



Career Planning Workbook

Step 3: Developing an Action Plan



careersthatwork.ca



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Introduction

The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (Saint John), Anglophone South School District and the Work Room Career Resource Centres have developed a program to assist people in preparing their career plan. PACE (Plan to Achieve Career Excellence) is divided into 5 sequential modules that combine to create an effective career plan. This workbook supports the third module-“Action Plan” by providing additional information, resources and activities to help people to conduct thorough career research and match their interests with potential career opportunities..

This workbook is designed as a follow-up to Step 2: Research in the PACE career planning system. This is a useful resources to anyone who requires advanced career support tools to help them to progress to the next stage of their career plan.

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A support website has been developed to provide additional resources. The web pages are colour-coded to correspond with the information contained in this workbook.

www.setyourowndpace.org

The PACE workshop and resources are not intended to be used as a substitute for professional career counseling. Instead, this workbook allows both youth and adults to do their own research and in the event they have questions concerning career planning, there are resources readily available to assist them.

For parents who are interested in receiving career coaching training, a 60 minute Introductory Career Coaching Workshop is available through The Work Room Career Resource Centres and select community partners. Expansion modules (such as this one) are available for those who complete the introductory workshop. For more information on PACE and related career products, workshops and resource material please visit:

www.careersthathwork.ca



Please use this summary sheet to establish goals and help guide you through this module. As you complete a section in the workbook, fill in blanks provided on this page. This will serve as a convenient summary for future steps in your career plan.

1. Which post secondary destination is the best fit for your employment goal?

- Apprenticeship** What trade? _____
- Community College** Name of School _____
- Military** Which Division? _____
- Private Training Schools** Name of School _____
- University** Name of School _____
- Direct to Work** Job Description _____

Checklist

- Researched chosen destination
- Met all entrance requirements/testing
- Applied for student loans
- Secured residence
- Applied to institution
- Accepted into desired program
- Applied for scholarships/bursaries
- Budgeted living expenses

Alternative plan #1: _____

Alternative plan #2: _____

Start Date _____

Projected End Date _____

The Six Destinations

Once you have established a career plan (or at the very least, a career goal), it is time to start acting on it. They have basically six options, or destinations, that can lead you towards your career goal. These are (in no particular order):

1. **Apprenticeship.** There are many opportunities and very good pay in the skilled trades. The best way to enter the field is through apprenticeship. An apprenticeship program is comprised of progressive on-the-job training as well as technical (in-school) training that culminates in recognized certification. About 80 percent of apprentice training takes place on the job; the remaining 20 percent involves technical training at a post-secondary training establishment. At the end of the apprenticeship program, the apprentice is required to write the final examination. Upon the successful completion of this examination and by satisfying all other requirements of the apprenticeship agreement, the apprentice will be issued a Diploma of Apprenticeship and a Certificate of Qualification, both signifying journeyman status. These documents are recognized across Canada.

For more information on apprenticeship in New Brunswick, visit:
<http://www.gnb.ca/0381/default.htm>

2. **Community College.** Community College offers very practical training that is often formed in partnership with industry so there is confidence that the training a person receives is marketable in the workforce. There are co-op placements in some programs to provide students with job experience in their field of study. Increasingly, community colleges and universities are partnering to offer joint degree programs and/or will provide credits for courses taken at other institutions.

The website for the New Brunswick Community College: www.nbcc.ca

3. **Military.** An increasingly popular alternative is the Canadian Armed Forces. People can become trained in many skilled trades, engineering, medical and scientific fields and have some of their training costs covered by the federal government. By choosing this route, a person can obtain financial assistance, gain valuable experience, and often be offered employment upon completion of training. Contact a local recruiter for more information or visit: www.recruiting.forces.gc.ca. You may find that military service is a great career option.
4. **Private Training.** There are many private training schools that offer industry-specific programs. Some schools offer flexible schedules, unique training opportunities and shorter certification programs than you could get through university or community college. Most private training schools in New Brunswick are reputable and offer excellent training, but make sure you research a private training institute before paying any money. See if they are registered under the New Brunswick Private Occupational Training Act www.gnb.ca/0368/Pota-1st.pdf, talk to former graduates, obtain graduate placement stats from the school and compare schools against each other.



