Public Abstract

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Title:DO ROLE MODELS MATTER? EXPLORING THE CORRELATES OF MOTIVATIONAL AND IMITATIVE ROLE MODELING BY PROFESSIONALS

This study was an initial attempt at precisely conceptualizing and measuring role modeling, and exploring the correlates, direct benefits, and career outcomes of role modeling for professionals. As such these results begin to address the question of whether more successful people engage in role modeling differently than less successful people. I developed two key dimensions of role modeling, motivational and imitative role modeling, and presented a conceptual framework that demonstrates the relationship between these dimensions and the direct benefits and career outcomes of role modeling. Although other categorizations of role models have been studied, these two dimensions captured the essential processes involved in one's cognitions about social interactions with, or observations of, role models. A sample of 301 professionals was surveyed at two points in time. As to answering the question, "Do successful people use role models differently than less successful people?" the data suggests that they do when it comes to immediate benefits and subjective career outcomes. This study found that role modeling was more strongly related to subjective career outcomes such as perceived career success and career satisfaction than to objective career success, as well as the proximal benefits of role modeling such as work-related learning, personal skill development, and career motivation.