

The concept and definition of career planning management essay

[Business](#), [Management](#)



In all organisations, irrespective of their structure, the employees have aspirations to advance and grow in their organisation, and also a desire to achieve a sense of fulfilment. Unless these aspirations and desires of employees are taken care of, the organisation cannot move to higher level of efficiency and productivity. The strength and vitality of any organisation much depends on the fact that whether its employees are convinced that they are taken care of, not only in financial and other tangible terms but also emotionally and mentally. A well thought-out system of career planning is one way of achieving this organisational objective. An organisation without proper career planning and career development initiatives is more likely to face the high attrition rate, affecting all its plans and programmes and causing a lot of harm. Without succession planning, manning of vacancies at higher levels becomes difficult. Therefore, effective HRP encompasses career planning, career development and succession planning. With the advent of rapid technological advancement, organisations are be-sighed with manpower redundancy and concurrently equally concerned with the problem of retention. On the other hand, organisations need to address career development need of employees that mostly revolves around individuals by taking care of proper career planning and career management system. With the given scenario, since success of manpower planning much depends upon career planning, there cannot be effective manpower planning, if there is ineffective career planning in the organisation. In other words, career planning is an integral part of the manpower planning that affects business strategy and corporate planning.

The Concept and definition of Career planning

Career is viewed as a bunch or collection of jobs or positions. Generally, it describes an applicable career path within the structure of the organization. Basically, it shows the principal personnel development paths within the organization. Career is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as a person's "course or progress through life or a distinct portion of life". Usually, it is referred to remunerative work and sometimes also formal education. The etymology of the term derived from the Latin word *career*, which means race. All the jobs, that are held together during one's working life, constitute career. It is also viewed as the sequence of positions held by an individual during the course of his employment life. Edwin B. Flippo defined a career, as a sequence of separate but related work activities that provide continuity, order and meaning in a person's life. A career may be viewed as amalgamation of the changes in values, attitudes and motivation an individual embrace, as he or she grows older. This constitute subjective element of the concept "career". Greenhaus and Schein described several themes underlying different definition of career as: The property of an occupation or organisation: In this way the career describes the occupation itself or an employee's tenure within an organisation. Advancement: It denotes the progression and increase in success an individual receives within an occupation or organisation. Status of a profession: In this sense, career is used to distinguish different profession. Such as engineering, medical profession is different from other occupation like plumbing carpentry etc. The former is said to have a career where the latter does not have. Involvement in one's work: Sometimes career is used in a negative sense to

describe being extremely involved in the task or job one is doing. Stability of a person's work pattern: Career describes a sequence of related jobs. While a sequence of unrelated jobs does not describe career. Career is often defined as both external career and internal career. External career is defined as objective categories used by a given society and different organisations to describe the progression of steps of different occupation. Whereas internal career refers to the set of steps and stages that make up an individual's own concept of career progression within an occupation. Due to two different approaches, in organisational context, career is considered as an integrated pace of vertical and lateral movements of an individual in an occupation during the span of his employment. Such integrated approach is basically intended to minimise diversity of hopes and expectations of employees by obtaining a match between individually perceived careers with that of organisational centred careers.

Career Planning

As both the individual and the organisation have interests in individual's career, career planning is a deliberate process of becoming aware of self, available opportunities, existing constraints with the alternative choices and sequences, identifying career related goals and programming work education and related developmental experiences to provide the right direction, proper timing and sequences to attain a specific career goal. Essentially, Career planning helps the employees to plan for their careers in terms of their capacities and competencies within the context of organisational needs. It is concerned with devising an organisational system

of career movement and growth. That provides opportunities for an individual to grow and develop progressively and consistently from the point of entry of an employment to the point of his or her retirement. It is also described as a process-of synthesising and harmonising the needs of the organisation with the innate aspirations of the employees, so that the latter realise self-fulfilment and the formers effectiveness is improved. Career planning is an ongoing process by which an individual sets his career goals and identifies the means and ways to achieve them. The way people plan for their life's work is considered as career planning. It propels and sometimes compels an individual to explore, choose and strive in order to derive satisfaction with one's career objective. Hence has significance in individual's life." Schermerhorn; (2002)" defined " Career planning as a process of systematically matching career goals and individual capabilities with opportunities for their self fulfilment". Effective career planning is about finding a suitable job that matches to an individuals' life. (John Lees). Career planning provides an answer to the question as to where a person will be in the organisation after five years or ten years or what the prospects of advancing and growing are in the organisation for building the scope of one's career. Career planning is neither an event nor an end itself. It is an ongoing process for the development of human resources and an essential aspect of managing people to obtain optimal results.

