MODULE 1:
What do I know about the career development topic?

Part 1: Historical overview

Career theory is bound by and reflects the social and economic environment in which it exists. The history of career theory is driven by social and economic realities. The goal of theories of career choice and development is to predict and explain the degree of fit (or congruence) between people's personalities and their occupations. Work is central for people's self-concepts and career success is important for individuals as well as for organizations.

The traditional concept of career is of the industrial age. During this age, most individuals were employed by large organizations whose primary purpose was producing a tangible product. These organizations provided much of the structure for people's lives. The vertically integrated hierarchical organizations provided the opportunity for advancement through promotion up the "corporate ladder". During the industrial age, work was concentrated in employment, learning was concentrated in education, and education preceded employment. The relationship of employer-employee was characterized by an exchange of worker loyalty for the organization's implicit promise of job security.

Substantial changes in today's work environment such as rapid technological advancements, flattened hierarchies, and decreased job stability due to financial meltdowns have diminished individuals' opportunities to pursue a career within one single organization during their lifetime with prescheduled linear upward moves over time. A perspective on careers considering these developments as introduced by Hall (1976) or Arthur and Rousseau (1996), is characterized by a shift of responsibilities for career progress from organizations to employees (e.g., Arthur and Rousseau 1996; Briscoe et al. 2006) and by an emphasis on the individual's freedom and growth as a core value (cf. Hall 1976, 2002, 2004).

The message from this recently emerged perspective is clear: To be employable, people have to be flexible and adaptive.
The career of the 21st century is protean. The protean career concept was introduced by Hall (1976, 2002) as a reaction to changing career pathways that contained more freedom and growth as well as self determination for individuals. The term protean stems from a metaphor of Proteus, a sea god in Greek mythology who had the gift of prophecy and used metamorphosis to hide his knowledge from others. Protean is a synonym for being flexible, adaptive, and changeable.

The protean career is defined as a career that is driven by the person, not the organization, and that will be reinvented by the person from time to time, as the person and the environment change. It is based on individually defined goals, encompassing the whole life space, and being driven by psychological success (rather than) objective measures of success such as pay, rank or power. It is a career in which the person is (1) values driven in the sense that the individual’s personal values provide the guidance and measure of success for the individual’s career, and (2) self-directed in personal career management—having the ability to be adaptive in performance and learning demands.

Characteristics:

- Focus on psychological success rather than vertical success;
- Lifelong series of identity changes and continuous learning;
- Career age counts, not chronological age;
- Job security replaced by the goal of employability;
- Sources of development are work challenges and relationships, not necessarily training and retraining programs;
- The new career contract is not a pact with the organization; rather, it is an agreement with one’s self and one’s work;
- Focus on learning metaskills (learning how to learn), i.e., how to develop self-knowledge (about one’s identity) and adaptability.

Adaptability and identity learning is best accomplished through interactions with other people (reflected in interdependence, mutuality, reciprocity, and learning from differences).
Another result of these changes is the move towards more ‘boundaryless’ careers, which involve a sequence of job opportunities that go beyond single employment settings. It involves the breaking down of traditional boundaries (for example job boundaries of specialist functions and skills), organisational careers which progress independently of well trodden career paths and the social boundaries separating work and family roles. A person with a boundaryless mindset, “navigates the changing work landscape by enacting a career characterized by different levels of physical and psychological movement” (Sullivan and Arthur 2006, p. 9). DeFillippi and Arthur (1994) developed the boundaryless career concept as a response to changes in the direction of more permeable (organizational) boundaries.

The boundaryless career attitude refers to organizational mobility preference (i.e., people’s physical mobility) and a boundaryless mindset (i.e., people’s psychological mobility). Organizational mobility preference means an attitude to conduct actual moves between different occupations, jobs, and organizations. People with a high organizational mobility preference choose to work in several different organizations and actually cross organizational boundaries by taking employment in another company. In contrast, a boundaryless mindset refers to an individual’s mental ability to be mobile. A person with a boundaryless mindset enjoys working on projects with people across many organizations and feels energized and enthusiastic about engaging in new experiences and situations outside of the organization.

