

CAREER ANCHORS

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

THIRD EDITION

Edgar H. Schein

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Published by Pfeiffer
An Imprint of Wiley
989 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-1741
www.pfeiffer.com

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ISBN-10: 0-7879-7759-4
ISBN-13: 978-0-7879-7759-7

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Printed in the United States of America
Printing 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



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THE PURPOSE OF THIS WORKBOOK is to give you information about career development, to provide you with a process that will enable you to assess more fully your career anchor, and to provide you with a process for analyzing your current job situation as well as possible future career options. To improve the career development process, you must understand fully how careers develop, what role career anchors play in that development, and how career anchors relate to job characteristics.

The *Career Anchors Self-Assessment* that you completed to give yourself an initial picture of your career orientations should now be supplemented by exploring more fully how career anchors develop, how different anchors function, and how they relate to job situations. To gain more insight into your own situation, this workbook provides you with instructions to do a personal career history, either by yourself in written form or, preferably, with the help of another person who would interview you and provide some feedback. (See pages 28–33.)

The second exercise, called Job/Role Analysis and Planning (pages 39–43), will help you to analyze your present career and job situation, provide some guidance on how to think about the future world of work, help you to assess your strengths and weaknesses in terms of future job requirements, and will enable you to determine what you need to do next for your own personal development.



The “Internal Career” and Career Anchors

The word “career” is used in many different ways and has many connotations. Sometimes “having a career” is used to apply only to someone who has a profession or whose occupational life is well structured and involves steady advancement. But if we think of a career as being what *any* individual would regard as the steps and phases of his or her occupation, then everyone has a career, and that career is “anchored” by the person’s self-image of his or her competencies, motives, and values.

One might consider this to be the “internal career,” to distinguish it from what others might view that person’s work life to be. Everyone has some kind of picture of his or her work life and role in that life. To distinguish the “internal career” from other uses of the word, we will use “external career” to refer to the actual steps that are required by an occupation or an organization to progress through that occupation. A physician must complete medical school, internship, residency, specialty board examinations, and so on. In some organizations, a general manager has to go through several business functions, have experience in supervising people, take on a functional management job, rotate through the international division, and serve on the corporate staff before being given a true generalist job as a division general manager. Most external careers involve a period of training or apprenticeship during which the person both learns and is tested to determine whether he or she has the skills and personal characteristics to do the job. Some organizations talk of career paths, which define the necessary or at least desirable steps for the career occupant to take along the way to some goal job. The clearest example of that kind of formal path is probably the military, with its well-defined ranks and clear rules for how one goes from one rank to another.

At the other extreme is what more and more people are calling a “boundaryless” career or a “protean” career that is more free-form, has to be managed more by the career occupant, and may involve movements across many employers (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 2002). Whereas organizations used to promise “employment security,” employers are increasingly promising nothing at all or only “*employability*



The Eight Career Anchor Categories

THE EIGHT CAREER ANCHOR CATEGORIES that are reviewed below were originally discovered in longitudinal research and subsequently confirmed in a variety of studies of different occupations and in different countries (Schein, 1971, 1975, 1977, 1978):

- Technical/Functional Competence (TF)
- General Managerial Competence (GM)
- Autonomy/Independence (AU)
- Security/Stability (SE)
- Entrepreneurial Creativity (EC)
- Service/Dedication to a Cause (SV)
- Pure Challenge (CH)
- Lifestyle (LS)

They were briefly reviewed in the Self-Assessment booklet and are explored more fully here.

Several other categories of career concerns have been proposed, but none have shown up consistently as “anchors,” as the one thing the person would not give up. For example, “variety,” “status or identity,” and “power” have been proposed as additional anchors but have not shown up consistently in research, hence are not included in the orientation questionnaire. When you look at these categories, you will realize that every person is “concerned” to some degree with each of these issues. And most occupations make it possible to fulfill needs in several of those areas. But they are probably not equally important to you, so it is important to know their relative strength in you, and what you would not give up if forced to make a choice.

To understand this concept fully and to determine your own anchor, you need to look at each of the anchors in greater detail and to understand how people with different anchors differ from one another. The following descriptions of the eight anchors are intended to provide you with this information. Each description begins



Identifying Career Anchors Through Career History Analysis

AN ANALYSIS OF YOUR PAST EDUCATIONAL and occupational decisions is ultimately the most reliable way to determine your career anchor. The *Career Anchors Self-Assessment* gives you a good picture of some of the things you care about, but your past decisions and the reasons for those decisions are an even deeper basis for self-insight. You can do the history yourself by writing out your answers to the questions on pages 28 through 33, but it often works better to have a partner interview you and help you decipher your own pattern of choices.

