



SDA Bocconi
School of Management

2012 Career Development Survey

Research study

prepared for the 2012 Career Development Roundtable

A research initiative co-sponsored by:

Optimis Human Capital Management

SDA Bocconi School of Management

Authors: Hathorn, Brusoni

Date: 27 November 2012



Table of contents

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.....	3
RESEARCH STUDY PARTICIPANTS.....	4
ORGANISATIONAL CHALLENGES	6
WHERE ORGANISATIONS SHOULD FOCUS.....	8
CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT	13
PERSONAL CHALLENGES	15
ADDITIONAL SUPPORT	17
CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE OUTLOOK	18
ANNEX A: ABOUT OPTIMIS	24
ANNEX B: ABOUT SDA BOCCONI SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT	25
ANNEX C: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE	26



Purpose of the study

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the **Career Development** challenges and priorities for International Organisations from the perspective of current and former participants in the Career Development Roundtable conferences. The individuals taking part in the survey have demonstrated a keen interest in the topic of career development and are in many cases instrumental in building the career development strategies and programmes of their institutions.

The importance of Career Development is increasingly recognised as a strategic driver for motivating staff and aligning skill development with organisational needs. It is also evident that the current economic climate, organisational constraints and the expectations of staff are posing new and complex challenges for the design and implementation of effective career development strategies by Human Resource functions for the organisations they serve.

Research shows that interesting and challenging work, the opportunity to learn and develop skills, and commitment to a higher purpose are important factors for staff motivation. Through career development practices organisations can achieve a competitive advantage in the attraction and retention of staff, cultivate a sustainable source of staff motivation and greatly enhance organisational performance.

To paraphrase the late Professor Sumatra Goshal, “future organisational performance will not result from traditional capital management any longer ... but from the management of human resources.”

Methodology

The study was conducted using the Optimis online survey platform over the period November 9th to November 16th. Analysis of the survey responses and preparation of the final research report was undertaken as a joint effort by Optimis and SDA Bocconi School of Management.

The research questionnaire (Annex C) was designed to capture the Career Development challenges and priorities for International Organisations from the perspective of Career Development Roundtable conference members, past and present. Ample opportunity was provided for commentary related to each of the main areas to enable a thematic analysis of the issues and encourage a healthy debate on the way forward.

High level report of consolidated findings

This report provides an overview of the consolidated findings and is available on the Optimis website www.optimis.ch and through the Career Development Roundtable. Demographic data was collected to facilitate comparisons among subgroups of participants and across organisation types, although only a limited number of these comparisons are reported in this paper. Should survey participants or other readers wish to delve deeper into the findings please contact Optimis directly.

We would like to offer a special thanks to the organising committee and support staff of the Career Development Roundtable making this research possible.

Organisations can
achieve a competitive
advantage through
career development
practices



Research study participants

Participants by industry

The survey attracted a total of 106 **respondents** across a wide range of International Organisations. As indicated by *Figure 1* below, the largest participant group participating was from the “Development” sector and the second largest group was represented by “Normative institutions,” followed by “Humanitarian-aid” and “International Financial Institutions.” The “Other” category is comprised of several types of international organisations including, for example, various institutions in the legal, secretariat and intergovernmental areas.

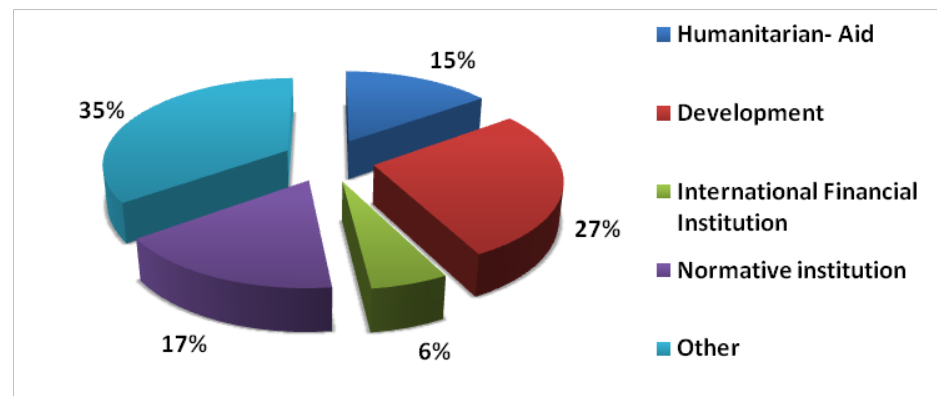


Figure 1: Participants by organisational type

Participants by position

Among survey participants, approximately 42% of the survey population were at the most senior levels – either Directors or Chiefs. An additional 47% are classified as professionals (21% as supervisor, 26% as individual specialist), followed by 8% identified as support staff.

Combining the three top participant levels with supervisory responsibility, we find that a full 63% of the survey population are dealing with the career development needs of staff reporting to them, in addition to their own career development needs.

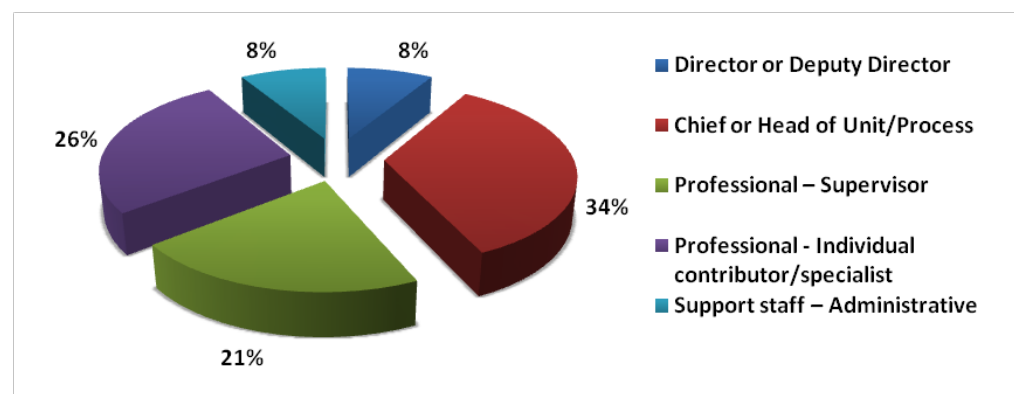


Figure 2: Participants by position

Participants by time spent in their current organization

In terms of tenure with current organisation, 44% have worked for their current employer for 5 years or less. The remaining 56% have more than 5 years service and would have had the opportunity to experience the evolution of career development processes and practices in their organisation over a significant timeframe.

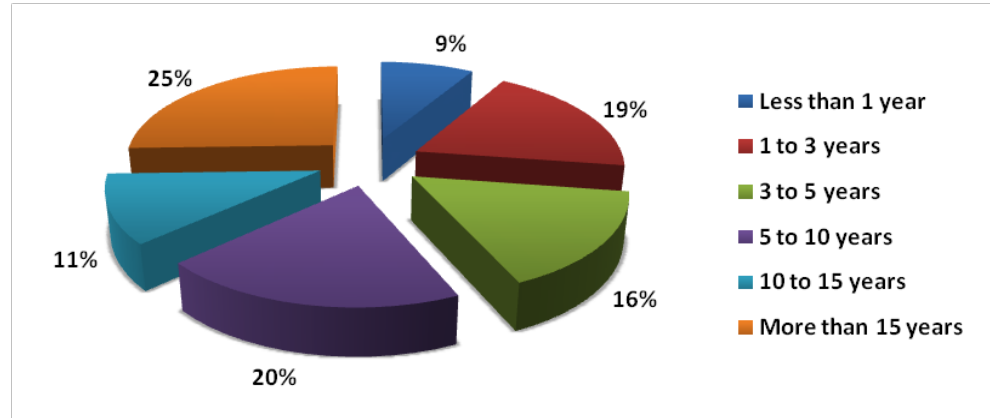


Figure 3: Participants by time spent in current organization

Over half of the survey respondents have greater than 5 years of service in their current organisation



Relating the time spent in the current organisation with the participants' position in the hierarchy, it is worth noting that 56% of the Director or Deputy Director professionals had been with their current organization less than 1 year, the highest proportion of low tenure compared to other positions. These individuals may bring valuable outside perspectives on career development to their new organisations, yet may lack a thorough understanding of the organisational context and challenges ahead of their new employer.

