



Career Choices

What you want out of your career and what options are available to you can change throughout your work life. It is important to remember there are many ways to get moving toward your ideal career. Here are six ways to move toward your career goals.

Enrichment (Growing in Place)

This is a process in which you expand or change the responsibilities of your current job to acquire competencies relevant to your career goals. Although your title stays the same, some of your tasks and how you accomplish them change. The key to a successful enrichment experience is a discussion with your immediate supervisor to plan how your current position might evolve to incorporate tasks you would like to perform.

Exploration (Investigating Possibilities)

The goal of researching possibilities is to collect the information necessary to decide how best to build your career. Through exploration you can identify other jobs that require your skills, interests and values. This exploration can be done through short-term job assignments, temporary project participation or informational interviews.

Vertical (Moving Up)

Advancement is most likely to occur when individual abilities coincide with the organization's needs. Learn the direction in which your organization is going and seek out assignments that will prepare you for an upcoming opportunity.

Lateral (Moving Across)

This type of movement involves a change in job, but not necessarily in responsibility, status or pay. When organizations grow slowly or are cutting back, lateral movements are an important career option. Your current position may not offer dynamic projects that change with time, which can limit learning. A lateral move can provide you with an opportunity to expand your knowledge and skills base in a specific area or across different functional areas of the organization.

Realignment (Moving Down)

Realignment involves a downward move in the organization. Refocusing in this way allows you to stay with an organization you like while beginning a new career direction. People move down by choice for a variety of reasons. Realignment can be a strategy for reconciling the demands of your work with other priorities, such as a return to study, family or health commitments, or a career change. Sometimes less demanding work in a faster growing part of the organization can put you in line with new career opportunities. Seeking different work from what you are used to can provide you with a new set of responsibilities and challenges. Realignment can also be a training step.

Relocation (Moving On)

Relocation means you leave the organization. There will likely be a time in everyone's career when your current work just doesn't match your skills, interests or values. Relocation may be the best option for you if you have a career goal that is not realistic in your current organization, if changes in the external environment have made your technical expertise less valuable or unnecessary, or if you want to develop your entrepreneurial skills.