Association of Corporate Counsel
National Capital Region

Strategically Advancing Your Career: Creating Your Individual Plan

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Introduction

“Leadership means not only having a dream but claiming that dream and the role you want to play in it.”

Bennis and Goldsmith, Learning to Lead
It’s Your Career

- You must own it
- It is a long-term investment
- It evolves
- Take charge or just let it happen to you
Elements of Strategic Career Planning Process

Preparation
Planning
Execution

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Step 1: Preparation—Where are you?

- Life? Career?
- What are your values, motivators, passions, fears....?
- What are your professional strengths, areas for growth, opportunities, threats?

Self-Reflection/Self-Assessment

Tools & Resources
- Values Assessment
- SWOT Analysis
- Competency Frameworks
- Online- Self-Assessments
- Feedback
- Performance Evaluation
- Other?
Step 1: Preparation

- Self-Assessments
  - Strengthsfinders
    - [www.gallupstrengthscener.com/Purchase/en-US/Index](http://www.gallupstrengthscener.com/Purchase/en-US/Index) --$15.00
  - GRIT
    - [http://sasupenn.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_06f6QSOS2pZW9qR](http://sasupenn.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_06f6QSOS2pZW9qR)
  - EI
  - Growth Mindset
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
<td>Threats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 1: Preparation—Vision/Versions

- Where do you want to be?
  - What is your next step in your career?
    - Founded on your values, sense of purpose, passions
    - Drives your goals
    - Gives you courage to face challenges, take risks and lea
Step 1: Preparation—Vision(s)/Versions

✘ Consider the following:

▲ Where do you want to be in 1, 3, 5 years?

▲ We have multiple possible ways to live our lives

▲ Most lives are actually lived as a series of (two to four year) segments strung together

▲ Multiple “Odyssey plans”/Design Thinking:
  ✘ Imagine multiple ways that you could live next 5 years of your life
  ✘ Rank and then explore alternatives

Source: Burnett, Bill & Evans, Dave: Designing Your Life

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Exercise: Articulate your Vision/Versions

1 Year: ________________________________

3 Years: ________________________________

5 Years: ________________________________
Exercise: Articulate your Vision/Versions

Version 1: ____________________________

Version 2: ____________________________

Version 3: ____________________________
Step 2: Planning

- Why develop an individual strategic plan?
Your Plan is your ROADMAP
Step 2: Planning—Got Goals!

- Why set goals?
  - Establish direction for your career
  - Challenge your growth
  - Raise your confidence
  - Raise levels of achievement and accomplishment
  - Make vision happen
Effective Goals are SMART

- Specific
- Measurable
- Acceptable
- Realistic/Results-Oriented
- Time-Bound
Measurable

- Goal should incorporate concrete criteria to determine success or failure
- Targets keep you on track
- Reflect tangible evidence of completion
Acceptable

- **YOU** must **OWN** your goals
- Goals must be “heartfelt”
- You know your strengths and weaknesses
Realistic

- A goal must represent an objective toward which you are both willing and able to work
- You decide how high your goal should be
- Plan to do things you are likely to do
Timeframe

- Determine when you plan to work on your goal
- Limit timeframe

A goal is a dream with a deadline
Step 2: Planning—Got Goals!

Exercise: Write down 3 SMART goals
(Template--attached)
Examples of SMART goals?

- By July 1, I will have done a Values Assessment and SWOT analysis.

- By August 1, I will have identified three potential “next step” career versions.”

- By August 15, I will identify/contact 4 people to discuss my next steps/options.

- By October 1, I will have identified one career option to further action step.

- OTHER?
Step 3: Execution—Action Steps

- Identify **specific action steps** for achieving your goals:

- Include time frame and resources

- Consider obstacles and alternatives

- **REMEMBER:** Skills are best developed experientially—by engaging in activities
Step 3: Execution—Action Steps

× Exercise: Action plan your goals
## Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals (what)</th>
<th>Action Steps (how)</th>
<th>Time Frame (when) (where)</th>
<th>Resources (who can help)</th>
<th>Benefits (why)</th>
<th>Obstacles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify/cont act 3 people to help me identify/explore my career next steps/options</td>
<td></td>
<td>8/15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Step 3: Execution-Action Steps

- Identify Resources: Who can help you?
  - Informational “Interviews”
    - Network—Friends, Family, Business Colleagues, Professors
  - Board of Advisors
  - Mentor—Sponsor
  - Stakeholders

- Communicate your plan
- Monitor/Update
- Persevere
- Transition

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Step 3: Execution—Resources

Board of Advisors

Definition: diverse core group of individuals (advisors, mentors, sponsors, role models, leaders, influencers) who in varying ways and degrees:

- take an active interest in their protégée and take action to advance their professional and personal growth, success and well being
- provide professional and psychosocial support through varying types of interaction (frequency/closeness)
- bring diverse strengths and perspectives
- inspire, challenge and motivate
- provide critical information and support at defining moments

Step 3: Execution—Resources

- **Stakeholder identification & engagement**
  - *Key element of your action plan*
  - Process by which you identify your key stakeholders, analyze their “interest” and gain their support

- **Stakeholder identification/analysis**
  - Who is affected by your plan, who has influence/power over it, interest in its successful or unsuccessful conclusions
  - Where do they each stand?
  - What is their opinion of your work? Of you? motivates them? Who influences them?

- **Stakeholder engagement/support**
  - How can you engage, inspire, gain commitment of key stakeholders (influence)
Step 3: Execution—Resources

Sponsors

- Sponsorship has been defined as:

  “active support by someone appropriately placed in the organization who has significant influence on decision-making processes or structures and who is advocating for, protecting and fighting for the career advancement of an individual”

Step 3: Execution—Resources
Sponsors

☒ Qualities of an Effective Sponsor
- A senior leader with capital and clout
- Aware of protégée's skills and accomplishments
- Can benefit from the protégées success

☒ Securing a Sponsor
- Commit: Get on radar screen
- Make yourself known (internally and externally)
  ☒ Engagement strategy with strategic networking goals
  ☒ Join organizations, committees (and be active) likely to include potential sponsors
- Be proactive
- Consider multiple sponsors
- ASK

☒ Sustaining a Sponsor
- Protégée must continually nurture and refresh the relationship

Source: Hewlett, S., Forget a Mentor, Find a Sponsor

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Step 3: Execution—Communicate Your Plan

- Share your plan and seek feedback
  - Create a communication “plan”—make communication of your plan with key stakeholders and obtaining their support a SMART goal—action plan it
  - Discuss plan with your stakeholders, mentors, personal Board of Advisors; Others?
  - Seek input and feedback
Step 3: Execution—Monitor Your Progress

- Monitor progress monthly/bi-monthly
- Make adjustments
Step 3: Execution—Perseverance

- **Confidence, Courage & GRIT**
  - Confidence has been called “life’s enabler”—“that belief in yourself that you can succeed at things and make them happen.”
  - Other traits—combined with confidence-- drive you towards action in particular situations
    - Courage drives you when risk involved
    - GRIT and Growth Mindset drive you when faced with a difficult task or disappointment
Remember when we were so confident, we thought we could do anything?
Step 3: Execution—Transition

- **Internal transition**
  - **Ending**
    - Letting go of where you were
  - **Neutral zone**
    - “In-between/limbo” zone
  - **New Beginnings**
    - New identity, roles and responsibilities

*Source: William Bridges, Transitions*
Conclusion: Strategically Advancing Your Career

Preparation  Planning  Execution

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Questions?

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