

# Employability and university continuing education in the boundaryless career era

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## Current and emerging career contexts

- Demographic changes in Western countries (especially in terms of age)
- Worldwide competition
- Accelerating rate of innovation (digital economy, new technologies)
- Expertise requirements (role of formal and informal learning)
- Organizational and individual flexibility
- Geographic, organizational and occupational mobility
- Unpredictability and uncertainty (« vocational chaos »)

## Contemporary career configurations

### Career

- Unfolding sequence of a person's work experiences over time (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989)
- Process of development of the employee along a path of experience and jobs in one or more organizations (Baruch & Rosenstein, 1992)

### Contemporary career configurations

Traditional

Post-corporate

Multi-directional

Intelligent

Boundaryless

Protean

## Career configurations : illustration from a belgian sample

Dangoisse, Parmentier & Nils (2017)

### 1. Method

1. N = 392, 235 women, age : M=38,7
2. Sociodemographic questions + home made career path questionnaire

### 2. Statistical tools

Clustering : Ward method using hierarchical ascending classification

## Career configurations : illustration from a belgian sample

Dangoisse, Parmentier & Nils (2017)

### 3. Results

Six career path emerge from cluster analysis

1. Fixed term contracts with low mobility (N = 32)<sup>a</sup>
2. Permanent contract with high mobility (N = 95)<sup>b</sup>
3. Permanent contract with low mobility (N = 83)<sup>a</sup>
4. High job/ no job transitions (N = 33)<sup>c</sup>
5. Fixed term contracts with high mobility (N = 92)<sup>a, b</sup>
6. Other types of workers with low mobility (N = 57)<sup>a</sup>

## Career configurations : illustration from a belgian sample

Dangoisse, Parmentier & Nils (2017)

### 4. Conclusion

1. Presence of both traditional career paths (permanent contract and/or low mobility) and other, less stable, configurations
2. Association of educational background with career path

## Individual implications of the new career context

### Individuals are expected to...

- Self-manage their career
- Increase their employability
- Continuously develop their skills accross the lifespan
- Be active agents in the construction of their careers
- Develop abilities to cope with unpredictable changes and to adapt to professional transitions has become crucial

Di Fabio, 2012; Ferreira, 2014; Forrier & Sels, 2003; Jarvis, 2004; Savickas, 2005, 2013

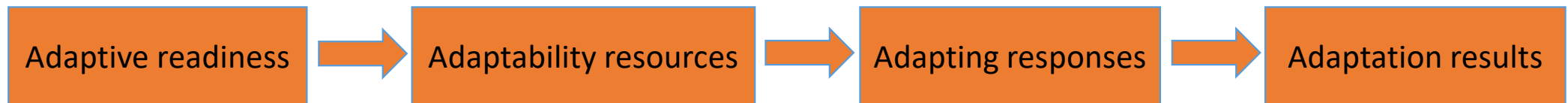
## Definition and dimensions of employability

Employability : set of competencies that enables people to fulfill, acquire and create work (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006)

- Social and adaptive competencies
- Technical knowledge
- Occupational expertise
- Anticipation and optimization (proactive, self-initiated screening and preparation for potential changes in job and career requirements and conditions)
- Reactive adaptation and resilience
- Identification with the organization's goals and ability to work together (corporate sense)



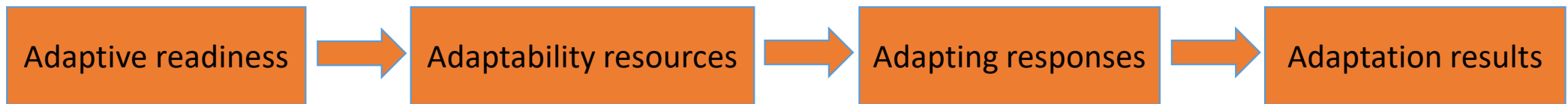
## The career construction model of adaptation



- People craft their careers by dealing with social expectations regarding their different occupational roles;
- Adaptation to the occupational environment is the result of people's integration of their personal needs with these social expectations;
- People differ in the extent to which they are willing (adaptive readiness) and able (adaptability resources/career adaptability) to develop beliefs and show behaviors (adapting responses) that address changing environmental conditions and, thus, lead to a positive integration and fit with their work role (adaptation results).

