

# THEORETICAL DRIVERS OF EARLY CAREER SUCCESS FOR NEW ENTRANTS TO THE JOB MARKET

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## ABSTRACT

*This research proposes a new model of early career success based on both individual characteristics and environmental features. The model contends that individuals discover their unique aptitudes, abilities, and values which in conjunction with environmental conditions, helps them create goals. This leads to a choice of organizations. Once there, the degree to which employees fit in their new firms and the type of socialization used by those employers differentially affects the implementation of their goals. Both the success and failure of the implementation of these goals then leads to an evaluation of how well it has promoted their careers.*

**JEL:** M10, M12

**KEYWORDS:** Career Success, Abilities, Goals, Socialization

## INTRODUCTION

Research on career management has primarily focused on cyclical, evolutionary processes that continue throughout the course of adult life. Although important, more attention to career strategies for new market entrants could prove useful. This transition stage from student to employee is critical to career success but that success is increasingly dependent on proactive and deliberate steps taken by new entrants. By integrating research on adult-life development and career management theories, this author introduces a four-stage model that identifies the major drivers of early career success. The proposed model explores both individual and organizational levels of early career development. The model integrates theories of the self-concept and environmental conditions, and helps explain how individuals develop and implement goals related to job selection, gain entry to organizations and experience early career success.

This paper provides an iterative approach to career success for new entrants to the job market. It is important to note that the author defines success both in subjective and objective terms. In other words success, for the purpose of this paper, can be defined as both something employees feel (e.g., a sense of satisfaction with the opportunity to continuously learn, time for self and family, social relationships, or job security) and something tangibly measurable (e.g., salary, rank, or number of promotions)(Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2010; Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003). Early models of career management generally focus on a broad set of behaviors. For example, Hall (1971) developed a model that involved a continuous cycle of goal setting, performance and goal resetting. Several other contemporary researchers, (e.g., Greenhaus and colleagues as well as Arthur, Hall and Lawrence, 1989), proffered similar cyclical approaches that focus on problem-solving and decision-making processes. These types of career models connote ongoing shifts in organizational structure, volatility in labor markets, and increasing employee turnover (both voluntary and involuntary). The resulting models of individual responsibility for job-related decision-making constitute “boundaryless” careers (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). These reflect broad economic and socio-cultural shifts that have occurred in the past few decades (Ashkenas, Ulrich, Jick, & Kerr, 1995). Contemporary career research, generally, assumes that employment is increasingly contractual

rather than relational (Herriot & Pemberton, 1966). Accordingly, individuals cannot expect to work a lifetime within one organization or steadily climb the corporate ladder. Rather careers are increasingly punctuated by turnover and lateral moves within a firm's hierarchy (Eby et al., 2003). Although there has been substantial research conducted on success in the boundaryless career, relatively less has been done on the subject of early careers. Our work focuses on the career entry process by integrating research on career management and adult-life development theories. Several theorists on adult-life development, particularly Donald Super (1957), have recognized the changes that occur as individuals mature over time. Super's (1957) emphasis on the self-concept and proposed developmental stages provide theoretical drivers helpful for understanding the individual level of career planning (Gould, 1979). Further, this research proposes that understanding career planning, especially in its early stages, can be enhanced by integrating theoretical and empirical evidence of the importance of appropriate career goal setting and implementation for new entrants. In this research, the authors briefly review the literature on career management and adult-life development theories of success, then discusses the limitations of these early conceptualizations and presents an alternative model of career success specific to new labor market entrants.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This research discusses the literature on career management and adult-life development theories in two steps. First, it considers the traditional and modern perspectives of careers and their impact on individual and organizational levels of career development. It also explores two key theories of modern careers known as the *boundaryless* and *protean* concepts. Second, it examines the research conducted on adult-life development theories and the correlation that exists between the career management and developmental perspectives.

### Traditional vs. Modern Perspectives

Traditional perspectives on careers have typically been characterized by an "individual's relationship to an employing organization" (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). This uni-dimensional direction of upward progression suggested high levels of commitment between the employee and the employer is referred to as a psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995). Employees expected job security and advancement in exchange for commitment to the organization (Baruch, 2004a). This perspective presupposes a limited view of career success in which achievement is defined by a steady progression up the corporate ladder, and assessed in terms of personal income or other extrinsic factors (Zaleska & Menezes, 2007). This view on careers played a dominant role in the popular imagination as well as the academic literature on careers because most organizational structures supported it (Sullivan, 1999).

Over the last thirty years, the effects of globalization, massive corporate downsizings, and loss of job security has led to changes in this traditional perspective (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). One major change is the shift that involves a move away from long-term psychological and relational contracts to more short-term transactional contracts. A transactional contract alters the relationship between the employee and employer drastically (Herriot & Pemberton, 1966). Instead of employees exchanging commitment for security, they must maintain flexibility and continue to develop their skills to fit the needs of the organization (Herriot & Pemberton, 1966; Baruch, 2004a). With this change in career structure, new perspectives on career management emerged. Two contemporary theories that are widely recognized are the *boundaryless* and *protean* concepts (Greenhaus et al., 2010).

The boundaryless career defies traditional perspectives by emphasizing that careers take on a "range of forms" and are not characterized by a single type (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). More specifically, boundaryless careers are not bounded or linked to a single organization and are punctuated by less hierarchical coordination and stability (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). Thus, the boundaryless career places the ownership of careers primarily in the hands of individuals rather than organizations and involves

frequent intra and inter-organizational mobility (Parker & Arthur, 2000). Concomitantly, Parker and Arthur (2000) suggested that conceptualizations of career success have been altered by de-emphasizing extrinsic and objective measures. Objective career success is defined as verifiable attainments, such as pay and promotions, and has been viewed in the past as the dominate metric of success across the majority of countries (Nicholson, 2000). On the other hand, Hall and Foster (1977) suggested that the new focus of career advancement is predicated on psychological success, which emphasizes the subjective view of careers, thus, eschewing any one measure of achievement. To assist in predicting success in the boundaryless career, Arthur and colleagues proposed three classes of variables, referred to as career competencies. These career competencies consist of career motivation and identification (knowing-why), marketability (knowing-how), and career-related networking (knowing-whom) (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994). Further, employees in the boundaryless career should maintain a high degree of flexibility in managing their careers and should strive to make decisions based on their value system (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1996). The concept of the protean career is similar to that of the boundaryless career (Hall, 1996). However, the protean orientation reflects a broader paradigm; specifically, a mindset related to careers based on individuals' values and their concomitant career behaviors (Briscoe & Hall, 2006). The boundaryless career, in contrast, involves boundary-crossing behaviors. The protean career takes an approach that is self-directed and values-driven (Briscoe & Hall, 2002). Self-directed individuals take responsibility for planning and managing their careers and take the initiative in making decisions and evaluating career options (Hall & Mirvis, 1996). The protean careerist's choices and search for self-fulfillment are the essential drivers of psychological success. Protean success occurs by accumulating skills and experiences learned in a variety of settings across different jobs and organizations (Hall, 1971; Baruch, 2004a).

