

WORK AND FAMILY: THE CONTEXT OF CAREERS

A consideration of
personal issues in human resource
management

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WORK AND FAMILY: THE CONTEXT OF CAREERS

That careers can only be understood in the context of people's total lives is by now a commonplace assertion. Work and family are obviously not independent of each other. Indeed, everywhere there is evidence of the increasing awareness of and concern for the proper relation between work and family, especially as more and more people change their life patterns in accord with new values. "A businessman sorts out what's important in life" says the headline in the Boston Globe (August 3, 1982, p. 43). And, equipped with a new wife, he moves to the country and completely changes his business strategy to accord with his changed personal priorities. Even though such decisions are not yet commonplace, or they wouldn't still be newsworthy, they are becoming more frequent.

Nor is it only individuals who are rethinking issues of work and family. There are many books on the topic (e.g., Fogarty et al., 1971; Kanter, 1977b; Derr, 1980; Evans and Bartolome, 1980; Smelser and Erikson, 1980; Bohlen and Viveros-Long, 1981), and the placing of work in the context of a total life has been deemed one of the characteristics of the "maturation" of career theory (Sonnenfeld and Kotter, 1982). Organizations, too, are increasingly concerned with career development in a broader sense--witness Shepard's "life planning" instead of career planning--and issues of work and family have entered the curricula of some management schools. I remember that when I first taught my course on issues of work and family in the management of human resources in the early seventies, my effort was greeted as a radical feminist maneuver--and this despite the fact that in the feminist world I was

seen as an arch-conservative. Today, though there are remnants of feeling that these are merely "women's" issues, the relevance of these concerns for all people is much more widely accepted.

Thus, there is a fairly widely shared awareness that the interrelation of work and family is not only an individual issue, to be dealt with idiosyncratically, in personal terms, but also a concern of educational institutions, employing organizations, and, indeed, of society at large (cf. Hirschhorn, 1979).

Our awareness of these issues has been highlighted by the entrance into organizational roles of "non-traditional" employees (see, e.g., Schreiber, 1979). The impact of this change in the workforce is interesting. The term "non-traditional" was initially applied to employees of the "wrong sex" moving into traditionally sex-segregated occupational roles, and the concern was whether or not these "deviant" employees had the capacity to do the work. These concerns are still there, of course, but today the issue seems to have shifted. Generally, we no longer worry so much whether there are women with the capacity to work in mines, climb telephone poles, manage business enterprises, or design airplane parts. Nor do we any longer question whether there are men capable of teaching little children or of nursing the sick. We have accepted, I think, the fact that the variability of capacities, interests, and skills within each sex is at least as great as most work-related differences between the sexes. We now see that what makes these employees "non-traditional" is the different roles they play and the different expectations they bring to the work place.¹ And though we are conditioned to think of these differences as closely correlated with sex, they are increasingly becoming more individually determined. Thus, men in dual-career families are just as "non-traditional" in technical and managerial roles as

women are. These are not only "women's" issues, therefore, but concerns of all employees, and they involve the general problem of the effective deployment of human resources in work organizations.

But though recognition of these issues is evidenced in changing individual life patterns, in research and theory, in our teaching, and to some extent in personnel management, when we look closely we find that in significant ways much of this response is still superficial and inadequate. It is inadequate because the assumptions on which it is based remain traditional. The innovative thought that exists in this area has not been translated into effective policies because of its failure to penetrate the often unarticulated underlying assumptions in which traditional responses are anchored.

We are only beginning to realize the extent to which specific organizational policies and procedures are determined by tacit assumptions (Dyer, 1982; Schein, 1983). Though these connections are not usually explicit--except, perhaps, at the time of an organization's founding--we become aware of the impact of underlying assumptions when the policies based on them turn out to be dysfunctional as they hit up against new circumstances.²

The experience of a utility company when it was trying to introduce women into foreman positions is an example. This company had a highly successful, though expensive, training program for foremen. They knew it was successful because when they put their male candidates through it they very quickly performed well on the job. But their experience with their women candidates was much less positive. Because they had an enlightened director of training, they did not immediately conclude that women made poor foremen, but rather tried to find out what really accounted for the poor performance. Soon they discovered that what made the men perform well was not the expensive

training course (which had been the implicit assumption) but the help these men got from their fellow foremen once they started in their new roles. The women, in contrast, did not get this on-the-job help. The story in this case has a happy ending. The company reduced the training course and formalized the on-the-job training. Their women candidates now performed as well as the men, and the company saved itself a lot of training expense. But the assumption that the course produced the good performance would have gone unquestioned if it had not been for an unusually enlightened response to the experience of "non-traditional" employees in foremen positions. And without the understanding that resulted from this response, the organization would not have been able to utilize any of its employees in the most productive way.

