

CALL FOR PAPERS

Submission deadline, March 31, 2012

EAWOP Small Group Meeting

Job Transitions from a Career and Occupational Health Perspective

12 - 13 September 2012, Antwerp, Belgium

Small Group Meeting Theme

Job transitions can be defined in many different ways. In this small group meeting, we take a broad perspective and define a job transition as any change in employment status or job content (Forrier, Sels & Stynen, 2009). Given this definition, job transitions can include transitions in and out of (un)employment, transitions between standardized and flexible forms of employment arrangements, horizontal or vertical job changes or other career moves within the same or between different organizations.

Changing jobs has become more common (Arnold, 1997; Baruch & Bozionelos, 2010), most likely because of more dynamic labour markets as well as more specific national and international government policies (Garsten & Jacobsson, 2004; Weinert, Baukens, Bollérot, Pineschi-Gapègne & Walwei, 2001). For the individual, this trend has been discussed in relation to risks, such as increased job and unemployment insecurity, but also in relation to a general tendency towards individualization in the world of work (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002), and employees' increasing responsibilities for their own working life career (Allvin, 2004).

In research, job transitions have become an important scientific topic in occupational health psychology and in career research, and both the downsides and the benefits of job transitions have been highlighted. Within occupational health psychology, the focus has been more on possible downsides of job transitions. Hence, work stress, working conditions and employees' health and well-being have been central topics in this field (e.g. Berntson & Marklund, 2007; De Cuyper, Bernhard-Oettel, Berntson, De Witte & Alarco, 2008; McKee-Ryan, Song, Wanberg, & Kinicki, 2005). In the career research field, attention has been drawn to individual choices and agency in shaping careers. Accordingly, this field of research more often investigates benefits of job transitions and focuses on antecedents and outcomes of objective and subjective career success (Arnold, 1997; Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 2004; Baruch & Bozionelos, 2010). What is lacking so far is an integration of both fields.

Small Group Meeting Aim and Agenda

Taken together, the complexity of the contemporary labour market implies that research on job transitions has to be aware of both risks and benefits of job transitions, and in particular of the tension between (the difficulty of) adapting to changing labour market realities and assertively enacting one's self-concept. In order to grasp the full set of consequences related to job transitions, it is vital and necessary to bring these two research fields together for further analysis. Consequently, the aim of the proposed small group meeting is to formulate a research agenda for the topic of job transitions based on insights from both – the occupational health and career research – fields.

To do so, the suggested small group meeting will address several topics:

1. *What aspects (outcomes)* can be identified as beneficial or disadvantageous in a short-term and long-term perspective? Examples are (but do not need to be restricted to): health, well-being, aspects of satisfaction, personal growth, training and development of competence, objective and subjective career success
2. *For whom* are job transitions beneficial or disadvantageous? Job transitions have been studied in rather diverse groups. The aim is to bring together and integrate research results from different samples, like the unemployed, older workers, less educated people, those in subsidized employment or with frequent changes of short-term temporary contracts, but also CEO's, consultants, trainees or high potentials.
3. Under *what conditions* are job transitions beneficial or disadvantageous? Individual, organizational as well as institutional conditions may impact the extent to which job transitions have downsides or benefits. An individual's employability, for instance, may reduce the risk of a job transition (De Cuyper, De Witte, Kinnunen & Nätti, 2010). Other individual factors could, for instance, be individual career management or participation in employability enhancing activities (Van Dam, 2004). Organizational factors are, among others, organizational career management or outplacement support. Institutional conditions could, for instance, be flexicurity arrangements or labour market conditions such as unemployment rates, labour shortages.

We welcome papers related to these topics.

Meeting Format, Dates and Location

The meeting is a small scale two day workshop on Wednesday September 12 and Thursday September 13, 2012 from 9 am until 5.30 pm. John Arnold (University of Sheffield) will be keynote speaker. We will have approximately 20 to 25 oral paper presentations. Submission of a paper indicates a commitment on behalf of the participant to be present for the full duration of the small group meeting.

The meeting will take place in Antwerp at Lessius University College. Antwerp is one of the major cities of Belgium, about half an hour by train or car from Brussels.

Submission of Papers

Abstract (max 500 words) should be submitted before **March 31, 2012** to Anneleen Forrier (anneleen.forrier@econ.kuleuven.be). After the review process each author will be notified about the acceptance of the submitted abstract by May 1, 2012. Full papers must be submitted before August 15, 2012. Maximum paper length: 7.000 words (tables, figures and references not included). Papers will be made available to all participants before the small group meeting takes place.

Publication of Papers

The outcome of the meeting, i.e. the discussion on the future research agenda, will appear in the form of a position paper which will be submitted for publication in European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology. In addition, the organizers will look for opportunities to publish a selection of the papers as a special issue of an academic journal.

Organizing Committee

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Erik Berntson, Stockholm University, Sweden
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