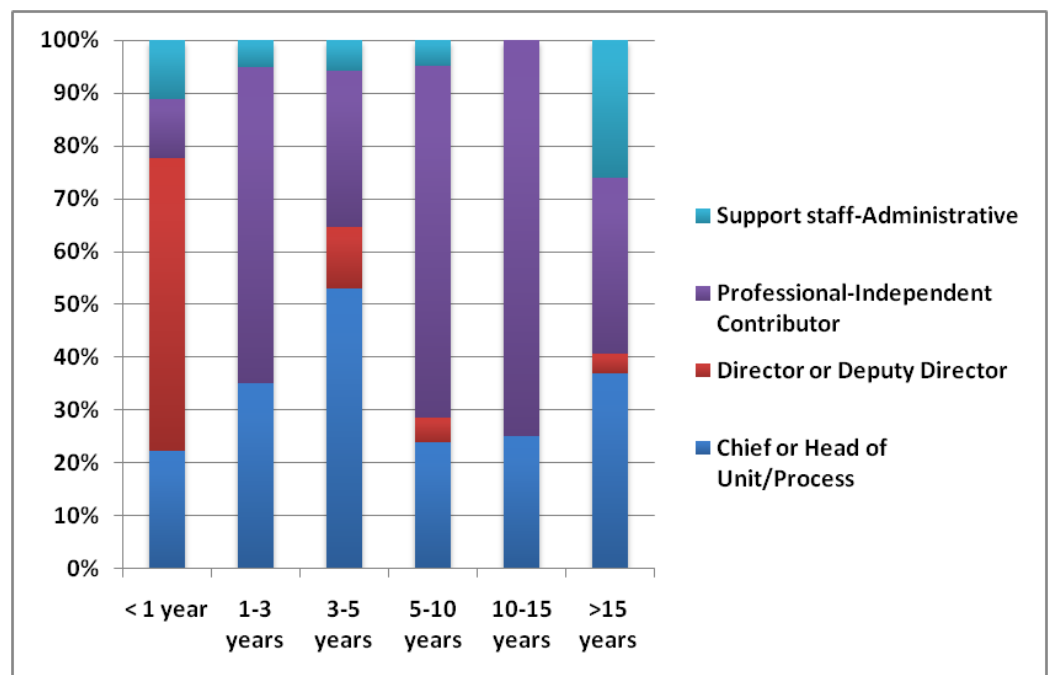


Figure 4: Participants by time spent in current organization and position

Organisational challenges

Respondents were asked to select from among a list of possible challenges that organisations might face in their efforts to provide career development opportunities to staff. The two challenges with the lowest frequency of choice were related to staff expectations and motivation. The main issue identified for staff was that organisations were perceived to offer too few opportunities, and this is consistent with the pattern of financial, program and process challenges captured by three of the top four choices.



Figure 5a: Organisational challenges

The top two choices elected by over 50% of the respondents were “limited funds” and “lack of ability to implement career development practices,” suggesting a persistent concern over both the means (funds) and the know-how (ability) available to organisations. Over 40% claimed that leadership did not prioritise career development and that there were few programs and processes available.

The combination of limited funds, low leadership priority, lack of ability to implement career development practices and too few programs -processes is a formidable set of organisational challenges chosen by 45% or more of respondents. Of particular concern are the cases where funds and leadership may be available, but a suitable framework and capability to implement are lacking.

Over 40% claimed that leadership did not prioritise career development

The table below captures the top 5 organisational challenges, possible causes and possible solutions:

Organisational Challenge	Possible Causes	Possible Solutions
Limited Funds (55% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic climate • Competing priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore low cost solutions, integrating career dev. into the day-to-day • Focus on "mind-set" and management practices
Lack of capability to implement ... (53% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor leadership and change capability • Weak framework for career development • Limited or nonexistent policy • Lack of supervisory skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain outside expertise • Build the conceptual frame • Develop and pilot policies • Train supervisors and hold them accountable
Few programmes and processes (45% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low value placed on career development • Poor leadership at multiple levels • No strategic framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a staff survey • Act on the results • Build programs and processes with managers
Too few perceived opportunities (45% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of communication of opportunities • Unclear process to develop • Poor supervision, lack of career discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate philosophy • Clarify development processes across a wide range • Incorporate career dev. into supervisory process
Not a priority for leadership (41% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of understanding of the benefits • Poor sense of drivers of motivation • Financial pressures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a staff survey • Measure motivation drivers • Present metrics to validate the benefits

Figure 5b: Organisational challenges, possible causes and solutions

A breakout of responses by sex to the **organisational challenges** question yields the patterns shown in Figure 5c below. In summary, males and females are quite similar in their ratings of the top organisational challenges with males being slightly more focused on the "funding" criteria and females scoring higher on the remaining criteria.

The scores by sex diverged by more than 5% on the following three criteria: "leadership priority," "too few perceived opportunities," and "unrealistic expectations of staff." Females selected these challenges more often than men did.

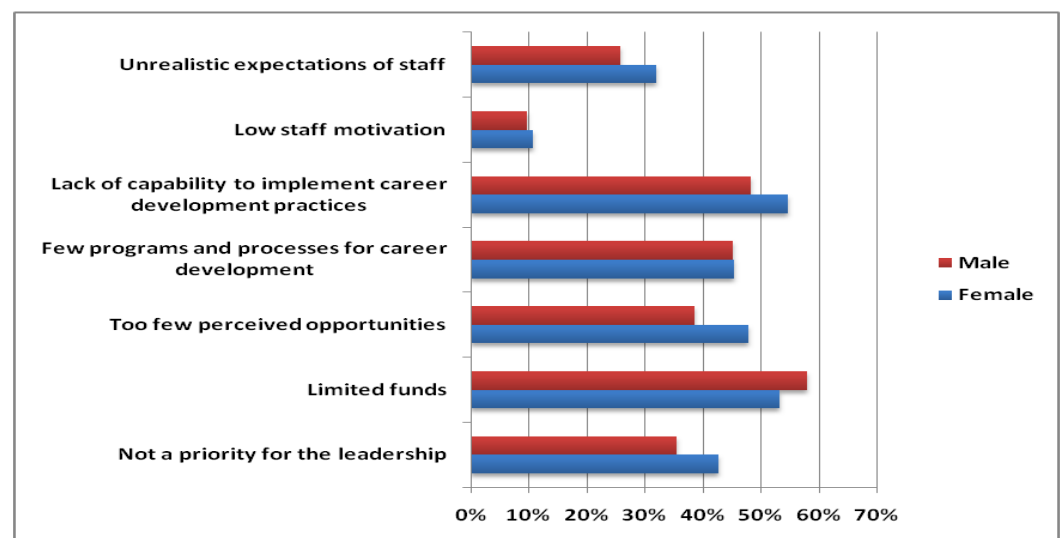


Figure 5c: Organisational challenges by sex



The top area of focus recommended for organisations was the creation of a fully integrated career development system, with 66% of the sample population choosing this item

Where Organisations should focus

The **top three areas of focus** identified for organisations in Career Development were to create **fully integrated career development systems**, develop **supervisory skills in career development** and provide **mobility opportunities**.