Thus, to ensure that organizations will respond appropriately to changes in the workforce, it is necessary to articulate and test the traditional assumptions that underlie an organization's career procedures. For if we do not, the possibility remains that the organizational response to the new circumstances will prove to be counterproductive.³

I would like, therefore, to consider some of these traditional assumptions and to speculate on what alternative and more productive guidelines for our career procedures might look like. Getting there, of course, is another matter. We cannot simply assert one day that we are now shifting our cultural assumptions. But awareness of how they link to procedures, and how these procedures operate in changed circumstances is a first step.

TRADITIONAL ASSUMPTIONS

Figure 1 lists the traditional assumptions that seem to me to underlie the career procedures most incongruous with new patterns of work/family relations. In many ways they are familiar, issues we have been aware of for a long time. My goal, however, is not merely to list these assumptions but to indicate their connection to organizational policies and career procedures and to show how they enter into our thinking and into our attempts to improve these procedures.

Assumption 1: Family Patterns are Traditional

It has been more than ten years since we were first alerted to the work issues facing "dual-career families" (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1971). And yet, much of our thinking is still premised on the assumption that all family patterns are traditional. Take, for example, the early career years. Even our best career textbooks (e.g., Hall, 1976; Schein, 1978), which include chapters on family, reach conclusions that implicitly assume traditional family patterns. We are told that successful careers depend on challenging first assignments, and that investment in career during the early years is critical to future development. We have research showing that even many years later success can still be traced to the character of these early years (e.g., Bray et al., 1974; Rosenbaum, 1979).⁴ And so, organizations respond by using these years to set career paths. "Fast trackers" are identified and "developed" on the assumption that the employee has a family support system (cf. Pfeffer and Ross, 1982). Indeed, in some occupations, the family is even expected to play an active role in the primary career (Papanek, 1973). These same textbooks, however, in their family chapters, alert us to the serious

Figure 1

SOME TRADITIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS
ABOUT EMPLOYEES

1. Family patterns are traditional
2. Employees should be totally work-involved.
3. Everyone wants to move up.
4. Within a given organizational category, employees' orientations are similar and unchanging.

issues involved in establishing mutually supportive relations with a partner and to the demands imposed by the presence of young children. What these texts seemingly ignore is the fact that these two periods of establishment--of a family and of a career--appear on their charts at the same time in a person's life. The unstated assumption (made explicit in the work of Evans and Bartolome) that makes sense of what at first seems like a contradiction is that these two tasks belong to different people: one person establishes a career and another the family. Elsewhere (Bailyn, 1980a; 1982a) I have suggested an alternative career model (the "slow burn" or apprenticeship model) which is premised on a less traditional assumption. But because of this premise, it is not yet seen as a viable alternative, even though we have indications that slow but more continuous movement throughout a career may be more productive on a long-term basis than initial surges followed by plateaus (Sarason, 1975; Lawrence, 1983; Bailyn and Lynch, 1983).

The assumption of traditional family patterns is also clearly reflected in organizational policies governing geographical relocation (see Renshaw, 1976; Brett, 1980). True, families are now consulted prior to moves and some refusals are permitted. These accommodations, however, do not obviate the organizational assumption of a single primary career person within each employee's family. In this issue, of course, it is the changed economics of relocation that has most affected the policy, rather than a realization that the underlying assumption may be erroneous. But if companies discover through economic pressure that they can develop managerial talent with less geographical relocation, they may find it easier to respond appropriately to employees who find relocation difficult because of non-traditional family patterns.

