A Study on the Meaning of "Reflection" in Career Development

Focusing on the structure of the "drift" in autonomous careers

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The purpose of this study is to focus on two entrepreneurs who have autonomous careers and who are trying to find keys to eliminate any feelings of despair within their organizations. Focusing on individuals who have autonomous careers causes a stir regarding the theory of traditional career development, and through this it might be possible to activate careers within organizations.

For this study, interviews with two entrepreneurs were conducted. Based on the interviews, their careers are applied to a three-career model, a career anchor, career transition models, and a turning-point career model.

The results of this study consist of the following:
The "direction," which is the individual's sense of value, occurs due to his consistent action (not only a career anchor).

1. They neither move toward the "stabilization" (by Nicolson) phase nor are passively "drifted" (by Kanai). They move to the career phase upon reflection. Then, they turn their own career cycles over, actively.

2. The career cycles have four phases and one converted phase. They are: 1) trying to find the right direction in their career, 2) making a decision on career design through "direction," 3) taking action, and 4) reflecting.

3. If they encounter an unavoidable change in the environment or feel a gap between decisions and action, they move to 5) a conversion phase to modify their careers, then move to 4) and 2).

4. Career cycles have two styles. One is a "self-building career cycle," in which one can build on career development actively and practically. The other is a "self-discovery career cycle," in which one cannot decide career direction and moves at random. This cycle is short-lived and turns into a "resignation cycle" (becoming passive and thinking about "giving up").

The "self-building career cycle" toward not misleading someone is effective for career education and employment systems. Thus, a study on the reflection that drives "self-building career cycles" will be needed.