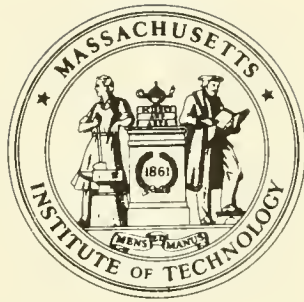


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DESCRIBING THE EXTERNAL CAREERS
OF MANAGEMENT SCHOOL ALUMNI:
CAREER PATTERNS AND CAREER STAGES

Judith R. Gordon

WP 805-75

August 1975

MASSACHUSETTS
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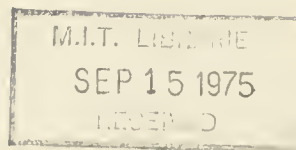
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Introduction

A career can be defined as "a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered, predictable sequence" (Wilensky, 1961). This definition suggests the possibility of describing a career with reference only to objective categories--the succession of jobs, and of distinguishing the external career--"the objective categories used by society and organizations to describe the progression of steps through a given occupation" from the internal career--"the set of steps or stages which make up the individual's own concept of his progression within an occupation" (Schein, 1975). If we can describe the external career of individuals or groups, and then relate its features to characteristics of their internal careers, we will have gained in our ability to analyze careers since job histories are easier to obtain than data about motives and aspirations.

Previous research (LeJeune, 1973) has demonstrated interconnections between various objective categories of job histories, particularly sequences of jobs. For example, if a person is in one type of job at time 1, the likelihood of his being in a similar or different type of job at time 2 can be specified. We have assumed that such sequences over a period of time are oriented toward a "goal-job," some position which legitimizes and gives meaning to the whole career pattern, and toward which the person presumably is oriented. Such a goal-job can be inferred from the job sequence over a period of time, and can be used to identify the career pattern if we take people who are well established in their career (10 years or more

out of school). The goal-job would typically be identical with the current job, but not necessarily so. The variety of possibilities is illustrated in the examples below.

The following two external careers, in spite of their identical early job sequence, illustrate two different career patterns since they differ in their inferred goal-jobs. The first job history includes two staff positions, followed by two functional manager positions, followed by line manager positions for the rest of the history; this example is classified as a "line/general manager" career pattern based on the current job--line manager--being considered the inferred goal-job. The second job history also includes two staff positions, followed by two functional manager positions, but followed by self-employment; this career pattern would be classified as "entrepreneur," on the basis of the current job--self-employment--being considered as the inferred goal-job. A third external career resembles the second one, except the sequence of self-employment is followed by a position as a line manager; this career would be classified as "entrepreneur," in spite of the current job not being self-employment, because of the assumed perseverance of the motives and aspirations underlying self-employment.

The purpose of this study is to develop a classification of career patterns and to identify job sequences which make it possible to infer those career patterns empirically. If the patterns can be identified, we can then study the stages and other dynamics within given career patterns.

The Data Base

The job histories of a sample of Sloan School of Management (M.I.T.) alumni provided the basic data for this study. All alumni had been requested to complete a brief questionnaire which asked them to recount their educational and occupational history.*

Types of Career Patterns

Nine career patterns, as described below, were defined according to the inferred goal-job of the members. The description frequently includes two parts: 1) information which is observable in the job histories and is used as the basis for classification of an individual into a career pattern (this is further elaborated in the classification guidelines presented after

*The sample for this study was selected from a pool of Sloan School of Management alumni who had responded to this questionnaire, reproduced in Appendix A. The present sample included only alumni of the masters degree program (excluding Sloan Fellows), who were male, United States citizens, and had graduated between 1952 and 1966, as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>
1952	7	1960	17
1953	8	1961	32
1954	10	1962	27
1955	5	1963	42
1956	10	1964	31
1957	16	1965	48
1958	28	1966	35
1959	30		
		Total	346

The total sample represents 43% of the total alumni population; however, this percentage is slightly deflated because population data include women and non-United States citizens. For all analyses the sample was further reduced to include only those who had worked for ten or more years, and, in some cases, who had reported their original, five-year, ten-year, and current jobs. Thus, 1965 and 1966 graduates were not included in the reduced sample.

the descriptions of the nine career patterns), and 2) motivations of the career pattern members which are inferred from the job histories. These patterns were identified from reading a large number of the job histories and from a knowledge of the types of career which tend to be pursued by management school graduates. Obviously, other careers would have to be included if we were working with a different alumni pool.

1. Entrepreneur: Those who either are or have been, within the last ten years, self-employed, that is, own the company for which they work. For those who were at one time, but are not presently, self-employed, we can, because of the perseverance of the motivation to be an entrepreneur, infer that they are marking time in non-entrepreneurial positions but plan to start their own enterprises at the earliest opportunity.
2. Line/General Manager: Those whose goal-job is line/general management and whose goal-job title specifies managerial responsibility but neither specifies nor implies a functional or technical area of concern. We infer that those with this career pattern view their goal-job as people management with little or no emphasis on a content specialty since their goal-job is held primarily because of their managerial skills.
3. Functional Manager: Those whose goal-job is management of work activities in their content area of expertise. They appear to be striving to combine their commitment to working in their content area of expertise with a position of managerial responsibility.
4. Staff: Those whose goal-job includes no managerial responsibility and whose work is focused on their content area of expertise. We can infer that they are highly committed to working in a functional specialty and have no desire for managerial responsibility.

5. Company Man: Those who have been employed by the same company since they received their degree from Sloan, or who have worked for the same company for a substantial part of their employment career. We infer that these alumni are motivated by their need for security (see Schein, 1974), and only secondarily by their commitment to working with people or working in their area of expertise. This career pattern can be subdivided into the following subgroups: 1) line/general manager, 2) functional manager, 3) staff; each has similar characteristics to the corresponding non-company man career pattern, but with the superimposed condition of employment by, generally, a single company.
6. Consultant: Those who have worked as consultants, generally in firms which specialize in consulting work, for the major part of their employment history.
7. Government: Those who have been employed by the federal, state, or local government, either as a civilian or member of the military, for the majority of their employment history.
8. University Professor: Those who hold full-time faculty positions in universities, colleges, or junior colleges.
9. Other: Those who have goal-jobs outside business or industry, government, or higher education, e.g. high school teacher or free lance writer.

