

WEEK 10: CAREER THEORY, BUSINESS AND THE INDIVIDUAL

CAREER THEORY is concerned with how individuals make career choices and how they can build more successful careers. The word career itself is about the sum total of your work experiences, these might be in one organisation, in a whole host of organisations, in one occupation (e.g. sales and marketing), spread across a number of occupations/professions.

In summary: a collection of all the work experiences you have.

IMPORTANCE OF CAREER FIT:

-Career fit:

-**person-job fit:** compatibility, fit or congruence between an individual and the job they are doing. Are you the type of person who likes this job and has a talent for it?

-**person-organisation fit:** does the individual fit in well with the culture and in the possibilities of the organisation in which they are employed. Do you believe in the organization's values? Is it the kind of place where you can grow as an individual? (Therefore be happy)

-This has been the concern of the vocational guidance movement, going back to the early 1900s.

WORK ADJUSTMENT THEORY: There are two key concepts to this theory:

-Your abilities can make you satisfactory for a job

-**matching your abilities to the skill needs of the job is critical to your performance.**

-You will be satisfied in a work environment in which you can meet your needs and goals.

-**what kind of job and organisation motivates you? To what extent is the job meeting your needs? Do you have the chance to apply your skills to the job?**

Individuals tend to be more satisfied when the skills they have can be applied to the work they do, as well as being concerned with whether the work they do is meaningful. Is the job something they are concerned, or motivated about? Am I making the level of income I seek and am I reaching my potential in the job? Can I meet people in the organisation or do you feel isolated? Can I grow in this job?

-Sometimes if employees are not reaching their emotional and or social needs, they can work with their manager to rewrite their job descriptions in order to ensure their needs are taken into account so they can reach more of their potential.

-The factors outlined above are important in terms of predicting whether or not you will perform well in a job and whether or not you will be satisfied in a job and in an organisation and whether in fact you will stay there or not.

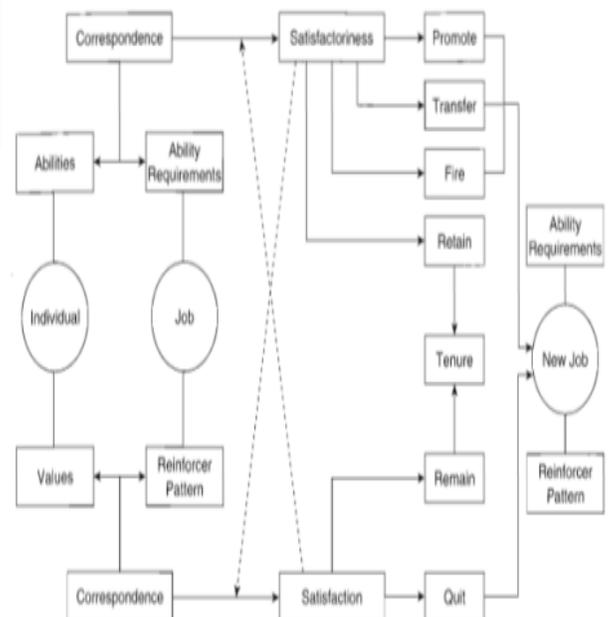
Work Adjustment Theory

An important theoretical application of the "fit" metaphor to people at work is called, variously, the theory of work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) and person-environment correspondence theory (Dawis, 2002). The latter heading is a nice summary of the precepts of the "fit" metaphor.

This theory consists of a series of formal propositions relating to people's adjustment to their work. The key variables and relationships in the theory are shown in Figure 5.1.

The theory is based on the correspondence or noncorrespondence of individuals with their jobs. Both individuals and jobs are complex, but like many psychologists and others interested in individual differences, Dawis and Lofquist (1984) believed that this complexity can be reduced to a finite set of variables:

- With respect to individual people, there is a set of variables labeled "abilities." These are the person's capacities and aptitudes relevant to specific skills that may be required to do a job: Abilities represent what the person is capable of doing.
- There is also a set of variables labeled "values" that express outcomes that the individual might seek to obtain from the job. Six crucial values defined by Dawis and Lofquist (1984) are achievement, comfort, status, altruism, safety, and autonomy. These indicate what needs the individual wants from the job.
- Corresponding to the person's abilities are ability requirements of the job—the abilities that are needed to perform the job well. A close correspondence between abilities and ability requirements brings satisfactoriness (i.e., the individual performs the job well).
- Corresponding to the person's values are reinforcer patterns—the rewards that are available from the job. A close correspondence between values and reinforcements brings job satisfaction.