Relating the suggested focus areas or priorities to the main challenges identified in the previous section, we can see that the emphasis is to put in place an integrated system of processes and programs in career development. This assumes that in fact leadership has made career development a priority for scarce funds and that the organisation has the skills to build and implement a framework for career development.

In a resource constrained environment, the type of approach chosen should be one that makes effective use of resources and is easy to maintain. A critical success factor to achieve that is to ensure that supervisors have the skills and integrate the career development practices in their staff management activities. For many organisations, public and private sector alike, this would suggest a cultural change and a strong leadership commitment.

Mobility opportunities ranked third among the focus areas, perceived by respondents to be important to gain additional skills and experiences valuable to the organisation and the staff member. At present, the UN secretariat has made the development of a new UN mobility policy a high priority. A number of challenges exist in this area, with early and late career stages generally favouring mobility options for staff due to fewer family obligations at those times.

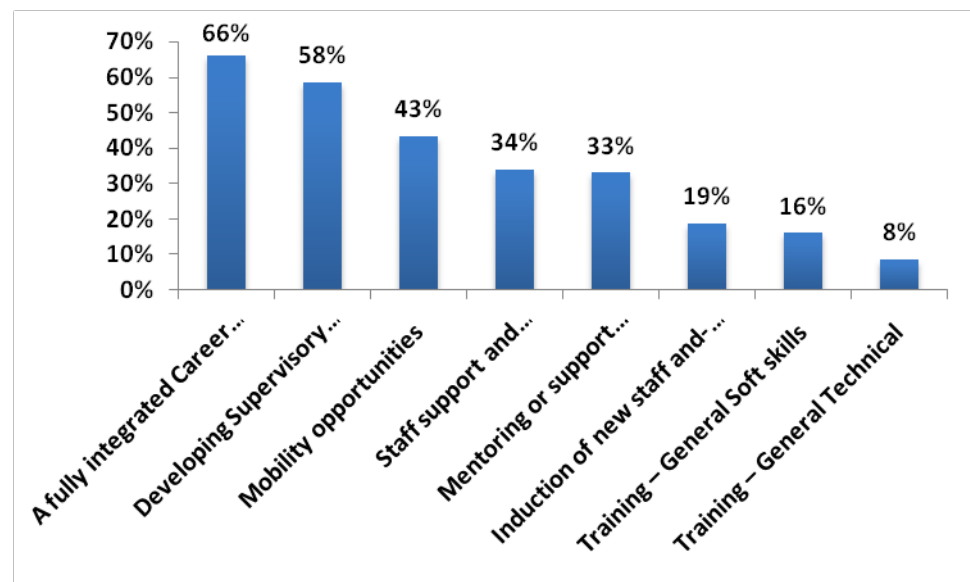


Figure 6a: Organisation focus areas

Of particular interest is the lack of emphasis on training in both “soft” and “technical” skills, suggesting that these areas are well covered as supporting factors for career development, with the possible exception of supervisory skills and practices that support career development.

A breakout of responses by sex to the **organisational priority focus question** yields the following patterns:

Both sexes chose the same top three priorities in absolute terms, with females placing more emphasis on the need for supervisory skills to support career development

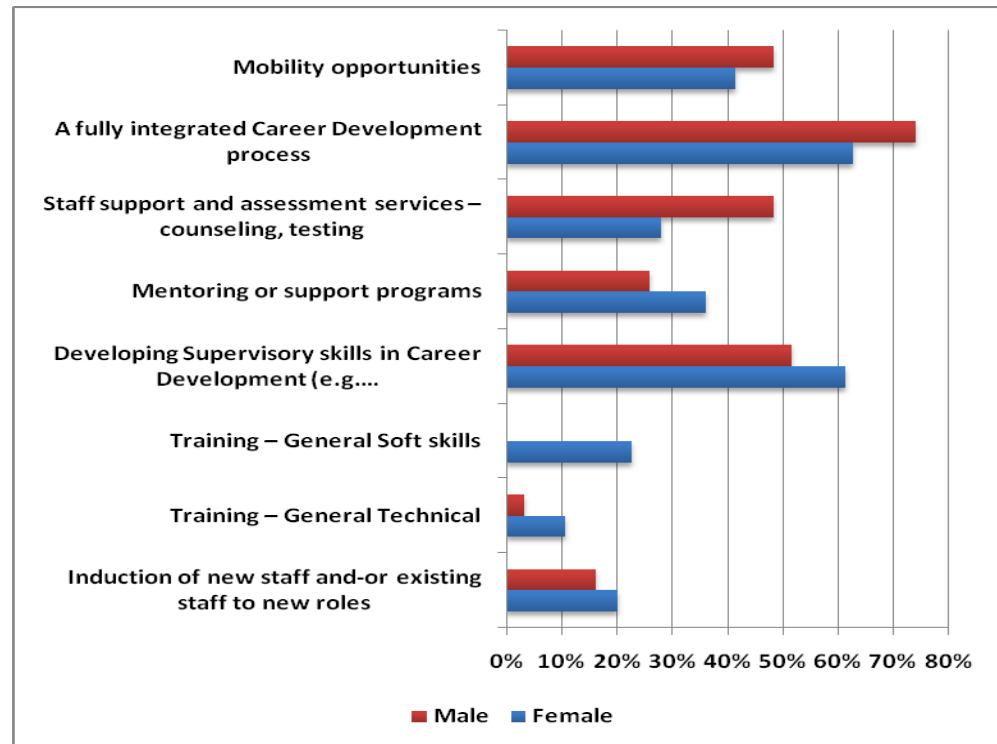


Figure 6b: Organisational focus by sex

Both sexes chose the same top three priorities in absolute terms. However, males placed more emphasis on mobility opportunities and a fully integrated career process while females rated supervisory skill development higher than their male counterparts. A closer look at the training area shows that females were significantly more likely to focus on training as a priority than men, especially “soft” skill training.

Most important action



In response to the open question on the the “single most important action that organisations should take” the leading theme was the development of a career development framework

Participants were asked to indicate the single most important action that their organization should take to support career development of staff.

As it was a open question, the results were classified thematically based on a content analysis of key words. This resulted in the identification of five themes that were then analysed by cross tabulation with other sample variables such as tenure and position.

The five themes are as follows:

- **Framework** refers the definition of the career path and the development programmes and processes by the organisation;
- **Commitment** is about leadership involvement, supervisor commitment and organizational culture;
- **Tools** are the elements that staff and managers can use to support career development processes and activities like communication campaigns, program information and other supports to allow a smooth implementation of the career development approach;
- **Competencies** refer to the skills, attitudes and behaviours of managers and staff alike that relate to career development. The competency set is different, but complementary for the two groups.
- **Resources** are the financial and personnel resources devoted to HR or initiatives like mentoring/coaching, training;

When asked to identify the most important action that organisations should take to support staff career development, 42% of respondents gave answers that could be classified under the “framework” theme. This is consistent with the previous finding where respondents chose the “development of an integrated framework” as the most important priority for organisations.

