



Toward an integrated model of intrinsic motivation and career self-management

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to develop an integrative process model that explains the mechanisms through which intrinsic motivation can influence career self-management and subsequent subjective and objective career success.

Design/methodology/approach – Research on career self-management can benefit by incorporating an intrinsic motivation perspective. The paper proposes a model that depicts how four components of intrinsic motivation – meaningfulness, competence, choice, and progress – can contribute to career self-management.

Findings – Because the manuscript is conceptual and theoretical in nature, there are no empirical findings to discuss. The paper does, however, advance six testable research propositions linking components of intrinsic motivation to career self-management and career success.

Research limitations/implications – The model is most applicable for individuals who have some level of control over their own career choices and mobility. Also, we focus on intrinsic, rather than extrinsic, motivation, and we consider psychological and sense-making aspects of motivation rather than structural and task-based aspects. Propositions are advanced to be tested in future research; future research can use the model as a platform from which to study the connection between intrinsic motivation and career self-management.

Practical implications – The paper describes how the model can be applied to help individuals navigate the realities and challenges of their careers.

Originality/value – Prior research has not specified the exact mechanisms through which intrinsic motivation may guide career self-management. This paper provides an integrated process model addressing this need with relevance to researchers, career management professionals, and individuals.

Keywords Career development, Career satisfaction, Motivation (psychology), Careers

Paper type Conceptual paper

A trend in the career literature has been an increased focus on career self-management. In the past, the literature on career management often emphasized organizational initiatives such as employee workshops, job rotation, job enrichment, career progression ladders and like organizationally planned programs or developmental stage theories (Feldman, 1989; Levinson, 1978; London and Stumpf, 1982; Super, 1957). More recently researchers have focused on the reality that a typical career involves multiple organizations and often dissimilar roles in those organizations, in large part because of globalization and advances in technology that have produced a turbulent environmental context (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Hall and Moss, 1998; Mirvis and Hall, 1994; Osterman, 1996; Sullivan, 1999). The examples of the engineer who becomes a manager and the doctor who becomes an administrator are relatively common. However, more radical shifts in individual career progression seem to be less unusual,



such as the lawyer who becomes a doctor and then a community activist or politician. Even more common are the examples of people moving across jobs in different industries, such as from telecommunications to the entertainment industry. The increased attention among researchers on exploring the dynamics of career self-management is important if we are to advance theory and help individuals manage and make sense of their careers. This paper attempts to further this effort by incorporating intrinsic motivation into a career self-management process model.

For many, shifts in their careers are not freely chosen – they are organizationally induced. Mergers, acquisitions, and downsizing are all indications of general shifts between declining and growing sectors of the economy that affect employees (Coovert, 1995; Freeman *et al.*, 1995; Howard, 1995; Sullivan, 1999). These shifts have been accompanied by the organizational trend to explicitly encourage employees to actively manage their own careers. Among career researchers, concepts such as the protean career (Hall, 1996), the boundaryless career (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996), and the changing assumptions of the employment contract (Altman and Post, 1996; Hall and Mirvis, 1996; Rousseau, 1995; Rousseau and Wade-Benzoni, 1995) have reflected the changing nature of careers beyond the context of a single, traditional organization. The concept of career self-management – the degree to which one regularly gathers information and plans for career problem solving and decision making – has become important as the essential nature of careers has shifted (Kosseck *et al.*, 1998; Stumpf *et al.*, 1983). King (2004) observed that if the nature of organizational life is becoming unpredictable or even chaotic as many have argued, self-management of one's career may be the only way to navigate through a turbulent world.

Some researchers have focused on the outcomes associated with the new career context. Kossek *et al.* (1998) urged that future work by researchers should try to assess the quality of career self-management activity and then link them to other outcomes. These outcomes should not only include visible signs of career advancement, but also the quality of the career experience for the individual. Researchers have also suggested that both the objective career (i.e. the career considered from the vantage point of the organization and society in general (Hughes, 1958; Van Maanen, 1977)) and the subjective career (i.e. the career considered from the vantage point of the individual (Hughes, 1958; Van Maanen, 1977)) are, in fact, interdependent (Arthur *et al.*, 2005; Hall and Chandler, 2005; Goffman, 1961). With this acknowledgement that the two vantage points are critically intertwined, it is important to have a better understanding of what motivational processes are involved as individuals navigate their own career paths and strive for an overall sense of success (with respect to both objective and subjective success) in their career.

The emergent emphasis on concepts such as career self-management, the protean career, and psychological success in the careers literature parallels recent research on empowerment and intrinsic motivation (Spreitzer, 1995; Thomas, 2000; Thomas and Tymon, 1994, 1997; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Thomas *et al.*, 1997). Thomas and Velthouse (1990) and Spreitzer (1995) argued that intrinsic motivation is the key motivational/psychological component of employee empowerment. Manz (1991) noted that intrinsic motivation enables employees to become self-managing or self-leading. In Hall and Moss's (1998) conception of the protean career, development is indeed self-directed. Furthermore, they argued that pursuing the protean career involves a

high level of self-knowledge, self-awareness, and personal responsibility. Individuals need to be self-correcting in response to changing demands from the environment, without waiting for formal training and development from the organization.

