Chapter 6

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This thesis set out to explain the consequences of employees' career self-management for individuals and organizations. In doing so, I present the findings from four empirical studies that addressed one or more of the four core research questions introduced in the first chapter. Based on these research questions, each chapter examined and revealed important theoretical and methodological challenges, contributing to the understanding of how career capital development accumulated during individuals' career trajectories could be beneficial for both individuals and their employing organizations. In this concluding chapter, the main findings obtained from the four studies are summarized and discussed in terms of their theoretical and managerial implications. The chapter ends with a discussion of the main limitations of this thesis, followed by possible avenues for future research.

Main research findings

In the previous chapters I discussed the findings of four individual empirical studies and gained new insight into how contemporary employees' career self-management could be beneficial for both individuals and their employing organizations. As presented in the introduction, these studies were designed to address the following relevant and important questions:

1. *How do individuals, through their career capital development, contribute to organizations?*

2. *What is the impact of personal factors on career capital development?*

3. *What is the influence of organizational career management on career capital development?*

4. *What is the interplay (i.e. causation) between career capital development and career outcomes?*

In this concluding chapter I outline the different studies in this dissertation and how they fit together to address one or more of the abovementioned research questions. It is important to note that each chapter in the current thesis offers a separate model, and given that I use both qualitative and quantitative methods, developing one main research model of all studies poses a significant challenge. Nevertheless, the use of career capital as a key concept allows to draw from and summarize the main findings around the four following themes; (1) the link with individual contributions to organization core competencies, (2) the impact of personal factors, (3) the impact of organizational factors, and (4) the interplay with career outcomes. Based on the four themes, I discuss the main findings and contributions in this chapter to further demonstrate how they interconnect across the studies.

Individual contribution to organizational core competencies and career capital development

The first theme concerns the link between individuals and organizations by taking a career perspective. In order to address this theme, I conceptualized this link by looking at individuals' investments in career capital development (operationalized as knowing-why, knowing-how and knowing-whom) and their contributions to organizational core competencies (culture, capabilities and connections). The findings of all studies confirm that there is a direct relationship between each of the 'three ways of knowing' and the relevant category of organizational core competencies, namely, between knowing-why and organizational culture, knowing-how and organizational capabilities, and knowing-whom and organizational connections.

Chapter 2 shows that positive associations exist between knowing-why and contributions to organizational culture, knowing-how and contributions to organizational capabilities, and knowing-whom and contributions to organizational connections. Chapter 3 extends the insights from chapter 2, demonstrating the causal relations among these associations. Accordingly, investments in the three career competencies lead to higher contributions to organization's core competencies (respectively). In Chapter 5 the link in a specific case context, corporate volunteering, is studied to explore how and for what purposes employees contribute to organizational core competencies. Findings reveal that employees employ a range of social-cognitive behavior and tactics, which may contribute to organizational culture (through engaging, motivating and sharing), to organizational capabilities (through applying generic skills and experimenting with new working methods), and finally to organizational connections (through transforming 'casual' friendship relationships into instrumental ones).

However, the main findings also show that individuals' contributions to organizational core competencies are contingent on several personal and organizational

factors. In chapter 2 these contributions are related to persons' dispositions and use of organizational career support. Specifically, people who are extraverted and open to new experiences positively contribute to organizational core competencies through their investments in the three ways of knowing. Moreover, only investments in knowing-how and knowing-whom were related to organizational career support, thus contributing to organizational capabilities and connections (respectively). Chapter 3 further shows that the direct relationships between career capital development and organizational core competencies is moderated by employees' career satisfaction perceptions. The most significant differences are found between employees with high career satisfaction and those with low career satisfaction in terms of their individual contributions to organizational culture. Finally, chapter 5 builds on the findings of chapter 3 by showing that the strong relationship between knowing-why and organizational culture depends on employees' perceptions of contextual and social (managerial) support.