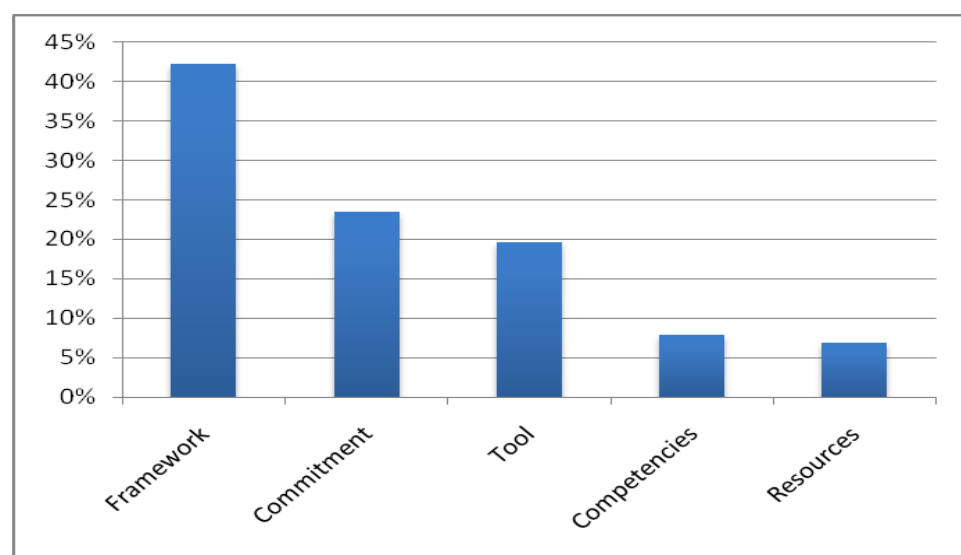


Figure 7: Most important actions grouped by theme

A quarter of the sample looks at the commitment of leadership and supervisors, while 20% ask for an investment in tools that could allow the staff to pursue career development. And finally, 8% think that competencies were the most important area of action and 7% that the most important issue is resources. It is interesting that the perception is that these programs can be integrated into the culture and practice of the organisation and do not necessarily rely on significant financial and HR personnel investment.



The thematic area of focus varies with the time spent in the organisation

According to the time spent in an organization, the thematic area of focus varies. The most prominent across all categories is the career framework dimension. In general, respondents believe it is important to understand the organisational approach framework and approach to career development. This provides reference points by which staff can attend to their own development and progression.

The theme of resources is emerges for respondents who have been with their organisation at least one year and continues up until the tenth year. As well, the theme of competencies arises after the first year and persists through advanced stages of tenure, peaking in importance in the category of from 5 to 10 years.

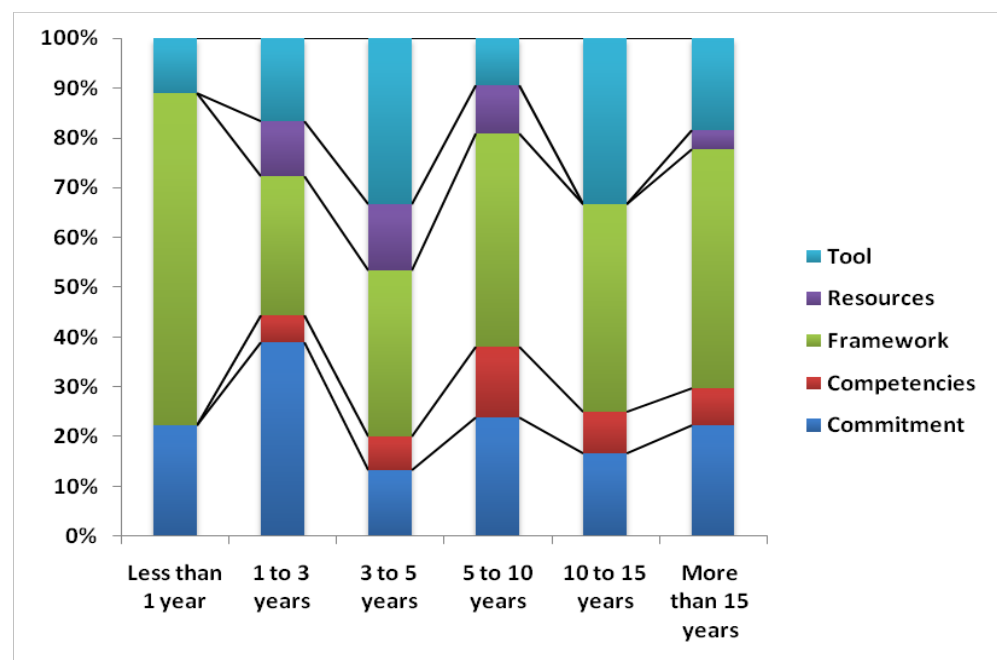


Figure 8: Most important action grouped by theme according to tenure

The relative importance of the thematic groupings varies not only according to tenure, but also to the position in the hierarchy.

Top management roles tend to focus more on broad terms, like framework, whereas those more involved in operational activities care about the practical tools to promote people development and the available resources. Professionals are the most concerned about the commitment of the leadership of the organization.

As before, we find that the “framework” category is the most prevalent single choice for all tenure groupings of staff.

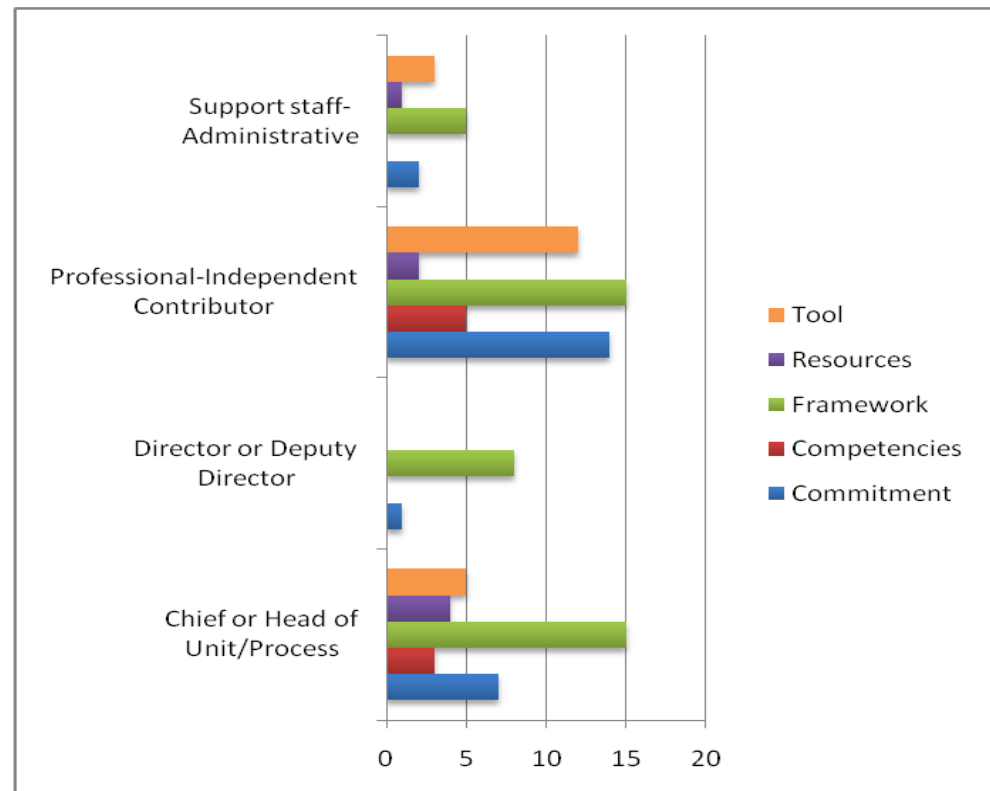


Figure 9: Most important action grouped by theme according to tenure

Career development assessment

Respondents were asked to rate their current organisation against 16 statements using a 5 point scale to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the statement. The results have been organised by grouping all scores of agreement (green), all scores of disagreement (red) and the neutral scores of partially agree-disagree (yellow). The aggregate patterns are displayed in the chart below from the highest levels of agreement to the lowest levels. The net result is an assessment of the performance of the respondent's current organisation on some key criteria for effective career development.

