

Difference Between Career Planning and Succession Planning

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Key Difference - Career Planning vs Succession Planning

The key difference between career planning and succession planning is that **career planning is an ongoing process where an employee explores his or her interests and capabilities and purposefully plan career goals** whereas **succession planning is the process by which an organization identify and develop new employees to take up key leadership roles when the existing leaders leave for a different career, retire or die.** Career planning is important from the viewpoint of the employee while succession planning is vital for the effective continuation of the organization.

What is Career Planning?

Career planning is an ongoing process where an employee explores his or her interests and capabilities and purposefully plan career goals. This is important for all employees since it can help to manage the direction the employee want to progress in the [career](#).

Career planning should be considered by an individual even before entering the workforce, preferably when he or she is a student. Educational qualifications play a vital role in obtaining employment; thus, it is important to pursue a specific educational qualification, studying an area where the individual wishes to be employed at.

E.g. A young individual is interested in becoming a marketing professional in the future. Thus it is important to follow a recognized marketing qualification in order to gain a competitive advantage in applying for a job.

Once an individual enters the workforce and starts working, career planning can be conducted in an extended manner than at student stage. The employee should clearly identify personal and career objectives, interests, strengths, and weaknesses. It is important to match the skills and capabilities with the job to understand how to improve performance on the job. Further, setting career goals

should be done according to time intervals covering medium to long term. For instance, an employee can set career goals for two years, five years and ten years. With time, these career goals may be subjected to change based on to what extent the employee had achieved the planned objectives. An individual may change job roles and organization along the career; however, career planning should be done continuously.



Figure 01: Career Planning

What is Succession Planning?

Succession planning is the process by which an organization identifies and develops new employees to take up key leadership roles when the existing leaders leave for a different career, retire or die. This is essential for all types of organizations, irrespective of their size, in order to ensure that organizational objectives are achieved and a smooth flow of operations are achieved.

Succession planning is usually done by senior management of a company where they continuously receive information about well performing employees from [line](#)

[managers](#). Succession planning cannot be done overnight since the skills and capabilities required to perform a [leadership](#) role take a time to develop.

Succession planning has a number of benefits to both the employee and the employer. From the employee's perspective, this leads to higher motivation since the employee knows the benefits awaits him or her as a future leader in the company. This in turn will result in increased motivation backed by the ability to learn more and perform better. It also reinforces the employee's desire for career development and career opportunities. From the viewpoint of the employer, the progression towards the achievement of organizational goals is not hindered or delayed as a result of a key leadership role becoming vacant. There is no need to hire a new employee externally within a short period of time, which may be costly and carry out induction.



Figure 02: Succession planning

What is the difference between Career Planning and Succession Planning?

Career Planning vs Succession Planning

Career planning is an ongoing process where an employee explores his or her interests and capabilities and purposefully plan career goals.

Succession planning is the process by which an organization identifies and develops new employees to take up key leadership roles when the existing leaders leave for a different career, retire or die.

Nature

Career planning is conducted from the point of the employee.

Succession planning is conducted from the point of the organization.

Scope

In career planning, one employee will perform various roles over a period of time.

In succession planning, one role will be performed by a number of employees over a period of time.

Summary - Career Planning vs Succession Planning

The difference between career planning and succession planning mainly depends on whether it is carried out by the employee or the company. Successful career planning mainly benefits the employee while the organization is the principal beneficiary party in successful succession planning. Both elements also complement each other; for instance, when an employee is well focused on developing his or her career, a leadership position can be offered to ensure that he or she positively contributes to the organization.

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