

Before meeting with your manager to discuss your career aspirations, it's important to reflect on the following:

Section 1. Past/Current Career

Looking back on your past jobs and your current role consider the following questions:

1. How would you describe your progress in your career thus far?
2. What are the most important skills you have learned so far? Why?
3. What has been your most rewarding role?
4. What is your favorite part of your current role? Your least favorite?
5. How are you performing against expectations and goals for your current position? How does this influence the achievement of your career aspirations?
6. What is the one task or type of project you would like to do more frequently in future roles? Less frequently?
7. If you weren't in this current role and knowing what you do now, what would you have done differently in your last role?

Section 2. Strengths

Research has proven that people succeed when they focus on what they do best. Identifying your strengths can go a long way in helping you create a career vision and plan. Take some time to consider:

1. What do you do really well? What are you recognized or rewarded for most often?
2. What are your unique experiences or capabilities?
3. If asked, how would you articulate your strengths, capabilities and unique experiences?
4. Which of your accomplishments are you proudest of?
5. For what do most people come to you for help?

Section 3. Skill/Competency Gaps

Are there specific skills you need for your desired career path or competencies you feel are in need of development? Seek feedback and ask yourself the following questions:

1. What experiences or capabilities do you lack that people on a similar career path have?
2. What do others perceive as areas for development?
3. What gaps do you need to address before you can pursue your career goals?
4. What other experiences do you need to have in order to accomplish your career goals (e.g. experiences in different department, faculties, and campuses)?
5. How can you demonstrate that you are ready for the next step in your career?
6. What sort of additional education or certifications do you need in order to reach your career goals?
7. How well do your career goals align with your current development opportunities?

Career Self-Reflection – Employee Guide

Section 4. Personal Drivers

External motivation factors help you to set goals and objectives. Drive is what pushes you to achieve those goals. Consider the following questions:

1. What do you value most in terms of your career (e.g. autonomy, work life balance, management, collaboration, independence, recognition, prestige, variety of work, influence, compensation, interpersonal relationships)?
2. What drives you (are you more creative or concrete in your mindset, outcomes or process-focused, compensation or altruistic-focused, etc.)?
3. What is the definition of a successful career for you?
4. What sort of lifestyle do you like to live? What non-work goals and priorities may influence your career decisions? In what ways?

Section 5. Constraints/Limitations

Have you thought about what might be getting in the way, what challenges may need to be addressed?

1. How competitive is the position you'd like to pursue?
2. What personal factors may influence your career decisions (e.g. geographic constraints, personal timing, spouse/partner's career)?
3. What sort of environmental factors may impact your career decisions (e.g. economic, political, technological, industry-related, and university specific changes that could impact your career)?

Section 6. Support & Resources

The following is a list of resources that can be helpful to you when considering your career path:

1. What support do I want from my manager or the director in my department or throughout the university?
2. Which development opportunities do I want to pursue to work toward achieving my career aspirations?
3. Who else might support my career development (consider past managers, peers, family, friends, etc.)?
4. What resources might I access to support me (e.g. university programs such as tuition support, LinkedIn Learning and online tools)?

Section 7. Define your Career Aspirations:

After your self-reflection, take the time to create your career vision and define the following:

1. What roles would you be interested in having in 1-2 years?
2. What is your long term vision (3-5 years from now)?
3. Build an individualized [action plan](#) tailored to your own unique career goals