

# CAREER STAGES

Exploration

Establishment

Mid-Career

Late-Career

Decline



# Career Stages

- Popular approach for analyzing and discussing careers
- Five stage model
- Generalize able to most people during their adult years
- Regardless of the type of work they do
  - Exploration
  - Establishment
  - Mid-Career
  - Late Career
  - Decline

# Five Stages of a Career

- Exploration
- Establishment
- Mid-Career
- Late Career
- Decline

# Exploration

- The exploration stage is the **pre-employment stage**, wherein the individuals are in their **mid-twenties** and enter from their college life to the work environment. The individuals narrow down their work preferences on the basis of the directions shown by their parents, friends, family, teachers.

# Exploration

- Career choices made prior to entering work force
- Career choices, directions, preferences influenced by
  - Parents
  - Relatives
  - Teachers
  - Friends
  - Television, books and films
- Perceptions of what careers are available also influenced by
  - Parents careers and their aspirations for their children
  - Parents financial resources

# Establishment

- At this stage, an individual actually experiences the **work culture** in his first job. Here, all the expectations and fantasies come to an end, and one has to face the reality of life. This stage covers about **10 years from the 25 years of age.**

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# Establishment

- Begins with search for work and includes
  - Getting first job
  - Being accepted by peers
  - Learning the job
  - Gaining first tangible evidence of success or failure in real world
- Time marked by uncertainties and anxieties
- Individuals yet to reach peak productivity
- Individuals seldom given work assignments that carry high importance, power or status
- Time also marked by
  - mistakes
  - Learning from mistakes
  - Gradual assumption of increased responsibility

# Mid-Career

- This stage covers the **age period of 35 to 45 years**. At this stage, the individual is no longer considered to be a fresher and his mistakes are taken seriously by the senior.
- At this stage, an individual has to maintain a **balance** between his career and his personal life i.e. spouse and children.

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# Mid-Career

- First severe career dilemmas start resulting in individual
  - Continuing their prior improvements
  - Leveling off
  - Begin to deteriorate
- First dilemma: No longer seen as learner
- Mistakes carry greater penalties
- Expected to move beyond apprenticeship to journeyman status
- Individuals making successful transitions get greater responsibilities and rewards
- For others time for
  - Reassessment
  - Job changes
  - Adjustments of priorities
  - Pursuit of alternative life styles

# Mid-Career

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# Late Career

- At this stage, an individual reaches to a particular position in the organization hierarchy, on the basis of his career graph which is characterized by growth or stagnation

# Late Career

- Relax, enjoy and play part of elder statesman
- Rest on ones laurels and get respect of juniors
- Individuals no longer learning
- Individuals NOT expected to outdo performance of previous years
- Value of individual to organization lies in
  - Judgment built up over many years
  - Experience
  - Sharing and teaching others knowledge gained

# Late Career

- Looking forward to retirement and opportunities to do something different
- Decreased work motivation
- For those who stagnated or deteriorated in previous stage, realization that they will NOT have
  - Everlasting impact
  - Change the world as once desired
  - Adjustments of priorities
  - Pursuit of alternative life styles

# Decline

- Final stage of career
- Time for retirement after several decades of
  - continued achievements and
  - High levels of performance
- Difficult time for everyone
- Hard for those who had successes in earlier stages
- Individuals forced to
  - step out of limelight and
  - Give up major part of their identity
- For modest performers or whose performance have deteriorated over the years, this is a pleasant time
- Responsibilities are fewer and life less structured

## Exploration

- External dimension
  - Advice and example of relatives, teachers, friends
  - Successes and failures in school, sports and hobbies
  - Choice of educational path – school, college, major
- Internal dimension
  - Development of self image of what one might be, what sort of work would be fun
  - Self-assessment of own talents and limitations
  - Development of ambitions, goals, motives
  - Tentative choices and commitments

# Linking Career Dimension with Stages

## Establishment

- External dimension
  - Explicit search for a job
  - Acceptance of a job
  - Induction and orientation
  - Assignment to further training or first job
  - Acquiring visible job and organizational privileges
  - First job assignment, meeting boss and coworkers
  - Learning period, indoctrination
  - Full performance – doing the job
  - Leveling of, transfer, promotion
- Internal dimension
  - Development of self image of what one might be, what

# Linking Career Dimension with Stages

## Establishment

- Internal dimension
  - Shock of entering real world
  - Insecurity around new tasks of interviewing, applying, being tested, being turned down
  - Make a real choice: take a job or not; which job; first commitment
  - Expectation of being tested for first time under real conditions
  - Reality shock – what work is really like, doing the dirty work

# Linking Career Dimension with Stages

## Establishment

- Internal dimension
  - Forming a career strategy, how to make it – working hard, finding mentors, conforming to organization, making a contribution
  - Feeling of success or failure
  - Decision to leave organization if things do not look positive
  - Feeling of being fully accepted by the organization, having made it

## Mid-Career

- External dimension
  - Assignment of crucial and important work of the organization
  - Entering period of maximum productivity
  - Becoming teacher/mentor than learner
  - Explicit sign from boss and co-workers that one's progress has plateaued

## Mid-Career

- Internal dimension
  - Period of settling in or new ambitions based on self assessment
  - More feeling of security, relaxation, but danger of leveling off and stagnation
  - Threat from younger, better trained, more energetic, and ambitious persons
  - Possible thoughts of new pastures and new challenges
  - Working through mid-life crisis toward greater acceptance of oneself and others

## Late Career

- External dimension
  - Job assignments drawing primarily on maturity of judgment
  - More jobs involving teaching others
- Internal dimension
  - Psychological preparation for retirement
  - Deceleration in momentum
  - Finding new sources of self-improvement off the job

# Linking Career Dimension with Stages

## Decline

- External dimension
  - Formal preparation for retirement
  - Retirement rituals
- Internal dimension
  - Learning to accept a reduced role or less responsibility
  - Learning to live a less-structured life
  - New accommodations to family and community

