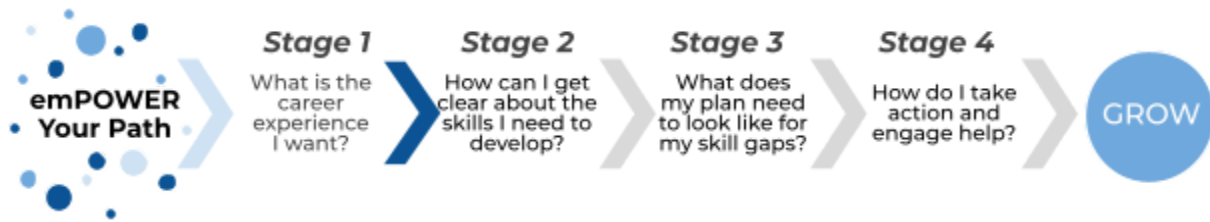


emPOWER Your Path



Explore & Define Your Career Goals

Stage 1

Why it's important

Taking time to define your career aspirations can be a challenge – there's so much to consider! This is your experience to define and your journey to take. Input from others will help, but they can't own this work for you. It's also very possible that your exploration will result in more questions than answers, which is fine – your journey may be more like a “jungle gym” than a linear path, and you may shift your views as you progress.

Sometimes people feel like they are perfectly happy with where they are and with what they are doing in the organization. That is GREAT...but that is sometimes thought of as “no development is needed”. We ALWAYS have development opportunities when we take ownership of our role, expanding our ability to influence others to get work done and keeping up with an ever-changing organization and industry.

Instructions

Visit the [Holistic Team Wellness Consulting](#) website to download the [Career Development Toolkit](#) spreadsheet. You will be using the *Skills List & Assessment* worksheet as well as the *Understanding My Values & Strengths* worksheet in this stage. Be sure to follow all of these steps. Don't skip a step, or fake a step, or pick something easy to make the activity shorter. Planning for your future is hard work, and it requires self-reflection and deep thinking about the activities you really enjoy all of the time.

A lot of times, we wait for a leader to come along to develop us. But the truth is that no one can develop you like yourself. You know what you really want, and are the only one that has the control to make it happen. While utilizing the perspectives of our leaders on your ability to perform and deliver will be a valuable consideration as you are creating your list of skills you need to develop further, it is only one perspective to take into account. Also, no one will celebrate when you achieve your development goals like you will. So, let's get to work...

Step 1: Understanding My Values & Strengths

Use the worksheet called *Understanding My Values & Strengths* to do some reflection on your core values and your strengths. This exercise is a critical first step. Work through the worksheet and spend some time reflecting on the things you've enjoyed about your past

roles, as well as what you didn't enjoy. You will also take some time to think through your learning agilities as part of this exercise.

Once you have worked through all of the questions in the exercise, take a step back and reflect on your current role, your organization, your principles and how you see your strengths today. You may see significant alignments or misalignments with who you are and where you exist within organizations today. Think through some of the strengths you have that are not being utilized today as well as those you get to use regularly. Reflect on your values and how well they fit and match up where you work today.

Step 2: Uncovering possible future roles

If you are fairly new to your role or industry (three years or less), there is a greater opportunity to focus inward on your current role and your skill gaps there than it is to even begin to think about the next role. Therefore, you should always include your own job description as well as that of your boss to make sure you are striving to be your best in your current role first.

If you are established well in your current role, step outside of your current world and envision the possibilities. Think big! Go out to LinkedIn, Indeed, and even explore job listings or descriptions from your current organization. Find two to four jobs that you would possibly explore someday – maybe tomorrow, or 3 years from now, or even 5 years from now. Review your values and strengths from the last step in association to these new roles to ensure they align with who you are and what you are looking for in a role. Review roles with a child-like inquisitiveness at all of the possibilities.

Step 3: Create THE LIST

Now you need to craft a list of skills required to achieve such incredible dreams. You will gather skills from each of those roles (whether in job posting form or job description form). Each will have a list of essential functions and skills needed to perform the role. Place all of the skills, responsibilities and requirements into the *Skills List & Assessment* tab in the *Career Development Toolkit* spreadsheet. Add any skills you know you are already working on, relationships you need to build, or things you need to expand in your current technical or leadership toolkit. You now have a comprehensive list of every skill, experience and certification/education that you'll need to obtain a role, or a higher or different level of accountability and responsibility in the organization.

Examples

Use the videos on the [Holistic Team Wellness Consulting](#) site to help you see real life examples of how this has worked for others in the past.

Common question: What if I'm stuck and can't envision or find a role that aligns with what I want to do? What if I'm new to my role and have a lot of skills to learn before I can think about the future?

This can happen to anyone. We want to be better at the role we're in before we focus on the future. If that's the case, use your current job description, the behaviors and skills listed in

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any leadership guidance documents you have from your organization, the learning agilities, feedback from others and/or your leader's job description to build your list of skills and qualifications.

NEXT: emPOWER Your Path, Stage 2 to focus in on your skill gaps and solicit feedback to fully evaluate your current skill levels

You are ready to move on to the next stage when you:

- ✓ Understand your values and strengths
- ✓ Reflect on your current position and organization for alignment with your values
- ✓ Decide what future roles are part of your plan
- ✓ Establish a full list of skills required for your future plans