

**Career Counseling in the New Career Era:
A Study about the Influence of Career Types, Career Satisfaction and
Career Management on the Need for Career Counseling**

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ABSTRACT

We investigate whether the perceived need for employer-independent career counseling differs between individuals according to their career type. We identify six different career types, basically varying in terms of career path and career aspirations: the bounded, boundaryless, staying, homeless, trapped and released career type. We investigate moreover (1) whether career satisfaction mediates the relationship between career types and the perceived need for career counseling and (2) whether this is moderated by the career support people get from their organization and by their career self-management. We use data from a representative sample of 957 Flemish employees. The study reveals that mobility on the labor market, more than a discrepancy between one's career aspirations and one's career path, drives the need for career counseling. People in homeless, released and boundaryless careers are most likely to participate in career counseling. Moreover, the results strengthen the argument that lifelong access to neutral career counseling is valuable in the current career era. Career counseling fulfils a need of people who are dissatisfied with their career. This need cannot fully be met by organizational career management activities. The study moreover sheds light on a potential pitfall of career counseling. Mechanisms should be developed for the people lacking career competencies and the appropriate career self-management behavior to find their way to career counseling.

Keywords: career counseling, career types, career satisfaction, OCM, ICM

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INTRODUCTION

Until recently, climbing the hierarchical ladder within the same organization was the most common and favored way of making a career. During the last decades, however, life time employment within the same organization came under pressure. Changing employers and professions is nowadays no longer considered as a rarity (Arthur & Rousseau, 2001). The career literature has come up with numerous new career concepts - such as boundaryless careers (Arthur & Rousseau, 2001), protean careers (Hall, 1976) or post-corporate careers (Peiperl & Baruch, 1997) - to grasp this new and changing reality. Although these concepts differ to a considerable extent, they all stress the increasingly fragmented and often discontinuous nature of careers. They emphasize that careers become less predictable and that individuals can no longer fully rely on their employer to offer them a career. The person, and no longer the organization, is in charge of the career (Hall, 2004).

This changing career context provides new challenges to career counseling. Several authors agree that lifelong access to career counseling becomes a necessity (Arnold, 1997; Santos & Ferreira, 1998; Watts, 1996). Career counseling has mainly been concentrated around the transition from full-time education to employment (Watts, 1996). Since careers become more often based on a long series of iterative decisions made throughout lives, neutral (employer-independent) career counseling might be needed at all these decision points (Watts, 1996). Although this claim for lifelong career counseling is hardly questioned, little empirical research has examined the role of career counseling in this new and more complex career environment. In this article, we study whether the perceived need for neutral career counseling differs between individuals according to their career path, going from a traditional to a new career path.

A considerable amount of research on both career counseling and new career models exists. Career counseling is mainly studied by vocational psychologists while new

career concepts are more the focus of attention of the career management literature. Scholars in both domains rightly comment that there is little overlap between both fields of research (Schein, 1986; Lenz & Reardon, 2004). Vocational psychology focuses primarily on career processes and outcomes from the perspective of the individual (Lent, 2001). Career management literature, on the other hand, is situated in the field of industrial/organizational psychology and is traditionally more concerned with organization-centered themes. However, their focuses of attention are becoming less opposing. Now the career management literature is fully stressing the role of individuals in shaping their own career, the time may be right to join hands. This study is on the interface of both research fields. We have several goals:

Past research has focused primarily on the development of new career concepts. Little empirical research has looked at the consequences of these new career models (Sullivan, 1999). In this study, we focus on an outcome, namely the perceived need for career counseling. Herr (2003) argues that the demand for career counseling will expand as the traditional conception of careers is modified. Career counseling is a way of enhancing one's ability to cope with complex and changing work environments (Santos & Ferreira, 1998). Therefore, people who, willingly or unwillingly, leave the traditional career path might need more support in managing their career development (Watts, 2000) and consequently perceive a higher need for career counseling. In this study we investigate this assumption and examine whether the need for career counseling differs between individuals according to their career path.

To do so, we first reexamine the new career models. Most career literature departs from a dichotomy, opposing for instance the bounded to the boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 2001; DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996; Sullivan, 1999) or the traditional to the protean career (Hall, 2004). Although these dichotomies stress the most remarkable shifts in careers during the last decades, we presume they are a simplification of reality. In this study, we want to enlarge our understanding of careers in the increasingly complex career environment by developing a more extensive typology of careers.

To get a more comprehensive insight in the link between career types and the perceived need for career counseling, (1) we investigate whether career satisfaction mediates the relationship between the career type and the perceived need for career counseling. We assume that career satisfaction is an important predictor of the perceived need

for career counseling. (2) In addition, we expect that the relationship between career satisfaction and the perceived need for career counseling will be moderated by the career support people get from their organization (Organizational Career Management, OCM) and their career self-management (Individual Career Management, ICM). We study whether OCM and ICM may either counterbalance or reinforce the need for career counseling.

A model depicting the key relationships of this study is presented in figure 1.

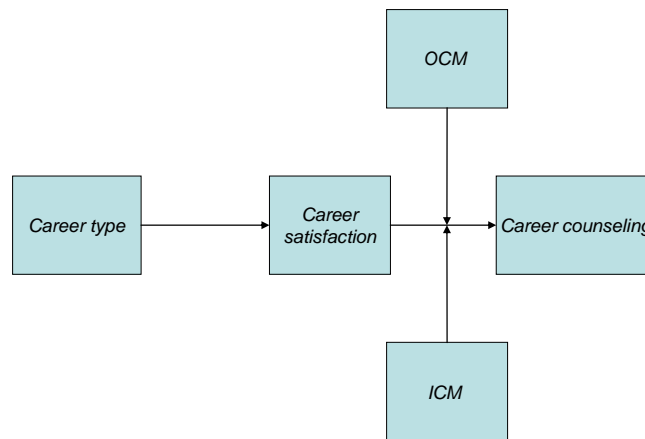


Figure 1: Research model

MULTIPLE CAREER TYPES

Within the bulk of new career concepts that have been proposed during the last decade, two career concepts stand out and became part of the central vocabulary used by career scholars. Almost every article or book on career change refers to the boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 2001) and/or the protean career (Hall, 1976). Although both concepts are often used to argue the same shift in careers, they differ to a considerable extent.

DeFilippi & Arthur (1996, p. 116) define *boundaryless careers* as “...sequences of job opportunities that go beyond the boundaries of a single employment setting”.

Traditional or ‘organizational careers’, on the other hand, evolve within the context of one firm (Arthur & Rousseau, 2001). Boundaryless careers are therefore distinguished from ‘organizational careers’ through the different career path that is associated with both. This definition of boundaryless careers does not pronounce upon the individual’s psychological experience of his or her career. The concept of the *protean career*, on the other hand, accentuates the psychological experience rather than the specific career path. Hall (2004, p. 4) defines the protean career as a career “in which the person, not the organization, is in charge, the core values are freedom and growth, and the main success criteria are subjective (psychological success) vs. objective (position, salary)”. The protean career is therefore primarily a career based on self-direction in the pursuit of psychological success in one’s work (Hall & Mirvis, 1995).