Classification of Job Histories into Patterns

Each individual questionnaire was coded by applying a set of questions to the job history given by the respondent. We first have to locate either the current job or the most relevant job--that job held most consistently or that job highest in the staff-managerial-entrepreneurial hierarchy--and then apply the following questions to that job or to the history:

1. Is he in government?
If yes, go to question 2.
If no, go to question 3.
2. Has he been in the government for more than four^{*} years?
If yes, classify as Government career pattern.
If no, go to question 12.
3. Is he in business or industry?
If yes, go to question 5.
If no, go to question 4.
4. Is he teaching in a college or university?
If yes, classify as University Professor career pattern.
If no, classify as Other career pattern.
5. Is he doing consulting work?
If yes, go to question 6.
If no, go to question 7.
6. Have his previous jobs been consulting positions?
If yes, classify as Consultant career pattern.
If no, go to question 7.
7. Is he self-employed?
If yes, classify as Entrepreneur career pattern.
If no, go to question 8.
8. Has he been self-employed within the last ten^{**} years?
If yes, classify as Entrepreneur career pattern.
If no, go to question 9.
9. How long has he worked for^{***} the present company?
If at least seven years^{***}, go to question 10.
If less than seven years, go to question 12.

* Four was selected because it is the average length of military enlistment in the United States.

** Ten was chosen because this was considered a reasonable length of time for a person with an entrepreneur career pattern but not currently self-employed to reestablish his own enterprise.

*** Seven was chosen because the majority of respondents who remained with the same company that long did not change companies subsequently.

10. How many companies did he work for before present company?
If zero, classify as Company Man career pattern and go to question 12 for subgroup classification.
If one, go to question 11.
If two, go to question 11.
If more than two, go to question 12.
11. Did he start in his present company in a low or middle level* functional management or staff job and move through higher positions?
If yes, classify as Company Man career pattern and go to question 12 for subgroup classification.
If no, go to question 12.
12. Does his position title have a functional or technical area specified or implied (e.g. marketing, engineering, finance)?
If yes, go to question 13.
If no, classify as Line/General Manager career pattern.
13. Does his position title include a managerial or administrative title (e.g. manager or vice president)?
If yes, classify as Functional Manager career pattern.
If no, classify as Staff career pattern.

Now that we have identified the career patterns, and described a procedure for deriving them from the job histories, we can study the dynamics of the external careers of the career pattern groups by delineating the stages of the external career. Our intent is simply to show that a phasing of the external career is evident and different for the various career patterns, to describe this phasing in some detail, and thus to suggest that careers differ in the timing and occurrence of certain key events. Ultimately, in subsequent studies, we are interested in precisely specifying the length and content of these stages of the external career, and relating them to the characteristics of the corresponding internal careers.

* Level was defined as the relative position in the organization hierarchy, and was generally related to functional or managerial responsibility.

Stages of the External Career

Previous analyses have described the individual's career by focusing on stages of his internal career. Ginzberg et al (1951) limit their theory of career development primarily to the process of individual choice which begins in childhood and ends in young adulthood; the phases they describe include, in chronological order: 1) the fantasy period, 2) the tentative period which includes interest, value, and transition stages, and 3) the realistic period which includes exploration, crystallization and specification stages. Super (1963) traces an individual's career development, beginning in early adolescence and ending in late adulthood; he cites 1) the exploratory stage with tentative, transition, and uncommitted trial substages, and 2) the establishment stage with trial and advancement substages. Super also refers to a series of five vocational development activities-- crystallization, specification, implementation, stabilization, consolidation-- which occur simultaneously with various parts of the exploration and establishment stages. Schein and Bailyn (1974) also define parallel stages of the career: 1) pre-entry, 2) novitiate, 3) early career, 4) middle career, and 5) late career. Each of these schemes for describing career development relies primarily on having information about the individual's internal career, rather than using only data about the external career, i.e. job history. Since we would expect data about the external career to be more accessible, if similar analyses of stages of the external career can be performed using only job history data, the practical implications are obvious.

In order to define stages of the career, we use the concept of congruent or incongruent job in terms of whether the job fits into (is identical or not identical with) the career pattern. Starting with the first job, how long does it take before initial and complete congruence with the goal-job (or career pattern) is achieved, and is the trend consistent, or are incongruent jobs held after initially congruent ones? These patterns of congruence define three career stages (see Figure 1):

- 1) Threshold stage is the time between the first job and the first congruent job; the length of this stage may be very brief, even zero, if the first job is the first congruent job.
- 2) Confirmation stage is the time between the first congruent job and the job when then and subsequently only congruent jobs are held; this stage may be non-existent if no non-congruent jobs are held after the first congruent job.
- 3) Stabilization stage is the time beginning when then and subsequently only congruent jobs are held and ending with the goal-job; in general this stage spans a substantial part of the career, especially if the last job held is the goal-job.

