



Frequently Asked Questions

Career Management

Why do I need Career Management?

The career management process is for anyone who wants to continually develop, in a big or small way, when it comes to their career. Whether you want to find ways to expand the position you currently have or are ready for the next step, the career management resources can help you find a way to make some of the changes you're looking to make.

What is the purpose of “Ask, Explore, Do?”

The “Ask, Explore, Do” concept of Career Management represent the different phases of the process. “Ask” is the first step where employees learn more about themselves, other jobs and careers, and where they would like to be in their careers. The next step, “Explore,” focuses on learning more information about possible next steps. Lastly, the “Do” phase of the process centers around taking action.

This process is not necessarily linear though. Employees may repeat phases several times if it fits their needs and ultimate career goals.

What are the roles of employee, managers, and the university in the career management process?

Employees are expected to take initiative when it comes to steering their career in the direction they want it to go. It is primarily up to them to learn more about themselves and their job/field of choice. It is also up to employees to take action with supporting their careers.

Managers are expected to support their direct reports in managing their careers by contributing whatever resources and guidance. This can be in the form of referrals, regular feedback, meet and greets or whatever else managers feel is appropriate. All managers are expected to stretch themselves and try new approaches to managing in a way that allows direct reports to expand their knowledge and skills where possible.

The university is expected to provide tools and training to employees and managers that guide and assist them throughout the career management process. It is also expected to support career management in policies as well as practice.

What are the next steps for career management at the university?

The university will continue to develop tools and resources to better support you as you drive your career. This website will be updated as these new tools and resources are developed.

If you have questions about these materials, please contact the UM System Office of Talent Management at talentmgmt@umsystem.edu.

Why are the materials combined for those who are seasoned in their careers and those who are just started out?

While the specific activities or length of time spent in each phase may differ depending on a person's individual situation, the resources are relevant at all stages of someone's career. The scenarios below provide examples of how these resources may be used by employees at different points in their careers and life stages. Ultimately though, it's up to you as an individual to decide what is best for you and your career.

What would Ask, Explore, Do look like for the following employees?

- Tyrone, an employee who is in his first two years of full-time employment in student affairs
 - Because Tyrone is relatively new to this career field, he might find it beneficial to conduct informational interviews. These interviews would provide him with examples of the typical career paths taken in this field and how others navigated them. Job shadowing would also provide Tyrone with similar information. (See: *Learning Through Informational Interviewing; Getting the Most Out of Job Shadowing*)
 - Self-assessments would also provide Tyrone with personal information about his interests, values, and preferred work environment. (See: *Self-Assessments Can Help You Develop*)
 - Both of these previous steps would allow Tyrone to begin determining his career goals, both short-term and long-term. (See: *Goals as a Strategy to Reach Career Success*)
 - With certain career goals in mind, Tyrone could seek stretch assignments with the approval of his manager. These assignments would help Tyrone develop within his current job while allowing him to "try on" different roles and tasks. Such opportunities would grant Tyrone the chance to revise his goals and career plan depending on how comfortable he is in various roles. (See: *Stretch Assignments and Advancing Your Career*)
- Sofia, a mid-career finance employee who is ready for the next step
 - As with Alex, Sofia might find informational interviews beneficial. Sofia is looking to take the next step in her career and these interviews would give her the chance to ask others about how they took the step required to get where they now are. She would also get a sense of what other jobs are like, which would help her determine the direction of the step she wants to take. (See: *Learning Through Informational Interviewing*)

- Sofia can also explore next step options using O*Net. This online tool can be used to research jobs within the University as well as outside of it. (See: *Discovering Potential Jobs Using O*Net*)
- If Sofia feels that she would like to remain within her current position but make some changes, she might want to consider job crafting. Job crafting could include changing the physical boundaries of her job or simply changing how she perceives her job as whole. Regardless of the job crafting method Sofia chooses, crafting will allow her to find increase meaning and purpose within that position. (See: *Job Crafting as a Career Management Strategy*)
- Lucas, an experienced librarian who is considering a career change
 - It will be important for Lucas to remember that the next step in his career does not always have to be directly “up.” He has the chance to move laterally (into a position of the same status and pay grade but broadens his knowledge or skill base) or down (into a position below his current job but that grants him the chance to create greater work/life balance or simply experience a change of pace). (See: *Career Move Options*)
 - Networking will be important to Lucas at this point on his career path. Knowing individuals in other career fields can help him learn more about those fields as well as get connected to a point of entry. Individuals within Lucas’s network can serve as mentors and provide him with opportunities for informational interviewing and/or job shadowing. (See: *What You Need to Know About Networking; Getting the Most Out of Mentoring; Learning Through Informational Interviewing; Getting the Most Out of Job Shadowing*)
 - Lucas could also talk with his current manager about career goals and where Lucas is looking to go from here. His manager could provide him with constructive feedback in preparation for new roles as well as information about job opportunities elsewhere. (See: *Talking to Your Boss About Your Career*)
 - Lucas might also consider furthering his education if he is looking to switch career fields completely. This can be done by going back to school, working on a new certification, or attending a conference. (See: *Continuing Your Education and Advancement*)
- Therese, a long-term IT employee who is satisfied with where she is
 - Even though Therese is content to stay in her current position, it would be helpful for her to routinely consult her career management plan and update it when necessary. This plan will help guide her and keep her focused on her career goals. (See: *Your Career Management Plan; Goals as a Strategy to Reach Career Success*)
 - Therese can use this time to maintain and build her network by connecting and keeping in touch with individuals via social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.). She can also use social media to create and promote her “brand.” (See: *What You Need to Know About Networking; Using Social Media in Your Career*)