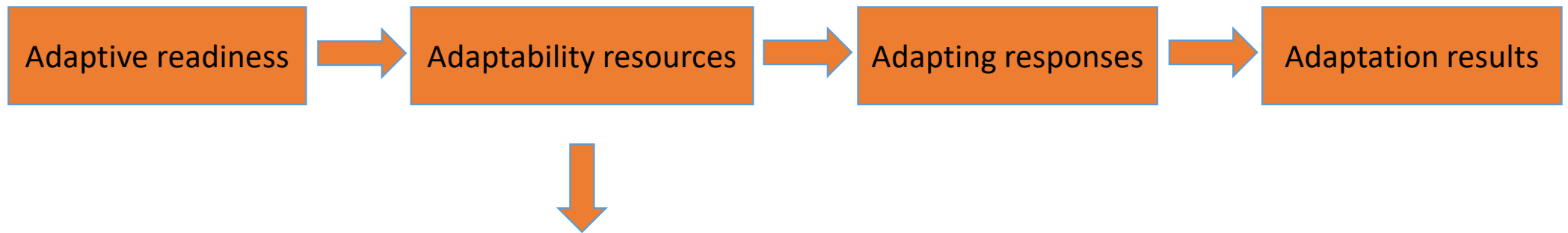
Savickas, 2013; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Hirschi et al., 2015; Tolentino et al., 2014

## The carrer construction model of adaptation



Stable, context-general, and trait-like psychological characteristics that involves the readiness and willingness to adapt to career changes. It influences the development and use of career adaptability resources.

## The carrer construction model of adaptation



Psychosocial construct that denotes an individual's resources for coping with current and anticipated tasks, transitions and traumas in their occupational roles. It enables workers to successfully solve unfamiliar, complex, and ill-defined problems throughout their careers.

## Career adaptability resources

Adaptability resources are 4 self-regulation strengths or capacities that a person may draw upon to solve the unfamiliar, complex, and ill-defined problems presented by developmental vocational tasks, occupational transitions, and work traumas

Career **Concern** deals with issues of orienting to the future and feeling optimistic about it.

People who show concern think about what their future will be like and prepare for it, realise that the choices they make today will shape their future to a large extent, are becoming aware of the educational and vocational choices they need to make, plan how to achieve their goals, are committed to their careers

Career **Control** involves increasing self-regulation through career decision making and taking responsibility for the future.

People who are in control keep upbeat, make decisions by themselves, take responsibility for their actions, stick up for their beliefs, count on themselves, do what's right for themselves

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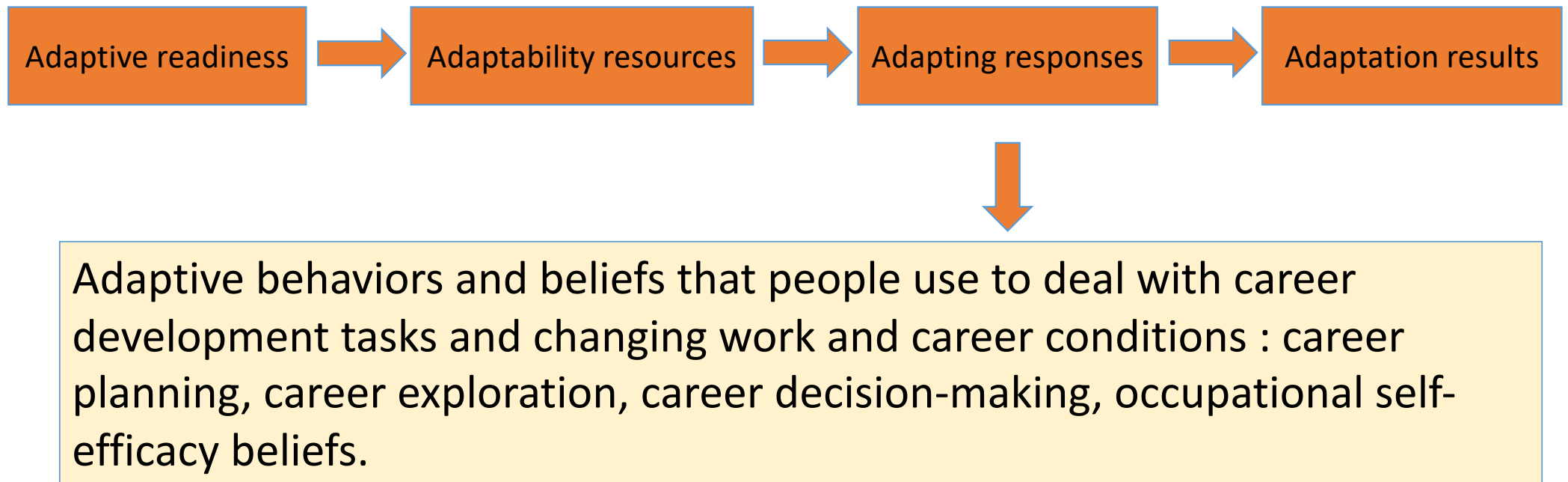
Career **Curiosity** reflects an inquisitive attitude that leads to productive career exploration.