To illustrate these stages, consider a job history with the following sequence of positions:

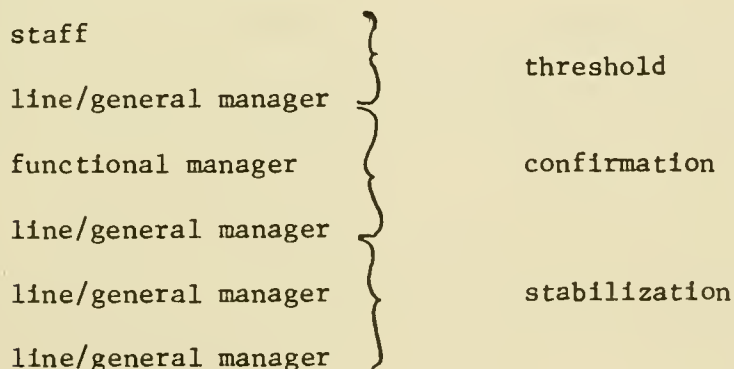
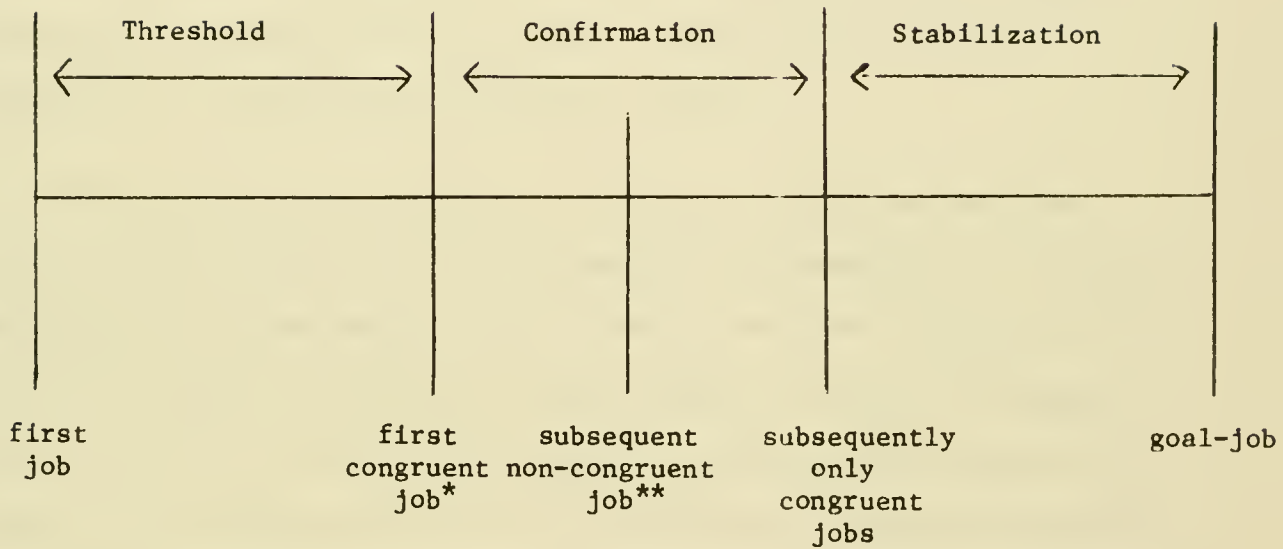


Figure 1
Stages of the External Career



* For some career patterns this is the same as the first job.

** Not all alumni will hold a non-congruent job during their career.

These three stages can be used to describe the career of an individual, as in the example above. However, they are potentially more valuable if they can be used to describe similarities and differences between the careers of groups of individuals who are in the same career pattern. Career patterns can then be compared in terms of the average length and relative location of each career stage. For example, if we find that the line/general manager career has a longer threshold stage and/or a longer stabilization stage than the staff career, this would have important implications for training and promotional policies.

Using career pattern as the unit of analysis should increase the ability to understand the career development of its members and to provide meaningful experiences and/or career counseling for them. The ability to track the progress of individuals in their careers, that is, to recognize whether individuals within a career pattern are progressing through their career at an appropriate rate or at a rate which will allow them to fulfill their career aspirations, has further implications for training and promotion policies and programs. By identifying the typical length and characteristics of the stages of the career for each career pattern group, the progress of groups of employees or even of particular individuals in the group can be charted by comparing their current position with the normative position for the career pattern at that time. Ideally, an analysis of career in terms of the stages of the external career should determine the time of onset and length of each stage, as appropriate.

Hypotheses about Career Stages

Based on our general knowledge of the activities of people within the different career patterns, we can hypothesize for each career pattern the length of the threshold stage, whether or not the confirmation stage exists, and the relative time of onset of the stabilization stage (see Table 1) by noting the timing of certain key events in or characteristics of the alumni's careers. The factors relevant to such hypotheses are related to the requirements for holding the goal-job, more particularly, to the amount and type of

1) formal education, e.g.

- a) when and how expertise in a particular functional field is acquired, and
- b) whether specific educational credentials are required;

2) on-the-job experience, e.g.

- a) how important it is to obtain experience in a variety of jobs,
- b) whether functional expertise is acquired on the job, and
- c) when and how the potential to hold a particular job is demonstrated;

3) generalized experience, e.g.

- a) how important it is to establish a reputation or make personal contacts in the field, and
- b) when and how sufficient capital to become self-employed or start a new enterprise can be acquired.

By considering which of these three categories apply to each career pattern, we can hypothesize the length of the threshold stage. Those jobs requiring formal education--the content-based career patterns of staff, consultant, and

Table 1
Hypothesized Length of Threshold Stage,
Existence of Confirmation Stage, and
Relative Time of Onset of Stabilization Stage

Career Pattern	Relative Length of Threshold Stage	Does Confirmation Stage Exist?	Relative Onset of Stabilization Stage
Entrepreneur	Long	Depends	Late
Line/General Manager	Long	Yes	Late
Functional Manager	Medium	Yes	Middle
Staff	Short	No	Early
Consultant	Short	No	Early
University Professor	Short	No	Early
Other	Depends	Depends	Depends

university professor--would have the shortest threshold stage. Those jobs requiring on-the-job experience in addition to formal education--the managerial career patterns of functional manager and line/general manager--would have longer threshold stages. Because of the greater diversity of and more extensive on-the-job experiences generally required for a line/general manager job, than for the functional manager job which requires functional expertise in a single area, we would expect the threshold stage of the line/general manager career pattern to be longer than that of the functional manager. Finally, for those jobs that require generalized experience in addition to formal training and/or on-the-job experience--the entrepreneur career pattern, we would hypothesize a relatively long threshold stage. Because of the diversity of jobs encompassed by the other career pattern, the exact nature of the requirements cannot be specified, and thus the length of the threshold stage would depend on the particular goal-job.

