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Dynamics

Career anchors and job/role planning:
Tools for career and talent management

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As the world of work and organizations become more complex, the issue of how to think about and build a career becomes more complicated for the individual, especially as early career selection and early career moves prove to be relatively poor predictors of what people ultimately want to get out of their career. At the same time, organizations find it harder and harder to define jobs and "work," wisely allocate people to jobs, manage retention, and develop the talent needed to get the work done effectively.

In this paper we will show how the concepts of "career anchors" and "job/role planning" can help individual career occupants and the human resource function achieve a better match between the needs of the individual and the needs of the organization. We will also consider how the changes that we are all experiencing on a global scale will influence these processes.

CAREER ANCHORS

The key to better talent management in HR systems is to give both the employee and the employing organization tools to better match what the employee needs and what the organization requires in terms of performance. Our research on career anchors showed that as people enter their career, they have very broad goals and aspirations which gradually become clearer and more specific as they get feedback during the first ten years of their career. The concept of *career anchors* is important for understanding this process and, therefore, is an important way to conceptualize the *adult* career.

Early career research by psychologists focused almost exclusively on aptitude tests and surveys designed to help high school students figure out what career they should go into. Sociologists studying occupations described *work* and *occupations* but ignored the possibility of differences between people who do a given job. There were some studies of adult development that included career issues, but on the whole, there was very little research on the kinds of issues and choices that people face in mid-life and beyond.

We recognized at the outset the importance of distinguishing between what we called an "external career" — a series of stages that a given occupation requires, such as medical school, internship, residency, fellowship, licensed physician — and an "internal career" which is the subjective self-concept that career occupants evolve as they go through these stages. We also recognized that the adult career involves complex accommodations between the requirements of work, the needs of the family, and the developmental needs of the person. In the 1960s and 1970s more women were entering managerial careers which created "dual career couples," which highlighted these complexities.

Paradoxically, the career anchor concept grew out of an entirely different research program launched by Schein whose interests in the early 1960s were in studying how graduates of management schools, MIT in this case, were indoctrinated into the corporate values of their employers. Schein launched a longitudinal panel study of 44 Masters students in the Sloan School in the early 1960s. In addition to surveying the attitudes and values of each person, the basic research method was to go through a two to three hour detailed life and job history interview to identify all educational and job choices made up to that point. For each decision the person was asked:

1) "What did you do?"
2) "Why did you do that?"
3) "How did it work out?"
4) "What were your plans and ambitions for the future, at that point?"
5) "What are your career goals now?"

The research on socialization produced data on the vast variety of careers that alumni were pursuing, but little

consistent evidence of indoctrination. All the panelists were then re-interviewed in 1973 to find out what career adventures they had had in the ten years since graduation. The research process was again the detailed job history interview emphasizing what choices had been made, why they had been made, and what aspirations the panelists now had for the future.

All 44 panelists had claimed at the outset of their careers that they wanted to become CEOs. A decade later, the stories they told varied greatly in terms of what they had done and were now looking for in their respective careers. Only one quarter of the group were on a general management CEO track. Some who had begun their careers in engineering, sales, or finance wanted to remain in those functions. Some had gone into entirely unrelated fields such as academics, consulting, real estate, or started their own businesses. Most evident was that each panel member had evolved a rather clear *self-concept* around his (all were men) self-perceived *competences*, career *motives*, and personal *values*. This self-image described what we called their "internal career" and was seen as a useful guide and constraint for career decisions, hence the label used by the panelists themselves — "an anchor." Different anchors were apparent but for each panelist there was a "dominant anchor" which now functioned as a guide to career choices and served to answer the question: "If I had to make a choice, what would I *not* give up?"

Eight Career Anchor Types

Based on what the panelists described as their self-image around competencies, motives, and values, Schein saw in the interview data five coherent patterns which were, in further studies, supplemented with three other patterns leading to eight career anchor types. A new anchor could only be added if the researcher found at least two cases that did not fit into any of the eight categories. Since that time and based on this rule, no other anchors have emerged.