We intend to bridge the gap between the careers literature and the intrinsic motivation literature. We begin by reviewing the careers literature, noting that the transition in the literature from emphasis on individual careers within the context of a single organization to emphasis on individual careers across organizations, industries, and vocational fields provides an opportunity to integrate the empowerment and intrinsic motivation literature. We then present a testable model of an intrinsic motivational approach to career self-management, which relates the four-component model of intrinsic motivation (Thomas and Tymon, 1993, 1994; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990) with career self-management (King, 2004) and suggests that career self-management can lead to career success. In doing so, we argue that the careers literature can gain from closer consideration and integration of the work on empowerment and intrinsic motivation in order better to understand the motivational processes involved in the career self-management process. We conclude with a discussion of the research and practical implications of the model.

The increasing importance of the self-managed career

There has been increased attention among researchers to viewing careers as involving multiple, short learning cycles over one's life span (e.g. Hall and Mirvis, 1996). For example, a single career might involve a series of mini-stages of exploration, trial, mastery, and exit as a person works within and across organizations, industries, and even vocational fields. Along with this, have come new ideas and concepts in the careers literature. Hall (1976) provided an enduring contribution to a shift in thinking from organizationally managed careers to career self-management with the introduction of the concept of the protean career. Recently, he described the protean career as "one in which the person, not the organization, is in charge, the core values are freedom and growth, and the main success criteria are subjective (psychological success) vs objective (position, salary)" (Hall, 2004, p. 4). In the 30 years since the introduction of the concept of the protean career, the ideas have been refined and continue to be extremely relevant in the context of the twenty-first century (see Hall, 2004, 2002, 1996; Hall and Chandler, 2005; Hall and Mirvis, 1996; Hall and Moss, 1998; Hall *et al.*, 2002). Additionally, a complementary perspective was introduced by Arthur and Rousseau (1996, p. 6), who conceptualized the "boundaryless career" as being different from the traditional career because of "independence from, rather than dependence on, traditional organizational career arrangements".

Other streams of careers research have also reflected a focus on the individual in career management. For example, London and associates (e.g. London, 1983, 1985, 1993; London and Mone, 1987; London and Stumpf, 1982) have researched career motivation and its dimensions. They postulated and found empirical evidence for three basic dimensions of career motivation: career resilience, career insight, and career identity. Resilience provides the personal drive to continue trying in the face of obstacles; insight reflects a strong understanding of oneself and the work environment; and identity channels the individual's energy, behavior, and performance toward a specific set of career objectives. London and his colleagues identified four patterns of career development as outgrowths of these dimensions:

- (1) healthy development;
- (2) redirection;
- (3) intervening self-doubt; and
- (4) breaking away from an ineffective pattern.

Additionally, they developed theory on the relationship of career motivation to situational characteristics. For example, organizations that provide reinforcement for good performance, opportunities to achieve, and an environment supportive of risk taking help contribute to the development of career resilience. Similarly, organizations contribute to career insight by encouraging the individual to set goals and by providing information about career opportunities within the organization. Organizations may also contribute to career identity by providing abundant opportunities for self-development, opportunities for advancement, and mentors. In this view of career motivation, London implicitly addressed shorter cycles of success and failure within the context of a single individual's career, in addition to suggesting that the career may be considered in the context of an individual, rather than within the context of a single organization.

Another stream of research that underscores the importance of the career within the context of the individual is the work that has developed as an outgrowth of Schein's (1978, 1990) typology of "career anchors" (e.g. Albertini, 1982; Barth, 1993; Feldman and Bolino, 1997, 2000; Yarnall, 1998). Schein's work suggested that individuals become more aware of their own abilities, motives and needs, and attitudes and values after several years in the workforce. He labeled these stable constellations of job preferences as career anchors and postulated that they set "reasonably strong parameters within which future career decisions will be made" (Feldman and Bolino, 2000, p. 55). The original (Schein, 1978) conceptualization of these career anchors included:

- technical/functional competence;
- managerial competence;
- security/ stability;
- autonomy/independence; and
- entrepreneurial creativity.

Schein's work in creating a typology that delineated the various individual-level non-monetary drivers of career choices placed emphasis on the career within the context of the individual. It is important to note, however, that Schein's (1978, 1990) typology does acknowledge both the individual as an entity with a career outside the boundaries of a single organization and the individual within a single organizational context (Yarnall, 1998).

The work of Wrzesniewski and her colleagues (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Wrzesniewski *et al.*, 1997) in developing the notion of individual work orientation (e.g. work as a job, career, or calling (Wrzesniewski *et al.*, 1997)) and the concept of job crafting (i.e. the physical and cognitive changes that individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work so as to revise work identities and meanings (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001)) has also placed a great deal of emphasis on careers within the context of the individual. With respect to job crafting, Wrzesniewski and

Dutton (2001) argued that individuals may actively alter both the task and relational boundaries of their jobs in order to create work with which they are more satisfied. From this perspective, despite the particular nature of a given occupation and/or organization, the work itself is shaped by the individual. Wrzesniewski and Dutton noted that job crafting takes many forms and directions, involving how people see their work and themselves in their work. They also note that job crafting often involves creative acts in which employees transform task and relational boundaries. Employees are seen as proactive and creative identity builders who take opportunities to engage others in ways that change work identity and work meaning.

