

Executive Summary

In many societies with a Western economic model children are encouraged and at times even pressured into deciding what career they want very early. In some cases this is to facilitate choice of school subjects. In others one suspects that parents are trying to crystallise their own expectations. It seems more appropriate to be able to say "*Julia is going to become a corporate lawyer*" or "*John will be a forensic anthropologist*" rather than "*Kim doesn't know what he wants to do*". There does appear to be a certain backlash against this with the rise of the "Gap Year" where the happy student finishes high school and then takes a year (or two) off to have a look around. But although many people will comment that they think this is a very "good idea", it is still accompanied by some nervousness. Will the child miss out? Will they be a bit behind in their career?

There may or may not be an answer to this and it is certainly way beyond this note to try to provide one. But is there something we can offer, through Facet5, to help such decisions. Career choice has been studied by people like Holland for over a generation and there do seem to be some broad indicators. People's career choice is linked to their personality although not to the point where we can be prescriptive. We may advise a nervous introvert that perhaps front line sales might prove a challenge or we may suggest to a very gentle, amenable lad who dislikes confrontation that Criminal Law may not be for him. But there are distinct limits. We have worked with a highly successful sales team who were all very introverted. But they were scientists selling highly complex laboratory equipment to other scientists. Yes they still disliked it when they had to do a "cold call" but this didn't happen often. Most of the time they "sold" to their friends and colleagues on the basis of the scientific excellence of their products and their own knowledge.

So what can we say? We had a lot of anecdotal evidence of people with different Facet5 profiles being happier in some roles than others. We wanted to see if there was any logical, formal structure to these preferences. This study addresses this issue. What do people want from their jobs?

Sample

The sample base consisted of 123 people who had attended career development counselling provided by a large UK professional practice.

Instrumentation

Each person was asked to complete an experimental questionnaire based on the Career Anchors concept put forward by Edgar Schein. They were told that the items were intended to help identify what kinds of criteria they have used in the past to make career decisions and which may be important to them in the future.

The model was expanded to encompass 22 broad domains measured by 100 individual items. Each item was presented as a 6 point Likert scale. Respondents were given the following instructions:

Instructions for Completion

Think back to your recent years in your career. By what kind of criteria have you made decisions about job moves, company moves, whether or not to accept new assignments and other career decisions? Think also about the kind of criteria which are likely to be important to you as you think about future career decisions you will be making.

For each question, circle a number which best describes how important that criterion has been and continues to be in your career decisions. Circle "1" for Not True, "6" for Very True or "2" to "5" for shades in between.

If you feel that your present or future criteria are different from past ones, answer in terms of the present or future. We want to understand how you look at these criteria now and how they will influence future career decisions, even though some of them are worded in terms of the past.

There are no right or wrong answers, except in terms of their importance to you. They cannot all be important. So, be selective and be honest with yourself.

HOW TRUE IS EACH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS FOR YOU?

Items presented included such things as

- ◇ It is important for my work to have a routine which is fairly predictable
- ◇ I like to have a position which gives me control over how others perform
- ◇ I need to have congenial, social relationships and a feeling of belonging

In addition to the "Career Anchors" questionnaire, 49 of the 123 participants also completed a Facet5 questionnaire.

Criteria

We analysed the relationship between the Career Anchors scales and the Facet5 profiles. We did this for both the 23 derived scores and the 100 item scores.

Results

It should be stressed that a detailed analysis of the psychometric characteristics of the Career Anchors scale itself was not carried out. The 23 derived scores were based on simple linear sums of the items deemed by the authors to be related. We are currently looking at a revised version of this scale to be implemented as part of the Facet5 suite and a full psychometric analysis will be conducted on that new scale.

We therefore report the correlations between the Career Anchors domains and Facet5 as they are and also the correlations between Facet5 scores and the 100 individual item scores.