Whether the confirmation stage exists or not is related to the second and third categories of requirements cited above, since the first category--formal education requirements--are generally met before the first job, and thus are not relevant to the subsequent job sequence. Thus, we hypothesize that those goal-jobs requiring primarily formal education--staff, consultant, university professor--would not have a confirmation stage. For those goal-jobs--line/general manager--where the organization encourages a long apprenticeship through extensive and varied on-the-job experience, we would hypothesize that a confirmation stage would exist. For the functional manager goal-job, which combines elements of the content-based career, which we

hypothesized has no confirmation stage, and of the managerial career, which we hypothesized has a confirmation stage, the orientation of the particular career pattern member, toward content or management, should affect whether a confirmation stage exists. For those goal-jobs requiring generalized experience--entrepreneur--whether or not a confirmation stage exists would depend on the timing and particular nature of such experiences. The heterogeneity of the goal-jobs of the other career pattern explain the hypothesis that whether or not a confirmation stage exists for this career pattern depends on the particular goal-job.

The onset of the stabilization stage mirrors the length of the threshold stage: staff, consultant, and university professor career patterns--relatively early onset, functional manager career pattern--middle onset, line/general manager and entrepreneur career patterns--relatively late onset, and other career pattern--varying onset.

We can summarize our hypotheses about the three stages for each career pattern. The entrepreneur career pattern is hypothesized to have a long threshold stage and a stabilization stage with a relatively late onset; whether a confirmation stage exists is expected to depend on the timing and nature of generalized experience required for the particular goal-job. Because of the nature and type of on-the-job experiences associated with the line/general manager career pattern, it is also expected to have a long threshold stage and a stabilization stage with a relatively late onset, and also to have a confirmation stage. We hypothesize a slightly shorter

threshold stage, an earlier onset of the stabilization stage, and the existence of a confirmation stage for the functional manager career pattern. The three content-based career patterns--staff, consultant, and university professor--are each hypothesized to have a short threshold stage, no confirmation stage, and a stabilization stage with a relatively early onset since the goal-jobs of these career patterns are characterized by having only formal education requirements. The length of the threshold stage, existence of the confirmation stage, and relative time of onset of the stabilization stage for the heterogeneous other career pattern are hypothesized to depend on the particular goal-job of concern.

Empirical Definitions of Career Stages

To analyze the career patterns of the Sloan sample, we began by restricting the sample to those alumni who had received their degree from Sloan at least ten years prior to their completion of the questionnaire. This restriction was imposed to increase the accuracy of identification of their career patterns, since some stabilization of their careers should have occurred by ten years after graduation. Because we were interested in using career pattern groups as the unit of analysis, each alumnus' job history was coded into a career pattern category, as described above.

Then, since the empirical definitions of the three stages--threshold, confirmation, and stabilization--rely on identifying congruence or non-

congruence of jobs held at various times in the career, these jobs were coded according to a classification which corresponded to the career pattern categories of concern: entrepreneur, line/general manager, functional manager, staff, consultant, university professor, other. A time sampling technique--coding of jobs at only the original, five-year, ten-year, and current time-marks--was used as a means of standardizing the analysis. Because our intent in this study was not to precisely pin down the exact length of the stages, but rather to obtain an indication of whether the phasing of various career patterns differed, time sampling allows us to speak about the stages in terms of these broad time dimensions.

To determine whether or not the length of the threshold stage varies by career pattern, we will report for each career pattern the percentage of people who first held a congruent job at the original, five-year, ten-year, and current time-marks.* The threshold stage, by definition, ends at the time-mark at which the largest (defined here as the numerically highest) percentage of the group first held congruent jobs. For example, to determine the length of the threshold stage of the line/general manager career pattern, we obtained the following data (excerpted from Table 4 below): of the 47 alumni with a line/general manager career pattern, 13% first held a job congruent with the career pattern originally, 19% at the five-year

* Summing these percentages plus the percentage of those who first held a congruent job at a time-mark other than these four will yield 100%.

time-mark, 34% at the ten-year time-mark, 23% currently, and 11% at a time other than one of these four. Hence the numerically largest group first held a job congruent with their career pattern at the ten-year mark; we will define ten years as the length of the threshold stage for this career pattern. Of course, the percentage first holding a congruent job may be more equitable for the four time-marks, for example 25%, 25%, 26%, 24%; in this case we would conclude that the length of the threshold stage cannot be established for the career pattern, but rather only for the individuals within the pattern group.

The empirical definition of the confirmation stage differs somewhat since we are concerned primarily with whether such a stage exists at all for a given career pattern. We will report for each career pattern the percentage who held at least one non-congruent job subsequent to the first congruent job. A confirmation stage exists, then, for those cited in these data. Excerpting from Table 5 the data for those with a staff career pattern illustrates this definition: of the 38 alumni with staff career patterns who first held a congruent job at either the original, five-year, ten-year, or current time-marks, 13% subsequently held at least one non-congruent job (at one of the four time-marks). These data suggest the existence of a confirmation stage for at least a subgroup of the staff career pattern.

The stabilization stage is conceptually defined as beginning with that job at and after which only congruent jobs are held. Because in this

study we are inferring the goal-job, the length of this stage cannot be determined. However, we can determine its relative time of onset in different career patterns. For each career pattern we will note at each time-mark the percentage whose jobs are congruent with their career pattern by that time and at all subsequent times. We will define the onset of the stabilization stage for a career pattern as the time-mark by which the majority (at least 50%) then and subsequently held only jobs congruent with their career pattern. For example, the following data excerpted from Table 6 for the 37 with staff career patterns, cites the percentage at each time-mark who by then and subsequently held only staff positions:

Time-mark:	Original	Five-Year	Ten-Year	Current	Not Stabilized
	76%	84%	89%	89%	11%

According to the empirical definition for the time of onset of the stabilization stage, it would begin for the staff career pattern with the original job since the majority (76%) then and subsequently held only staff jobs. The 11% whose job sequence had not stabilized held a staff job at either the original, five, and/or ten-year time-marks, but do not hold a staff job currently.

