Abstract

The article looks at the importance of career management tools in career planning. The career assessment tools can be used both by the organization as well as the individual to increase their efficiency. Key words: Career assessment tools, career planning, organizational efficiency.

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Introduction

In today’s global scenario where the wheel of change is moving very fast, with industries changing in the way they operate and organizations reinventing themselves to survive in the globally competitive market career assessment tools help individuals grow both professionally as well as personally.

Career assessment tools are tests and assessments taken to measure preference in job and career

Types based on the individual’s assessment of his or her own personality, character trait and skills. Another purpose which is served by these tests is to make an individual aware of his/her strength and weaknesses. These tests include the whole gamut of interest test, personality test and aptitude tests.

Some of the popular career assessment tests are Birkman Method: which facilitates team building, executive coaching leadership development, career counseling and interpersonal conflict resolution. Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), for interests and preferences, The MBTI measures your personality -- in essence, what makes you tick. The first of its four scales tells you how you prefer to focus your attention -- whether you're extroverted or introverted. The other scales measure how you look at things (sensing versus intuitive), how

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you generally make decisions (thinking versus feeling) and how you deal with the world around you (judging versus perceiving). Combined, this information can help you understand what type of work you'd like to do, with whom, how, why and even where.\(^1\) Motivational Appraisal of Personal Potential (MAPP) etc. The Strong Interest Inventory helps to identify an individual’s interest. The results of the test point out to certain general interest areas and also points out certain specific occupations. The six broad areas are social, investigative, artistic, conventional, enterprising and realistic.

Organizations also provide career assessment services by providing various online and offline inventories and tests. Some organizations are offering various onsite or online career centers which might include access to career development libraries; workshops and executive coaching. One can also entail the help of career coaches for doing career assessments. These tools can help prevent individuals from committing professional *hara-kiri* by pointing out careers which are unsuitable for them, thus saving individuals from making choices which would surely set them up for failures if there is a mismatch between the individual’s skill, competencies and the chosen career.

Young professionals just embarking into their careers can use career planning tools to determine the choice of their careers. Career planning is about individual’s choice of occupation, organizations, and jobs. In planning their career, individuals will set their career objectives and determine a method to achieve those objectives. They can use these tools to decide upon the courses and streams they should study and the career where they can achieve their maximum potential. The successful usage of career assessment tools leads to an increase in career self awareness and a greater chance of satisfying ones self actualization needs. It enables individuals to have a deeper understanding of their own skills, their value systems, motivation and understanding of self. This in turn leads to identifying career paths and opportunities which would be most suitable for the individual. This in turn also means greater efficiency for the organizations employing these individuals which in turn would result in greater efficiencies and quality for the customers of the services or products produced by these organizations. Career assessment tools can also help organizations in
targeted recruiting. They can be used to predict a prospective employee’s on-the-job performance and retain ability.

For professionals already in the establishment stage of their career, career assessment tools provide professionals insights to be more efficient at performing their own jobs. By providing an insight into typical strengths, and deeper self-interest it helps professionals to fine-tune themselves with the requirement of their jobs and also upgrade and relearn the skills which are required at this level to further fuel their career growth.

Today’s world is also seeing emergence of a new breed of professionals who are making a career switch. This career switch can either be a choice or necessitated by the changing world of our times characterized by its fast and furious changes and economic turmoil. Career assessment tools are a big boon for such professionals which make this transition process a little easier. The career assessment tools at this stage would help an individual explore their interest, values and skills which would help them to zero on careers which would be a perfect match and satisfy their interest. Also it would help them to do a SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and threat analysis) of themselves in respect to the career they are contemplating to switch to and would give them insight whether the switch they are contemplating is realistically possible. It will also serve as a mirror to reflect upon the skills and knowledge required for being successful in that particular career switch.

Usage of career assessment tools leads to a win-win situation both for the employee and the organization. It helps the organization to plan its training program optimally. Usage of career assessment tools provides employees with information regarding making correct career decisions. An understanding of the aptitude and interest of employees would help the organization to structure training programs which cater to the need of the employee and the organization. They help the managers in achieving an employee job fit by zeroing on areas where the employee would be best suited in an organization. These tools can also facilitate talent management by ensuring that talent pool is created within the organization. It also has a positive impact on employee motivation and morale as employees feel that organization is interested in their development. One important thing which should be kept in mind by organization using these tools are that organizations should communicate clearly to the
An organization can use career assessment tools to bring objective information in the hiring process, creating a more focused and efficient interview and help pre-employment assessment which can help employers gain better insight to their candidates and improve quality of hire and reduce turnover.

Globally many companies are using career assessment tools. Driscoll, California based provider of fresh berries has been using career assessment tools to hone the leadership skills of its employees. According to a report by Boston based research firm Aberdeen group companies are including assessment tools in their efforts to identify high-potential talent, to develop workers' interpersonal and leadership skills and to set performance goals for their workers.

According to the T Jinsite study, 45 per cent of the employers stated that talent assessment tools largely works because they offer a comprehensive insight into candidate's suitability.

Career assessment tools to be successful should be easily interpretable, valid and reliable. To harness the best out of career assessment tools it is important to ensure that the answers to the assessment are provided honestly by the assess. In case career assessment tools are provided by the organization. The organization must coach the employees on how to take a career assessment. The employee should honestly answer all the questions to harness the best from this test and as not to skew the results.

It is important to remember that results of career assessment are merely indicators of ones preferences and aversions and it is left to the individual to how best mange the results. If one manages and utilizes these results well it can lead to achievement of personal fulfillment by optimizing on ones strength and increasing ones self esteem (as individuals become aware of their strengths and potential their self esteem increases).
References

