

CAREER MANAGEMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Olivia Roxana Popescu

Assist. Prof., PhD, "Constantin Brâncuși" University of Târgu-Jiu

Abstract : The dynamics of life and the speed with which the world changes within the organization assume the existence of competent social actors, capable of performance, knowledgeable, devoted to their profession and institution, loyal and moral, honest, adaptable, tolerant, healthy and optimistic. This goal must respond ed by career management and training, integration and human socialization, work protection and service relations, in a word, by human resources.

Recruitment, selection, assessment, motivation, promotion, planning, preparation and coordination of personnel is the most important activity, which includes continuity, efficiency, evolution, modernization and compatibility of European organizations. And all these desirable are not possible without studying the main area in the training of future professionals.

Underlining its complex interdisciplinary character, the problem of educational and vocational guidance and career management has become a systematic concern with the diversification of labor and with frequent changes imposed by contemporary society,

In fact, this dynamic world lives a feverish existence always being under the double edged sword of Damocles : competition and change. Hence, the appearance of competition of any human activity, so the motto "to fight means life, so fight" not only does not lose its validity, but gains depth and new contours related to motivation, aspirations, knowledge, age, mentality, merit and equal responsibilities.

Keywords: Management, Human Resources, Career management, Managers, counseling and school orientation

Taking in consideration the technological and economic changes in the world, the nature of careers or the way people pursue their careers has changed. Due to changing work

environments, people found the increasing complexity of modern careers. Individuals who are unable to adapt themselves to career complexity usually fail to have a great career. All businesses need to improve organizational management in order to achieve and sustain their competitive advantages over time. Managing people in workplace is one of managerial tasks. Effective human resource management leads to continuous organizational competitive advantages.

Career management issues have been widely studied by researchers. Career management is a key factor for accomplishing both personal goals and organizational goals. Many companies consider career management as important to contemporary HRM practice and they assist employees to manage careers. Most companies value skilled employees and need to retain them for long-term employment.

While companies pay attention to establishment and implementation of career management programs, individuals can also develop themselves without waiting for career development support from their organizations. Individuals who focus on occupational goals prefer long-term career development and want to be successful in their careers. Individual career management (also referred to as career self-management) has been noted as important to employee's career success. However, many people put less effort into career self-management. These people normally reactively respond to changing career environments. The notion of career self-management behaviors was found to be crucial for HR practitioners since it influences individuals' career outcomes. Employees who concentrate on career self-management seem to be more proactive than those people who do not take action on their own career management. Proactive behaviors of employees support both individual and organizational success¹.

First of all we have to start from the beginning, that means to answer to the logical question "What is a career?". Nowadays, for most of the people the answer is very simple; they associate the word 'career' with an upward progression of jobs, increasing in pay, status and

¹ Mohamad Yazam Sharif, *A Review of Organizational and Individual Career Management: A Dual Perspective*, International Journal of Human Resource Studies, ISSN 2162-3058 2014, Vol. 4, No. 1
www.macrothink.org/ijhrs 103

responsibility. This is why, many of them think that the idea of a ‘career’ is only relevant to the middle or senior management levels of an organization. However, these days the use of the term ‘career’ encompasses a wide range of occupational experiences, not just conventional ones. The truth is careers don't necessarily involve promotion or progression, and they frequently cross occupational and organizational boundaries. The term “Career” can be defined as the sequence of jobs that a person has during his or her working life.

The concept of career management is discussed in this paper. It provides knowledge and idea to those who are interested in and involved in this issue. Few careers adhere closely to the idea of upward progression through a hierarchical sequence of roles. Some involve sideways moves within an organization, or frequent moves in or out of employment in a number of different companies, or phases of self-employment, temporary work and permanent employment.² People also develop their careers by accumulating and transferring job skills from one context to another, by broadening the range of expertise they apply in each successive job, or by constantly seeking out novel and challenging situations.³

In what concerns the term career there are two perspectives: the individual perspective and the organizational perspective.

The individual perspective refers to the fact that what people want from their careers depends on the place they have in their personal and working lives. Their career priorities are determined by a lot of factors like: their background, age, family situation, financial commitments, lifestyle choices and future life plans. Some people may hope to be promoted into another job with the same employer. What people hope to gain from their jobs will be determined by their previous experience of work, their current needs (in material terms, and in terms of personal development) and their aspirations for the future.