VOCATIONAL PERSONALITY THEORY:



-6 personality theories: Tell us what people are like and what they are good at and like to do.

-ARTISTIC: these people are creative, intuitive, sensitive, articulate, expressive, unstructured, original, nonconforming, innovative; rely on feelings, imagination, inspiration, like to work with ideas and concepts, are spontaneous and open minded.

-INVESTIGATIVE: Intellectual, introspective, and inquisitive. They are curious, methodical, rational, analytical, and logical, scholarly, scientific, technical, or medical, avid readers. They like to solve problems, perform experiments, and conduct research.

-REALISTIC (doers): Independent, stable, persistent, genuine, practical,

and thrift, tasks that are tactile, physical, athletic, or mechanical, being outdoors, using tools, operating machines, interacting with animals, and working with their hands. (hands-on)

-CONVENTIONAL (organizers): Conscientious and conservative. They are logical, efficient, orderly, and organized. They are thorough and detail-oriented. They value precision and accuracy. They are reliable. They enjoy practical tasks, quantitative measurements, and structured environments. They follow the rules. (Accountants)

-ENTERPRISING (persuaders): Adventurous, ambitious, assertive, extroverted, energetic, enthusiastic, confident, and optimistic. They are dominant, persuasive, and motivational. They like influencing others, being in charge, taking risks, debating, and competing.

-SOCIAL (helpers): Kind, generous, cooperative, patient, caring, helpful, empathetic, tactful, and friendly. They excel at socializing, helping others, and teaching. They like tasks that involve teamwork, social interaction, relationship building, and improvement of society.

People are usually a blend of these theories overall and these theories help determine the type of fit an individual will need out of their job (THEREFORE: what kind of opportunities and options should I gravitate?)

CAREER ANCHORS: (something stabilizing for an individual)

-express what matters most to us in our career choices

-are an important self-image, which becomes clearer to us as we gain work experience.

TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCE: an individual is drawn towards the idea of continually improving their functional ability or expertise. E.g an accountant will wish to continually improve their knowledge of accounting and take on more and more interesting accounting assignments and grow continually in that field. (This will make them happier: applying their trade and building their expertise, don't wish to be a manager of people).

-MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE: an individual discovers overtime that they enjoy leading other people and prefer that over being a technical expert. While being a manager, they will find it challenging, interesting and exciting NOT as much stressful or overpowering but as a challenge you relish. Like the stress of managing and coordinating and bringing out the best in others.

-AUTONOMY/INDEPENDENCE: an individual's deepest value is actually about their personal control, about being able to make choices independently. Having a drive to be in control of and influence their own environment is a fundamental characteristic of all human beings. These people are high in the need for autonomy/independence and this is increasingly important to these individuals. (Often the case in professional occupations where traditional where traditional professionals such as teachers/engineers/lawyers like to exercise a high level of control in the way they approach their work.) This is a drive for these types of people.

-SECURITY/STABILITY: There are two types of security. 1. The person who only feels secure inside a very large/caring organisation, one that looks after their career. They tend to stay in one organisation for the whole of their lifetime if they can because that organisation gives them security and they identify strongly with that organisation.

2. The person who is geographically orienteered to a particular town or region and this is an important place for them in terms of their lifestyle and family; seek to remain stable in that location.

-ENTREPRENEURIAL CREATIVITY: Individual who is only happy when they are creating new things or creating their own business. Want to make a mark in the world through their own enterprise.

-SERVICE/DEDICATION TO A CAUSE: Individual is only happy and fulfilled when they are in a caring profession or are serving the world in some significant way, believe in supporting important causes, wish to make a difference to society or to the wellbeing of other human beings.

-PURE CHALLENGE: Individual is somebody who is looking for an ever challenging assignment/project in life that is more interesting and develops them further than the previous task. Often interested in contests and tournaments in ways of competing themselves against other people in their environment.

