

SWP 49/90 CAREER - A CHANGING CONCEPT

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Human



(alternative title:-" Career Development - in Mid life Crisis")

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAREERS

Career and Job

For centuries the concept of career was either meaningless for most people or so intertwined with the notion of job as to be indistinguishable from it. Individuals were essentially defined by their largely unchanging job which was a lifelong activity.

Some limited mobility has always been possible . Within established crafts the apprentice "boy" would serve his time and become a crafts "man" and possibly eventually a master craftsman and a man in holy orders might progress from deacon to priest and on to bishop.

These people can be said to have had careers; career being defined as a series of roles or jobs with some common factor adding coherence or unity to the sequence.

At least half of the population were women and the idea of career would, until the mid twentieth century, have been thought a ridiculous one. During the twentieth century major changes have occurred in the nature of society, technology and the expectations of individuals. They have led to the development of the concept of career and latterly to its fragmentation and the confusion with what it means today.

Upward Mobility

During the 20th century there has been a growth in the size of organisations. The increased number of levels in organisations and the process of bureaucratization allowed career paths in clerical , administrative and management work to emerge. To a limited extent blue collar advancement became possible. The new large organisations tended to blur the distinctions between classes and categories and between the owners of the means of production and those who sold their labour. The emergence of a management activity separate from ownership was highlighted by James Burnham as a "Managerial Revolution".

A second important change has been in the beliefs that are held about the nature of people and the possibility and desirability of upward mobility.

The first world war was the catalyst for a radical relook at the distinction between those who lead and those who follow. As the whole generation of those who were fitted by birth to lead was wiped out in the trenches, so new sources of officers were required. The result was a search for those in the ranks who had "officer like qualities".

The success of large numbers of leaders without breeding challenged the reliance upon birth and breeding as the determinant of leadership roles by demonstrating that substantial upward mobility was possible. It was a necessary precondition for the concept of career to become meaningful.

The first war also began to challenge the idea that women could not "work" in paid employment other than domestic service or in one or two exceptional professions.

The Organisational Career

The development of large complex organisations with many different levels and roles allowed the concept of a career being with one organisation to develop. It became possible to work from initial education to retirement for the same organisation, moving through a series of roles. For some it meant advancing through a series of increasingly senior roles. For others it meant a variety of roles with little advancement. In the large public service bureaucracies and private sector organisations it became not only common but seen as desirable to spend a whole lifetime working for the same organisation.

Although, in New Zealand and most of the western industrialised world, this has become far less common; the remnants remain of premiums being paid for long service.

The design of many pension schemes still tends to give major advantages to those who continue to work right up to retirement for one employer. The absence of portability of pensions has been a major factor reducing the mobility of management between organisations.

Until very recently the New Zealand Government Superannuation Scheme was a very rewarding scheme for those who joined early and stayed in until age 60. It was a generous scheme with indexed linked payments for those who retired at normal retirement age, but far less substantial for those who left before retirement. The scheme was based on the assumption that the Public Service was a secure job for life. Indeed some would say that many who were lured into the Public Service with those claims felt betrayed by the radical changes in the New Zealand Public Service which reduced its size by a third in a little over 12 months in 1987/8.

Cynics would claim that the public service career offered low financial rewards but security of employment with little risk and a good pension. The public service career assumptions also included the assumption that public servants could do anything. A senior official dealing with procurement of weapon systems in the Ministry of Defence would naturally be able to move to write charters for kindergartens, policy for prescription drugs and on to the ministry of justice. After all they were all public Service administration tasks!

The election of the Labour government of 1987 heralded a major change in the public service. The moves to corporatisation and privatisation were accompanied by a new emphasis upon freedom for the operational heads of state owned enterprises to negotiate levels of staff, conditions of employment and to introduce fixed term contracts. The core public service shrank

in size and adopted similar performance based management philosophies.

Long term employment became overnight something that could no longer be guaranteed. Demands for performance lead to an emphasis on qualification and proven performance. Many direct appointments were made from outside and 47,000 public servants ceased to be public servants in just over a year and many more became contract employees. The idea of life long public service careers received an enormous blow.

The organisational career was not only a public service phenomenon. Many private organisations rewarded long service. Fletcher Challenge (New Zealand's largest company) had for many years an elaborate scheme for rewarding long service. Through a series of rising awards it led up to a trip to the U.S. for employee and spouse at 30 years service and a world trip at 40 years. As the orientation of the company has become more immediate the award scheme has become less significant and less valuable to its employees.

These changes have been, for both private and public sectors, a response to a changing world. The commercial and managerial world has become more and more turbulent. There has been a growing pressure from competition and new technologies which requires swift and radical responses to ensure the survival of the organisation. Change is no longer a temporary phenomenon to be endured until normal life re-emerges with its predictable patterns of career advancement and gradual evolution of organisations. Change has become the new status quo.

The number of organisations that are stable enough to offer lifetime employment has reduced and is continuing to reduce. The number of organisations continuing to exist 40 years after joining it as a young person will be very small. The concept of a company career is largely a thing of the past in most of the westernised world.

The exception most discussed is Japan. Major corporations in Japan have gone to great lengths to provide life long careers for loyal employees. In some cases it is literally from the cradle onwards with nurseries, educational assistance, housing, health care and old age provision. There are signs that the trend is beginning to be away from this pattern of rewarding conformity and loyal service.

The idealistic pattern so frequently described in the major Japanese corporations has in fact only ever applied to 25% of the workers. It has been sustained by the existence of smaller secondary and even smaller (often family based) third level organisations. They were the regulating device-being given varying amounts of work to keep the full employment at the large organisations possible. Job insecurity in these smaller and less stable organisations could be said to have been exported from the stable ones.

The Professional Career

An alternative to life long service with one employer for some higher order occupations has been a career anchored in their "professional" status.

Occupations which have long training; an established body of expert knowledge; control of entry and practicing certificates; have for many years encouraged loyalty to the profession and to colleagues. Doctors, lawyers and others tend to speak of their careers in terms of medicine and law rather than in terms of their employer or the organisation they serve.

The range of people and occupations able to adopt this orientation has widened with the growing number of expert technologies and techniques. Some of the old professions have fragmented as the knowledge and skill base has expanded. New technologies have led to quite new "professions".

The range of validating qualifications and licenses has widened. Computer scientists, information technologists, finance managers and management accountants and financial planners are examples of occupations which have in recent times been sufficiently in demand to allow individuals to think of a series of jobs and moves as being a a career with the only coherence in the pattern of moves being a rising salary and a common use of the professional training and or qualification.

There was a time when changing employer was seen as a sign of instability in most of the developed world. This may have been a less common view in New Zealand, where for many years full-employment existed and job hopping was encouraged by the chronic labour shortage.

The world has changed to such an extent that people who do not move regularly are seen by some today as dull, lacking in initiative and perhaps lacking commitment in their work.

The Binary Career

A further step away from the career spanning the whole of the working life, but given coherence either by one employer or one theme of activities, has been the increasing number of individuals who need to radically retrain as the market for their skills or the organisation they work for ceases to exist. The need for updating has been growing but in the late 1980s a growing number of people have begun to make radical changes which will in effect mean they have a series of mini careers or indeed a series of jobs which has no coherence in terms of industry, employer or skill.