Need for career planning

The need to plan for an employee's career is caused by both economic and social forces. In order to survive and prosper in an ever changing

environment, the human resources of an organisation need to and must be in a constant state of development. A planned programme of internal human resource development pays more than relying upon outside recruitment to cater to the sudden need. Above all, too many employees retire on the job when there is no managerial concern for proper career progression. Further, the millennial day employees insist and expect their work demands to be effectively integrated with human needs for personal growth, match with family's expectations and meet ethical requirements of society. However, it is most ironic that, what is most precious to the individual in so far as work is concerned is the career, is given least attention by the organisation. As pointed out by John Leach and other researchers, most of the organizations do not give enough attention to this important aspect in real practice for a variety of reasons. As a result of which, the demands of employees are not adequately matched with organizational arrangements. Considering the changing scenarios of social and economic environment and the growing expectations and aspirations of employees, career planning is an essential prerequisite for effective man-management, for organisational growth and development and for obtaining optimum productivity. Usually, a person applies for a job in an organisation after making necessary enquiries about the prospects of the job and after taking up the job he or she starts enquiring about the job prospects and the future likely positions. Depriving of satisfactory answers, an individual feel de-motivated and frustrated, and starts looking outside of the organisation in search of some other prospective job. Generally, this is typical situation for persons holding senior supervisory, executive and managerial positions. The personnel holding such positions

are keen to know where they can rise from their present positions, in the organisation, and when. In order to attract and retain competent personnel for senior positions in an organisation, it is essential that, they must be assured of progressive careers. Thus, career planning has become a must for manning an organisation with efficient supervisors, higher technical and managerial personnel and for preventing such personnel leaving the organisation for lack of promotional avenues. Productive employees wish to seek careers rather than short duration jobs. Career planning, if properly designed and implemented, it benefits the managements as well as the employees and the absence of it make a big difference both for the employees and the organization.

Features of career planning:

A Process: Career planning is an ongoing process of developing human resources. It is neither an event nor a programme. **Upward movement:** It involves upward movement in the organisational hierarchy. It could also be special assignments, completing a project that requires better skills and abilities to handle recurring problems. **Mutuality of Interest:** Career planning serves mutuality of interest. It serves individual's interest by taking care of his needs and aspirations to the required extent. Simultaneously it serves the organisation's interest as the human resources of an organisation are provided with the opportunity to develop and contribute to the organisation's goals for fulfilment of its objectives to the best of their ability and confidence. **Dynamic:** Career planning is dynamic in nature in order to cope with the ever changing environment.

Objectives of Career Planning

Generally, Career Planning aims at fulfilling the following objectives: It provides and maintains appropriate human resources in an organisation by offering careers, not jobs. It creates an able environment of effectiveness, efficiency and growth. It maps out careers of different categories of employees, in accordance with their ability and willingness to be 'trained and developed' to take the responsibility of higher positions. It seeks to maintain a stable workforce within an organisation by controlling absenteeism and reducing employee turnover. It caters to the immediate and future human resource need of the organisation on a timely basis. It increases proper utilisation of managerial reserves within the organisation.

Career planning and Manpower Planning

Career Planning and Manpower Planning are not synonymous. The latter enables the personnel department of an organisation to report on the inventory of skills and potentials available in the organisation. The former enables the organisation to identify, who on the basis of performance and potentials appraised and evaluated, could be groomed for or fitted in higher level assignments, and where, when, and how. Again manpower planning provides human resources data that is immediately available within the organisation to meet change in conditions such as expansion of the existing business, a technological innovation, providing a new service or opening up new branches.

Career Planning and Succession Planning

Succession planning is a conscious and deliberate decision of an organization to foster and promote the continual development of employees in order to ensure that, key positions maintain some degree of stability, enabling an organization to achieve its business objectives. Succession planning ensures that, an organization has the right personnel to takeover in the event of departure of key employees. When vacancies occur in key positions in the organization, it is to be filled up either promoting internal people or by hiring externally. When this is done in accordance with an agreed upon and carefully-thought-out policy and process, it is a succession plan. Generally, succession or replacement planning programmes are implemented to ensure the development of sufficient number of qualified people to fill future vacancies in key managerial and professional positions. Succession planning is required for higher level executives. Whereas career planning covers executives at all levels including highly skilled employees and operatives. Creating and maintaining current skills inventories allow employers to develop succession plans based on current employees' skill sets. Again it identifies key employees for future openings which are critical to the company's leadership and business success. Both have the same requirements and implications. Generally, career planning in an organisation moves with a succession plan for the higher-level executives. The succession plan involves identification of likely vacancies in the higher echelons and to locate the probable successors. Career planning may have charts showing the career paths of different categories of workers and how they can advance up in the organisation. Career planning is succession plan, when it

gives the picture of the potentials for the development of those specific persons, who are already in positions and to cater to future manpower needs, caused by retirements and other casualties. An organisation has to build theoretical career ladders for all key and important employees so that hard working and capable employees can be retained and their aspirations for growth and development can be satisfied. Basically, succession management involves knowing the needs of the organization as well as its employees and developing their capacity and competencies, so that they can address emerging issues to ensure business continuity.

