

## Career Agility in the world of work



The world of work has changed over the years and the future world of work seems to require different skills, because of automation, robotics and AI among other factors. The turbulent workplace conditions have a profound impact on individuals' career behaviour and needs. Current work conditions entail frequent transitions between jobs, organisations, and occupations which demand enhanced career adaptation capabilities. Changing industry employment conditions expect employees to be highly adaptable and resilient in their career. The nature of work and skills required constantly changes and technological sophistication is one of the biggest drivers of change. The capacity for career agility is deemed important in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution as the disruptive and accelerated pace of change requires organisations and employees to become increasingly agile to proactively respond and embrace disruption. Career agility denotes the willingness or adaptive readiness to proactively adapt to technological change and to engage in continuous learning which may help to trigger the use of career-adaptability resources (Coetzee et al., 2020). Career agility has 3 facets namely technological adaptivity, agile learning, and career navigation as potential explanatory mechanisms of individuals' career adaptability. Career adaptation results in successful alignment with, and proactive adaptation to shifting environmental conditions. Proactive career behaviours such as career planning and decision-making are career behaviours that lead to positive outcomes such as career satisfaction, life satisfaction, and job satisfaction. Career agility is important in career self-management.

Researchers identified three facets of career agility namely technological adaptivity, agile learning, and

career navigation that describe individuals' adaptive readiness for proactive career self-management in the technological-driven digital era. These three facets of career agility positively explain individuals' adaptability. Career agility is built on the coordination of personal strengths and resources that can be leveraged for career success. The facets of career agility function as motivational energisers of adaptivity that promote the building of personal resources needed to achieve career goals. Career agility enables individuals to effectively cope in anticipating and solving the challenges that the digital era brings to occupations, jobs, and careers (Coetzee et al., 2020).

#### Technological adaptivity

Career agile individuals embrace technological innovation, they improve their technological skills to be able to upskill and reskill for the uncertain world of work. Technological adaptivity helps individuals to capitalise on career development opportunities that are especially influenced by technological innovation. Career agility explains individuals' shifting psychological career development needs in the their adaptation to the changes that accelerated technological developments bring to the nature of work and careers.

#### Career Navigation

Creating a diverse network of professional relationships often help to create meaningful new career pathways in uncertain, changing contexts (Andersen, 2020; Konstant, 2020).

#### *Agile learning*

The willingness to set and manage the achievement of career goals. Individuals who display high levels of agile learning are full of energy, they are eager to search for opportunities to learn new skills that will improve their career and job success. An agile learning mindset encourages people to leverage and maximise their knowledge, skills and style preferences. This requires constant upskilling and reskilling being open to new ways of doing things in the workplace.

#### *Career navigation*

Individuals have willingness to navigate and adapt to change and uncertainty in their job and career environment, and flexibility influences this. Individuals with high levels of career navigation are willing to scan the environment for new career opportunities and to take advantage of changes in the job and career environment. Creating a diverse network of professional relationships often help to create meaningful new career pathways in uncertain, changing contexts. Relationship building and maintenance is an important factor in career navigation.

Career agility is a psychological adaptation mechanism that reduces career insecurity in uncertain employment contexts, increases individuals' self-efficacy in career identity management. However, research on the construct of career agility is sparse. The organisation and individual are important in the manifestation of career agility. Organisations have to create an environment that cultivates and promotes career agility in their employees by retraining, reskilling to transform the workforce, especially by

utilising technology. Individuals need to be agile by learning within the workplace and outside the workplace. They need to have meaningful relationships to help them navigate their careers.