

Discover your best future

Self-guided workbook



Building a better
working world

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Welcome

Deciding “what’s next?” in your career is a big decision. It requires thoughtful reflection, planning and meaningful conversations. The EY Career Center is pleased to support you in this process.

We believe that discovering your best future starts by: knowing yourself, knowing your options and taking action. This workbook walks you through these steps so you can plan effectively for the next phase of your career journey.

We also encourage you to visit the [Resources](#) section of [eycareercenter.com](#) for many other self-service career-planning tools.

We wish you all the best in your career exploration process.

Dawn Pons
Americas Director, EY Career Center and Executive Career Coaching

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dawn A. Pons".

Career transition questionnaire

To set the foundation for your career goals, it's important to first take stock of your strengths and what inspires and motivates you the most.

Use this questionnaire to inform your career goals and the direction you take going forward.

Strengths

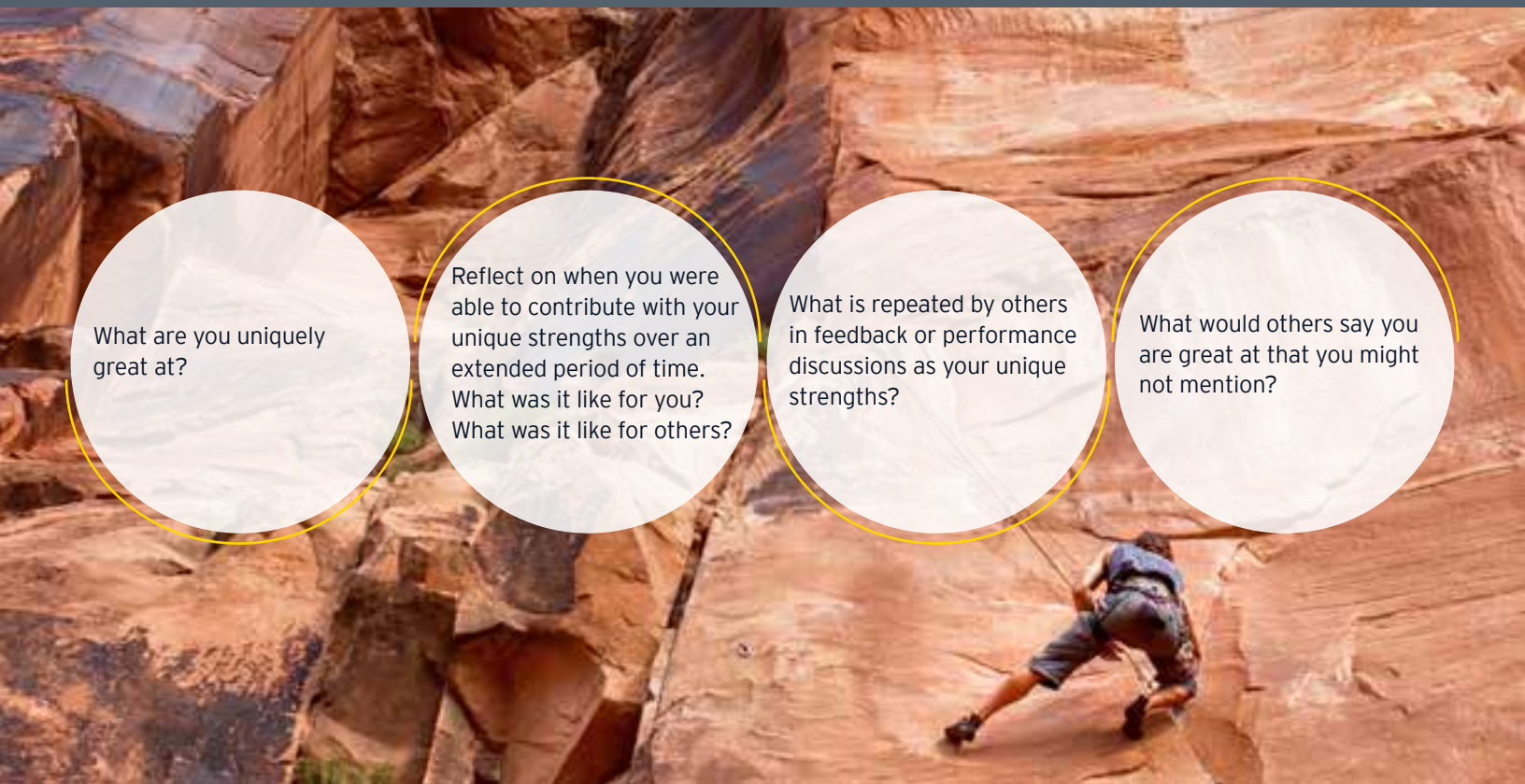
- ▶ What do you see as your strengths?
- ▶ How are you perceived by your peers?
How would your peers describe you?
- ▶ Which aspects of your role today do you enjoy? What energizes and invigorates you most?
- ▶ In which areas do you excel the most? What makes you stand out from the crowd?
- ▶ What do you see as next in your career?
- ▶ How would you describe your skills and experience?