### Developmental Perspectives

Developmental perspectives of careers typically present a series of stages that link closely to chronological periods or age. Donald Super (1957), a pioneer of adult-life development theories, emphasized the importance of developing and implementing a self-concept. The self-concept is the mental and conceptual image one develops of oneself (Super, 1957). Derived from personality traits, it encompasses abilities, interests, needs, values and aspirations (Gibson, 2003; Super, 1957). Super (1957) argued that individuals pass through stages that span the course of adult life. He identified the following stages: growth (birth to mid-teens), exploration (age 15-24), establishment stage (age 25-30), maintenance stage (age 45-62), and disengagement (age 65+). The exploration and establishment stages are of particular importance to this research because they are most proximal to those newly entering the labor market.

The exploration stage is comprised of a turbulent period where individuals make career choices based upon self-examination, role tryouts, and investigating various occupations (Gould, 1979). There are three components of the exploration stage: tentative appraisal (age 15-17), the crystallization of preference (age 18-21), and the specification of vocational preference (early 20's). First, tentative appraisals are made by incorporating needs, interests, capacities, values, and opportunities where the individual can attempt to identify work roles. Next, individuals begin to make specific choices based on their preferences by implementing their self-concepts. By the third phase, individuals have usually explored and chosen an appropriate occupation, which they believe, could be a viable long-term avenue for work. However, individuals' commitment in this stage is still relatively conditional. If they ultimately determine that the chosen occupation is not suitable, they may start the process of crystallizing, specifying and implementing a new preference over again (Super, 1957).

In the establishment stage, individuals seek to achieve stability in life. Finding one's niche for instance, leads to expectations of securing permanent and appropriate work in which to advance. Super (1980) considered these the most productive in the span of an adult's life. The establishment stage is broken down into two component parts: trial/stabilization (age 25-30) and advancement (age 31-43). The

trial/stabilization stage involves the individual settling down and making use of their abilities. If they lack satisfaction in the current job, they may make changes until the right one is found. The advancement phase directs the individual's efforts at securing a position, developing skills and demonstrating superior job performance. Ultimately, a sense of stability should begin to emerge in this stage (Super, 1957; 1980). Although Super (1957) initially presented these stages in a sequential manner, he later added that individuals cycle and recycle throughout the life span as changes occur in the self-concept and in the work place. Individuals' abilities to adapt to these changes affect the developmental process. Understanding these age and related stages of career development helps the individual in the decision-making process.

The research of Erik Erikson and Daniel Levinson also warrants discussion. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development (1963) involves the progression through eight distinct stages, wherein successful completion of each stage results in increased growth and successful interaction with others. Conversely, individuals who fail to successfully complete a stage may suffer a reduced ability to transition through to the remaining stages, thereby limiting development. Erikson's (1963) sixth stage, intimacy vs. isolation, is particularly important for young adults (age 18-40) and directly applicable to new labor market entrants. In this stage, individuals begin exploring mature physical and emotional relationships and search for intimacy with others (Erikson, 1963). Successful completion of this stage results in caring and trusting relationships. However, if individuals fail to complete this stage, they may develop a sense of isolation that leads to loneliness and depression. Although successfully completing each stage does not ensure absolute stability, failing to complete an early stage alters one's full development in later stages (Erikson, 1963).

This adversely affects new entrants in early career stages because these shortcomings may act as outside distractions to job performance or barriers to the creation of strong network association within work organizations. Levinson's research on adult life development also plays a significant role in the evolution of career and life stages. Levinson's (1978) approach includes four eras of development: pre-adulthood, early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood. Two of Levinson's (1978) main theoretical contentions suggest that each era contains a stable period and a transitional period. The stable period represents a crucial time where individuals make choices, pursue goals and attempt to create a desired lifestyle. The transitional period constitutes the end of one stage and the beginning of another. Individuals often reexamine their goals, and question the value of their accomplishments. This reflection promotes development because it pushes individuals to consider useful changes in certain areas of their lives (Levinson, 1978). Like the early stages of development proposed by both Super (1957) and Erikson (1963), Levinson's early adulthood (age 17-45) sheds light on issues pertaining to employees entering the labor market. Levinson's conceptualization of early adulthood era can be divided into four developmental periods: early adult transition (age 17-22), entering the adult world (22-28), age thirty transition (28-33), and settling down (33-40). Individuals passing out of adolescence and beginning to separate from their parents characterize the early adult transition. As young people withdraw, both financially and emotionally, from their parents and homes they are expected try out more adult roles.

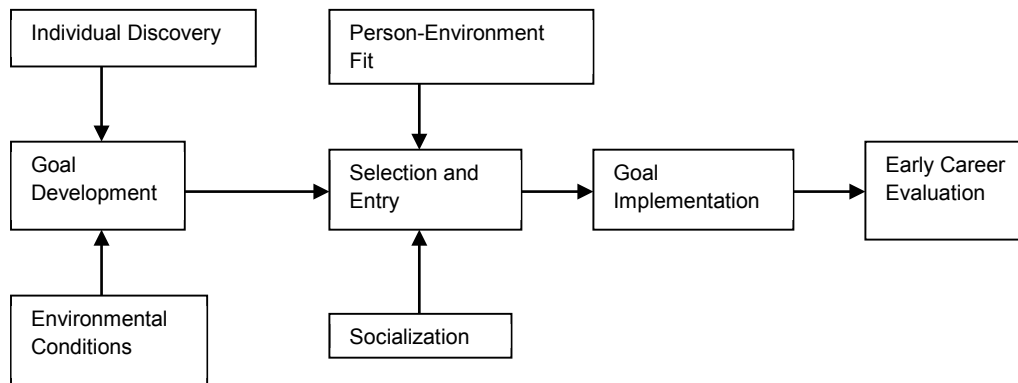
These role tryouts raise potential questions and conflicts. Should they explore adulthood by trying out different career options or settle down and gain some stability? Similar to Erikson's (1963) theory (i.e., intimacy vs. isolation stage), this stage presents potential role conflicts which, if left unresolved, inhibit the development of meaningful interpersonal relationships. Each course of action presents potentially different conflicts and likely outcomes. For example, if individuals choose to explore career options, there is a possibility they will question whether they want to develop important amorous relationships due to time constraints, a preoccupation with time spent at work, or the perception that family life carries with it a penalty (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000). On the other hand, individuals who choose to settle into a domesticated existence may feel overly bound to their outside commitments. As individuals transition into their thirties, more changes may occur. The outcome of these changes can range from moderate to severe. They include the possible dissolution of marriages or restricted career mobility due to having forgone prior

opportunities (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000). Nevertheless, once individuals reach the end of the early adulthood era, they have generally reached a stable period in their lives (Levinson, 1978).

### Alternative Approach for New Job Entrants

Traditional and contemporary perspectives of career management and adult-life development theories have proven useful in understanding the fundamental process of career development over a lifespan (Baruch, 2004a; Greenhaus et al., 2010). However, there are certain limitations in the application of these theories; they do not focus specifically on new entrants to the job market. By integrating career management and adult-life development theories, we provide entrants an alternative approach to career management that seeks to provide insight to new entrants who are transitioning from the role of student to employee. This alternative perspective, the early career success model, is composed of four stages (see Figure 1 for an overview of the model): goal development, selection and entry, goal implementation, and career evaluation.

