

From strength TO STRENGTH

Taking ownership of career development is the only way to ensure that you continue to grow and progress in your profession, says **TERESA ROBERTSON**.

When I was an MBA Careers Coach at Strathclyde Business School, most of the students I coached said they were doing an MBA for career progression. They felt that an MBA was what they needed to do, particularly to try and make that move into management. During their MBAs, however, they realised it wasn't the answer; the answer was that they needed guidance and support, someone to talk to who could guide them on a structure and a plan of what to do. They also discovered that having open conversations with their line managers about

their career plans would have helped and may have prevented them from leaving past employers.

What I've found is that some individuals stumble into progression or they happen to be in the right place or right role at the right time. But for many of us, it is a competitive world when trying to move up that career ladder and achieve our aspirations. We can set ourselves key roles, or the level we want to achieve; we may know what we want, but we



SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES

The Institute has a wide range of resources to support you throughout your career:

- e-CPD Toolkit: contains 800+ resources on the subject of career development
- Mentoring: if you are a member with more than 10 years' experience in the banking sector, you can become a mentor. You can also be a mentee and benefit from having a mentor to provide guidance through your career development

- Membership: attend events throughout the year to network, find out what's going on in the industry and include it as part of your CPD
- Qualifications: each level of study instils the concepts of ethical professionalism and develops core banking skills
- Events: from seminars to round tables, our events explore the current hot topics in the industry and provide opportunities to network.

are not always sure how to achieve it, or how to adapt when the situation changes.

Goal and objective setting are common in the workplace, from everyday tasks to annual appraisals. When we want to achieve something, whether it is a once-in-a-lifetime vacation or the Christmas shopping, we have to-do-lists – we allocate resources, whether that's time or money – and we even review and check as we are going along to ensure that we are on track to achieve our objective. So why not do the same with our careers? If we, as individuals, don't take ownership and responsibility for our own career development and progression, who will?

WHAT IS CAREER DEVELOPMENT?

At school, we may aspire to being a lawyer or a doctor. Equally, we may have no idea of what we would like to do when we grow up. Some individuals set about choosing subjects or universities and achieving qualifications in order to pursue their career path. Others follow their parents' advice and take a variety of subjects to build in some flexibility in their career options. When you joined the banking industry, did you plan your career path to begin in the banking industry or did you start

“If we, as individuals, do not take responsibility for our own career development and progression, who will?”

in a completely different career path and move into banking through a professional route?

Career Development is exactly the same, as we will continue to set ourselves goals and objectives to achieve more in our career. It is the proactive planning of actions and steps we map out in order to continue to grow and progress in our profession.

FIRST STEPS

Self-Assessment is the first essential step to support your career planning. Ask yourself these questions:

- What do I want from my career?
- What's important to me in my career?
- What are my personal and career goals?
- What do I want my career to offer me that I don't get now?
- What are my transferable skills?
- What are my weaknesses and how do I overcome them?
- Which companies do I want to work in and why?

- Do I need to undertake training? If so, have I the time, money and commitment?
- Do I need to take a pay cut to pursue a different career path?

Once you've answered all the questions then create an action plan, a **Career Development Plan** showing how you are going to achieve it.

- This will act as your career roadmap – adding in goals to be achieved and timelines
- Identify the goal you want to achieve then list the steps you'll take to achieve it – include details of specific tasks you need to complete
- Allocate realistic deadlines for the completion of each task and step. Once you've completed your assigned tasks and reached your goal, it's a good idea to evaluate your situation
- Reflect on your progress and set any new goals you might wish to achieve.

A Career Development Plan will force you to regularly perform a self-assessment on where you are now in your career and where you would like to be. This will provide you with a greater sense of personal fulfilment and satisfaction when the goals and timelines are achieved.

Career Development Plans can be used for your five-year career plan, or to plan for each career move you wish to make.

CURATING YOUR CAREER BIOGRAPHY

Creating a career biography (in other words, a master CV) will define 'you' and your personal brand. This is a great way of showcasing what you have achieved to date in your career and your professional accomplishments in a crisp and concise way. It should include key areas, such as:

- Experience
- Knowledge
- Qualifications
- Memberships
- Profile
- Education
- Training
- Achievements
- Transferable skills
- Personal and work-related values.

This can help in identifying any gaps, training, qualifications or skills you need, which can be your first step or task in your Career Development Plan. **CB**

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Have a conversation with your line manager as part of your performance appraisal system and outline your career development plans
- Seek their support to help put a plan of action in place (Individual Training Plan)
- Become a mentee – or a mentor (this could also be done externally)
- Volunteer to help out other teams or departments to gain knowledge, contacts and experience
- Job shadow to gain insight into a particular role or department you may be interested in
- Share knowledge with other colleagues/teams to develop cross-training
- Put yourself forward to take on projects
- Build on your contacts – the majority of opportunities can open up through who you know
- Network – either at events (internally or externally) or through your contacts
- Get involved in voluntary experience outside of your regular job
- Seek out training and development opportunities, particularly if it is part of your career plan
- Check whether career coaching is available
- Consider the benefits of professional membership and qualifications.