<table>
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<th>Key Attributes of Traditional vs Protean Careers</th>
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<td><strong>Traditional Career</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mobility/Security</strong></td>
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Part 2: Career management concepts and career development process

Rapid changes in information and communication technologies, increasing globalisation, and greater competition, are all contributing to a dramatic change in working life, which will have an impact on your career. The concept of a job for life is no longer a reality. Young people now are likely to experience five to eight major career changes in their lives in a variety of industry sectors. They will also be experiencing more fluid forms of working with increasing casual, contract and part-time work options.

Many people are also increasingly looking for work/life balance in their lives. They want to maintain the best balance between the hours they spend in paid work and the time devoted to other roles in their lives such as leisure and home and family life.

In this new climate, individuals need to be adaptable, dynamic, innovative, flexible, resilient, self-initiating and collaborative to accommodate and thrive in workplaces, or to create work for themselves.

People need to be proactive life/career managers actively engaged in learning throughout life. Lifelong learning is now the norm and will be an integral part of workplaces of the future. It is critical for people to manage their life, learning, and work if they are to successfully navigate their way around a dynamic and complex economic landscape.

Career: The etymology of the term comes from the French word “carrière” and dates from the 16 c. ("road, racecourse") which, in turn, comes from the Latin word "(via)cararia" (track for wheeled vehicles) which originated from the Latin word “carrus” which means "wagon".

Career definition: Career is defined as a person’s "lifelong progression in learning and work", where learning can be formal or informal, work can include all paid and unpaid work roles, and progression can be any kind of movement which retains a sense of development.

In this definition career is understood to relate to a range of aspects of an individual’s life, learning and work. Career is also frequently understood to relate to the working aspects of an individual’s life. A third way in which the term career is used to describe an occupation or a profession that usually involves special training or formal education, and is considered to be a person’s lifework. In this case "a career" is seen as a sequence of related jobs usually pursued within a single industry or sector e.g. "a career in law" or "a career in the building trade".

Career planning: Career planning is about organising your ideas and your time in order to make things happen in your future. For some, this may be a logical sequence of events that happen
in a 'typical' order; for others, it's about organising your thoughts and ideas and creating small steps to make the bigger ideas a reality.

There are generally 4 key steps within career planning:

- Self awareness
- Exploring options
- Decision-making/ planning
- Transition management
- Setting goal;
- Taking action.

**Self awareness**

- This means thinking about what you want out of life/ a job.
- Think about what you actually like and what makes you happy.
- Understanding what you have to offer and or what makes you stand out from everyone else and even whether there are any gaps in your skills.
- Some of this may start within your degree (for instance, in PDP sessions) with or without the Careers Advisers. Some people prefer to make individual guidance appointments to work through these things in a one-to-one setting.

**Exploring your options**

Questions to consider include:

- What options are available to you?
- Does your programme have a natural progression or does it allow for expansion into a variety of areas?
- Have you considered work experience to try out different areas, make new contacts or find out more about yourself?
- Do you need to look into further study in order to specialise?
- What kinds of employers recruit in a particular field?
- What do other graduates do?

**Decision making and planning**

- How are you going to achieve your goal (if you have decided what it is)?
- Do you need to plan ahead due to application deadlines or demand for roles/ places?
- How will you fit this career planning into your schedule along with your studies and any other commitments you have?
Do you need to make more of an effort in a particular sector to be entrepreneurial or to make contacts?

**Taking action**

- This involves putting plans into action and being able to manage the process of moving from university into work, or moving from undergraduate into postgraduate study.
- How you self-market can make a difference to your success. Have you critically evaluated how you look from an employers' perspective?

*Watch* graduates talking about how they put their career ideas into action and the practical steps they took to make these a reality.

**Career Development** is the lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future. It also includes many related topics, including learning enough about oneself and the world of work to make a satisfactory career choice, having a satisfactory work life, and preparing for a productive and happy retirement.

