

CAREER ORIENTATIONS INVENTORY – CAREER ANCHORS

- Edgar Schein

The purpose of this questionnaire is to stimulate your thoughts about your own areas of competence, your motives, and values. This questionnaire alone will not reveal your career anchors because it is too easy to bias your answers. However, it will activate your thinking and prepare you for the discussion with your partner.

INSTRUCTIONS – HOW TO RATE THE ITEMS

- Try to answer the questions as honestly as you can and work quickly.
- Avoid extreme ratings except in situations in which you clearly have strong feelings in one direction or the other.

For each of the 39 items, rate how true each item is for you by assigning a number from 1 to 6. The higher the number, the more that item is true for you. You would rate each item according to this scale :

- | | | |
|--------|---|--|
| 1 | = | The statement is never true for you |
| 2 or 3 | = | The statement is occasionally true for you |
| 4 or 5 | = | The statement is often true for you |
| 6 | = | The statement is always true for you |

-
- | | | |
|-------|----|---|
| _____ | 1. | I dream of being so good at what I do that my expert advice will be sought continually. |
| _____ | 2. | I am most fulfilled in my work when I have been able to integrate and manage the efforts of others. |
| _____ | 3. | I dream of having career that will allow me the freedom to do a job my own way and on my own schedule. |
| _____ | 4. | Security and stability are more important to me than freedom and autonomy. |
| _____ | 5. | I am always on the lookout for ideas that would permit me to start my own enterprise. |
| _____ | 6. | I will feel successful in my career only if I have a feeling of having made a real contribution to the welfare of society. |
| _____ | 7. | I dream of a career in which I can solve problems or win out in situations that are extremely challenging. |
| _____ | 8. | I would rather leave my organization than to be put in a job that would compromise my ability to pursue personal and family concerns. |
| _____ | 9. | I will feel successful in my career only if I can develop technical or functional skills to a very high level competence. |

- _____ 10. I dream of being in charge of a complex organization and making decisions that affect many people.
- _____ 11. I am most fulfilled in my work when I am completely free to define my own tasks, schedules and procedures.
- _____ 12. I would rather leave my organization altogether than accept an assignment that would jeopardize my security in that organization.
- _____ 13. Building my own business is more important to me than achieving a high-level managerial position in someone else's organization.
- _____ 14. I am most fulfilled in my career when I have been able to use my talents in the service of others.
- _____ 15. I will feel successful in my career only if I face and overcome very difficult challenges.
- _____ 16. I dream of a career that will permit me to integrate my personal, family, and work needs.
- _____ 17. Becoming a senior functional manager in my area of expertise is more attractive to me than becoming general manager.
- _____ 18. I will feel successful in my career only if I become a general manager in some organization.
- _____ 19. I will feel successful in my career only if I achieve autonomy and freedom.
- _____ 20. I seek jobs in organizations that will give me a sense of security and stability.
- _____ 21. I am most fulfilled in my career when I have been able to build something that is entirely the result of my own ideas and efforts.
- _____ 22. Using my skills to make the world a better place to live and work is more important to me than achieving a high-level managerial position.
- _____ 23. I have been most fulfilled in my career when I solved seemingly unsolvable problems or won out over seemingly impossible odds.
- _____ 24. I feel successful in life only if I have been able to balance my personal, family, and career requirements.
- _____ 25. I would rather leave my organization than accept a rotational assignments that would take me out of my area of expertise.
- _____ 26. Becoming a general manager is more attractive to me than becoming a senior functional manager in my current area of expertise.
- _____ 27. The chance to do a job my own way, free of rules and constraints, is more important to me than security.
- _____ 28. I am most fulfilled in my work when I feel that I have complete financial and employment security.

- _____ 29. I will feel successful in my career only if I succeed in creating or building something that is entirely my own product or idea.
- _____ 30. I dream of having a career that makes a real contribution to humanity and society.
- _____ 31. I seek out work opportunities that strongly challenge my problem solving and/or competitive skills.
- _____ 32. Balancing the demands of personal and professional life is more important to me than achieving a high-level managerial position.
- _____ 33. I am most fulfilled In my work when I have been able to use my special skills and talents.
- _____ 34. I would rather leave my organization than accept a job that would take me away from the general managerial track.
- _____ 35. I would rather leave my organization than accept a job that would reduce my autonomy and freedom.
- _____ 36. I dream of having a career that will allow me to feel a sense of security and stability.
- _____ 37. I dream of starting up and building my own business.
- _____ 38. I would rather leave my organization than accept an assignment that would undermine my ability to be of service in others.
- _____ 39. Working on problems that are almost unsolvable is more important to me than achieving a high-level managerial position.
- _____ 40. I have always sought out work opportunities that minimize interference with personal or family concerns.
-

SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

- At this point look over your answers and locate all of the answers you rated highest.
- Pick out the THREE items that seem most true for you and give each of those items an additional FOUR (4) points.
- You can now score your questionnaire. The scales will have more meaning to you once you have read the text in the next section.

In the next section, you will find blank spaces for each of the forty items, arranged in order so that you can easily transfer the numbers from your rating sheets onto the scoring sheet. After you have transferred all of the numbers, add up the columns and divide by five (the number of items) to get your average score for each of the eight career anchor dimensions. Do not forget to add the extra four points for each of your three key items before you total and average your scores.

The following blanks represent the items you have just rated. Transfer your answers from the preceding pages to these blanks. Do not forget to add the four points for the three items that were most true for you. Total the numbers in each column, and then divide that total by the number of items in the column (five). The resulting average is your self-assessment of how true the items in that scale are for you!