Personal factors and career capital development

The second theme identified in this dissertation refers to the way personal factors (e.g., personality traits, individual perceptions, and personal experiences) shape the development of career capital. Chapter 2 illustrates the extent to which the personality traits - extraversion and openness to experience - are positively associated with individuals' investments in the three ways of knowing. These results recognize the importance of proactive and explorative dispositions in developing motivation, skills and social capital. Chapter 3 further identifies personal differences in career capital development with relation to psychological evaluations of one's careers. As indicated, in comparison to investments in knowing-how and knowing-whom, investments in knowing-why are significantly higher for satisfied employees than for employees with low career satisfaction. Chapter 5 focuses on the personal experience of volunteering as a driver of career development. As our findings show, through participation

in corporate volunteering projects, employees are able to develop vital career capital including psychological engagement, generic and volunteering-specific competencies (e.g. communication, organizing and managing, and social skills), and psychosocial and instrumental relationship networks. The results of these studies demonstrate the significant impact of not only dispositions and perceptions, but also of contextual personal factors in determining one's career development. In particular the results show how individuals adapt to the changing work settings, and acquire career capital that can benefit both their personal and professional success.

Organization factors and career capital development

The third theme concerns the way organizational factors (e.g., organizational career support, mass career customization, and corporate volunteering) can facilitate or hinder career capital development. Chapters 2 and 4 focus on how employees make use of organizational career practices available to them at work. In chapter 2 the use of various career support practices appears to have significant positive relation to investments in three ways of knowing, specifically for employees of the Municipality organization. While in chapter 2 I take a bundle approach, chapter 4 examines the career choices employees make through the use of a particular career management practice, Mass Career Customization (MCC). The results indicate that these career choices are particularly relevant for knowing-why investments (as reflected in the relationships with career satisfaction and salary), suggesting the MCC leads to higher career motivation and ambitions. In chapter 5 corporate volunteering programs emerge as a developmental and learning experience, through which individuals develop career capital valuable both for themselves as well as their employing organizations. Thus, chapter 5 emphasizes how organizations can facilitate employees' career development by utilizing organizational practices other than career management. All in all, these three empirical studies illustrate the dynamic relationship between organizational management

practices and career capital development. As shown, such practices play an important role in facilitating career self-management. Moreover, the main findings show that those persons who invest more in developing career capital and make use of organizational management practices can reap positive benefits, both for their personal and professional success.

Career outcomes and career capital development

The final theme refers to the interplay among career capital development and career outcomes (i.e. career satisfaction, salary and organizational commitment). In particular, within this theme I examine the causal inferences in this link. Chapter 3 focuses on the interaction between the 'three ways of knowing' and career satisfaction. As the results show, career satisfaction increases the effects of each of the three ways of knowing on contributions to organizational core competencies. Nevertheless, these effects appear to be the strongest for knowing-why in such a way that satisfied employees invest more in knowing-why, compared to those who are not satisfied. Chapter 4 further investigates the relationship between the three ways of knowing and career satisfaction, as well as salary (indicator of objective career success) and organizational commitment over a period of approximately two years. This chapter confirms findings by earlier studies, which uncovered a positive association between career capital development and career success. Furthermore, the findings point out the reversed positive effects of career outcomes on career capital, in such a way that individuals are encouraged by these psychological and psychosocial cues to invest more in their career capital. In sum, these studies provide a better understanding of the complex relationship between career capital and career outcomes. They further suggest that career outcomes play a vital role not only as dependent factors, but also as intervening or driving mechanisms of individuals' career development.