Motivation

- ▶ What is really important to you?
- ▶ What does success look like for you now?
How might this change in the next phase of your journey?
- ▶ What are your ambitions?
- ▶ What type of career do you wish to pursue (type of responsibilities, time commitment, nature of work)?
- ▶ What are your non-negotiables (minimum salary, no relocation, etc.)? How do these impact your intentions?

Step 1:
Know yourself

Discover your strengths



Notes:

Identify your values

Values clarification

Clarifying your values will allow you to pursue opportunities that align to what matters most to you and thrive in your next endeavor.

Review the list of values below and select the five to seven that are the most important to you. Add any that might be missing from the list but are important to you.

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| ☐ Accomplishment, success | ☐ Delight of being, joy | ☐ Integrity | ☐ Respect |
| ☐ Achievement | ☐ Democracy | ☐ Intelligence | ☐ Responsibility |
| ☐ Advancement | ☐ Discipline | ☐ Justice/fairness | ☐ Results |
| ☐ Adventure | ☐ Diversity | ☐ Knowledge | ☐ Risk |
| ☐ Autonomy | ☐ Efficiency | ☐ Leadership | ☐ Safety |
| ☐ Balance | ☐ Equality | ☐ Love, romance | ☐ Satisfying others |
| ☐ Beauty | ☐ Excellence | ☐ Loyalty | ☐ Security |
| ☐ Belonging, affiliation | ☐ Faith | ☐ Maximum utilization | ☐ Self-reliance |
| ☐ Calm, quietude, peace | ☐ Family | ☐ (of time, resources) | ☐ Service (to others, society) |
| ☐ Challenge | ☐ Financial security | ☐ Meaning | ☐ Simplicity |
| ☐ Change | ☐ Freedom | ☐ Openness | ☐ Solving problems |
| ☐ Clarity | ☐ Friendship | ☐ Orderliness | ☐ Speed |
| ☐ Cleanliness | ☐ Fun | ☐ Peace, nonviolence | ☐ Spirituality |
| ☐ Collaboration | ☐ Global view | ☐ Perfection | ☐ Stability |
| ☐ Commitment | ☐ Goodwill | ☐ Perseverance | ☐ Status |
| ☐ Communication | ☐ Happiness | ☐ Personal growth | ☐ Strength |
| ☐ Community | ☐ Hard work | ☐ Physical fitness | ☐ Teamwork |
| ☐ Competence | ☐ Harmony | ☐ Pleasure | ☐ Tolerance |
| ☐ Competition | ☐ Health | ☐ Power | ☐ Tradition |
| ☐ Concern for others | ☐ Honesty | ☐ Practicality | ☐ Tranquility |
| ☐ Connection | ☐ Honor | ☐ Privacy, solitude | ☐ Trust |
| ☐ Continuous improvement | ☐ Humor | ☐ Progress | ☐ Truth |
| ☐ Contribution | ☐ Improvement | ☐ Prosperity, wealth | ☐ Variety |
| ☐ Cooperation | ☐ Independence | ☐ Quality of work | ☐ Wealth |
| ☐ Courage | ☐ Individuality | ☐ Recognition | ☐ Wisdom |
| ☐ Creativity | ☐ Influence | ☐ Relationship | |
| ☐ Customer satisfaction | ☐ Inner harmony | ☐ Reliability | |
| ☐ Decisiveness | ☐ Innovation | ☐ Resourcefulness | |

Identify your values

A

How well does my current work satisfy my values?