An increasingly common pattern for those who train or develop into specialised areas, is to find that upon reaching the top in the chosen field a great gulf is in front of them. The goal of general management is on the other side with no means to reach it. This is happening at an increasingly early age which makes the problem worse. Arriving at the Chief Accountant, Chief Engineer, Head of Marketing or Production Director role in the early 30's or indeed the late 20's faces the individual with either appearing to sit still for 30 or 40 years or making a fundamental change. Arriving at the same stage at age 55 would be another matter with just a few years to enjoy the position. At age 29 it is quite different.

This phenomenon has encouraged the spread of Executive mid career retraining programmes such as MBA (Master of Business Administration).

Designed to allow the successful specialist to broaden into general management, these programmes attract increasingly large numbers of people who want either a second career in Management from scratch or who wish to move into really senior corporate roles retaining some connection with their specialised skills and experience.

A Move to Individual Centred Careers

We have moved past a time when one employer or profession could provide a lifelong focus to a career, to a time when neither will be the ordinary common experience of working life.

We have entered a time when one period of training will not provide the basis for a life's work. The time when individuals were defined in terms of their occupation is well past and most of us have a wider definition of who we are by which to make so called career decisions.

In 1937 Everett Hughes wrote

"A career is the moving perspective in which a person sees his life as a whole and interprets the meaning of his various attributes actions and the things which happen to him".

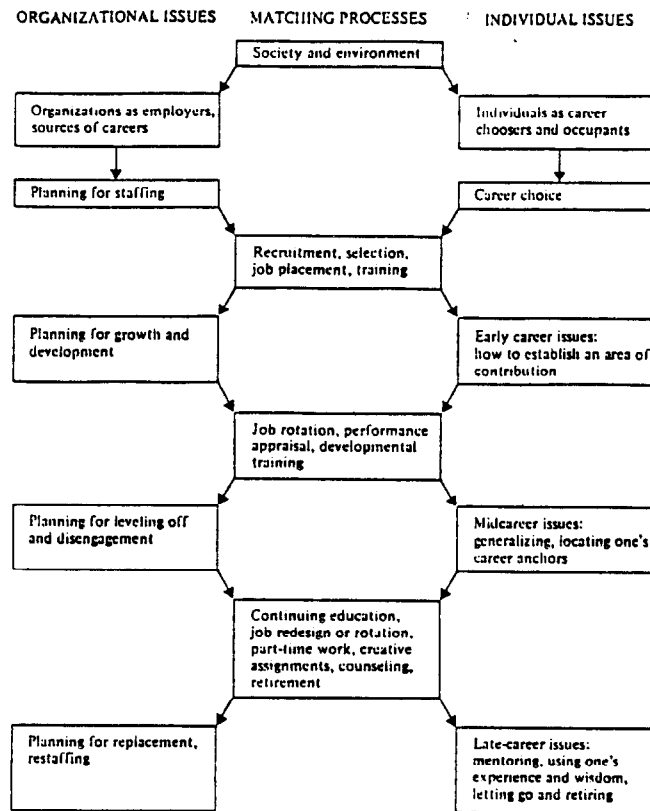
The impact of a definition such as Hughes' is to focus completely upon the individual and aspirations. We will take that focus later in the chapter when we have examined the traditional approaches to career development in organisations.

Even with the number of changes to "career" that have occurred and are occurring there are still sufficient patterns to manage, to examine and to understand.

THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

Much of the career development activity being undertaken today has Edgar Schein's "Career Development Perspective" (1) underlying it. He argues for a perspective that seeks to match the needs of individuals and organisations. His Human Resource Planning and Development model related issues which occur at various stages of career for individuals and a number of issues that arise for organisations at various stages through a sequence of matching processes usually undertaken as part of the Human Resource Management of the organisation.

The Human Resource Planning and Development Model



(reproduced from Schein (1) p4)

The model describes the classic case of the one company upwardly mobile career. We have previously discussed the increasing rarity of such a case but it is still seen as an ideal by many individuals. Many companies aspire to it in New Zealand and overseas. Williams (2) writing in the United Kingdom for the Institute of Personnel Management about developments in career development says:-

"Although family life and leisure are now taken much more seriously by both sexes, there is no evidence of the onward and upward concept of a full-time career falling from favour"

He claims further that

"Unfortunately, however, the "leaner and fitter" culture coupled with a larger labour market than ever means there are fewer promotion opportunities of the traditional type".

He believes that the consequent frustrations are as detrimental and mostly to organisations as they are to individuals.

The model lacks complete utility, particularly in its assumption about age and stages, but it has encouraged attempts to integrate the needs of organisations and individuals. Attempts in that direction do seem to pay dividends.

A New Zealand example of an attempt to make career interventions consistent with this Human Resource Planning and Development model was reported recently in Management magazine (3).

National Bank of New Zealand is a subsidiary of the U.K. based Lloyds Bank. The chief manager personnel Dr Don Abel was quoted as saying:

"We saw a primary responsibility on the part of the employer to make career development programmes available to all staff at all levels in the organisation. From this flowed the responsibility to give clear direction on the opportunities available; training to assist staff to reach their goals, communication of the performance levels required and feedback to staff on their progress."

"On the employee's side, staff members were seen as being individually responsible for making use of the opportunities available. All would have the responsibility to set their own career goals and to select a career development programme suited to assist them to reach their goals."

It is quite clear from these statements that the company sees itself as the initiator and the one responsible for allowing the matching partnership to get going.

Many organisations come to career planning as a solution to releasing human potential. National Bank was suffering turnover of 25% in 1985 and 1986.

"It was becoming increasingly difficult for us because we were losing a lot of middle order staff-people who had been with us for three to five years and were essential to our operation. We tried to address the problem through pay rates but that didn't work. Staff were more concerned about their long term careers with the bank."

The National Bank career development programme was a response to a business problem and a year after it had been introduced turnover had dropped to 11%. They were clearly addressing an organisational need and the concern came from that and not initially from a concern for the expectations of people. It would also be possible to argue that the period of high turnover was one in which the financial sector expanded and boomed in New Zealand and provided a huge number of opportunities to escape from traditional retail banking to more dynamic and highly paid activity. Following the crash in October 1987 the number of opportunities dramatically reduced and unemployment appeared in the financial sector. The labour market may have accounted for the newer lower turnover as much

as the effect of the career planning activity. But from the point of view of the bank a problem had been dealt with and staff were experiencing more satisfaction in their work and careers.

The Dimensions of Career

As well as the model in Fig 1., Schein suggested a three dimensional model of an individual career. The first dimension is vertical progress up the hierarchy through a series of different and increasing jobs or responsibilities. The second dimension which he suggests is a functional or technical dimension: - which describes their area of special expertise or blend of talents and skills. It is a lateral growth. The third dimension is one of inclusion; of movement towards the inner circle or centre of the enterprise. The diagram in Fig. 2 suggests that movement vertically will come to be reliant on inclusion and not just technical skill. The model explains why obviously widely skilled and successful people do not always make it to the most senior positions.

