

Plan for a great career or plan to do without one.

Even if presented with the challenge of finding a new job following unexpected redundancy, having a clear plan for your career enables swift recovery. The absence of a plan in such circumstances leaves most people wondering what they are going to do next.

CAREER PLANNING

Effective career planning begins by working out what you are really motivated by and enjoy doing.

Effective career management, begins with an effective plan. If you have difficulty with career planning, there are a number of useful career inventory assessment tools you can use to help you get started. Once you have a sense of where your vocational interests lie, you need to orient these preferences in the context of your personal circumstances and lifestyle priorities. Family and friends can also be very useful in helping to assess your strengths and weaknesses. Ultimately you should arrive at a set of career goals that state what you want in a job now and in the future.

Honest personal reflection can be a difficult process. For some people, even contemplating writing a CV for the first time in years is a significant challenge. Analysing what you do well comes naturally for some, but not for everyone. If you are in the latter category, then start your career plan by writing out any professional qualifications you have, training programmes you have completed and what you regard as your achievements to date. Next, identify the areas in which you feel you need personal development.

Your career plan should identify the broad industry sectors and role types that you feel will best suit your vocational interests and enable you to develop a solution to your skill gaps. For a career plan to work effectively, you must commit to a realistic timeframe. Set milestones for training and education needs. Identify what you want to achieve in terms of role levels and new skills for a 12 and 24 month schedule.

Make sure you keep your career plan close to hand and review it on a regular basis. Look around you in your current job for opportunities to take on new tasks or responsibilities that will support your development or progression goals.

Even if there is no immediate financial benefit to you, your reward may very well come later.

