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THE STABILITY OF VALUES IN THE FIRST TEN YEARS
OF THE CAREER

Edgar H. Schein

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Forty-four alumni of the Sloan School of Management classes of 1961, 1962, and 1963 were followed up in 1973 by means of interviews and questionnaires to determine: 1) career paths followed; 2) value changes observed; and 3) relationships between value changes and career events. Careers were conceptualized in terms of "career anchors", five such anchors were defined covering all of the cases, and value changes were related to the different career anchors. Implications are		

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Final Report on ONR Contract N00014-67-A-0204-0073*

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Author: Edgar H. Schein, Sloan School of Management, MIT, Cambridge, MA 02139

Date: September, 1975

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Final Report on ONR Contract N00014-67-A-0204-0073 (OSP 80845)

Edgar H. Schein

September 22, 1975

This final report covers the period since the last Status Report, dated April 1, 1975 and reviews progress on the entire project to date. The basic purpose of the project was to reinterview and resurvey a panel of graduates of the Sloan School 10 to 12 years after their graduation, in order to determine how attitudes and values had changed during those years and to relate the changes to organizational and career experiences. Data gathering was completed in the period of January, 1973 to May, 1974. Analysis of questionnaires was completed by July, 1975, and transcribing of interviews will be completed by January, 1976. Summaries of the interviews were recorded and transcribed earlier permitting the writing of several technical reports even though the final interview transcripts are not yet completed.

Summary of Findings

Analysis of the interview summaries and interview notes revealed striking patterns of consistency in the careers of the 44 panelists (Schein, 1974). These consistencies were conceptualized in terms of the theoretical concept of "career anchor," a syndrome of self-perceived talents, needs, motives, and values based on early career experiences. A career anchor serves as a constraint on the person's career in that if the person makes a job or career move which takes him too far afield from what his motives, talents, and values dictate, he finds himself being drawn back to jobs more consistent with the anchor. Five anchors were identified as sufficient to unambiguously classify all 44 panelists. The anchors are stated in terms

of the need/motive which is the ultimate constraint--that which the person is seeking primarily and which he will not give up: 1) Managerial competence; 2) Technical/functional competence; 3) Creativity; 4) Security/stability; 5) Autonomy.

The actual careers pursued by the panelists closely correspond to and can be explained by their career anchor. It is important to note that not everyone wanted to be a general manager. From a pool of management school graduates came some general managers, some functional managers, some entrepreneurs, some technical or functional staff people, and a number of teachers and writers. Based on the evidence thus far these careers appear to be fairly stable. It is not likely that the functional or staff people will move toward general management, based on their career histories and present value system.

Value changes and self-image changes appear to be most closely related to career anchors. Those moving into managerial careers show evidence of having been socialized toward management values prior to or during graduate school, and became even more pro-management. Those moving away from management (the autonomy group) were less managerial in their values to start with and move farther away from such values during the early career (Schein, in preparation).

The implications of the findings are that one must be cautious in generalizing about the motives and values which underlie careers, determine what anchors are actually operating, and be prepared to vary reward systems and career development systems to permit people with different anchors each to pursue their own career goals.

Inventory of equipment: No new equipment was purchased under this contract.

Tape recording was done with the original machine purchased in 1961 and transcribing is being done on a machine purchased with other funds.

Inventions: None

Disposition of funds: Funds were exhausted during the summer of 1975 but final data analysis and writing will continue throughout the next year to complete all aspects of the project.

Plans for the future: Plans for a further follow-up are being made, probably to be conducted in 1978-79. All panelists enjoyed their participation in the project and expressed interest in future follow-ups. Many of the issues raised in the 10-12 year follow-up will not be resolved without further data gathering, e.g. is the stability of values shown up to this point going to continue as the group enters their late 30's and early 40's.

Future publications: All future publications resulting from this project will be treated as technical reports and distributed to the ONR list. Such publications should be forthcoming for the next year or two.

- Reports to date:
- 1) Schein, E.H. Career anchors and career paths: a Panel study of management school graduates. MIT, Sloan School of Management Working Paper No. 707-74, May, 1974.
 - 2) Schein, E.H. Career Development: Theoretical and practical issues for organizations. Paper read at Conference of Career Development, International Labor Office, Budapest, Hungary, April, 1975
 - 3) Schein, E.H. Career Anchors hold executives to their career paths. Personnel, 52, 1975, 11-24.
 - 4) Joint report drawing partly on ONR study: Van Maanen, J. & Schein, E.H. Improving the Quality of Work Life: Career Development. June, 1975 (one of a series of monographs of Quality of Work Life to be published by Goodyear in 1976).