

Can Everyone Craft a Sustainable Career?

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Jos' main research interests lie at the intersection of sustainable careers, career shocks, and employability. He is an Associate Editor for the *Journal of Vocational Behavior* and a Past Chair of the *Academy of Management Careers Division*. Jos is also the program director of the VU MSc in Business Administration. He is also a proud dad of three wonderful kids. 😊



01

INTRODUCTION

Setting the stage: contemporary careers

02

SUSTAINABLE CAREERS

What do we know and where are we going?

03

SHOCKED INTO OR OUT OF A SUSTAINABLE CAREER?

On the role of career shocks in contemporary careers

04

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS AND WRAP-UP

Ask my anything you like!

A SUSTAINABLE CAREER...?



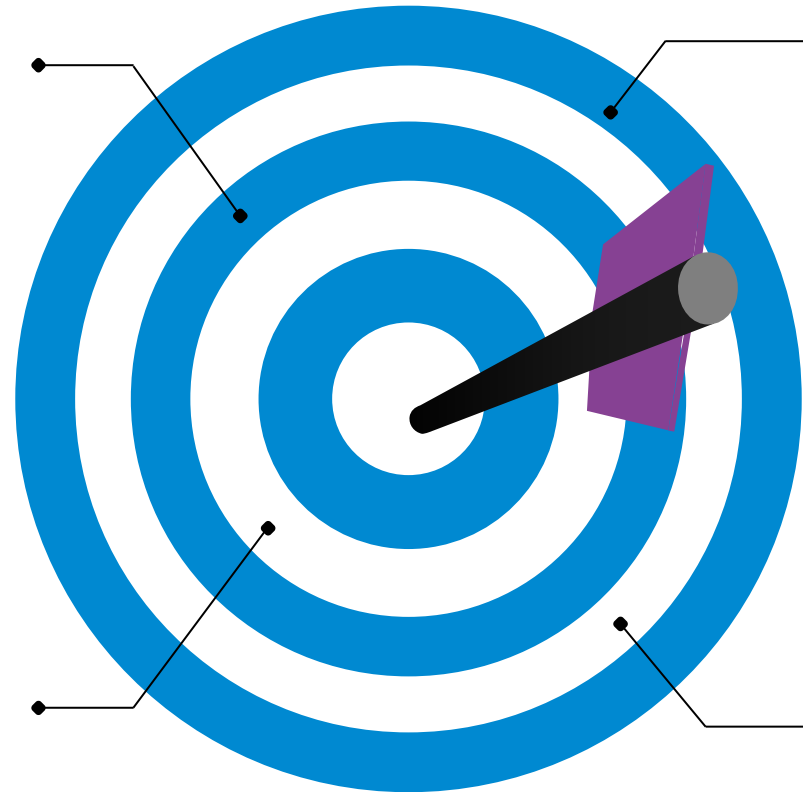
THE TENSION IN CONTEMPORARY CAREERS



HOW CAREER RESEARCH HAS EVOLVED

1 Boundaryless careers emphasizing physical and psychological career mobility

2 Protean careers emphasizing self-directed and values-driven career orientations



3 Objective and subjective career success as hallmarks of individual career development

4 Career capital, resources, and competencies as foundation for navigating individual career paths

For an overview, see:

Akkermans, J., Spurk, D., & Fouad, N. (2021). Careers and career development. In Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Psychology.

TOWARD *SUSTAINABLE* CAREERS



PROCESS MODEL OF SUSTAINABLE CAREERS

DIMENSIONS OF SC

INDICATORS OF SC

CONTEXT

Workgroup *Organization*
Occupation *Institution*
Nation *Private life*

Proactivity ↑ ↓ *Adaptability*

PERSON
Agency
Meaning

TIME
Changes
Events

Person-
Career Fit

HAPPY

Satisfaction
Career success

HEALTHY

Well-being
Stress
Physical health

PRODUCTIVE

Performance
OCB
Employability

Source:

De Vos, A., Van der Heijden, B. I. J. M., & Akkermans, J. (2020). Sustainable careers: Towards a conceptual model. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 117, 103196. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.06.011>

