

What Is Career Development?

Career development is an organized approach used to match employee goals with the business needs of the agency in support of workforce development initiatives. In this process, the purpose of career development is to

- Enhance each employee's current job performance
- Enable individuals to take advantage of future job opportunities
- Fulfill agencies' goals for a dynamic and effective workforce

Who's responsible for career development?

- Managers are responsible for linking the organization's needs to employee career goals, and can assist employees in the career planning process.
- Human Resources is responsible for design in career paths and employee development programs that help employees reach their goals.
- Each employee is responsible for planning and managing his or her own career.

Steps to Career Planning

1. Conduct a self-assessment.
2. Explore careers that interest you.
3. Make decisions and set goals.
4. Create an action plan.
5. Manage your career.

It is important to know your overall goal. Think about where you would like to be at the end of your career, and set your plan to get there. The best way to ensure compatibility and balance in your life and career is to consider all aspects of your life from the beginning of your plan.

Once you have a sense of what you are trying to accomplish overall, it is important for you to establish your current status. A personal inventory can reveal your abilities, interests, and attitudes. The inventory will also assist in defining your strengths and weaknesses.

Looking for a match between your strengths and the work you are doing or considering is the most important step before making any decisions. Assessing your personality and attitudes will help you determine the best way for you to move toward your goal.

- What are your current skills and achievements?
- What about knowledge and values?
- How will your learning style impact your pursuit?
- What are your interests?

When you are clear on these things, you will be able to make better choices about the direction you want your career to take—and do a better job of convincing prospective employers that you are the best choice.

Planning Your Career

What is *career planning*?

Career planning consists of activities and actions that you take to achieve your individual career goals. Career planning is the ongoing process where you

- Explore your interests and abilities
- Strategically plan your career goals
- Create your future work success by designing learning and action plans to help you achieve your goals

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Who's responsible for planning your career?

You have the lead responsibility for planning your career. Supervisors, managers, and your employer can provide you with meaningful assistance in this process. The following are examples of career planning actions:

Employees

- Decide what you want from your career now and in the future.
- Take actions individually or with your supervisor to assess your individual interests, strengths, and areas for development.
- Develop a yearly Employee Development Plan with input from your supervisor, including current job development and long-term careers objectives, as part of the performance management process.
- Work with your supervisor to identify on-the-job learning and training opportunities, continued education, and avenues for professional development.

Managers

- Identify the job-related knowledge, skills, abilities, competencies, and experience that employees need to be effective in their positions.
- Help employees define short- and long-term development needs that support agency objectives and employee career goals.
- Support Employee Development Plans by indicating specific steps that need to be taken and by whom to accomplish the learning goals.

Employers

- Provide a job and compensation structure that supports the organization's goals and allows for individual development and growth.
- Provide time and available funding for development activities.
- Utilize the knowledge, skills, and abilities of each employee to support organizational objectives and meet future staffing needs.

Keep in mind that factors outside of the employee and organization's control may affect the outcome of career actions. But one thing is true: It is important to perform well in one's current position. Consistent, high-quality performance, along with thoughtful career planning, will help ensure continued career success.

Overall, career development involves being aware of one's personal goals and values, as well as work goals. It involves continuously learning and applying new knowledge, taking advantage of opportunities, and taking risks in order to help the organization be productive and effective while achieving one's career and personal goals.

Article from CARE's WorkLife Solutions Website



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