Figure 1: The Early Career Success Model



*The model contends that individuals discover their unique aptitudes, abilities, and values which in conjunction with environmental conditions, helps them create goals. This leads to a choice of organizations. Once there, the degree to which employees fit in their new firms and the type of socialization used by those employers differentially affects the implementation of their goals. Both the success and failure of the implementation of these goals then leads to an evaluation of how well it has promoted their careers*

Contemporary models, such as Greenhaus and colleagues' (2010) career management model provide a description of cyclical processes that continue throughout adult life. However, the linear model proposed in this research applies to individuals in the early career years that generally lack tenure organizational positions, face looming career plateaus and may have not benefited from the succession of promotions and opportunities more common to employees in their middle or late career years (Greenhaus et al., 2010; Ference, Stoner, & Warren, 1977). This research argues that new entrants can effectively predict career success by utilizing a sequential, programmed approach.

### Stage 1 – Goal Development

This proposed model of early career success for new entrants to the job market begins with goal development. The researcher contends that two variables predict the creation of useful, career enhancing goals: individual discovery and environmental conditions. Prior research noted “a career goal can clarify thinking, motivate and direct behavior, help in the development of a career strategy and serve as a monitoring device to assess progress and identify obstacles to future satisfaction” (Greenhaus, Callahan, & Kaplan, 1995). Specifically, goals can motivate and regulate human behavior. In order for goal setting to be effective for new entrants, they should adhere to established guidelines. Studies on goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990, 2002) suggested that individuals should set specific, difficult goals that offer relevant, timely feedback in order to optimize performance levels. Vague, abstract or immeasurable goals

lead to lower levels of performance and delay or derail future career development. If individuals are committed to their goals, have the knowledge, skills, abilities, and aptitudes to attain them, and do not have other conflicting objectives, they greatly improve their chances of successful obtainment (Locke & Latham, 2006). Furthermore, career goals should be flexible and compatible with the individuals' values, and non-work interests (Greenhaus et al., 1995).

Career goals can be both conceptual and operational in nature (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2006). Conceptual goals describe the career ambitions individuals have and reflect their preferences, values, aptitudes and ambitions (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2006). Conceptual goals encapsulate individuals' preferred work, the kinds of relationships they would be required to have with others, and the physical and organizational environments in which they would be employed (Greenhaus et al., 2010). They reflect a kind of end state. Operational goals, on the other hand, are more proximal. They describe individuals' attempts to secure a specific job in a desired firm, which then allows them take the first step towards achieving their conceptual career goals (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2006; Greenhaus et al., 2010). It is important for new employees to create both kinds of goals but to focus, up front, on the operational components because if they are not met first, their conceptual aspirations may never materialize.

Career goals also have a short and long-term dimension (Greenhaus et al., 2010). Although this distinction is somewhat arbitrary, short-term goals (if achieved) are likely to come to fruition within one to three years (Greenhaus et al., 2010). As such, short-term goals are likely to be mostly operational in nature (e.g., manage office material procurement within two to three years). Long-term goals, although not long relative to one's entire working life, are those which one could reasonably hope to attain within five to seven years (Greenhaus et al., 2010). These are often conceptual in nature but do not necessarily have to be. For example, if one's short-term goal were to manage procurement at the office within three years, a long-term goal could be to manage procurement for the entire company with seven years. This long-term goal still has operational components but if its achievement allows that person to establish his/her own stand-alone procurement company; it could also serve as a conceptual goal. Before new employees set goals for early career success, certain conditions should be met. Specifically, individuals entering the job market for the first time should enhance their self-awareness and analyze salient environmental conditions. Doing so augments the quality of the established goals.

### Individual Discovery

Effective career planning begins with the individual and requires a willingness to develop greater self-awareness. As previously noted, this is a principle component of the individual's self-concept (Super, 1957). For example, potential employees might be asked, "how would you describe yourself in five words?" Frequently, recruits have difficulty answering this question if they have not explored and identified their core abilities, values and interests. That understanding is one intended outcome of individual discovery. It also aids in setting clear, realistic, goals. Of particular interest in this proposed model are individuals' personality dimensions, values, interests, abilities and lifestyle preferences (Greenhaus et al., 2010). Prior research (e.g., Goldberg 1981; Schein, 1996) developed methods to tap that information.

Personality: Companies often test employees' personalities because it has a bearing on commitment to the organization and performance on the job (Colquitt, LePine, & Wesson, 2011). As new entrants begin the process of discovery, they could benefit greatly from a basic assessment of their personality dimensions. McCrae and Costa (2000) describe personality traits as "endogenous dispositions that follow intrinsic paths of development essentially independent of environmental influences." This suggests that personality is a relatively stable trait only minimally influenced by environmental factors (Digman, 1989). Some researchers challenge this assumption citing alleged changes in personality over time (Roberts, Walton, & Viechtbauer, 2006). Nevertheless, due to the relatively short focal period (the first few years after high

school or college graduation) considered in this model, the researcher contends personality dimensions substantially influence early career development (Baruch, 2004a; Greenhaus et al., 2010; Roberts et al., 2006). Previous research concluded that five broad traits or “super factors” best describe the notion of personality (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Often called the “Big Five,” these personality dimensions are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience (Goldberg, 1981). Extraversion describes the degree to which individuals seek social stimulation. Individuals scoring high in extraversion display traits such as sociability, talkativeness and assertiveness. Those with low scores are described as introverted and reticent (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Prior research indicated that extraversion, although not universally predictive of job performance and career advancement, does predict success in a limited respect. Specifically, extraversion enhances the probability of success where interaction and influence proffering (e.g., sales positions) are required (Barrick & Mount, 2005; Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001). Agreeableness refers to a characteristic likeability, kindness and feeling sympathy for others. Individuals scoring high on this dimension are amicable and caring whereas, those low in agreeableness are self-centered (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Like extraversion, agreeableness is a “niche trait” (Hogan & Holland, 2003). It is relevant most in jobs or organizations that prioritize helping and collegiality. The author believes that as business around the globe move toward more group assignment of work (e.g., Devine, Clayton, Philips, Dunford, & Melner, 1999) this trait is likely to become increasingly important. Indeed, according to Mount, Barrick and Stewart (1998), agreeableness in team conditions might be the most important personality dimension for predicting success.

Conscientiousness refers to self-control and the active process of planning, organizing and carrying out tasks (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Those high in conscientiousness are as dependable, strong-willed and organized. Further, conscientious individuals are achievement oriented (Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002). Various researchers (e.g., Tett, Jackson, & Rothstein, 1991; Barrick & Mount, 1991) noted that conscientiousness has a high correlation with job performance, which suggests that conscientious individuals are better performers regardless of occupation. Neuroticism refers to a tendency to experience negative emotions such as fear, sadness, guilt, jealousy, anxiety and disgust. High levels of neuroticism predict irrational ideas, a lack of impulse control, and an inability to cope effectively with stress. Those low in neuroticism tend to be emotionally stable and relaxed. Research on neuroticism concluded it has potentially lasting career implications. However, running counter to conscientiousness, high levels of neuroticism predict poor performance evaluations, lower job performance and less career advancement (Barrick & Mount, 2005; Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, & Barrick, 1999).