Although we spend a large part of our lives working, most people are very poorly prepared to choose a satisfying career.

**Career Management:** It is the process by which individuals can make reasoned, appropriate decisions about their work life. It is an approach to problem solving that can be used to address a wide variety of career decisions.

*Watch* 6 TED talks to inspire your career search.
Part 3: Career Management Skills

Career management skills (CMS) are increasingly touted as necessary for all citizens, young and adult, particularly given the realities of employment and self-employment in a knowledge-based society, where “protean”, “portfolio” careers are expected to increasingly become the norm and lifelong career guidance an entitlement of all citizens.

Definitions of CMS vary across Europe. The CMS is a particularly Anglo-Saxon term in origin. The French translation “acquisition de la capacité de s’orienter”, which overlaps the notion of “self-guidance”, seems to capture the notion of CMS.

There is some concern, therefore, about the challenge of developing a shared, Europe-wide understanding of what is being referred to by CMS because of the economic, socio-political and cultural differences across Europe. A definition that seems to capture the range of meanings that are attributed to CMS in Europe:

Career management skills refer to a range of competences which provide structured ways for individuals and groups to gather, analyse, synthesise and organise self, educational and occupational information, as well as the skills to make and implement decisions and transitions.

They are therefore of value to the individual in terms of constructing and implementing a life project in which work, whether as an employee or as a self-employed person, occupies a central place.

Three main areas of career competences:

- **Self-management skills** (including communication skills, leadership skills, self-awareness skills, and self-evaluation skills, i.e. understanding one’s abilities and interests; self-confidence/self-efficacy skills, problem-solving skills, teamwork, decision-making skills. The self-management skills refer to knowing about individual strengths and weaknesses, personal interests, values and predispositions, developing positive self-image and developing positive relationships with others);

- **Opportunity awareness skills** (including skills in looking for and evaluating information collected related to career pathways, training and labour market opportunities). They mean to be able to find, process and apply relevant information, refer to lifelong learning and the ability to explore career and learning opportunities and explore social environment;
○ **Transition skills** (including skills in personal action planning; job-search skills – writing letters of applications, CV writing, interview and self-presentation skills; awareness of work ethics). The transition skills refer to the ability to take career decisions, develop personal career plan, define adequate learning/career and life goals, apply knowledge and skills in seeking implementation of learning/career and life goals, managing transitions (from school to further learning or the labour market;

○ **Leadership skills**;

○ **Employability, job-search skills**;

○ **Problem-solving skills**;

○ **Entrepreneurship skills**.

The European Commission developed a European reference framework of key competences mapping 8 lifelong key competences. Note the complementarity between CMS and the key competences:
Table 1. Mapping CMS within the European reference framework of key competences for lifelong learning.

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<tr>
<th>Domains of the European reference framework of key competences for lifelong learning</th>
<th>Links to CMS</th>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Communication in mother tongue</td>
<td>• Able to search, collect, process written information</td>
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<td>• Able to distinguish relevant from irrelevant data</td>
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<td>(2) Communication in a foreign language</td>
<td>• Able to work with diversity</td>
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<td>(3) Math, science, technological literacy</td>
<td>• Able to manage a budget</td>
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<td>• Cultivating a disposition towards critical thinking</td>
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<td>• Able to manipulate tools and data to reach a conclusion</td>
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<td>(4) Digital competence</td>
<td>• Able to use Internet-based data and services</td>
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<td>• Able to use ICT to support critical thinking, creativity and innovation at leisure and work</td>
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<td>(5) Learning-to-learn</td>
<td>• Effective self-management of learning and careers</td>
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<td>(6) Interpersonal and civic competences</td>
<td>• Able to interact effectively with institutions</td>
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<td>• Able to distinguish between work and personal life</td>
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<td>(7) Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>• Skills in project development, implementation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Able to identify one’s strengths and weaknesses</td>
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<td>• Able to assess and take risks when warranted</td>
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<td>(8) Cultural expression</td>
<td>• Able to realise economic opportunities in cultural activities</td>
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