

**A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF  
A CAREER PLANNING SYSTEM WITHIN AN  
ORGANIZATION WITH A  
DELAYERED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

by

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Submitted in fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree

**DOCTOR COMMERCII  
(HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT)**

in the

**FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**

**PRETORIA**

**JANUARY 2000**



*"Know what work you want to do and go after it.  
The young man who gets ahead must decide for himself  
what he wishes to do.*

*From his own tastes, his own enthusiasm,  
he must get the motive and the inspiration  
which are to start him on his way to a successful life."*

**Alexander Graham Bell**

(From Dale Carnegie's Scrapbook, 1959)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of people from different resorts. The researcher wants to specifically thank the following people and institutions for their assistance and support:

- ◆ ***My Creator***, who gave me enormous opportunities in my life;
- ◆ ***Prof. Schalk Theron***, my promotor, for all his professional advice and support through the years;
- ◆ ***Mr. Anton Landman***, my husband, for all his patience and understanding;
- ◆ ***Miss Marinda Muller***, my friend, for all her assistance with the proof reading, technical purveyance and general support;
- ◆ ***My parents***, for all the moral support and interest;
- ◆ ***Mrs. Mariëtte Snyman***, for the hours of proofreading and language purveyance;
- ◆ ***Mrs. Elize du Preez***, for her assistance in transcribing the interviews;
- ◆ ***Mr. Derick de Jongh en Mr. Cornél Schoombee***, for all the hours of proofreading and support;
- ◆ ***Saambou Bank Limited***, for providing the necessary sample, information and much needed support;
- ◆ ***All my colleagues*** at Saambou Bank, who was taken up in the sample, for their unselfish, eager assistance, interest and support.

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## SUMMARY

### A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF A CAREER PLANNING SYSTEM WITHIN AN ORGANIZATION WITH A DELAYERED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

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In terms of career and succession planning within a delayed (flat) structure, it is important to have something in place for employees. They need to know where they are going and how they will get there. *Opportunity Creation* is a vehicle that can provide this. The implementation thereof, however, is critical. It requires changes in attitudes and paradigms, since it ignores the traditional roles and processes within career and succession planning.

The impact that delayed structures have on traditional career and succession planning is extreme. The organization expects employees (with their traditional career expectations) to take full responsibility for their careers. Self-management and self-development are seen as the crux of it all.

The organization now becomes merely a creator and provider of opportunities for progress and/or development, but what is finally done with these opportunities is entirely the individual's responsibility. Skills and competence direct individuals' careers and indicate their readiness (or lack of readiness) for progress. Horizontal progress, entailing greater responsibility or the acquisition of more skills, therefore occurs more often than vertical progress (promotion).

In terms of *Opportunity Creation* as a process that addresses these phenomena, every employee should learn to be prepared when opportunities arrive and to grab every opportunity and make the best of it. The individual indicates his/her career goal/vision, and the organization only provides the means to achieve that. If the employee is seen as fit or "ready" for his/her career goal/vision, he/she is added to a readiness pool from which candidates can be drawn when a vacancy in that position arises. Whilst in the pool, they are exposed to work-related problems and have to find solutions. They can also be utilized to stand in for other managers who are not there and so experience the everyday reality of their goal positions. For the organization this has the benefit that the right ("ready") people are appointed in the right positions.

The whole process is an enormous effort to assist employees in managing to maintain a career within the delayed structures of an organization, and it requires a change in the traditional mindset. Those who are prepared to take on the challenge and develop themselves and be ready when the bus comes by will be able to get on that bus and reach their end destination with a huge smile on their faces.

## SAMEVATTING

### 'n FENOMENOLOGIESE ANALISE VAN 'n LOOPBAANBEPLANNING-SISTEEM BINNE 'n ORGANISASIE MET 'n NIE-MEERVLAKKIGE STRUKTUUR

deur

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Dit is essensieël om iets in plek te hê ten opsigte van loopbaan- en opvolgbeplanning binne die nuwerwetse nie-meervlakkige (plat) strukture. Werknemers het 'n groot behoefte daaraan om te weet waarheen hulle oppad is en hoe hulle daar gaan uitkom. *Geleentheidskepping* is 'n voertuig wat gebruik kan word om hierin te voorsien. Die korrekte implementering daarvan is egter krities. Dit vereis 'n verandering in houding en paradigmas aangesien dit tradisionele rolle en prosesse binne loopbaan- en opvolgbeplanning ignoreer.

Die impak van nie-meervlakkige strukture op tradisionele loopbaan- en opvolgbeplanning is ekstreem. Die organisasie verwag van werknemers (met hul tradisionele loopbaanverwagtinge) om ten volle verantwoordelikheid vir hul loopbane te aanvaar. Selfbestuur en self-ontwikkeling word beskou as die kruks waarom alles draai.

Die organisasie word nou slegs 'n skepper en voorsiener van geleentheid vir vordering en ontwikkeling, maar wat met dié geleentheid gedoen word is totaal die individu se verantwoordelikheid. Vaardighede en bevoegdheid gee rigting aan hulle loopbane en dui hul gereedheid (al dan nie) vir vordering aan. Horisontale vordering in terme van meer

verantwoordelikhede of meer vaardighede wat aangeleer kan word, gebeur dus meer gereeld as vertikale vordering (bevordering).

Met *Geleentheidskepping* as 'n proses wat hierdie fenomeen aanspreek, sal elke werknemer moet leer om voorbereid te wees vir wanneer geleenthede hulle voordoen en om elke geleentheid aan te gryp en die beste daarvan te maak. Die individu dui aan wat sy/haar loopbaan-doelwit/visie is en die organisasie voorsien slegs die middelle om dit moontlik te kan bereik. As die werknemer as toegerus of "gereed" beskou word vir sy/haar loopbaan-doelwit/visie, word hy/sy by die gereedheidspoel gevoeg vanwaar kandidate geneem kan word vir wanneer vakatures in daardie posisies ontstaan. Terwyl hulle in die poel is word hulle blootgestel aan werkverwante probleme waarvoor oplossings gevind moet word. Hulle kan ook benut word om in te staan vir ander bestuurders wat afwesig is en sodoende ondervinding opdoen in die alledaagse lewe van hulle doelwit-posisie. Vir die organisasie bevoordeel dit in die sin dat die regte ("gereed") mense in die regte poste aangewend word.

Hierdie is 'n enorme poging om werknemers by te staan om steeds 'n loopbaan te hê binne die nie-meervlakkige strukture van 'n organisasie en dít vereis 'n verandering in 'n tradisionele verwysingsraamwerk. Vir diegene wat bereid is om die uitdaging te aanvaar en hulself te ontwikkel en gereed te wees vir wanneer die bus verby kom - hulle sal in staat wees om wel op daardie bus te klim en hul eindbestemming met reuse glimlagte op hulle gesigte te bereik.