

## Career Management of Employees: A Theoretical Overview

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### Abstract

Career management is one of the functions of Human Resources department in the organizations. It is in fact a joined responsibility of the organization as well as the individual. Career management helps individuals to achieve success in their careers. There are basically two approaches in career management. Career management from the organizational point of view is called organizational career management. The career management from the individual point of view is called individual career management or career self- management. In order to survive in this dynamic and highly competitive environment, it is important to have an effective and apt policy to mold its employees career constantly. Individuals now a days prefer organizations that provide better opportunities to realize their career progression plans. Well defined career management practices helps in attracting and retaining competent and skillful employees in the organization for a longer period of time.

**Keywords:** career; career management; success; organizational career management; career self-management.

### Introduction

Globalization has brought out changes in every sphere of life with respect to technology, economics, politics, environment and culture. And these changes in turn had their impact on the jobs and affected the lives and careers too. The concept of one employer and one job for life was changed. This wasn't the outcome of just globalization, but also the advancements made in technology, diverse workforce, structural changes made in organizations and also the dynamic nature of jobs. These things led to changes in career and its management. Career management is now one of the functions of HR department in the organizations. It is in fact a joined responsibility of the organization as well as the individual.

Career management helps individuals to achieve success in their careers. The 'objective career success' is now replaced by 'personal career

success'. Continuous learning, competence and recognition replaced the level of responsibility, status and income.

### Statement of the problem

This current paper tries to look into the importance of career management of employees. A proper career management can help individuals to achieve career success.

### Objectives

The following objectives are framed based on the research problem.

1. To understand the concept of career management.
2. To understand the approaches in career management.
3. To understand the need for career management.
4. To identify the advantages and limitations of career management.

### Research methodology

The study is descriptive in nature. The data for the study is collected from secondary sources like research articles, books and journals.

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## Career & Career Management

Career is a series of jobs and positions held by an individual and also the work accomplished over a longer period of time (Hall, Chandler, 2005). Career is not merely a series of jobs taken up. It has a proper sequencing of job roles, increased authority and status, increased pay and increased responsibility. Its more like a path that's well organized by the individual in his professional life. The older generation used to be very loyal to the employer compared to the current generation. They tend to stay with one job during their whole career, whereas the new generation tends to change jobs depending upon their career plans.

Career management is defined by Greenhaus and Callanan as, 'a dynamic process in which individuals gather information on their own likes, dislikes, strengths and weakness about the world of work, develop achievable career goals, implement career strategies to achieve these goals and obtain feedbacks to promote further career decision making (Greenhaus, Callanan, 2008).

Career management is not just an isolated activity. It is a bundle of activities that is wrapped up to be called as career management. Career planning, career assessment, career counselling, career development workshops, development of career paths and harmonizing the individual objectives with organizational objectives together constitute career management.

Career management can be successful or unsuccessful depending upon the internal and external factors. A successful career management outcome will be in terms with work-life balance, personal contentment, achievement of individual goals and organizational goals.

### Career Management Approaches

There are basically two approaches in career management. One is from the organizational point of view and another from the individual point of view. Career management from the organizational point of view is called organizational career management. The career management from the individual point of view is called individual career management or career self- management.

#### 1. Organizational career management

From the organizational perception of career management, career is viewed as a structural property of an organization and is termed as organizational career management. From the

organizational career management view, career is a series of positions an employee has held and seen as a moving path within an organization (Armstrong, 2006). So career planning can be considered as a set of practices and policies used by the organizations for managing the career of their employees.

Organizational career management encourage their employees to fulfill their goals and in turn achieve successful career within the organization. Organizations trained man power requirements are fulfilled by organizational career management. It also provide employees with the necessary periodical training to get them ready for increased level of responsibility within the organization.

Organizational career management refers to the set of policies and practices followed by organizations to improve the career effectiveness of its employees (Baruch, 2004). In organizational career management, the emphasis on vertical progression through increased responsibility, status and reward is defined by the organization and not by the individual. Individual's objectives are expected to confirm with the organization objectives, where the individual is working.

#### 2. Career Self-Management

Career can be defined as the pattern of work related experience that span the entire course of an individuals life (Greenhaus, Callanan, Godshalk 2010). This definition of career definitely brings an exemplary difference to the idea of career from that of organizational point of view. Career does not require an individual to work with a single organization throughout his life. Any person who engages in any work related activity is pursuing his career. Career belongs to an individual and it should be considered as his possession and not organizations'.

Career self- management include career related activities initiated by an individual like career planning, strategy formulation and implementation, career appraisal, learning and use of networking to achieve their goals. The importance has been given for the career as a profession chosen by an individual.

The individual pursues a unique career by taking up a series of jobs, experiences and positions. As from the individuals point of view, career management is the responsibility of an individual more than the organization. Individuals should have competencies that allows them to face any foreseen challenges that could come up in their career.