Correlation between Career Anchor Domains and Facet5 Scores

N=49	Will	Energy	Affection	Control	Emotionality
Power	0.49***	0.18	0.19	0.30*	-0.27*
Affiliation	-0.32*	0.28*	0.41**	0.29*	0.15
Persuasion	0.29*	0.29*	0.24	-0.13	-0.26
Creativity	0.47***	0.17	0.05	-0.39**	-0.14
Ego Involvement	0.27	0.07	-0.09	-0.40	0.12
Autonomy	0.16	-0.19	-0.08	-0.30*	0.02
Material Reward	0.04	0.13	-0.44**	0.06	0.22
Specialist or Expert	0.03	0.09	-0.17	0.03	0.20
Achievement	0.38**	0.16	0.18	0.01	-0.22
Variety	0.20	0.32*	0.06	-0.09	-0.33*
Entrepreneur	0.28*	0.14	-0.11	-0.14	-0.12
Status	0.18	0.11	-0.01	0.26	-0.05
Service to others	-0.02	0.29*	0.50***	0.11	-0.21
Security of Tenure	-0.02	-0.15	-0.05	0.27	-0.10
Professionalism	0.13	0.18	0.02	0.27	0.00
Geographic location	-0.17	-0.11	-0.02	-0.35*	0.09
Status of Employer	0.20	0.31*	0.12	0.05	-0.12
Task Meaning	0.18	0.08	0.11	0.07	-0.16
Financial Security	0.02	-0.40**	0.02	0.21	0.02
Personal Meaning	-0.03	-0.06	0.09	0.11	0.04
Self Fulfilment	0.20	0.15	0.16	-0.10	0.00

* = Sig less than 0.05, ** = Sig less than 0.01, *** = Sig less than 0.001

These correlations can be summarised as follows:

Will values such things as:

- Power
- Persuasion
- Creativity
- Achievement

And is less

- Affiliative (negative correlation)

Energy values such things as:

- Affiliation
- Persuasion
- Variety
- Being of Service to others and
- The status of their employer

But is less concerned with

- Financial Security

Affection values such things as:

- Affiliation
- Being of Service to Others

But has little interest in

- Material Reward

Control values such things as:

- Power
- Affiliation

But has little interest in

- Creativity
- Autonomy
- Geographic Location

Finally, Emotional people look for:

- Reduced Variety
- Roles that are not "Powerful" as such.

Item Correlations

When we look at the relationships at the item level we see a similar but even clearer picture.

Item Correlations for Will

Statement	Correlation
I want to be in a position of substantial control over other people	0.53
I like to have a position which gives me control over how others perform	0.50
I like to take decisions which really make a difference	0.47
I like to influence others in the way they think and the actions they take	0.45
I am in my element striving against all the odds yet somehow overcoming them and winning through	0.45
I have been motivated throughout my career by being directly involved in creating new ideas	0.41
I love to dream up things, to create things that no-one else has worked on before	0.41
I want to innovate, to be called upon to use my creative abilities in my work	0.40
I seek to use my personal creativity, to think up new ideas, new ways of doing things	0.39
The process of supervising, leading and controlling people at all levels is vital to me	0.37

Item Correlations for Energy

Full Statement	Correlation
I enjoy having a position where other people look to me for leadership	0.42
I seek deep, close relationships with other people in my work	0.40
An endless variety of challenges in my work is what I really want from my career	0.37
I want to work where I am required to persuade and convince others	0.37
Entrepreneurial activities are an important part of my career	0.35
I will accept a management position only if it is in my area of expertise	0.35
I respond to the opportunity to persuade people to do or buy something that they might not otherwise	0.35
I would derive great comfort from knowing how I will stand financially on my retirement day	-0.34
I seek to pursue my own lifestyle and not be constrained by the rules and restrictions of an organisation	-0.31
I want to be having to get to know new people though my work	0.31

Item Correlations for Affection

Full Statement	Correlation
I have always sought a career where I could be of service to others	0.47
Being close to others and feeling a sense of companionship is so important it would inhibit me from	0.47
I wish to use my skills and talents in the service of a worthwhile cause	0.46
I want to contribute to the welfare of others and be of value to society	0.44
I want to be able to spend money easily and without worrying	-0.38
I would want my work to provide a sense of team membership where I work alongside others	0.37
I like to be involved in helping others change for the better as a result of my efforts	0.36
The chance of becoming really affluent attracts me greatly	-0.36
I very much want to use my interpersonal skills in the service of others	0.35
Without wishing to put too fine a point on it, I want to be wealthy	-0.34