-LIFESTYLE: Interested in balancing everything: the person who wants to have a successful career but not at the expense of family or lifestyle. This person wants to balance the various agendas in their life, to get an overall successful balance.

Advantage of this framework is that an individual can think about themselves as time goes by in your career: which matter the most to you. What kind of work will please you, which organizations will be able to provide these aspects to keep you satisfied?

ASSESING JOBS AND ORGANISAITIONS: important things to keep in mind.

-Your abilities matter in your career choices: they are what you can do. But so too do your motivations: they are what you want to do. (Link between my skills and the organisation)

-your personality draws you to some kinds of work that you enjoy, and repels you from work you dislike.

-you have particular interests, and grow your interests through pursuing them.

-you seek to satisfy your needs (to earn a good income etc...) and you value some goals over others.

WHAT EMPLOYERS ARE LOOKING FOR:

- WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GETTING A JOB:

1. Stand out from the crowd: need to stand out to be successful
2. The clock is ticking: A three year commerce degree provides only one chance for a summer internship
-Recruitment success is achieved by the students that are best prepared
3. Grades are not enough: Employers are looking for the well rounded candidate

Q (qualifications and GPA) + WE (work experience) + S (skills/communication) +PQ (personal qualities) = SUCCESS

-Can you fit in with the rest of the team?

-Interpersonal and communication skills are important in today's careers.

Two-thirds of all job placements are based on informal contacts. What are your networks like?

What are you doing to develop them? For example, are you a member of any professional associations or internet groups where you can network with experienced people in your field of interest? If not, why not?

-PERSONAL QUALITIES= integrity, a curiosity to learn etc... and transferable skills which must be developed at uni.

4. Clubs are the answer: Make the most of your opportunities to add value.

e.g. MCC and Marketing Clubs (AIESEC), AU Investment Club, Toastmasters, Beta Alpha Psi, SPARK etc..

-CONFESSIONS OF A JOB-HUNTER:

-University is a journey of exploration.

-Part time jobs help to balance out your skills and experience for your CV.

-University job search helps find internships: ass invaluable value to your CV and skills.

Apply for positions early, if you are persistent you will find something.

TIPS FOR INTERVIEWS: Be yourself and be prepared.

PREPARATION: -Background research the company you are being interviewed for

-Prepare answers about yourself

-Strength and weakness analysis of yourself.

-THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS: Recruitment from the employer's point of view.

1. Application: (2000 applicants) Cover letter, resume transcript, (must be up to scratch for the employer), psychometric test

2. CV screening and short listing: (500) Employer will work very fast over a short period of time to eliminate as many applicants as possible, anything not up to scratch will be discarded.

3. Validation test, interview, office tour: (160) Meeting the employer or HR person face to face, often the validation test must follow the psychometric test done previously.

4. Offer: (130) Interview with a partner or principal of the firm.

www.careerhub.auckland.ac.nz

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CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES FOR TODAY'S CAREER BEGINNERS:

The idea of building an organization around stable, loyal staff that can be upwardly mobile in their organizational careers is appealing. Since the 1980s the uncertainties of business life have meant that most organizations, even if they want to keep such promises, eventually become unable to do so. The statistics tell us that most people spend their careers working consecutively for many organizations, not just one, and will become “permanent fixtures” in their organizations only in the latter stages of their careers. Your employer is encouraged to think of you as a 'human resource', whose contribution to the organization can be maximized by 'human resource management'. A 'career anchor' is a cluster of individual values and interests which Schein said remain relatively stable for most of us and which provide a focus for our career behavior over time. For example, some people have a strong 'technical/functional competence' anchor, and seek always to achieve good results in specific areas such as engineering or marketing. Other anchors include 'managerial competence', 'security', 'creativity', 'autonomy', and 'lifestyle'.

The career anchors theory is an example of vocational fit theories, exemplified in the work of Holland, who identified and measured the unique but enduring characteristics of each individual in terms of “vocational interests” and the complementary characteristics of occupations. If you become skilled at assessing your own characteristics and knowledgeable about them, and also at seeing what different types of work have to offer, you have a basis for effective decision making about your career. But again, the theory tends to emphasize stability, in the form of on-going characteristics of both people and jobs, and encourages a static view of career processes.