King's (2004) approach to career self-management also reflects the shift toward shorter learning cycles and the consideration of the career within the context of the individual. King (2004) depicted career management as a dynamic process involving the enactment of a set of three concurrent behaviors, including what she described as positioning behaviors. These behaviors include developing contacts, skills, and experiences to achieve one's desired career outcomes. King suggested that both individuals' self-efficacy (i.e. task-specific self-confidence (Bandura, 1986, 1997) and their desire for control over career outcomes (Bell and Staw, 1989; Greenberger and Strasser, 1986; Seibert *et al.*, 1999) would be related to the degree to which they exhibited career self-management behaviors, and that career self-management behaviors would then lead to the attainment of desired career outcomes and subsequent life and career satisfaction. King's (2004) approach, while not intended to be solely applicable to the new protean or boundaryless career, is nevertheless a process model of career management that can be applied within the context of the individual, across organizations, industries, and vocational tracks. Additionally, King's (2004) process model can apply to any of the shorter learning cycles that individuals encounter during the course of their careers.

All of the approaches to careers research discussed above have important parallels to empowerment and intrinsic motivation theory. In the words of Hall and Moss (1998), if the old contract was with the organization, then the protean contract is with the self and one's work. According to this view, the individual is empowered, and, we argue, will benefit from being intrinsically motivated to manage their own career. Similarly, London's (1983) model of career motivation suggests that individuals are motivated through career resilience, identity, and insight. While environmental factors such as the extrinsic rewards provided by an organization may be an important influence on behavior, individuals are fundamentally responsible themselves to achieve career success. Schein's (1978, 1990) work on career anchors assumes that career motivation is driven by one's personal understanding of one's own abilities, needs, and values – and that making choices that are consistent with this understanding will help lead one to a more satisfying, personally fulfilling career. Wrzesniewski and Dutton's (2001) model of job crafting suggests that three individual needs – the need for personal control (e.g. Adler, 1930), the need for a positive self-image (e.g. Steele, 1988), and the need for connection to others (Baumeister and Leary, 1995) – serve as important motivational factors in whether or not individuals choose to craft their jobs. In particular, the idea that individuals are motivated by a need for personal control is conceptually congruent with the need for autonomy from the job design literature (e.g. Hackman and Oldham, 1980) and the need for choice from the intrinsic motivation literature (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990).

The ties to the motivation literature are quite apparent in King's (2004) view – both of her immediate antecedents to career self-management behaviors (self-efficacy and desire for control over career outcomes) are motivational variables. Self-efficacy is the key element in Bandura's (1986, 1997) social cognitive theory, which suggests that individuals are intrinsically motivated to perform if they feel confident in their ability. With respect to desire for control over career outcomes, Hackman and Oldham's (1980) job characteristics theory includes autonomy as a key motivational variable – precisely because of the assumption that individuals will be more intrinsically motivated if they feel they are in charge of their work. King's (2004) use of desire for control over career outcomes suggests that some people may be more intrinsically motivated to self-manage their own careers because the desire for control is an individual difference. To conclude, the consideration of motivational variables in the careers literature is relevant and has already been occurring to some degree without having had a unified theoretical frame from which to do so. In the next section, we discuss Thomas and Velthouse's (1990) theory of intrinsic motivation, which we believe will add significantly to our understanding of the connections between intrinsic motivation and career self-management.

Intrinsic motivation

An understanding of intrinsic motivation and its component parts is necessary in order to understand its relationship with career self-management. In contrast to extrinsic motivation, which is based on rewards and punishments controlled by the organization (e.g. expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964)), intrinsic motivation is based on positively valued (rewarding) experiences that a person gets directly from their work tasks (Deci, 1975; Deci and Ryan, 1985; Thomas and Tymon, 1997; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990). These positive experiences serve to get an individual excited, involved, committed, and energized by their work (Thomas and Tymon, 1997). At its heart, intrinsic motivation is about passion and positive feelings that people get from their work. These feelings reinforce and energize employees' self-management efforts and make work personally fulfilling. Building intrinsic motivation, then, helps to create an upward spiral of positive feelings and experiences (Thomas, 2000).

Recent research has resulted in a comprehensive model of intrinsic motivation consisting of four essential judgments, called "task assessments" (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Thomas and Tymon, 1993, 1994, 1997). These component elements consist of feelings of meaningfulness, choice, competence, and progress; when combined, the four elements make up the set of intrinsic rewards that are necessary to produce and sustain empowerment (Thomas and Tymon, 1994). This model builds on and combines elements of the foundational research of Deci and associates (Deci, 1975; Deci and Ryan, 1985) in the psychological literature and Hackman and Oldham (1976, 1980) in the organizational sciences. A discussion of these foundational models and the differences between them can be found in Thomas and Tymon (1997). Also, Thomas's (2000) work contains a recent thorough discussion of intrinsic motivation.

In brief, the four components of intrinsic motivation are defined as follows. The feeling of meaningfulness occurs when an individual is progressing on a path that they believe is worth their time and energy. The purpose or objective that they are pursuing matters to them. The feeling of progress involves a person's sense that a task is moving forward and that their activities are really accomplishing something. The feeling of

choice occurs when an individual feels free to choose activities that make sense to them and is able to perform them in ways that seem appropriate. Here, the individual feels they are able to use their own judgment and act out of their own understanding of the task. The final component of intrinsic motivation, the feeling of competence, involves whether the individual feels skillful in performing the task activities that they have chosen (Thomas and Tymon, 1993).

The integrative model of intrinsic motivation consisting of the experience of meaningfulness, choice, competence and progress is derived from both one's sense of purpose and activities performed. For example, the purpose one is pursuing at any single point in time in one's career provides a vehicle for experiencing a sense of meaningfulness and a sense of progress. Furthermore, the activities one is engaged in at any one point in time in one's career provides a vehicle for experiencing a sense of choice and a sense of competence. Research on the model has provided empirical support for it, showing high reliability of the measures for the four component elements of intrinsic motivation and significant relationships to job satisfaction, reduced stress levels, and performance (Thomas and Tymon, 1997).