Openness to experience refers to an individual’s tolerance for the unfamiliar. Those high in openness tend to be curious, imaginative and unconventional. In contrast, those low in openness have narrow interests and maintain conservative views. Openness to experience has limited generalized applicability to career success but can predict achievement in some limited circumstances. For example, openness is an important predictor of tolerance for change (a current economic reality), creative ability and potential international/expatriate managerial success (George & Zhou, 2001; Le Pine, Colquitt, & Erez, 2000; Caligiuri, 2000). Holland (1997) proposed another more comprehensive framework related to the interaction of personality with socially constructed value systems. Holland’s (1997) theory of vocational choice assumes that most individuals have one of six personality orientations: realistic (practical and task oriented), investigative (research oriented and scientific), artistic (creative and impulsive), social (generous and helpful), enterprising (ambitious and domineering), and conventional (efficient and conscientious). These orientations define individual’s distinctive patterns of values, abilities, interests, and needs (Feldman, Ethington, & Smart, 2001). Holland’s (1997) theory proffers three secondary assumptions that have important implications for new entrants (Latack, 1981). Holland (1997) proposed that some personality types (e.g., social and enterprising) are more likely to work well together than others (e.g., investigative and conventional). A further contention is that individuals maintain a strong preference for work activities and vocational because they have a more clearly defined occupational self-identity. The final assumption

is that personality and values, in combination, incline potential employees to seek organizations that have congruent orientations (Holland, 1997; Latack, 1981).

Several other personality assessment inventories (e.g., MBTI,) also provide new entrants with the opportunity to identify their character traits and explore their strengths. Utilizing these tools enhances the prospects of success for would-be new labor market entrants.

*Abilities: Mental, Physical and Emotional.* Like the personality variables noted above, abilities (e.g., mental and physical) are largely stable, initially hereditary, attributes that describe the capabilities individuals possess to perform a range of discrete but related tasks (Fleishman, Costanza, & Marshall-Mies, 1999). Of interest in this work is general mental ability (GMA). Sometimes referred to as the intelligence quotient (IQ), GMA is an amalgam of several different cognitive abilities: verbal, quantitative, spatial, reasoning, and perceptual (Johnson & Cullen, 2002). Fleishman et al. (1999) summarized the dimensions of GMA and their applications to specific occupations as follows: verbal ability describes an understanding of both spoken and written languages and the capacity to make oneself understood by others in the same fashion. It is relevant to almost every occupation and is broadly considered the most important component of GMA (Carroll, 1993). Quantitative ability involves performing both basic math operations quickly and correctly and properly selecting the appropriate methods of analysis. It is pertinent to occupations in financial planning, statistics, and mathematics. Reasoning ability describes anticipating when something might go wrong, developing new ideas, and the proper use of both deductive and inductive logic. It is useful in medicine, leadership in business, law and police work. Spatial ability includes a propensity to know where one is relative to other objects and to be able to anticipate how something would look if rearranged. Certainly, this would be important for not only pilots, drivers, and ship captains, but for artists. Perceptual ability involves being able to find patterns in information as well as comparing objects with remembered information. This ability is useful to musicians and police investigators.

GMA is one of the more useful and historically prominent study variables in the social and organizational sciences (Judge, Klinger, & Simon, 2010; Schmidt & Hunter, 2004). The demonstrated relationship between GMA and job performance (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998), is of salient interest here. Prior research indicated that GMA is generalizable across both jobs (Schmidt, 2002) and cultural boundaries (Judge et al., 2010; Salgado & Anderson, 2002). In addition to its impact on job performance, GMA also predicts other potentially important job and career related outcomes (Judge et al., 2010). In general, it augments appraisals of leadership ability (Judge, Colbert, & Ilies, 2004), creativity (Kuncel, Hezlett, & Ones, 2004), and job satisfaction (Ganzach, 1998). Conversely, GMA tends to mitigate counter-productive work behaviors (Dilchert, Ones, Davis, & Rostow, 2007). Given performance in a series of specific jobs constitutes a major driver of career advancement and development (Greenhaus et al., 2010) properly assessing GMA is of great importance. Unsurprisingly, in a meta-analysis conducted by Ng, Eby, Sorensen and Feldman (2005), researchers lent further credence to the assumption that GMA lent to higher salaries. Furthermore, the influence of GMA on the level of education attained is substantial and promotes career advancement (Deary, Taylor, Hart, Wilson, Smith, Blane, & Starr, 2005).

In addition to its influence on jobs, GMA also affects non-work-related aspects of life. Higher levels of GMA promote marital and familial stability, health and longevity (Gottfredson, 1997; Gottfredson & Deary, 2004). Based on findings relative to the changes from the traditional to modern forms of careers (e.g., Baruch, 2004; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009), some of the distinctions between work and non-work aspects of life are blurring. It is possible that GMA's demonstrated ability to promote marital and family stability, could actually promote job performance. Baruch (2004b) noted that many contemporary employees seek to work from home (e.g., "tele-commute") in order to be more involved in family life. GMA could promote, in a sense, home life and work life simultaneously with the help of applicable technologies. Physical abilities have been a topic of interest in the field of Industrial – Organizational (I/O) Psychology from its inception and have long been used in personnel selection decisions (Hough, Oswald, & Polyhart, 2001). Occupations that are physically demanding make up a significant portion of the labor market (Courtwright,



McCormick, Postlewaite, Reeves, & Mount, 2013). This is particularly true of developing economies (Courtwright et al, 2013). Recent data suggested about 28% of the U.S. labor force works in physically intensive jobs in public safety, construction, maintenance and repair, and the military (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). In these kinds of jobs, tests of physical ability are commonly used in selection, placement and retention decisions (Salgado, Viswesvaran, & Ones, 2001). The implications of poor performance on these exams have serious ramifications in that it predicts lower performance, more injuries, higher absenteeism and higher rates of, sometimes fatal, accidents (Courtwright et al., 2013; Gebhardt & Baker, 2010). Physical ability tests might benefit not just organizations but society as a whole when public safety concerns like safe operation of public transit and the apprehension of criminals are addressed (Gebhardt & Baker, 2007). Physical abilities can be grouped into five general categories: strength, stamina, flexibility/coordination, psychomotor, and sensory (Fleishman et al., 1999). Strength is the ability to both singularly and repeatedly lift, push, and pull heavy objects. It is useful, for example, in firefighting where moving heavy gear and rescue victims is common (Kazmi, 2005). Stamina refers to extent to which a person's cardiovascular conditioning can hold out over prolonged physical strain. It is particularly useful for athletes, performers and commercial under-sea divers (Fleishman et al., 1999).

Flexibility and coordination connote the speed and degree to which one can bend and flex as well as maintain balance and coordinate the use of all limbs simultaneously. Naturally, athletes benefit from this ability as well as structural iron and steel workers (Fleishman et al., 1999). Psychomotor abilities include having steady hands, manipulating small objects, make precise adjustments to machinery while operating it, and quickly responding to signals with correct body moves. Physicians, pilots and athletes benefit from this ability greatly (Fleishman et al., 1999). Sensory ability includes seeing objects both near and far, colors, at night as well as hearing, judging relative distances, recognizing speech, and being able to identify sounds in the presence of ambient noise. This ability applies directly pilots, commercial drivers (e.g., busses, taxis, and trucks), and musicians (Fleishman et al., 1999). Over the past several decades, researchers have debated the prospects of another type of ability: an emotional intelligence (EI) which, largely independent of GMA, allows some to move more effectively in social situations than others (Bar-On, 1997). The field has largely agreed that such a construct exists and bears consideration when examining job performance and career advancement (Farh, Seo, & Tesluck, 2012).