Each anchor type is built around either a dominant set of competencies, a key motive, or a central value which leads to an integrated concept of the career around preferred types of work, how the person wants to be managed, rewarded, and developed in the future. In truncated form and defined simply in terms of what a person would not give up, the eight anchors as we now constitute and label them are:

1) *General managerial competence* (GM) in which one would not give up the opportunity to direct the activities of others and climb to higher levels in an organization.
2) *Technical functional competence* (TF) in which one would not give up the opportunity to apply and sharpen one's skills in a particular line of work.
3) *Entrepreneurial creativity* (EC) in which one would not give up the opportunity to create an enterprise or organization of one's own.
4) *Autonomy/independence* (AU) in which one would not give up the opportunity to define one's own work in one's own way.
5) *Security/stability* (SE) in which one would not give up the opportunity to have employment certainty or tenure in a job.

6) *Service/dedication* to a cause (SV) in which one would not give up the opportunity to pursue work that one believes contributes something of value in the larger society.
7) *Pure challenge* (CH) in which one would not give up the opportunity to work on solutions to seemingly difficult problems, to win out over worthy opponents, or to overcome difficult obstacles.
8) *Lifestyle* (LS) in which one would not give up the opportunity to integrate and balance personal and family needs while meeting the requirements of a work career.

Most careers permit people to satisfy several of these anchors so the identification of what is *the* "dominant" anchor — the anchor that they would not give up if *forced* to make a choice — often has to be teased out in the interview by posing hypothetical future choices. For example, many panelists asserted that they wanted to continue their line of work, e.g. engineering, but also to get to high levels of management. If they were asked: "In the future if you had a choice between being the chief engineer of your company or a high level general manager, which would you aspire to?", it often produced an immediate response in one or the other direction, thereby revealing that person's dominant anchor.

The discovery of the diversity of career anchors also clarified why the original goal of studying indoctrination produced such mixed results. It turned out that while those anchored in Security/Stability, General Management, and Entrepreneurial Creativity showed attitude change toward the corporate managerial values, the Autonomy/Independence anchored panelists showed actual movement away from corporate values, while the remaining three groups showed no consistent pattern.

This set of career anchors describes and categorizes multiple ways people respond to their work situations. They can be viewed as complex but distinct syndromes of personal interests, abilities, needs, motives, and values that give remarkable stability to a career, even one that looks chaotic and without pattern, when viewed externally or solely from a glance at a resume. The results of this self-discovery process are such that, for example, people avoid moving into work settings where their personal values are likely to be compromised, or if they discover they have moved into such a role, they are soon "pulled back" into circumstances more congruent with their skills, motives, and beliefs.

Follow-up studies of some of the panelists suggest that anchors can be quite stable in the sense that once one has "defined" oneself, once one has acquired a self-image and identity, the psychological need for stability and social forces one encounters tend to stabilize that self-image. This was seen most clearly in those people who defined themselves in terms of their technical competencies and would actively resist being moved into generalist jobs. For example, one panelist who loved the technology of manufacturing told Schein in a follow-up interview that he was "afraid that his success would get him promoted into being a high level general manager." He decided to actively lobby headquarters to ensure that his next promotion would stay in the functional area and, when Schein talked to him again years later, that is exactly where he was — Head of the Manufacturing Staff.

Autonomy/Independence anchored people similarly avoid managerial jobs that would require them to become "organization (wo)men" and Service anchored people resist being rotated to some other managerial function. An extreme but telling example was the panelist who had dropped out of a major corporation, was doing ghost writing work, and when asked in a follow up interview what he would do if he had a family and needed a more stable job, he replied that he would move to England where eccentric careers were more acceptable and run a little shop. Schein interviewed him ten years later and located him and his family outside Oxford running a small antique business!