People who are curious explore their surroundings, look for opportunities to grow, investigate options before making a choice, observe different ways of doing things, probe deeply into questions that they have, take an interest in new opportunities

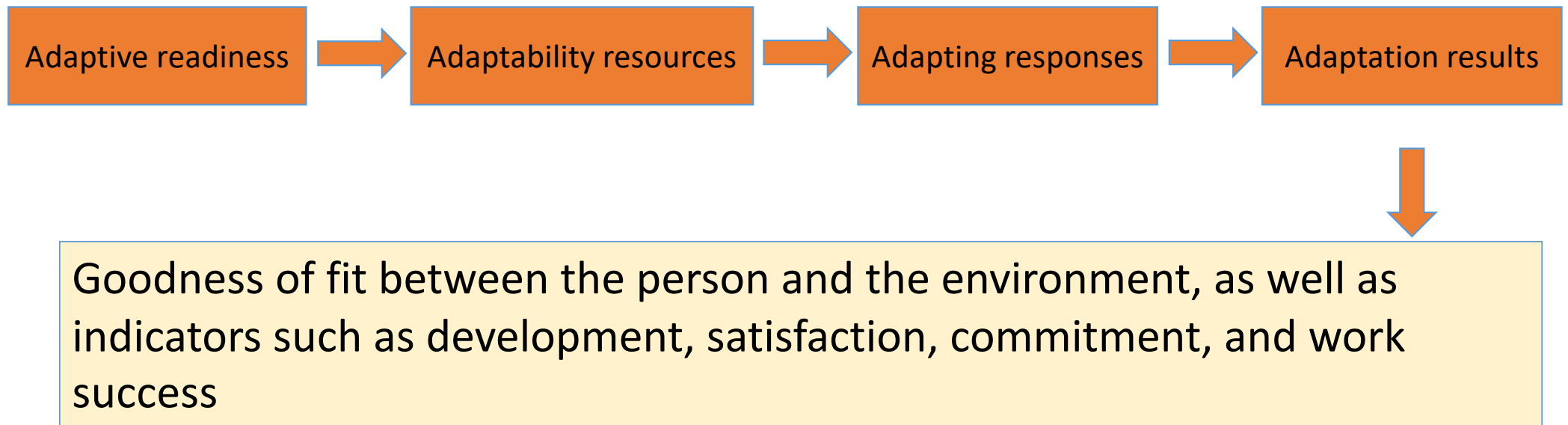
Career **Confidence** deals with acquiring problem-solving ability and self-efficacy beliefs

People who are confident perform tasks efficiently, take care to do things well, learn new skills, work up to the level of their ability, solve problems and overcome obstacles

