

MANAGERIAL CAREER - TARGETED EFFECT OF CAREER MOVEMENT

Marta Matulčíková

University of Economics in Bratislava

durdovic@euba.sk

Keywords:

career – career movement – organisational structure – career preferences – career path

JEL classification: I21, I23, J21

Abstract:

Despite the fact that the professional career of successful individuals is decisive for the competitiveness of business as well as non-business entities, managerial career can be considered to be more prestigious not only from the view of individuals but also from that of society. This fact is reflected also in the interest of individuals, namely that their ambition in the career movement is rising to a managerial position, not only because of a higher remuneration but also to achieve a higher societal level, attain authority and power. From the perspective of an individual but also from that of certain societal perception, managerial career is evaluated as the result of successful career movement.

Introduction

The starting-point of career changes is the division of labour and system of organizational arrangement within an organization. The size of organisation and type of its decisive activity affects its specific type of organisational structure. Possibilities of vertical or horizontal career movement are influenced by a high organisational structure on the one hand and the flat organisational structure on the other hand. The idea of career growth is understood by numerous individuals in connection with assuming a leading position on the line or middle level of management, at least. In many cases, this brings serious problems namely in small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as in organisations with the flat organizational structure, in which it is not possible to satisfy the ambitions of individuals. For employees who cannot be promoted, there should be prepared proposals for the so-called second career plan, as well as the alternative based on the extension of professional competence. This is expressed by the career dynamics.

Under current conditions of evaluating career changes, we can describe three main lines of career development:

- a) professional career – the basis of this career is the building of the second hierarchy with specific titles, tasks, degrees, and statutory symbols. This group of employees is equally important for an organization as those who perform

- managerial career. They are often key employees in the organization, who perform creative, systemic, and scientific and innovative tasks.
- b) managerial career – represents a vertical ascent in the organization hierarchy and often is the path. Leading positions bring the increase in duties and responsibilities, the pressure on knowledge, specific skills and abilities, which are connected with the rise of incomes and social status of an individual.
 - c) project orientation in career – as a result of the changes in traditional hierarchy structures of enterprises to flat organisational structures, the management systems come to be simplified, which in turn results in decreasing the number of management levels. An alternative solution path is project management, where each project has its own management, and so it is possible to provide authority to several employees and responsibility for the results achieved in the project solution. The work on project is often connected also with taking over various project functions, which have their own hierarchy beside the managerial function. In this way, employees can acquire more power and responsibility without the vertical ascent. It is often referred to as horizontal career.

Results of research achieved under research project KEGA No. 006EU-4/2013 – demonstrate that managerial career is perceived as the result of a successful career movement, and it is the ambition of many individuals to fulfil this vision as soon as possible. Partial results achieved will be presented in this paper.

1. Methodology and the Review of Literature

Career is important not only in the process of self-actualization of an individual, but the growth of career is accompanied with the achievement of more significant work positions and the individual's shift to higher societal strata. Achieving career aspirations and aims is the way that starts from the moment of selecting school and lifelong acquisition of knowledge, skills and experience.

The research of respondents' opinions of managerial career was very extensive; for this reason, we focus only on its partial presentation. The empirical part of the paper focuses on respondents' opinions of their ambitions to achieve the managerial job position.

Respondents were human resources with complete secondary education completed with maturita (approximately, equivalent to GCSE) examination and university education (of all the three cycles).

The research was carried out by means of the interview method and questionnaire method in 267 respondents, of them 155 employees in non-managerial job positions and 112 managers. In terms of the number of employees, enterprises were represented as follows:

- a) respondents from small enterprises – 52 respondents;
- b) respondents from medium-sized enterprises – 80 respondents;
- c) respondents from large enterprises – 135 respondents.