Assumption 2: Employees Should Be Totally Work-Involved

Most of our career procedures are based on the implicit assumption that employees should be totally involved in their work. Explicitly, of course, we know that people have other involvements. But we can gauge the power of this assumption by the reluctance of all but the most established (and traditional) employees to go against it. For example, I have been told by the treasurer of a large company, himself an enlightened man who took off every lunch to see an ailing father, that he feels perfectly comfortable about using his time in this way, but that he knew it would not be possible for a younger employee to do the same. Similarly, when a young faculty member in a major university complained to the dean about the department chairman, the reply was: "Don't be too hard on him, he just got a divorce." The faculty member was amazed. She herself had just had a baby and held an administrative position on top of her full-time teaching schedule. No one, she felt sure--least of all herself--would have excused any lax behavior on her part on personal grounds.⁵ Indeed, the policies that stem from this assumption have compelled many "non-traditional" employees to adjust the family cycle in order to accommodate the work emphasis assumed necessary for organizational success.

Despite the fact that we know that commitment may limit flexibility and innovation (Salancik, 1977), and that employees with primary non-work involvements may, on occasion, be of peculiar usefulness to an employing organization (Bennis, 1976; Bailyn, 1980b), many career procedures are still based on the assumption that effective performance requires total work involvement. This connection is seen most clearly in the way organizations define observable indicators for the evaluation of performance, particularly for jobs that lack clear measures of output. Though it is no easier to

"measure" commitment than performance, there are corollaries to this assumption that seemingly help with the task. In particular, if involvement can be gauged by time spent at work and by willingness to go along with organizational assignments and to stay in the organization, then, according to these assumed connections, performance can be judged by time put in and by loyalty. Again, there is evidence to show that the connections are not necessarily valid: part-time work and work done on shared jobs have been shown to be highly productive (Cohen and Gadon, 1978), and the assumption that turnover is a problem has been "turned over" (Dalton and Todor, 1979) and its organizational value, not only its cost, has been established (Staw, 1980). Still, time spent at work and loyalty to the organization continue to be used as substitute indicators of top performance, with predictable negative consequences for the fate of "non-traditional" employees (Bailyn, 1980a). Such employees may be doing highly effective work, but if this work is judged deficient because it does not meet criteria set by untested connections to an untested assumption, it will almost surely begin to deteriorate. And thus we are in a situation made familiar by the self-fulfilling prophecy (Merton, 1948). If procedures based on the assumption that employees should be totally work-involved tend to make "non-traditional" employees less productive, then we have a self-reinforcing cycle that serves to support the initial assumption, even in the face of contradictory evidence.

Assumption 3: Everyone Wants to Move Up

The truth of the assumption that everyone wants to move up—or at least anyone who is any good—has been questioned for some time now. As early as 1972 we were provided with examples of the "mutiny" of executives (Beckhard, 1972) and discussion of the issues surrounding technical careers (e.g., Dalton

et al., 1977; Bailyn, 1980b) is very centrally concerned with testing this assumption. Yet, its effect remains pervasive. Witness the remarks of a Ph.D. scientist in an R&D lab:

Yes, it's possible to refuse to accept a promotion, but it is not a decision easy to make and stay here. I have seen it happen and the people are miserable. It antagonizes management. One's judgment is questioned since management makes the evaluation. It changes one's relationship to the company. One either must leave or stay and be unhappy.

Most reward systems in organizations strongly reinforce this assumption: pay and other forms of compensation are closely tied to hierarchical position, as are symbols of status and recognition such as type of office, secretarial help, or parking place. Attempts to provide significant rewards for other organizational career paths, like the dual ladder, have proved to be full of complications and only effective under very special circumstances (Shepard, 1958; Gunz, 1980). The reason may lie in the procedures for evaluating performance. Motivated, often, by the need to guarantee management succession, performance appraisal systems consider potential for advancement an important category, and, in the absence of clear notions about what high level jobs require, use ambition and desire for promotion as proxy indicators. Such a system inculcates in appraisers as well as in the appraised the positive value of promotion and advancement (Sofer, 1970), and thus reinforces the presumed validity of this assumption.

A corollary to this assumption is the definition of career success as residing primarily in the attainment of high level positions. Since such positions have been shown to be commensurate with "life satisfaction" for some traditional employees (e.g., Bray and Howard, 1980; Evans and Bartolome,

1980), traditional career procedures are acceptable to this group. For others, however, whose conceptions of their careers are not "linear" (Driver, 1982) or whose career anchors are not managerial (Schein, 1978), such procedures may be counterproductive. And they are particularly likely to present complications for the lives of those whose careers are embedded in "non-traditional" patterns (e.g., Bailyn, 1978; Wallace, in progress).