Choose a partner with whom you will feel free to share the events of your career so far, as well as your future aspirations. For this reason, it is best to avoid a superior or subordinate or a peer with whom you may be in competition. Your partner does not have to be the same age you are or be in the same line of work. Many people report that a spouse or a close friend makes a good partner.

The partner does not have to have any training as an interviewer; all of the questions to be asked are provided in this booklet. All that is needed is some interest and willingness to discuss your career with you.

The interview should take about one hour. Give this workbook to your partner so that he or she can take notes on the interview pages before returning it to you. For each decision, try to figure out *why* you made that decision. The anchor that will reveal itself gradually will show up best in the pattern of answers to the “why’s.” Chances are that, even if you have moved many times, there will be a pattern to the reasons why you moved. The interview will reveal that pattern.



Job/Role Analysis

THE PRIMARY FOCUS UP TO NOW has been on your own career history and the self-insights you have had about your competencies, your career motives, and the values that you hold strongly. The concept of career anchor captures these insights. But what are you to do next in a world in which more and more you are expected to take charge of your own career? To make intelligent plans, you need a vehicle to analyze present and future job situations, a process to enable you to decide whether to stay where you are, whether to try to move to a different organization in a different locale, and what forces are out there in the environment that you need to take account of.

In its simplest form, job/role analysis is a process of identifying the major stakeholders of a given job to create for yourself a “role map” that enables you to assess how well your job and your anchor fit with each other. If the fit is poor and you decide you need some career development moves, the job/role planning process enables you to create role maps of potential future jobs, along with some analysis of how the expectations of stakeholders will change as you look ahead and a self-assessment of the competencies you may need in those future jobs.

