating those competencies throughout the various processes (i. e. job evaluation, training, recruitment) of the organization. In general, one can define competency as behaviour (i. e. communication, leadership) rather than a skill or ability (19).

The steps involved in competency mapping with an end result of job evaluation include the following:

- 1) Conduct a job analysis by asking incumbents to complete a position information questionnaire (PIQ). This can be provided for incumbents to complete, or one can conduct one-on-one interviews using the PIQ as a guide. The primary goal is to gather from incumbents what they feel are the key behaviours necessary to perform their respective jobs.
- 2) Using the results of the job analysis, one is ready to develop a competency based job description. This can be developed after carefully analyzing the input from the represented group of incumbents and converting it to standard competencies.
- 3) With a competency based job description, one begins mapping the competencies throughout human resources processes. The competencies of the respective job description become factors for assessment on the

performance evaluation. Using competencies will help guide one to perform more objective evaluations based on displayed or not displayed behaviours.

4) Taking the competency mapping one step further, one can use the results of his or her evaluation to identify in what competencies individuals need additional development or training. This will help one focus training needs on the goals of the position and company and help employees develop toward the ultimate success of the organization.

### Systems Theory and Human Performance

Systems theory is fundamental to organizational theory since organizations are complex dynamic goal oriented processes. Kurt Lewin was influential in developing the systems perspective with organizational theory (20).

A systemic view on organizations is trans-disciplinary and integrative. This is because it transcends the perspectives of individual disciplines, integrating them on the basis of formal apparatus provided by systems theory.

A system theory in organizational studies is considered by some as humanistic extension of the natural sciences and it deals with human performance. It focuses on developments in activity theory. It can be used in a variety of disciplines to understand the way people act. Under the rubric of the systems theory work represents a modern synthesis within activity theory. Its development is oriented towards the analysis and design of basic elements of human work activity: tasks, tools, methods, objects, results and the skills, experience and abilities of involved subjects.



### Vertical re- skilling

Vertical re skilling provide higher level learning. This activity opens new opportunity and allows the talent to move into higher roles. An example of vertical re skilling is training in a vertical with more jobs which results in longer employment (21). Implications of re-skilling are that a gap exists between the capabilities of sophisticated constituent relationship management (CRM) systems and the staff who use them. For example, there is much less need for data entry clerks and much more need for skillful managers capable of higher value work. For example, a recruiter who can scan the historical details and nuances of an applicant's profile in the CRM database while speaking with him or her on the phone (21).

Associated with the rising need for re-skilling, IT departments are scrambling to keep up with security threats escalating with the sheer number of devices and applications being used by students and faculty. Virginia Rezmierski at the University of Michigan says the only way for IT people to stay current is through continuous education and training. Surely, every department on campus faces a similar diagnosis.

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