The integrated model of intrinsic motivation and career self-management

Prior to a detailed discussion of our proposed model, several boundary conditions should be noted. First, our model is most applicable in situations where individuals are likely to have some level of control over their own career choices and mobility (e.g. professionals and knowledge workers). Second, our model exclusively considers the importance of intrinsic motivation in the career self-management process. Although we recognize that extrinsic motivation may work in tandem with intrinsic motivation to guide individuals to self-manage their own careers (e.g. the possibility of higher pay and promotion might serve as extrinsic motivators that would also encourage individuals to self-manage their own careers), we focus on intrinsic motivation, as we believe that this is a necessary antecedent to an individual's subjective sense of career success. As Hall and Chandler (2005, p. 157) noted, "When viewed from inside the skin of the person pursuing the career, success, by definition, has to be defined by how it looks through that person's eyes." Third, we do not focus on structural and task-based variables that might contribute to intrinsic motivation; rather, we focus on the psychological and sense-making aspects that help mold individuals' intrinsic motivation levels. Once again, this is not to say that structural and task-based variables are not important – we simply focus more on ways in which individuals are influenced by their own perceptions and behaviors. Last, our concern presently is career development across a fairly long time span (i.e. a number of years). For the individual, this could include managing one's career across multiple jobs, occupations, and organizations.

Our integrated model of intrinsic motivation and career self-management is presented in Figure 1. The model depicts four important antecedents to intrinsic motivation with respect to career motivation: interpretive styles, global assessments, individual initiative, and interpersonal facilitation. The components of intrinsic motivation – meaningfulness, competence, choice, and progress – are depicted as directly influencing career self-management, which is shown to influence career success. Career success then has an influence on future interpretations and assessments (a feedback loop).

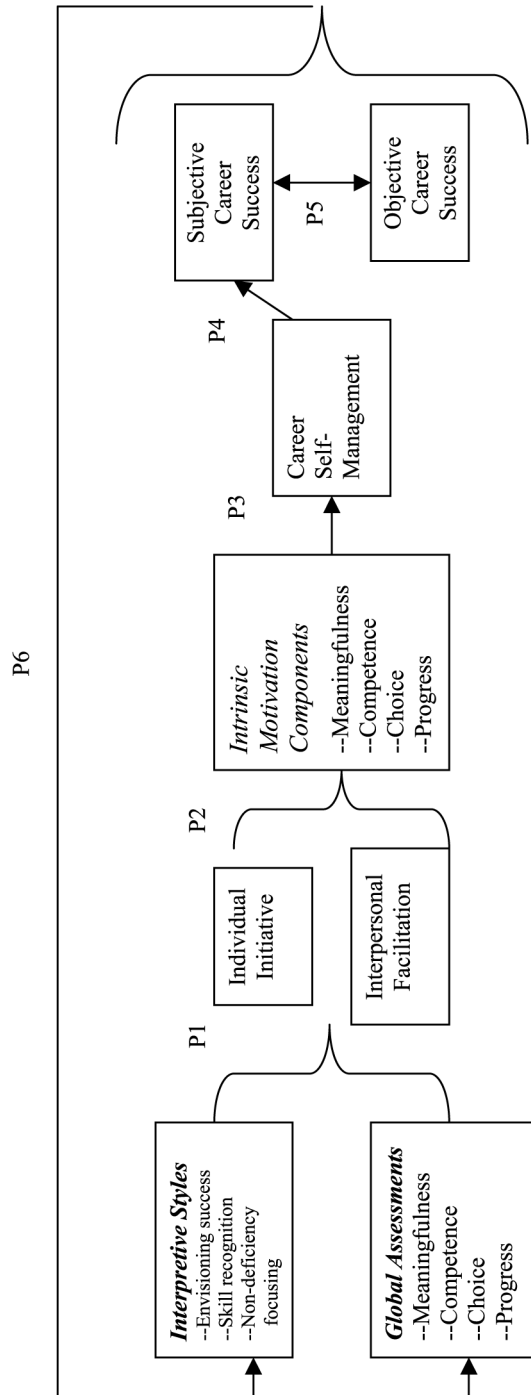


Figure 1. Diagram of an intrinsic motivation approach to career self-management

The influence of interpretive styles and global assessments on individual initiative and interpersonal facilitation

In Thomas and Velthouse's (1990) initial model of empowerment two important antecedents were proposed: interpretive styles and global assessments. We make a similar argument here in the context of career self-management and propose that interpretive styles and global assessments influence intrinsic motivation with respect to one's career through two important mediators.