Assumption 4: Within a Given Organizational Category, Employees' Orientations are Similar and Unchanging

Career procedures in organizations seem to be based on the assumption that all occupants in a given organizational role have the same career orientations, and that once established these orientations remain fixed for life. This assumption is the implicit underpinning for the monolithic career paths typically provided by organizations and for the constraints organizations tend to place on lateral movement (Bailyn, 1982b).

Research, however, has shown these presumptions to be false. It turns out that occupational role is not a sufficiently refined category for the study of careers. It is necessary, rather, to consider differences in orientation among occupants of the same occupational role (e.g., Schein, 1978; Bailyn, 1980b; Driver, 1982; Bailyn and Lynch, 1983; Van Maanen, 1983). Nor are these orientations necessarily stable. The work on adult development by Levinson and others has made it amply clear that people grow and change throughout the adult years. And, in regard to work reactions, research has shown that staying in one job for a long period can, in itself, create changes in the way that job is reacted to (Sarason, 1975; Katz, 1982; Bailyn and Lynch, 1983).

On one level, organizations are clearly aware that not all their employees in a given category have identical orientations. Indeed, it is the

purpose of most of their career development efforts to help employees define for themselves what their particular orientations are. What is problematic, however, is the organizational response to this information. In fact, if multiple career paths do not exist, then making the individuality of orientations explicit may actually be dysfunctional. The R&D employee quoted above, for example, may be fully aware that his calling is science. But if his assessment of his management is correct, this information will not help establish for him a satisfactory and productive career in that organization.

Nor is non-hierarchical movement and change built into the career pathing procedures of most organizations. Even when an alternative career path is available, as with the dual ladder, there typically is little movement between the technical and managerial ladders (except perhaps by plateaued managers) once an initial decision has been made early in the career. And within technical and other functional roles, reward systems often favor specialized expertise, which also tends to preclude change beyond the early years (cf. Jewkes et al., 1979).

These difficulties affect all employees in an organizational category who do not happen to fit its presumed universal career orientation. But the probability of such lack of fit is, almost by definition, greater for "non-traditional" employees. Hence career procedures based on this assumption are likely to be particularly problematic for them.

THE PATTERNING OF ASSUMPTIONS: HOMOGENEITY

So there are, it seems to me, at least these four assumptions, rooted in traditional views, that impede our efforts to provide a more flexible response to changing family/work patterns. They are not independent of each other.

Indeed, they form a pattern (Dyer, 1982; Schein, 1983), a pattern that centers on the notion of homogeneity: homogeneity in life circumstances, in expectations, in motivation, in ways to meet the requirements of occupational roles. Further, it is a homogeneity that is particularly unlikely to fit the life situations of many young people beginning careers today. And, since the older and more traditional managers still set the tone in today's organizations, they tend to reinforce the existing pattern. They do this, first, by the natural tendency to assume that what is true for them is true for all. Second, they reinforce this pattern by a characteristic presumption that what people do is solely determined by who they are and by their basic, probably unchangeable, traits and competencies (Jones and Nisbett, 1972; Ross, 1977). If all work behavior can be attributed to personal traits, it is clearly unnecessary to question organizational procedures when inappropriate responses occur (cf. Kanter, 1977a). These two facts—that these assumptions are all interrelated and that they are reinforced by "implicit" psychological processes (Wegner and Vallacher, 1977)—make it peculiarly difficult to introduce change.

And if the desired change is in the direction of more flexible career procedures, based on revised assumptions of diversity rather than homogeneity, the problem is compounded. It actually seems easier to define procedures based on the exact reverse of these traditional assumptions than it is to accept the fact that it is their underlying pattern of homogeneity that needs rethinking. The issue of promotion accompanied by geographical transfer is an example. Where previously an employee's family was ignored, now there is a tendency to co-opt the family. In moving away from a policy of transferring managers without regard to their family situations, we now face the danger of

allowing presumed family concerns to dictate advancement policies. I have heard enlightened executives say that of course they need to know what is going on in their employees' families in order to decide their future, and have heard managers report that they did not offer a particular employee a chance at a promotion in a new location because "I knew he wouldn't take it because of his son in high school, and I didn't want him to have to turn it down." We certainly do not want to shift from assuming that work is all that counts to assuming that family is all-important, or to shift from assuming that everyone is in a traditional family pattern to assuming that everyone is in a non-traditional pattern. Nor do we want a paternalistic system, where the organization decides what an employee's family needs are. This would run counter to most of our notions of individual choice and privacy in personal affairs.⁶ Such "organizational paternalism" might even become "insidious" by defining "anything but the most innocuous expressions of self-determination, autonomy, and other conditions of individualism as illness" (Scott and Hart, 1979, p. 77).