Career is a notion of an individual's future from working, material, and psychic aspects. Apart from the psychic aspect, there is also a sociology dimension of career (Bednárík, 2009, p. 70). A classical sociological definition of career is the opinion of Z. Bauman, according to whom a specific core of the concept of career is the relocation of individuals from lower social positions to higher positions (Bauman, 1967, p. 9). However, to delimitate the concept of career it is not enough to characterise it via the type of vertical social mobility. Therefore, Z. Bauman supplements: career and career advancements mean acquiring a new, higher qualification, which requires an increasingly deeper study and greater efforts (Bauman, 1967, p. 111). F. Bělohlávek defines career as the path of life, in particular, professional one, in which one acquires new experience and implements their personal potential (Bělohlávek, 1994, p. 11). This approach to understanding the concept of career has a wider sense: it involves the preparation for employment and the development of qualification as a life-long process and does not contain only the course of work activities. Career involves also a set of stagnations or declines. In the course of career occur shifts. All the changes in job position are denoted as career movement. Man changes one's position, employer, moves to a higher or lower position in the enterprise; from one area to another one, e.g. from manufacturing to marketing. Career study requires the mapping and classification of these shifts, which represent career movement. A set of career movements expresses the career dynamics. Career is not connected only with the advancement in functions; an individual can perform professional activity for a longer time in the same or in some other employer entity, where the individual develops and acquires new skills, knowledge and increases their qualifications. Therefore, there are several career types:

The most appropriate expression of basic career types is as follows:

- a) Expert type, in which an individual selects their employment for a lifetime, and the aim is to be a professionally competent and recognised expert.
- b) Linear type, typical of dependent job and for individuals who do not want to do business of their own; within a selected organization they are trying to achieve higher positions and remuneration in the form of salary.
- c) Spiral type, in which the direction of career movement does not change; individuals remains in their fields, but after some time they pass to some other workplace, usually better paid and connected with a higher rate of influence.
- d) Transitional type, in which individuals prefer flexibility and adjust to new opportunities. They often change their employment, employers, acquire new experience and are able to perform various activities (Lepeňová & Hargašová, 2012, p. 9).

In view of the uncertainty and instability situation on the labour market majority of persons may be expected to be obliged to change employment and employees, redirecting the career movement into other areas than those originally planned. In the future, individuals will have to change their employers several times in the course of

their lifetime and also change their qualifications and re-qualify for the performance of new jobs.

2. Results

Although a lot of individuals do not participate in a specific kind of education in accordance with acquiring knowledge and skills for the managerial career, many of them find the performance of managerial career interesting in terms of desire for power and authority, due to better remuneration, higher societal status and feelings of recognition, as well as owing to acquiring reputation and satisfying their need to excel.

TAB. 1: Evaluation of stimuli of managerial career

Stimuli for managerial career	Absolute numbers of respondents
Desire for power and authority	44
Ability to achieve results through people	61
Better remuneration (salary)	86
Higher societal status	63
Recognition and high reputation, satisfying the need for excel	13

Source: results of own empirical research

Research results show that the intent of acquiring the managerial position is better remuneration (in salary). Almost the same number of respondents indicates the incentive for acquiring the managerial position, their ambition to achieve results by means of coordinated efforts of several individuals who take part in work activities (61) as well as the desire for better social status (63). From the total number of respondents (267), 169 of them indicated that they were interested in becoming managers and the remainder of 98 interrogated were not interested in becoming managers and their career ambition was to perform Professional career. Achievements in Professional career were often connected also with the participation in solving several projects. Rate of success in solving projects shifts members of research teams to higher Professional level and provides them recognition of their co-workers and managers.

Although the statistical population consisted from 112 respondents, those who currently occupy managerial position, statistical population Table 2 of the statistical set accounted for 135 respondents, since not only their current managerial positions were taken into consideration but also all managerial positions acquired for the first time at a certain age interval. The difference indicates that 23 respondents no longer perform managerial activity in a given period but they used to perform it in the past.

TAB. 2: Age at the time of acquiring managerial position for the first time in %

Difference in age at the time of attaining Managerial position	25-32	33-40	41-48	49-56	57-65	66+ years
Completed education						
Vocational school completed with maturita	32.4%	38.2%	23.5%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%
School of General education with maturita (equivalent to GCSE)	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Follow-up study	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Tertiary education – Humanities field of study	44.4%	55.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Tertiary education Social Sciences field of study	66.7%	20.8%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Tertiary education – Natural sciences field of study	50.0%	33.3%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Tertiary education – Technology field of study	50.0%	35.4%	0.0%	14.6%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: results of own empirical research

There is a current trend (Tab. 2), that managerial positions are filled with persons at the age between 25 to 32 years. From the respondents addressed, 65 respondents in this age interval acquired managerial positions. A higher percentage of the age bracket of 33 – 40 years represents only graduates from vocational schools and tertiary education – humanities fields of study, where the total number of respondents who acquired a managerial position during this age interval is 46. At the age of 41 to 56 years, 24 respondents gained the managerial position and in higher age categories there were no longer respondents who would occupy the managerial position for the second time.

