

Careers and abilities of next-generation executive candidates

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Abstrak

This article examines the relationship between career system and ability development of candidates for next generation business managers. Two research questions are set, and they are as follows; 1) Are there abilities unique to business managers those are irrelevant to any specific function and those are not expected by Intellectual Skills Theory? If they are, then their contents and development process should be identified. 2) Do the candidates pursue their specialists' careers with wide ranging careers or develop their generalists' one through multi-functional jobs experiences among which there is no complementarity, or both of the two exist? An interview research on the relationship between the learning contents through the 22 candidates' careers in a large electronic component company and opportunities to learn is conducted for the purpose of finding the answers to the two research questions. The results are as follows; The 129 learning contents are found and almost two thirds of the contents are abilities irrelevant to a specific function such as managerial one in spite of their wide range careers within one or two functions. Identified managerial abilities are for coordinating with other departments, understanding situations of entirety of their firm, judging based on their firm's strength and weakness, and bearing trust from other employees and networks within their firm. The process of mastering management abilities identified in this research is analogical learning based on comparison that is triggered by difference recognition to their work triggered by a personnel move. And this process is not expected by Intellectual Skills Theory. Then the concurrent learning hypothesis is proposed that recognition of difference triggers by a personnel move encourages two types of learning. One of those is cause-effect learning that develops uncertainty processing ability unique to a specific job which is supposed by Intellectual Skills Theory, and the other is analogical learning based on comparison between the two jobs that a personnel move brings in that is not relevant to any specific function.