On the other side jobs opportunities exist because organizations have work that needs to be done, and groups of individuals co-operate to that end. Employers need to have the right people with the right skills in place if their organizations are to remain viable in the short-term

² Richard Donkin, *The Future of Career*, CIPD Publishing, London, 2002

³ <http://www.cipd.co.uk/download/anonymous/2994guidecareermgmnt.pdf>

and sustain competitive advantage in the long-term. The kind of people and the kinds of skills needed depend on the sector of the economy in which the firm operates, its occupational make-up, the technology employed, the orientation of its customers, and so on. These organizational requirements determine how jobs are structured, what sort of individuals are recruited into each job, and how employees are developed once in the job. Within any one firm, jobs vary as to whether they provide the opportunity for career progression. Many employers offer career progression with some jobs (typically those where the skills involved are either unique or highly valuable to the firm) and limited opportunity in others.

According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, Career management aims to find an optimal, rather than a perfect, fit between the organization's and the individual's perspective. This means finding not the ideal solution for either party but a solution which is satisfactory for both parties.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development sustains that there are a number of underlying principles that characterise effective career management:

- consistency. Since responsibility for career management is usually shared by HR professionals and line managers, employees can pick up messages about their careers in a variety of situations. Effective career management involves making sure that, in all of those situations, a coherent and consistent picture of the organization's perspective is presented.
- proactivity. Effective career management anticipates the future direction of the organisation and reflects the wider corporate strategy or objectives. It maintains the current capabilities of the organization while building flexibility and agility for the future.
- collaboration. Effective career management is based on partnership between the employer and the employee. Employers should work together with employees at all levels of the organization to find mutually satisfactory solutions.
- dynamism. Career management requires flexibility and compromise over time, as changing organizational and individual circumstances mean that each party wants and expects different things from the employment relationship.

Recent findings from the CIPD's 2003 Managing Employee Careers survey of HR professionals supports this. The survey showed that career management is more likely to be thought effective if line managers take it seriously, if senior managers are involved and if it is integrated with wider HR and business strategies.

Career Management is a concept that has been debated in organizations for years. In particular, the key question about Career Management has been whether it is a 'soft' benefit for employees, with the organization seeing no return on the investment, or whether there are tangible benefits to implementing Career Management practices.⁴

In fact, where organizations have active Career Management practices in place, they can expect to experience a reduction in employee turnover; heightened employee motivation; improved employee satisfaction; and more effective succession planning.

In the area of Career Management, according to specialists from Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, the following strategies need to be implemented:

1. Implementation of supportive Career Management practices

Organizations' Career Management practices can be either *active* or *passive*. *Active* strategies (such as career workshops and employee training) are implemented for the express purpose of Career Management, and *passive* strategies incorporate a number of organizational practices (such as regular performance reviews and provision of key performance indicators) that, by default, promote employees' Career Management.

While most organizations' efforts to facilitate and encourage Career Management are *passive* activities, and some engage in *active* practices, few organizations encompass their Career Management practices within an overall strategy incorporating both active and passive activities.

Organizations need to look for a balance of *active* and *passive* practices that encourage an environment within the workplace that is supportive of Career Management. In a study

⁴ www.hr.com/hr/.../career_management___who

undertaken by DBM, respondents identified the six most successful Career Management practices used within their organizations. These practices included:

- Placing clear expectations on employees so that they know what is expected of them throughout their careers with the organization
- Giving employees the opportunity to transfer to other office locations, both domestically and internationally
- Providing a clear and thorough succession plan to employees
- Encouraging performance through rewards and recognition
- Giving employees the time and resources they need to consider short- and long-term career goals
- Encouraging employees to continually assess their skills and career direction

2. Elimination of barriers to employees' career advancement

In addition to looking at the implementation of effective Career Management strategies, organizations need to assess whether there are any internal barriers to employees' career advancement. In fact, the removal of any barriers to career advancement can be as significant to reducing employee turnover as the implementation of Career Management strategies.

Generally, these barriers fall into 'clusters', including:

- Lack of time, budgets and resources for employees to plan their careers and to undertake training and development
- Rigid job specifications, lack of leadership support for Career Management and a short-term focus
- Lack of career opportunities and pathways within the organization for employees

As organizations assess their Career Management strategies, it is essential that they not only consider the implementation of practices, but also look to eliminating as many barriers to career advancement as possible to ensure that employees have the best possible chance to look for opportunities within their organization.

