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The protean career: A quarter-century journey

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Abstract

This is a review of the development of the author's ideas on the protean career. The origins include both personal experience and scholarly inquiry. I first applied the adjective "protean" to careers in 1976, in *Careers in organizations*. It described a career orientation in which the person, not the organization, is in charge, where the person's core values are driving career decisions, and where the main success criteria are subjective (psychological success). This paper traces the link between the protean concept and the context of growing organizational restructuring, decentralization, and globalization. Current research related to the protean concept is discussed, and quandaries to guide future research are presented. The paper concludes with a suggestion for examining situations where people are pursuing their "path with a heart" with the intensity of a *calling*, along with some questions to help researchers self-assess their own career direction, with an assist from Yogi Berra.



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