A prominently cited theory of EI is Mayer and Salovey's (1997). Their model is comprised of four emotional competencies. The first is emotional perception (keen awareness both one's own emotions as well as those of others). Second is emotional facilitation (using emotions to enable thinking). Third is emotional understanding (understanding emotions, signals, and the use of emotional language). The final component is emotional regulation (controlling emotions in order to achieve specific goals). These correlated dimensions are theorized to fall along a hierarchical continuum, from those which enable basic psychological functions (perceiving emotions) to those which allow individuals to manage themselves and achieve goals (regulating emotions) (Mayer, Roberts, & Barsade, 2008). Essentially, individuals with higher EIs are better suited to navigate emotionally charged situations and interactions (Farh et al., 2012). EI is particularly useful for functioning in two organizational contexts; jobs that require a lot of teamwork and those high in managerial work demands (MWD). High-MWD jobs require that managers direct a diverse set of individuals, functions, and lines of business (Farh et al., 2012). This requires working with or around others to accomplish tasks and achieve goals (Dierdorff, Rubin, & Morgeson). Because the common denominator of all interpersonal encounters is human emotions (Barsade & Gibson, 2007), those who understand them best are best at gaining from their proper use.

A major tenet of EI research contends that activated traits and abilities influence job performance, particularly in group or team situations, due to individual utilization of more effective work behaviors (Tett & Burnett, 2003). Indeed, according to Côté and Miners (2006), working well with others is the most important means by which highly emotionally intelligent employees achieve better job performance. Specifically, research suggested that the EI components of perceiving and responding appropriately to the

emotional states and needs of important others in organizations is one of the most important drivers of task performance in interdependent work settings (Marks, Mathieu, & Zaccaro, 2001; Stewart, Fulmer, & Barrick, 2005). This ability is likely to increase in importance to new employees enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century due to the increased utilization of group and team based systems of work across occupations (National Research Council, 2001). Understanding personal abilities is vital to successfully transitioning into, and establishing oneself in, the workforce. Abilities allow individuals to perform a wide array of tasks but also constitute a set of constraints and may affect employees' potential accomplishments (Greenhaus et al., 2010). Fortunately, new entrants can make use of career planning methods that assess their own strengths and weaknesses before they choose an occupation that may not be appropriate.

Values. Another aspect of individual discovery involves identifying individuals' value systems. Values are concepts or beliefs that pertain to desirable end states or behaviors, transcend specific situations, guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and denote a relative rank ordering of importance (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987). Values are culturally conditioned and, along with personality dimensions, are central to the creation of job relevant attitudes, intentions to follow through with seeking them, and ultimately gaining the desired employment (Fishbein & Azjen, 1975).

Early on, Eduard Spranger (1928) suggested six core values individuals possess to differing degrees but which act as basic motivators and drivers of behavior. Individuals' behaviors, according to Spranger (1928) are driven by a preference selecting conditions that allow for the expression of values. Those with strong theoretical values have a passion for creating knowledge. Utilitarian values predict practicality and a strong appreciation of money. Aesthetic values describe a drive to create and appreciate beauty in the world. Social values incline individuals to seek opportunities to help others. Those with strong individualistic values seek autonomy and positions in which to gain power and control of situations and others. The last of Spranger's (1928) values he calls traditional. Those with strong traditional values have an almost religious zeal for finding meaning in life.

More recently Brown's (1996) presented a model of career development that stresses the incorporation of cognitive, behavioral, and affective components by which individuals evaluate their own behaviors and those of others (Brown, 1996; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2006). The central premise of this model is that individual behaviors occur due to a more holistic sense of well-being that incorporates the interactions of differing roles across the life space (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2006). Brown's (1996) model has six components. The first postulate is that values are culturally derived and, subsequently, individuals develop a set of priorities that addresses a portion of them. Second, individuals attempt to deal with the most important of these values first provided they have a choice in deciding which life roles they assume. The third component acknowledges that gender, cultural background, socio-economic circumstances promote value systems and, as such, they differ between societal subgroups. Next, Brown (1996) contended that life satisfaction comes from appropriately attending to these roles.

The fifth component describes the movement of individuals between roles. The significance of a role is determined by the extent to which that role satisfies the prioritized value, but that will change as individuals shift between roles (e.g., between manager and parent). Finally, success in any role is determined (as noted above) by the aptitudes and abilities of those to perform them. Brown's (1996) model garnered varying degrees of empirical support (Niles & Hartung, 2000). Nevertheless, it is important for new labor market entrants to understand their own values when developing goals, and early career aspirations. Research indicated that the misalignment of values with the actual experience of work resulted in dissatisfaction (Niles & Hartung, 2000). This dissatisfaction could be directed at pay, promotion opportunity, supervisors, coworkers or the work itself (Locke, 1976). Schein's Career Anchor Model. Edgar Schein's (1978; 1996) career anchor model provides new entrants with a more global, conceptual, view of how personality, values, interests and abilities interrelate. Schein (1978; 1996) defines career anchors as a collection of self-perceived talents, motives and values that form an individual's self-concept and serve as the basis for career

aspirations. These individually rank ordered anchors serve to not only direct but to stabilize and reinforce chosen career paths (Schein, 1996; Baruch, 2004b). Schein (1996) identified the following eight career anchors: technical/functional competence, general managerial competence, autonomy/independence, security/Stability, entrepreneurial/creativity, service/dedication, pure challenge, and lifestyle integration. Technical/functional competence refers to employees' primarily seeking to achieve in and remain in one functional area of a company (e.g., marketing, human resources, operations, etc). The general managerial competence describes those who seek line authority more than functional specialization and seek to organize and integrate the efforts of others across organizational boundaries. The autonomy/independence anchor refers to a preference for being able to free oneself from most organizational restrictions related to how and when to work. Individuals who value autonomy highly might pass up a promotion (1978; 1996) in order to remain relatively independent (Schein, 1996; Greenhaus et al., 2010). Security/stability anchors emphasize the need for long-term career predictability. This likely includes a desire to stay in the same company, position and geographical areas for extended periods of time (Schein, 1990; Greenhaus et al., 2010). Entrepreneurial creativity indicates a drive to create something novel and useful.

They are typically not risk averse, assume responsibility and build companies to their specifications (Schein, 1996; Greenhaus et al., 2010). Some employees anchor their work in service and dedication. For them helping others is of more importance than money or promotion (Schein, 1996; Greenhaus et al., 2010). The pure challenge anchor drives some to seek out difficult, seemingly unsolvable problems and work them out. Typically, this involves working in novel ways that provide variety. The final anchor is lifestyle integration. Those who rank this most highly seek balance in various aspects of life, particularly the integration of family and career (Schein, 1996; Greenhaus et al., 2010).

