Since the 20th century, careers have undergone crucial changes (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Parker & Linck, 1999; Tiffin, 2001), becoming increasingly "boundaryless" and "protean" (e.g., Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; 2006; Seibert, Kraimer, & Grant, 2001). Due to this dynamic nature of work organizations (King, 2001, p. 65), career management practices are becoming more and more needed at the different career periods of adulthood (Kidd & Killen, 1992; King, 2001; Watts, 1996). Nevertheless, while traditionally the responsibility for career management was equally distributed between organisations and individuals, nowadays, it seems that this accountability lies almost exclusively on the individual (e.g., Sturges, Guest & Davey, 2000). In this context, this study, being part of a larger PhD research, aims to discuss the concept of self-career management, derived from Vocational Psychology. In addition, it also intends to present results of the assessment of a self-career management intervention, which was oriented to facilitate that process in workers at a public university in the northwest of Portugal. The program designated "Personal Career Management Seminar", invites participants to foster an optimistic vision of their future, to incorporate this vision into their career, and to develop the skills of career employment creation and attainment, as well as, life-career planning and decision-making competencies. For measurement purposes of the intervention impact, it has been used the Career Exploration Survey (CES; Stumpf, Colarelli & Hartman, 1983, EEG, adapt. by Taveira, 1997) to assess the career exploration process, and the Adult Career Concerns Inventory (ACCI; Super, Thompson & Lindeman, 1985; IPC, adapt. by Duarte, 1997), to assess career concerns and valued life-career goals, at a pre and post-test. This measurement plan was administrated to 60 research paid workers (22, 36.7% control group; 22, 36.7% treatment group) from both sexes (42, 70% women) with age range between 22-48 years old, (M_age=28.12, SD_age=5.08), developing their research activities in exact, social and human science domains. In general, the results suggest that at pre-treatment both treatment and control groups are partially equivalent with respect to the assessed dimensions. Furthermore, the outcomes of the post-treatment indicate that this intervention promotes career exploration and reduces the level of career concerns in the experimental group. Main implications for human resources management in work organizations are outlined.

## Procedure and Analyses

The ‘Personal Career Management Seminar’ is structured into three main periods: (a) an introductory session of the process of self-career management; (b) four sessions of 120 minutes each, weekly, in small groups (4 to 7 participants) dedicated to the analysis of the personal career path, the development of an accurate picture of interests, values, preferred lifestyle, and advanced training and employment opportunities. (c) An orientation to the concept of self-career management, as well as, the improvement of a strategy designed to achieve those goals; and (c) a session of consolidation and conclusion of the seminar. The evaluative measures were applied immediately before and after the psychological intervention, according to a quasi-experimental design.

The control group filled out the same questionnaires, in moments of time corresponding to the pre and post sessions of the treatment group. The accomplishment of both questionnaires, in both, groups, took approximately 45 minutes. Statistical Program for Social Sciences for Windows – SPSS, Version 15.0, was used to make descriptive statistical analyses for the socio-demographic characteristics of participants, as well as, non-parametric statistical analyses (Mann-Whitney and Wilcoxon), to evaluate the presence or absence of noteworthy differences between groups and intra-groups.

## Discussion and Practical Implications

In general, results are indicative of the lack of statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups, suggesting that these groups were partially equivalent, in terms of career exploration and career concerns, at pre-test. This study also suggests that the self-career management seminar differentiates the research paid workers, when in promoting career exploration, as well as, in exploring the level of career concerns. After the intervention, the experimental group had higher abilities about the possibility of obtaining employment in the preferred area, of obtaining a favorable position in the labor market, as well as, about the possibility of the self-control information to the achievement of career goals. It also had higher levels of personal information, and about employers, jobs and organizations, which resulted in a greater amount of satisfaction. There were also increasing levels of satisfaction with the information obtained, and the amount of stress related to the exploration process. It can also be noticed a concern and need to explore different activities and make them in a different way.

Based on the results, we can identify two major practical implications. First, it is important to stress the relevance of the psychologists' evaluation of their own career interventions. Similarly to a number of previous meta-analytic studies, this career intervention program has been effective in this population, in a particular set of dimensions. Furthermore, and prior to intervention, the career professional should take into consideration that programs that are being developed and applied, are meeting the assessed needs and characteristics of a particular subgroup of the population. The higher the concern in meeting these needs and characteristics, the greater the intervention effectiveness level (Whiston & Buck, 2008).

Moreover, these findings highlight the need for a closer focus on career management in the individuals, organizations should not be completely out of this task. It is a fact that organizations cannot meet the currently responsibility for the management of each of its employees. However, they must be prepared to support them throughout this process. And, this can only be achieved by hiring career professionals able to develop career management tasks that best meet the individuality of each employee. Accordingly, we support the notion of shared responsibility by the aggregate of obligations that the organizations owe to the management process.

## References