Table6.1 Overview of main contributions per chapter

Chapter	Title	Main contributions
2	THE LINK BETWEEN CAREER CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYEES' CONTRIBUTIONS TO ORGANIZATIONS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF DRIVERS AND CONSEQUENCES	Chapter 2 is the first study to address the link between career capital development and individuals' contributions to organizational core competencies and contributes by (1) empirically examining this link, (2) considering relevant personal and organizational antecedents (i.e. personality traits and organizational career support) that shape career capital, and (3) conceptualizing career capital as a mediator factor between personal dispositions and use of HR practices, and contributions to organizational core competencies.
3	EMPLOYABLE AND SATISFIED: ORGANIZATIONAL CONSEQUNCES OF EMPLOYEES' CAREER CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT	Chapter 3 further contributes to the empirical study of the relationship between career and organizations by (1) employing a longitudinal design, this is the first study to show the causal relations between employees' investments in the three ways of knowing and their contributions to organizational core competencies, and (2) examining the role of career outcomes in shaping career development, this study is the first to introducing career satisfaction as a moderator in the relationship between career capital development and organizational core competencies.
4	ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAREER SELF-MANAGEMENT AND CAREER OUTCOMES: DO CAREER CHOICES MATTER?	Chapter 4 examines the consequences of individual and organizational career management for career outcomes and contributes to literature by (1) identifying the potential reciprocal nature of the relationship between career capital and indicators of career outcomes (i.e. career satisfaction, salary and organizational commitment) over time, and (2) investigating the impact employees' career choices differences have on these relationships through the use they make of a newly implemented career support practice.
5	CAREER CAPITAL AND CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING: REVEALING THE BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYEES AND THEIR EMPLOYERS	Chapter 5 refines the consequences of career capital development for both individuals and organizations through corporate volunteering, and thus extends literature by (1) identifying which career capital employees acquire, (2) showing the way they apply this newly acquired at the work place, and (3) clarifying how, and under which conditions, employees can utilize the career capital to contribute to organizational culture, capabilities and connections, upon their return from volunteering experiences.

Theoretical contributions and implications

In table 6.1 the main contributions I discuss in chapters 2 to 5 are summarized. This section further expands on the theoretical implications of my research cut across the four individual studies.

Consequences of individuals' career self-management

First and foremost, my research shows that individual career self-management career has a positive impact for both individuals and organizations. As illustrated by the first theme, this is achieved by taking a contemporary career lens and by studying employees' career capital development. Doing so responds to the increased skepticism regarding the implications of career self-management (e.g., DiRenzo & Greenhaus, 2011; Lazarova & Taylor, 2009). In line with the strategic management literature (e.g., Corredoira & Rosenkopf, 2010; Dokko & Rosenkopf, 2010; Somaya et al., 2008), I show that the career resources individuals accumulate as their careers unfold can be useful for organizations. Although careers scholars have increasingly called for such research, very few have addressed and studied this topic empirically. In my research I tackle this gap by bringing together two influential frameworks; the *intelligent career* and *intelligent enterprise* (Arthur et al., 1995; Quinn, 1992). Although in career literature these two conceptual frameworks are often connected, they have never been empirically studied.

The current thesis not only provides evidence for the way employees utilize their career capital at work, but it also highlights the ways in which they can shape organizational development and innovation. Furthermore, I have underlined the importance of careers as a linking mechanism between individuals and organizations (Jones & Dunn, 2007). The main findings illustrate that the investments in knowing-why play an important role in this link, as they provide individuals the opportunity to explore career opportunities and follow their

career ambitions. In turn, these career experiences form employees' contributions to organizational culture. However, as the effects on organizational core competencies can be recognized over time, it calls for further clarification as to when these may take place. Moreover, more clarity is needed about the process through which individual career capital is transformed, integrated and later institutionalized in the organizational level (contributing to organizational culture, capabilities and connections).

What drives contemporary employees' career self-management: The person or organization? The second contribution of my research concerns the factors that shape and facilitate individuals' career self-management and their subsequent contributions to organizations. As reflected in the second and third themes, in my research I recognize that both personal and organizational factors to play an important role. The conceptualization and operationalization of career capital in my research emphasize the focal focus on initiative taking and proactive behavior. Furthermore, in the current thesis I highlight the importance of individuals' dispositions, ambitions and personal perceptions for engaging in such behavior. In line with the notion of agency, these findings corroborate the assumptions that as an active agent the individual is the main driver and shaper of his or her career (Khapova & Arthur, 2011; Tams & Arthur, 2010). This therefore accentuates one's personal desires over organizational career management (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009), particularly in the studies of contemporary employees' careers.