Naturally, not all scholars subscribe to the theory that relatively stable anchors guide careers or that they come from initial aspirations. March and March (1977) went so far as to contend that career success is almost random and providential. Doubtless, good and bad fortune occurs. Nevertheless, Igbaria, Greenhaus and Parasuraman (1991), concluded an employee's career anchor or career orientation still significantly influences the selection of specific occupations and work settings, and it affects the employee's reactions to his or her work experiences. Ultimately, this research contends that taken together, abilities, values and career anchors, influence the development individuals' career goals, their attempts to gain entrance to organizations that allow them to implement these goals and evaluate how successful their efforts have been.

### Environmental Conditions

Career entry requires investments from would be participants that are partly conditioned by a job market realities. These can be fraught with the juxtaposition of high expectations with potential lack of employment opportunities, disappointment and self-questioning (Fournier & Pelletier, 1996). For decades, many new employees took for granted that, after obtaining a diploma or receiving specialized training, they could step into a career with relative ease. That economic and organizational reality changed substantially in the past three to four decades (Fournier & Pelletier, 1996). Economic recession, (particularly the deep one triggered by a meltdown in the subprime mortgage lending industry in 2008), increasing technological development and investment, as well as the questioning of traditional social expectations (e.g., lifelong employment) influenced how labor markets function and raised the required level of academic training required to gain an early foot hold (Brown, 1990). This could change the shape of contemporary career goals and, unfortunately, dissuade some from making them.

However, new entrants can now feel encouraged. Despite the potentially daunting tasks facing new labor market entrants, macro-economic conditions are currently improving. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in June of 2014 that unemployment rates were lower in May than a year earlier in 357 of the 372 metropolitan areas, higher in 11 areas, and unchanged in 4 areas. The national unemployment rate in May 2014 was 6.1 percent, not seasonally adjusted, down from 7.3 percent a year ago at that time and

approaching the level of joblessness the country experienced just prior to the beginning of the recession in 2008 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). Macro-economic conditions and the process of individual discovery are vital to potential success for new entrants although they only represent a part of the puzzle. It is important for new entrants to realize careers are a combination of jobs, subsequent occupations and the organizations in which employees conduct them. It is through interaction with the work environment that individuals utilize their capacities and seek to satisfy their values. Greenhaus et al. (2010) suggest four facets of the environment that are of particular importance to career management: occupations, jobs, organizations and families. A complete review of all theories of occupational choice goes well beyond the scope of this work. Instead, this research focuses on common themes derived from them. On one hand, individuals choose occupations they believe will meet their needs and on the other firms choose employees they believe meet theirs (Greenhaus et al., 2010). Occupations are groups of similar jobs that exist in several similar establishments (Crites, 1969). Individuals look at occupations and decide which to seek based on their task activities, financial rewards, security, (potentially dangerous or not) physical settings, and other lifestyle considerations (Callanan, 2003). Given the opportunity, they then set goals to obtain these desires. Organizations offer individuals a venue in which to attempt their self-discovered goals but they also act as co-creators of goals once they are members. Industry trends, the financial health of a particular firm, its business strategies, abundance of lack of definable career paths, flexibility, the size and structure of a firm and the influence of its competition could all affect individuals' career goals (Greenhaus et al., 2010). There are many reasons individuals seek the jobs they do.

Prior research identified task variety, task significance, ability and training requirements as principle drivers (e.g., Hackman & Oldham, 1976). The Job Characteristics Model (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) postulated that jobs requiring greater abilities are inherently more interesting and important. Furthermore, those jobs allow employees to do several different things with relative autonomy (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Ultimately, those jobs are intrinsically attractive, motivational, and satisfying (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Herzberg, 1964). This research contends, to the extent that organizations can offer these types of positions and new market entrants are aware of their prospects, individuals create career goals to secure such jobs. Their families influence individuals entering the labor market.

At the minimum, social learning theory posited that family background and interaction had a pervasive influence on what individuals find rewarding and influence their career choices and aspirations (Bandura, 1977; Krumboltz & Jacobs, 2006; Jepson, 2006). Certainly, this influences the goals they make (and those they will not make) related to securing a job. Furthermore, if married, a spouse's career aspirations, children's emotional needs, and the family's financial needs, may all differentially affect the kinds of career goals individuals make (Greenhaus et al., 2010). In addition to minding general market trends, one source of information that new market entrants might find particularly useful in developing career goals is the occupational information network of the United States' Department of Labor (O\*Net). Based on standard occupational classifications (SOC), O\*Net provides detailed information related to occupations and existence of virtually all jobs in them. It notes the kinds of skills necessary to perform a job, the job's environment and the types of tools employees must use. Furthermore, O\*Net uses Bureau of Labor Statistics data to project the growth of all legitimate industries.

## Stage 2- Selection and Entry

The selection process is pivotal to early career success. New labor market entrants can neither grow nor develop their careers if they fail to find jobs. This research focuses primarily on occupational choice as a process of matching occupations and people. Foundational research conducted by Holland (1997) and Super (1957) proposed that individuals select occupations based on their self-concept. New entrants who select occupations based on their values, abilities, and interests are likely to experience better initial job performance and, thus, enhance early success (Schein, 1996; Schmidt, 2002; Judge et al., 2010). From the perspective of organizations, based on job analysis, selection attempts to match the qualifications and

characteristics of applicants with jobs available and seeks to choose the most competent candidate (Schreuder & Coetze, 2006). Typically, organizations recruit from both internal (i.e., current employees) and external sources (Schreuder & Coetze, 2006). The external labor market (i.e., outsiders seeking employment), is of primary concern here. Once a suitable list of candidates for a job is created, organizations grant preliminary interviews, issue application blanks (i.e., forms filled out by job seekers), administer employment tests, interview further, check references, and, if applicable, give a physical exam (Schreuder & Coetze, 2006). Primarily, firms seek to fit applicants to positions due to its demonstrated positive impact on job performance (Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990; Greenberg, 2002).

New market entrants can be proactive. In this author's proposed model, the process of individual discovery is foundational. Courses in career development are available in business schools. Communities, states and universities often have career placement services. These can be helpful particularly in terms of employment testing, résumé coaching, and mock interviews. If potential applicants are diligent, they can measure their own interests using common tests of personality, values, and abilities like those noted above. Individuals might, thus, already possess knowledge of what best suits them and select themselves into jobs and organizations where their own prior test results predict achievement. Assuming organizations use similar (or identical) valid and reliable measures, the chances for selection success go up.

As newcomers move from the selection stage to entry, they may experience some shock or disequilibrium (Hughes, 1958). This experience comes from the unrealistic expectations entrants had prior to entering the organization. It stems from misconceived notions about organizational culture and climate (Jones, 1986). Although new employees might have engaged in a lot of individual discovery, some of these misgivings are almost inevitable (Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995). As a result, new entrants might be forced to reevaluate their assumptions by taking on a more active role in learning the new culture and work processes (Jones, 1983). The attraction-selection-attrition model (e.g., Schneider et al., 1995) predicts that in order to achieve in an organization, new employees must either become fully socialized and "fit" with the firm's culture, or seek membership elsewhere (Schneider et al., 1995).