Results

A classification of alumni job histories yielded the distribution of career patterns shown in Table 2. The largest group have functional manager

Table 2
Career Patterns of Sloan School Alumni

Career Pattern	Percentage of Alumni (N=261)
Entrepreneur	10%
Line/General Manager [*]	17
Functional Manager [*]	39
Staff [*]	17
Consultant	3
University Professor	9
Other ^{**}	5

* The percentage in each of these groups with company man career patterns is line/general manager--5%, functional manager--15%, staff--7%.

** One percent of the other career pattern could be classified as having a government career pattern.

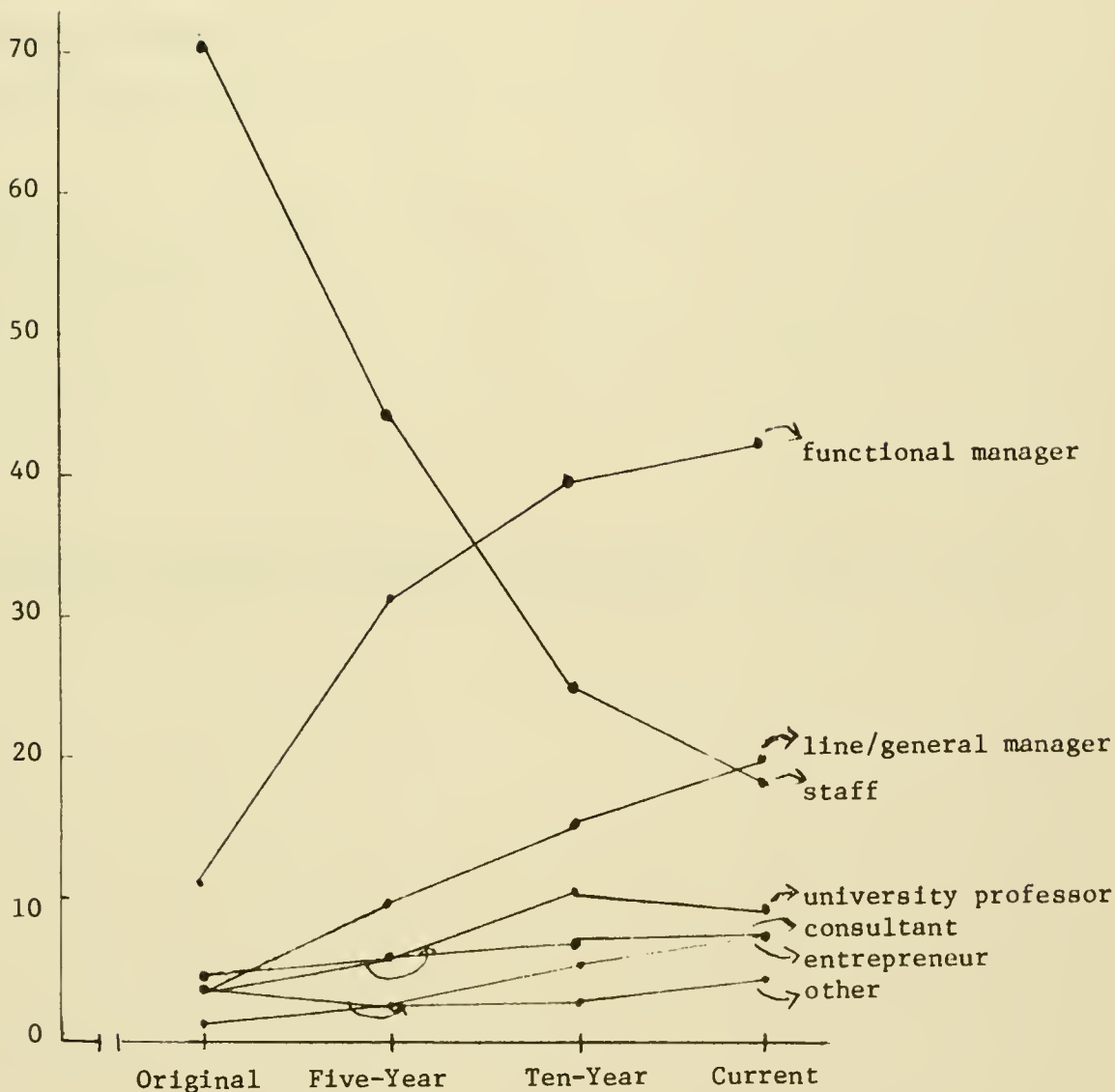
career patterns, followed, in order of decreasing size of group, by line/general managers and staff, entrepreneur, university professor, other, and consultant career patterns.

Initial insight into whether the career patterns differ with respect to the threshold, confirmation, and stabilization stages can be obtained by reviewing the jobs held originally, five years after beginning work, ten years after beginning work, and currently (see Figure 2 and Table 3). The career patterns can be divided into three groups: 1) those with an increasing percentage holding the job over time--entrepreneur, line/general manager, functional manager; 2) those with a relatively constant percentage holding it over time--consultant, university professor, other; 3) those with a decreasing percentage holding it over time--staff.

These different trends suggest that differences exist between career patterns in the job sequences, and, therefore, most likely in the sequencing and timing of congruent and non-congruent jobs. The majority of alumni (70%) began in staff jobs; most of these subsequently held jobs other than staff ones, since only 17% of the alumni currently hold a staff job. In marked contrast is the increase in percentage holding line/general manager and functional manager jobs, especially between the original and five-year time-marks, and between the five-year and current time-marks.

Comparing the percentage holding the various jobs at each time-mark

Figure 2
Description of Jobs Over Time*



* Only respondents who reported their jobs at each of the four time-marks are included in this analysis (N=249).