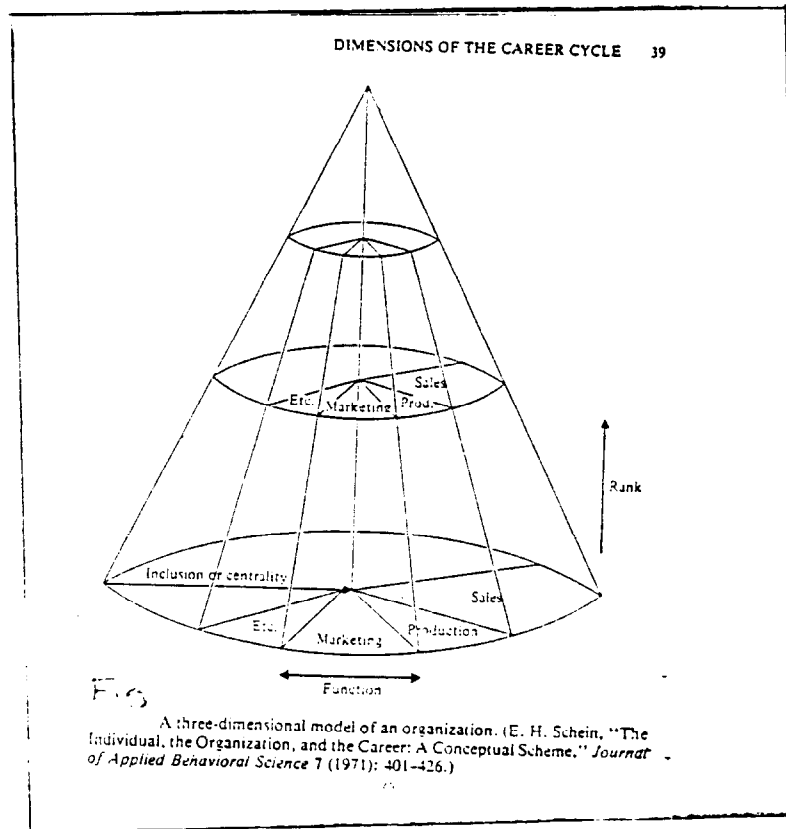


Fig 2

The most obvious examples are young MBA graduates who are able to move laterally through various areas and achieve some vertical growth but fail to make it into the core of the business. Wallach (3) has a telling account of this phenomena describing the failure of arrogant young graduates.

Career growth is blocked by some characteristic in the individual or those making the decisions which denies them acceptance. The move justified by competence and results is denied because the new promotion would require admittance to an inner circle who would find the individual a threat or an unwelcome colleague. Often the blocking of progress towards inclusion is for non-technical reasons and is to do with fitting in.

Career Anchors

A career anchor is a pattern of self perceived talents, motives and value (Schein). It serves to guide, constrain, stabilise and integrate the person's career. Fourty four graduating students at M.I.T. were interviewed at graduation and again at between 10 and 12 years later to explore career decisions and the reasons for them. Although there was little consistency in the actual job histories, there was a great deal of consistency in the reasons given for decisions. The reasons became more clear cut articulate and consistent as job experience was accumulated.

The 44 alumni studied could be separated into five groups: Some found themselves unable to work in large organisations and ended up in what he calls "autonomous" careers and so were anchored in "autonomy"; a second group organised their careers around the need to creat something: - a product, company or service and were anchored in "creativity"; a third group organised their careers around their specific areas of technical or functional competence and made career moves to maximise their opportunity to remain challenged by their specific content areas. They were "content" anchored. The fourth group were preoccupied primarily with career stability and security and so were "security" anchored. The fifth group were concerned with climbing the corporate ladder to general management positions and link whole organisations performance to their own efforts. They were "managerial competence" anchored.

Some clear parallels can be seen between these anchors and the variety of conventional careers described earlier.

The three parts of Schein's work help us by drawing our attention to the need for a managed activity to match individual needs and organisational needs; by explaining some of the apparently odd management decisions concerning appointments at senior levels and pointing to the existence of career anchors which explain individual decisions concerning careers. However they do not seem to have provided the basis for the development of very much in the way of career development among New Zealand organisations.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT - THE NEW ZEALAND PRACTICE

Formal systems of Career Development are not widespread in New Zealand. When 20 of the larger New Zealand private sector organisations were approached in 1988 (5) only three responded that they had career development systems. When human resource consultants were asked to identify organisations that had thoroughgoing career development systems, the list grew to 10.

Two out of three of the organisations who claimed to have comprehensive formal systems and all but two of those mentioned to us had strong overseas connections being either wholly or partly owned by multinationals. It seems likely that the requirements of overseas Head Offices may have generated the systems. The most striking exception is the AMP company who have developed a system in New Zealand and are currently persuading the Australian Head Office to adopt it for its entire operation.

The absence of formal systems does not mean that no activity which matches individual and company needs is taking place. Indeed many New Zealand companies are systematically involved in succession planning for their most senior staff. Many companies also have a part of their performance appraisal system referring to development and training, which is a limited type of career development. It is surprising that so little exists at a sophisticated level or below the most senior level, that is home grown.

This may be due to New Zealand's small population and comparatively recent industrial and economic development which have not provided the range of well established and sizable organisations which need career management for their employees. A high proportion of businesses are small; - the majority with less than 10 employees. The lack of opportunity to train within New Zealand to the highest professional level in human resource management has also played its part in the general backwardness in the personnel field so apparent to visitors.

Dakin and Garters (6) suggest New Zealand companies wanting to develop or replace their pool of general management may benefit from a number of practices. Organisations should provide early responsibility to those who show potential for upward movement. That implies a monitoring activity and also some planning or career management in a formal sense.

If organisations do not provide adequate challenges for bright ambitious people in their early twenties they will leave, looking for challenges elsewhere, or they will make too strong an investment in a specialised field to be able to make the transition to general management. Dakin and Garters suggest that it is important for organisations to provide career guidance to prospective managers in their early twenties to help them along career steps.

They also suggest that organisations should make it possible and easy for managers to move across functional boundaries to gain more general experience. They suggest that as part of career development managers should move through branch management positions to foster conceptual skills and acceptance of responsibility by learning to run a branch or regional division.

Sinclair and McCormick (7) develop the career management process that could be administered by organisations for potential managers by easing graduate entry into the organisation's workforce and supporting them in their management career development.

They suggest of various ways in the early stages of careers, to facilitate social interaction; such as shared projects and activities. They highlight the importance of the socialisation process which allows culture to be absorbed and mission understood. They suggest a "buddy" system of pairing

individuals with a similar person already established in the organisation. They also value the appointment of mentors - an experienced person who has made it in "inclusion" terms.

They are addressing to some extent the "inclusion" dimension. Dakin and Garters were emphasising both the "advancement" and the "development" dimensions.

The examples which follow illustrate what is possible in the traditional career development pattern. AMP and IBM attempts to put both the career development perspective from Schein into place, and also signs of concern for other matters raised by Dakin and Garters and Sinclair and McCormick.

Career Development at AMP

AMP has a well thought out and developed career development programme. It has been developed in New Zealand by the New Zealand Personnel Resources team, who are currently engaged in selling the programme to the corporate Head Office in Australia and to other overseas subsidiaries.