#### Individual Level: Person-Environment Fit

The general notion of person-environment fit, or congruence, is an important precursor of success for new entrants. One approach to person-environment fit focuses on the match between individual skills and job requirements, and the relationship between individual characteristics and organizational climate (O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991). Furthermore, individuals choose careers that "match" or "fit" their unique set of values, interests, and needs (O'Reilly et al., 1991). Similarly, Lofquist and Dawis (1969) proposed that satisfaction results from "a harmonious relationship between the individual and his environment, suitability of the individual to the environment and vice versa." Another aspect of environmental fit is person-organization fit (P-O fit). The notion comes from the interactionist perspective, which contends that the way employees behave at work and function in their jobs is a combination of both individual and situational characteristics (Chatman, 1991; George, 1992; Erdogan, Kraimer, & Liden, 2002). Fit occurs if individuals' characteristics are in line with situational characteristics and, thus, results in more positive attitudes and outcomes (Erdogan et al., 2002).

Value congruence is a significant form of fit because beliefs tend to remain relatively stable over time and are instrumental in guiding individuals' actions, developing and maintaining attitudes, and judging behaviors (Rokeach, 1968). Value congruence occurs through both proper employee selection and socialization and is typically associated with lower levels of turnover and higher levels of satisfaction (Kristof, 1996). Furthermore, Erdogan et al. (2002) found that higher levels of career satisfaction occurred with a high degree of congruence between individual and organizational values even for employees who were not the most liked or favored by their supervisors. These findings again underscore that new employees

enhance their prospects of early career success when they engage proactive behaviors aimed at aligning themselves with not just suitable jobs, but also the right employers (Erdogan & Bauer, 2005).

Organizational Level: Socialization

Socialization focuses on how individuals learn the beliefs, values, orientations, behaviors and skills necessary to perform new role behaviors and function effectively in an organizational context (Van Maanen, 1976). Socialization eases adjustment for new entrants into the organization. Properly socialized employees are desirable because they more rapidly learn their new roles, master new tasks, and become socially integrated (Cooper-Thomas, Anderson, & Cash, 2012). Furthermore, proper socialization is associated with greater job satisfaction, higher levels of organizational commitment, better person-organization fit and lower turnover intentions (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2012; Kammeyer-Mueller, Wanberg, Glomb, & Ahlburg, 2005; Kramer, Callister, & Turban, 1995; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992).

Researchers typically approached socialization as a sequential event. Stage model theories of socialization (Schein, 1978; Van Maanen, 1976) focused on the phases through which new associates transition to becoming fully integrated members of an organization. Much of the research on stage models has indicated that entrants will progress through at least three stages (Reichers, 1987). The first stage represents the time prior to organizational entry. During this period, individuals often have misconceptions about what their careers that do not adequately depict reality. The second stage represents the entry phase into the organization, which may cause the new entrants to reevaluate their previous expectations about the job. During this stage, individuals begin to increase their focus on making an impact on the group or organization (Schein, 1978). In the final stage, Schein (1978) suggested that newcomers become either more or less conforming to essential standards of behavior in response to the various socialization tactics employed by the organization. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) offered six socialization tactics (see Table 1), that they hypothesized significantly affected newcomer responses. These dimensions run along a continuum from individualized to institutionalized (Chow, 2002; Jones, 1986). Table 1 provides a synopsis.

Table 1: Tactics of Organizational Socialization

Tactic Involving Mostly:	Institutionalized:	Individualized:	Measures:
Context	Collective	Individual	→ Provision of common learning experience
	Formal	Informal	→ e.g. set training program
Content	Sequential	Random	→ Structured career program
	Fixed	Variable	→ Timetable for career progression
Social	Serial	Disjunctive	→ Provision of role models
	Investiture	Divestiture	→ Support from experienced org. members

*This table presents the dimensions of organizational socializations as well as the tactics available to firms. It melds Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) work on the social, content, and context aspects of socialization with Jones' (1986) continuum of institutionalized to individualized approaches.*

Context refers to the social space or background under which socialization occurs. The collective versus individual distinction denotes the choice organizations make to socialize individuals separate from others or to bring them onboard as a cohort (Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Formal versus informal distinctions reflect the existence of a set program of socialization training or weaker informal lack of it (Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Content describes the progression of roles that individuals adopt throughout their time in an organization (Chow, 2002). Sequential socialization is the

organizationally planned and managed path on which employees develop their careers. Random socialization, or a largely unpredictable or non-existent path, is more common in the modern conceptualization of the boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). The difference between the socialization choices of fixed and variable is the difference between specifying how long an employee is expected to serve in a given capacity (i.e., fixed) and leaving that timeline vague (i.e., variable) (Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

The social dimension denotes the degree to which established members of organizations (e.g., leaders, managers, and mentors) act as role models and remind new employees that they are members of a distinct group and that it helps define who they are (Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). The serial/disjunctive is the degree to which a new member's direct supervisor once held the position he/she currently occupies. Serial relationships offer a new member good role models with a specific understanding of the technical requirements and role obligations of that employee's position (Chow, 2002). The last dimension, investiture versus divestiture describes the degree to which managers in a firm require that new employees abandon previous values and identities and replace them with new ones prescribed in the socialization process (Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). The more an organization requires debasing activities, the higher it is on investiture (Chow, 2002).

In addition to Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) six tactics of socialization, Table 1 also notes Jones' (1986) continuum of institutional to individual socialization. The institutional dimension includes collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture. These tactics connote a regimented and planned set of activities that provide new members with an objectively clear set of socialized expectations and an enhanced understanding of the firm's culture. The individualized dimension includes individual, informal, random, variable, disjunctive, and divestiture. The individualized approach to socialization places the burden of acquiring the content material of socialization squarely on the shoulders of the new employee. Generally, the institutionalized approach creates a conformist employee, whereas, individualized approaches tend to foster employee creativity (Vanous, 1992). Empirical work on employee career satisfaction indicated that institutional approaches strongly, negatively, predicted satisfaction (Orpen, 1995). Furthermore, Orpen (1995) found that individualized approaches, when utilized upon organizational entry, positively predicted career satisfaction later in life. Under no circumstances did either of these dimensions predict career success as defined by promotions and salary growth over the initial three years of employment (Orpen, 1995). In light of the dual (i.e., objective and subjective) nature of career success (e.g., Baruch, 2004b), the author contends organizations that take individualized approaches to socialization are more attractive to new employees because individuals increasingly subjectively define success (e.g., in terms of a work/life balance), not just by making more money and gaining more authority.