What is needed, rather, is a way to make personal concerns legitimate in career decisions, without either assuming homogeneity or concentrating in the organization the responsibility of making these decisions. Clearly, it is not possible for me to give a prescription of how we can bring this about. Indeed, following prescribed steps is not likely to be the way such change will happen (Quinn, 1980; March, 1981). Rather, I would like to suggest a process by which such decisions might be reached. It is a process of negotiation and the outcomes, by definition, will not be uniform.

NEGOTIATING CAREERS

The essence of the problem, as I have indicated, stems from the fact that the life situations of employees are becoming more various, which means that career procedures based on an assumptive pattern of homogeneity (traditional or non-traditional) are inadequate. It seems to me that the wide distribution of tasks and responsibilities potentially available in most organizations, even within particular job categories, makes it possible to view this situation as negotiable, and to conceive of career procedures as bringing employee preferences and organizational needs together in more differentiated ways. But such diversity is not easy to manage, either for the individual or for the organization.

From the individual's point of view, the proliferation of acceptable life styles means that no life pattern--no way of relating family to work--any longer receives the social support that the traditional pattern once did. To the extent that our society moves in this direction, all individuals, not only those with "deviant" patterns, will face the burden of choice and the self-generation of support for that choice (cf. Bailyn, 1964). This puts more responsibility on individuals than they have often taken, and if they are not to turn to ideology for substitute support (as has happened, for example, among radical feminists or "total women"), it requires self-assessment in the context of tolerance for differences. At a minimum, an individual should be aware of this necessity, and, indeed, our more sophisticated self-assessment procedures emphasize individual "ownership" of these issues.

The task confronting the individual is to integrate the demands imposed by two systems: a work system and a family system.⁷ The work system represents the arena for a person's contractual relation to the external

environment (Jahoda, 1982), a place where activities are externally regulated and monitored, and where one is held publicly accountable for one's performance. The family system represents a more internal, more self-regulated, and more private arena, centered on a primary tie to another person or persons.⁸ Though it is obvious that social expectations as well as self-defined priorities determine how these demands are perceived, interpreted, and reacted to, the essential individual task is to assess the satisfactions provided by each system and thus to arrive at a relative weighting of importance between them, at least for a particular time in a person's life.

The organization's task, as has been indicated above, is to provide multiple career paths and career procedures flexible enough to accommodate such individual differences. Beginnings have, of course, been made: e.g., dual ladders and cafeteria benefits (see Hall, 1976). But even if an organization's job structure were defined in a highly differentiated way, there would still remain the problem of how to fit individuals with different accommodations between work and family into this structure. In my opinion, this is the real crux of the difficulty. The answer is clearly not for organizations to assume what these individual accommodations are or should be. Nor can an organization simply collect all personal information on its employees and use that to define the appropriate deployment of its work force. What is needed, rather, is a way of negotiating careers within a context that presumes a diversity of interests, all of which are considered legitimate (Trist, 1975; Strauss, 1978).

What might such a negotiating process look like? First, the bounds would have to be set. Clearly, the negotiation would have to take place within a particular occupational role or job category, which would have been determined by matching organizational requirements with an individual's

experience, interests, and skills. It would also be bounded by the period of time for which it would be deemed to apply, itself a negotiable point.

Second, there must be an individual input, a simple way of summarizing a person's thinking about the relative importance he or she places on work and family.⁹ Finally, the organization's contribution is to provide differentiation within job categories: by task and level of responsibility.

The level of one's desired occupational investment¹⁰—the extent to which one wants to commit oneself to the work one does—is a useful way of summarizing one's assessment of one's priorities, and could serve, I think, as a common "currency of exchange" between the individual and the organization.

For example, a technician can be assigned routine tasks or more complicated, responsible ones. The latter is more appropriate for an employee with high occupational investment, the former for one whose investment is low. The nature of the work assignment is the first thing to be negotiated. But the negotiation must include, also, the ways by which the performance will be evaluated and compensated. For the routine task, satisfactory completion is probably a sufficient criterion. For the more complex task, one would want to be more elaborate and include also some measure of independence of judgment, awareness of interdependence with other tasks, and so on. What is critical is that such procedures not be uniform, that the criteria for the more complex task not be applied to the simple one, or vice versa. Lower occupational investment does not automatically mean lack of competence to perform at a higher level; it only means that at a particular period in a person's life, the degree of investment necessary for the complex task is not available for work. Neither does low performance on a task more demanding than expected necessarily mean inability to rise to such a challenge under different circumstances.