SEVERAL IMPORTANT NOTES

Source:
De Vos, A., Van der Heijden, B. I. J. M., &
Akkermans, J. (2020). Sustainable careers:
Towards a conceptual model. *Journal of
Vocational Behavior*, 117, 103196.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.06.011>



DYNAMIC

Changes within and between
persons

The role of disruptive events
(*career shocks*)

Ongoing interplay between
indicators



SYSTEMIC

The context is critical →
*multiple stakeholder
perspective*

A whole-life approach



IDIOSYNCRATIC

The “universally sustainable
career” does not exist

Non-normative perspective on
career development

RECENT INSIGHTS



Further reading: special issue *Journal of Vocational Behavior*: Sustainable careers across the lifespan (2020).
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-vocational-behavior/vol/117/>

A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE: *SCAN YOURSELF* (DAIRY INDUSTRY INTERVENTION)



NOW... SOMETHING ABOUT *DISRUPTIONS* IN CAREERS



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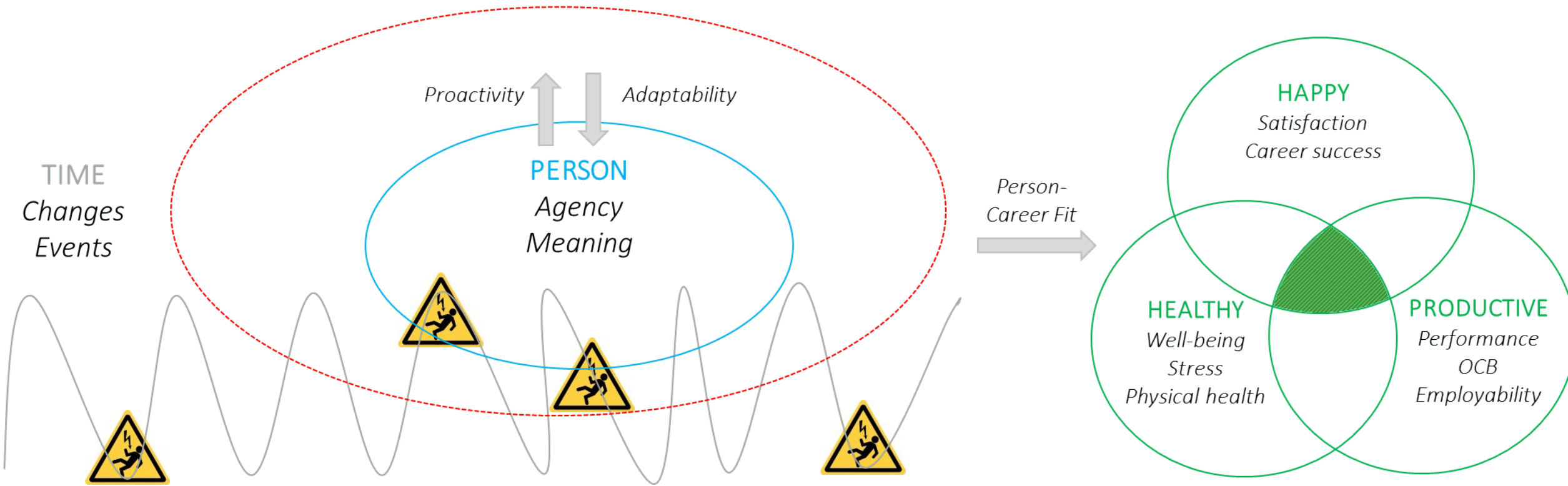
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A DEFINITION OF CAREER SHOCKS

Source:

Akkermans, J., Seibert, S. E., & Mol, S. T. (2018).
Tales of the unexpected: Integrating career
shocks in the contemporary careers literature.
SA Journal of Industrial Psychology, 44, e1503.
<https://doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v44i0.1503>

“A career shock is a disruptive and extraordinary event that is, at least to some degree, caused by factors outside the focal individual’s control and that triggers a deliberate thought process concerning one’s career. The occurrence of a career shock can vary in terms of predictability, and can be either positively or negatively valenced.”