Nevertheless, my research also identifies in what way and how the organizational context facilitates career self-management. The current thesis shows that the career support individuals receive from their employer assist them in making career decisions and developing career capital. After all, careers are developed in the context of organizations, industries and nations (Inkson et al., 2012). Thus, following up on contemporary scholars (e.g., De Vos, Dewettinck, et al., 2009; Sturges et al., 2010), I also argue that organizational

career management is complementary to career self-management. As I find, by creating a supportive environment, organizational career management practices can in turn facilitate contributions at work and for organizational outcomes.

More specifically, my research further confirms that career management practices which are designed as meaningful experiences (e.g., volunteering) provide more opportunities for exploration of oneself, and consequent contributions to organizations. The study about corporate volunteering reveals that people are not participating in the program to add another line to their résumé, but rather due to a genuine motivation to make a significant change. The volunteering experience re-energize employees to gain autonomy and responsibility by which they acquire career capital and apply it at work upon their return. In particular, the study suggests that corporate volunteering has an impact on psychological capital that is on individual engagement and commitment. It might be that this energizing feeling encourages employees to continue volunteering. This signature experience is hard to imitate by other organizations, and therefore it is up for the person and employer to identify how re-focus this energy. However, if volunteering is the ideal career development environment, only time will tell. Studies on this topic are increasingly growing, emphasizing the importance of volunteering for job meaningfulness and benefits for employers (e.g., Rodell, 2013). Hence, corporate volunteering could be a vital and powerful management tool. Further research in this area is necessary, particularly in identifying which practices can be useful in facilitating career self-management and individual contributions to organizations.

The interplay between career capital development and career outcomes

The increased attention on individuality and employability in contemporary careers research has naturally involved focusing on the outcomes of such trajectories. This is not surprising given that career success is driven by the initiatives and control gained through career self-management (Briscoe et al., 2006; DiRenzo & Greenhaus, 2011). Following the extensive

body of research, in the current thesis I have put forth to examine the work-related and psychological accomplishments stemming from one's career development (Arthur et al., 2005). However, contrary to prior studies (e.g., Colakoglu, 2011; De Vos, Dewettinck, et al., 2009; Eby et al., 2008, 2003; Kuijpers et al., 2006; Ng et al., 2005), by employing a longitudinal design I provide two novel perspectives on career success.

First, the findings unravel the dynamic reciprocal relationship between career capital development and career outcomes. Accordingly, experiencing positive outcomes stimulates and impacts future career behavior (Tice & Wallace, 2003). Thus, rather than outcomes, the thesis also identifies these career success indicators as stimulating factors. Second, the longitudinal design allowed accommodating for different constellations of these relationships, thus specifying how career success drives career self-management. More specifically, the thesis shows that career success indicators play an important role in shaping individuals' contributions to organizational core competencies. These results highlight the dynamic interaction between career capital and career success, and the way this interaction drives involvement and change at work. While these findings of the thesis provide ample evidence, only research looking at both subjective and objective career success over a long period of time, would be able to establish for how long these relationships could sustain and under which contextual conditions.

Applying research approaches to study careers of contemporary employees

In this thesis the consequences of contemporary employees' career self-management for individuals and organizations are studied by incorporating three main design features. First, my empirical studies examine the research questions using samples of individuals from various professional groups. Contemporary career studies, and particularly the boundaryless career, have been criticized for their overly emphasized focus on the managerial level, which accordingly can exercise agency due to their distinct positions and skills (e.g., Inkson et al.,

2012). However, the current research clarifies that agency is being practiced by individuals in different levels within organizations, and is not necessarily the property of one group or another. In particular, the current research thus highlights that career self-management is not rare occurrence, but rather an integral part of work in the contemporary knowledge economy.

Furthermore, this thesis involved studying career self-management across different contexts, namely the public, private and non-for-profit sectors. In doing so, it provides a unique perspective on how career development shapes, and is shaped, by different work environments (Khapova, Vinkenburg, et al., 2009; Weick, 1996). The main findings reveal that individuals' experiences, and reflections of these experiences, provide them with the opportunities to take responsibility and action to manage their own careers. As shown in the corporate volunteering example, these career experiences appear to be most beneficial when employees are able to cross contexts (physically or psychologically) and accumulate learning and resources that are valuable for both individuals and organizations (e.g., Hudson & Inkson, 2006; Jokinen et al., 2008).