Table 3
 Description of Jobs at Original, Five-Year,
 Ten-Year, and Current Time-Marks*

Job	Percentage Holding Job at Each Time-Mark			
	Original	Five-Year	Ten-Year	Current
Entrepreneur	1%	2	5	7
Line/General Manager	4	10	15	19
Functional Manager	11	31	39	41
Staff	70	44	23	17
Consultant	5	6	7	7
University Professor	4	6	9	8
Other	4	2	2	3

* Only alumni who reported their jobs at the original, five-year, ten-year, and current time-marks are included in the analysis.

(reported in Table 3) to the percentage in the career pattern (reported in Table 2) further illustrates these differences. For example, a smaller percentage of alumni than has a line/general manager career pattern held line/general manager jobs originally, whereas a larger percentage than has a staff career pattern held staff jobs originally. We might anticipate, according to these data, that line/general managers would first have a job congruent with their career pattern later than would the staff group. Similar comparisons can be made for the other jobs and career patterns.

Threshold Stage: "First Job" to "First Job Congruent with Career Pattern"

The threshold stage is conceptually defined as the time between the "first job" and the "first job congruent with the career pattern." To identify the length of this stage, we ask at what time-mark--original, five-year, ten-year, current, or other--do we find the numerically largest percentage first holding a job congruent with the career pattern. Table 4 presents these data, first citing the career pattern, then the number with that pattern, then the percentage who held their first congruent job at each time-mark. For example, referring to the first line of Table 4, of the 25 alumni in the entrepreneur career pattern, 4% first held an entrepreneurial job (a job congruent with the career pattern) at the original time-mark, 16% at the five-year mark, 28% at the ten-year mark, 24% at the current mark, and 28% at a time other than one of these four. In other words, the

Table 4
 Percentage Holding First Job Congruent with
 Career Pattern at Different Times

Career Pattern	Number in Career Pattern	Percentage with First Congruent Job at Time-Mark				
		Original	Five-Year	Ten-Year	Current	Other
Entrepreneur	25	4%	16	28	24	28
Line/General Manager*	47	13	19	34	23	11
Functional Manager*	99	11	38	36	13	2
Staff*	38	87	8	5	-	-
Consultant	7	43	29	29	-	-
University Professor	24	42	19	31	-	8
Other	13	31	8	46	8	8

*The percentages differ for those in two of these career patterns who are also classified as company men as opposed to those not so classified.

Line/General Manager--						
Company Man	12	8	25	25	33	9
Non-Company Man	35	14	17	37	20	12
Functional Manager--						
Company Man	39	8	39	36	15	2
Non-Company Man	60	13	38	35	12	2
Staff--						
Company Man	19	95	5	-	-	-
Non-Company Man	19	87	8	5	-	-

For the line/general manager career pattern, the company men seem to lack a threshold stage, whereas the non-company men have a threshold stage approximately ten years in length. For the functional manager career pattern, both company men and non-company men have a threshold stage of similar length--between five and ten years. The staff company men have a slightly longer threshold stage than the staff non-company men.

entrepreneur career pattern is entered at many different times, suggesting two possible interpretations: 1) no threshold stage exists for this career pattern group, although it may exist for individuals within the group, or 2) such a stage exists, but is longer than ten years; (the coding of jobs after ten years, in addition to the current job, might allow a determination of the exact length of the stage).

Next, reviewing the data about line/general managers, we note that the largest percentage (34%) first held a congruent job at the ten-year time-mark, suggesting ten years as the length of the threshold stage for this career pattern. Over 50% of the line managers held a congruent job by that time.

Continuing the analysis, for the functional managers we see that an almost equal percentage of this group held their first congruent job at the five-year (38%) and at the ten-year (36%) time-marks; this can be interpreted as their having a threshold stage between five and ten years in length, or the career pattern may include two distinct subgroups whose threshold stage is five and ten years long, respectively.

The staff career has a much more abbreviated threshold stage, as reflected by the more than four-fifths of this group (87%) who first held a congruent job at the original time-mark. For the consultant career pattern, too, the largest number (43%) first held a congruent job originally, suggesting

a very brief threshold stage for this career pattern group as well. Similarly, for the university professor career pattern, 42%, the largest percentage, first held a congruent job originally, again reflecting a very brief threshold stage.

The other career pattern group seems to include two subgroups, one whose threshold stage terminates with the original time-mark, and the second with the ten-year time-mark. It is possible that these differences are attributable to differences in the internal careers of these subgroups, specifically different motivations for being in this career pattern.

The data in Table 4 can be used to rank order the career patterns in terms of the length of the threshold stage, as follows:

- 1) staff,
- 2) consultant,
- 3) university professor,
- 4) functional manager,
- 5) other (taking the larger percentage as the indicator),
- 6) line/general manager,
- 7) entrepreneur (if the threshold stage exists for this pattern).

This ordering seems to match that hypothesized in Table 1; however, whether such a stage exists for the entrepreneur career pattern must be determined.

Confirmation Stage: "First Congruent Job" to Time Beginning When "Only Congruent Jobs Are Held Then and Subsequently"

To measure the relative length of this stage, or its existence, we need to determine the percentage of alumni who held at least one non-congruent job after their first congruent job. Table 5 first lists the seven career patterns, then shows the number who held their first congruent job at the original, five-year, ten-year, or current time-marks,^{*} and then the percentage of these who held at least one non-congruent job thereafter. The external careers of these individuals, by definition, have a confirmation stage.

The first row shows that, of the alumni in the entrepreneur career pattern, 18 first held congruent positions at one of the four time-marks, and 6% or one of these held non-congruent jobs thereafter. Looking next at the line/general manager career pattern, we note that of the 42 alumni whose first congruent job was held at one of the four time-marks, 4% or two subsequently held at least one non-congruent job. The percentage holding non-congruent jobs after the first congruent job is slightly higher for the functional manager and staff career pattern groups, with 11% of 97 and 13% of 38, respectively, holding non-congruent jobs subsequent to the first congruent job. For the consultant career pattern, none of the 7 alumni whose first congruent job was held at one of the four time-marks subsequently held a

* This will not necessarily total the number in the career pattern since those who first held congruent positions at other times or for whom complete data are not available are excluded from the analysis.