In spite of these differences in emphasis, a mixture of both concepts emerges in literature. Within the literature on the boundaryless career, the difference between the traditional and the boundaryless career is often not solely related to the career path but also to the mentality and attitudes associated with both. It is regularly implicitly or explicitly assumed that individuals deliberately opt for the boundaryless career path in their striving for psychological success. To survive in the new more complex career environment, individuals are believed to incorporate the identity, career values and career activities related to the protean career. Moreover, the protean career literature also emphasizes aspects of the boundaryless career concept arguing that the protean career is mostly characterized by a mobile career path (Hall, 2004; Hall & Mirvis, 1995). The career literature heaps both career concepts together and draws the following total picture of the new career (Table 1).

Table 1: Comparison of Traditional and New Career

	Traditional career	New career
Boundaries	One or 2 firms	Multiple firms
Identity	Employer-dependent	Employer-independent
Employment-relationship	Job security for loyalty	Employability for performance and flexibility
Skills	Firm specific	Transferable
Success measured by:	Pay, promotion, status	Psychological meaningful work
Responsibility for career management	Organization	Individual
Key attitudes	Organizational commitment	Work satisfaction Professional commitment

Source: adapted from DeFillippi & Arthur (1996), Hall (2004), Sullivan (1999)

Although this dichotomy stresses the most remarkable shifts in careers during the last decades, we assume it is a simplification of reality. A person's career path does not always reflect his or her career expectations and criteria for success. Nicholson (1996) argues that both paradigms represent ideal types. He moreover states that old structures persist in what people want and expect. Although people may have built up sequences of jobs that go beyond the boundaries of one firm, they may still be committed to the organization and be longing for job security (Janssens, Sels & Van den Brande, 2003). Hall & Mirvis (1996) too underline that there may be pluses and minuses of the boundaryless career with regard to psychological success. They claim that many working people may have to reexamine their career aspirations and look to other sources of psychological success than the traditional ones, -such as job security and promotion-, or else risk disappointment and a sense of failure.

These arguments stress possible discrepancies between somebody's career path and career aspirations. The dichotomy between the traditional and the new career does not allow for these inconsistencies. We therefore opt for a multiple career type model that identifies different career patterns that basically vary in terms of career path and career aspiration. To identify the career path, we distinguish those who have a stable career path with one employer from those who change employers more regularly. We consider 'the need to stay with one employer' as a central career aspiration distinguishing the

traditional from the new career. This career aspiration matches Schein's career anchor 'organizational security' (Schein, 1990) or Derr's 'getting secure' pattern (Derr, 1996). It distinguishes those valuing organizational commitment from the ones valuing work satisfaction over organizational commitment. (Table 1).

Opposing these two characteristics we get four career patterns: (1) those with a stable career path aspiring stability, (2) those changing employers aspiring flexibility and change, (3) those with a stable career path aspiring flexibility and change, (4) those changing employers aspiring stability. The first two career patterns respectively match the traditional and the new career as we sketched them out in Table 1. The third and the fourth career pattern are characterized by a discrepancy between career path and career aspiration. Since we want to study the perceived need for career counseling of these different groups, it might also be interesting to look at the extent to which the people with a discrepancy expect this inconsistency to be solved in the future. For this might influence their perceived need for career counseling. We therefore identify a third characteristic for these two groups, namely the expectation to leave the current employer. If we combine all these characteristics we get the following six career patterns (Table 2).

Table 2 Multiple Career Types

	Stable career path		Multiple-employer career path	
<i>Stability and security</i>	Bounded		<i>Expect to stay</i>	<i>Expect to leave</i>
			Staying	Homeless
<i>Change and flexibility</i>	<i>Expect to stay</i>	<i>Expect to leave</i>	Boundaryless	
	Trapped	Released		

The *bounded* follow the traditional career path sketched out in Table 1. They stay with their employer and aspire stability. The *boundaryless* have a 'new' career path. They change employers and long for change and flexibility. They behave as 'nomads' in the career landscape. The *staying* have changed employers regularly although they long for stability and security. They expect however to be able to stick with their current

employer in the future. The discrepancy between their career path and their career aspiration for stability will consequently be solved. The *homeless* are in a situation comparable to that of the staying. They have changed employers regularly but aspire stability and security. The main difference with the staying is that this discrepancy will continue in the near future since they expect they will have to change employers again. The *trapped* built their career with the same employer although they long for change. Since they expect to stay with their current employer this discrepancy remains and they are ‘trapped’ with their current employer. The *released* have a career with the same employer and long for change. Since they expect to change employers in the future they are ‘released’ and solve consequently the discrepancy they are confronted with.

MULTIPLE CAREER TYPES AND THE NEED FOR CAREER COUNSELING

In figure 1 we presented the research frame for this study. Central in our discussion is the link between different career types and the perceived need for career counseling. To get a more comprehensive insight, we investigate moreover (1) whether career satisfaction mediates the relationship between the career type and the perceived need for career counseling and (2) whether the relationship between career satisfaction and the perceived need for career counseling is moderated by the career support people get from their organization (Organizational Career Management, OCM) and their career self-management (Individual Career Management, ICM). The overall model, as shown in figure 1, describes a “moderated mediation” (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The relationship between the mediator (career satisfaction) and the outcome variable (need for career counseling) is moderated by other variables (OCM, ICM). Below, we discuss these relationships into more detail and we formulate several hypotheses for each step of the moderated mediation analysis (Langfred, 2004).

Career Types and Career Counseling

Career counseling can affect people’s career competencies. DeFillippi & Arthur (1996) identify three types of career competencies: knowing how, knowing whom and knowing why. Career counseling may enlarge people’s insight in their skills, knowledge and

competencies or stimulate them to develop career-relevant skills (knowing how). It may increase people's knowledge of the labor market or introduce them to people who may influence their career (knowing whom). These elements are part of the 'outward looking' aspect of career counseling. It helps to create a better positioning on and insight in the internal and external labor market. Besides that, career counseling may also clarify and/or adjust career aspirations (knowing why). This is 'inward looking'. Santos & Ferreira (1998) argue that career counseling should not focus merely on occupational details, but on all matters of the development of the person as a whole. Watts (1996) has a similar line of reasoning arguing that career counseling should increase self-awareness.

We expect that both the outward and inward looking aspect of career counseling may be attractive to people who, willingly or unwillingly, leave the traditional career path. This is in line with Herr's statement that the demand for career counseling will expand as the traditional conception of careers is modified (Herr, 2003). In the multiple career model described above, we identified five career types that differ from the traditional bounded career according to at least one of the following factors: 1) the mobility on the labor market and/or 2) the discrepancy between career aspirations and career path. We expect that these characteristics will increase the need for career counseling.

People facing labor market mobility can benefit from the 'outward looking' aspect of career counseling, guiding them to seek out opportunities on the labour market, enhance their employability and market themselves. The inward looking aspect may also be beneficial. A better insight in one's career aspirations and goals increases the likelihood of a successful transition.