3. Adapting Career Management strategies to suit the organization's size and structure

It is important that an organization's Career Management strategies reflect its dynamics, size and structure. For example, while large organizations tend to have more support mechanisms for employees, they often present a higher number of barriers to career advancement. Small organizations, on the other hand, rarely implement extensive Career Management strategies, usually as a result of lack of resources, however, they also tend to present the least number of barriers to career advancement.

As organizations consider their Career Management practices and strategies, these factors must be weighed-up in the decision to ensure that whatever the strategy is, it is suitable to the organization.

There is a direct link between Career Management strategies, the removal of barriers to career advancement, and ultimate employee turnover levels. With few positive strategies and many barriers, organizations can expect to carry the cost of demotivated employees and replacing key staff - costs that might otherwise have been avoided. There are a number of considerations that need to be made by organizations in implementing Career Management strategies, and a one-size-fits-all approach will not work. But where the time is taken to assess all of the relevant areas, organizations can be assured that they will see a significant impact on their workplace.⁵

Career Management ensures others know about you and your value. Although Career Management is one of the five phases of career development planning in our model, it is deliberately front and center since activities related to career management are relevant to all the other phases. Also, career management, unlike the other phases, is a continuous process that occurs throughout one's career and not just at discrete times. It may be helpful to think of career management as a philosophy and set of habits that will enable you to achieve career goals and develop career resiliency.

Successful career management is accomplished through regular habits of building relationships, engaging in career development conversations, updating your career development plan, and setting new goals as life and career needs change. Being proficient at career

⁵ www.hr.com/hr/.../career_management___who...

management also means possessing basic skills related to job searching and managing changes in a resilient manner.⁶

Therefore, even scientist from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development consider that Career management is a critical challenge for HR professionals in the twenty-first century. They say in their guide that this domain is essential for developing and sustaining organizations in the long-term and for giving each individual within the organization a meaningful focus for the future. However, short-term business horizons and a focus on financial results mean that the need for effective career management, with its more intangible, long-term outcomes, is often overlooked. HR professionals need to champion the cause of career management within their organizations, helping every line manager, senior executive and individual employee understand and embrace its importance. The most important thing that organizations have to understand that employers and employees bring different perspectives to the situation, and that these differences need to be recognised and resolved. Each employee has their own set of past experience and future priorities, which may or may not fit with what their employer can provide in the long term. The challenge for employers is to understand what kind of careers they can offer, and to formulate a consistent, collaborative and proactive approach to managing careers. Meeting this challenge will become even more important as working patterns continue to evolve. We can expect to see more international resourcing, global collaborations, multicultural teams, virtual working and project-based organization as technological, social-demographic, economic and political environments continue to evolve. Individuals and organizations both have an increasing complexity of choices to make in the process of developing and managing careers. Doing so effectively depends crucially on open-handed discussion between employers and employees about what each side expects to give and to receive on an ongoing basis.⁷

⁶ www.legacybowes.com/.../career-management-...

⁷ Zella King, Career management – a CIPD guide,
<http://www.cipd.co.uk/download/anonymous/2994guidecareermgmt.pdf>

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

1. Mohmad Yazam Sharif , *A Review of Organizational and Individual Career Management: A Dual Perspective*, International Journal of Human Resource Studies, ISSN 2162-3058 2014, Vol. 4, No. 1
www.macrothink.org/ijhrs 103
2. Richard Donkin, *The Future of Career*, CIPD Publishing, London, 2002
3. <http://www.cipd.co.uk/download/anonymous/2994guidecareermgmnt.pdf>
4. www.hr.com/hr/.../career_management___who...
5. www.legacybowes.com/.../career-management-...
6. CIPD. (2002) *The future of careers*. London: CIPD.
7. CIPD. (2003) *Managing employee careers*. London: CIPD (download from: www.cipd.co.uk/surveys).
8. CIPD. (2004) *Effective career discussions*. Part of the CIPD online practical tools series www.cipd.co.uk/tools
9. Zella King, *Career management – a CIPD guide*, <http://www.cipd.co.uk/download/anonymous/2994guidecareermgmnt.pdf>