5. University. At university, a person can develop a well rounded education that is in high demand by many employers. Just make sure the degree (s) you pursue can be applied to a career field that is viable. Don't expect a degree will earn you a free pass to the labour market. It is merely a tool that you must use to your advantage. If you have decided that university is the choice for you, you may be interested in checking out the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada website <http://www.aucc.ca/>. The AUCC represents 94 Canadian public and private not-for-profit universities and university-degree level colleges. On the website you can find information on Canadian universities, scholarships, research opportunities and specific programs/courses.

Here are some funding links:

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|----------------------------|--|
| Student Aid New Brunswick: | www.studentaid.gnb.ca |
| Scholarships Canada: | www.scholarshipscanada.com |
| Student Awards: | www.studentawards.com |

6. Direct to Work/Starting your Own Business. Do you have a great business idea? Check out this site, www.cbsc.org/bsa for reliable information on market research, preparing a business plan, financing opportunities, protecting intellectual property, business taxes, hiring employees and more!

Maybe owning your own business isn't for you, but eventually you will want to become employed. A couple of great sites to find out about resume development, job search skills, and national job postings are:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Service Canada Job Bank: | www.jobbank.gc.ca |
| Career Beacon: | www.careerbeacon.com |
| Monster Job Bank: | www.monster.ca |

When developing a career plan, it is important that you keep an open mind about all of the options available to you. No destination is better than the others, but some can be more effective for you depending on your goals and circumstances. Some occupations can be achieved via a very direct route but factors such as finances, acceptance into a program, etc, may dictate alternate routes to get you closer to you career destination.

Based on the research, which of the destinations are the most appropriate places to start putting your career goal (s) into action?

Career Goal (as identified from step #2)

Post-Secondary Destination

Alternate Plans:

Putting it all together

At this stage, you should be ready to formalize a career plan. You should have identified your interests (step 1) and have done the research (step 2) to match those interests with potential occupations and opportunities in the workforce.

Based on your research, one of the 6 post-secondary destinations identified in this section should stand out as a starting point for the next phase in your career journey. Now it is time to make the appropriate choice to obtain the necessary education and experience you require for your chosen career path.

“Back-up plans” may be discovered through an exploration of the remaining destinations.

Congratulations! You have developed a career plan. You can keep your plan on track by adhering to the SMART principles:

S = Specific
M = Measurable
A = Attainable
R = Realistic
T = Timely

Specific - A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. “I would like to be a pediatric nurse” (specific) versus “I want a job where I help people” (general).

Measurable - Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal you set. Make sure you and everyone supporting your career progression measures goal attainment and define success the exact same way.

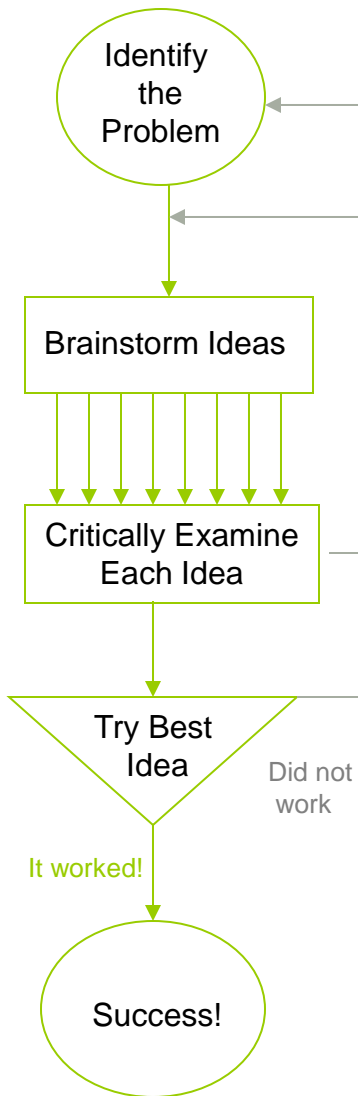
Attainable – Break your career goal into a series of smaller steps that can be done easily and in a reasonably short period of time. This aids in keeping a person motivated and able to develop the attitudes, abilities, skills, and financial capacity to reach each step.

