

## Importance of Career Development for Individuals and Organizations

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**Abstract:** Career development and planning is very significant to carry the organizations from current to the higher levels as well as professional and personal developments of the individuals. In terms of career, it can be said that the individuals and the organizations who invest in the career development can keep up with the others in the market. This paper tries to shed a light upon the importance of career development and shows basic traits of the career development.

**Keywords:** Professional Development, Career Planning, Organization, Individual, Career Development

### 1. Career Development

Career development is a process throughout which the individuals try to give strength to their professional life or in other words their own careers. Within this context, the coverage area of career development is not limited to the current status of the individuals but also is interested in the future potentials. Career development is not one-way action. It covers whole life of the individuals. Therefore, it is very significant. The potential of the individuals and status; professional promotions or reaching up to another level of employment; establishing a new career etc. are the subjects of career development.

Depending on this fact, Becker and Huselid (2003) state that human resource offices have a very crucial role in the organizations. In some organizations, the functions of human resource offices can be considered just like an office to complete employment and termination procedures of the employees and it is obvious that such organizations will not be able to move themselves to a further step or they will not have well-established roots to be able to survive in the future. However, the companies that make investment in the career development will, in a sense, grow their future personnel from today, even from past.

Similarly, Peel (1992) expresses that career development not only helps people during their employment, but also helps in the personal lives of individuals in terms of personal efficiency, motivation and reaching the personal targets. As it is seen here, career development is not an issue which is limited to the office environment. It is more than that by expanding itself to the all parts, periods and aspects of the

individuals. Thanks to the activities supporting career development, the individuals will be able to shape their professional lives as well as their daily lives and future targets.

In this sense, we can define career development as a continuous process which passes through the individual's employment and life experience. Ivancevich (1994) mentions that the needs and expectations of individuals are subject to change as they pass through these processes. Namely, as person develops in terms of career development, the perspectives of the individuals change, too.

## **2. Reasons for Career Development**

There are several factors that push the individuals to improve their career or for career development. Some of these factors can be listed as follows:

### **2.1. Job Security**

Literally speaking, job security, as described by Business Dictionary (n.d.), is the “assurance (or lack of it) that an employee has about the continuity of gainful employment for his or her work life. Job security usually arises from the terms of the contract of employment, collective bargaining agreement, or labor legislation that prevents arbitrary termination, layoffs, and lockouts. It may also be affected by general economic conditions.” As it can be seen from the description, job security is the gainful employment for the individual's career. Although job security has been protected by the laws and agreement, yet the individuals must adjust their career targets in accordance with the requirements of the age, geography and market.

In the past, it was possible to get employed with high employment security, but following the technological developments, there is always a risk of losing job or changing profession. In other words, the current century has changed many things including our understanding of being employed and being employer. Thus, the individuals should remember that being a good staff may not be enough; they should choose their professions professionally on the very beginning of the life road and during the employment, they should continue their development process. In another way of saying, as the life becomes mobile and fast, the individuals must keep up with the requirements of the age.

### **2.2. Continuous Learning Activity**

Continuous learning activity can be handled from three levels: organization-based, group-based and individual-based.

#### **a) Individual-based**

The employees are supposed to have certain positive tendencies towards the professional development which will require future education and training. In this sense, they are supposed to be open to the changes, developments and self-criticism. The individuals ought to revise their current conditions and skills and seek new ways to enhance their capacities.

### **b) Group-based**

The importance of group works has increased a lot in this era. Rather than individual successes, co-operation and collaboration as a team has gained importance. “At the group level, continuous learning is reflected, for example, by a team transforming itself in response to changing conditions” (Continuous Learning, p.1). The individuals composing a team try to adapt themselves to the new changes; therefore, both group training and individual training as a part of the group is very important.

### **c) Organization-based**

Depending on the changing economic conditions and market demands, the importance of permanent learning or training is gaining importance. The companies must keep up with these changes to be able to survive in the market; they must have short-term and long-term targets in which learning and training of the employees must necessarily be located in their agenda. In the dictionary, it is stated that continuous learning activity is the “ongoing learning process that seeks to incorporate the lessons learnt (from the results of already implemented changes) into a continuous improvement program [that should be offered and considered by the organization itself for the career development of the employees]” (BusinessDictionary, n.d.).