Hypothesis 1: People who are mobile on the labour market, namely the boundary-less, the released and the homeless, will feel a higher need for career counseling than people in a bounded career

Participating in career counseling could be a possible strategy to overcome a discrepancy between one's career aspirations and career path. Career counseling can help to clarify or adapt one's career aspirations (inward looking) or to look for a career that matches one's aspirations (outward looking). We assume therefore that being confronted with a discrepancy between one's career expectations and one's career path will

increase the perceived need for career counseling. We expect that this will only be the case if the discrepancy will not be solved in the near future. We formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: People being confronted with a discrepancy between their career expectations and their career path that will presumably not be solved in the near future, namely the homeless and the trapped, will perceive a higher need for career counseling than people in a bounded career

Career Types and Career Satisfaction

Career success can be defined as the positive psychological and work-related outcomes accumulated as a result of one's work experiences (Judge, Higgins, Thorensen, & Barrick, 1999; Seibert & Kraimer, 2001). It is often split into two components: extrinsic and intrinsic career success (Bozionelos, 2003; Judge, Cable, Boudreau & Bretz, 1995). Extrinsic career success is objectively observable and is measured in terms of salary and promotions (Judge *et al.*, 1999; Seibert & Kraimer, 2001). Other people often evaluate somebody's career success on the basis of these objective and visible criteria (Judge *et al.*, 1995). Career success can also be judged by the individual pursuing the career. This is called intrinsic career success. Intrinsic career success is an individual's subjective reactions to his or her career. It is most often measured as career satisfaction (Judge *et al.*, 1999; Seibert & Kraimer, 2001). Since we are interested in people's perceptions about their need for career counseling, we will focus on their appraisal of their own career success, namely intrinsic career success or career satisfaction.

Schein (1990) and Feldman & Bolino (1996) argue that when individuals achieve *congruence* between their career anchor and their jobs, they are more likely to achieve positive career outcomes. Theories of career development consistently emphasize the importance of creating a match between vocational needs and jobs in producing career satisfaction (Seibert & Kraimer, 2001). We presume therefore that career satisfaction will be higher if there is a closer fit between people's career aspirations and their career path. We formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: People being confronted with a discrepancy between their career expectations and their career path, namely the staying, the homeless, the trapped and the released, will experience lower career satisfaction

Although the discrepancy of the staying and the released might be solved in the near future, we still presume they will have a lower career satisfaction since their career satisfaction might be more determined by their past career experiences than by possible future opportunities.

Career Satisfaction, Career Management and Career Counseling

We expect that people who are less satisfied with their careers, will feel a higher need for career counseling. Arthur, Kapova & Wilderom (2005) reason that individuals' perceptions of their career progress (or their career satisfaction) will influence future career behavior. King (2004) follows a similar line of reasoning arguing that people who are less satisfied with their career will develop strategies to overcome the career barriers they experience. Participating in career counseling is a possible strategy to overcome these barriers. Yet, besides career counseling, other strategies can help to increase future career satisfaction. People may get career support from their employer (organizational career management) or may themselves engage in other career management activities (individual career management). We expect that the extent to which people experience OCM and/or ICM will moderate the relationship between career satisfaction and the perceived need for career counseling. We formulate the related hypotheses below.

Career Satisfaction, Organizational Career Management and Career Counseling

Despite the rhetoric that individuals should take responsibility to manage their own career, organizations are still heavily involved in career management (Sturges, Guest & MacKenzie Davey, 2000). Several authors argue that career management should be a shared responsibility between the individual and the organization (Hall, 2002; Kraimer, Seibert, Wayne & Liden, 2003; Orpen, 1994; Sturges, Guest, Conway & MacKenzie Davey, 2002). Organizational career management (OCM) covers "the various policies and practices, deliberately established by organizations, to improve the career effectiveness of their employees" (Orpen, 1994, p. 28). Organizational career

management activities are frequently classified as formal activities versus informal activities (Kraimer *et al.*, 2003; Sturges *et al.*, 2000; Sturges *et al.*, 2002). Formal activities include, for instance, training programs, personal development plans, formal career planning. Informal activities are, for example, mentoring and networking opportunities.

Kraimer *et al.* (2003) studied the relationship between organizational career management and perceived career support. They defined perceived career support as the employee's belief that the organization cares about his or her career needs and goals. They found that promotional opportunities and informal OCM activities - namely informal career discussions with a boss, participation in challenging job assignments and mentoring relationship(s) with senior colleagues – positively related to perceived career support. We presume that people experiencing career support from their organization will feel less need to participate in career counseling. A study of Van Dam (2004) is in line with this expectation. She found that people who experience more organizational support have a lower employability orientation. Employability orientation was defined as employees' attitudes and behavior towards improving their employability. Feeling the need for career counseling can be considered as an expression of employability orientation. We presume 1) that a high level of organizational career management will weaken the relationship between career satisfaction and the perceived need for career counseling and 2) that a high level of organizational career management reduces the perceived need for career counseling compared to a low level of organizational career management. We formulate hypothesis 4:

Hypothesis 4: Career satisfaction and Organizational Career Management will interact in such a way that career satisfaction will be more influential in determining the perceived need for career counseling for people with low OCM than for people scoring high on OCM. People scoring low on career satisfaction and on OCM will perceive a higher need for career counseling than people scoring low on career satisfaction and high on OCM.

Career Satisfaction, Individual Career Management and Career Counseling

Since individuals can not always fully rely on their employer to offer them a career, they are also personally in charge of their career (Hall, 2004). Individual career management contains “the personal efforts made by individuals to advance their own career goals which may or may not coincide with those their organizations have for them” (Orpen, 1994, p. 28). We expect that people who have taken the initiative for career self-management activities in the past will be more likely to be interested in career counseling. Because of their previous experiences with career activities, they may experience less barriers to take the initiative for career counseling. Moreover, their profile may be different from that of the ones who never took any career initiative.

Research revealed that the extent to which people undertake career self-management activities depends on their personality (Guthrie, Coate & Schwoerer, 1998). Crant (2000, p. 439) introduced the proactive disposition as a construct “that identifies differences among people in the extent to which they take action to influence their environments”. He assumes a relationship between proactive personality and the active management of one’s career. This assumption was confirmed by the study of Seibert, Kraimer & Crant (2001) revealing a strong positive relationship between proactive personality and career initiative. A study of Van Dam (2004) showed a positive relationship between initiative, a construct similar to proactive personality, and employability orientation. Other personality characteristics related to individual career management strategies and employability behavior are ambition (Guthrie *et al.*, 1998) and openness to experience (Guthrie *et al.*, 1998; Holland, Johnston, Asama & Polys, 1993; Van Dam, 2004). These findings strengthen the assumption that people who invest in career self-management have a specific profile. They are more often having a proactive personality and are open to new experiences. We therefore expect that people who showed career initiative in the past, will be more likely to see the benefits of career counseling and thus express a need for career counseling, even if they are satisfied with their career. We assume, moreover, that the perceived need for career counseling of people scoring low on individual career management will be more strongly determined by their career satisfaction. This leads to hypothesis 5:

Hypothesis 5: Career satisfaction and Individual Career Management (ICM) will interact in such a way that career satisfaction will be more influential in determining the perceived need for career counseling for people with low ICM than for people scoring high on ICM. Satisfied people scoring high on ICM will be more inclined to participate in career counseling than satisfied people scoring low on ICM.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

This study was conducted in Flanders, a region in Belgium, as part of a larger study. The Flemish government has recently decided to offer every employee the entitlement to participate in career counseling. More specifically, the regulation encompasses the following elements:

- The arrangement applies to every Flemish employee with at least one year of working experience. Unemployed are excluded since they have access to different and more intensive counseling.
- The government opted for the development of an external network of independent counselors. By external is meant that the career counseling is not organized by the employer. Independent implies that the counselor is not employed by the employer.
- People are free to decide when to make use of career counseling. But they have to respect a period of minimum six years between two participations.
- The government is financing the largest part. Participants only have to pay a small non-refundable part, varying between 150 and 25 euro.
- The duration of the career counseling paths that are funded should be between 6 and 18 contact hours.

