The Social Chronology Framework: a multiperspective approach to career studies

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[Abstract] The promise of careers as a focal point for better understanding the relationship between individuals, institutions and society has not yet been fulfilled. A major reason for this is the lack of a joint framework and language that facilitate a mutual exchange of ideas between career studies and the broader field of social research, in particular organization studies. We describe a new approach, the Social Chronology Framework (SCF), which helps to overcome this divide. It builds on three perspectives inherent in career studies: spatial, ontic, and temporal. Their respective distinctions, core operations, and constructs lead to a multiperiod, multilevel and coevolutionary heuristic model for structuring career scholarship. As a result, the SCF provides a blueprint for how career studies can benefit from insights available in organization studies. We give examples from studies of mentorship and career success to show how the SCF can be applied to substantive areas of career scholarship. This leads researchers to established areas outside the field which, when imported into career scholarship, suggest original approaches for career research and broaden the scope of organization studies.