



# Career Planning ebook

## **11** Easy Steps

to Create your Career Plan & Set Career Goals



## Start your career journey here

When people think about their annual holiday or a new car they give it some thought. They do research, get clear on what is important to them - for a car - budget, engine size, insurance group etc. and then see what is available and make sure it meets their needs. Choosing to get a new job or to focus on regaining the love for our current job will benefit from a structured approach and this ebook is going to help you do just this. Follow the steps, complete the exercises and feel more confident in your decision making.

## About the author

This ebook was brought to you by Denise Taylor, a double award winning career psychologist and Director of Amazing People. Her career books include 'How To Get A Job In A Recession' and 'Now You've Been Shortlisted', and her 11 ebooks include 'How To Use LinkedIn To Find A New Job'.



Denise Taylor

**In this ebook we are going to focus on career goals, but the approach is equally valid for other areas of your life.**

**Let's get you rethinking your goal and get you on your way.**

## Step 1 Review your goal

Some people want their career to be a key focus of their life, they live to work. For other people a job or a career is a means to an end, it gives them sufficient income for the lifestyle they choose. Many people have never considered which focus suits them, for example Sophie realised that for her it was the latter whereas her father, partner and friends all wanted it to be the former. This one step provided clarity and helped her make the right decision and it will do the same for you. We need to know the answer to help drive our career decisions.

Firstly what do you want - is it a new job or is to change how you view your current job?

If it's a new job you will want to think about what job you want and this ebook will be your guide! If it is to love your current job, make a note of everything you like about the job, what you will miss if you left and 3 positive steps you could take.

## Step 2 Choose an approach

If you want something new you need to work out what. You can try out different approaches:

- Look for jobs via online job sites like [jobs.ac.uk](#), but if you don't know what you want you could be overwhelmed by choices
- Ask for advice based on your CV but that's likely to be more of what you have already done (jobs.ac.uk are offering a FREE CV review via our recommended CV writing partners The Fuller CV- see the [jobs.ac.uk Careers Advice section](#) for details)

Decide if you want to move towards or away from something. You may want to choose something new - you know the job you want but may be unclear how to become successful. Or you may seek to move away from a job you hate, or a difficult boss.

- Take some time to think about your strengths, your talents, your interests and to identify some options you can research
- Do creative exploring, see Step 4

### Choose an approach

If you want to move away from something you hate be really clear what it is so you avoid getting into the same situation again. It can help to write down everything you dislike about your current work situation, see if you can address any of this right now and make sure your next choice won't put you back in a similar situation.



## Step 3

### Set a SMARTER Goal

We need a goal which is **SPECIFIC**. It's clear on what we want to achieve. If we are looking for a new job we need to be clear on what job.

It needs to be **MEASURABLE**; we need to know where we start from so we can monitor progress. Getting the new job is a clear measure of success but we need to break it down into sub steps such as: revise our CV, gather information on the current challenges in the industry etc.

The goal has to be **ACHIEVABLE** - whilst stretch goals can be perfect, perhaps you need the smaller steps, firstly to get a job as a Marketing Assistant, then Marketing Executive as you work towards being a Marketing Director.

It also has to be **REALISTIC** - most things are possible if we set our minds to them and focus, but if we find science confusing will we ever pass the exams to qualify as a nutritionist? Are there better alternatives?

Peer pressure to make a change is not enough; you need to turn it into a well-defined goal. Most of us know about SMART goals, but then forget to think about each element. Let's get you setting SMARTER GOALS.

**TIME BOUND** means we have a time scale to achieve. Talk to people and get a sense of how long it will take to move from x to y. Get clear on all the sub steps and create a time line.

The goals should also be **EXCITING**; it should have personal meaning for us. It has to be something that we want to do. Make sure it makes you want to get on and get there.

Finally it should be **RECORDED** we need to write it down and monitor progress, get your goal, and all the sub goals written down and in your diary, on your phone, on the wall ...

### Write your goal down here and then review

Is it specific? In what way?  
Make a note.

How can you measure it?  
List the criteria you will use.

How is it achievable?

Is this a realistic goal? You may need to break a long term goal into sub goals.

What time scale will it take to achieve this? If you don't know find out and write it down

Is it exciting for you? Is it something you want to do? You want to write a big YES!  
If not it's probably the wrong goal.

# YES

Now write your goal down taking all the above into account. Save it to your phone, make it your screen saver; put it on a post it note on your fridge, bathroom mirror and more.

## Step 4 Creative exploring

Take time to relax, be in a calm and curious state, and close your eyes. Pretend you won the euro millions lottery and once you've bought the house and travelled the world. We're now going to narrow things down. Firstly look at what you have, can you group some together? Then think about why these dreams are important to you.

Not all of them may be conventional careers so how could you find out more about turning these into a job?

Get thinking of all the things you would love to do.

Some people find it easy to see how dreams can become real so if you are more likely to think of the reasons why something won't work you may need to get some support from friends or a career coach, choose someone who is creative and will inspire you.

We now need to add some realism, which are possible and which will remain as dreams? Now time to narrow things down, think of the reasons why not. You should now have some new ideas to explore.

## Step 5 Start researching

You are now able to move forward to explore more about your options. You can look online using websites such as [jobs.ac.uk](#), [National Career Service](#) and [Prospects](#). You will probably identify a number of interesting careers but then must take a reality check, what will be the likelihood of your success?