Realistic - To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective which you are *able* to work toward and *willing* to apply the effort required to attain that goal.

Timely - A goal should be grounded within a time frame. With no time frame tied to it there is no sense of urgency.



A Problem Solving Model



Your plan isn't working! You need to identify factors that are contributing to your current roadblock and put each one through this problem-solving model.

Once you have identified a problem, you need to compile a list of possible solutions.

You should examine each potential solution and determine which course of action is the most appropriate one to try. You can evaluate each possible solution by criteria such as cost, time to complete and ease of completion.

At some point in time you will have to put your idea into action. Did it work? If not, try another idea or brainstorm new ones. You may even need to determine if you are addressing the real problem.

Hopefully your solution to the problem works and you continue to advance your career plan.

Getting "unstuck"

Sometimes it may seem as though your career plan is at an impasse. As was presented in the last module, you have free resources available to help you progress in your career plan.

- High School Guidance Counsellors
- Employment Counsellors
(Department of Post Secondary Education, Training and Labour)
- The Work Room Career Resource Centres

Hopefully, the destination your chose will help you achieve your career goal as effectively and efficiently as possible. It is important to note that it is entirely possible that you may use a combination of these destinations to further your career goal.

For example;

You start your training at community college and discover your funding fell through. You then enroll in the military to get much of your tuition covered and access similar training that is offered through a private training school. After a few years, you decide to leave the military and go to work in the private sector. You enroll at the local university and take evening classes part time and eventually earn a post graduate degree.

Of course this is an extreme example, but demonstrates that a person isn't locked into only one way of attaining their goals. Skills acquired through your training is often transferrable and increases your employability immeasurably. This will be discussed in the next module "The Nine Essential Skills".

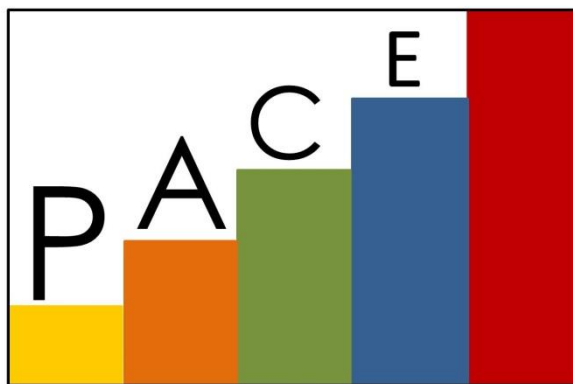
A few final points to note as you put your career plan into action:

1. Establish a support group around you. There will be times when you feel you may want to quit of face obstacles that slow you down. By having family, friends and mentors around you will give you the help you need when the going gets tough.
2. Make sure you have your finances in order BEFORE you start your training. Apply for all the scholarships and/or bursaries that you can. If you don't have the money saved up, then get approved for student loans, personal loans or any government funding asap.
3. Research the labour market to make sure you have good odds of securing employment once you complete your training.
4. Research the training institution to find out how many people who have completed the course and are working in the industry as a result of the training. Ask employers if they recognize the training school as one that provides the training they seek.
5. Make appropriate arrangements for things such as accommodations, child care, and transportation during your training. These are things that can disrupt your training very easily if you don't have solid contingency plans.
6. If you can't commit to you plan 100%, don't do it. If required, rework your plan until you can make a complete commitment and are prepared to put forth the effort required to see it through to completion.

Preview of the next step: The Nine Essential Skills

- PACE participants will learn the nine essential workplace skills that employers say are vital for success in any industry.





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Developed through the partnership of the Department of Post Secondary Education, Training, and Labour (Saint John Regional Office), Anglophone South School District and The Work Room Career Resource Centres.

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