Finally, as mentioned before, in this thesis I employ a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches (including longitudinal designs). Thus, while each study illustrates one side of the story, as a whole these studies show to *what extent*, *how* and *in what way* contemporary employees' career self-management impacts both individuals and organizations. My research further emphasizes the vital role of time in the definition and study of careers (P. Parker et al., 2009). All in all, the three design features contribute to the existing literature by taking one step forward to "studying careers as phenomena or series of observable events that happen to career actors over time" (Khapova & Arthur, 2011, p. 10).

Managerial contributions and implications

Career research has undergone many developments, in particular in the recent three decades with introduction of concepts such as boundaryless and protean careers. While contemporary

researchers have mainly focused on the consequences for individuals, the relevancy of these careers for organizations is still uncertain. Consequently, studies have addressed the negative effects of employees' career self-management by emphasizing workforce turnover, and knowledge and skills outflow (e.g., Kacmar et al., 2006; Lazarova & Taylor, 2009; Shaw et al., 2005; Sirmon et al., 2007). Nonetheless, the current thesis shows that career self-management entail potential benefits for organizational development and innovation. When appropriately facilitated and encouraged, self-managed behavior could not only positively increase employees' success and well-being, but could also add value to organizations. Thus, the aligning individuals' ambitions and motivations with the organizational needs gives place for a reciprocal relationship that leads to prosperity of both parties. Drawing on my previous chapters, in this section I formulate three key recommendations for organizations and their employees.

Relevancy of investing in career capital development for individuals

My research shows to what extent and how investments in career development are vital for contemporary employees. Technological, economical and labor changes put an increased pressure on individuals to take responsibility and manage their careers. Consequently, for individuals to stand out in the labor market is not enough to hold a certain university degree or profession. On top of these, as this thesis shows, people are more successful if they make the "right" choices and career investments. As suggested in chapters 3, 4 and 5, the development of career capital provides the opportunity to explore various career experiences, and improve one's strengths. Thus, developing knowing-why assists in identifying what one wants, knowing-how in developing skills and expertise relevant to one's work and career, and knowing-whom in building instrumental and psychosocial networks that provide related support. Over time, these appear to be important for one's perceived satisfaction and commitment, as well for the actions and contributions individuals make at work.

Furthermore, by investing in the three ways of knowing, individuals increase their employability and value for current and future employers. Nevertheless, chapter 2, 4 and 5 suggest that in order to achieve these objectives, and hence become more valuable in the labor market, employees should identify the opportunities and utilize the resources provided to them by their employers. By doing so, they can make career choices and decisions that better fit their personal work and life values.

Relevancy of investing in career capital development for organizations

My research further shows to what extent and how employees' career capital development offer potential benefits for organizations. By investing their three ways of knowing, employees accumulate resources, which can be utilized at work and advance organizational development and innovation. Through developing their ambitions and identities (knowing-why), individuals encourage and motivate others to act differently and contribute to the collective shared understanding (organizational culture). The skills and expertise employees develop, assist them in taking initiatives at work, to bring forth new ideas and solutions, and improve processes that can contribute to increased organizational know-how (i.e. capabilities). Finally, the networks of social relations individuals build and maintain provide sources of essential information, which are useful for knowledge sharing and communication within organizations. As illustrated in chapters 3 and 5, however, these positive impacts are shaped by individuals' psychological perceptions and (cross-boundary) career experiences. This means that employees will be further engaged and contribute more at work when they perceive their expectations have been met. Consequently, this will attract talented and committed individuals. Therefore, designing management practices that can support and accommodate such behavior is increasingly important to attain competitive advantage. I continue discussing this in the following section.

