



Career Self-management: The **Key** to Your Future

The work environment of the 21st century is less defined and more fluid than ever before. Most companies have experienced downsizing, outsourcing and restructuring. As a result, there are no rigid lines to define your “job.” What should you do to ensure your success in today’s ever-changing marketplace? The first and most crucial step is to take responsibility for your own career management.

Ten steps to managing your career options

- 1 Align your career goals with the direction, needs and realities of your company’s business strategy.
- 2 Develop a plan for achieving your long- and short-term career goals.
- 3 Conduct a realistic appraisal of your skills, training and functional expertise and plan strategically to build on the competencies needed for the company’s success.
- 4 Compare yourself to the high achievers in your company or industry and identify the keys to their success.
- 5 Explore both promotional and lateral opportunities. A lateral move may lay the groundwork for a significant vertical move.
- 6 Establish a network of professional contacts that are “in the know” about positions of interest.
- 7 Take advantage of available information so that you are aware of key industry, organizational, professional and competitor trends.
- 8 Build on the skills that employers value as contributing to the success of the company:
 - business knowledge and contribution to financial results
 - strategic thinking
 - leadership
 - problem solving
 - customer focus
 - individual effectiveness
 - versatility
 - people skills



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- 9 View work as a chance to grow by creating opportunities to demonstrate your skills.
- 10 Work at your highest potential every day to move toward the position or goal you are striving for. This will give you a sustainable competitive advantage in the future.

Progressive organizations are no longer focused on hiring, training and paying employees to perform a specific job. Instead, they hire individuals for their skills and knowledge. This approach opens the door for you to create your own career opportunities. Take the first step today and begin managing your own career.

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