The programme operates through two career development guides. One is written for the employee and the other for the supervisor or manager. This itself emphasises the joint nature of the activity. The two guides are essentially the same except for additional information for the manager concerning timetables and counselling. There is also a staff report form for the manager to fill in with the employee.

AMP Career Development and Advancement Policies; (8)

- a) Promote from within (i.e. we prefer to develop our own officers where possible)
- b) Promote on merit and performance
- c) Equal opportunities to all staff
- d) Prime responsibility for his/her own self development and career advancement is vested in the individual.

The guide also outlines progression or promotion paths through illustrations of successful careers. Interestingly the guide explores a range of specialist disciplines for lateral movement recognising the lateral as well as vertical dimensions. Great emphasis is placed on taking control of one's own career. The guide says:-

"People who succeed set goals for themselves. If you don't you can end up anywhere - not necessarily where you would have liked to be."

Goals are explained as relating to personal and/or work life. Examples of personal goals quoted are:

- to buy your own home
- to travel overseas
- to complete a degree in six years.

Work goals given as examples are:

- to complete a major project by a certain date
- to become the manager of Investments Division
- to have all processing transactions completed by the end of today.

The process is indicating that career is part of a wider environment for the individual.

The Career Development and Advancement Process is set out as six sequential activities and employees are invited to begin:

- 1) Personal Appraisal:-
 - a self evaluation of the person's success identifying Values, Goals, Skills, Strengths and Weaknesses.
- 2) Identifying Types of Jobs in AMP:-
 - through a variety of methods: by asking questions about AMP and finding out as much as the employee can:
 - by talking to their Department Head/Line Executive
 - by talking to people who work in other areas of AMP
 - by talking to one of the Personnel Resources Team.
- 3) Identifying Career Objectives:-
 - by relating their career objectives to personal values, goals, skills, strengths and weaknesses.
- 4) Preparation:-
 - asking themselves what they can do to achieve their career objectives.
- 5) Letting People know where they want to go by:-
 - the Staff Development Report
 - telling their Controlling Officer/Line Executive
 - speaking to one of the Personnel Resources team.
- 6) Doing Well:-
 - which in AMPs terms means achieving their goals within AMP.

The Staff Development Form is a Key Document and part is reproduced in Fig 3 and 4 below.

3) ASPIRATIONS & POTENTIAL

(A) CAREER ASPIRATIONS — To be completed by the staff member:

(i) What are your career aspirations in the short term i.e.: your next placement and the more medium term i.e.: the next 3 years? The following Divisional breakdown reflects the existing organisational structure (which may be subject to change). Please review the various areas and indicate your preferences in the table below.

<p>1. ACCOUNTING</p> <p>a) Accounting Services b) Banking Services c) Management Accounting d) Cashiers</p>	<p>2. INDIVIDUAL INSURANCE</p> <p>a) Assessments b) Disablement Insurance c) Endorsements d) Financial Services Centre e) Groups/Direct Debit g) IID Accounts h) Policy Payments i) Policy Holder Services j) Specialist Officers k) New Business</p>	<p>3. INVESTMENTS</p> <p>a) Investment Accounting b) General Investments c) New Loans d) Share Analysts e) Treasury f) Specialist Officers</p>
<p>4. SALES</p> <p>a) Agency Administration b) Commissions c) Sales Accounting d) Sales Training e) Sales Support f) Marketing g) Specialist Officers h) Office Management i) Field Force</p>	<p>5. PROPERTY</p> <p>a) Administration b) Accounts c) Engineering d) Building Managers e) Valuations f) Development</p>	<p>6. PERSONNEL</p> <p>a) Personnel Services b) Personnel Resources c) Staff Training d) Industrial Relations/ Remuneration</p>
<p>7. SUPERANNUATION</p> <p>a) Specialist b) Actuarial c) Support d) Management Departments</p>	<p>8. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES</p> <p>a) Data Processing b) Internal Communications c) Library d) Legal e) Printing & Stationery f) Telephones g) Typing Services Centre h) Security i) Administration j) Premises</p>	<p>9. FIRE & GENERAL</p> <p>a) Specialist b) Brokers c) Underwriting d) Accounts e) Claims f) Advisors</p>
<p>10. MANAGEMENT</p> <p>a) Internal Audit b) Administration</p>		

<p>SHORT TERM</p> <p>EXAMPLE <input type="text" value="6d"/></p> <p>1st Preference <input type="text"/></p> <p>2nd Preference <input type="text"/></p> <p>3rd Preference <input type="text"/></p>	<p>TIMEFRAME PREFERENCE</p> <p>1) 3 Months <input type="text"/></p> <p>2) 6 Months <input type="text"/></p> <p>3) 9 Months <input type="text"/></p> <p>4) 1 Year <input type="text"/></p> <p>5) >1 Year <input type="text"/></p>	<p>MEDIUM TERM</p> <p>1st Preference <input type="text"/></p> <p>2nd Preference <input type="text"/></p> <p>3rd Preference <input type="text"/></p>
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If you have specific jobs in mind please state _____

If you have specific jobs in mind please state _____

(We recognise that your preferences will naturally be subject to change.)

Comments: _____
(if appropriate)

(ii) Using the table from 'Career Aspirations' above, please indicate in the boxes provided any particular areas of the Society in which you would not like to be considered for experience.

Fig 3 AMP Staff Development Report-Aspirations

(B) CAREER POTENTIAL — To be completed by Reporting Officer.

(i) Indicate the direction you consider to be most appropriate/beneficial for the officer for the next placement —

- 1) Horizontal — To broaden experiences
 - 2) Vertical — To take on more responsibility
 - 3) Specialist
 - 4) No Move.
- Other Comments. _____

(ii) Using the career aspirations table from part 3(A)(i), please suggest a possible next placement and medium-term placement for the officer on the basis of the above assessment and the existing organisational structure.

Possible Next Placement/s Possible Medium-Term (Next 3 Years)

Possible Time Frame for next placement

1) 3 Months 2) 6 Months 3) 9 Months 4) 1 Year 5) >1 Year

Please detail possible positions if appropriate:

Next Placement: _____

Medium-Term Placement: _____

4) ACTION PLANNING

To be completed jointly by staff member and reporting officer during counselling session. This section is to reflect agreements reached. Recognising the fact that any future placement will require different skills, abilities and experience/knowledge, please list below the individual's development needs for the next year and what action plans are needed to meet these needs. Staff development needs might be met via on-job training, staff training courses (refer Staff Training Catalogue), technical training, tertiary studies and/or job placements. Examples are provided.

NEEDS	COURSES OF ACTION	POSSIBLE TIME FRAME
EG — Increased Product Knowledge	IINZ Studies	Ongoing This Year
— Supervisory Skills	Section Head Seminar	March
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLANNER — REPORTING OFFICER Please tick the appropriate box.

A documented up-to-date Staff Development Planner is in place for this officer.

The Reporting Officer has elected not to complete a Staff Development Planner at this stage.

A Staff Development Planner will be completed within one month.

Fig 4 AMP Staff Development-Potential Review and Action

Helping Yourself to your Future-Career Development at IBM

IBM New Zealand use the U.S. sourced career development programme used worldwide in all the IBM operations and subsidiaries.