The need for economic security was, of course, present in all of the panelists but was an anchor only for a small group. However, that need sometimes leads to being stuck in a job that does not permit the fulfillment of one's anchor needs. If people feel beholden to a work situation that simply does not permit the expression of the dominant anchor we found, in subsequent studies, that people played out their anchors in hobbies or second jobs. In other words, once a self-concept of this sort had been formed, it did not change readily even if the job situation required something different. You just had an unhappy, unengaged employee, whose tenure was often not that long.

IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN RESOURCE AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

As our own studies as well as those by others moved beyond managerial and organizationally defined careers, the anchor concept continued to be relevant and revealing. It was tempting initially to stereotype occupations in terms of a given anchor but surprisingly when we studied other occupational and organizational groups, the range of anchors remained in place, leading to the important insight that people enter occupations for different personal reasons and that *most occupations afford the possibility of meeting many different kinds of personal needs*. We found that in every occupation we sampled there were opportunities for the different anchors to be played out, even if a given occupation might have a preponderance of one or two of the anchors. The more important finding was how even among doctors or among policemen there are those who want to exercise their skills, those who want to manage, those who want autonomy, those who most seek security or to serve a cause, those who want Pure Challenge, to build an organization, and those who find themselves in complex life situations that require various accommodations.

The full significance of the finding that virtually *every occupation has in it people with different career anchors* has not been grasped yet by HR practice and the proponents of various kinds of blanket performance appraisal, reward, or incentive systems. Employees with different anchors are looking for fundamentally different kinds of things, yet HR and talent management systems continue to be built on assumptions pertaining to what we believe the general manager type wants — quick promotions, more responsibility, and substantially more pay than his/her subordinate. There is much talk of creating "cultures of engagement" that totally ignore the reality that what engages one person may be anathema to another, even in the same kinds of work. What

is missed in this approach is the need to go much broader than the occasional "dual ladder" for special individual contributors and work out with each subordinate what he or she needs, wants, and is good at. Talent management will inevitably have to face that "talent" includes motives and values as well as competencies.

THE CAREER ANCHOR INTERVIEW AS A DEVELOPMENTAL EXERCISE

Research interviewees consistently commented that they had never before understood their career so well and were grateful for the chance to talk out their "inner career." This insight led Schein to convert the research interview into a *self-administered career anchor exercise* that could be useful to adults at all stages of their life. It proved to be less useful for younger people in that they pretty much wanted most of what the different anchors promised. A real sense of what one really wants and would not give up results from *multiple* job role experiences and a gradually evolving insight into what one is good at, wants, and values.

As this developmental interview became used more widely, the inevitable pressure built up to supplement the occupational history with a shorter more quantitative measure of this self-concept. This led us to develop a 40-item self-scored survey labeled *Career Orientation Questionnaire*.

Each item is a statement which the respondent must rate from 1 to 4 as to whether the statement is "Never," "Seldom," "Often," or "Always" true for him or her. With age and experience people became more discriminating and even the questionnaire shows clear high and low scores on different anchors. A typical Service oriented question is "I dream of being in a career that makes a real contribution to humanity and society," a typical General Management question is "I will feel successful only if I become a high level manager in some organization," and a typical Technical Functional question is "I want to be so good at what I do that others will seek my expert advice." Using the questionnaire alone, people can become somewhat more aware of what they do and do *not* want or need, which will be valid to the extent that they have answered the questions honestly. Questionnaire results demonstrate that younger and less experienced persons are likely to score high on many of the orientations because it is not a forced choice "test."

The questionnaire results can be easily biased toward what the respondent would *ideally* want, whereas the interview reveals through the pattern of choices and reasons what the person *actually* wants. The quantitative scores therefore should be used only as a warm-up for the interview in which talking out the steps and the reasons for them not only provides the developmental insights but enables the listener to point out realities that the individual can ignore when doing just the survey. Being interviewed by someone using the career anchor interview format thus enables people to get a much more accurate picture of what their dominant career anchor really is.