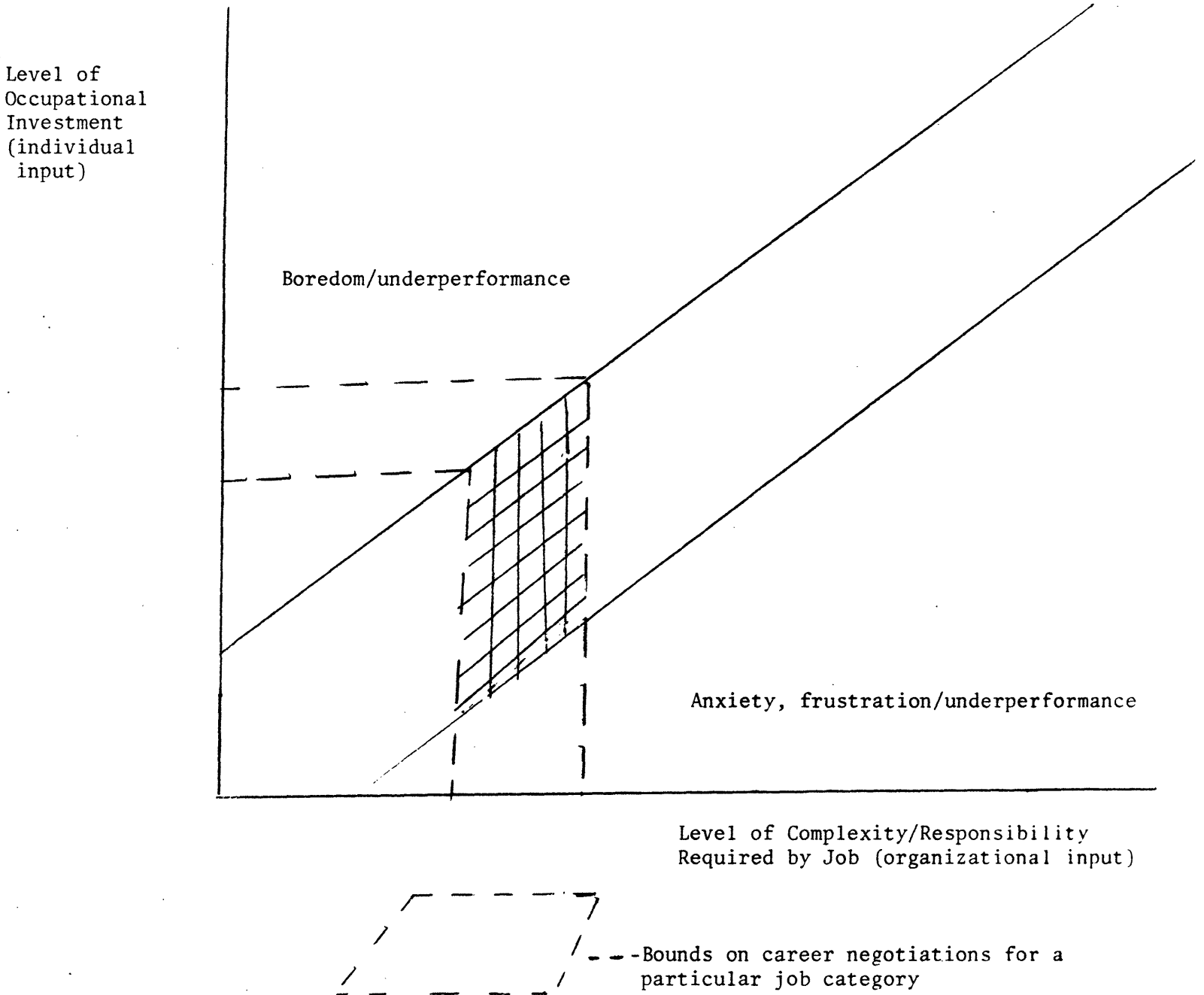
Thus, the negotiation on career procedures--on the actual work people will do and on the way they will be assessed and compensated for that work--occurs for a particular period of time within bounds set by quite general requirements of occupational roles. Such an approach, as Figure 2 makes clear, implies that the career match between an individual and the employing organization is not a point but an area, and appropriate career procedures will vary according to position in that area. The process I am suggesting is for the individual to determine his or her placement within this area as input into the negotiations on career procedures.¹¹