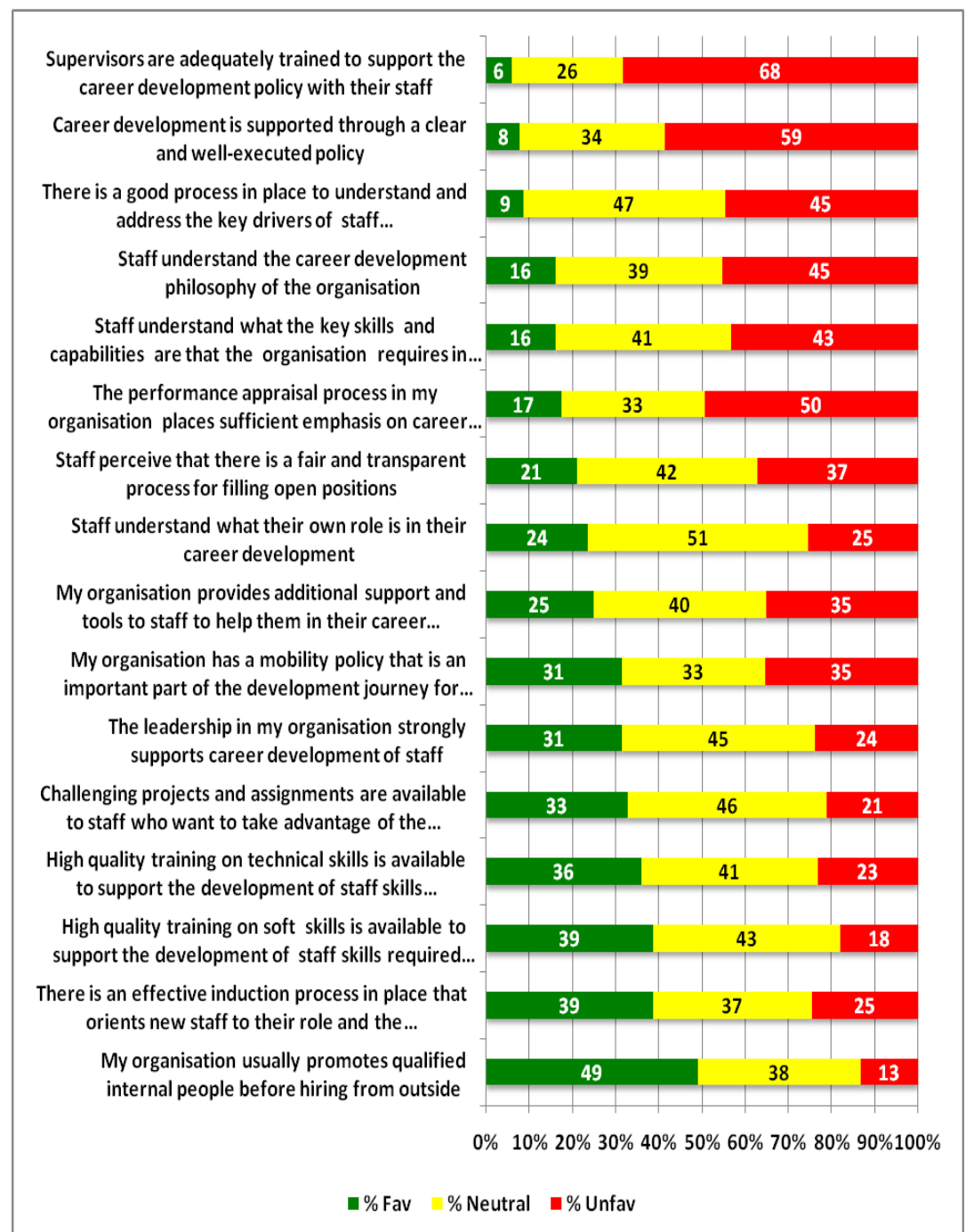


Figure 10: Career development assessment results

Respondents believe that qualified people are promoted, yet the mechanisms by which new job holders are chosen are unclear.



The top 4 statements of agreement among respondents range from 36% to 49% and cover the questions related to the promotion of qualified internal people, an effective induction process and high quality training in “soft” and “technical” skills. The finding on the internal promotion practice is interesting given the low tenure of Directors versus other levels in the organisation. In addition, the statement on staff perceiving a fair and transparent process for filling open positions was rated at only 21%, less than half of the statement on promoting qualified people. This suggests that respondents believe that qualified people are promoted, yet the mechanisms by which the new job holders are chosen are unclear.

The induction process and training responses are plausible in light of respondents earlier pattern of responses on organisational priorities where induction and training ranked lowest, suggesting a high degree of internal consistency in these results.

Turning our attention towards the bottom 3 scores on the agreement criteria, we find that **less than one in ten** believe the following:

- Supervisors are adequately trained to support the career development of staff
- Career development is supported through a well executed policy
- A process exists to address and understand the key drivers of staff motivation

In addition, poor scores are found regarding staff understanding the career development philosophy of the organisation and what skills are required. When this is coupled with only 17% claiming the performance appraisal process puts insufficient emphasis on career development it is clear that the majority of organisations are not meeting staff needs in this area. Once again, there is a pattern that suggests organisations neglect the more strategic issues in creating integrated career development frameworks and policies.

Personal challenges

Respondents were given the opportunity with an open question to identify the biggest challenge that they currently face in their career development. As before their answers have been classified thematically resulting in 8 distinct categories, including a category “none” where no response was provided to the question.

Consistent with previous sections, the emphasis on the lack of an understandable framework and supporting processes was viewed a particularly challenging and mentioned by 35% of the respondents. The opportunity to gain skills through training (15%) was compromised for many by lack of time to pursue courses, versus lack of available training. A supportive leadership and the availability of coaching-mentoring support received similar levels of mention at 14% and 13% respectively.

Mobility deserves a mention at just fewer than 10% of respondents, where most felt there was a lack of mobility. This was expressed across multiple inputs from the sample in the broader sense – including lateral, horizontal and geographical mobility.

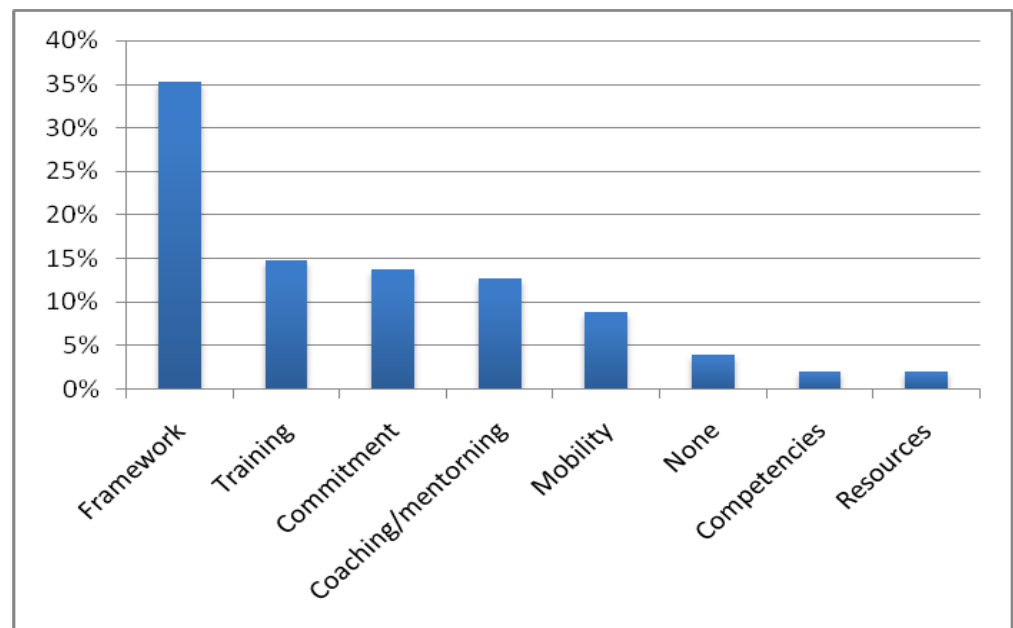


Figure 11: Thematic analysis of personal challenges to career development

Cross tabulating the data with tenure, we can see that perceptions change according to the time spent in an organization.