The survey and the interview have been used primarily in career counseling, in career development programs, and in outplacement programs where an outside organization would be hired to transition employees who were laid off toward new jobs and careers with the help of the anchor diagnosis

exercises. It was the discussion of what a person might do to find a job that was better matched to his or her anchor that revealed the need for the other half of this talent management process — a better way to analyze and describe jobs.

JOB/ROLE ANALYSIS AND PLANNING

An effective career system requires a good matching process between the career anchor of the individual and the job requirements of the organization. This matching often breaks down, however, because *the organization is not very effective in analyzing the nature of the work that it assigns.* Formal job descriptions are at best highly general, often out of date and rarely reveal the human network in which *jobs* become *complex roles* — the critical *relational* part of the work. Doing a job largely involves meeting the expectations of a variety of *role stakeholders* such as bosses, peers, subordinates, friends, family, and sometimes even people in the community who expect something of the role occupant.

We therefore introduced an analytic tool to complement the career anchor diagnosis. This involves creating a "job/role map" for present and contemplated future jobs. The individual who has analyzed the career anchor now is invited to draw a job/role map of the present job he or she has or some future job that he or she aspires to. The process is to put yourself into the center of a sheet and draw around yourself all the people who have some expectations of what your relationship with them will be. Put arrows between each of these "role stakeholders" and yourself, where the length or thickness of the arrow can represent the degree to which those stakeholders are more or less critical to you. For example, your boss, your family, team members, and subordinates might all have strong expectations of you, while various others whom you have identified, such as members of the community, staff people in the organization, and so on, might have less strong expectations of you.

The map then helps the map-maker to identify who expects what, who are the key role senders, and whose expectations must be met (and whose are far less important), both now as well as in the foreseeable future. It also allows the map-makers to explore how they might cope with the inevitable problems of role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload that accompany many if not most jobs. The ultimate self-development task then becomes the matching of one's anchor with the role requirement of the job and, if discovering a mismatch, how to either find a new job, or explore how the job might be crafted into a role that provides a better fit, or identify the skills and developmental needs one would require to do the job successfully.

Job/role analysis can be used to help career occupants match anchors with the requirements of a job but can also be used by hiring managers to figure out what a job really entails and how they could, consequently, do a better job of career counseling with their subordinates and in succession planning. Some organizations have thus adopted the career anchor exercise and job/role analysis as a way of building a common vocabulary that both enhances career development discussions between subordinates and their bosses, as well as facilitating analyzing and redesigning the work itself.

Within the organization, job/role planning can become a powerful tool in succession planning. For example, while leading a career anchors workshop for ALCOA Australia, Schein was at a lunch meeting with the senior managers of the company when the CEO suddenly interrupted the discussion and asked: "Ed, do you mind if we take a few minutes to solve a problem that has come up?" The "problem" was that the Senior Vice President for Administration was retiring and the group needed to decide rapidly who should fill that job. The issue was that William, their prime candidate, was sound but the group was a bit nervous about him and needed to discuss him further. His various attributes were mostly seen as positive, but for some reason the group was reluctant to appoint him.

Schein listened to the conversation for about 15 min, noting that it was not headed for resolution because some wanted to gamble on William while others were very hesitant. As the impasse lingered, Schein became curious about the job itself and asked: "By the way, what does the VP of Admin do?" The CEO, using his best patronizing voice explained: "It has various functions under it — Human Resources, Safety, Environmental Affairs, Public Relations..." At this point one of the other executives jumped in with: "It is in the environmental and public relations area that I have my doubts. He's just not good enough to handle the public affairs and these are getting to be more and more important. William is great in all the other areas."

As this comment sank in, a collective lightbulb went on as one of the other VPs said: "Why does Public Relations have to report to the VP of Admin?" This comment led the CEO to say: "It does not. In fact, the PR job is getting so big with all the new regulations that we should create a new VP of PR. William is perfect for all the other parts of that job. All my concerns were about his doing the PR job." The group concurred, the job was redesigned on the spot, and the succession problem was solved.