B

As I think about my next career step what will be critical to satisfy my values?

C

How can I get closer to satisfying some of the values that seem to be missing right now?

D

As it relates to my values, what is non-negotiable in this next step in my career?



Design your life

Pie chart exercise

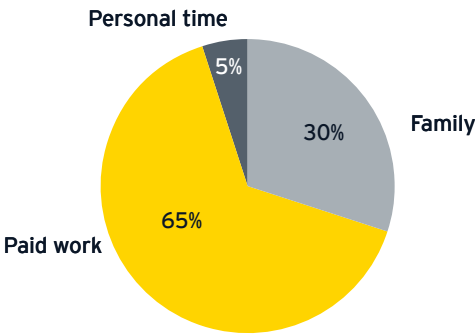
A key element to creating a vision for your future is thinking about your life on a day-to-day basis. Viewing your time using a pie chart helps outline the ideal way you'd like to spend your time. Refer to this pie chart during your career exploration to keep yourself honest as you design your best life.

Ask yourself: what day-to-day responsibilities do I want to focus on most? How do I want to prioritize my time so I achieve both my personal and professional goals? Which pieces of the pie are non-negotiable?

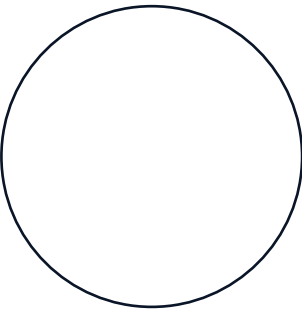
Using the example below, design two pie charts. The first one will represent how you currently spend your time. The second will represent how you would ideally like to spend your time. Reflect on the differences and ask yourself the following questions:

- ▶ How important is it to me to make changes to reflect my ideal pie chart?
- ▶ How might I manage my time to match my ideal pie chart?
- ▶ How will my future choices impact my ideal pie chart?
- ▶ What changes am I willing and motivated to make?

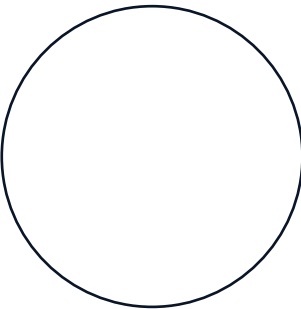
Example



Current pie chart



Ideal pie chart



Define your personal brand



These four steps will help refine your personal brand.

Self-assess - What three words best describe me? - What am I known for and what do I stand for? - What are my top transferable skills?	Validate What do I consistently receive feedback on regarding the specific value I provide?	Redefine - How does my personal brand align with what I want to pursue next in my career? What adjustments might I need to make? - What opportunities does this brand present or prevent?	Activate - With whom should I share my brand? - What vehicles do I plan to leverage (LinkedIn, networking events, social media, etc.) and when?
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All of us need to understand the importance of branding. We are CEOs of our own companies: Me, Inc. To be in business today, our most important job is to be head marketer for the brand called You.

– Tom Peters



Step 2: Know your options

Experience inventory

Conducting an inventory of your past experience and reflecting on your accomplishments will help you draw out themes, strengths and interests.

Your experience inventory

When reflecting on your career history and achievements, challenge yourself to translate your experience into language that is not internal to your current employer.

In documenting, reflect chronologically on:

- Relevant experience
- Special projects, task forces, committees
- Volunteer activities

For each experience, think about:

- Your role
- Skills you applied
- Impact you had
- Capabilities you enhanced

Leverage what you've documented through this exercise to begin creating your resume. Detailed guidance on how to develop a compelling and professional resume is available in the Resources section at eycareercenter.com.

Notes:



Dream big!

Taking time to brainstorm can help you think in new ways about the next step in your career.

Considering all you've reflected on so far, make a list of possible career options you'd like to explore. This could include any industry, organization or specific roles you are interested in. Think wildly, and consider including others who know you well in your idea generation.

Now, review your list and choose three to five options to explore.