Item Correlations for Control

Full Statement	Correlation
Gaining status and respect from my occupation is important to me	0.56
I want to work on things requiring a good measure of precision, where one has to be careful	0.55
I would want a job where I can follow a systematic approach and work according to a schedule	0.46
I like to bring a certain orderliness and have a well organised workplace where things are in their place	0.45
I love to dream up things, to create things that no-one else has worked on before	-0.45

The process of supervising, leading and controlling people at all levels is vital to me	0.43
Social status is an important motivator for me	0.41
I would want my work to provide a sense of team membership where I work alongside others	0.40
I would like a role where tasks are continually new and different and for things never to be the same	-0.40
It is important to me to develop products or new services which carry my own name	-0.39

Item Correlations for Emotionality

Full Statement	Emotionality
I wish for my career to provide a wide variety of assignments and work projects	-0.39
I love to take on a challenge that really stretches me, and where there is a possibility of failure	-0.37
I wish to use my skills and talents in the service of a worthwhile cause	-0.37
The excitement of participating in a whole range of differing and diverse areas of work motivates me	-0.37
I prefer to work for an organisation which provides tenure, i.e. lifetime employment	-0.32
I want to be able to spend money easily and without worrying	0.32
The process of supervising, leading and controlling people at all levels is vital to me	-0.31
It is especially important to me that I work with people whom I like and who like me	0.31
An endless variety of challenges in my work is what I really want from my career	-0.30
I want to enjoy a reputation as a real specialist, an expert in my field	0.30

Discussion

There is a strong logical relationship between a Facet5 score and the types of activities that a role can offer. At a broad or detailed level, knowing a person's Facet5 scores will give a significant insight into the factors they consider important when making decisions. They can be summarised as follows:

Will

Core elements here are influence over others, decision making and creativity. Accepting and meeting a challenge is also important. They want to stamp their mark on the world, to create and innovate. They want to make important decisions and to influence and control the way things are done.

Energy

Here we see elements of persuasion, affiliation and variety, all elements that would be expected to appeal to high Energy people. In addition there is enthusiasm for a leadership role although it appears that this needs to be in an area of personal interest. They also don't want to be tied down and constrained. High Energy people have little interest in longer term financial security.

Affection

It is clear that Affection is associated with a desire to help, to be of service and to feel they have done something "worthwhile". There is also a search for companionship and contribution to the greater good. What is interesting is the clear selflessness that is shown. There is no interest in financial or material issues. This may be just as well since such service and compassionate roles rarely lead to accumulation of wealth.

Control

There appear to be two broad themes running through the drivers for Control. First we have a preference for work that is precise, careful and neatly scheduled. There is a need for consistency and predictability. Secondly however is a strong pressure to be in a position of authority and leadership which commands status and respect. They don't show much interest in having their own name in lights or having to be imaginative and creative.

Emotionality

An immediate point here is that all except one of the items linked to Emotionality are negatively correlated. It seems that Emotionality acts more as a filter or limiter, showing up the things that the person doesn't want rather than what they do want. It is a negative rather than positive influence. This is in keeping with many other researchers' observations about the negative nature of Emotionality.

On closer examination it seems that the pressure of Emotionality is to reduce variety, challenge and diversity. There is no interest in supervision of others. There is however an interest in not having to worry, in being able to ply their specialised trade and to be comfortable with the people they work with. Since Emotionality carries with it an undercurrent of self doubt and social sensitivity this is entirely in keeping.

These relationships provide strong support for the idea that the career choices a person makes are related to their own personal style as reflected in a Facet5 profile. The information is valuable for people working in career development roles within organisations but may also be of value at an earlier stage, when people are starting to evaluate their career options.

If such an approach was to be used in the early stages of Career choice then we need to remember that the personality factors measured by Facet5 are probably in a soft and relatively unformed state at least until a person is in their mid-twenties. Therefore, although some broad indications may be found, especially in those factors thought to be either partially genetic (Emotionality and possibly Energy) or formed early (Will and Affection), no prescriptive decisions should be made. What Facet5 would add to the decision making is a way of exploring options and drawing links between the way a person is and the demands of a particular role.