The programme is communicated through three booklets. One is designed for employees to work through, the other two are to guide managers in both assessing employees and to provide career counselling.

The employee work book begins with a foreword including the following (9):

"IBM has always viewed employee development-helping people to grow in their jobs and making the best use of their abilities - as vital to its own success and to that of its people. This view, which stems from our belief in respect for the individual, supports and reinforces our long-standing practice of promotion from within.....

responsibility and whole of life dimension of the process....

This employee development package has been designed to help you plan and manage your career, personal situations and variations thereof. This package also includes instruments so you may assess yourself and take responsibility for your own course of development.

The key ingredient of success in any employee development plan is that you (each employee) take ownership and that you are committed to its success.

The guide is a comprehensive booklet designed to firstly help an employee view and review themselves as a basis for career aspirations. A series of worksheets takes each employee through a process of self assessment, including questions and exercises such as "Who am I?, Clarifying Life Values, Satisfying Accomplishments and Least Satisfying Accomplishments".

This is followed by producing a skills inventory (job content skills, transferable skills and self-management skills) and job profile.

A series of worksheets concerned with attitudes lead the individual through Sources of Satisfaction and Attitude to Job, Career and Life, to the Quality of Business and Personal Relationships and to a Personal Definition of Success.

A whole section is then introduced on the subject of Plateauing. It is defined as a

"levelling off, or slowing in the rate of progress in ones career, job or life. The person who is productive, satisfied and maturing and whose main ambition is to grow in that job can be considered to be positive plateaued. The negative side of plateauing occurs when a person has ambitions, desires promotions which are not forthcoming and perceives themselves as stuck and becomes unhappy

dissatisfied and unproductive."

The IBM employee is invited to identify the opportunities for positive plateauing bringing significant satisfaction and reward. Three types of plateauing are defined: "structural plateauing" (when upward movement may be very slow or have stopped either temporarily or permanently); "job content plateauing" (when work has become so familiar there is no challenge); and "life plateauing" (when life seems routine and purposeless). Some employees can experience all three types at the same time.

IBM identify a number of actions that managers can take to confront plateauing and also ideas for individuals. Reassigning work through temporary assignments, task forces, retraining, and increased job variety are suggested as managerial responses. Individuals experience three phases in structural plateauing: -Resistance, Resignation and finally Reenergisation. A major responsibility is placed on the individual to use the guide provided to re-evaluate and progress to positive plateauing or lateral career progress.

The final stages of progress through the guidebook/workbook are to write some goals and then turn them into objectives with action plans. Individuals are asked to state some goals and then check them against a series of fairly searching questions which test their reality. For example "What is the cost (personal time, life and family) of my career goals?", and "Does someone close to me agree with and understand my answers to these questions?" Again we see a whole of life approach being pursued.

Although great emphasis is placed on individual responsibility, the company has an active role. The diagram from the employee workbook (Fig 5) carries with it a commentary that offers the assistance of the manager in steps 4 to 7, 9 and 10. A successful completion of the first 10 steps will lead to an experience of growth.

In addition to the workbook for employees, detailed guidance is provided to managers about how to assist with counselling and other interventions.

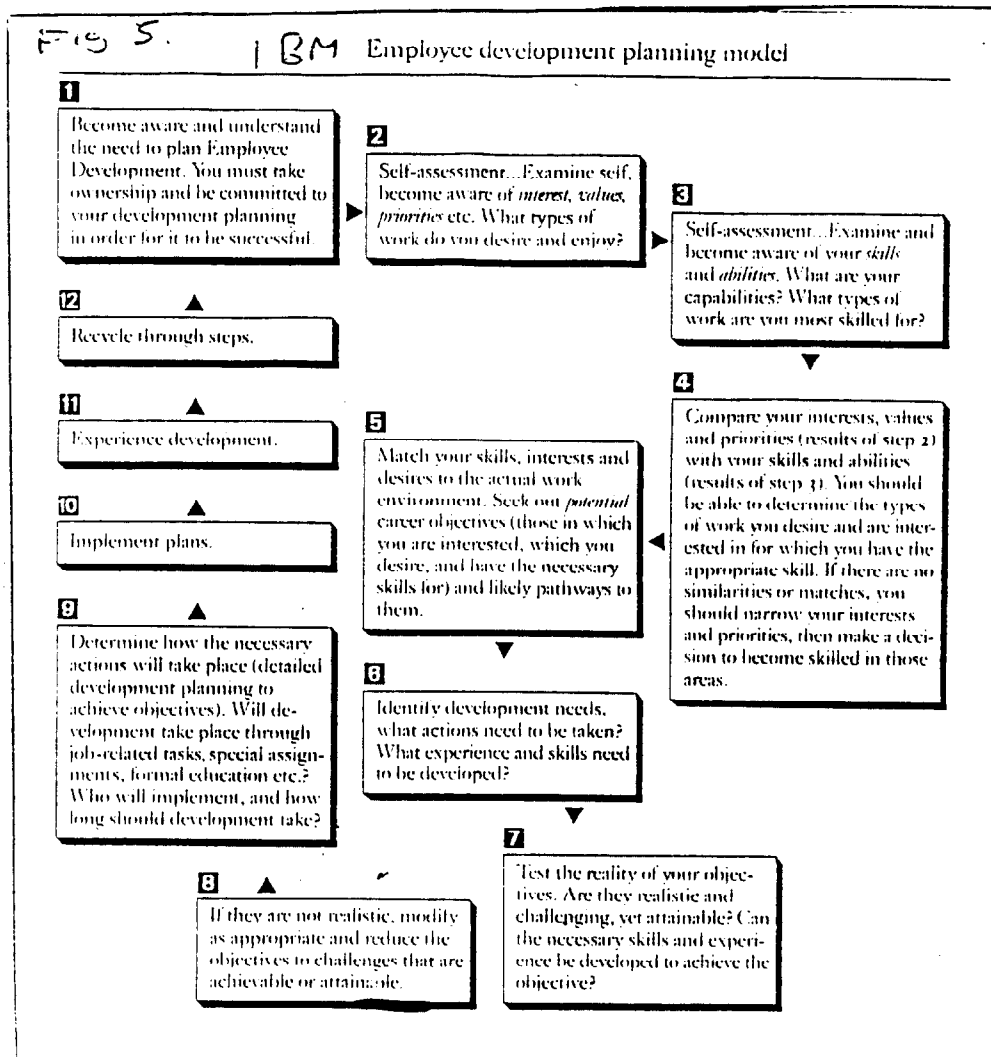


Fig 5

In comparing the two examples it is interesting to see the same concern to include lateral movement as part of the career concept. IBM are more explicit about "plateauing" and so remove very clearly the career advancement expectations. They have also gone further with preparation of managers for counselling.

Both organisations are recognising the interection of individual needs and wants with the needs of the organisation but clearly locate responsibility with the employee from cooperating and in some senses initiating the matching process which Schein speaks about.

INCREASING CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

We have considered some of the background to the career issue, and illustrated current attempts to manage the needs of individuals and organisations. It is clear that the matching of individuals and organisations is going to be even more difficult in the future.