## **2.3. Technology**

Twenty-first century is the age of technology; moreover, the new generation is very familiar with technology (Serin, 2017). It affects all classical understanding and approaches to the phenomenon. In terms of career employment, It is important for the individuals to set up their own career goals; to enhance their skills and capacities; to improve and renew their current, available knowledge and information in accordance with the rapid changes in technology and information. Otherwise it is going to be a failure for most of the employees to be able to cope with their peers and/or colleagues.

On the other hand, the organizations should also adjust their plans by taking these changes and market demands into the consideration. Within this context, they are supposed to provide necessary equipment and training/education opportunities for their employees to be able to sustain their existence in the market.

## **3. Individual Career Development and Organizational Needs**

One of the aims of career development is to find a common, shared point between the professional development of individuals and the needs of any organization. The activities to be performed for the career development are supposed not to be in confrontation with the organizational needs; rather, they are both ought to support and reinforce each other. Within this context, the human resources offices in the organizations or career planning offices must set the necessary plans and programs by considering the personal needs and company’s needs.

Thanks to career development plans and programs, the companies are aware of the potential yield they already have as well as the individuals become aware of themselves. In other words, both parties will see what they already have from the eyes of another mechanism. The individuals become much more familiar with the goals of organizations and this will increase the interaction. According to Osibanjo,

Oyewunmi and Ojo (2014), the man and material power are the very basic factors contributing to the survival and development of any organization. The priority, in Gross' mind (1968) is the survival of an organization and this survival is bound to the interaction between the organization and individuals employed and such a synergy will help the organizations to achieve their destinations.

Additionally, as said above, career development can be handled in three levels; individual, group and organization. By means of such activities held to improve career development, employees will be more willing to act in accordance with the aims of organizations. Adeniji, Osibanjo and Abiodun (2013) argue that career development programs "... include employees identifying the interests and goals of the organization, and be aligned and committed in achieving these goals".

#### **4. Career Planning**

Career planning has two areas to deal with; the theories based on psychology and theories based on sociology.

Parsons' (1909) studies have played pioneering role in the literature. The theories depended on psychology are based on Parson's studies having been conducted in the very beginning of the twenty first century. According to Parson, the relationship between the skills and abilities of individuals and job requirements in determining the career choice is very significant. This relationship is parallel to each other.

There are six basic traits for an individual to decide which career to choose (Oliver & Waehler, 2005). These traits can be listed as: realist (practical, physical and material-based), researcher (with intellectual, scientific and critical thinking skills), artistic (original and authentic skills), social (collaborative, co-operative and helpful), enterprising (competitive, convincing, promising and leading skills) and conventional (focused on organizations and details).

Similarly, Super (1980) suggests that our working environment is exposed to constant changes. According to him, the individuals pass through different phase of the life. These phases are as follows: improvement, discovery, setup, sustainability and de-occupy. However, handles the situation starting from the childhood from a psychological perspective. According to her, the environment that any child has been exposed to during the childhood has a very crucial role in future career planning and choice. Gutteridge (1986), Sauer et al. (2002), and Swanson and Halton (2001) talk about the importance relationship between the individual and the organization in terms of career planning.

#### **5. Conclusion**

Career development and career planning are very important concepts not only for the individuals but also for the employers, organizations and companies. These concepts, furthermore, go on influencing the lives and experience of individuals both inside the working, employment setting and during the regular, daily life. As time passes and the things challeging the individuals increase, individuals are supposed to enhance their skills to be able to win the competition in the professional life, because being a good staff may not be enough int today's world, the sustainability of this situation is also very crucial, too. In this perspective, the individuals are supposed to be open to new developments, knowledge and criticism internally or externally directed.

On the other side, as again mentioned above, the very essence for the organizations is to survive and growth. While doing this, the organizations are supposed to be aware of happenings around them. This awareness is not just the perception of technology and purchasal of it; the personnel must be trained and educated accordingly. The instituons should adjust their short-term and long-term goals by considering the career development processes, as well.

Career planning and/or development is a process by which the individuals have the opportunity to find the most suitable careers depending on their traits. These traits, if can be manipulated competently, can be used as a contributory input and output for the organizations. Thanks to awareness of how, who and why, the organizations may make use of their staff efficiently.

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