CAREER PLANNING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Broadly, the term career is referred to an individual's entire work life. In a narrow sense, it can be defined as the succession of jobs and or ranks held by a person in a particular organisation. An individual's career begins with placement in a job and ends with departure from the organisation, may be in form of retirement, resignation or death. In between, the career progression consists of changing tasks, tenure in various jobs, temporary or permanent promotions, transfers etc. Career planning and development includes all those events that is happening to or initiated by an individual affecting his/her progress or promotion. It happens by widening and/or changing employment possibilities and is characterised by different and higher status, better conditions of service and increased satisfaction with the job. It revolves round events and occurrences an individual goes through while moving up the hierarchic ladder. Career development is the process that enables an organisation to meet its current and projected manpower

requirement through provisions of career opportunities for its employees. It aims at optimising the effectiveness of human resources of an organisation through planned development of their knowledge, set of skills and potentialities for accomplishment of organisational objectives. Career planning refers to planned and systemised progression of events and development in the field of work or vocation of individuals during the employable periods of their life for fulfilment of organisational objective with the individual ambitions getting to the top. Career is intensely related and relevant to individuals. Essentially career development is an integral part of the holistic human resources management of an organisation. It is concerned with the growth of both individuals and the organisation. Individuals seek their total fulfilment within the organisation and the organisation in turn fulfils its charter of goals, only through its employees. This mutuality represents a commonality of concern in the development of career. Individual career and organisational careers are not separate from each other. For which, it becomes imperative on the part of the organisation to take the responsibility of assisting their employees in career planning, so that both individual and organisational goal can be met. The basic character of career development is futuristic. For which, its policies and programmes are devoted for tomorrow. It envisions distant horizons and is multidimensional in nature. Broadly, all the functions of management and the multi-tiered aspects of personnel policy and practices from entry in the organisation to the point of separation are very closely connected with career development. Recruitment, probation, training, deployment, transfers, promotion, motivation etc have a bearing on career development. Career

development is regarded as the 'pivot' around which the entire personnel management system revolves. It links each stage, phase, event of individual's work life and acts as the 'buckle' that fastens an employee to the organisation. Career planning or development is primarily 'proactive' in the sense that, it must anticipate future, rather than be taken over by emerging situations.

Career Management

Career is a general course of action, an individual chooses to pursue, all through his or her employment life. It may be represented as " occupational positions a person has hold over so many years." Many people feel satisfied by achieving their career goals. At the same time, others have a strong feeling that, their careers, their lives and their potential has undergone unfulfilled. Employers too have a profound effect on employees' careers. Some organisations have very formal career management processes, while others are very little concern about it. Career management is defined as " ongoing process of preparing, implementing and monitoring career plans. It can be undertaken either by the individual alone or can be a concerted activity along with the organisation's career systems". " Career management" is a process that enables the employees to better understand their career skills, develop and give direction to it and to use those skills and interests most effectively both within and outside the organisation. Specific career management activities provide realistic career oriented appraisals, posting open jobs and offering formal career development activities. Career development involves the lifelong series of activities that contribute to a

person's career exploration, establishment, growth, success, and fulfilment. Career planning is the deliberate process by which an individual becomes aware of his or her personal skills, interests, motivations, knowledge and other such characteristics. He also seeks and acquires information about the opportunities and choices, identifies career-related goals and establishes action plans to attain specific goals. Career management and career planning activities are complementary and can reinforce each other. Career management can also be regarded as "lifelong, self-monitored process of career planning. That involves choosing and setting personal goals and formulating strategies for achieving those". However, in an organisational context, the focus is on taking actions to meet the anticipated HR needs.