### Stage 3- Goal Implementation

As new entrants progress through the selection and entry stage, they continue to work towards their goals. Despite honest intentions, many goals go unmet (Dalton & Spiller, 2012; Webb & Sheeran, 2006). The disappointing discrepancy between what people want to do and what they actually accomplish garnered considerable research attention on the subject of goal pursuit (Dalton & Spiller, 2012; Fishbein & Azjen, 1975) and the strategies used to complete them (Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2009). Planning is essential to goal completion (Dalton & Spiller, 2012). In general, research on goal achievement and the intentions that foster it, focused on the completion of a single goal (Dalton & Spiller, 2012). Fundamentally, even distinguishing conceptual from operational goals indicates that new employees juggle the completion of multiple objectives. Unfortunately, strategies that apply to the completion of a single goal do not easily translate to the attainment of multiple goals (Austin & Vancouver, 1996). Attending to the specific actions required for achievement of multiple goals is difficult. Research indicated that planning for multiple goals in complex environments like contemporary work environments, is very tenuous (Dalton & Spiller, 2012). These researchers found that when individuals face multiple, often competing, goals, the perceived

difficulty of executing actions related to goal obtainment becomes salient, and their commitment to them weakens. Without persistent, high levels of commitment, individuals typically fall short of their stated objectives (Dalton & Spiller, 2012). Despite the aforementioned difficulties, individuals can work towards the completion of multiple objectives with the proper use of career strategies. These are behaviors, activities, or experiences designed to help individuals meet goals (Callanan, 2006). Callanan (2006) described a process for implementing career strategies. First, new entrants should reexamine their long-term goals and make sure they are compatible with what they value. Although, presumably, new entrants have done that during the process of individual discovery, it is possible that their job demands and organizational experiences have altered what they have come to value. Second, they should scan their organizations and identify the behaviors and experiences that will ultimately allow them to reach their long-term goals. Third, new entrants should explore the fit between their short and long-term goals and evaluate whether they conflict. Fourth, they should identify the behaviors or experiences that help in attaining short-term goals. Finally, new entrants should combine the lists of career strategies for short and long-term goal attainment. New entrants would benefit by familiarizing themselves with strategies that garnered empirical support in predicting goal achievement. These career strategies include attaining competence in the current job, working extended hours, securing a mentor, and developing new skills that extend beyond those required in the current position (Callanan, 2006). Developing and implementing career strategies enhances employees' chances of attaining their short and long-term career goals as well as coordinating their operation and conceptual goals.

#### Stage 4- Early Career Evaluation

The last stage in this model involves career evaluation. It requires individuals to assess the decisions made during all phases up to and including the evaluation of goals set prior to seeking employment. Career management is a flexible, adaptive, process that individuals can use to evaluate and negotiate the terms of their employment (Greenhaus et al., 2010; Baruch, 2004b). Herriot and Pemberton (1966), noted that in the absence of procedural (e.g., Rawls, 1971; Sheppard, Lewicki, & Minton, 1992) and distributive (e.g., Adams, 1965) justice (perceived fairness that occurs when the process utilized or actual work outcomes are seen as fair and reasonable respectively), individuals attempt to either renegotiate the work contract, or leave the organization. If individuals deem the process fair, they will deepen their relationships with their organizations. However, if individuals evaluate their circumstances in terms of both money and interactions within organizations and find them unfair, they are likely to make unfavorable judgments and (e.g., either voluntarily or involuntarily), look to a different track and/or employer for career satisfaction.

Career evaluation refers to the process by which career-related feedback is gathered and used. According to Greenhaus and colleagues (2010), the feedback obtained through career appraisal has two specific functions. First, it assesses the appropriateness of a particular career strategy. Does the strategy help the new entrant reach established goals? Second, feedback can test the appropriateness of a goal itself. Does the goal still fit the new entrant's career plan? Is the goal still attainable? If accomplished, did the completed goal bring the anticipated levels of satisfaction? With effective appraisal, new entrants can discover information that validates or invalidates their prior decisions and propel their choices over the following phases of their lives and careers.

#### **CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

The author's aim in creating the model of career development laid out in this research was to provide new labor market entrants with a theoretically sound framework for enhancing the probability of early career success. As organizational structures continue to evolve, it is imperative that prospective employees plan better. This proposed model contends that individuals focus first on attaining greater self-awareness, which helps define and refine the self-concept. Next, the model suggests would-be applicants familiarize themselves with relevant environmental conditions (e.g., the macro economic conditions of the labor market



and the opportunities available in specific firms and occupations). This allows entrants to engage the first stage of the model: goal development. Properly prepared new entrants will be better able to set difficult, specific, obtainable, goals that guide their choices in occupational selection. Once they choose/gain entrance to appropriate organizations (Stage 2 of the model), they navigate organizational socialization tactics which help them (or not) adjust to their roles and “fit” with the organizational culture. Provided they are properly socialized, in the model’s third stage they implement their goals and gather feedback (e.g., from supervisors, family, and coworkers) in order to evaluate the utility of prior decisions and plot a future course (the model’s final phase-early career evaluation). New employees who successfully transition through these stages enhance their chances of early career success and set the stage for better outcomes throughout the rest of their working lives.

Naturally, the proposed model has inherent limitations and is fraught with potential methodological difficulty. Future research must empirically validate this model. However, doing so could prove demanding. For example, prior research in goal accomplishment (e.g., Austin & Vancouver, 1996) focused on the difficulties of commitment to, and achievement of, multiple goals. This proposed model requires the assessment of multiple, concurrent, goals that are both personal and organizational. Assessing their accomplishment would likely require dyadic data gathered from employees and supervisors as well as individual responses related to non-work aspirations. Such would be a very aggressive research agenda which could probably only be done in modest, stepwise chunks. The author anticipates difficulty obtaining dyadic samples and the potential for response bias. Despite the shortcomings and challenges germane to this model, future empirical research on early careers is inherently important because successful outcomes, both for individuals and organizations (e.g., individual accomplishment and growth, earning a living, firm well-being and profitability) are all of ubiquitous concern.

**APPENDIX**

The Model of Early Career Success: Phases, Objectives, Activities and supporting Literature

Phase of Early Career Success	Principal Objective	Prerequisite Activities and Conditions	Representative Supporting Literature
<u>Stage 1</u>	Goal Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Individual Discovery</li> <li>❖ Environmental Scanning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ (Barrick &amp; Mount, 1991)</li> <li>➤ (Holland, 1997)</li> <li>➤ (Schmidt &amp; Hunter, 2004)</li> <li>➤ (Fishbein &amp; Azjen, 1975)</li> <li>➤ (Schein 1978; 1996)</li> <li>❖ (Hackman &amp; Oldham, 1976)</li> <li>❖ (Bandura, 1977)</li> <li>❖ (Brown, 1990)</li> </ul>
<u>Stage 2</u>	Selection and Entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person/Environment Fit</li> <li>○ Tactics of Organizational Socialization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Schreuder &amp; Coetze, 2006)</li> <li>• (George, 1992)</li> <li>• (O’Reilly, Chatman, &amp; Caldwell, 1991)</li> <li>○ (Van Maanen &amp; Schein, 1979)</li> <li>○ (Jones, 1986)</li> </ul>
<u>Stage 3</u>	Goal Implementation	Completion of Stages 1 & 2	(Dalton & Spiller, 2012) (Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2009) (Callanan, 2006)
<u>Stage 4</u>	Early Career Evaluation	Completion of Stages 1-3	(Herriot & Pemberton, 1966) (Baruch, 2004) (Greenhaus, Godshalk, & Callanan, 2010)

*The above chart describes the flow of the model proposed in Figure 1. It describes the stages of model, describes what new labor market entrants attend to in each of them, notes what they need to accomplish in order to move to the next phase and lists the research drawn upon to conceptually justify each phase.*

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