Schein wondered then and now whether they realized that the solution to their dilemma was to focus on the job rather than focus on the person. But this experience strongly reinforced his conviction that the big flaw in most career management systems is that the nature of the many kinds of work required in organizations is rarely well understood and that most jobs are given far too little attention as role networks. A telling example was how a chemical company was doing a succession plan for plant managers. When they did a job/role map of this job and projected it into the future they found that the job would become mostly political, in that the plant manager would have to negotiate with the government and the community around pollution issues and with the union around safety and job security issues. The technical parts of the plant's work would be mostly done by technical staff. To their dismay, the planning group discovered that all the people in their succession pipeline were the best technologists who might be quite incompetent in managing the complex negotiations. They had to start looking for entirely new kinds of people and the job description had not revealed this need.

Implications for Talent Management

Just as it is important for individuals to know what they need in their careers, it is equally important for an organization to understand its own work, design jobs properly as complex

roles, and to be able to communicate job requirements effectively to job applicants. The individual cannot make good choices if she or he does not get an accurate picture of what the job actually entails. A good example of aligning the individual and organizational side of this process was when the Career Anchor and Job/Role Planning booklet was adopted in the late 1970s by the Swiss-German company Ciba-Geigy. Top management had the interview protocol translated and then asked all their senior managers to do the interview first and then ask their subordinates to also do it as input for their annual career development discussion. It was important not to stereotype the subordinates but to create a conversation where the subordinate could reveal to the manager what his or her own career needs were.

It was mandated that all managers reporting to them do a job/role analysis to improve their understanding of how to conceive of and communicate the "essence" of any given job as an aid both to career development and succession planning. All senior managers, including the Chair of the Board, completed the exercise and talked about it openly at their annual meeting. Job/role planning was also quite useful to them since they were engaged in a major restructuring of the company at the time.

HOW USEFUL IS THE ANCHOR CONCEPT IN A MULTICULTURAL, DYNAMIC WORLD?

When *Career Anchors* was first published, a question quickly arose as to how culturally specific were these categories? Would they be useful in other cultures, in other languages, in other economies, in other labor markets? Was the Swiss-German experience with Ciba-Geigy typical? We do not have a definitive answer because multi-cultural globalization is occurring all over the globe, but we do know that there have been inquiries from dozens of other countries and we have done workshops in Australian, Germany, France, Portugal, Denmark, Italy, Mexico, and Brazil. We have also used career anchors extensively in our teaching of mid-career students as well as in a variety of executive programs in which participants have come from perhaps 40 or 50 different countries. Career anchors and the job/role diagnostic exercise have been translated into eight different languages including Dutch, Korean, Chinese, Japanese, and Portuguese. It seems that those who have learned of career anchors find them useful and relevant because they are, in the end, reflective of broad and vital themes in people's organizational and occupational lives wherever they live.

A big cultural question arose around Asia — specifically, would these concepts mean anything in less individualistic cultures and in a highly programmed work system like Japan? The question arose for us how the huge and relatively stable Japanese organizations sorted out their various types of people because clearly there would be considerable variation in competencies, motives, and values among their employees. We also knew that the Japanese economy was stalled if not shrinking in relation to its dazzling growth in the 1970s and 1980s and wondered how our anchors and ideas about career self-management would play out in that context.

Part of the answer came when Schein gave a general lecture on Career Anchors in Cambridge in 2005 and was asked by an attendee who happened to be the head of the Japan Career Counselors Association whether he would be willing to come to Japan and give the same lecture once in Tokyo and once in Osaka. This proved to be unexpectedly significant because they had budgeted for 300 attendees at each session to cover expenses but attendance was well over 500 people for each lecture indicating that there must be "something going on" in Japan that would produce that level of interest in "individual career development." At the same time there is growing interest in job/role planning to help large corporations to loosen up their traditional career development systems.