Although the Flemish government has put its back into career counseling, little is known about the extent to which Flemish employees feel a need for neutral career counseling. The larger study, of which this study is part, investigates whether Flemish employees are planning to make use of such an entitlement to career counseling.

METHOD

Sample

Participants of this study were Flemish employees with at least one year of work experience. A proportionally stratified random sample was drawn, resulting in a realized sample of 957 individuals. The stratification variables chosen were age and level of education. Both variables influence career outcomes such as career success (Judge *et al.*, 1995; Tharenou, 1997), career strategies (Guthrie *et al.*, 1998), the stability of career anchors (Schein, 1978) etc. Consequently, we expect them to influence the career type and the perceived need for career counseling. The proportions by age and level of education within the realized sample reflect the actual distribution of the age and educational categories in the Flemish population of employees (Labor Force Survey, 2002). We have an equal proportion of males and females in the realized sample: 477 female (49,8%) and 480 male (50,2%) respondents.

The data was collected using a standardized questionnaire. Respondents were interviewed by a total of 65 professional interviewers from a private research office (random walk method). We opted for face-to-face interviews to increase the response rate, control consistent interpretations and safeguard the overall quality. All interviewers were very experienced in conducting face-to-face interviews. In order to minimize the risk of interpretation errors, we organized a briefing on the content of the questionnaire for each individual interviewer.

Measures

Career types. To develop the career typology we described above (Table 2), we used several variables. To measure *organizational security*, we used the Dutch version of the Career Orientation Inventory of Schein (1990). The items were measured on a 7-point scale. All items loaded on a single factor ($\alpha = 0.74$). We recoded the score, going from 0 to 10. We set the cut-off point at 5. The ones scoring more than 5 were categorized as attaching high importance to organizational security. Those with a score lower than or equal to 5 were categorized as attaching less or little importance to organizational security.

To measure the *stability of the career path* we used the answers to the question “How often have you changed employers in the last five years?”. Answer categories

were: 1) never, 2) once, 3) twice, 4) three times or more. Sullivan (1999) considers a career spanning the boundaries of more than two firms as a boundaryless career. Since we only collected information about the last 5 years and not about the total career, we relaxed this criterion and included everybody who had changed employers at least once the last 5 years as having a multiple employer career path.

To distinguish the homeless from the staying and the trapped from the released, we also measured whether people expected to *leave their employer* within the next five years. This was measured using the answers to 3 questions: “Do you expect to change employers in the next five years?”, “Do you expect to become self-employed in the next five years?”, “Do you expect to become unemployed in the next five years?”. Answering categories were ‘yes’ or ‘no’. A positive answer to at least one of these questions was used as an indicator of the fact that somebody expected to leave his or her employer within the next five years. Combining the above measures allowed us to develop the different career types of Table 1.

Career satisfaction. To measure career satisfaction, we used the three items of Martins, Eddleston & Veiga (2002). The two first items, measuring career and job satisfaction, were originally developed by Childs & Klimoski (1986). The third item measures advancement satisfaction and was first developed by Dunnette, Campbell & Hankel (1969). Respondents had to indicate on a 7-point Likert scale, whether 1) in general, they were satisfied with their career status, 2) in general, they were satisfied with their present job and 3) they felt that their career progress was satisfactory. Similar to the findings of Martin *et al.* (2002) factor analysis revealed a single factor ($\alpha = 0.89$). We recoded the score going from 0 to 10.

Organizational career management. To measure organizational career management, we used the 10 items developed by Sturges *et al.* (2000) and Sturges *et al.* (2002). Respondents had to indicate to what extent they had experienced different kinds of organizational career management help. Responses were on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The items concerned both formal and informal interventions. Formal interventions were, for instance, being given training to help develop their career, being thought things they needed to know to get on in their organization, being given a personal development plan. Informal help was, for instance, being given impartial career advice when they needed it, being introduced to people

who might help their career development. Factor analysis revealed two factors, after deleting the items which did not load on any factor namely 'I have been given a personal development plan' and 'I have been given impartial career advice when I needed it'. The scales for both factors are reliable: formal organizational career management ($\alpha = 0.87$), informal career management ($\alpha = 0.85$). For each factor, the score was recoded going from 0 to 10.

We added an additional element to organizational career management that was not explicitly included in the items of Sturges *et al.*, but that might influence the perceived need for career counseling considerably. We asked the respondents whether their organization offered them the opportunity to participate in career counseling. Answer categories were yes or no. This item is separately introduced in the analyses.

Individual career management. To measure individual career management, we used the 16 items developed by Sturges *et al.* (2000) and Sturges *et al.* (2002). The respondents had to indicate to what extent they had practiced a range of individual career management behaviors. Responses were on a 5-point scale going from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Some activities are aimed at furthering the career inside the organization. Sturges *et al.* (2002) distinguish two related factors: networking behavior – such as building contacts in areas where they would like to work or introduce themselves to people who might influence their career - and visibility behavior such as drawing attention to one's achievement. Other activities are aimed at furthering the career outside the organization. They include mobility oriented behavior - such as gaining marketable knowledge or making plans to leave if the organization could not offer a rewarding career – and doing practical things such as monitoring job advertisements. After deleting the item 'I have asked for feedback on my performance when it was not given', we found four factors similar to the ones of Sturges *et al.* (2000) and Sturges *et al.* (2002). The scales of the four factors are reliable: networking ($\alpha = 0.82$), drawing attention ($\alpha = 0.82$), mobility oriented behavior ($\alpha = 0.67$), practical things ($\alpha = 0.81$). For each factor, the score was recoded going from 0 to 10.

Need for career counseling. To measure the perceived need for career counseling, we looked at the intention of people to participate in neutral (employer-independent) career counseling in the (near) future. The interviewer first explained thoroughly what should be understood by career counseling. That way, we controlled for different

interpretations of the concept career counseling. Moreover, this helped the respondents to better assess their need for career counseling. To measure the perceived need for career counseling, we used the answers to the following question: ‘Imagining the government is carrying the full cost of career counseling, would you participate in career counseling within this and five years?’. Possible answers were 1) there is no possibility, 2) there is a slight possibility, 3) there is a real possibility, 4) I am almost certain I would and 5) I am not able to estimate this possibility. Since we measure the intention to participate in career counseling within 5 years and not the actual need, we choose a strict cut-off point to divide the ones who are interested in career counseling versus the others. We create a dummy variable with value 1) I am almost certain I would versus value 0) the other response categories. 19% of the respondents (n = 182) score 1 on this variable.

Control variables. We controlled for age, level of education and gender. We coded three age levels: 20-34 years, 35-44 years, and 45-64 years. Three educational levels were coded: low (education until the age of 15), average (high school certification) and high (bachelor and master levels). Gender was coded as follows: 0) male, 1) female.