Benefits of the career management

Staffing inventories--Effective career management ensure a continuous supply of professional, technical and managerial talent for the fulfilment of organisational goal. Staffing from within-- Most organisations like to promote employees from within for available positions because of the many potential advantages. In order to recruit from within, it requires a strong career management programme that ensures effective performance of employees in their new jobs. Solving staffing problems-- Effective career management may serve as a remedy for certain staffing problems. Rate of employee turnover can be slashed because of the feeling that there is existence of opportunity within the organisation. It may be easier to go for new recruitment as the company develops its employees and provides better career opportunities. Satisfying employee needs-- The current generation of

employees are very different from those of past generation in terms of their set of needs. Again higher levels of education have raised their career expectations and many of the employees hold their employers directly responsible in providing better opportunities for realisation of their career expectations. Enhanced motivation—Since, progression along the career path is directly related to job performance, an employee is likely to be motivated and perform at peak levels to accomplish career goals.

Employment equity—Effective career management demand fair and equitable recruitment, selection and placement and try to eliminate discriminatory practices concerning promotions and career mobility. Such type of affirmative programmes contains formal provisions that become helpful for enhancement of the career mobility of women and other minorities groups emphasizing employment equity.

TYPES OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Organisations undergo different types of developmental programmes to enrich skill sets of human resources. These include organisation development, employee development, management development and career development. Organisational development is a long-term effort, led and supported by top management, to improve an organization's visioning, empowerment, learning, and problem-solving processes, through an ongoing, collaborative management practices by utilizing the consultant – facilitator role and the theory and technology of applied behavioural science, including action research for enhancement of organisational effectiveness. Management Development is concerned with upgrading the managerial

skills, knowledge and ability of employees to enable them to accomplish higher job demands which is not only beneficial for themselves but also for their employer organizations. In organisational development (OD), the effectiveness of management is recognised as one of the determinants of organisational success. Therefore, investment in management development can have a direct economic benefit to the organization.

STAGES OF LIFE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The career stage approach is one way to look at career development. One way to characterise a person's life or career is by identifying common experiences, challenges, or tasks most people go through as their life or career progress. As argued by psychologist like Freud and others, the human nature such as personality, intelligence and morality develop in a predictable common sequence closely tied to a person's age. Research by Levinson and Erikson suggests that adult life follows a series of common stages. According to Levinson (1986) model, people grow through specific stages separated by transition periods. At each stage, a new and crucial activity and psychological adjustment may be completed (Ornstein, Cron and Slocum 1989). In this way, career stages can be, and usually are based on chronological age. Schein, Super and others suggests that careers also develop in stages. Again, unfolding career development with life stages reveals the commonalities of difficulties for all people when they experience difficulties in adjusting their first position, or face midcareer crisis. It also helps in understanding why both individuals and organisations predict likely crises and challenges and therefore plans ways to resolve or minimize them.

As individuals have different career development needs at different stages in their careers, when an organisation recruits an employee in any of the grades of its cadre for a fairly long tenure, the employer must take interest in and take constructive steps for building up employees' career from that point of time. Stage views of career development have their limitations. It is applicable to a typical individual. Since all individuals are unique, they may not have the same experiences. Therefore, career development stages differ from individual to individual due to obvious difference in perceived internal career. However, keeping in view of general requirements of people career development may be grouped under the following four categories.

Exploration StageThis stage starts when a new employees joins an organisation. This career exploration stage is best described as the "information gathering" phase. This is a kind of 'budding' stage for a new employee and is considered as the formative phase of his/her career. Therefore, it is essential for an organisation to sustain the behavioural as well as operational deficiencies of new hire to help him to develop in the course of time. The organisation's responsibility at this stage is to ensure that, the employee's concerns are taken care of. He/she is helped out to settle down and establish himself/herself. At this stage, induction-training in the form of organisational work familiarisation programmes, technical or professional training or on-the-job training at the institutions are imparted to the employees. Unfortunately many organizations experience high level of turnover at this trial and exploration stage. Employees in this stage need opportunities for self-exploration and experiment with a variety of job activities or assignments.

ESTABLISHMENT STAGE

The next phase is the establishment and developmental stage. It is also known as 'blooming' stage or advancement stage. This involves growing and getting established in one's career. In this stage, the individual is concerned with achievement, performance, and advancement. This stage is marked by high employee productivity and career growth, as the individual is motivated to proceed and succeed in the organization in his or her chosen occupation. This stage desires the employees to take the opportunities of higher responsibility and more challenging jobs for better use of special competencies. The employees strive hard for creativity and innovation by taking challenging job assignments. Organisations, at this stage, need to provide required degree of autonomy to the employees, so that they can experience feelings of individual achievement and personal success. During this period, employees must be oriented in a manner that will create maximum learning opportunities and favourable attitude towards the organisation. It should also be ensured that the assignments assigned to them are optimally challenging with a genuine test of their abilities and skill. Suitable training and developmental opportunities could be provided to ensure an adequate and proper transition from technical work to management work particularly for those who possess all the management talent and want to occupy managerial positions. Usually, Management Development programmes are organised at this level to help those kinds of people. Some area-specialisation input is also imparted to enable them to update their specialist skills. Therefore, a successful career development process is important at establishment stage, in order to retain more number

of employees in the organisation and to develop a sense of loyalty and commitment.