Slightly revised version (work-in-progress): Career shocks are deliberate reflections on the investments – such as time, effort, and direction – you make in your career goals and progress, which are triggered by and immediately follow a disruptive event.

SOME FINDINGS ON CAREER SHOCKS

Career Transitions

e.g., education - work
(Seibert et al., 2013);
paid employment -
entrepreneurship
(Rummel et al., 2021;
Seibert et al., 2021)



Work Outcomes

e.g., engagement
(Kraimer et al., 2019),
person-job fit (Pak et
al., 2021), thriving
(Mansur & Felix, 2021)

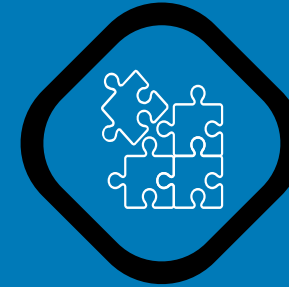
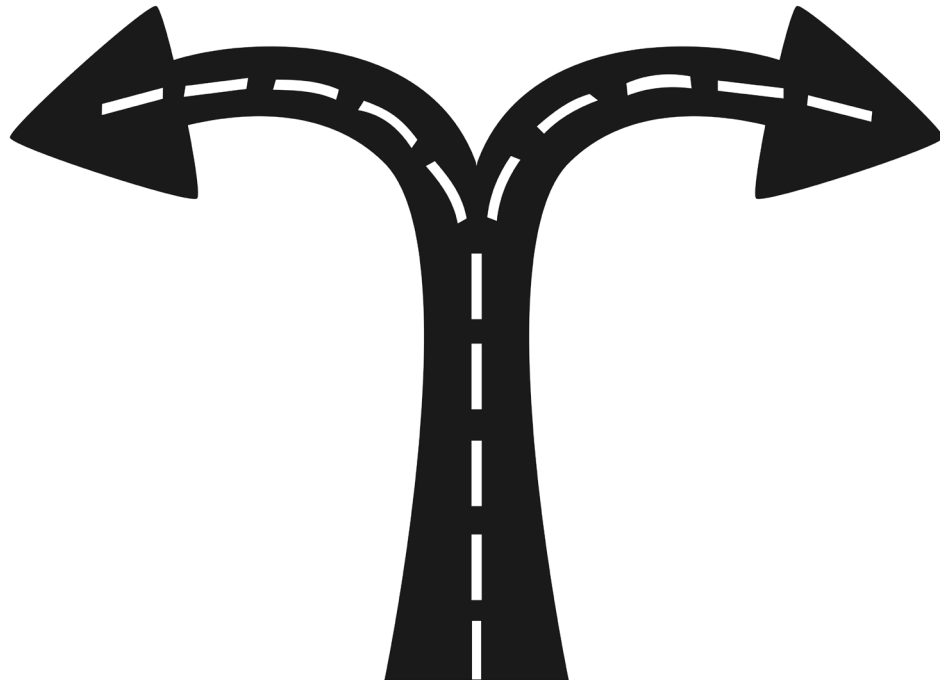


Career Outcomes

e.g., career success (Kraimer
et al., 2019), employability
(Blokker et al., 2019), career
optimism (Hofer et al.,
2021)

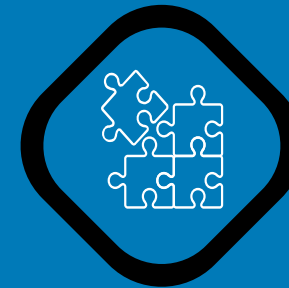


LESSONS FROM COVID AS CAREER SHOCK



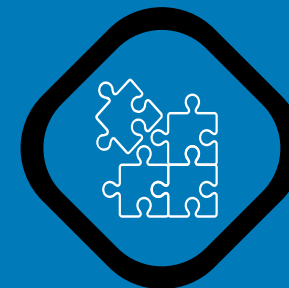
LESSON 1

Impact of a shock is the consequence of an interplay between individual and context



LESSON 2

Impact of a shock can change for short-term vs. long-term and across career stages