Newcomers struggle most with the commitment of leadership and their supervisor to career development, coupled with the challenge of obtaining coaching and mentoring support. This suggests a significant opportunity for supervisors to support their new hires.

Mobility is not perceived as a challenge for newcomers and has two peaks, one during the first to the third year of tenure and the other from the tenth to the fifteenth year. This is what can be expected as newer staff tend to be more amenable to mobility options early in their career, as do experienced staff, dependent upon age and stage of family life cycle.

Training also has two peaks, the first with the 3-5 year group and the second with the >15 year tenure group. Interestingly, training as a challenge is missing entirely from the 10-15 year group, where the framework theme is more important than to any other tenure subgroup.

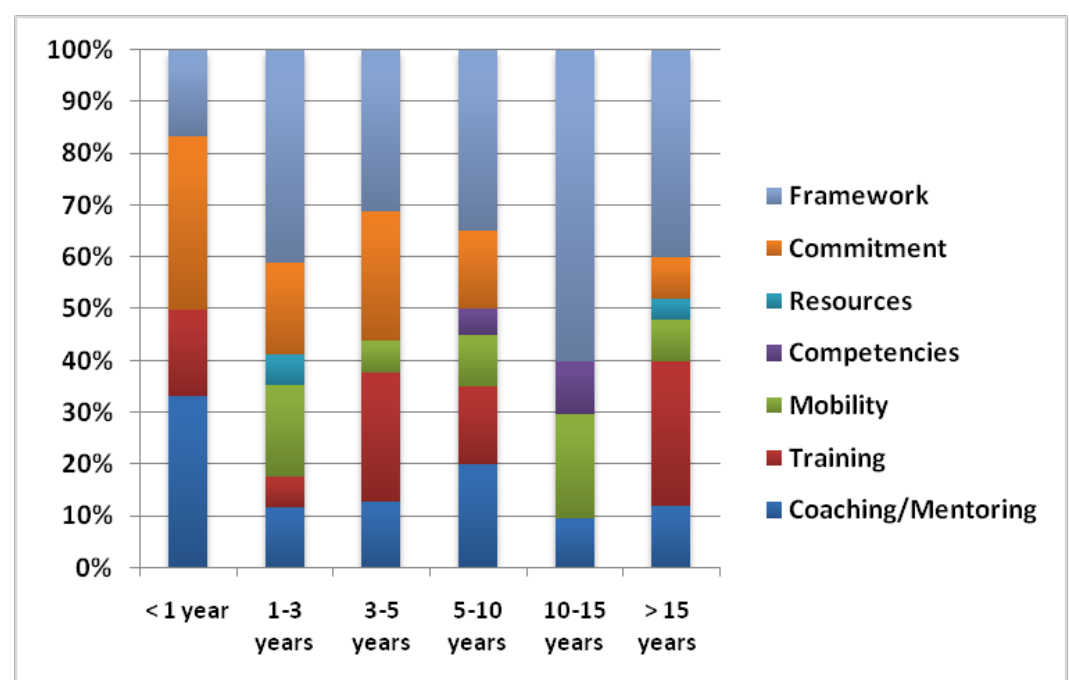


Figure 12: Personal challenges according to tenure

Additional support

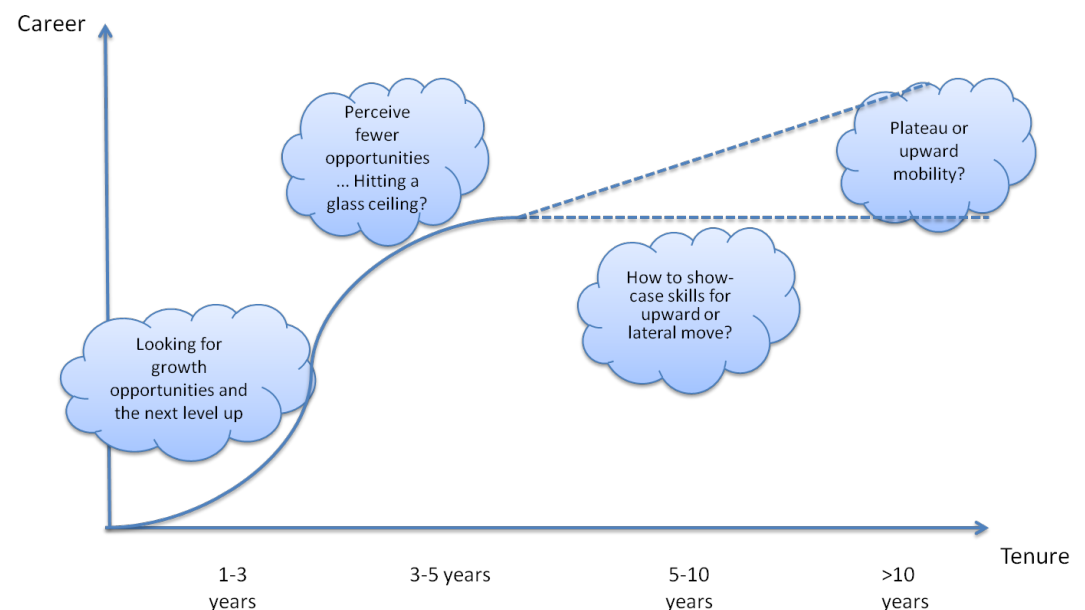
An analysis of the question “What additional career development support would you like to receive from your organization?” shows that answers cluster around length of tenure.

A full 70% of people in the first three year of experience in their current organization look at ways to improve their position, in their own words: “How to get to the next level” or “grow beyond current level.”

From the third year to the fifth two-thirds of respondents state that they have no or few opportunities for development, in their words *“Limited opportunities for lateral moves given the segregation of functions in the organization and lack of exposure to other functions.”*

Between 5 to 10 years spent in the same organization the majority of this group there is a the pressing need to see their skills recognized and valued in order to move ahead, either upward or horizontally. Four respondents claim that they have not been put in the right position to acquire new skills or demonstrate existing skills. Regarding lateral moves, one respondent put it succinctly as follows, *“A step higher in the hierarchy is not what interests me. How can I develop further making lateral moves?”*

After 10 years the challenges seem to revolve around how to continue with upward mobility and compete for the limited number of more senior positions. Respondents here are also keen on lateral mobility within or across functions, and toward the later stages of their career are open to geographical mobility.



The common echo among all respondents is that more clarity is needed on what career development options are available and what skills are valuable to the organisation. The mobility theme was more prominent in respondents’ answers to this section than in the previous section regarding personal challenges – especially after the third year of tenure.

The staff members in our sample expressed a strong commitment to their own career development but at times were at a loss of what the best course of action might be to put themselves in a position to benefit from the greater challenges that often come with greater responsibility.