Table 5

Number with First Congruent Job at Four Time-Marks*
and Percentage of These with at least One Non-Congruent Job Thereafter

Career Pattern	Number with First Congruent Job at Four Time-Marks	Number with One Non-Congruent Job Thereafter	Percentage with One Non-Congruent Job Thereafter
Entrepreneur	18	1	6%
Line/General Manager**	42	2	4
Functional Manager	97	10	11
Staff	38	4	13
Consultant	7	0	0
University Professor	24	4	17
Other	12	3	25

* The number first holding a congruent position at one of the four time-marks does not necessarily equal the number with that career pattern, either because some in the career pattern first held a congruent job at an "other" time, or their job history was incomplete for the four time-marks.

** All in the line/general manager career pattern who held non-congruent jobs were originally classified into that career pattern, not into the company man career pattern.

non-congruent job. The percentage of university professors and other career pattern members who held non-congruent jobs subsequent to their first congruent job was relatively high, with 17% or four of 24 professors and 25% or three of 12 in the other career pattern category.

We note that between 0% and 23% of those within a career pattern held at least one non-congruent job subsequent to their first congruent job. These data suggest that the career pattern groups differ in whether or not they exhibit a confirmation stage. Clearly, the careers of the consultant career pattern group, with 0% holding a non-congruent job subsequent to the first congruent job, do not exhibit a confirmation stage, whereas the careers of the university professor career pattern group, with 17% holding a non-congruent job subsequent to the first congruent job, seem to exhibit such a stage. However, the small sample size for each career pattern prevents us from drawing detailed conclusions about this career stage for each career pattern. Also, because only four time-marks are used in the analysis, allowing relatively little time for the holding of non-congruent jobs subsequent to the first congruent job, we can expect that a more precise analysis of complete job sequence, rather than of jobs at only four time-marks, would yield a higher percentage of the various career pattern groups having a confirmation stage. For selected career patterns these percentages may be further deflated if the first congruent job was most frequently held late in the career, such as for the line/general manager career pattern. For these alumni, who generally first held a congruent job no earlier than the

ten-year time-mark, the only subsequent non-congruent job could be held at the current time-mark; in contrast, for the staff career pattern, where most held the first congruent job originally, non-congruent jobs could be held at any of the three subsequent time-marks. These limitations suggest that the analysis of the data to determine whether a confirmation stage exists for each career pattern should be done with a larger sample or with longer careers, or a more precise analysis of complete job sequence should be made.

Stabilization Stage: Time Beginning When "Only Congruent Jobs Are Held Then and Subsequently" to "Goal-Job"

To delineate the stabilization stage for the various career pattern groups, we will determine its relative time of onset for the various patterns. By noting the time by which the majority (at least 50%) of the career pattern then and subsequently held only congruent jobs, the onset of the stabilization stage will be identified. Table 6 first lists the seven career patterns, followed by the number of alumni with that career pattern. The next section of the table shows, for each time-mark, the percentage of alumni in each career pattern who by that time held only jobs congruent with their career pattern then and subsequently.* The last section, or right-most column, cites the percentage whose career has not yet stabilized since they do not hold only congruent jobs beginning with any of the four specified time-marks.

* Thus, within a row, the percentages are cumulative.

Table 6
 Percentage Holding Congruent Jobs By and
 Subsequent to Various Times

Career Pattern	Number with Career Pattern	Percentage Holding Only Congruent Jobs By That Time and Subsequently				Percentage with No Sequence of Only Congruent Jobs
		Original	Five-Year	Ten-Year	Current	
Entrepreneur	25	4%	16	44	68	32
Line/General Manager	47	9	28	62	88	12
Functional Manager	99	9	41	74	90	10
Staff	37	76	84	89	89	11
Consultant	7	43	72	100	100	0
University Professor	26	31	50	77	77	23
Other	13	8	23	61	69	31

Thus, the data presented in the first row state that of the 25 alumni with an entrepreneur career pattern, 4% held only congruent jobs--entrepreneurial jobs--then and subsequently by the original time-mark, 16% by the five-year time-mark, 44% by the ten-year time-mark, and 68% by the current time-mark; 32% have no sequence of congruent jobs.

The onset of the stabilization stage for the entrepreneur career pattern, therefore, can be placed at the current time-mark; longer job histories must be analyzed if the time of onset of the stabilization stage for the entrepreneur career pattern is to be more precisely specified. Looking next at the line/general manager career pattern shows that the majority (62%) held only congruent jobs by the ten-year time-mark, suggesting that time as the onset of the stabilization stage. Of the functional manager career pattern group, the majority (74%) also held only congruent jobs by the ten-year mark, placing the onset of the stabilization stage at that time, as well. The majority of the staff career pattern (76%) held jobs congruent with their career pattern beginning with the original job, suggesting the onset of the stabilization stage at that time. The majority of those with consultant career patterns (72%) and with university career patterns (50%) held only congruent jobs by the five-year time-mark; the onset of the stabilization stage for these two career patterns, then, is at the five-year time-mark. The onset of the stabilization stage for the other career pattern is placed at the ten-year time-mark; by that time the majority in the career pattern (61%) held only congruent jobs.

Using these data, we can rank order the time of the onset of the stabilization stage from earliest to latest:

- 1) staff,
- 2) consultant,
- 3) university professor,
- 4) functional manager,
- 5) line/general manager,
- 6) other,
- 7) entrepreneur.

In general, this ordering follows that hypothesized in Table 1, with the exceptions of the relatively late onset of the stabilization stage for the functional manager and other career patterns.

