

Career Planning



Introduction

The term career means advancement in terms of achievements or higher assignments/positions in activities one is pursuing. Career reflects the individual and organizational definition of what is worthwhile set of activities to pursue throughout a life time.

Career planning is a shared responsibility. Development of individuals is possible only when they are able to recognize that in developing themselves to meet the organizational needs, their needs are also being met; where career planning is not a shared responsibility but only a responsibility of the organization, it means that there is no career planning, although there may be organizational planning for human resources.

Career planning is the systematic process by which one selects career goals and the path to these goals.

From the organization's viewpoint, it means helping the employees to plan their career in terms of their capacities within the context of organization's needs.

A career can be developed by an individual within one organization or several others. Considering career planning as a process within the organization, career planning is that part of personnel administration which aims at developing paths through which employees may progress in the organization over time.

Schwind Das and Wagar defines as, “Career planning is the process of enhancing an employee’s future value.”

Douglas T. Hall states that, “An individually perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviors associated with work related experiences and activities over the span of the person’s life.”

Stages of Career Planning

The proper way to analyze and discuss careers is to look at them as made up of stages. We can identify five career stages that most people will go through during their adult years, regardless of the type of work they do. These stages are exploration, establishment, mid-career, late career and decline.

1. Exploration

Many of the critical choices individuals make about their careers are made prior to entering the workforce on a paid basis. Very early in our lives, our parents and teachers begin to narrow our alternatives and lead us in certain directions. The careers of our parents, their aspirations for their children and their financial sources are crucial factors in determining our perception of what careers are open to us. The exploration period ends for most of us in our mid-twenties as we make the transition from college to work. From an organizational standpoint this stage has little relevance since it occurs prior to employment.

2. Establishment

The establishment period begins with the search for work and includes our First job, being accepted by our peers, learning the job and gaining the first tangible evidence of success or failure in the real world. It is a time which begins with uncertainties, anxieties and risks. It is also marked by making mistakes and learning from these mistakes and the gradual assumption of increased responsibilities. However, the individual in this stage has yet to reach his peak productivity and rarely gets the job that carries great power or high status.

3. Mid-career

Most people do not face their first severe dilemmas until they reach their mid-career stage. This is a time when individuals may continue their prior improvements in performance or begin to deteriorate. At this point in a career, one is expected to have moved beyond apprenticeship to worker-status. Those who make a successful transition assume greater responsibilities and get rewards. For others, it may be a time for reassessment, job changes, adjustment of priorities or the pursuit of alternative lifestyles.

4. Late career

For those who continue to grow through the mid-career stage, the late career usually is a pleasant time when one is allowed the luxury to relax a bit. It is the time when one can enjoy the respect given to him by younger employees. During the late career, individuals are no longer learning, they teach others on the basis of the knowledge they have gained. To those who have stagnated during the previous stage, the late career brings the reality that they cannot change the

world as they had once thought. It is a time when individuals have decreased work mobility and may be locked into their current job. One starts looking forward to retirement and the opportunities of doing something different.

5. Decline

The final stage in one's career is difficult for everyone but it is hardest for those who have had continued successes in the earlier stages. After several decades of continuous achievements and high levels of performance, the time has come for retirement. The individuals step out of the limelight and relinquish a major component of their identity. For those who have seen their performance deteriorate over the years, it may be a pleasant time; the frustrations that have been associated with the work are left behind.