Most production jobs, for example, are very low on complexity and responsibility. Our assumption is that the occupational investment of production employees, at all times in their lives, is sufficiently high to place them in the boredom region, and so we have tried to enrich these jobs. But such a response should be guided not by employer assumptions, but by employee input. Some employees, at certain periods of their lives, do not welcome enrichment (cf. Katz, 1977; Hackman and Oldham, 1980) because their commitments are not primarily to their work. For them, satisfaction and effective performance are enhanced by jobs of low complexity. Assignment to enriched jobs, therefore, should be negotiated on the basis of an individual's level of commitment to that job as determined by the person's assessment of interests and capacities in all areas of his or her life.¹²

Similarly, managerial jobs ought to be able to accommodate employees with different levels of occupational investment. Our usual assumption about managerial careers is that they continuously increase in the level of complexity and responsibility they demand (Jaques, 1970). But this requires a continuous increase in the level of occupational investment for effective performance and individual satisfaction to be maintained. Otherwise, anxiety

Figure 2

NEGOTIATING CAREERS



Note: Adapted from Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, chapter 4.

or frustration and underperformance will result (the Peter Principle). In fact, of course, many employees do not want to increase their level of occupational investment and would perform more effectively on organizational tasks that do not increase in complexity. But the appraisal of their performance would have to be adjusted to fit this position in the area of satisfaction.

In summary, the process I am suggesting requires individuals to take responsibility for assessing their own priorities and to translate this into the level of commitment they are willing and able to give to work. Organizations, in turn, need to adjust the requirements of a particular job to varying degrees of employee commitment. I suspect that there are very few, if any, jobs that actually necessitate one particular level of occupational investment on the part of their occupants. Further, in coming together to negotiate a career, individuals and organizations must be willing to share the risk of innovative accommodations. This, I believe, will be easier if we depend more on temporary arrangements than on permanent and inflexible career courses (Handy, 1980). In fact, since occupational investment will vary over a lifetime, as work and family demands change, the negotiation itself needs to be periodically renewed. Such a process of periodic negotiation would build some discontinuity into organizational career paths, which would make them more responsive to the cycle of family needs. It is my belief that from the point of view of changing life patterns, it makes more sense to view the career as a series of discrete chunks rather than as a continuous line. An engineer, for example, may want to shift among three different aspects of technical work: (1) solving technical tasks set by others; (2) being involved in technical decision making; and (3) supervising the technical work of other people. Each requires a different level of occupational investment, and

performance in each needs to be evaluated in its own terms. Only new negotiations at different points in that engineer's career will ensure that the work of that engineer remains satisfactory and effective.

It is obvious that such a process would make career procedures more complicated and would introduce ambiguity and uncertainty into organizational careers. But this is exactly what is needed for today's more diverse life patterns. Nor are these implications necessarily bad. We already have evidence that complication and ambiguity can help organizations be more effective users of their resources (cf. Goode, 1967; Weick, 1979). And it is not even entirely clear that the reduction of uncertainty is always desirable (cf. March, 1978; Snyder and Wicklund, 1981).

CONCLUDING NOTE

And so, what is needed is a whole new set of assumptions based on diversity and discontinuity. But new assumptions are not easy to acquire. In fact, we may have to wait for a new generation to manage our organizations and for new procedures to emerge--both formal and informal--that respond to the needs of "non-traditional" employees. But in this process we ourselves can play a role, by what we teach (cf. Scott and Hart, 1979).

In general, we need to help our students, whether they are just entering careers or are already well established in organizations, to understand the assumptions on which current organizational procedures are based and to test these assumptions against the realities of their own and others' life situations. By sharing these life experiences and using such techniques as role play, cases, and films, we can emphasize the variability of people's

lives and the need for more flexible procedures to take advantage of these differences. But our emphasis in teaching should remain on the process of career negotiation, for if we try to meet our students' demands for specific prescriptions, we may be burdening them with a new set of homogeneous assumptions which will eventually conflict with new realities, and thus produce difficulties that are impossible for us now to anticipate.

