

Self-awareness and how it contributes to the development of an appropriate person...

[Business](#), [Strategy](#)



Business – Personal Review Paper

Introduction

Assessing one's own ability based on personal observations and observations from peers and colleagues can spell the difference between a forward and a backward progressing career. These reviews are largely based on feedbacks. Without such feedbacks, any individual can linger in an incorrect career path for God knows how long. The worse thing is that without having received proper feedback, any individual can linger on that wrong career path for forever. Cases like these are not so uncommon which only tells career-oriented individuals, and professionals from various industry the importance of conducting self-assessments or being a subject to a company-sponsored career assessment and planning programs. According to a systematic review published in the Journal of Adolescence, the most positive career results can be achieved by basing one's career plans on established theories and frameworks, one example of which is the Social Cognitive Career Theory Framework . The objective of this paper is to discuss the importance of conducting a personal review, focusing on the outlook of one's career, and the importance of self-awareness in supporting the development of an appropriate personal career strategy; relate personal career strategy formulation to established theories, frameworks, concepts and techniques, and finally to formulate my own career strategy for the next three to five years, backing all of the related ideas with concrete examples.

First and foremost, what is self-awareness? Is it even important? According to Hansen (2012) in a review article that got published in Forbes, there are a

lot of steps or ways to catapult one's career not towards the top but towards progressiveness and improving one's self-awareness has been identified as one of the game-changing characteristics along with other conventional and actually obvious characteristics such as hard work, patience, and experience .

It has been explained by many occupational theorists like John Holland, Edgar Schein, and Frank Parsons just to name a few out of many, that an individual worker's personality has a casual and in fact, naturally-existing relationship with his job . This means that a certain level of harmony must exist between one's personality and the type of career that one has or plans on entering, especially if one plans on staying on that career path for quite some time, much more if he aims to make a name and chase fame. A good example to make this point stronger would be putting an individual with an introvert personality—one that would perfectly fit in the job posts of a computer programmer, or anything that would not require constant and highly dynamic social interaction, in the job post of a real estate property consultant—a position which not only involves but actually demands a high level of interpersonal and relationship-building skills in order to attract and entice clients and investors and to ultimately make them buy the offered commodities. Doing so violates the occupational theory that John Holland et al. support. Such a situation obviously puts both the company and the employee in a compromised situation. The employee would naturally feel ill at ease with his job considering the fact that conversing to hundreds if not thousands of people every week is the last item on his list of things to do, inevitably leading to a poor job performance; the company that hired him on

the other hand would in turn suffer losses from the poor output quality it receives from a mistakenly-hired employee, a scenario that equates to a lose-lose instead of the ideal win-win situation.

Now, the operational definition of self-awareness has already been set. How is it important in the process of developing an appropriate personal career strategy then? A personal career strategy is largely based on goals. It should answer the questions what the things that immediately needs to be improved and what the things that can be focused on later are. The point here is that it is mainly based on goals and improvements because having a perfect career completely negates the need or even the want to formulate a personal career strategy or goal. Creating career goals and improvements are almost always rationalized by improvement and development , regardless whether personal or financial. So now, the main problem would be how can a person improve or develop his skills, or whatever he needs to improve and develop in order to progress higher in his or her chosen career ladder? The first step here would be to set and record a baseline measure . Setting up a baseline measure is like doing a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis as doing so enables an individual to recognize himself as a separate entity from other individuals and the environment better. Also, the individual becomes able to see his flaws, his strengths, and most importantly, the things where he is weak at and the things that could jeopardize his strengths and assets . It is the first the first step in the scientific way of solving a problem wherein problems are identified.

According to a growing body of evidences, self-awareness is being

continuously proven to be associated with having a successful career, particularly in careers that involve qualities of leadership, and making social and business interactions with other people, all of which are criteria that defines more than half of the job positions available today. In summary, self-awareness or the ability of an individual to see himself as an entity separate from the environment and unique from other individuals, serves as a the starting place where an individual sets up baseline measures—where he can know his strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities and threats to his progress. The process of progressing one's career involves continuous personal improvement and development and without a place to start, it would simply be next to impossible to improve and develop, and of course, formulate an effective personal career strategy. How can an employee improve if he cannot even know which of his skills and other credentials can be seen by employers as an asset to their organization if the person himself does not know which is which and what is what. Having a high level of self-awareness does that.

My Personal Career Strategy

My personal career strategy is based on six steps. It all starts with a personal or even a professional self-assessment, in which I will determine the things that I naturally enjoy doing, things that motivate me, things that I am good at, and the things that capture my interests.

- Determining where I am good at and the things that I need to develop

This is the part where I will review my present as well as my previous job roles and descriptions so that I can determine whether they are in line with

my educational history, my strengths, my skills, and my expertise.

Figuratively, this is the phase where I will set my starting point.