Analysis

We are confronted with a moderated mediation underlying our model (figure 1). There are different types of moderated mediation (Langfred, 2004), depending on where the moderation occurs. In this model, the moderation occurs between the mediator (career satisfaction) and the outcome variable (career counseling need). Langfred (2004) gives an extensive overview of three different alternatives to analyze such a moderated mediation model. We opt for the first option Langfred (2004) proposes. This is the most direct extension of a classic Baron and Kenny (1986) mediator analysis. The following four steps, similar to the four steps of Baron & Kenny (1986), are necessary. In step 1, the relationship between career types and the perceived need for career counseling is established, in the absence of career satisfaction (hypothesis 1 & 2). The second step is demonstrating the relationship between career types and career satisfaction (hypothesis 3). The third step is establishing the relationship of the interaction between career satisfaction and OCM (or ICM respectively) with the perceived need for career counseling, controlling for career type (hypothesis 4 & 5). The fourth step is

demonstrating that the effect of career types on the perceived need for career counseling is eliminated (full mediation) or reduced (partial mediation) when career satisfaction, OCM and ICM are in the same equation.

RESULTS

Table 3 presents the number of respondents in each career type category and the distribution by gender, age and educational level.

Table 3: Distribution by Age, Educational Level, Gender; score on ‘Openness to change’

	Bounded	Trapped	Released	Staying	Homeless	Boundaryless
n	563	82	19	147	80	52
%	59.7%	8.7%	2.0%	15.6%	8.5%	5.5%
Age						
20-34	29.1%	20.7%	57.9%	52.4%	61.3%	50.0%
35-44	33.6%	43.9%	21.1%	32.0%	23.8%	21.2%
45-64	37.3%	35.4%	21.1%	15.6%	15.0%	28.8%
Chi ² = 76.886; p=.000						
Education						
Low	28.6%	18.3%	21.1%	27.9%	25.0%	21.2%
Average	33.9%	42.7%	36.8%	39.5%	46.3%	40.4%
High	37.5%	39.0%	42.1%	32.7%	28.8%	38.5%
Chi ² = 10.743; p=.378						
Gender						
Male	51.3%	41.5%	57.9%	49.7%	48.8%	51.9%
Female	48.7%	58.5%	42.1%	50.3%	51.3%	48.1%
Chi ² = 3.388; p=.640						
Openness to change (scale 1-9)						
Average	4.56	5.49	5.32	5.04	5.16	6.19
F=12.398, p=.000						

The bounded career type is by far the most represented in the sample. We find a significant difference in age among the different career types. The majority of the bounded and trapped are over 35, while the other career types have a larger share below 35. We do not find any significant difference in gender and educational level among the different career groups. To test the validity of the career typology, we compared the

average score on the personality facet ‘openness to change’ of the different career groups. Openness to change is a facet of the Big Five dimension ‘openness to experience’. Openness to change (also labeled ‘Actions’, Costa & McCrae, 1992) implies openness to take on new activities. It encompasses curiosity towards everything that is new and different and longing for variation. People who score low on this facet prefer familiarity with their situation above change. We consider ‘openness to change’ as a personality trait related to the boundaryless career. Hall & Mirvis (1996), for instance, characterize the protean careerist as one who is open to new possibilities. Sullivan, Carden & Martin (1998) formulate the proposition that individuals with higher tolerance for ambiguity are more likely to prefer self-designing careers than traditional careers. The average scores on ‘openness to change’ in Table 3 confirm this assumption¹. The average score on openness to change of the boundaryless is significantly higher than that of the other career groups. The bounded career group has the lowest average score on ‘openness to change’. This is also in line with the career literature. Table 4 provides means, standard deviations, and correlations among all variables in this study.

¹ To measure the personality facet openness to change we used the Dutch version of the NEO-PI-R (Hoekstra et al., 2003). The NEO-PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992) is the most frequently used personality inventory for the measurement of the Big Five traits. The facet was measured by 8 items on a 5-point scale (1: completely disagree – 5: completely agree). The scores were standardised to have a score from 1 to 9 (Hoekstra et al., 2003). $\alpha = 0.65$.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variable	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1. Age	38.5	9.99	1.00																			
2. Gender	.50	.50	-.096	1.00																		
3. Low education	.27	.443	.176	-.135	1.00																	
4. Middle education	.37	.483	-.076	.052	-.464	1.00																
5. High education	.36	.481	-.085	.072	-.455	-.578	1.00															
6. Bounded	.60	.49	.203	-.030	.052	-.077	.029	1.00														
7. Boundaryless	.05	.23	-.046	-.009	-.030	.017	.011	-.294	1.00													
8. Staying	.15	.36	-.162	.004	.012	.021	-.032	-.522	-.104	1.00												
9. Homeless	.08	.28	-.152	.009	-.012	.058	-.047	-.370	-.073	-.131	1.00											
10. Trapped	.09	.28	.076	.054	-.058	.035	.018	-.376	-.075	-.132	-.094	1.00										
11. Released	.02	.14	-.056	-.022	-.019	.000	.018	-.175	-.035	-.062	-.043	-.044	1.00									
12. Career satisfaction	7.37	2.26	-.007	-.028	-.080	-.021	.095	.104	-.061	.117	-.212	.001	-.132	1.00								
13. OCM formal	5.14	2.77	-.130	-.045	-.123	-.025	.0138	.039	-.023	.096	-.087	-.051	-.065	.439	1.00							
14. OCM informal	2.62	2.59	-.112	-.006	-.061	-.002	.058	-.005	-.037	.102	-.037	-.018	-.072	.303	.594	1.00						
15. OCM: counseling	1.24	.425	.017	-.052	.005	-.002	-.003	.069	-.079	.048	-.044	-.067	-.009	.127	.308	.277	1.00					
16. ICM: networking	4.21	2.38	-.117	-.062	-.192	-.049	.226	-.073	.056	.036	.066	-.029	-.002	.166	.411	.467	.196	1.00				
17. ICM: visibility	5.66	2.72	-.025	-.016	-.051	-.050	.098	-.030	.004	.080	.021	-.067	-.010	.169	.330	.279	.132	.523	1.00			
18. ICM: mobility	2.34	2.17	-.197	-.023	-.048	-.053	.097	-.197	.121	-.034	.227	.011	.095	-.276	.012	.136	.005	.389	.287	1.00		
19. ICM: practical	3.08	2.40	-.210	-.017	-.214	-.058	.256	-.175	.113	-.021	.220	-.017	.066	-.128	.095	.187	.022	.508	.333	.589	1.00	
20. Counseling need	.19	.39	-.073	.007	-.034	.019	.012	-.101	.035	.020	.142	-.035	.027	-.158	-.036	-.067	.000	.070	.090	.174	.264	1.00

Correlations above .065 are significant at the .05 level, those above 0.081 are significant at the .01 level. Tests of significance were two-sided. n = 957

Hypothesis 1 and 2 predict a relationship between the career types and the perceived need for career counseling. Testing these relationships is the first step of the mediation analysis. The results are presented in Table 5 under “Mediation step 1”.