Conclusions and future outlook

This research project raised a number of areas ripe for action. It is clear that many organisations do not place sufficient emphasis on career development and that the leadership often fails to make it a priority. As a result, career development strategies and frameworks are weak or nonexistent, leading to a general confusion by staff and managers alike on what should be done to support career development.

The opportunity cost to organisations is the neglect of a main driver of staff commitment, motivation and skill development that can be aligned with organisational goals. In effect, both the staff member and the organisation win when career development is approached strategically.

This main theme of lack of a cohesive strategy-policy framework is joined by a concern that supervisors are not adequately prepared to support the career development of their staff. As well, staff are not quite sure what their own role is in their career development. This is interesting in light of the perception that other training in “soft” and “technical” skills was perceived as a relative strength for the organisations represented in the survey.

An outcome of the lack of attention to career development in the broader sense is that it becomes overly associated with promotion. This is counterproductive because the pool of possible promotions is increasingly limited by the decreasing number of posts at higher levels. Many survey respondents expressed their frustration on the lack of opportunity for lateral moves, either within or across functions. This represents a missed opportunity to challenge staff to learn new transferable skills that are valuable to the organisation and motivating to staff.

In this final section, the focus is on four broad areas with some suggestions for meeting the challenges in each area. The list is not meant to be exhaustive but to rather to provide food for thought and to stimulate reflection on what your organisations could do to better address the opportunities of a strategic career development approach. The four areas are:

1. Gaining leadership commitment
2. Creating a career development strategy
3. Implementing career development policies, processes and tools
4. Training supervisors

For each of the above topics, there is space allocated for the reader to reflect on how this applies to their organisation and what could be done.

1. Gaining leadership commitment

In this research study, limited funds was the top organisational challenge identified but it is reasonable to argue that the prioritization of available funds rests with the leadership and is the critical issue.

The challenge then becomes one of helping leaders recognize the importance of career development as a critical driver of **organisational effectiveness** and **staff motivation**. Faced with competing priorities in a resource constrained environment it is easier for the leadership to focus on the initiatives that can be more easily understood and quantified. Accordingly, a shift in “mind-set” is needed.

HR professionals can make a difference by marshalling the evidence to make the case for career development as a high priority, as a driver for the evolution of the capabilities that the organisation needs to be successful at present and in the future. The following approaches may be helpful to build the case for career development:

- Review the research on motivation and engagement as it relates to career development and present the “evidence” to senior management
- Engage in ongoing discussions with senior management about career development and staff motivation, creating a focus on the topic and a shift in understanding and “mind-set”
- Measure “staff engagement” for the organisation using any of a number of methodologies – engagement surveys and focus groups are common approaches to identify the drivers of staff motivation, which inevitably highlight the key elements of career development
- Implement a process to follow up on the aggregate survey results
- Have leaders commit to following up on priority actions developed from the results of the staff engagement process, including career development and other related areas

The reality is that leadership commitment is a **key success factor** for changing the management culture and successfully implementing new strategies and practices in career development.

Reflection and Application

If relevant, how might you address this area in your organisation?

2. Creating a Career Development strategy

The importance of an integrated career development framework was a main finding of this research, with respondents indicating that this was the most important area that an organisation should focus on. This integrated framework connects career development with the HR strategy and the organisational strategy, creating a powerful alignment and context for focusing on the right elements to enhance organisational effectiveness. In practical terms, this means that the main areas of the HR strategy like recruitment, performance management, job architecture, competency frameworks and training programs are linked in a larger HR system to career development.

This presupposes that an HR strategy exists and is aligned with the organisational strategy. If this is not the case then the first order of business is to craft the HR strategy. The following approaches may be helpful in building the strategy:

- Understand the organisational strategy and current context
- Engage the HR professionals responsible for the main HR processes in the discussion early to explore the linkages among the areas and a prototype of the career development framework
- Use this as the basis for engaging stakeholders across the organisation to further refine the career development framework that would best serve the staff and the organisation
- Choose specific projects and priorities to implement in the near term, recognizing that not everything has to be done at once
- Try to devolve strategy implementation and oversight to the line management as much as possible. It is important that career development activities become part of everyday management practice within the context of the strategy, policies and processes. The tools can be used to link career development with other HR practices, like the performance management process for example. By involving management in this way you will ultimately reduce costs.

The creation of a career development strategy and framework is an important prior step to the development of policies, processes and supporting tools for implementation. The career development process and tool development can be considered the final phase of strategy development. In effect, the policies, processes and tools are key deliverables of the career development strategy. These deliverables should be as light and simple as possible. Managers and staff alike are at times put off by the complexity of these programs.

Some practical suggestions for possible inclusion in the policy, processes and tools are as follows:

- Improve transparency and communication of internal opportunities of development
- Define/formalize a dual career ladder, including managerial and technical tracks to allow technical experts to be rewarded for continuing in their specialty
- Foster different types of lateral moves: within function, across functions and geographic
- Develop tools in order to allow a more accurate matching between position and profile
- Involve experienced people in an informal mentoring role working with newer hires. Leverage their experience as a way to increase their motivation and develop young talent.
- Use project and special assignments as means to develop staff skills and create a “triple win” – the organisation is able to focus existing resources on important projects, the supervisor in charge of the project has more available resources to meet the goals and the staff potentially has a rich on-the-job learning experience

Reflection and Application

If relevant, how might you address this area in your organisation?

3. Implementing career development policies, processes and supporting tools

Implementation of a new approach or initiative can be very challenging, often even more so than the development of the strategy, policies, processes and tools. Effective implementation requires excellent change management, project management and communication skills so it is important to have the right expertise in place to lead the implementation projects. In addition, these types of projects can be an important development experience for others involved.

Here are a few ideas that may help to create a smoother implementation process:

- Create a project plan and governance structure for the project. The project plan will allow you to create a shared understanding among members of the project and the governance structure keeps your stakeholders involved.
- Consider piloting the new processes and tools prior to launching them in the organisation. A limited pilot can be used to build commitment to the new process and also to further refine it, surfacing issues that were not anticipated.
- Communicate, communicate, communicate ... keep stakeholders informed of what you are doing. Don't forget that stakeholders include all staff so general communications to all will be needed.

Reflection and Application

If relevant, how might you address this area in your organisation?

4. Training supervisors

The success of a new initiative is usually measured by how well the new processes are implemented and the value that they deliver. An important part of this implementation equation is that supervisors are committed and capable to engage in career development support for their staff.

An interesting finding in this research project was the emphasis on increasing supervisory skills in career development, which was the second highest organisational priority chosen by 58% of the survey participants. Participants also scored their organisations the lowest on the “training of supervisors in career development ...” with only 6% believing that their supervisors were adequately trained and 68% indicating that their supervisors **were not** adequately trained in this area.

Some suggestions for bringing the supervisors skills up to par in career development are as follows:

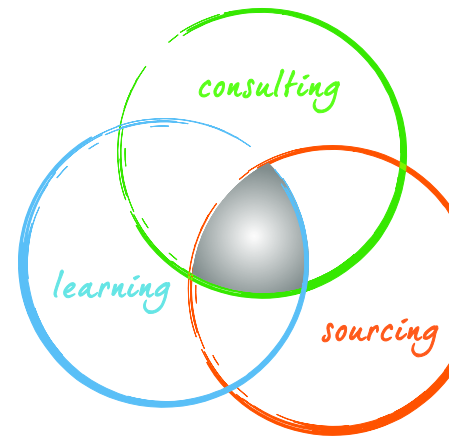
- Socialise the supervisors to the new system as part of the project implementation. They should be made aware of the strategy and the full set of policies, processes and tools in this area and of their responsibilities.
- Integrate the career development training content into the existing supervisor skills programs to reinforce the linkages with other areas and the behaviors for successful career development support
- Hold supervisors accountable through their own performance objectives for managing career development as an integral part of their management role

Reflection and Application

If relevant, how might you address this area in your organisation?

