



19MEE312

PRINCIPLES

OF

MANAGEMENT



UNIT III ORGANISING

CAREER PLANNING IN AN ORGANIZATION

Career planning is the process by which one selects career goals and the path to these goals. The major focus of career planning is on assisting the employees achieve a better match between personal goals and the opportunities that are realistically available in the organization. Career programmers should not concentrate only on career growth opportunities. Practically speaking, there may not be enough high level positions to make upward mobility a reality for a large number of employees. Hence, career-planning efforts need to pin-point and highlight those areas that offer psychological success instead of vertical growth.

Career planning is not an event or end in itself, but a continuous process of developing human resources for achieving optimum results. It must, however, be noted that individual and organizational careers are not separate and distinct. A person who is not able to translate his career plan into action within the organization may probably quit the job, if he has a choice. Organizations, therefore, should help employees in career planning so that both can satisfy each other's needs

Need for Career Planning

Every employee has a desire to grow and scale new heights in his workplace continuously. If there are enough opportunities, he can pursue his career goals and exploit his potential fully. He feels highly motivated when the organization shows him a clear path as to how he can meet his personal ambitions while trying to realize corporate goals.



Unfortunately, as pointed out by John Leach, organizations do not pay adequate attention to this aspect in actual practice for a variety of reasons. The demands of employees are not matched with organizational needs; no effort is made to show how the employees can grow within certain limits, what happens to an employee five years down the line if he does well, whether the organization is trying to offer mere jobs or long-lasting careers, etc. When recognition does not come in time for meritorious performance and a certain amount of confusion prevails in the minds of employees whether they are 'in' with a chance to grow or not, they look for greener pastures outside. Key executives leave in frustration and the organization suffers badly when turnover figures rise. Any recruitment effort made in panic to fill the vacancies is not going to be effective. So, the absence of a career plan is going to make a big difference to both the employees and the organization. Employees do not get right breaks at a right time; their morale will be low and they are always on their toes trying to find escape routes.

Organizations are not going to benefit from high employee turnover. New employees mean additional selection and training costs. Bridging the gaps through short-term replacements is not going to pay in terms of productivity. Organizations, therefore, try to put their career plans in place and educate employees about the opportunities that exist internally for talented people. Without such a progressive outlook, organizations cannot prosper.



Career planning seeks to meet the following objectives:

- i. Attract and retain talent by offering careers, not jobs.
- ii. Use human resources effectively and achieve greater productivity.
- iii. Reduce employee turnover.
- iv. Improve employee morale and motivation.
- v. Meet the immediate and future human resource needs of the organization on a timely basis

Career Planning Process

The career planning process involves the following steps:

i. Identifying individual needs and aspirations:

Most individuals do not have a clear cut idea about their career aspirations, anchors and goals. The human resource professionals must, therefore, help an employee by providing as much information as possible showing what kind of work would suit the employee most, taking his skills, experience, and aptitude into account. Such assistance is extended through workshops/seminars while the employees are subjected to psychological testing, simulation exercises, etc. The basic purpose of such an exercise is to help an employee form a clear view about what he should do to build his career within the company. Workshops and seminars increase employee interest by showing the value of career planning. They help employees set career goals, identify career paths and uncover specific career development activities (discussed later). These individual efforts may be supplemented by printed or taped information. To assist employees in a better way, organizations construct a data bank consisting of information on the career histories, skill evaluations and career preferences of its employees (known as skill or talent inventory).



ii. Analyzing career opportunities:

Once career needs and aspirations of employees are known, the organization has to provide career paths for each position. Career paths show career progression possibilities clearly. They indicate the various positions that one could hold over a period of time, if one is able to perform well. Career paths change over time, of course, in tune with employee's needs and organizational requirements. While outlining career paths, the claims of experienced persons lacking professional degrees and that of young recruits with excellent degrees but without experience need to be balanced properly.

iii. Aligning needs and opportunities:

After employees have identified their needs and have realized the existence of career opportunities the remaining problem is one of alignment. This process consists of two steps: first, identify the potential of employees and then undertake career development programmes (discussed later on elaborately) with a view to align employee needs and organizational opportunities. Through performance appraisal, the potential of employees can be assessed to some extent. Such an appraisal would help reveal employees who need further training, employees who can take up added responsibilities, etc. After identifying the potential of employees certain developmental techniques such as special assignments, planned position rotation, supervisory coaching, job enrichment, understudy programs can be undertaken to update employee knowledge and skills.

iv. Action plans and periodic review:

The matching process would uncover gaps. These need to be bridged through individual career development efforts and organization supported efforts from time to time. After initiating these steps, it is necessary to review the whole thing every now and then. This will help the employee know in which direction he is moving, what changes are likely to take place, what kind of skills are needed to face new and emerging organizational challenges. From an organizational standpoint also, it is necessary to find out how employees are doing, what are their goals and aspirations, whether the career paths are in tune with individual needs and serve the overall corporate objectives, etc.