NOTES

1. The analysis of the experience of women employees in terms of structural factors of the workplace (Kanter, 1977a) also throws into question the concern with differences between the sexes in capacities or styles.
2. While the experience of non-traditional employees has been such a circumstance in relation to work and family, a similar process is evident in the management of professionals in R&D organizations, as these companies try to respond to dramatic changes in their technological and competitive environments (see Bailyn, 1982b).
3. Introduction of generalized personnel procedures, such as a Hay's classification of jobs or pre-set compensation system, may be unproductive in such a way. These uniform procedures assume a homogeneity in career needs that is less and less likely to be present. Their use is, therefore, apt to decrease the probability of responding effectively to employee needs. It is ironic that the push toward using such systems stems, in part, from the requirement to provide "non-traditional" employees with fair and equal treatment.
4. I am not questioning the validity or value of these studies. They describe accurately the early experiences of today's successful managers. What concerns me is the translation of this historically bound description into prescription for the future, where people and circumstances are likely to be very different (Gergen, 1973). We need this research to help us understand how present conditions arose, but we should not assume that it gives us universal truths. See, for example, my response to the findings on motivation of new management trainees as interpreted by the AT&T researchers (Wharton Magazine, Fall 1981, p. 78).
5. This is not the first example of how forces set in motion by the movement to "liberate" non-traditional employees benefit, first of all, the traditional workforce. One management school, for instance, which wanted to permit women with children to attend part time had, for legal reasons, to phrase its regulation in sex-neutral terms. The first person actually to take advantage of the new rule was a man.
6. The Japanese management of organizational careers, which we seem to consider so enviable, is paternalistic in this sense. But, as with other aspects of that system, their paternalism might have difficulty surviving in our very different culture (cf. Schein, 1981).
7. Other formulations (e.g., Schein, 1978) deal with three relevant systems: self, work, and family. To the extent that inclusion of this third system emphasizes the fact that the self develops and grows in continuous interaction with work and family, it is obviously useful. What I am trying to emphasize, however, is the asymmetry between self on the one hand and work and family on the other. My point is that a person defines the self, in part, by responding to the demands of the family and the work systems (cf. Van Maanen, 1979). The self is the actor who deals with two contexts, and the fact that actors and environments affect each other should not obviate the distinction

NOTES (continued)

- between them. A different three-way model involves the interrelation of work, family, and leisure (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1980). Leisure (as well as other non-work, non-family activities such as community, religious, and political activities) is obviously an important part of a person's life. It generally does not, however, represent a part of the personal environment to which one is tied by contract, whether legal, economic, or psychological, and therefore is not likely to impose the same requirements of self-definition.
8. Notice that I am not relating these two systems to a particular set of adult needs, as in some classic formulations which identify family with expressive or affiliative needs and work with instrumental or achievement ones. There are emotional and task subsystems in each area (cf. Piotrkowski, 1979) and each provides opportunities for the expression of effectance (White, 1959) and of interpersonal needs.
 9. It should be obvious that even though I am emphasizing family in this paper, the argument holds for any personal, non-work issues that have high salience for an employee. In other words, I am arguing for a way of legitimizing diversity in orientations to work among occupants of the same occupational role no matter what reasons lie behind such differences.
 10. In some ways, occupational investment is the converse of what I have previously called accommodation (1978). Both concepts contain within them the relation in a person's life between work and family. But for the purpose of negotiation with employing organizations, it is more useful to focus on the work side of this dimension rather than on the family side. And, though data in 1970 from MIT alumni in their late thirties and early forties showed that involvement with work was associated with a negative evaluation of the importance of the family (Bailyn, 1980b), there is no theoretical reason why high occupational investment and high accommodation should not go together (cf. Marks, 1977). Indeed, it is the hope that more responsive organizational career procedures will make it easier for such a combination to exist and to persist.
 11. Though the argument cannot be developed here, the views presented in this paper point to a definition of the job as residing in the incumbent rather than in the role, and to a situationally anchored understanding of competence.
 12. To what extent such low occupational investment results from lack of experience with complex jobs is difficult to assess (cf. Hackman and Oldham, 1980). Nor can the role of unions be ignored, which often fight against individualized procedures (except, perhaps, on the basis of seniority) in order to ensure equal treatment for all employees. The extent to which such mandated equality may actually be inequitable remains an open question (cf. Rapoport and Rapoport, 1975).

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