-RESTRUCTURING AND DOWNSIZING: Under competitive pressures, organizations in both the private and public sectors have in recent years restructured substantially—for example, merging, changing ownership, downsizing (reducing, sometimes dramatically, the number of employees) and de-layering (reducing the number of hierarchical levels). Frequently, careers are disrupted by the requirement to transfer to another job, or by voluntary and involuntary redundancy.

-FROM MANUFACTURING TO SERVICE. Manufacturing operations are being steadily automated and/or relocated in low-wage economics. Jobs are increasingly in the service sector. While low-level jobs still exist, all jobs increasingly require social and IT skills rather than physical strength and dexterity.

- FLEXIBLE FORMS OF WORK: As organizations strive to maximize the flexibility of their workforces in changing conditions, employees become multi-skilled and are expected to work across traditional occupational and job boundaries. One effect is 'de-jobbing' (Bridges, 1995) whereby 'jobs'—in the form of those nice, convenient, 40-hours-a-week bundles of work which suit us so well—are replaced by contracts, projects, part-time assignments and so on.

-Outsourcing: Many organizations nowadays seek to focus on their core business and to contract out subsidiary functions to specialist organizations, to individual contractors and to consultants.

-CASUAL EMPLOYMENT: As organizations restructure, the 'core' (permanent) workforce shrinks, and the periphery grows, including temporary, part-time and casual workers, all of whom can be employed on a short-term basis and then dispensed with when circumstances change.

-GLOBALISATION: The fact that organizations can nowadays shift activities internationally to secure competitive advantage means that the work relied on by local employees may suddenly disappear. Globalization also results in more career moves taking place across international boundaries. Cross-cultural skills and adaptability become paramount.

- INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: Technological changes result in whole occupations disappearing. Other occupations requiring different skills take their place, and the character of work in most other occupations alters dramatically. E-commerce is dramatically shifting the balance of job opportunities. Social networking changes the nature of the interpersonal and interorganizational networks through which organizations and job candidates find each other.

-FEMINISATION OF THE WORKFORCE: Women have entered the full-time workforce in ever-increasing numbers. In dual-career marriages, each partner's career must take account of the other's.

-EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT: The new forms of work require interpersonal and information processing skills, technical qualifications and so on. Employees are increasingly expected to have acquired requisite technical qualifications, often relatively recently, so that they are up to-date. Education to degree level, once regarded as an elite qualification, is now expected of many. Hierarchical or occupational progress is more likely to be interrupted. New learning becomes more necessary.

Careers are taking on new, more ambiguous, more flexible forms. The principles of the 'new careers' are based not around security, the acquisition of status, and organizational politics, but around autonomy, flexibility, learning, and networking beyond the employing organization. In the new careers environment, management needs to cultivate a new appreciation of the nature of human organization, and of the growing need to develop organizations which respond to knowledge workers' energies, rather than attempting to constrain and contain them.

-BE OPEN TO DISCONTINUITY: The conventional view of careers urges you to undertake continuous development within your organization or occupation. The more discontinuous experiences you have, the greater the likelihood of finding a type of experience that really works for you. An unqualified typist had joined an advertising agency at 16 and become an account executive within five years by working hard outside her job description. In nearly all cases, discontinuity had brought them major benefits.

-THE SELF-DESIGNED APPRENTICESHIP: In a formal apprenticeship, you undertake an approved course of training and development to qualify you in a chosen occupation, such as welding or hairdressing. Typically, you work for low wages, attend classes and receive instruction from experienced workers. In a self-designed apprenticeship, you organize the same kind of deal yourself.

-SELF-RELIANCE THROUGH TRAVEL: In the classic Overseas Experience, there is no 'career plan'. You are motivated by a desire to 'see the world' or 'have new experiences'. You travel spontaneously. You get whatever temporary jobs you can, often below your level of skill and outside your area of expertise. You learn self-confidence in an alien environment. You learn networking skills. You learn to be versatile and to improvise

-CONDUCT EXPERIMENTS: If you do what you want to do early, and stick to it, you give yourself only one chance to find out what you really enjoy and are good at. Many people have 'moments of truth' when a new experience helps them to see a new, positive direction for their careers. Experiments may involve seeking new duties, moving to a temporary job to see what it is like, taking on a second job, or taking new educational courses.