In their original model, Thomas and Velthouse (1990) suggested that individuals make assessments (i.e. interpretations or constructions of reality) not only based on objective facts, but also on the way those facts are construed. As such, global assessments (i.e. generalized beliefs about meaningfulness, competence, choice, and progress that are inductive generalizations from past situations) and interpretive styles (i.e. tendencies regarding an individual's interpretive processing of events that influence whether a person feels empowered or disempowered) have an important influence on individual task assessments. For example, if an individual has a generally positive set of global assessments, they would be more inclined to be optimistic when undertaking activities. With respect to interpretive styles, subsequent empirical research found three dimensions that can influence individual perceptions of the components of intrinsic motivation: envisioning success, skill recognition, and non-deficiency focusing (Thomas and Tymon, 1994). Individuals who tend to envision success, recognize their own skills and abilities, and do not focus on deficiencies are more likely to view ambiguous information in a way that would make them feel empowered. It is important to note that Thomas and Velthouse's (1990) model contained both global and task specific assessments about meaningfulness, competence, choice, and progress. Global assessments are "more abstract beliefs in contrast to the specific assessments that motivate a person's behavior in a given task situation . . . Global assessments are assumed to be inductive generalizations from past task assessments and thus . . . represent an individual's cumulative learning about these factors" (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990, pp. 669-70). Task specific assessments are those that have to do specifically with the task at hand (in the case of our model, career self-management).

The essential nature of the protean or boundaryless career suggests that individuals encounter a large degree of ambiguity with respect to their careers over time. With the additional freedom associated with a career considered outside the boundaries of one organization, industry, or vocation, individual careers do not have the same type of predictability they once did. We postulate that although the protean career offers individuals many opportunities and possibilities, it is also ambiguous – which means that interpretive styles and global assessments will have an important influence on whether individuals feel empowered with respect to their own careers or overwhelmed and discouraged by the limitless options. We also postulate that the way in which these individual perceptions have an impact on their more specific task assessments is through influencing individual initiative and interpersonal facilitation with respect to one's own career. Thomas and Tymon (1993) have described a number of building blocks in terms of team actions and personal actions that serve as antecedents to the experience of each component of intrinsic motivation. Further research on the building blocks appears in Thomas and Tymon (1997) and Thomas (2000). Here we focus on the

personal actions people can take to enhance intrinsic motivation in their career self-management efforts.

Personal actions that build intrinsic motivation are of at least two types. The first type includes those actions resulting from reflection on oneself (which might help individuals better understand their personal career anchors (Schein, 1978, 1990)) and the individual initiative, or individual self-direction, resulting from that reflection. The second type includes those actions resulting from reflection on interpersonal work dimensions and the interpersonal facilitation, or social support emanating from co-workers, fostered as a result of that reflection. It is important to point out that both individual initiative and interpersonal facilitation with respect to one's career are likely influenced by global assessments and interpretive styles. For example, people with more positive global assessments and interpretive styles will be more likely to believe that taking individual initiative will have positive results. This is consistent with recent empirical work linking proactive personality and behaviors to career initiative and subjective and objective career success (Seibert *et al.*, 1999, 2001). Similarly, they will be more likely to feel confident and positive about their interactions with others, which would allow interpersonal facilitation to occur. This issue has been addressed in the theory of core self-evaluations, which suggests that individuals' interactions and evaluations with others are outgrowths of their own personal assessments of themselves (e.g. Judge *et al.*, 1997). Therefore, we propose:

- P1.* Global assessments and interpretive styles will influence intrinsic motivation with respect to career self-management through their impact on individual initiative and interpersonal facilitation.

The influence of individual initiative and interpersonal facilitation on intrinsic motivation

Both individual initiative and interpersonal facilitation influence the four key components of intrinsic motivation with respect to career self-management in several ways. Approaches to building intrinsic rewards into one's job have been referred to as the building blocks of empowerment (Thomas and Tymon, 1993, 1997; Thomas, 2000). For example, to build feelings of meaningfulness, individual initiative might facilitate an understanding of one's career anchors, which would be consistent with an increased understanding of one's own passion and values and would guide career choices. Indeed, Sullivan *et al.* (1998), integrating the literature on career development models, identified internal work values as one of the primary criteria that can differentiate career types. Similar to Schein's (1978, 1990) career anchors theory, we suggest that individuals can help themselves build a sense of meaningfulness by attempting to actualize personal values in work activities; individual initiative would be an important catalyst in the process. Other individual initiatives to build meaningfulness might include buying into an organizational vision that resonates within oneself and making it one's own. Personal actions involving interpersonal facilitation to build meaningfulness would include seeking out supportive co-workers who nurture one's ideals and seeking assignments on teams that share one's passions. Indeed, a recent meta-analysis of the mentoring literature found that mentoring relationships were associated with subjective outcomes such as career satisfaction (Allen *et al.*, 2004); we suggest that one way in which these relationships may lead to positive outcomes is because they help engender meaningfulness.

To build the experience of choice, individual initiatives would include listening for and trusting one's own judgment. Another building block would be to have the courage to try new approaches and avoid giving in to fears. Interpersonal facilitation building blocks here would include negotiating for the right to make autonomous decisions as well as contacting others to request any information needed. Tesluk and Jacobs (1998), in their article on work experience, cite research suggesting that experiences that provide a high level of autonomy can create an increase in intrinsic values and enhance emotional wellbeing. As with the other components, building choice can have multiple benefits for the individual.

To build a sense of competence, individual initiatives would include appreciating one's own success and limiting any deficiency focusing tendencies that one might have (Neck and Manz, 1992; Thomas and Tymon, 1994, 1995). Other building blocks would include trying new tasks that require one to use new skills or to further develop old ones. Interpersonal facilitation to build a sense of competence would include activities such as networking and finding mentors (e.g. Day and Allen, 2004; Moreland and Levine, 1997). Others would include learning from the success of others without feeling threatened and taking in the positive feedback received from others.

