

Career Path Planning Template

Career path planning is an iterative process. Here are some guidelines to help you think through it.

Step 1. Define your motives, strengths, and requirements	
Question	Notes
What are the major professional and personal experiences that have really contributed to my character today?	
What aspects of those experiences did I enjoy the most? What motivated me? Be honest! <i>(e.g., analyzing data, leading teams, exercising autonomy, traveling, location flexibility, salary, bragging rights, work/life balance, etc.)</i>	
During those experiences, what did I excel at? What did my colleagues praise me about?	
What are the tablestake conditions I am not willing to compromise on? <i>(e.g., salary requirement, location, etc.)</i>	

For each of the last three questions, choose the top 3-5 answers. These are your **key criteria** when assessing your career path.

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Step 2. Define your goals and requirements

Question	Notes
<p>What is my long-term professional goal? Where do I want to be in 5 years?</p> <p><i>Try to be as specific as possible (e.g., director of marketing at a successful start-up in the biotech industry).</i></p>	
<p>Does my goal satisfy all or most of my key criteria established above? If not, iterate step 1 or rethink your goal.</p> <p><i>Revisit this step as many times as possible to narrow down to a long-term goal that you are truly excited about.</i></p>	
<p>What are the requirements (e.g., credentials, knowledge, experiences, etc.) that I need to achieve this long-term goal?</p> <p><i>Be specific and ensure that they are truly critical for this goal (e.g., master's degree in chemistry, 2 years of experience in sales, etc.).</i></p>	
<p>What activities or resources do I need to execute to satisfy those requirements? When do I need to complete them by? Create a clear timeline. (e.g., mentorship from an industry expert, capital, work at a start-up, etc.)</p>	

Go and execute. Reiterate as often as possible if any of the inputs change.