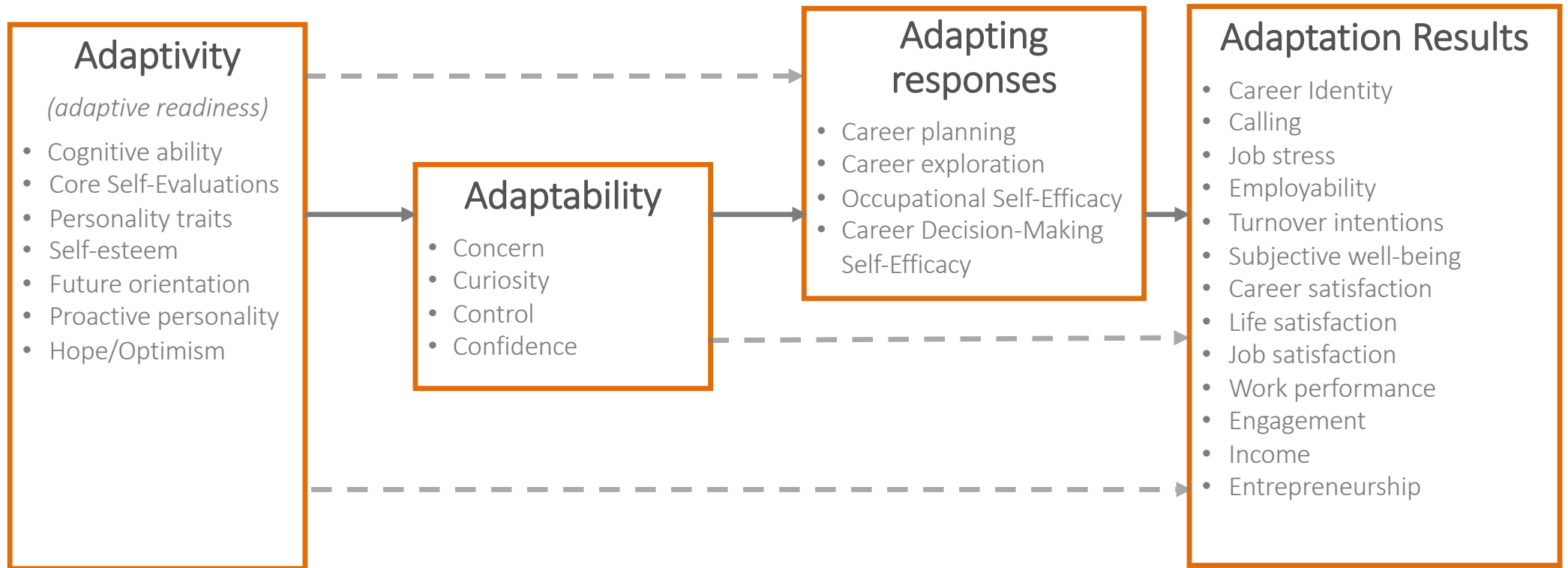
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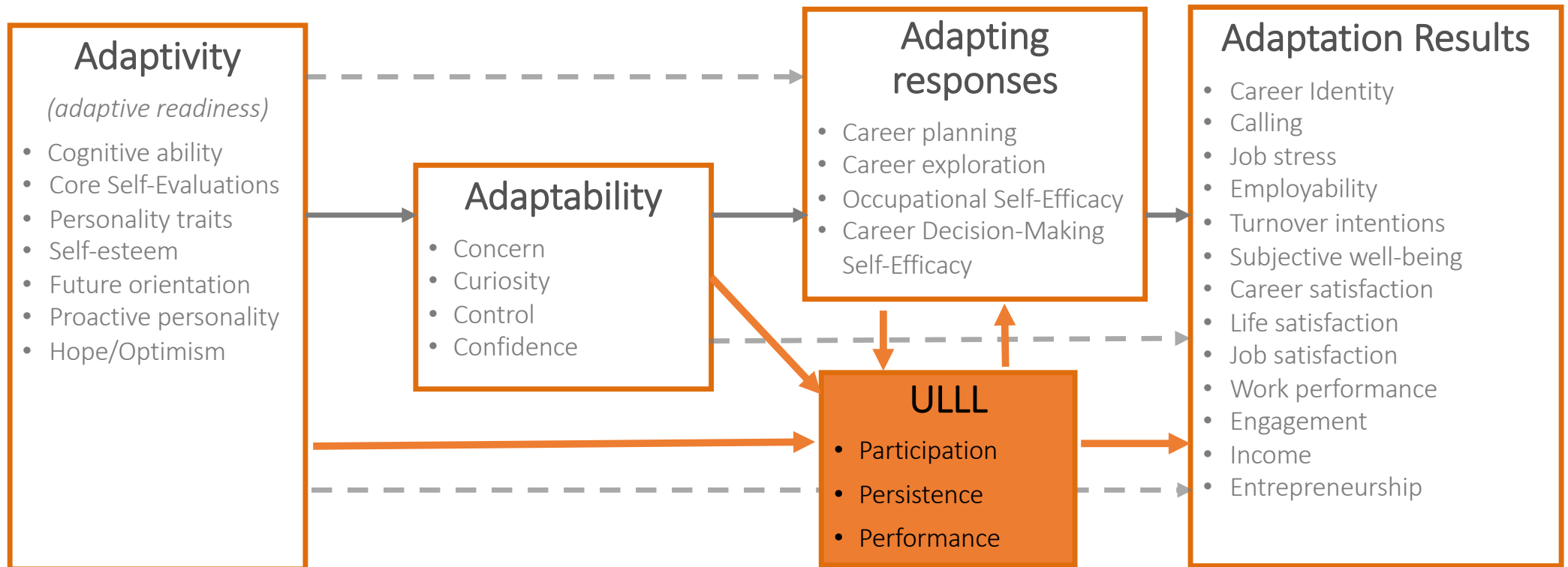


# The carrer construction model of adaptation





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## The career construction model of adaptation and ULLL: Empirical evidence

1. Career adaptability predicts the adoption of life long learning goals (professional and/or vocational development learning entry motives (Parmentier, Pirsoul & Nils, 2018)
2. These specific learning entry motives are associated with persistence and performance in ULLL programs (Vertongen, de Viron and Nils, in press)
3. Formal life long learning contributes to employability (Van der Heijden, et al., 2009)
  1. It increases occupational expertise and corporate sense
  2. But attention must be paid to knowledge transfer to the workplace
4. Formal life long learning increases adapting responses (Van der Heijden, et al., 2009)
5. Participation in ULLL predicts perceived employability (Parmentier, Pirsoul & nils, 2018)
6. Occupational future time perspective moderates the motivation to enter LLL programs (Froehlich, Beausaert & Segers, 2015)

## Conclusion

1. Impact of educational background on career paths
2. The career construction model as a global framework integrating LLL and employability in the boundaryless career context
3. Promising results but further evidence needed
4. Implications for practitioners, counselors and LLL program developers:
  1. Increase of career adaptability and adaptive responses as learning objectives
  2. Enhance knowledge transfer to the workplace
  3. And what about intrinsic motivation?