Table 5. Moderated Mediation: Results of Regressions

Mediation step 1: Career Counseling. Binary Logistic Regression Analysis				Mediation step 2: Career Satisfaction. Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis		
Variables	Exp(b)	-2logLikelihood	$\Delta\chi^2$	β (stand.)	F	R ²
<i>Control variables</i>		898.981	23.320*		9.561***	.093
Age:20-34	(ref)			(ref)		
35-44	.907			-.053		
45-65	.814*			-.031		
Education: Low	(ref)			(ref)		
Middle	1.157			.068		
High	1.170			.129**		
Gender (female =1)	.991			-.045		
<i>Career types</i>						
Bounded	(ref)			(ref)		
Boundaryless	1.685			-0.85**		
Homeless	2.981***			-.224***		
Staying	.1.343			0.64		
Trapped	.894			-.023		
Released	1.774			-.148***		
Mediation step 3 & 4: Career Counseling. Binary Logistic Regression Analysis						
Variables	Exp(b)	-2logLikelihood	$\Delta\chi^2$			
<i>Control variables</i>		804.195	107.667***			
Age:20-34	(ref)					
35-44	.990					
45-65	.959					
Education: Low	(ref)					
Middle	1.065					
High	.803					
Gender (female =1)	1.085					
<i>Explanatory variables</i>						
Bounded	(ref)					
Boundaryless	1.145					
Homeless	1.558					
Staying	1.414					
Trapped	.827					
Released	1.090					
Career Satisfaction	.698*					
OCM formal	.863					
OCM Informal	1.075					
OCM counseling	.739					
ICM networking	.972					
ICM visibility	1.074					
ICM mobility	.687*					
ICM practical	1.511**					
<i>Interaction effects</i>						
Satisfaction x OCM formal	1.028					
Satisfaction x OCM informal	.973					
Satisfaction x OCM counseling	1.062					
Satisfaction x ICM networking	.999					
Satisfaction x ICM visibility	1.001					
Satisfaction x ICM mobility	1.055**					
Satisfaction x ICM practical	.981					

n = 932, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Hypothesis 1 states that people who are mobile on the labor market, namely the boundaryless, the homeless and the released, will perceive a higher need for career counseling than people in the bounded career type. Hypothesis 2 claims that people with a discrepancy between their career aspirations and their career path – a discrepancy that presumably will not be solved in the near future - will be more likely to perceive a need for career counseling than people in bounded careers. Looking at the odds ratio's, we notice that the homeless have a higher likelihood to perceive a need for career counseling than the bounded. The boundaryless and the released have odds ratio's above 1, but these are not significant. Consequently, hypothesis 1 is only partly confirmed. We do not find any significant effect for the trapped either. Hypothesis 2 is also only partly confirmed. Only the homeless facing labor market mobility *and* a discrepancy differ significantly from the bounded in their likelihood to participate in career counseling. We conducted a second analysis with the homeless as reference group. This analysis (annex) reveals that the boundaryless and the released do not differ significantly from the homeless in their likelihood to participate in career counseling. The other groups (the bounded, the staying and the trapped) are less likely to participate in career counseling than the homeless (odds ratio's < 1). This analysis shows that mobility is a stronger driver for career counseling than a discrepancy between one's career aspirations and one's career path.

Hypothesis 3 predicts a relationship between career types and career satisfaction. It states that people being confronted with a discrepancy between their career aspirations and their career path, namely the staying, the homeless, the trapped and the released, will experience lower intrinsic career success than the bounded and the boundaryless. The results are presented in Table 5 under "Mediation step 2" and indicate a relationship between career types and career satisfaction. Yet, the direction of this relationship is not as straightforward as stated in hypothesis 3. People being confronted with a discrepancy between their career path and their career aspirations do not necessarily experience lower career satisfaction. The results indicate that the staying ($t= 1.956$, $p=.051$) are more satisfied than the bounded. The trapped ($t=-.709$, $p=.479$) do not differ significantly in career satisfaction from the bounded. The other groups (the boundaryless, the released and the homeless) have a significantly lower career satisfaction than the bounded.

We still need to look at the interaction effects to find support for the moderated mediation model as presented in figure 1. Hypothesis 4 assumes that OCM will moderate the relationship between career satisfaction and the need for career counseling. To test this hypothesis, we look at the results of step 3 and 4 of the mediation analysis (Table 5). We

study the relationship of the interaction between career satisfaction and OCM with the need for career counseling, controlling for career type (step 3). We do not find any interaction effect between the OCM factors and career satisfaction. Thus, Hypothesis 4 is not supported. We do not find any main effects of the OCM factors on the perceived need for career counseling either.

As far as the interaction between ICM and career satisfaction is concerned (hypothesis 5), we only find one interaction effect. The interaction of mobility behavior and career satisfaction has a significant effect on the perceived need for career counseling (step 3). Moreover, the effect of career types on the perceived need for career counseling is decreased (odds ratio's closer to 1) and no longer significant (step 4). To explore this relationship fully, we plotted the interaction between career satisfaction and mobility behavior as is shown in figure 2. To separate the high from the low satisfied, we took one standard deviation above and below the mean (Aiken & West, 1991). The same counts for high versus low scores on mobility behavior.

Need for career counseling (%)

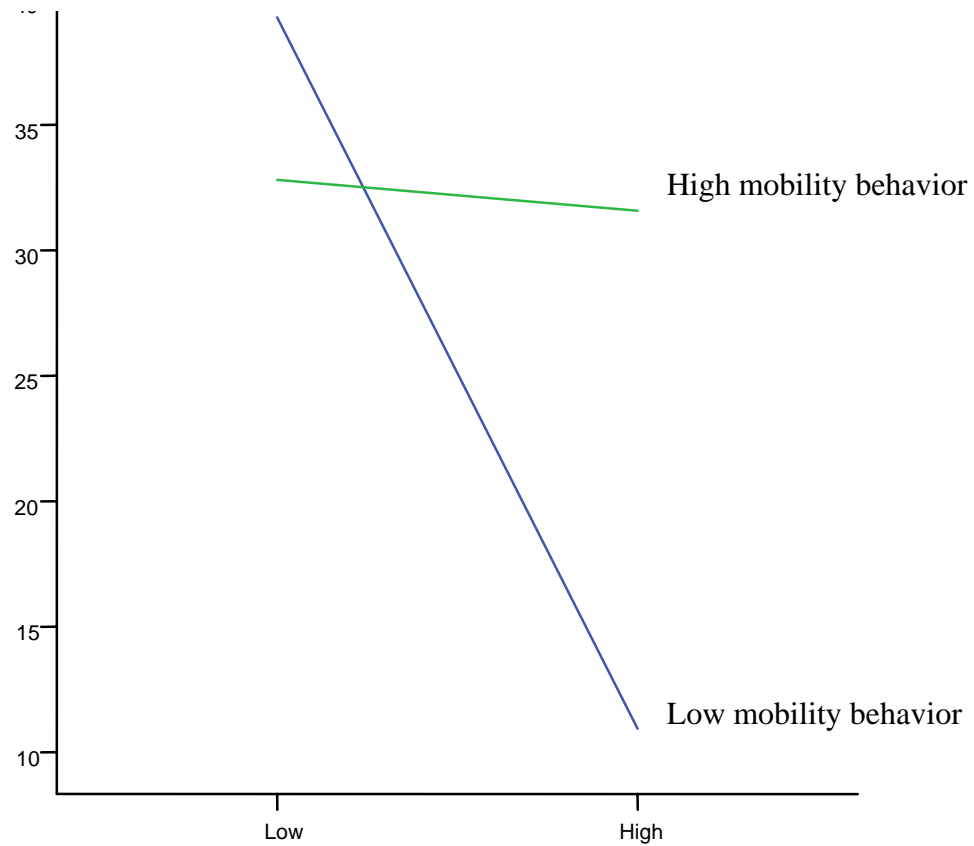


Figure 2 Interaction Effect between Career Satisfaction and Mobility Behavior

The figure shows that the negative relationship between career satisfaction and the perceived need for career counseling is stronger when the level of mobility behavior is low than when the level of mobility behavior is high. This indicates that career satisfaction is less crucial in determining the perceived need for career counseling for people who score high on mobility behavior. The plot also indicates that people with high levels of mobility behavior and high levels of career satisfaction will be more likely to participate in career counseling than people scoring high on career satisfaction and low on mobility behavior. The plot confirms hypothesis 5 for the ICM factor ‘mobility behavior’.