We have found in Japan, China and Singapore a very different attitude from our own in terms of how to determine and utilize career anchors. We have always emphasized the importance of self-development and have assiduously avoided turning the career interview into a "test." By design, we did not seek to measure reliability and validity in the Career Orientation Survey, putting our emphasis instead on using the qualitative and subjective life history interview as a way of promoting "personal insight for purposes of development and job choice." However, the pressure for something more quantitative has always been there and makes the 40 item Career Orientation Questionnaire more attractive. It appears that the face-to-face job history interviews are culturally less feasible in some Asian countries. As so often happens when concepts and methods migrate across cultural boundaries, the essence remains but the local culture reinterprets what the concepts mean and changes the diagnostic methods in various ways to fit what is locally acceptable and meaningful. Inasmuch as the career anchors and job/role planning concepts are designed to be developmental, rather than diagnostic, such local changes are desirable rather than problematic. For these same reasons, we have not worried about retranslating to check on accuracy, reliability and validity, preferring instead to have the concepts remain developmental in terms of the career systems and understandings within each country.

THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF CHANGES IN THE NATURE OF WORK

As work environments and jobs change, so do the challenges and opportunities offered to career occupants with a well-developed anchor. In order to assess the potential applicability of these concepts and self-development tools for the future, we need to first consider the implications of global changes and other trends for both the external career patterns and stages of employment, and second, for the internal career — how anchors will fit into these new patterns. Across all of these trends, the need for more deliberate job/role planning will be paramount because as organizations, jobs, and the concept of work itself change, job/role planning will become one of the most important diagnostic tools to track in detail how some of those changes will impact relationships.

Restructuring and Globalization

Almost continual restructuring is expected in many public and private organizations. Restructuring occurs in a variety of ways, serving different ends. For the past several decades the emphasis has been on downsizing (or, euphemistically,

"rightsizing"), based largely on the argument that competition is a relentless and unceasing force in the world and therefore an organization's ability to survive in such a world depends largely on the stringent control of costs. Innovation, research and development, growth, quality, and safety all matter, of course, but only if costs are kept in line and, wherever possible, minimized. The most common response to these cost pressures to date has been to replace the more expensive workers, such as law partners or tenured professors or skilled machinists, with less costly ones, such as salaried attorneys or non-tenured, adjunct faculty, part-time or contract workers, or even robots.

Massive numbers of jobs that were once regulated to ensure they were full-time, well-paid, and protected from cutbacks have become part-time, poorly-paid, and now permit employers to let workers go without restriction. Union membership (and protection) in the U.S. is now at its lowest point in the past fifty years, all of which has contributed to waves of layoffs and reconfigured organizations. Many jobs have simply disappeared and work has been reallocated and/or redesigned so that a smaller number of people now perform it.

Outsourcing is a common restructuring practice across most industries, aided if not initiated by dramatic advances in information technologies, the rise of free trade agreements, and the general liberalization or relaxation of governmental restrictions on the economic policies of most nations. This puts an even greater strain on domestic labor markets in developed economies that must adjust to progressively cheaper labor available elsewhere resulting in fewer jobs at home. Such moves are hardly restricted these days to low skill or back office work as so-called "gold collar" jobs in fields such as chip design, medical diagnosis, software development, and many more are outsourced. General Electric now has the majority of its Research and Development personnel located outside the U.S.

Insourcing is also growing in the U.S. — if on a smaller scale than outsourcing — as workers from other countries become part of the domestic workforce. Foreign technical workers, programmers and engineers with H-1B visas earn about half of what Americans with comparable credentials earn. They are typically college educated, single men in their late twenties who are sponsored by firms — *Microsoft* being a prime example — for an extended period of time and are thus essentially immobile, existing in "*de facto* indentured servitude" because trying to shift to another employer would put their visa at risk.

The most obvious implication of these trends is that external careers may become multiple careers in different forms and in different organizations. People with Technical Functional anchors will become vulnerable to more frequent obsolescence and have to become resilient re-learners or fulfill their anchors outside the formal work world. Autonomy-oriented people should be less impacted while General Manager types may find it harder to locate stable organizations in which they can advance reliably. This world will be more manageable for the person anchored in Pure Challenge.