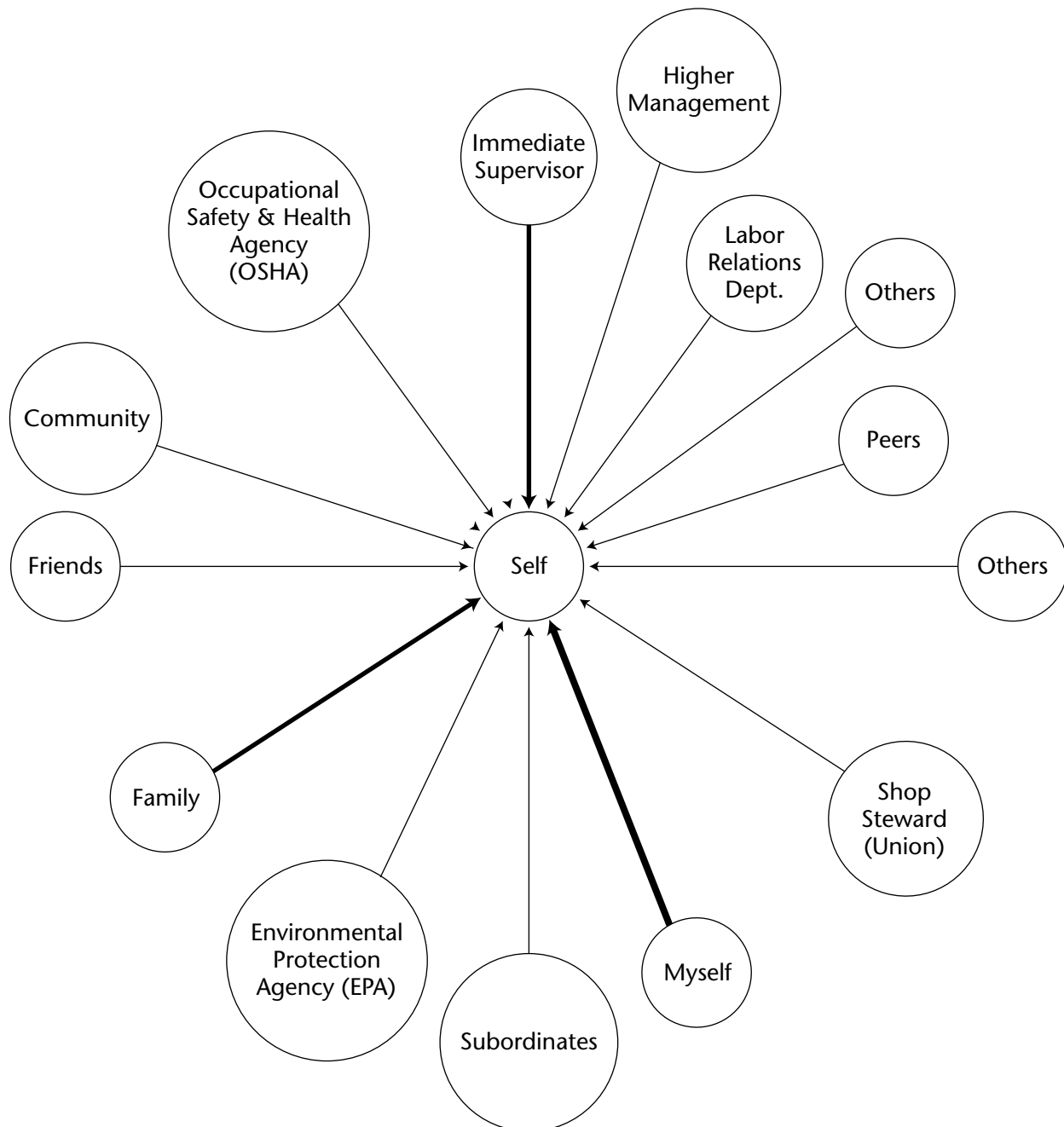
Analyzing Your Present Job

The analysis of your present job can be done by yourself by identifying the stakeholders and role senders of your present job. You will create a picture of your “role network,” which is all of the people who have some expectations of you. The key stakeholders are those members of the role network whose own work will be severely affected if you do not meet their expectations.

Step 1. Create a Role Map

A job is a set of activities that relate you to various other people who have expectations of you. The first step in this job/role analysis is to identify who those others are and to create a visual overview of the network of people who are connected to you. This picture is your “Role Map” (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Sample Role Map





Job/Role Planning for Future Career Options

YOU MAY HAVE IN MIND SOME POSSIBLE future kinds of jobs. In order to determine whether such jobs might suit you and fit with your career anchor, you need to create role maps for such jobs. You may not have enough information to do this by yourself, so you must locate two or more people who are in those jobs or closely related jobs.

In considering future jobs, it is preferable to gather together two or three colleagues, peers, subordinates, or even supervisors, all of whom would be familiar with that future job.

Step 1: Use the blank page following these instructions and put the job in the center.

Step 2: With the help of your colleagues, draw a role map to identify the key stakeholders of that job.

Step 3: Analyze the expectations of the key stakeholders and, in particular, speculate on how those expectations will change as you look ahead, given some of the trends identified above.

Step 4: Rate yourself on the job competencies shown on pages 53–56.

Step 5: Determine whether there is a good fit between the way you analyzed the job, the competencies needed in that job, your self-rating on those competencies (see next section), and your career anchor.

Future Job Role Map



Self-Assessment of Future Job/Role Requirements

A FUTURE JOB MAY BE COMPATIBLE WITH YOUR CAREER ANCHOR, yet may require of you certain motives, competencies, and values that you lack, indicating developmental needs that you should address in the immediate future. To help you analyze yourself in that regard, below is a list of fifty such items on which you can rate yourself. You can then think about dimensions that a future job would require and determine to what degree you qualify on that dimension.

Instructions: Rate yourself on each of the items below. A “1” means you do not possess that motive, competence, or value to any degree, while a “4” means you possess it to a great degree. For each item, provide two ratings. Put a *circle* around the number that represents where you think you are now. Put a *cross* through the number where you think you ought to be, given your job/role planning analysis. Try to be honest with yourself because this is not a test but a way of identifying your own strengths and developmental needs.

A. Motives and Values

	Low		High	
1. My desire to get a job done, my need for accomplishment	1	2	3	4
2. My commitment to my organization and its mission	1	2	3	4
3. My career aspirations and ambitions	1	2	3	4
4. My degree of involvement with my career	1	2	3	4
5. My desire for high levels of responsibility	1	2	3	4
6. My desire to take risks	1	2	3	4
7. My desire to make tough decisions	1	2	3	4
8. My desire to work with and through people	1	2	3	4



Developmental Implications and Next Steps

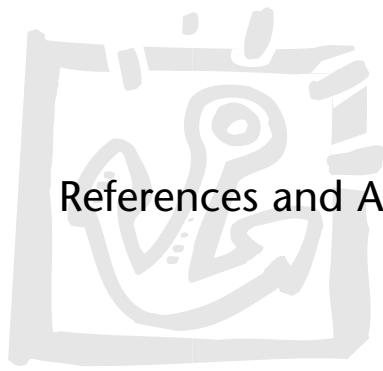
FIRST LOOK AT THOSE ITEMS FROM THE SELF-ASSESSMENT you just took where there is the greatest discrepancy between your present rating and where you feel you should be. For each area for which you feel there is a significant discrepancy, figure out a development plan for yourself or figure out how to restructure your job so that your present capacity will be sufficient to do the job.

If you conclude that you must restructure your job, think that through in terms of renegotiating with the requisite stakeholders and ensure that the new expectations are realistic, both from your point of view and their points of view.

List below the various developmental or restructuring actions you plan to take and keep this list as a point of reference to be reviewed at various times.

Item Number: _____

Developmental Plan:



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Notes