

## CAREER MANAGEMENT Opportunity or threat for the employer

The last contribution of Michael Moran regarding this subject was challenging and led me to some reflections on his subject.

Career management is the management of career mobility within an organization. Career mobility has a variety of facets which can be desired or not by the employer:

- Geographical mobility: the choice of where to work (region, country, continent)
- Functional mobility: the choice of which task to fulfill in an organization
- Vertical mobility: the choice of taking more responsibility for a larger task (and maybe a leadership role)
- internal vs. external mobility: the choice of staying with the employer or finding a new one
- or a combination of these.



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**CAREER MANAGEMENT**  
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The March ACF Europe Newsletter will feature an article by Marc Saunder (Syntec Conseil en Evolution Professionnelle - French ACF Chapter - and Board Member of ACF Europe)

This is in function of whether the employer has a certain need to avoid or cover a vacancy or not. For an employer all of these options can be desired in relation to a specific employee or not at a given moment and therefore there is a time reference to mobility. Companies are interested in employees moving within and leaving as they are in employees entering the organization.

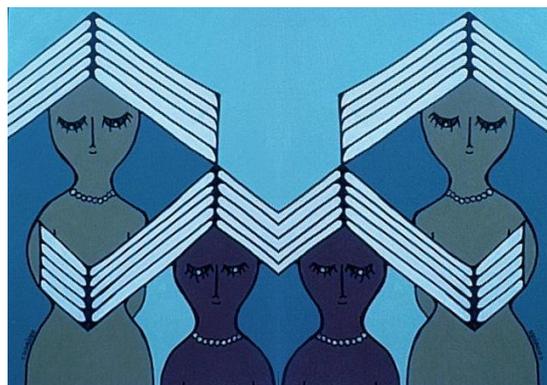
### How is the decision for career mobility taken?

The main question here is: "How is the decision for mobility taken?" Is it taken unilaterally taken by either side (employee or employer) or is there a joint discussion and decision taking?

For an employer the unexpected leave of a collaborator normally is a threat, leaving the corresponding tasks unattended and competencies unavailable. So for the employer career management, i.e. helping an employee to better understand his/her competencies, potential and aspirations (e.g. strength/weaknesses, competences, usp) and to develop a career perspective (e.g. needs and desires, work situation) as well as to evaluate the potential market value does not seem a good idea in short term perspective. In consequence, the employer is in the duty of valuing the collaborator and offering a corresponding developmental perspective. In trying to sell career management I was once confronted with the statement: "If our collaborators know their market value they are bound to leave". The assumption or fear that a collaborator will leave shortly after having a professional career coaching starts off with the idea of him/her not knowing before the value of her/his work to the employer. This seems an inappropriate assumption to work with for most situations.

But of course any employee can do his homework and make the career development research by himself and find a decision on his own. This unilateral decision will often not be in the interest of the employer.

There can also be a conflict of interest between a collaborator, who would like to develop her/his career, and the superior who values higher the work done at the momentary job. But for the employing organization the objective has to be the best use of its resources, most importantly the human ones. So the best decision has to be a common decision.



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## How to use career management?

Today's job markets have become very complex and demanding. In a world of continuous change in work environment this is true in the external job market as well as the internal job market within organizations, especially but not only in large ones.

The better knowledge of the own potential helps to better orientate oneself and to evaluate job opportunities for the successful next career move. And it helps to keep the employability higher by reflecting the personal need for development. This corresponds to the organizational need to manage its HR-portfolio.

This is why the French government has given every employee by law the opportunity to make a career balance every five years. The Swiss canton of Geneva has gone the same way by offering employees a voucher for a career balance.

So using the initiative and competence of the employee (with career coaching) and the organization (with career planning and development) will result in the best use of the human resources.

## Internal vs. external career coaching

One of the reflections around career coaching is whether this should be supported by the internal HR-specialists or by external consultants. Three aspects speak for the external consultant: 1. the required specialist skills of a person who works on a daily basis on a large variety of job market opportunities (not only the internal ones) 2. the personal ideas and reflections that an employee might not want to share with his employer and 3. a neutral position and perspective which might generate a new point of view or solution.

## What are the advantages?

In the past there has been a detailed career planning for the high potentials and the management. This has been flawed by the dynamics of change which have brought different priorities in form of right-sizing, M&A and global restructuring. Today, larger companies can restructure their business by pushing the corresponding button. But this does not mean that the employees are involved in the process.

Using the resource of the employees in the process will give some clear advantage for both parties. Career management will bring the employer an improved individual and overall performance of their collaborators as well as a better retention. Ideally this is embedded in the strategic planning of the organization. There will also be a higher satisfaction of superiors as well as of higher commitment of collaborators in their common vision of development – and of course the collaborator will have a “better job” (as with outplacement / see newsletter February 2013).

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## IMPORTANT DATES

### Webinar 1 April

ACF Europe is setting up a Webinar to present the findings of the **2013 ACF EUROPE SURVEY** to its members.

Date:  
1 April at 13:00 CET  
(12:00 UK).

Login details will be communicated shortly.

### ACF Europe Conference Paris, 15 & 16 May

The Board of ACF Europe is happy to announce that an ACF Europe conference will be organised in Paris from Thursday night 15 May (dinner) to Friday afternoon 16 May 2014.

All members will receive a formal invitation and conference details shortly.

Please join us in Paris in May to discuss the current outplacement industry topics.



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