1

2

3

4

5

Gather information

Informational interview

Seeking opportunities to connect with someone who has a job you might like; who works within an industry you might want to enter; or who is employed by a specific company that you're interested in learning about is a great way to gather firsthand information. These conversations are excellent for focusing your aspirations. The goal is not to get a job, but to learn about the individual and their role.

For each career option you'd like to explore, identify two to three people whom you'd like to ask for an informational interview. The following are a few sources that may lead to interviews:

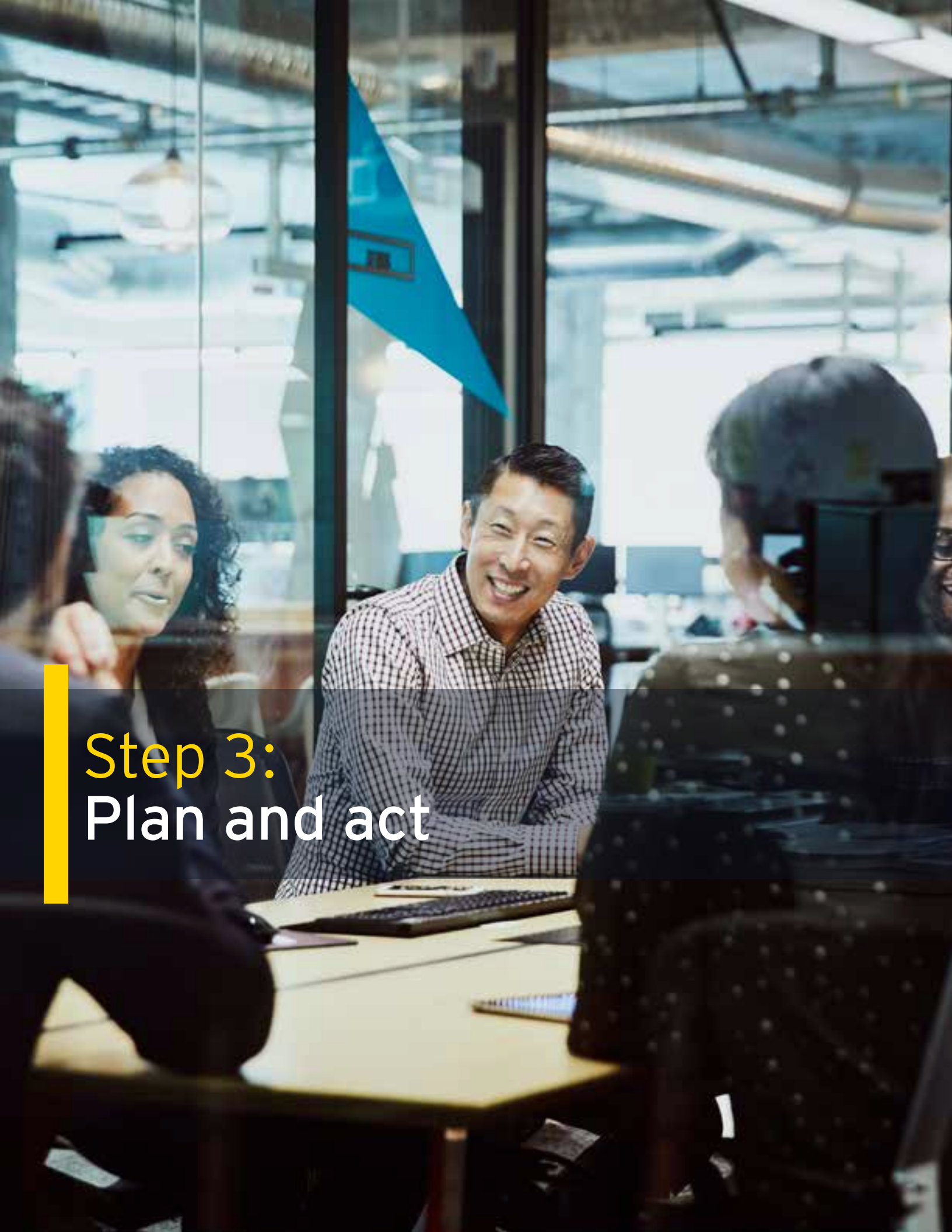
- Your personal network
- Your network's network
- LinkedIn

Upon completion of your informational interviews, what options do you want to pursue?