### **Need for Career Management**

Career management is very important for managing the human resources of an organization in order to obtain efficient and effective performance from them. Only when the employees are loyal towards the organization and have satisfaction working with the organization, an organization will be able to attain its objectives, improve productivity and take organization to further development. Normally employees aspire to work with more than one organization in their life time in order to achieve career success. In order to improve the efficiency and productivity, organizations has to take care of not only the pecuniary and tangible needs of employees, but also their psychological and immaterial needs.

If an organization have a well-developed career management system it becomes easy for an organization to have a satisfied employee. In order to survive in this dynamic and highly competitive environment, it is important to have an effective and apt policy to mold its employees career constantly. Career management is not just the need of the hour, it's more like a necessity that is caused by social, economic, individual and organizational forces.

In the olden days, usually employees would join one organization, stay with that organization their entire life, and retire from the same organization. During that time, career management was considered as the property of the organization where the employee works. That thought has changed dramatically now. Now a days career management is not the responsibility of just the organization, but a joint responsibility of both the organization and the individuals. It has further changed to 70:30, where individuals claims majority of the responsibility regarding career management and for them the organizations are now the means to attain their career objectives.

These days most of the individuals work with many organization till their retirement to achieve career success and career success is the summation of job satisfactions the individual have earned so far from all the jobs he has taken up. Now a days individuals evaluate the career progression available to them even before joining the organizations. If they realize that the organization they are in provide only fewer opportunities for realizing their career progression expectations, they will not stay with that organization. They go for organizations that provide better opportunities to realise their career progression plans. In order to retain competent employees, organizations should have develop and implement appropriate career management policies.

### **Advantages of Career Management**

A well designed and implemented career management programme benefits both the organization as well as it's employees. Effective career management policy is the outcome of the efforts made in understanding the human resource requirement of the organization and the individual career objectives.

Well defined career management practices helps in attracting and retaining competent and skillfull employees in the organization for a longer period of time. Absentism and job hopping can be reduced to a greater extend by aligning employees career goals with organizational need and requirement.

Confidence and motivation of the individuals can be improved by matching employees abilities and need of the organization. A well motivated employee will be more effective and efficient compared to a non- motivated employee. Well motivated employees, stay longer with the organization. And this will further reduce labor turnover costs.

Employees should also be included in career management. This will motivate them and increases their morale. This will result in increased productivity and employee retention.

Career management balances various other functions of HR department such as human resource planning, talent management, succession planning etc.

Employees will have an awareness of the career progression opportunities available for him in that particular organization, if the organization have a good career planning system. This will help the employees to take necessary training and development in the areas depending on the requirement of higher level positions.

Employees take active part in career management as it is a participative process. If an organization could formulate a well designed career management system , it will never fail to attract the talented workforce and could develop goodwill in the labor market. It is necessary to have a well designed career management system as the market is dynamic and competitive.

### **Limitations of Career Management**

Every management function will have its own advantages and disadvantages. Like wise career management too have certain limitations. Changes can happen within the business environment or outside the business environment. Career

management policies should be kept flexible as far as possible so that the policies can be changes accordingly. Career management policies of the organizations should also be dynamic like the business environment. If the policies are not kept flexible, career management will be futile and unproductive.

Synchronising the organizational career management objectives with the individuals career management objectives is a tedious task. If the career management planning is done for a longer span, it may not be feasible provided the environmental factors are ever changing and unpredictable.

Small firms wont be able to opt for career management as it doesn't suit them. There will be very less opportunities available for the employees for vertical movement in the career within the organizations.

Career management is not effective for lower level employees who are unskilled and educationally backward. These lower level employees will not have much career aspirations and this further makes career management for them difficult.

Sometimes filling up vacancies for a senior level post from outside will altogether makes the career management system of the organization topsy-turvy.

For every policies to be fruitful, support from top management is inevitable. If the top management is ignorant about the benefits of career management system, they may not give the necessary support for the effective implementation of career management policies.

These are the possible limitations of career management system in the organization. If these limitations could be tackled successfully by the organization, achieving the objectives of the organization along with the individuals career goals will becomes easier.

### Conclusion

Career management plays a pivotal role in managing the employees of an organization.

Career management programs and policies form an essential part of human resources management. Most often organizations include career management policies for supporting the development of their employees and also to enhance the performance of the employees. Without the support of top management and the individuals working within the organizations, an organization cannot successfully implement a career management system.

Career management is a joint responsibility of individuals as well as the organization themselves. Organizational efforts as well as the efforts from individual is needed in order to nurture individual career development.

Most of the organizations, by now have recognized the need and importance of career management. Effective management of career is needed for improving the performance and productivity. An effective and updated career management initiative is the only way for the individuals and organizations to sustain in this highly dynamic, unpredictable and competitive business environment.

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