Facilitating individual's contribution to organizations development

My research shows that organizational practices, and career management specifically, are helpful in encouraging contributions to organizational core competencies. First, the results of this thesis provide support that contemporary employees develop their career across different organizations and sectors. Understanding how these career unfold and what their drivers and consequences are, could help managers to take further steps in developing appropriate tools. As chapter 3 and 4 show, employees' career satisfaction plays an important role in shaping career capital and contributions to organizations. Thus, it is relevant to implement practices that allow employees and their managers to reflect on their professional progress and ambitions. These may change over time, which is why periodic meetings and communication are vital for the success of such programs. While providing concrete and tangible incentives are useful, it is also relevant to understand what drives contemporary employees' career self-management. Thus, incentives or programs that allow employees to explore new professional opportunities or acquire new skills are important. Although customization may seem to be costly, the results suggest that in the long run these could be compensated as the talented and ambitious employees stay committed and become part of the management.

Furthermore, chapter 5 points out relevant alternatives of management programs that involve work with the community. The experience of engaging in activities outside the work environment not only provide employees with further satisfaction and practice, but also allow them to learn what are the needs of potential stakeholders. The ideas and resources employees bring with them may be useful for developing new products and services. The challenge for managers is to integrate and institutionalize this knowledge. One way of doing so is by allowing employees and their managers to reflect on these experiences. Such reflections could involve sharing thoughts and perspectives. Another way is ensure that employees are involved in such activities as part of their development goals. While it is not

recommended to reward extracurricular activities such as volunteering, it may be helpful to support and align it with advancement within the organization. This will emphasize the commitment of both employees and organizations in creating a sustainable working environment.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

While I introduce novel approaches in my research to address the consequences of contemporary employees' career self-management, limitations are unavoidable. I discuss the limitations in more detail under each related and separate study. Nevertheless, here I will provide the more general limitations that cut across the chapters and links to avenues for future research.

First, in my empirical studies I have tried to tackle various groups that are representative of the workforce in the knowledge economy. However, given the limited access to organizations, my studies are mainly composed of educated samples. In doing so, I fail to include other representative professional groups, such as lower education, entrepreneurs, the unemployed or homemakers. An extension of the current research could use larger and varied samples to examine to what extent career self-management is relevant in these contexts and whether there are differences among those groups.

Second, in my research I maintained and ensured high standards, including using widely spread and relevant research designs and data analysis, questions regarding the generalizability and reproducibility are inevitable. On the one hand, researching various professional groups in several sectors may offer broad conclusions and recommendations. Nevertheless, I also recognize that organizations and personal preferences may differ and thus challenges more detailed conclusions. Therefore, future research could address this limitation by conducting large-scale comparative studies in particular sectors. Such endeavors could shed light on whether the findings are relevant to particular organization or sectors.

Another related limitation concerns the focus on Dutch organizations. While most of the organizations are international and employ people from across the world, I cannot control for the cultural and national effects. To identify whether there are such differences, a potential avenue for future research would be to replicate my research in different countries (in Europe and U.S) with same or similar organizations. Another possibility is to control for employees' nationalities. It is plausible that Dutch employees have different values from American or people from the Middle East.

Finally, my findings highlight the importance of involving time when studying careers. Time is not only fundamental for the definition of careers, but also offers opportunities to understand the dynamic relation between agency and action. In my research I try to accommodate that by involving longitudinal designs over a maximum period of three years. This period of time appears to provide significant results, however there is still more to learn. Studying career development over a longer period of time, for example 15 years, is more appropriate and beneficial for extending theory (e.g., Jansen & Vinkenburg, 2006). I encourage therefore future researchers to use mixed methods, by conjoining both qualitative and quantitative research questions, to further explore and learn about the effects of career capital development on individuals and organizations.

Moving Forward

As discussed above, the findings of this dissertation both broaden and refine, but also question what we know about contemporary employees' career self-management and how it impacts individuals and organizations. Nevertheless, the question that still remains is what does the future entail? Along with additional information and extensions to the findings of my thesis, in the following I outline some several exciting ideas for inquiry. I hope this will encourage scholars, practitioners and policy makers to further exploring and studying career self-management.

Recognizing people as motivated agents is an important assertion in the process of constructing and making meaning of their careers and (Savickas, 2012). This is significantly pertinent given the changes undergoing in the world today. Even during this year, while many believe we overcame the economic crisis, people are still facing with challenges related to their work such as loss of jobs, lower compensation (e.g., salary and pension), increased retirement age, and graduate unemployment, among others. However, (re) starting your career in an economic downturn may result in negative outcomes (Kahn, 2010).