To build a sense of progress, individual initiatives would include reflection on how far one has come in terms of doing what is meaningful, the choices one has made in accomplishing work, and how one's own competence has grown. A person could establish milestones in each of these three areas and celebrate progress toward accomplishing these milestones. Personal actions for interpersonal facilitation of a sense of progress with respect to meaningfulness would include feedback from customers, clients, or others one has served. With respect to choice, it would include recognizing expanded trust by others in one's decision-making capability. Less oversight and greater discretionary authority could be indications of this. With respect to competence, a sense of progress would result from new assignments to more challenging projects taking advantage of one's increased skill. We have summarized the above ways in which individuals may be able to increase their intrinsic motivation with respect to career development through both individual initiatives and interpersonal facilitation in Table I. In keeping with the above discussion, we propose:

- P2. Individual initiative and interpersonal facilitation with respect to career self-management help to facilitate intrinsic motivation.

The influence of intrinsic motivation on career self-management

The model of intrinsic motivation consisting of the four elements discussed above serves as a guiding mechanism for career self-management and personal career development. Each of the four elements is a critical component of intrinsic motivation; furthermore, when people experience meaningfulness, choice, competence, and progress in their work, they experience that work as being intrinsically rewarding (Thomas *et al.*, 1997) as well as motivating. In this sense, the work itself is its own reward, contributing to a sense of personal growth and fulfillment.

For intrinsic motivation to be a guiding mechanism with respect to career development, a number of self-management issues are salient. First, an understanding and awareness of intrinsic motivation as consisting of these elements is necessary. In colloquial terms, we often hear people lament that their work is "missing something." We suggest they become familiar with each of these four components in order to

	Meaningfulness	Choice	Components of intrinsic motivation	Progress
Individual initiatives	Understand own passion and values Seek and be guided by that which is personally meaningful Believe in and contribute to the vision of the organization	Listen to and trust own judgment Have courage to try own approaches Avoid giving in to fears	Appreciate one's own success Limit any deficiency-focusing tendencies Try new tasks that require new skill attainment Further develop old skills	Reflect on advances in meaningfulness, choice, and competence with respect to career Establish milestones and celebrate progress
Interpersonal facilitation	Seek out supportive co-workers who share similar ideals Seek out and participate on teams that have shared passions	Negotiate for authority to make own decisions Contact others for needed information	Network with others Find and establish a relationship with a mentor Learn from the success of others Accept and build on positive feedback	Acknowledge feedback from customers and/or co-workers Recognize trust others place in you Recognize new challenges in assigned work that reflect increased skill level

Table I.
Building intrinsic motivation with respect to career self-management

diagnose whether those “empty” feelings can be associated with something missing in one or more of these elements. This leads to the next self-management issue. A person needs to continuously monitor the state of their intrinsic motivation and the experience of intrinsic rewards along these four dimensions. Most importantly, from a personal career development perspective, a person must actively manage their work to increase the likelihood that these four elements are experienced at a high level. To the extent that a person is successful, we contend they will experience a sense of career success.

Thomas and Jansen have proposed a model of a self-management process relating the intrinsic motivation components to each other (Thomas and Jansen, 1996; Thomas *et al.*, 1997). In this model, the self-management sequence begins with a commitment to a meaningful purpose. It is important to note that this model describes self-management in relation to one specific purpose. Once individuals commit to the purpose, they use their judgment to choose activities they believe will accomplish the purpose. The people then perform those activities, monitoring their performance for quality or competence. As the work continues, people monitor the amount of progress that occurs toward the purpose. The model also includes feedback loops throughout the process.

We propose a somewhat different framework for an individual to manage personally the career development process using intrinsic motivation as the guiding mechanism. The grounding of the process must be the experience of meaningfulness in the pursuit of a personally energizing purpose at any given point in time. As we noted above, the personally energizing purpose could be related to Schein’s (1978, 1990) individual constellation of career anchors; the purpose could also be a more specific career goal associated with what an individual wants to achieve during the course of his/her career (e.g. Lee, 2002)[1]. Over time, individuals can reexamine the driving purpose or purposes in their work life. Driving purposes can remain the same, shift, and/or new purposes may become salient. If personal career development is occurring (experienced) with intrinsic motivation as the guiding mechanism, both a sense of choice and competence need to be felt. From a career perspective, progress should be experienced in relation to each of the other three components of intrinsic motivation: meaningfulness, choice, and competence. Progress in terms of what is meaningful to the individual, progress in the experience of choice, and progress in the experience of competence (skill), are all crucial career development issues. We believe that individuals will feel that they have managed their own career successfully when they experience a high degree of intrinsic motivation. Therefore, we propose:

- P3. Feelings of meaningfulness, competence, choice, and progress will result in an individual’s positive assessment of engaging in effective career self-management.

Influence of career self-management on subjective career success

Ultimately, we expect career self-management to be related to career success. It is important, however, to distinguish between two different types of career success – subjective and objective. Career success is broadly defined as the accumulated positive work and psychological outcomes resulting from one’s work experience (Ng *et al.*, 2005; Seibert and Kraimer, 2001); subjective or intrinsic career success is associated with individuals’ subjective judgments about their career attainments (e.g. job and career satisfaction (Baruch, 2004; Burke, 2001; Judge *et al.*, 1995; Ng *et al.*, 2005)), while objective or extrinsic career success typically includes indicators of career success that

can be seen and evaluated objectively by others (e.g. salary attainment, rank, etc. (Baruch, 2004; Gutteridge, 1973; Judge *et al.*, 1995; Ng *et al.*, 2005)).