3. Maintenance stage.

This is a midcareer stage for those employees, who strive hard to retain their established name and fame. The mid-career stage is generally typified and characterised by a sort of continuation of established patterns of work behaviour. At this stage, the person seeks to maintain his or her established position in the organization. This stage is also viewed as a mid-career plateau in which very little new ground is broken. This is otherwise known as mid career crisis. People at this stage, often make a major reassessment of their progress relative to their original career ambitions and goals. The individuals at this stage is helped out and provided with some technical training to update their skill sets in their respective field. In order to avoid early stagnation and decline, the employees are encouraged to develop and learn new job skills by renewing and updating their knowledge in the context of the changing environment. Only the stable and matured executives/managers from this point can progress and reach at the higher career stage which is known as 'full bloom' stage. At this stage people are in super time scale, holding senior management positions, involving high level policy and programming assignments. The organisation, at this stage, must help people to flourish to the maximum extent possible by providing them with wider range of responsibilities and broader opportunities for better performance and to adjust with their changing role as their career shifts from the specialised to generalise advisory role. In this top level stage of policy-

planning-advisory area, the organisation must see that people's career interests are catered for and self actualisation facilities are provided. That encourages the employees to devote their full time, attention, energy to the organisation. In this part of career, developmental strategy is then oriented towards policy making, programme planning and review and problem solving. For which, the focus should be on advanced study and education for enhancement of professionalised efficiency and total preparation for leadership. This career stage is also reflected with a kind of spiritual attitude, dedicated to public service and a stronger inner urge to work for a larger cause than oneself.

Late-career stage/ stage of decline.

This stage is characterised by lessened career importance and the employees plan for retirement and seek to develop a sense of identity outside the work environment. Employees at this stage get scared for the possible threat of reduced role and responsibilities in the organisation. Therefore, career development at this stage aims at helping the employees to get mentally prepared for retirement and to accept the reduced role and responsibilities, so that they can accommodate themselves in their family and in the society after retirement. Retirement rituals management without destroying the employee's sense of self worth is the primary concern of the career development process at this stage. The retired employees can also be provided with new part-time roles both within and outside the parent organisation, so that people can use their knowledge, experience and wisdom for the cause of society.

Steps/ Process in Career Planning

Career Planning involves different activities for successful organisations and generally, covers the following steps.

Identifying individual needs and aspirations:

Most individuals do not have a clear cut idea about their career aspirations, anchors and goals. Therefore, the human resource professionals must help an employee in this direction and provide as much information as possible. Taking into account his skills, experience, and aptitude, he is shown the kind of work, that would suit him most. Workshops, seminars can also be arranged with psychological testing, simulation exercises to extend such type of assistance. Such an exercise is basically meant to help an employee to form a clear view of his career of chosen occupation within the company. Workshops and seminars boost employee interest in career planning , as it help the employees set their career goals, identify career paths and uncover specific career development activities. Printed and other forms of information can also be provided to supplement individual efforts. To assist the employees in a better way, organizations construct a data bank or skill and talent inventory, consisting of information on the career histories, skill evaluations and career preferences of its employees.

2. Analyzing career opportunities:

Once career needs and aspirations of employees are known, the organization determines the career paths for each position, showing career progression possibilities clearly. That indicate the different positions, a good performer

could hold over a period of time. Career paths change over time in tune with employee's needs and organizational requirements.

3. Aligning needs and opportunities—

After employees have identified their needs and there is existence of career opportunities, the next step is to align the former with latter. This process involves identification of the potentiality of employees and then undertaking career development programme. The potentiality of employees can be assessed through performance appraisal. That would reveal employees who need further training, who can take added responsibilities, etc. Then certain developmental techniques are undertaken to update employees' knowledge and skills taking into consideration of employee potentiality. It includes special assignments, planned position rotation, supervisory coaching, job enrichment, understudy programmes and so on.

4. Action plans and periodic review--

After initiating the above steps, it is necessary to review the whole things periodically to uncover the gaps. These gaps are to be bridged both by individual career development efforts and organization supported efforts from time to time. Periodic review will help the employees to know the direction in which he is moving, what changes are sought, what kind of skills are needed to face new and emerging organizational challenges. organization also find out how employees are doing, their goals and aspirations and whether the career paths are in tune with individual needs and serve the overall corporate.