Therefore career self-management is relevant more than before. This concerns not only professionals, but also other occupational groups such as students, entrepreneurs, retired professionals, and even homemakers who are constantly concerned with looking for new ways to engage in employment relations. Studying career self-management among and within such groups can open new doors to understanding the way people respond to their political and economic context (King, 2001). Nevertheless, this calls for the following important questions: should organizations accommodate these groups' career development, why and how?

One example for organizations that may be able to do so, are non-for-profit organizations. As suggested by Hoffman (2014), people from the abovementioned occupational groups are mostly the ones who search for a meaningful impact opportunity (e.g., volunteering) that will allow them to make positive impact on the world using their skills and experiences. Thus, one interesting research direction would be to identify these groups of people and examine what are their drivers and desired career outcomes? How can they leverage their skills and experiences? Are these useful and applicable to other organizational settings? Furthermore, the career discourse today describe many 'types' of career patterns, broadly labeled under the term *contemporary careers* (Arthur, 2008; Khapova & Arthur, 2011). Therefore, such research is also important for further gaining

insights and developing theory on career self-management of different career trajectories (e.g., self-employed, post-corporate careers, kaleidoscope careers).

Another interesting avenue concerns the consequences of career self-management for society and economy. In this dissertation I focus on the impact of employees' career self-management on individual and organizational outcomes. However, one should not forget that the career discourse could be better understood if we take in consideration also the larger social and economical climate shaping careers (Byster, 1998). If we acknowledge, as suggested by the findings of my thesis, that individuals can shape larger organizations, then we should also consider the possibility that these changes can take place beyond these institutions. Arthur et al. (2001; 1999) have already provided examples of how, through the development of career capital, individuals can impact industries and societies. However, we are still missing rigorous theoretical and empirical underpinning. In particular we need to understand why and how career self-management can have societal consequences? How can individuals translate their career endeavors and connect it to the community (e.g., social entrepreneurship)? What are the contextual factors that may play an important role in this processes? Moreover, we need to understand whether the ability to make a change in such large scale is in the hands of only 'elite' or particular group of people (e.g., leaders, mangers, entrepreneurs)? If so, what makes this group of people so particular? One well-known example concerns Steve Jobs, who is considered by many a visionary entrepreneur that changed the fields of animation, personal electronics, and marketing through the enactment of career self-management (Isabella & Simmons, 2014).

Finally, as researchers and educators, we should also give attention to preparing and teaching people how to self-manage their careers. Given the turbulent work environment characterizing the context in which *contemporary careers* evolve (Arthur, 2008), managing sustainable career self-management is highly relevant. As my current review of the literature

suggests, most of the studies about career self-management focus on the career trajectories of professional employees. However, should we assume that every individual can or is able to engage in career self-management directly after her or she graduates from University? If not, then what can pedagogical agents or career counselors do in order to guide these people? Going back to the conversation I started in the beginning of this section, many young professionals and students today have to deal with a changing organizational world. They are obliged to seek and identify opportunities, invest in developing their human and social capital, and take actions that will help them positioning themselves in the labor market. However, many times these individuals graduate with no prior work experience, and may not know where or how to start. The question that we, as researchers, may ask is how can universities and organizations teach people to manage their careers?

One possible way is to explore what makes one careerist better than the other, and then teach others to follow the same strategies. However, as my thesis show, in many cases one's success depends on various factors. The career counseling literature has developed useful tools, such as sort cards (Butcher, 2004), which may help paying attention to personal needs and characteristics. Others have suggested conceptual frameworks that could assist career counselors in practicing and training individuals to take responsibility and assert agency in their careers (Hirschi, 2012). Building on that, future research is needed to shed light on what career self-management tools should include? How often and in which intervals can one go through such training? Finally, studies should also examine the role Universities, teachers and career service offices play in supporting students' career self-management.

All in all, I identify the topics covered in this closing section as valuable theoretical and research directions that could contribute greatly to the literature on career self-management, contemporary careers, and career management and counseling.