Consider the following in preparing to connect with contacts:

- What's your objective for the discussion?
- What do you want to share?
- What do you want to know and/or learn from them?

Notes:



Step 3: Plan and act

Top tips for networking

Be authentic

Be your authentic self when networking. Don't present yourself as something you're not.

Connect others

Introducing contacts to each other will build strong relationships and encourage others to make connections for you.

Engage strategically with headhunters

Be clear on your goals and intentions before engaging – an unclear articulation can be detrimental.

Use LinkedIn

Use the power of social media to get noticed and remember that there is little risk in accepting a headhunter's LinkedIn invitation.

Be selective

Don't attend every event. Pick and choose the networking events that are of greatest value to you.

Have a clear goal for each event

It's natural to focus attention on existing contacts. Set yourself a challenge as to how many new contacts you'll make.

Build a personal connection

Resist the temptation to lead with your personal pitch. Listen, ask questions, and build a personal connection. When the time comes, customize your pitch based on your audience and the context of the conversation.

Customize your pitch

Present your pitch within the context of your audience and the conversation.

“

You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.

– Dale Carnegie

It's time to create a plan of action. Review the following milestones and target dates of completion. Share your plan with a trusted friend or mentor so they can provide support and accountability to achieve your goals.

Milestone	Date of completion
☐ Determine by “roughly when” you want to be in a new job. Develop a work plan with target dates and milestones that lead up to that timing. <i>*Success tip: treat yourself like you would a client; you can even create a client file titled, “My Best Future.”</i>	
☐ Reflect on your personal and professional wants, needs and accomplishments. ▸ Know your fastball – what you are great at and what you love. ▸ Know your interests and which industries and companies appeal to you. <i>*Success tip: think about the times and places you feel most alive. What naturally engages and energizes you is where your passions lie.</i>	
☐ Develop a short statement that articulates who you are and what you are pursuing. <i>*Success tip: follow the “rule of three” for creating a clear and compelling elevator pitch:</i> ▸ It should be 30 to 90 seconds. ▸ Your skill (or how you benefit a potential employer) should be clear. ▸ There should be a goal, or ask, of the individual to whom you are communicating.	
☐ Create or update your LinkedIn profile and resume to accurately reflect your accomplishments and tailor it to the roles you are seeking. ▸ State the impact you’ve had on a given project or role vs. writing a job description. ▸ Develop three to five PARS (per role) to highlight your impact. PARS may be used to develop accomplishment-based bullet points and speaking points for your role. See the acronym for PARS below. ▸ Problem (Describe a problem/issue/situation that you addressed) ▸ Action (What action did you take to address the issue?) ▸ Result (Quantify your impact wherever possible – e.g., dollars, percentages, numbers. You may also choose to qualify your impact. For example, was your solution replicated because it was so great?) ▸ Skills (What skills did you learn and/or exhibit in the process?) ▸ Have three trusted friends review your resume and provide suggestions. Know there are varying perspectives, so collect inputs and make edits as you see fit. <i>*Success tip: test how well your accomplishments align with the job opportunity by pasting your LinkedIn and resume into a word-cloud app like TagCrowd. The app allows you to quickly see if what’s emphasized in your resume fits with what you most want to highlight.</i>	
☐ Activate your network. ▸ Cast a wide net to let people know you are considering what’s next in your career. ▸ Learn more about others’ jobs and companies. ▸ Ask each person, “Who else do you think I should get to know?” ▸ Send a thank-you note after each person spends time with you. Include your resume and/or LinkedIn profile link and a brief reminder of your job search interests. <i>*Success tip: networking is never finished. Commit to doing at least one networking activity each week until it becomes a natural part of your life. The investment of building relationships intentionally now will set you up for success throughout your life.</i>	
☐ Determine who will hold you accountable to stay true to your career goal, strengths, passions and values as you move into the interviewing process. <i>*Success tip: keep a mindset that you are not running from something but rather toward something even better – your best future.</i>	

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