SECTION 2: CHOOSING THE RIGHT CAREER DIRECTION

Investing time, thought, and planning in choosing your career direction will help you to have the job fulfillment and career path that’s right for you. This approach breaks it down into four simple steps:

1. Who you are
2. Where you are now
3. Where you want to go
4. How you will get there

By going through each of these steps, you will gain insights into your career journey to make informed career decisions going forward. Take the time to reflect on the questions in each step. Your answers should be as honest as possible. Then plan to discuss them with your manager as part of a career planning conversation.

Here are some questions to consider:

WHO YOU ARE

Understand who you are – what are your values, your strengths and weaknesses, your preferences and what is important to you.

What do I enjoy doing - when am I most committed, passionate and engaged?
What aspects of work do I like to do when I have a choice?
What aspects of work do I not enjoy doing?
What would I like to do more/less of?
What are my key strengths, experiences, skills, competencies?
What talents do I rely on most?
What are my key values, beliefs and motivators in life?
What are my needs and preferences in relation to work life balance?
If money were no concern, what would I be doing?

WHERE YOU ARE NOW

Look at where you are now - your career to date, your achievements, your highs and lows, your levels of satisfaction. Your career journey can greatly inform your future career choices.

What is most satisfying to me in my current job?
What has been most satisfying to me in my previous jobs?
Which skills do I want to use in the future?
When have I been most sure of myself and my decisions?
What are my biggest work accomplishments?
What are my weaknesses? Are they important to my next role?
If there is one thing in my current job that I could change, what would it be?
Am I happy with my career choices and progress to date? Why/why not?
How much of this do I attribute to myself and how much to other factors?

WHERE YOU WANT TO GO

Look forward to the future - what you want in terms of job content, job satisfaction, personal development and work environment.

What are my short-term aspirations, next 1-3 years?
What are my longer-term aspirations, 3-5 years?
What will “success” look like for me - how do I define it?
Which jobs/Functions/locations am I interested in?
Which jobs/Functions do I not want to do?
Do I have any constraints e.g. location, mobility, personal circumstances, other factors?
What is changing in the company and the industry that may impact my career choices?
HOW YOU WILL GET THERE

This final step is all about how you will get there - What development do you need? How can you make your career plans known? Who can support you?

What skills, knowledge, experience and competencies do I have that will help me get to my next job?

What knowledge and skills do I need to work on?

What is my plan to develop necessary skills and experience?

What training, development or other resources will help me develop my career plan?

Who can assist me with my development and provide advice?

Note: Now move on to Section 3: Building Your Personal Brand. This tool will help you to determine how others see you in the work environment and give you the power to make necessary adjustments, if needed.