Conclusions

This paper has attempted to present a way of analyzing the external careers of graduates of a school of management. First, we have defined career patterns for the alumni sample. Then, we have shown that, by looking at the jobs held at particular times in the career, and determining whether they are congruent or not congruent with the career patterns of the alumni, we can talk about stages--threshold, confirmation, and stabilization--of a career for individuals and career pattern groups. Ultimately, by matching this analysis of the external career to analyses of the internal careers of the alumni we can better understand their motivations and needs at various

stages of their career. Such an understanding would allow improvement of formal and on-the-job education and training programs to better match the needs of the alumni. Since this paper provides only preliminary evidence of the phasing and content of these stages, future research which more clearly delimits their length and the characteristics of the internal career at each stage is necessary. Also, validation of these stages for other samples is essential. Additional research might also be directed toward explicating the specific applications of the concepts developed in this paper for management policy formation, particularly career counseling and development programs.

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SLOAN SCHOOL ALUMNI QUESTIONNAIRE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Last _____ First _____ Middle _____
 Address # _____ Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Citizenship _____ Age _____ Sex _____ Marital Status _____ # of Children _____
 Business Address _____

EDUCATION

Undergraduate School: _____ Field of Study _____ Degree _____ Year _____
 Area of Concentration _____
 Ph.D. 19 ____ Area of Concentration _____
 Additional Education: Please specify schools, areas, degree (if any), years

PRESENT JOB

Briefly describe your major functions _____

 Location of headquarters _____ Total # of employees in organization _____
 Annual yearly professional income (include profit sharing, fees, etc.) _____
 Spouse's occupation _____ Spouse's working income _____

OCCUPATIONAL HISTORY

Beginning with your present job, for each of the major jobs you have held, list organization, job title, dates, starting and final salaries; please include your professional experience prior to your admission to Sloan School, but not military service; if any military service, give dates: _____

<u>Employing Organization</u>	<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Dates</u> (begin--end)	<u>Salaries</u> (begin--end)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
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Continue on reverse side for additional entries

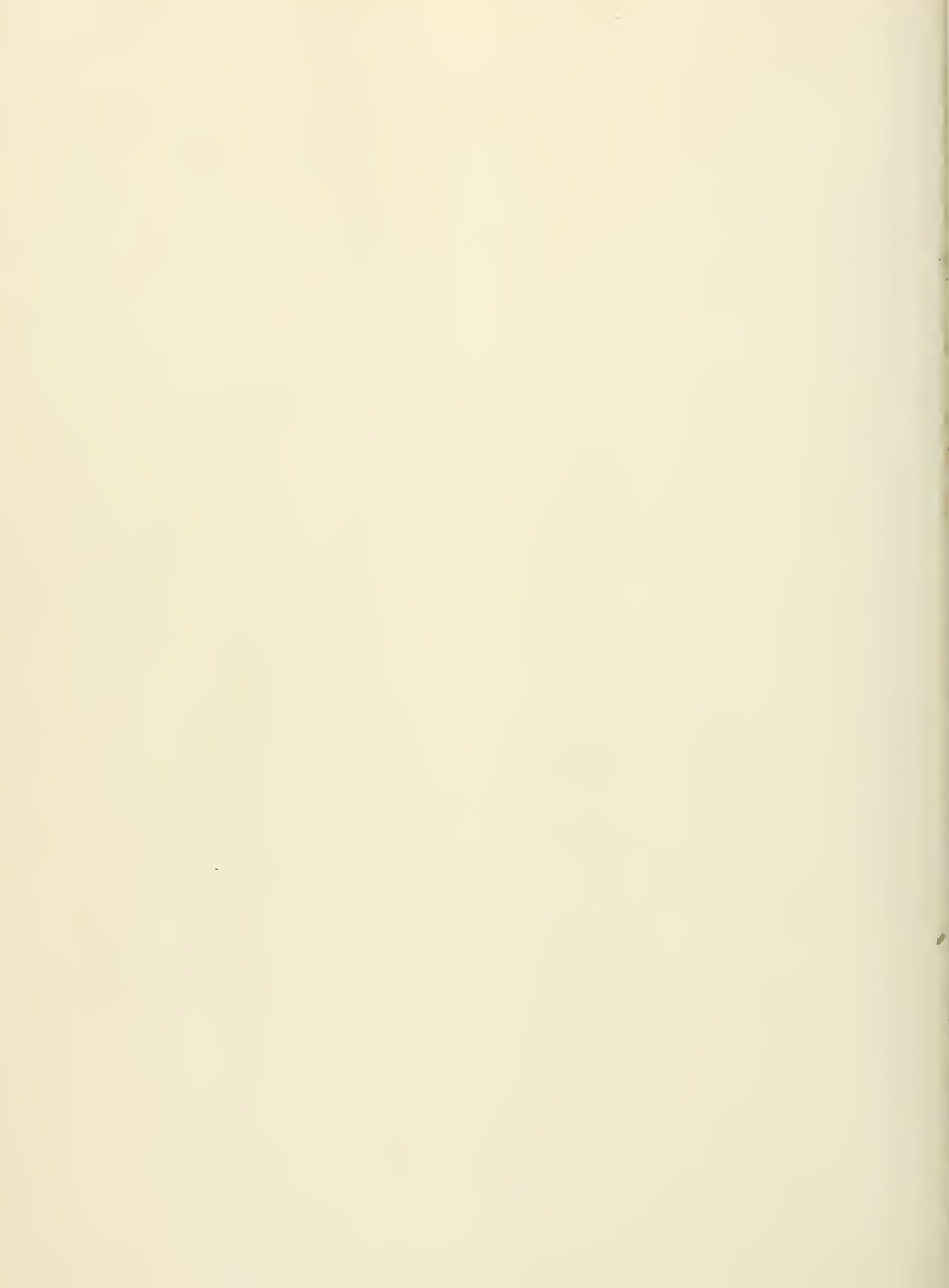
What parts of your Sloan School education did you find most and least valuable (use reverse side if necessary)

What changes would you now recommend in the program you took at the Sloan School _____

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BOSTON, MASS.

Professor Edgar H. Schein
Alfred P. Sloan School of Management
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Room E52-583
50 Memorial Drive
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Additional comments:



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FEB 26 79		
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- JUN 18 79		
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MAY 6 81		
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