Changing Organizational Forms

In the process of restructuring, organizations are (a) re-examining and trimming their hierarchical structures particularly in the middle ranks, (b) moving toward flatter organizations, (c) relying more on coordination mechanisms other than hierarchy, (d) "empowering" their employees in various ways, and (e) becoming more flexible in regard to projects they undertake (and abandon) as well as the people they employ (growing in fat times and retrenching in lean). In the relatively flat, flexible, networked, project-based organizations of the future, power and authority will rotate among different project leaders, and individual project members will have to coordinate their own activities across a number of projects with different leaders. Operational authority will shift rapidly from one project leader to another, and individual employees may find themselves matrixed between several bosses. At the same time, as knowledge and information are more widely distributed, employees will become *de facto* empowered because they will increasingly know things that their bosses will not know.

These new forms of organizing are facilitated in part by technology and in part by the shift in the economy to casual and contract work illustrated by billion dollar start-ups like Uber, TaskRabbitt, and Airbnb, which operate global businesses with just a handful of employees. A laser-like focus on retaining only so-called "core competencies" within the formal organization has become something of a mantra for those promoting these newer organizational forms. Power and authority will derive from what a given person knows and what skills he or she has demonstrated. But since conceptual knowledge is largely invisible, the opportunities for misperception or conflicting perception of who knows what and who should be respected for what will increase, making the exercise of authority and influence at all levels more problematic. This in turn will not only increase anxiety levels in organizations, but also put a premium on social skills such as negotiation, conflict management, and coalition building, thus highlighting the importance of building trusting relationships across various kinds of organizational and occupational boundaries.

What this all means for career anchors is none too clear. Later starts and slower climbs may disadvantage many of those in the General Managerial camp, since fewer opportunities to discover and practice management skills will be available. At the same time, the supposedly nimble, team-based organization projected for the future will require competent project leadership at all levels. Critical decision making responsibilities are likely to be picked up at lower levels in the organization than in times past. Those anchored in Pure Challenge will find comfort in these situations as will those with Technical Functional anchors if they have the right expertise and if they are willing to learn new areas as old areas become obsolete. Lifestyle and, certainly, Security anchors are however less likely to be well-served in cost conscious organizations that are continually restructuring.

Technology and Expertise

New technologies coupled with the spread of globalization have loosened the boundaries of organizations, jobs, and roles. At the organizational level, for example, we see in many industries a loosening of the boundaries between suppliers, manufacturers, and customers wherever they may be located. By using sophisticated information technology tools, customers can directly access a company's sales organization, specify in detail what kind of product or service

they require, and obtain an immediate price and delivery date sent from the seller's computer. As a result, certain occupational roles such as purchasing agents and sales agents or representatives have changed considerably and these changes create a chain reaction throughout an organization requiring a redefinition, or other occupational and organizational roles in areas such as order processing, marketing, and even design and manufacturing.

Coordination and relational skills will inevitably become an important element of managerial and technical/functional jobs, raising the interesting question of whether a new anchor around "relationship and teaming" will gradually evolve as a core element of work situations.

The digitization and automation of everything from administrative work to complex manufacturing processes makes certain kinds of jobs from secretary to production worker less manual and more conceptual. The role of management becomes more uncertain and ambiguous, as managers no longer have the power of knowing things that their subordinates do not. It is especially important for managers in such positions to recognize that the nature of their authority and their relationships to those they nominally supervise have shifted in a number of ways. Workers with high levels of technical skills — and often high levels of commitment to an occupation — have come to hold a much more central position in organizations. That will force people in higher positions of power to learn how to be humble and helpful to their more highly trained subordinates upon whom they will be increasingly dependent. Beyond general relational skills, this implies also a commitment to being helpful, to having "downward curiosity" and a willingness to treat subordinates as valuable total persons with different career anchors, not merely "technical resources." With technological complexity come opportunities for new ways of doing things that will create many more opportunities for the Entrepreneurially- and Autonomy-oriented people.