The ability of organisations to engage in meaningful longer term human resource planning is declining. The simple model of planning which simply predicted the activities of an organisation, derived the demand for people by activity, skill, location or other factor and compared it with the current or expected skill inventory and planned to close the gap by the battery of activities in the human resource function is at best an inadequate or partial one for most organisations. Increasing turbulence in social economic and technological arena makes prediction of survival difficult let alone the shape of the human resource demand. We need some new ways of thinking about individuals and their careers and also organisations and their human resource planning.

The Whole of Life Perspective

The concept of career anchor needs to be extended to fully take account of the fact of a growing concern for components of life outside of work. It may be more appropriate to speak of "life anchors", recognising that many career decisions only make sense in the wider context of an individuals life values, aspirations and social context. The large literature in the field of self discovery and employment planning is evidence of the increasing interest in making decisions that relate to whole of life satisfaction. Most encourage individuals to holistic decisions including work as just one part of life.

Concern for the Quality of Working Life has been replaced for many by Concern for the Whole of Life. Organisations that wish to take a proactive role in career development must take account of the fact that for many people career is a small part of the equation. They must not regard as odd the people who have no career growth aspirations in the traditional sense and cater for a whole variety of life anchors and interests, some of which will regard work as tangential to satisfaction.

Reduced Mobility

For many years government departments and larger organisations in New Zealand have used repeated moves from town to town and eventually to Wellington as career development moves. For 10 years or more there has been increasing resistance to such repeated moves, because of damage to the whole of life.

The increases in vertical career movement have been insufficient to offset the disruption to family, school, spouse's job and social networks to make moves attractive. Public service and state enterprises have found it particularly difficult to persuade people to move to Wellington or Auckland.

In making family decisions many people now doubt that in the long term the organisation can guarantee long term employment at all, certainly not an uninterrupted and gentle ride to the top. Organisations continue to assume that mobility is a reasonable requirement for progress Don Abel of National Bank was reported in February 1989 as saying (3):

"People who are unable to accept, transfers out their locality must accept that their promotional opportunities may be limited because they may not be able to get all the experience they need in one particular area".

It might be thought that the top level of employee might be exempt this change on grounds of career drive and high ambition. Meryl Louis(10) carried out a five year study of M.B.A graduates and found that family and life-style considerations contributed significantly to most of the major work-life decisions (particularly to change jobs and decline promotion). Even the minority who were single mindedly devoted to work at graduation seemed to make concerted efforts to rebalance their lives in about the third year after graduation. She claims that our current approaches to career development have not adequately considered the total life space of an individual.

I would go further and suggest that we need to acknowledge that the life space will change with the seasons of life. The stages in life and their various tension points at mid life and other stages are relevant to the career decisions of individuals. Schein (1) identified three cycles (biosocial, work/career and family) which were externally defined (Fig. 6). Each of these has a series of difficult periods which can be predicted.

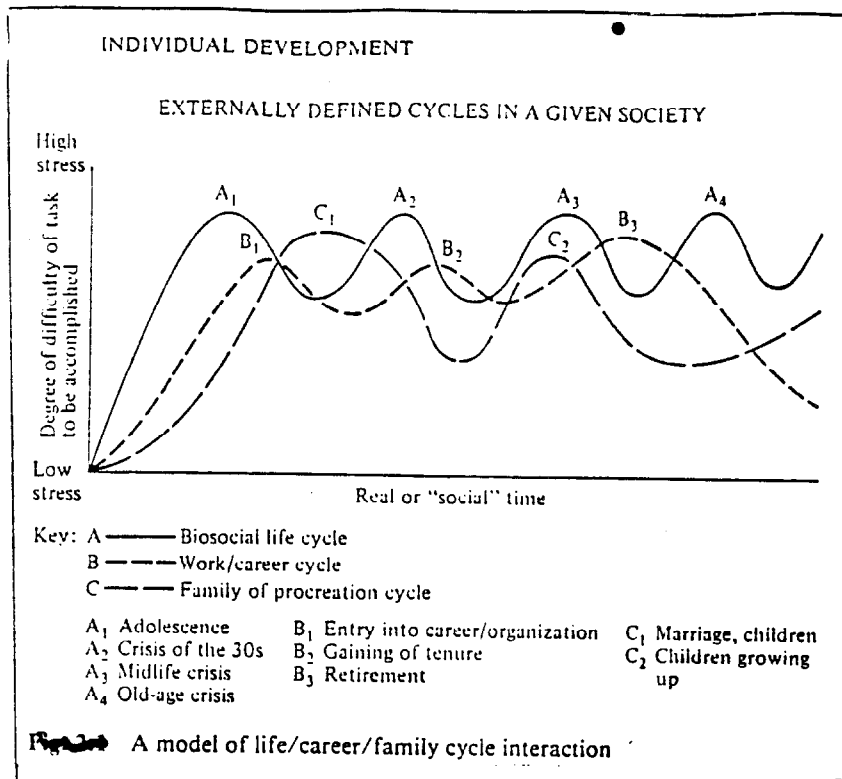


Fig 6

Although the diagram has a scale of real or social time, it is essentially predicting a time based series of experiences all of which will occur for most people in the same order and at the same ages. By understanding the particular stages that individuals are at, we are expected to be able to help them with self analysis, transitional activities and career planning within the scope of the organisation's needs, via career development interventions in the Human Resource Planning and Development model. When Schein was writing those assumptions had more validity than today and the 1990s. More and more we are unable to see age and development as well related. Of course in the extreme cases of early childhood and senility they are related, but age is clearly more a matter of state of mind than mere chronological time.

Most of us know people who behave as the stereotype older person when still in their late twenties and people who show great energy, ambition and drive in their 70's. Indeed the assumptions about age are some of the most discriminatory-denying advancement to young people and denying useful work to older people. "The too old at 50" has become in many areas "too old at 40".

More and more people have life experiences and a series of changes in life space that defy the assumptions of the past. It is no longer enough to assume because of age or family circumstance people are at particular stages and aspirations generally, and in particular concerning their work. Any attempt to career plan must take into account the turbulent environment of individual aspirations and be thoroughly individual-centred.

Dual Career Marriages

The increasing number of dual career marriages has led to increasing difficulty in restricting career planning even to a holistic approach to the employee. The spouse and their career will need to be considered.

Where mobility is essential organisations will need to pay greater attention to the way they encourage and facilitate moves. Williams(2) writes that in particular with the rise of dual career couples, both partners need to be involved and inducements may need to be aimed at the spouse as much as the employee. Career counselling for both may be involved. Help in finding employment for the spouse may be needed.

A number of New Zealand companies already involve partners in decisions to relocate. Hallensteins have for a number of years flown the spouse to the new location and involved them in the decision process on behalf of the company as well as the employee.

The assumption implicit in the attempts to involve spouses has been that generally it will be men who have the most mobile jobs, the most lucrative posts and that generally it will be for the wife to move. That this is so is confirmed by the media speculation and interest when this assumption is turned on its head. Two recent examples illustrate it.

When Dr Karen Poutasi, then Medical Superintendent of Middle More Hospital in Auckland was appointed to the post of Chief Health Officer at the Department of Health in Wellington, much was made in the media of the fact that her husband had just taken up a post in the Presbyterian ministry in Auckland and ill-informed comment made about whether or not he would move. It is unlikely that if the roles had been reversed there would have been any comment at all.