One of Hall and Chandler's (2005) important contributions to the careers literature was in specifying how careers supported by a driving sense of personal importance would help motivate individuals to set and achieve personally meaningful goals, which would then lead to subjective career success because those goals would be inherently important. As they noted, when an individual "sees her career as a calling, she will have a strong focus on goals that reflect her purpose. As a result of this goal clarity, she will exert the effort needed to succeed and carry out the calling" (Hall and Chandler, 2005, p. 165). We postulate that when career self-management is an outgrowth of intrinsic motivation with respect to one's career – in essence, when career self-management is borne out of a driving sense of meaningfulness, choice, competence, and progress with respect to one's career – successful career self-management will result in subjective career success. This idea is similar to King's (2004, pp. 122-3) assertion that "through successful use of career self-managing behaviors over a sustained period, people master their development tasks and, as a result, achieve their desired career outcomes." Therefore, we propose:

- P4.* Career self-management is positively related to experienced subjective career success.

The reciprocal relationship between subjective and objective career success

Much attention has recently been given to differentiating between subjective and objective career success and the nature of the relationship between the two concepts (e.g. Ng *et al.*, 2005). Arthur *et al.* (2005), in their review of 11 years of career success research (1992-2002), found that 39 of 68 articles (57 percent) included either an explicit or implicit reference to the duality of the subjective and objective careers underlying career success. However, more than half of those articles focused on only a one-way relationship (56 percent) rather than a two-way relationship (44 percent). Specifically, 25 articles (37 percent) considered a one-way influence of objective career success onto subjective career success. A total of 13 articles (19 percent) considered the influence of subjective variables on objective career success; 22 articles (32 percent) acknowledged the two-way interdependence between subjective and objective career success. It is interesting to note that recently, Nicholson and de Waal-Andrews (2005) urged not losing sight of the importance of objective career success, using evolutionary theory to argue for the primacy of objective outcomes and to analyze why the relationship with subjective career success is not stronger. The need for further research on the nature of the relationship between subjective and objective success appears evident.

Our model proposes a reciprocal relationship between subjective and objective success, acknowledging the duality of career success. The proposed relationship of career self-management to subjective success is compatible with depictions of the connections between the protean career orientation (in which the individual is self-directed and driven by his/her own values) and the protean career's definition of success, which is internal, subjective, and encompasses the "whole" self rather than just the "work" self (Hall and Chandler, 2005). As Hall and Chandler (2005) note, this is also consistent with the idea of individuals following the "path with a heart" throughout their careers in order to achieve psychological success (Shepard, 1984). We

also postulate, however, that when individuals achieve goals that are important to them and are in organizational environments that are supportive of those goals, objective career success may coincide with the subjective success they experience. Over the long term, individuals who experience subjective career success will likely have a more sustainable approach to their own careers, allowing them to achieve higher long-run objective career success. Therefore, we propose:

P5. Subjective career success is reciprocally related to objective career success.

The feedback loop

Career success (both objective and subjective) that arises out of an intrinsic motivation approach to career self-management will in return have a positive impact on global assessments and interpretive styles. Individuals who experience success will likely internalize that success and be less likely to make negative global assessments that might hurt motivation. In addition, the internalization of this success will lead to higher levels of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986, 1997), which, in turn, will positively influence interpretive styles. This iterative feedback process is consistent with Hall and Chandler's (2005) feedback loop in their calling model of career success. In that model, external recognition of the objective success that individuals achieve influences identity change and subsequently supports a greater sense of calling and higher self-confidence. A positive feedback loop allows individual intrinsic motivation with respect to one's career to spiral upward, leading to increasingly higher levels of subjective and objective career success. Therefore, we propose:

P6. Subjective and objective career success encourages positive global assessments and interpretive styles in a cyclical process.

Discussion

Kossek *et al.* (1998), citing the work of Howard (1995), noted that motivational factors are becoming increasingly important in the workplace, despite the fact that most employers are unsure how to manage them. We would add that individuals own understanding and management of their personal motivation through a career self-management process is an important topic for exploration. Knowledge of one's own values, career goals, and intrinsic motivation may serve as important antecedents of career self-management. In this paper, we developed a theoretical process model integrating the concepts of intrinsic motivation and empowerment with career self-management to shed light on the motivational processes associated with career self-management. The current state of research that tests elements included in the model, such as interpretive styles and the components of intrinsic motivation, provide evidence in support of the model. However, additional research is needed to test both the concepts and linkages proposed in the model. The following is a list of the propositions developed in this paper:

P1. Global assessments and interpretive styles will influence intrinsic motivation with respect to career self-management through their impact on individual initiative and interpersonal facilitation.

P2. Individual initiative and interpersonal facilitation with respect to career self-management help to facilitate intrinsic motivation.

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- P3.* Feelings of meaningfulness, competence, choice, and progress will result in an individual's positive assessment of engaging in effective career self-management.
- P4.* Career self-management is positively related to experienced subjective career success.
- P5.* Subjective career success is reciprocally related to objective career success.
- P6.* Subjective and objective career success encourages positive global assessments and interpretive styles in a cyclical process.

In the following sections, we discuss the research implications of the model and future research directions, as well as implications of the model for individuals.