The Growth of Support and Service Functions

As work and life become more technically complex, more support services are needed. In the workplace, fewer people will occupy operational roles and more people will be needed in knowledge-based service and staff roles supporting the operation. This will create curious organizational dilemmas. For example, the labor cost savings expected from investments in automation and computerized work processes may turn out to be illusionary since such efforts may often result in a redistribution rather than a reduction of the work force. Fewer operators are needed, but more support services are required so the total cost of the operation ultimately may not change all that much. But the kinds of work that are performed change radically and the relationships between groups in the organization change as well. Operators have greater immediate responsibility for doing things right, but the programmers, systems engineers, and maintenance engineers have greater ultimate responsibility to design the system well and to keep it up and running, in order to keep the digitized systems from "going down." Management becomes more of a coordinating and liaison function and less of a monitoring and control function. Peers in service and coordinating roles come to be seen as much more central in the help-and-advise or trouble-shooting networks than they had been previously.

All this suggests that those anchored in the right kinds of Technical Functional areas and in Service will have a potentially wider array of possible career choices than at present. Lifestyle anchors tied to social ends may also benefit — although some service jobs said to be 'family friendly' such as public school teaching and administration, or patient care work in hospitals, often in fact require long, unpaid, and irregular work hours, rigid schedules, and offer limited if any opportunity to work part-time (all of which may be quite important for those with a Lifestyle anchor).

The Changing Meaning of Work in Society

People are placing less value on traditional concepts such as loyalty and the acceptance of authority based on formal rank, age, or seniority, and are instead placing more value on individualism and individual rights vis-a-vis large organizations. Increasingly, people are asking that the tasks they need to perform provide them with a sense of meaning and an opportunity to express their talents. They are demanding that the rights of individuals be protected, especially if they are in danger of being discriminated against on some arbitrary basis, such as gender, race, sexual preference, age, religion, or ethnicity. Increasingly, people want to have some voice in decisions that directly affect them at work and at home. Progress in all these areas over the past 40 or 50 years is notable although it has come unevenly, in fits and starts, and, for many, at far too slow a pace.

We know also that many people are placing less value on work or career as a total life concern, and less value on promotion or hierarchical movement within an organization as the sole measure of "success" in life. Today, many discussions are about how to lead a balanced life, in which work, career, family, and self-development often all receive substantial attention. It is arguably the case that "success" for many of us is increasingly being defined in terms of the full use of our talents and contributing not only to our work organization, but to family, community, and self as well. Yet the different anchor groups define success very differently which is, perhaps, the most important point to consider as we look forward.

For the Technical Functional type, work continues to be central around the development of their talent; for the Managerial type new challenges will arise around whether the career continues to be in a large organization or in a series of projects; for the Entrepreneur a whole new series of services and potential new applications of information technology and social media will beckon; as environmental and global warming problems escalate more opportunities will arise for Service-oriented people; Lifestyle as an anchor has already risen over the decades and will probably become a more common anchor in the future. For those who are looking for Security/Stability the future seems less clear, while for those with Autonomy/Independence anchors the future will provide more opportunities than ever.

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

We have outlined how the quest for a good fit between yourself and your career may be facilitated by diagnosing both your career anchor, as well as the expectations of those who occupy the work roles you are (contemplating) undertaking. An inescapable conclusion from our decades of use of the career anchor categories and the job/role analysis tool is that the inner careers of people are different, even if they are in the same occupations and jobs. In addition, specific jobs viewed as role sets are often very different from each other, even when the job descriptions are identical. While it is tempting to look for general concepts of what is a career, what is an occupation, and what is a job, we must instead remain aware of idiosyncratic differences among people and jobs, in order to effectively attract, motivate, and retain a highly talented workforce.

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