SCORING SHEET

	TF	GM	AU	SE	EC	SV	CH	LS							
1.	_____	2.	_____	3.	_____	4.	_____	5.	_____	6.	_____	7.	_____	8.	_____
9.	_____	10.	_____	11.	_____	12.	_____	13.	_____	14.	_____	15.	_____	16.	_____
17.	_____	18.	_____	19.	_____	20.	_____	21.	_____	22.	_____	23.	_____	24.	_____
25.	_____	26.	_____	27.	_____	28.	_____	29.	_____	30.	_____	31.	_____	32.	_____
33.	_____	34.	_____	35.	_____	36.	_____	37.	_____	38.	_____	39.	_____	40.	_____
TOTAL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5	÷ 5
Average	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

SCHEIN'S CAREER ANCHORS

TECHNICAL / FUNCTIONAL (TF)

If your career anchor is competence in some technical or functional area, what you would not give up is the opportunity to apply your skills in that area and to continue to develop those skills to an even higher level. You derive your sense of identity from the exercise of your skills and are most happy when you work permits you to be challenged in those areas. You may be willing to manage others in your technical or functional area, but you are not interested in management for its own sake and would avoid general management because you would have to leave your own area of expertise. Your inventory score in this area is in the first column of the scoring sheet under TF.

GENERAL MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE (GM)

If your career anchor is general managerial competence, what you would not give up is the opportunity to climb to a level high enough in an organization to enable you to integrate the efforts of others across functions and to be responsible for the output of a particular unit of the organization. You want to be responsible and accountable for total results and you identify your own work with the success of the organization for which you work. If you are presently in a technical or functional area, you view that as a necessary learning experience; however, your ambition is to get to a generalist job as soon as possible. Being at a high managerial level in a function does not interest you. Your inventory score in this area is in the second column of the scoring sheet under GM.

AUTONOMY / INDEPENDENCE (AU)

If your career anchor is autonomy / independence, what you would not give up is the opportunity to define your own work in your own way. If you are in an organization, you want to remain in a job that allows you flexibility regarding when and how to work. If you cannot stand organizational rules and restrictions to any degree, you seek occupations in which you will have the freedom you seek, such as teaching or consulting. You turn down opportunities for promotion or advancement in order to retain autonomy. You may even seek to have a business of your own in order to achieve a sense of autonomy; however, this motive is not the same as the entrepreneurial creativity described later. Your inventory score on this dimension is in the third column of the scoring sheet under the letters AU.

SECURITY / STABILITY (SE)

If your career anchor is security / stability, what you would not give up is employment security or tenure in a job or organization. Your main concern is to achieve a sense of having succeeded so that you can relax. The anchor shows up in concern for financial security (such as pension and retirement plans) or employment security. Such stability may involve trading your loyalty and willingness to do whatever the employer wants from you for some promise of job tenure. You are less concerned with the content of your work and the rank you achieve in the organization, although you may achieve a high level if your talents permit. As with autonomy,

everyone has certain needs for security and stability, especially at times when financial burdens may be heavy or when one is facing retirement. People anchored in this way, however, are always concerned with these issues and build their entire self-images around the management of security and stability. Your inventory score on this dimension is in the fourth column of the scoring sheet under the letters SE.

ENTREPRENEURIAL CREATIVITY (EC)

If your career anchor is entrepreneurial creativity, what you would not give up is the opportunity to create an organization or enterprise of your own, built on your own abilities and your willingness to take risks and to overcome obstacles. You want to prove to the world that you can create an enterprise that is the result of your own effort. You may be working for others in an organization while you are learning and assessing future opportunities, but you will go out on your own as soon as you feel you can manage it. You want your enterprise to be financially successful as proof of your abilities. Your inventory score on this dimension is in the fifth column of the scoring sheet under the letters EC.

SERVICE OR DEDICATION TO A CAUSE (SV)

If your career anchor is service / dedication to a cause, what you would not give up is the opportunity to pursue work that achieves something of value, such as making the world a better place to live, solving environmental problems, improving harmony among people, helping others, improving people's safety, curing diseases through new products, and so on. You pursue such opportunities even if it means changing organizations, and you do not accept transfers or promotions that would take you out of work that fulfills those values. Your inventory score on this dimension is in the sixth column of the scoring sheet under the letters SV.

PURE CHALLENGE (CH)

If your career anchor is pure challenge, what you would not give up is the opportunity to work on solutions to seemingly unsolvable problems, to win out over tough opponents, or to overcome difficult obstacles. For you the only meaningful reason for pursuing a job or career is that it permits you to win out over the impossible. Some people find such pure challenge in intellectual kinds of work, such as the engineer who is only interested in impossibly difficult designs; some find the challenge in complex multi-faceted situations, such as the strategy consultant who is only interested in clients who are about to go bankrupt and have exhausted all other resources; some find it in interpersonal competition, such as the professional athlete or the salesperson who defines every sale as either a win or a loss. Novelty, variety, and difficulty become ends in themselves, and if something is easy it becomes immediately boring. Your inventory score on this dimension is in the seventh column of the scoring sheet under the letters CH.

LIFESTYLE (LS)

If your career anchor is lifestyle, what you would not give up is a situation that permits you to balance and integrate your personal needs, your family needs, and the requirements of your career. You want to make all of the major sectors of your life work together toward an integrated whole, and you therefore need a career situation that provides enough flexibility to achieve such integration. You may have to sacrifice some aspects of the career (for example, a geographic move that would be a promotion but would upset your total life situation), and you define success in terms broader than just career success. You feel that your identity is more tied up with how you live your total life, where you settle, how you deal with your family situation, and how you develop yourself than with any particular job or organization. Your inventory score on this dimension is in the eighth column of the scoring sheet under the letters LS.