The other ICM factors do not interact significantly with career satisfaction. We do not find any main effect of the ICM variables aiming at furthering the career within the organization (networking and visibility behavior) on the perceived need for career counseling. We do find a significant main effect of ‘doing practical things’, the second factor (besides ‘mobility

behavior') aiming at furthering the career outside the organization. People who have done 'practical things' in the (recent) past will be more likely to participate in career counseling in the (near) future ($\exp(b)=1.511$, $p=.005$).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, we investigated whether the perceived need for neutral (employer-independent) career counseling differs between individuals according to their career path. We included mediating and moderating factors in the relationship. We investigated (1) whether career satisfaction mediates the relationship between career types and the perceived need for career counseling and whether (2) the relationship between career satisfaction and the perceived need for career counseling was moderated by OCM and ICM. The results indicate that 1) the career type influences the need for career counseling, 2) the career type influences career satisfaction, 3) the ICM factor 'mobility behavior' moderates the relationship between career satisfaction and the perceived need for career counseling. In addition, we found a main effect of the ICM factor 'practical things' on the perceived need for career counseling. We did not find any effect of OCM on the perceived need for career counseling.

Career types. To study these relationships, we developed a career typology that is more extensive than the dichotomy between the traditional and the new career. We identified six different career types basically varying in terms of career path and career aspiration (Table 2): the bounded, boundaryless, staying, homeless, trapped and released careers. Looking at the number of respondents in each category (Table 3), we notice that only 5,5 percent of the respondents has a boundaryless career while 59,7 percent of the respondents is represented in the bounded career type. We must conclude, at least for the Belgian labor market, that claims about the speed and inevitability of the shift from traditional to new careers have to be put in perspective. Previous research drew similar conclusions. Schömann (2002) and Forrier (2003) pointed out that Belgium is one of the European countries with the lowest labor market mobility. Research of OECD (2002) showed that, on average, permanent employees in Belgium are having one of the highest job tenures compared to other OECD countries. Belgian research on psychological contracts (Janssens *et al.*, 2003; Sels, Janssens & Van den Brande, 2004) revealed that employees with an unattached psychological contract, which resembles the so-called new deal, represent only 4 percent of the total working population. Sels, Janssens, Van den Brande & Overlaet (2000) point out the value of job security and the

practice of collective agreements between trade unions and organizations as two important cultural and institutional elements that tend to strengthen loyal psychological contracts, or the so-called old deal. This recommends caution in generalizing findings of career research to other institutional setting. Sullivan (1999) raises questions about the portability of the boundaryless career concept to other than US settings. Our study reveals that observable trends in the US may be less outspoken in other institutional settings. Future research may therefore want to explicitly consider the cultural and the institutional context when studying the transformation of careers. Moreover this study points to the danger of studying small and selective samples such as MBA students and specific professional groups such as consultants (Janssens *et al.*, 2003). This selectiveness might lead to misleading conclusions about the speed of the shift from traditional to new careers.

Career types and career counseling. An important finding of this study implies that the demand for career counseling may expand as the traditional conception of careers is modified. Mobility on the labor market, more than a discrepancy between one's career aspirations and one's career path, drives the need for career counseling. Yet, this increased need for career counseling is not solely felt by "new careerists", deliberately getting off the beaten track of the traditional career. The homeless, who are looking for organizational security but haven't been able to find it yet, are most likely to perceive a need for career counseling. This study puts the optimistic image of the new careerist into perspective. The literature on the "new career" often paints a picture of people who are being released of having their hands tied to one employer and grab their chance to manage their own career. In this line of thinking, career counseling is a helpful tool to guide voluntary career transitions. The results of this study show that career counseling is not primarily an instrument supporting the new career, but rather a tool to obtain organizational security. This finding takes nothing away from the merits of career counseling. The results emphasize that people do indeed perceive a need for career counseling. Yet, it incites to detach the role of career counseling from the simple dichotomy between the traditional and the new career. Recognizing the existing diversity in the current career landscape helps to develop career counseling as an instrument that suits the need of different groups of individuals.

Career types and career satisfaction. Studying the model represented in figure 1, we found that the career type influences career satisfaction. However, the direction of this relationship was not as straightforward as the one we expected in hypothesis 3. We presumed that intrinsic career success would be higher if there is a closer fit between people's career aspirations and

their career path. The results revealed that people being confronted with a discrepancy (the homeless, the staying, the trapped and the released) do not necessarily experience lower intrinsic career success than the others (the bounded and the boundaryless). The results show that people planning to continue their current employment relationship (the bounded, the staying and the trapped) have higher career satisfaction, even if they do not aspire this organizational security (i.e. the trapped), than those who will not continue their current employment relationship. Additional research is necessary to further uncover this relationship between career types and career satisfaction. The finding of this study could lead to the assumption that the criteria for extrinsic success (salary, promotion) may be influential in determining intrinsic success. People continuing their current employment relationship might be facing more opportunities to climb the hierarchical ladder. This might influence their own perception of career success. Future research may therefore want to investigate the relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic career success. A recent special issue of the *Journal of Organizational Behavior* (march 2005) tackles this question more deeply (o.a. Arthur *et al.*, 2005; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Nicholson & De Waal-Andrews, 2005). The results of our study raise the question whether the career satisfaction of people in boundaryless careers is still strongly determined by their extrinsic career success. This might explain why a boundaryless career does not necessarily lead to high intrinsic career success, although striving for psychological success is a feature of the new career (Sullivan, 1999). Yet, this supposition conflicts with Heslin's (2005, p. 127) proposition that "subjective and self-referent criteria are particularly salient when individuals have non-linear, rather than a linear career". According to Heslin's definition of non-linear careers, they encompass types as boundaryless and protean careers. Future research should shed more light on the relationship between career types and career success.

Future research may also want to include antecedents of career types in the study of the relationship between career types and career satisfaction. Lately, the interest in the influence of personality traits on career success has grown (Bozionelos, 2003; Eby, Butts & Lockwood, 2003; Judge *et al.*, 1999; Seibert & Kraimer, 2001). The underlying assumption of this dispositional perspective to career success is that personality traits impact career success by influencing career processes (Bozionelos, 2003). Although this perspective assumes that the career process mediates the relationship between personality traits and career success, the career process is hardly included in the analyses. Future research may consider the career type as an important mediating variable between personality traits and career success.

Career satisfaction, OCM and career counseling. Contrary to what we expected, we did not find a significant relationship between OCM and the perceived need for career counseling. This finding offers important insights in the relationship between organizational career management activities and career management activities independent from the employer. The results indicate that OCM is not capable of solving all career problems of individuals. If people are not satisfied with their career, they are more likely to reach for career counseling regardless of the career support they get from their employer. OCM and organizational career counseling are no substitutes for external career counseling. OCM acts as a lubricant on the internal labor market supporting the internal employability of the employees. It aims at a fit between organizational requirements and individual needs and aspirations (Baruch, 1999). External career counseling goes beyond the internal labor market. This again stresses the importance of lifelong access to neutral career counseling for individuals.