Annex A: About Optimis

Optimis is an international consultancy group based in Switzerland. We support private and public sector organisations in the achieving greater **organisational effectiveness** by reviewing, developing and optimizing their Organisational and Human Resource Management strategies, structures, processes and systems. We are a group of senior professionals committed to measuring the benefits of our client's investment and operating as a strategic advisor to help achieve optimal returns, financial as well as organisational. Our service areas are split into three main sectors:



Optimis Strategy Consulting

Below are several areas where Optimis offers strategic consulting services:

- **Organisational Diagnostics and Research**

We are committed to understanding the organisational context, challenges and issues of our clients through organisational surveys, organisational analysis, research and functional audits. We provide our diagnostic services on three levels: organisational, functional-team and individual

- **Developing Strategy Initiatives**

We support our clients in defining and developing appropriate organisational and HR strategies, structures, policies, processes and systems to address organisational issues

- **Implementing Programs and Projects**

As a partner, we support the implementation of solutions through rigorous change management and learning activities to ensure successful execution

Optimis Learning

Optimis provides **customised learning programmes** designed to meet the organisation's needs and to build management and leadership capabilities. Optimis delivers enterprise wide learning solutions for your leadership and management teams. We use experiential applied learning techniques and seasoned facilitators to draw out the potential of individuals, groups and entire organisations. Our learning architects assist in the design of custom programmes that are linked to our clients' priorities and the specific capabilities required achieving their goals. Through a mix of learning and coaching, we help them create an environment where engagement, performance and learning are fully integrated into the day-to-day activities and are everyone's priority.

Optimis Sourcing

We support your strategic change initiatives with expert **selection and assessment services** to ensure you have the right talent to implement your organisational strategy. In addition, we provide **interim management** placement to support our clients in accessing difficult to find profiles

Annex B: About SDA Bocconi School of Management

Founded in 1971 by Bocconi University, the SDA Bocconi School of Management was a pioneer in management education in Italy and today enjoys international recognition as a leading management school.

SDA Bocconi is a not for profit institution that sees its economic balance as a means to achieve long-term cultural independence. Our mission is to educate men and women ready to act anywhere in the world, using their knowledge and imagination to serve business and society. For over forty years, SDA Bocconi has been working alongside businesses, public and not for profit organizations, banks and financial institutions, to contribute to the development of society.

SDA Bocconi dedicates energy and resources to creating value. Our research, teaching and collaborations with the scientific, business and institutional communities are proof of our commitment. It is exemplified by our values-based international approach, critical spirit, pragmatism, curiosity, innovation practices and idea exchanges. Knowledge and imagination are the shared pride and heritage of the faculty, its students, and thousands of alumni around the world

SDA Bocconi is internationally recognized by the most prestigious international accreditation bodies which include: AACSB (The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business); EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System) and AMBA (Association of MBAs).

SDA Bocconi has one of the most highly regarded Public Management and Policy Departments in Europe, dealing specifically with research, executive education and life-long programmes for civil servants. There is a dedicated faculty that works with the following programs:

- **Master Programs:** 3 Specialized Masters and 3 Executive Masters

- **Open Programs:**

- **Healthcare:** 30 programs;
- **Public Administration:** 20 programs;
- **Non Profit:** 6 programs;

- **Custom Programs:**

Uniquely designed custom programs that equip institutions to successfully achieve their strategic goals, to execute policies and programs and to drive change; Custom programs may combine different formats: business diagnosis can be run to shape the program; business cases, surveys, focus groups and other tools can be applied to support vision and stimulate problem solving.

Our Networks and Communities approach is an effective and innovative way to involve Alumni and Public Organisations in a continuous learning process and experience exchange. This programme is managed by the Public Management and Policy Department and focuses on key topics or professional families, such as Accountants, Directors General of Health Care Organisations, Public Procurement Officers, and HR Managers at regional and local level.

Annex C: Research questionnaire

Demographic

1. Which category best describes your current professional level?

- ☐ Director or Deputy Director
- ☐ Chief or Head of Unit/Process
- ☐ Professional – Supervisor
- ☐ Professional - Individual contributor/specialist
- ☐ Support staff – Administrative
- ☐ Other:

2. How long have you been working in your current organisation?

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1 to 3 years
- ☐ 3 to 5 years
- ☐ 5 to 10 years
- ☐ 10 to 15 years
- ☐ More than 15 years

3. What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

4. Which category best describes the type of organisation you work with currently?

- ☐ Humanitarian- Aid
- ☐ Development
- ☐ International Financial Institution
- ☐ Normative institution
- ☐ Other:

Challenges and Priorities

1. The biggest challenges that face my organisation today in their efforts to provide career development opportunities to staff are: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Not a priority for the leadership
- ☐ Limited funds
- ☐ Too few perceived opportunities
- ☐ Few programs and processes for career development
- ☐ Lack of capability to implement career development practices
- ☐ Low staff motivation
- ☐ Unrealistic expectations of staff
- ☐ Other

2. The two or three most important areas that I would like to see my organisation focus on in the next few years to improve career development support and opportunities for staff are:

- ☐ Induction of new staff and-or existing staff to new roles
- ☐ Training – General Technical
- ☐ Training – General Soft skills
- ☐ Developing Supervisory skills in Career Development (e.g. coaching, development planning)
- ☐ Mentoring or support programs
- ☐ Staff support and assessment services – counseling, testing
- ☐ A fully integrated Career Development process
- ☐ Mobility opportunities
- ☐ Other?

Open response

7. What is the single most important action that I think my organization could take to support the Career Development of staff?

Career Development

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding career development at your organization using the following 5 point scale:

Strongly Agree Agree Partially agree/partially disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree NA

Q1. The leadership in my organisation strongly supports career development of staff:

Q2. There is an effective induction process in place that orients new staff to their role and the expectations of the organisation:

Q3. Staff understand what the key skills and capabilities are that the organization requires in the next 5 years:

Q4. Staff understand the career development philosophy of the organisation:

Q5. Staff understand what their own role is in their career development:

Q6. Career development is supported through a clear and well-executed policy:

Q7. Supervisors are adequately trained to support the career development policy with their staff:

Q8. The performance appraisal process in my organisation places sufficient emphasis on career development:

Q9. High quality training on technical skills is available to support the development of staff skills required to perform the technical aspects of the work:

Q10. High quality training on soft skills is available to support the development of staff skills required to perform the non-technical aspects of the work:

Q11. Challenging projects and assignments are available to staff who want to take advantage of the opportunity to build new skills:

Q12. My organisation provides additional support and tools to staff to help them in their career development efforts (testing, counseling, mentoring, etc.):

Q13. My organisation has a mobility policy that is an important part of the development journey for certain staff populations:

Q14. Staff perceive that there is a fair and transparent process for filling open positions:

Q15. My organisation usually promotes qualified internal people before hiring from outside:

Q16. There is a good process in place to understand and address the key drivers of staff motivation, including those related to career development:

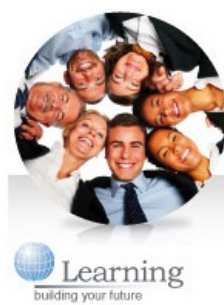
Open response

Q17. What additional career development support would you like to receive from your organisation?

Q18. What is the biggest challenge that you currently face in developing your career?



How will you take it to the next level?



Rte de la Gare 17, CH – 1026 Echandens, Switzerland

Tel : +41 21 701 9121, Fax : +41 21 701 9120

info@optimis-hcm.com

www.optimis-hcm.com