## Step 6 Review your CV

Jumping ahead, let's assume you now know what you want to do. Grab your CV, and give it an objective review. How well does it sell you for the job that you want? Look at the requirements for the jobs you seek, make sure you include evidence on all these areas. Ask people who work in HR or recruitment for advice, would they shortlist you? You may need to get yourself ready for this job through gaining extra experience or think of an interim job change step.

*Don't forget jobs.ac.uk are offering a FREE CV review via our recommended CV writing partners The Fuller CV- see the [jobs.ac.uk Careers Advice section for details](#).*

## Step 7 Make use of Social Media

Whatever your career goals it will be enhanced through being on LinkedIn. It's a great way of networking and researching, companies and individuals. If you use Facebook and Twitter search for the companies you want to work for and like or follow them.

If you aren't using social media you are stuck in the 20th century and missing out on many ways to enhance your knowledge and increase your chance of success.



### Creative exploring

#### Step 1

Make a note of all the things you would love to do. Don't worry about the practicalities, think as big as you can and start writing as fast as you can and get every idea on paper. Keep adding to this list. Write everything down, we'll edit later.

#### Step 2

Look at what you have, can you group some together?

#### Step 3

Think about why these dreams are important to you. Not all of them may be conventional careers so how could you find out more about turning these into a job? Seek some inspiration from a creative friend if needed.

#### Step 4

Add some realism, which are possible and which will remain as dreams? Narrow things down, think of the reasons why a job may not be.

## Step 8

## Love your job more

That's when you may need a new perspective in your current job. If it's going to take time to be ready for the job you ideally seek, but you are not that happy at work for now there are things that can help:



Possibly you are not going to be a perfect match, you may lack certain experience or need to get a qualification.

- ▶ Decide to like your job, and identify 5-10 positive attributes such as a nice work location, close to home, you can finish early on a Friday. Get writing now.
- ▶ Each lunchtime make a note of one positive event from the morning, such as you stayed calm with an angry customer, and wrote a report 15 minutes quicker than last week, do the same before you leave work at the end of the day.
- ▶ Think about how you can help your boss, look for ways that you can improve your job, or save the company money or get more clients. These will be great examples for your CV and should make your job more interesting.

Each lunchtime and before you leave work at the end of the day, use a template like the one below to make a note of something positive.

Mon lunchtime	Tues lunchtime	Wed lunchtime	Thurs lunchtime	Fri lunchtime
Mon evening	Tues evening	Wed evening	Thurs evening	Fri evening

## Decide to like your job,

and identify 5-10 positive attributes such as a nice work location, close to home, you can finish early on a Friday.

- |    |     |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6.  |
| 2. | 7.  |
| 3. | 8.  |
| 4. | 9.  |
| 5. | 10. |

## Step 9

## Prime yourself for the job you want

- ▶ What books will help you learn more about the challenges people face in this job?
- ▶ Start keeping up to date on this new career path or industry, setting up [Google alerts](#) will help
- ▶ Start talking to people who work in the area you seek and gain advice on what you can do to improve your chances.



Did you know **jobs.ac.uk** has a CV service? [Upload your CV now](#) and let top employers know you are out there

## Step 10 Use different ways to search for a job

Once clear on what you want you must use a variety of methods to get there. Of course you will look at online job sites, and make sure you get the best out of these sites - take some time to review their terms, check how many versions of your CV you can upload, the types of jobs they publicise and read the advice they share.

Don't spend all your time looking online; also get out there talking with people, getting yourself known, increasing your profile. Far more time should be spent on this than passively looking for jobs to apply for.

## Step 11 Staying focused

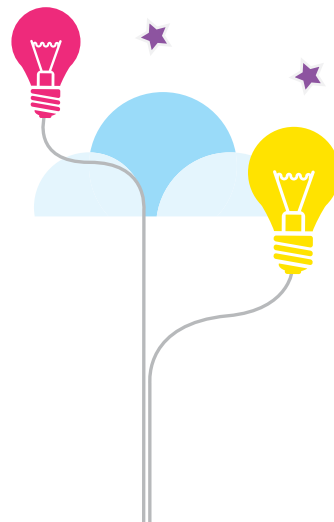
There are many ways to keep yourself motivated.

Think of mini steps you can do to move you forward towards your goal. In the meantime stay focused on your job, get listing all your achievements, both to help improve your CV and to be ready to share at interview. Look for how you can help your boss. This will help improve your CV and can be used as examples at interview but it should also increase your motivation.

Who knows, your boss may see a new side to you and give you more responsibility which could lead to an internal job change

- Split your goal into mini steps
- List your achievements
- Identify how to help your boss

Be realistic and recognise now that it may be challenging to get a new job and it will take time.



## Checklist Have you

- Step 1** Reviewed your goal?
- Step 2** Chosen your approach?
- Step 3** Set a SMARTER Goal?
- Step 4** Done some creative exploring?
- Step 5** Started researching?
- Step 6** Reviewed your CV?
- Step 7** Identified how you can love your job more?
- Step 8** Primed yourself for the job you want?
- Step 9** Made use of Social Media?
- Step 10** Identified different ways to search for a job?
- Step 11** Stayed focused?



You can start planning for a new job today and consistent action will help you to succeed. Don't fall into the dieters trap of starting on a Monday and by Thursday be back eating cake or crisps to excess. If you want sustained weight loss new eating and exercise patterns need to become part of your life.

Seeking a more fulfilling career or sufficient income to pay for the lifestyle you seek will also benefit from consistent action and appreciating that it can take time. For now, having a positive mind-set where you set out to enjoy your time at work will help you keep going until you get the job you want.



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