



ZCAS University

SMS2342 CAREER PLANNING AND MANGEMENT

MID-SEMISTER EXAMINATION

TUESDAY, 17TH OCTOBER 2023

16:30 – 19:30 HOURS

TIME ALLOWED: THREE HOURS (plus 5 minutes to read through the paper)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Section A: this question is compulsory and must be attempted.
2. Sections B: Answer **Three (3)** questions from this section.
3. This question paper carries a total of **100 marks**.
4. Candidates must **not turn this page** until the invigilator tells them to do so.

SECTION A: All questions in this section are compulsory and must be answered

Question One

CASE STUDY

Why was Richard's decision to leave his employer of 14 years such a shock? Maybe it was the outstanding reputation of the company he had decided to leave – a company known for innovative computer technology and progressive human resource practices. Perhaps it was his steady advancement in title, responsibilities, and salary, or his obvious enthusiasm for his work and for the company that had treated him so well. Or possibly it was the fact that Richard had started with this paternalistic company right out of college, and it was rare for any employee to leave when he or she had such high job security.

Richard had made a significant career decision that, in retrospect, should not have been so surprising. At 38 years of age, he yearned for more – more money and a more prestigious title – but, most significantly, he wanted more responsibility and an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the destiny of his employer. This opportunity may have come eventually with his current company, but it would have taken a while, and Richard was growing impatient. Richard was in the phase of his career where he needed to have a greater degree of authority and independence, to be listened to seriously, and to make a name for himself. With a stay-at-home spouse and a young daughter, Richard was also concerned about increasing his compensation to provide a nice lifestyle for himself and his family, now and in the future. Aware of his needs and the opportunities at his current company, Richard, with the support of his spouse, decided to risk security in a safe, known environment and pursue his goals. This decision shaped the course of his career and life in profound ways.

Richard left his former employer with goodwill and enormous optimism. He accepted a position as Director of Customer Support with a rapidly growing computer firm. In this new position, he and his staff were in charge of providing technical support for all of the company's private and corporate clients. Richard approached his new job with the enthusiasm and energy that had produced success in earlier years. He upgraded his employer's back-office information system, and built a management structure within his division that was sorely needed. His accomplishments were substantial and were recognized by his superiors, peers, and subordinates alike. It looked like his decision had paid off!

Unfortunately, Richard did not count on, nor did he anticipate, the corporate changes in strategy that were about to take place. Not that he was particularly naïve, but how could he have known that the senior management of the company was planning on "Offshoring" all of its customer support to Asia. Facing intense competition and resultant pressures to cut costs, the company's senior management team, with the blessing of the Board of Directors, decided to reduce labour costs by 40 percent by outsourcing Richard's entire department. After just a few months in what he thought was going to be his dream job, Richard was facing a great deal of uncertainty about his future. It's one thing to know intellectually that a change in corporate strategy can outweigh job performance in the real world; it's quite another to be the victim of a major corporate cost-cutting move. Richard was worried; he had a family to support, a child to eventually put through college, and a heavy mortgage to pay each month.

At the age of 40, Richard found himself unemployed for the first time since high school. Finding a new position became a full-time job, and he approached this task with alacrity and extensive planning. After what seemed like an eternity, he found a position with a brokerage Firm, heading up its information systems group. Burned once, he comforted himself that this new company was less likely than his previous employer to make a major change in strategy. But after two years of outstanding contributions, this Firm is now undergoing a major reorganisation and a reshuffling of personnel. Richard's future? Although he was recently promoted to Vice President, he's not so sure of himself any more. When a friend asked whether he had any regrets about his decision to leave his initial employer, Richard gave an emphatic "maybe".

Case Analysis Questions:

- A) What do Richard's experiences indicate about the process of Career Management? (5 marks)
- B) What environmental factors have affected Richard's career? (12 marks)
- C) When Richard decided to leave his initial employer, what career trade-offs, either consciously or subconsciously, did he make? Do you believe that Richard has done a good job of managing his career? Why or why not? (13 marks)
- D) If Richard sought your help, what advice would you give him in terms of the future management of his career? (10 marks)

(Total 40 marks)

SECTION B: Attempt any THREE questions in this section

Question Two

It is said that we live in a competitive world which follows the Survival of the fittest called "The Law of The Jungle", where those who are weak are crushed by the mighty. Therefore, Career Planning is a tool that makes a person competitive.

Discuss the 21st Century life skills needed for an employee's survival in this kind of environment. And in so doing, suggest 4 benefits of career planning to an employee for possessing the said skills. **(20 Marks)**

Question Three

Career planning consists of activities and actions that you take to achieve your individual career goals. As a student of Career Planning and Management who passed with first grade in the course, you have been nominated to give a talk to the 1st year students at ZCAS University during their induction in the University.

Required; Identify and explain Four (4) elements on how people choose careers? **(20 Marks)**

Question Four

In the process of Career Planning circle of one's job goals and aspirations, values play a very important role to reach at those goals. Values are the things that you believe are important in the way you live and work. Values exert major influence on the behaviour of an individual and serve as broad guidelines in all situations. It is worthy also to note that values do also change at different times throughout one's life. However, there is usually a core set of values that will determine what career/job is acceptable or not.

Required: With the use of relevant examples, describe Four (4) general Core Values which may influence and determine what career or job could be acceptable to an individual. **(20 marks)**

Question Five

Write short notes on the following:

- A) Advantages of choosing a career based on salary **(10 Marks)**
- B) The myth about choosing a career **(10 Marks)**

END OF EXAMINATION