Research implications and future research directions

In presenting a model linking scholarship from the intrinsic motivation and careers literatures, we have attempted to show how intrinsic motivation can be an important antecedent of career self-management and subsequent subjective and objective career success. Much work has yet to be done to examine empirically the propositions put forth here. As we noted earlier, our model is intended to be applicable to the study of the long-term association between intrinsic motivation and career success over the duration of an individual's career. Both qualitative and quantitative methods could be used to test the propositions. With respect to qualitative methods, semi-structured interviews could be performed with individuals at various stages in their careers to determine:

- whether they have engaged in career self-management;
- what they perceive to be the major drivers of their own career self-management (and whether there are differences across individuals regarding whether intrinsic motivation is identified as an antecedent); and
- whether they believe career self-management activities allowed them to experience more subjective and objective career success.

Interesting differences between the observations of individuals early in their career vs. individuals who are more advanced might be exposed with this particular method. With respect to quantitative methods, as noted above, Thomas and Tymon (1993) developed the empowerment inventory in order to assess the four components of intrinsic motivation, while Spreitzer (1995) also developed a closely-related measure to assess the four components of psychological empowerment. These measures could be used to collect data from individuals, while a measure based on King's (2004) discussion of the three types of behaviors that make up career self-management (positioning, influencing, and boundary management behaviors) could be developed and used to collect data from peers and/or superiors of the focal sample in order to get a realistic perspective on the career self-management activities of the focal sample. Ideally, instead of assessing subjective and objective career success concurrently with this data collection, a longitudinal design could be employed. Other parts of the model need to be tested as well. The empirical examination of the model is an important step

in order to determine whether the model truly bridges the gap between the intrinsic motivation and the careers literatures.

Another future research direction could be an examination of situational or individual moderators with respect to the model. We did note that we believe the model applies to at least professional and/or knowledge workers (i.e. individuals with a fair degree of autonomy and chance of managing their own careers). The type of occupation and/or nature of the tasks involved in the work may serve as moderators in the model with respect to the relationship between intrinsic motivation and career self-management. We would expect to find that individuals in professional occupations would likely exhibit a stronger relationship between intrinsic motivation and career self-management behavior. We also noted that the model did not include the consideration of any extrinsic motivators, yet individuals in a position to self-manage their own careers are likely to be impacted by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Future research could expand upon the model and consider the dual role of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in career self-management and subsequent subjective and objective career success.

Implications of the model for individuals

The model proposed in this paper focuses on the individual level of analysis. In this section, we briefly discuss practical implications of the model for individuals, focusing specifically on intrinsic motivation and career self-management. The model suggests the level at which a person experiences meaningfulness, choice, and competence, and the progress being made in the experience of each of these factors can help a person answer the question "What's next?" As an illustration, suppose a person finds their work meaningful, is happy with the level of choice they have in accomplishing their work, and feels competent in performing their work. At the same time, they feel they are making progress in terms of a career purpose that is meaningful to them, continue to grow in their ability to make choices in performing their work, and continue to grow in developing their competence. Under these circumstances, the model suggests individuals are likely to experience their work life as rewarding and motivating. This suggests they are unlikely to feel radical shifts in their careers are necessary.

If, however, a person is low on one of the intrinsic motivation components discussed here, the model would suggest that they would be more likely to engage in career self-management strategies to address the deficiency. For example, an individual might feel that their work is meaningful, that they are performing competently, and that they are continuing to make progress in these areas. However, they might feel they have not had the opportunity to exercise choice to the degree that they would like. In this case, the individual might meet with upper management to discuss areas where greater discretion in making decisions is appropriate. Of course, in other circumstances, an individual might decide that the low level of their current intrinsic motivation requires a more radical shift, such as changing jobs, organizations, or even occupations.

Of course, in today's environment of downsizing and mergers, the necessity of involuntary job change is not uncommon. In this case, the model would suggest that intrinsic motivation might be used as at least a partial guiding mechanism in a job search. For example, individuals might consider what type of work is meaningful to them, the degree of choice different jobs might provide, and how they might experience

a sense of competence. In addition, the individual might consider the feelings of progress that different job opportunities provide in terms of building feelings of meaningfulness, choice, and competence.

Although enhancing intrinsic motivation and intrinsic rewards are expected to be the immediate effect of individual initiative and interpersonal facilitation in the model, we would expect progress in enhancing experienced meaningfulness, choice, and competence would align with external assessments of one's career and future potential. Examples of such external assessments include performance appraisals and job searches. For example, when considering a candidate for a job, evaluators are likely to assess the candidate along the dimensions of meaningfulness, choice, and competence. They are likely to ask: what has the candidate done that is meaningful? Have they demonstrated independent decision-making (choice)? What are their skills (competence)? If individuals have been guided by intrinsic motivation to a significant extent in their career self-management, we would expect they would be able to articulate how in past work situations they have demonstrated choice, competence, progress, and meaningfulness.

In conclusion, in what Hall (1976, 2004) has called the protean career, a person's own career choices and search for self-fulfillment are the unifying or integrative elements in their life. Success is not wholly determined by external objective measures. In this paper, we have proposed a model integrating intrinsic motivation as an important influence on career self-management. We also suggest that intrinsic motivation could be used as a guiding mechanism for personal career development. If so, this would involve individuals actively managing their work life to increase the likelihood that they will experience the feelings of meaningfulness, choice, competence, and progress, and ultimately career success.

Note

1. We note that there is an important distinction to be made between one's career goal and/or career anchors and one's intrinsic motivation at a point in time. The former is associated with the direction in which one's career may progress; the latter is associated with the current state of motivation in performing tasks.

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