Similarly the appointment of Mrs Margaret Mulgan as Chief Human Rights Commissioner, which involved a shift from Dunedin to Auckland aroused great interest in the Dunedin press and a request for a statement from her husband who was a senior Professor at Otago University where she had also been employed as a senior lecturer. Many male staff have left the university with no media interest in the fact that their wives have left important work to move with their families.

In both cases the spouses moved to very satisfactory, even advantageous new positions suggesting that career planning was a family matter not an isolated individual one.

Equity for the disadvantaged

One of the features of the 1980s in New Zealand has been a growing reluctance on the part of those groups who are disadvantaged to remain so. Prominence has been given to ethnic minorities, women and to a lesser extent those who have a disability.

Women's Career Experience

The number of women in paid employment has increased since World War Two. After 1951 the female workforce grew at a faster rate than the male. In the 1970's there was a steady increase in the number of full time women workers with children. By 1986 married and unmarried women constitute nearly half the total workforce (11).

Married women in New Zealand now make up half the female workforce. Including mothers in full time and part time employment the workforce participation rate for women with children exceeds that of women with no children. Over 85% of mothers of five to six year old children are in the paid workforce (11).

"In this age of liberation and non-discrimination it might seem both sexist and unnecessary to talk about women's careers differently from men's. Does the difference make any difference? Managerial occupational statistics clearly demonstrate managerial man-power is the operative term, with 80% of managers being male...The higher up the hierarchy the smaller the percentage of women" (12). These remarks concern the situation in Britain. The picture in New Zealand is even more stark.

In a leaflet to introduce the Ministry of Women's Affairs published in 1986, it was claimed that although women outnumber men in the workforce, men far outnumber women in the decision making bodies in the country. There were no female managing directors of major companies. Only one percent of the people at the upper levels of the public service were women. Females made up 14% of local body members, 9% of mayors and 13 percent of MPs. There were only three female judges in the country (13). The career system was believed to be still geared to the male breadwinner, nuclear family life cycle - a forty year, forty hour week - taking no account of the time women spend in child rearing.

Two thirds of primary teachers are women, but women hold only 8 per cent of principal's jobs. In secondary schools women constitute 48 percent of the teachers but only 15 per cent of the principals (11). Teaching is one of those areas where equal opportunity has notionally existed for many years.

In 1983 over half the employees of New Zealand's four main trading banks were women. However 95 per cent of the women were in the three lowest grades compared with only 49% of the men. Thirty five per-cent of the men held the highest ranks of executive grade - compared with only 0.7 percent of women (11).

Given this failure to make career progress in advancement it is natural to ask the question why. A number of major factors seem to play a part:-

The education system channels and in some cases imposes vocational choice on females.

Helen Place's study of New Zealand women and managers indicates a difficulty facing women who resist the educational stereotypes and aspire to managerial positions; the belief that women are not emotionally suited for management posts because -

"They cannot take the pressure required of an executive, as they become tense under stress and let intuition take over instead of thinking problems through to a logical conclusion" (14).

It is ironic that such a view should still be prevalent at a time when the interest of researchers in the nature of management and the use of left and right brain in thinking has led to an endorsement of the need for intuition and other so called female characteristics in producing excellent management. Denial of entry to management careers to women represents a refusal to use a major resource and is in itself poor management.

The procedures controlling promotion and training in most organisations present barriers to women wishing to advance. Progress is via executive development programmes and few women are given the opportunity to attend such Programmes.

A group of Otago University staff have been offering management courses to industry for almost 15 years. Over that time it has been, and is still, rare for more than one women to attend each course. Most have 20 plus men on the programme. The 1989 entry to the Otago MBA has one women studying fulltime out of 28-despite strenuous efforts to attract women.

We have been considering the advancement or vertical dimension of career for women. The inclusion dimension is a further problem. The basic issue in making it to the very top is whether you fit in. However competent an individual, unless they are welcomed as suitable to join the team then competence technically is of no value. Australian studies (15) and American studies show that a major difficulty is male beliefs that women would not fit into a predominately male environment.

It is widely considered to be proper for a women to interrupt her career in order to have children. This interruption usually occurs when the women is in her late twenties or thirties and makes a time gap between early and late career. It creates an apparent temporariness in female employment before she has her family. It also means that she is disadvantaged when she returns, in relation to her male counterparts, due to a briefer work experience.

Out-dated assumptions lie under these barriers. The assumption of a career as a long smooth series of moves through an organisation or profession itself leads to seeing anything else as odd. Re-entry after a break for child rearing is only seen as a problem if there is an assumption that is is not a normal alternative. If we consider career to be a series of moves given coherence by the life anchors or the individual desires and life space; then child bearing and home management can be seen as useful management and developmental experience. Another assumption damaging to women, is that only full time work is real. Newer models of work allow part time work to be seen as as much part of a career as full time. Working at home, or tele-networking will provide opportunities for women.

Within the traditional male dominated world of management women are advised to treat it as a foreign land by Val Garfield (16) (Fig 7).

What can a woman do?

Women entering - or wanting to enter - the power structures of male-dominated institutions, particularly business, are like persons wanting to become citizens of another country - and they must be willing to learn the language and culture if they want to succeed.

In order to succeed in this foreign country a woman must first decide that she really wants to be there. To be clear with herself that she wants a career and that she is willing to pay the costs and deal with the problems in order to reap the rewards.

In order to do this:

- She needs to be more conscious of and specific about her career goals and of her individual career development plan than a man does.
- She must be conscious about herself, her strengths, her vulnerabilities, her personality - and thus be able to effectively manage who she is in the context of the environment in which she has chosen to work . . . and, she needs to be clear about the need to manage the environment and herself concurrently.
- She must consciously seek out a mentor, an advocate - someone in the organisation who can and will teach her, advise her, support her, criticise her; and possibly open doors for her. To succeed in this she must be someone worth investing in, someone who can and will make a return on the help she receives.
- She needs to be knowledgeable about and in charge of her 'female' programming from family and culture, so that she can determine her personal priorities and be in charge of herself and her life.
- She must be willing to risk and to be less passive - to stop waiting to be chosen and to be assertive about what she wants.
- She must be willing to recognise and use the formal and informal systems in the organisation; and to make a strategy for herself based on this analysis.
- She has to stop being the Queen Bee, and help, support and make pathways for other women.
- She must be in charge of her own learning and development - finding programmes both in and outside the organisation to acquire the knowledge and skills she needs to advance.
- She must take responsibility for managing her private and her work life.

Fig 7

Affirmative Action

Despite the difficulties, more and more women are returning to work; more and more are seeking careers which satisfy their aspirations.

Many male managers are beginning to recognise that the barriers placed in the way of women have been harmful. However many managers are concerned to improve the results of the organisation in the very short term. Actions that would be seen as changing the established order are often rejected as "not my business..stuff for social workers".

Six ways in which organisations may take affirmative action are suggested by Val Garfield (16) -

- . the recruitment of qualified women with management potential... perhaps the selection of a woman in preference to an equally or more qualified man
- . providing every opportunity for women to learn about the 'foreign country' of the corporate business world - the language and culture their male colleagues know automatically
- . providing special financial and educational assistances
- . making line managers responsible and accountable for professional development of their women subordinates
- . the selection of women for promotion or career development instead of a qualified man
- . providing specialised personal and professional development programmes only for women.