-TREAT YOUR EMPLOYER AS A TEMPORARY PARTNER: In the new environment, your psychological contract with your employer is less likely to be a promise of a long-term relationship, and more likely to be a transaction of performance for rewards. In this context, you should ensure that you give your best to your employer, but retain control over your own career. Pursue employability, rather than long-term employment. Consider how relevant the skills you are learning in the organization are to your employability elsewhere.

-LEARN, LEARN, LEARN: Within a few years of your graduation from university, half of what you know may be obsolete. The time taken for knowledge gained at university to become obsolete is probably declining with each passing year. Successful career builders tend to be compulsive learners. Their learning has general, rather than specific, relevance—it goes beyond simply being able to do the current job better. They also constantly replenish their stock of knowledge and expertise, by means of reading, further education, taking on projects with built-in learning opportunities, volunteering for transfer to leading-edge work and so on.

-BUILD YOUR OWN NETWORKS AND REPUTATION WIDELY: Organizational contacts are valuable mainly if you seek an organizational career. Career building is mediated by 'career communities'— for example, through industry groups, professional associations, clients and suppliers met through work, social and family contacts and so on. Social media such as Facebook and Linked-In are increasingly important to people like professional recruiters and as a means of protecting yourself into the networks you will need. You need to network to develop a 'reputation', so that employers tend to look for you, rather than you having to look for employers.

-CONSIDER SELF-EMPLOYMENT: Self-employment has increased. Self-employment typically requires you to have knowledge or skills you can sell on the open market. Most successful entrepreneurs have prior periods of 'normal' employment enabling them to develop the specialist knowledge and networks they need to develop a small business.

-LEVERAGE YOUR EXPERIENCE: Everything you do and are interested in is a potential career asset. If you understand enough about yourself, you can use your assets to get what you want. The assets are not just the obvious things you have like qualifications, aptitudes and work experience, but also things like self-confidence, sense of direction and motivation. Some people even find that apparently peripheral things, like hobbies and social contacts, are potential career assets.

-KEEP YOUR OPTIONS OPEN: If careers are becoming 'portfolio' careers, everyone should have more than one folder in their portfolio. You never know when disaster may strike your main career track. Do you have anywhere else to go? Successful career builders cultivate versatility through hobbies, second jobs, small businesses on the side and network connections held 'in reserve'

STUDY TIPS FOR EXAM:

2 hours

SECTION A: 6 short answer questions (each worth 10 marks) do not go over 200 words

SECTION B: 1 essay question (40 marks)

-Take 3-5 minutes to plan your essay; even for short answers a well-considered paragraph is better than waffling away.

ANALYSE THE QUESTION:

-TASK: words that tell you what to do, e.g. explain, discuss, what is the connection between? ...etc.

-Explain (typically seen in short answer questions)

-Briefly describe using examples where appropriate or suggested

-Discuss (typically seen in essay questions where there is more space)

-Describe or explain in a bit more detail

-State "how" and "why", or provide linkages when asked

-Use examples to support your explanation

-Illustrate your answer with ___

-What is the connection between ___ and ___?

-Explain how these two things relate or are linked to each other

-Is ___ related to ___?

-Answer yes or no and justify your answer

-Support with evidence such as example

-TOPIC: words that tell you the concepts to address and that give you a focus for your answer. (What content is being examined?)

-LIMIT: words that tell you the scope of what you are to write, e.g. select one...

ANSWERS SHOULD BE: written in a well-considered paragraph of around 150 words. The quality of your answer will be marked both on what you say (content) and on how well you say it (clarity and conciseness)

SECTION B: Should be a well-considered answer in a proper essay format. A concise essay of several pages in the exam booklet, which includes clear and well-structured paragraphs, is a good guideline.

Key concepts: concepts which came up in TB workshops, readings and webcasts are likely to come up in the exam.

-The exam is comprehensive

-LOOK OVER PAST EXAMS (library homepage)