- Determining my Psychological Preferences

As mentioned earlier, there exists a casual and naturally-existing relationship between one's occupation and his personality towards work, himself, and towards other people. This fact rationalizes the need for this step which involves determining one's psychological preferences. By doing so, I would be able to know what type of personality I have, based on an objective assessment tool. One of the mostly used outcome measuring tool that can accomplish the specific goals for this phase is the MBTI (stands for the Myers and Briggs Personality Type Indicator). The MBTI " is a psychometric questionnaire designed to measure psychological preferences in how people perceive the world and make decisions" . By using an objective way of assessing my personality, I would be able to critically assess what type of people I can get along with well and what type I cannot. Among the good things about the MBTI is that most companies use it to assess newly-employed individuals in the company before they officially start working for the company and so it usually comes for free; it also is widely recognized in various psychometric studies as a toll having high construct validity, test and retest reliability, and internal consistency . However, the scores that can be obtained from this tool cannot be used as an indicator or predictor of an employee's job performance as based on the precepts and ethics section of the tool the MBTI only measures an individual's preference and not his skills nor his abilities .

- Incorporating Feedback

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This is what I perceive to be the bulkiest or the most time-consuming phase of my personal career strategy development because this involves reviewing and analyzing the feedback I have received from my professional and educational ventures, from work appraisals, from my boss, superiors, seniors and peers. Based on these feedbacks, I can be able to set my main points for personal development or the areas that need the most attention. What I plan to do is to put the major feedbacks, either direct or indirect, and formal or informal, into writing so that I can get back to them and review them whenever necessary, and as a way to check my progress and development. I am totally not against receiving feedback even it comes from someone that has something negative to say about me because I view it as a form of constructive criticism that helps rather than breaks—although it may be too hard to accept sometimes. As long as it is true, I would be willing to accept it no matter how negative it is.

- Determining Things that I enjoy

There is a big difference when you see the challenge of improving yourself as a task and seeing it as an interesting activity . It is important in setting a personal career strategy to make sure that the things that will lead to improvement and development of the main development points identified in phase two will be interesting as well. This is because in order to improve a skill, one has to use it until perfection or at least near perfection; and when using such skill makes the individual bored and out of focus—perhaps because doing so does not interest him, then that could be a major hindrance for improvement and development. In my case, I do not really have a specific set of things that I do not really enjoy. As long as I feel that I

am appropriately compensated for my work be it in terms of salary or benefits, I would be more than happy to give the company my 110 percent dedication to my work.

- Determining my working preferences

Now that the strengths, weaknesses, and main development points, and specific strategies how to interestingly improve on such have already been identified, it would now be important to know how to utilize the strengths and the improvements realized in the previous phases. This is the phase where I will determine how I can work smarter. There is a big difference between working hard and working smart. A smart worker does not usually have to work hard because everything has already been optimized as opposed to the plain hard worker who only cares about the job output but not on the things that could have made attaining the same results easier or simpler. Knowing my working preferences and style is one good step to start optimizing things. From there, I can easily determine which group of people I could work best with and which I could not, and all sorts of things that would greatly boost my work quality, pace, and overall performance.

I have always preferred to work in a team setting, a setting where I can share ideas to and draw learning from other members of the team. Also, according to studies, progress and development is faster when one is in a team and practicing his profession rather than when one is working alone . I also prefer to be challenged everyday rather than be a bum at work. It helps me sharpen my skills and hone them further—which contributes to my ultimate goal of career progression over the next 3-5 years, and it also helps the management meet its quota and performance predictions.

- Building my Ideal Job Description

All of the previous steps are actually prerequisites to this step, which involve building my ideal job description. The resulting job description would now contain the list of qualities or characteristics of the job that based on me and other people, who participated in the feedback-review phase, would best fit me, my abilities, my interests, and my working style and preferences. Being recruited for a job post that perfectly fits the resulting job description in this phase would eventually lead to a win-win situation for me and my future employers. I would be able to work at my best condition and deliver the output volume and output quality expected of me or even exceed the employer's initial expectations, and the employer on the other hand would be able to benefit from the my deliverables.

A significant number of evidences suggest that employees do not only look for a certain value of financial compensation that a job offer has but also for other things like how being in one job position can help him improve his craft and be a step closer towards self-actualization , the highest level of need according to the hierarch that Abraham Maslow formulated . I find my ideal job description to be the same. As long as I feel that my hard works and efforts as well as my skills and abilities are compensated well; that I get along well with my colleagues; and that I always have room for improvement, I can stay in one job post forever.

Conclusion

The purpose of formulating a personal career strategy is to prevent professional stagnation and to stimulate professional growth and

development. I think the six steps: determining where I am good at and the things that I need to develop; determining my psychological preferences; incorporating feedback; determining things that I enjoy; determining my working preferences; and building my ideal job description, all positively contribute to my goal of painting a picture of what and where I want to be professionally in the next 3-5 years. Basically, the main point I wanted to establish in this personal career strategy is the fact that as long as I know I am well-compensated for my efforts for the company and that there is no lack in room for improvement; I can stay in one job position forever, which can potentially make this personal career strategic plan valid not only for 3 or 5 years but forever.

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