LESSON 3

Negative shocks *can* lead to positive outcomes (and vice versa)

Source:

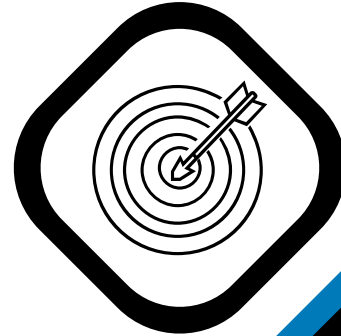
Akkermans, J., Richardson, J., & Kraimer, M.L. (2020). The Covid-19 crisis as a career shock: Implications for careers and vocational behavior. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 119, 103434.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2020103434>

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

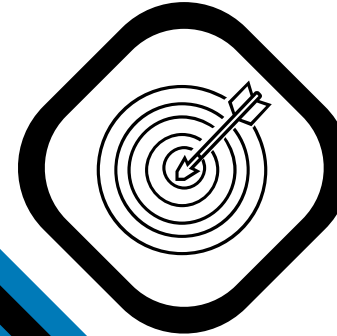
JOB SEARCH

Research and policy focused on self-regulation but job search often triggered by shocks + self-regulating cognitions, affect, behavior after shocks



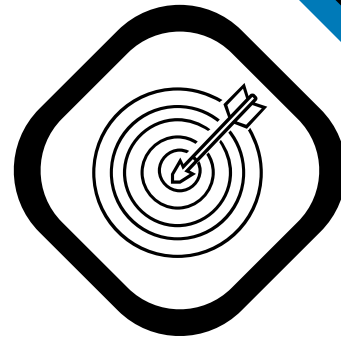
HRM

HR policies and practices often focus on strategy, not on individuals. Shocks can influence perceptions of HR, well-being, and “boomerang” hires



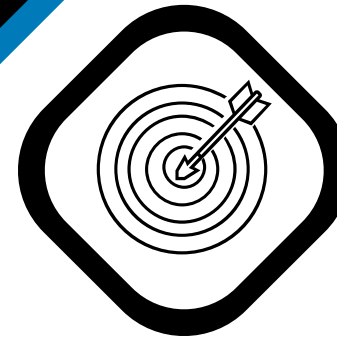
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Move into entrepreneurship is often a result of shocks; transitions to and from paid employment as well. Importance of (entrepreneurial) identities



DIVERSITY

Occurrence of shocks and salience of shocks may differ across social groups; shocks may cause changes in how social groups are perceived



Source:

Akkermans, J., Collings, D., da Motta Veiga, S., Post, C., & Seibert, S. (2021). Toward a broader understanding of career shocks: Exploring interdisciplinary connections with research on job search, human resource management, entrepreneurship, and diversity. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 126, 103563. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2021.103563>

HOW IT ALL CAME TOGETHER: CAREER LEAP

High hopes: Sometimes school is not enough to help young people get a job

Twelve inner city trainees have been honoured as they 'Leap' to the workplace

© Thu, Nov 9, 2017, 20:22

Seán Dunne



Kristy Hubbard (20) from Finglas: "I was scared about starting Leap but, after some encouragement, I decided to give it a go and it's been great for me." Photograph: Seán Dunne

'I loved every minute': This inner city programme for unemployed youths has a 90% success rate

This programme was developed by Trinity College and brought together community groups, local businesses and young people eager to get into the workforce.

Nov 9th 2017, 6:27 PM 15,603 Views 19 Comments Share 350 Tweet Email 3



This year's Career Leap participants - four of them have already secured employment.

Source: Lorraine O'Sullivan

"I LOVED EVERY minute of it."

Career LEAP prepares young people for the workplace

Updated / Monday, 30 Nov 2020 14:06



Paul Fay and Nathan McDonald are participants in the Career Leap programme

ANY QUESTIONS?





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Let's work together to enhance our understanding and practical applications of sustainable careers and career shocks!

[#sustainablecareer](#) [#careershocks](#) [#areamanagement](#)



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INTERESTED IN MORE...? CHECK OUT THIS TEDX TALK ON CAREER SUCCESS! 😊