Yet, an alternative explanation for the lack of relationship between OCM and career counseling in our model could be that career satisfaction mediates the relationship between OCM and career counseling. If so, the lack of effect of OCM on the perceived need for career counseling is explained by the higher career satisfaction of people receiving OCM. Orpen (1994) indeed found a significant positive effect of OCM on career satisfaction. In this case, OCM does function as a substitute for career counseling. To test this, we conducted a mediator analysis (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This analysis revealed no significant relationship between ‘formal OCM’ ($\exp(b)=1.006$, $p=.886$), ‘OCM career counseling’ ($\exp(b)=1.156$, $p=.495$) and the perceived need for career counseling, if career satisfaction was left out of the analysis. This again highlights that these OCM factors do not function as substitutes for external career counseling. The effect of ‘informal OCM’ ($\exp(b)=-.921$, $p=.054$) is on the edge of being significant, showing that more informal OCM decreases the likelihood of participating in career counseling. When career satisfaction is introduced in the equation, the effect of ‘informal OCM’ on the perceived need for career counseling decreases only slightly ($\exp(b)=-.930$, $p=.089$). This is not surprising since the effect of ‘informal OCM’ on career satisfaction is not pronounced (stand. $\beta=.068$, $p=.063$). This points at a very small mediating effect of career satisfaction on the relationship between ‘informal career management’ and the perceived need for career counseling.

However, caution is needed when interpreting the relationship between informal OCM, career satisfaction and the perceived need for career counseling. Possibly only certain groups

of people (e.g. those with a strong position in the organization) are selected for informal organizational career support. In that case, there is a selection effect instead of a direct effect of informal OCM on career satisfaction and the perceived need for career counseling. If so, informal OCM is no substitute for neutral career counseling since those most in need might be excluded from informal OCM. There is a long discussion in the econometric literature on how to deal with problems of selection bias (Lechner, 1999). Our data does not allow us to tackle this problem further. Future research should increase the insight in which facets of OCM and independent career counseling are either substitutes or complements.

Career satisfaction, ICM and career counseling. We did not find any effects of ICM activities aiming at furthering the relationship in the organization (networking, visibility behavior) on the perceived need for career counseling. The same alternative explanations as the ones we developed for OCM can be formulated here. 1) ICM activities aiming at furthering the relationship within the organization are no substitute for career counseling; 2) career satisfaction mediates the relationship between these ICM activities and the perceived need for career counseling; 3) we are dealing with selection bias. Additional analyses revealed no effect of ‘visibility behavior’ on the perceived need for career counseling, when career satisfaction was left out of the equation. Consequently, ‘visibility behavior’ is no substitute for career counseling. We did find a significant effect of networking ($\exp(b)=.897$, $p=.033$) on the perceived need for career counseling, when career satisfaction was left out of the equation. We moreover found a strong effect of networking on career satisfaction (stand. $\beta=.236$, $p=.000$). The effect of networking on the perceived need for career counseling decreased and was no longer significant when career satisfaction was introduced in the equation ($\exp(b)=.926$, $p=.140$). This shows that career satisfaction is mediating the relationship between networking and the perceived need for career counseling. Here again, future research may want to investigate whether selection bias occurs in this relationship. It could be that only people with specific career opportunities in the organization are networking. If so, networking itself is not causing the increased career satisfaction and the lower perceived need for career counseling.

We did find significant effects of the ICM activities aiming at furthering the relationship outside the organization (‘mobility behavior’ and ‘doing practical things’). We found a significant interaction effect between career satisfaction and mobility behavior indicating that career satisfaction is less crucial in determining the perceived need for career counseling for people who score high on mobility behavior. People who showed active mobility behavior in

the past, will be more likely to participate in career counseling, even if they are satisfied with their career. People who score low on mobility behavior are only inclined to participate if they are dissatisfied with their career. Yet, in this era in which individuals are considered to be personally responsible for their careers and their employability, career counseling could also be beneficial for those who are currently satisfied with their career. This finding reveals one of the possible pitfalls of career counseling. Although career counseling aims at enhancing people's career competencies, it runs the risk of failing to reach people who lack these competencies. Career counseling is a useful instrument to support people in managing their career. It should, by all means, avoid to enlarge the gap between the proactive and the more 'passive' groups on the labor market.

We found an additional main effect of the ICM factor 'practical things', such as monitoring job advertisements, on the perceived need for career counseling. This effect is not surprising. People updating their curriculum and monitoring job advertisements are presumably looking for a job. It is no surprise that they are more likely to perceive a need for career counseling than the ones who haven't done any practical things, controlling for career satisfaction. The difference in effect between the ICM factors mobility behavior and practical things is no surprise either. Mobility behavior is reflecting a person's attitude. 'Practical things' is more an indicator of a specific situation people are in.

Limitations. Despite the above contributions of the study, there are some shortcomings in the data we collected. First of all, the number of respondents in certain career types was rather low. Although this reveals the distribution of these groups in the total working population, it is more difficult to study comprehensive models with these data. Additional research on different samples should increase the insight in the antecedents and outcomes of these career types. A second limitation implies that this cross-sectional study does not allow to study the direction of some causal relationships between the variables of our model (e.g. ICM and career satisfaction). Studying the model using longitudinal data should help to overcome this weakness. A third limitation is that we only collected data of the last five years. It would be valuable to have data concerning a longer time period to measure the career types more rigorously.

Practical implications. Several European countries are developing systems to facilitate the access to neutral career counseling for their citizens (Santos & Ferreira, 1998; Watts, 1996, 2000). The results of this study sustain the claim that governments have a role to play in supporting career development services and reveal some important point of interest. A

rationale for policy interest in career development and counseling services is that they represent a public as well as a private good (Watts, 2000). They are not only valuable to the individuals to whom they are addressed, they also yield benefits for the wider society. There is an economic rationale behind supporting career counseling services. Career counseling activities may shorten periods of unemployment, create greater flexibility in the labor market, and support vocational mobility (Plant, 1999). Organizational career management is no substitute for career counseling. Organizational career management is a lubricant on the internal labor market and consequently does not automatically produce the same effects. Moreover social arguments also support the role of the government in offering career counseling services. Career counseling could bring about social equity in access to educational and vocational opportunities (Plant, 1999; Watts, 2000). This study draws attention to a potential pitfall in aiming for social equity. It should be safeguarded that the support of governments in career development does not only benefit the ones who are already possessing the necessary career competencies. Mechanisms should be developed for the people lacking career competencies and the appropriate career self-management behavior to find their way to career counseling.

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Appendix

Mediation step 1. The Need for Career Counseling; Homeless as reference group

Binary Logistic Regression Analysis			
Variables	Exp(b)	-2logLikelihood	$\Delta\chi^2$
<i>Control variables</i>		898.981	23.320*/
Age:20-34	(ref)		
35-44	.907		
45-65	.814		
Education: Low	(ref)		
Middle	1.157		
High	1.170		
Gender (female =1)	.991		
<i>Career types</i>			
Homeless	(ref)		
Boundaryless	.565		
Staying	.450**		
Bounded	.335***		
Trapped	.300**		
Released	.595		