

Career Development as a lifelong process through which an individual develops and understands his or her career goals and continually explores various paths to get there. It also encompasses an individual's education and career related choices, and the outcome of those choices.

If you start with that premise, consider these questions: Who do you want to be in control of your career? Of the jobs that you work? Of the direction you go? What does all this mean? Here are some things you can do to take control of your career:

- Identify where you would like your career to go.
- What are the necessary steps to get there? Take the time to think about it.
- Take assessments to pinpoint your strengths, opportunities and style. Map out a plan – Put it in writing. Try to merge your skills and interests.
- Talk to leaders at your own organization about your thoughts and ask for feedback, support and strategy in accomplishing your goals. Reiterate your desire for continual learning as a way to give back to the organization.
- Consider an advance or different degree to meet your goals.
- Identify people who you know (or who you can find) that currently hold that “ideal” job? How did they get there (education, career ladder, etc.)? Consider doing Informational Interviews to learn more. They, along with effective networking can help get you where you want to go.

Don't forget that career management and development is lifelong; you must nurture it in order to reap the best rewards. And most of all, love what you do.

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