The aim of gaining the managerial career is not only better remuneration and professional prestige but also acquiring a social position.

3. Discussion

The performance of managerial position should be the climax of one's life-long career after achieving necessary professional knowledge, skills, but mainly also after acquiring experience and achieving social maturity. When starting from specific stages of career development, then:

- a) Preparation – is connected with the clarification of interests and abilities for future profession; choice of education;
- b) Development – searching for a new employment, taking a competitive selection procedure and the selection of an employer or starting one's own business. The employee tests his/her skills in their employment, form their attitudes to the team, work and their aspirations to be efficient in a given enterprise. They may also attain negative experience in the work process, which can later appear in their later lives;
- c) Climax – the stage of the highest performance, when the employee is entrusted the most important tasks. At this stage, an individual can work not only as a key employee but also as a coach as well as a manager. This is also the period of the greatest changes and financial demands in the employee's family, which may make the employee make re-evaluate the direction of their career;
- d) Attenuation – later years in one's career when the employee's work performance is gradually decreasing and the employee is preparing for retirement.

A mass acquisition of managerial positions between 25-32 years of life which may be identified with the period of development, in which also the first years of the following interval may be included (33-40), cannot be seen as favourable. On the contrary, the age that can be included in the period of climax (41-56), when individuals can be expected to have developed complex personality properties, i.e. professional as well as emotional maturity, is connected with a low rate of acquiring managerial positions, with the exception schools of general education with maturita (GCSE), where the course of winning managerial positions is slower. Therefore, it is becoming a current practice these days for young managers to receive their education directly during the performance of their managerial position, namely, frequently with smaller or larger mistakes (Szarková, Andrejčák & Matkovčíková, 2014, p.140) leading to corresponding consequences for the development of the entity they manage.

Conclusion

The current period brings new employments, new work roles, but also different work expectations, as well as various views of one's own career. Career is perceived as the development of work situation, running across one's work life, which is purposefully supplemented with continuous lifelong education.

In the Slovak Republic, a higher social recognition and assessment of work career is connected with the advancement career. Individuals who gradually attain higher positions are considered to be successful, or even if they are appointed to the positions

with important powers at the very beginning of their careers and these positions are connected with the decision-making possibilities. Managerial career is considered to be more attractive by respondents than becoming a renowned expert in a particular field. The focus of interest in managerial career is better remuneration, as admitted by 32.2% of respondents, higher societal status – 23.59% of respondents and the desire for power and authority – 16.48% of respondents.

It is, however, debatable whether the acquisition of managerial positions at such an early age, as the analyses indicate and to such an extent, is really significant for individual enterprises, regions, and the state.

Acknowledgement:

KEGA No. 006EU-4/2013 – “Methods and principles applied in the preparation of structure and content of the subject disciplines supporting the development of economics knowledge and business skills in students of non-economic study programmes of the second cycle of higher education”

References:

Bauman, Z. (1967). *Kariéra: sociologické črty*. Praha. Publisher Mladá fronta, The First Edition, 116pp.

Bednárík, R. (2009). *Stručný prehľad sociológie*. Nitra. ENIGMA, p. 70 – societal mobility, 313pp. ISBN 978-80-89132-59-1.

Bělohávek, F. (1994). *Osobní kariéra*. Praha. Grada Publishing, a. s., ISBN 80-7169-083-X. s. 11

Lepeňová, D., Hargašová, M. (2012). *Kariéra v meniacom sa svete*. Karierová výchova a kariérové poradenstvo pre žiakov. Bratislava. Metodicko – pedagogické centrum, p. 9-12, ISBN 978-80-8052-407-4.

Szarková, M., Andrejčák, M., Matkovčíková, N. (2014). *Personnel audit as a function of personnel marketing and personell management*. Brno. Tribus EU, ISBN 978-80-263-0809-6, s. 140 – 143.