Affirmative action programmes mean that some men will be held back. But until there are appreciable numbers of women in management roles such action may be needed.

The People of the Land

There is no substantial literature concerning the careers of Maori people. What is clear to most managers, who are themselves pakeha, is that very few Maori people make large scale progress in vertical career growth. "They are under represented in the professions, being found in a limited range of occupations and rarely in positions of power and influence" (17). The 1986 Census suggested 2.2% of managerial and professional people were of Maori or Pacific Island descent. While there are examples of very successful Maori people in the public sector as a result of government policy and intervention; the private sector success of Maori in vertical career terms is very limited. The reasons for this are manifold but largely undocumented and unresearched.

The culture of an organisation is greatly influenced by the senior managers. They are in most organisations overwhelmingly pakeha. The values held by Kiwi managers were studied as part of a major study by Hofstede (18) in 1984. Data was collected from employees in 52 countries and the underlying values ranked along four dimensions. New Zealanders shared closely the value sets of Australia, Canada, the US and Great Britain. The study showed the centrality for New Zealanders of individualism, (defined as a preference for a loosely knit social framework

where individuals care only for themselves and their immediate family); low power distance (defined as a dislike of large power inequalities and tendency to resist being fixed in a hierarchy); weak uncertainty avoidance (defined as an absence of tight codes of belief, behaviour and protocol); and masculinity (defined in the study as a social preference for achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material success).

The definitions read like a list of all that is not Maori. It maps out an essentially foreign land - and one even more strange to Maori people than the male world of business is to women entering it.

"Maori people generally are much less obsessed than Europeans with the idea of accumulating wealth and belongings which is almost basic to an individualistic European society" (19, p 5). As a result the monetary and other material and lifestyle rewards may not have the same attraction; particularly if a denial of essential parts of the Maori cultural heritage is required.

Maori people tend to think in terms of we rather than I. A person's membership in the family group is the basis of economic and social life. It defines a person's social status. Careers that are founded on personal competition, individual achievement and specialness of the individual are culturally strange to Maori people.

If a pakeha dominated organisation rewards separation from others by achievement as the basis for promotion it runs against the cultural tradition of the Maori way. "I find meaning and personal value in my connectedness with others not my disconnectedness" was how one well known Maori academic put it.

When a Maori person goes to work there is a sense in which the whole family, community and tribe may be said to be involved. Signs that an individual is succeeding in the pakeha world of management may be received negatively by whanau (immediate family), the hapu (the extended family) and the iwi (wider community) all of which provide a far more important sense of identity than for most pakeha. Tension may well arise.

From their infancy pakeha children are taught to respect other people's property as if it were part of the other person. The concept of my coat rather than our coat is a peculiarly western concept and the Maori way would be to speak of "our coat". Similarly, the idea of "my career" as a piece of personal property would be in tension with the idea of "our success" for many Maori people. A requirement to succeed in competition at the expense of others would be seen as of doubtful legitimacy.

The Maori view of authority and its acquisition may also add a difficulty for Maori wishing to succeed in the pakeha world. A culture that emphasises eldership as being connected with chronological age sits uneasily with a world where the race to the top is increasingly going to those who are in the first half of their lives and those in the second half are likely to be effectively burned out and discarded. Taking part in the corporate race and winning at the expense of those who are, by other definitions, elders, threatens the Maoriness of those Maori people who try. Taking or attempting to take "mana" by virtue of personal achievement would be seen as both foolish and impossible for many Maori people.

Greatness is something to be ascribed in the fullness of years not achieved.

All of these things make it difficult for many Maori people to succeed in traditional Pakeha careers. In the 1990s there is a need to encourage and assist people from Maori and Pacific island groups to be able to make their full contribution in management. Affirmative action may be required and also the development of culturally sensitive models of success and criteria for upward mobility. New models of management and career may also be a rich outcome of the post 1990 Maori renaissance.

Other Disadvantaged Groups

We have focused on women who are the largest group who are disadvantaged by the career systems in New Zealand. We have also, as is appropriate for a book published in 1990, given some thought to the difficulties faced by the tangata whenua (the people of the land). There are many other groups who by virtue of their ethnic or national origin, physical or other disability or indeed age; are disadvantaged and for whom special provision and affirmative action are required. Although important, they are far less numerous and if affirmative action is successful in recognising the special needs of women and Maori, the lessons may be easily transferred.

Career Development and Planning for the 1990's

Human resource practitioners may by this stage be bemused by the rising tide of difficulties presented and in danger of paralysis as a result of the analysis.

In practice something will still need to be done. Because planning is an imprecise art based on shifting bases does not mean it is not worth the attempt. Even if the Human Resource Planning and Development model lacks completeness in its utility it is still useful.

Individuals will still go through the five phases and career planning interventions will be useful at each stage, seeking to match organisation and individual needs. It may be that individuals will go through the whole cycle once and leave the organisation. It may be that they will complete most of it several times over. In some cases they will have very long plateau experiences and additional interventions will be required.

From Advancement to Development

Our orientation needs to change from a focus on the vertical dimension of advancement as being the most important dimension in career, to a recognition of the importance of the lateral dimension which is essentially concerned with development. That implies an acceptance that everyone cannot progress in vertical terms. It implies being open about that fact and dealing sensibly with the Plateauing issue. The IBM example is a model of how to do that.

Career development activities may need to include what Williams (2) calls

systematic enrichment; through secondments, sabbaticals, extending and rotating job components. It will involve avoiding giving people aspirations in advancement terms that can never be met and giving instead development aspirations which can be met to the benefit of individual and organisation.

One result may be that we are engaged in encouraging apparently productive employees to leave the organisation for their own development. Turnover will have to be seen as neither good nor bad and not an admission of failure by either side of the contract.

Life Planning and Counselling

We have been thinking about the problems of planning for organisations. The world in which we are seeking to have employees take control of their careers is a traumatic and turbulent one for individuals. We cannot simply dump the problem on them. An increased amount of time and effort will be required to help individuals cope. The services and help offered will extend far beyond the traditional add-on to the appraisal system. It may involve individuals and managers in establishing life goals and career plans which are far more than traditional one company career paths. Organisations may have to be seen as a series of shifting coalitions of individuals who move in and out of the core and periphery of the enterprise with increased ease.

Career planning may involve helping people out of organisations and helping others to design new models of personally centred career.

Plateauing will be an increasingly common phenomena and will need to be addressed in many organisations. It can be addressed by assuming that as people are plateaued we encourage them out of the organisation to ensure they are not occupying jobs that are need to allow mobility from below. It can be handled by the type of measures in place already at IBM. It may be that a new philosophy of what an organisation is, will help us.

Careers will in the future be widely different from the past for most people and an enormous variety of employment sequences are likely to emerge. Perhaps the only safe prediction is that for individuals and organisations it will be an interesting time with rich possibilities for both. If indeed the concept of career and career development are going through a mid-life crisis, then positive re-evaluation may allow for a re-energising of the practice of career management for the benefit of individuals and organisations.

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