

Career development and progression



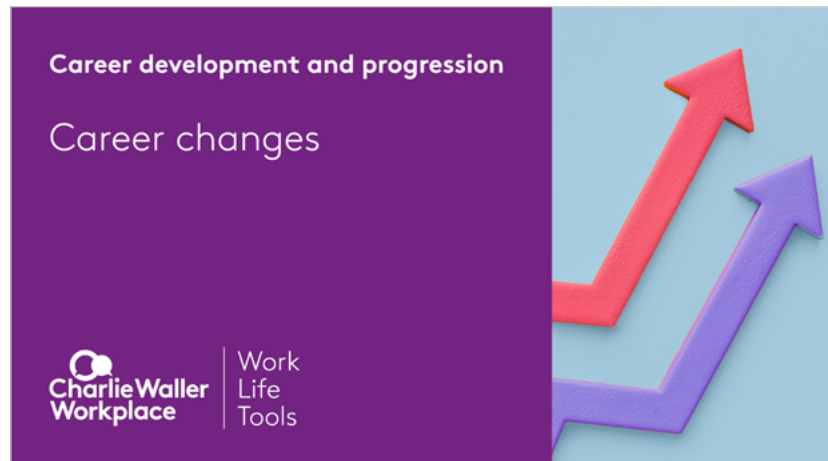
Work
Life
Tools



Actions to take to help you develop your career and
achieve your goals

Career development and progression

If you're keen to develop your career, there are plenty of actions that you can take that will help you to stand out and to get a better sense of what you need to do to achieve your goals.



Keep a bank/log of information to support your progression conversations

Keep a log of your achievements and where you have made a great contribution. You might also want to pin these up so you can remind yourself of them when you need a boost:

- Where have I made a real difference and added value?
- When have I been most proud of my work?
- When have I received great feedback?

Do your own reflecting – what have been your high and low points; what areas of work do you love and/or give you energy (and you want to do more of):

- What have I really enjoyed doing in my role?
- What tasks have made me feel great (vs those that have drained your energy)?

Consider what 'personal brand' you are creating (the way you are viewed at work) and check you are acting in accordance with the way you want to be viewed:

- What are my core values and how will I live by these at work?
- What do I want to be known for? How can I show up like this at work?

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Be an active planner and participant in the development conversations you have

Identify your own needs before you have a development conversation:

- What are my goals for this conversation?
- What are the key issues I want to discuss? What questions do I want answers to?
- How will I know if this conversation has gone well (your measures for success)?

Find ways to get confident in sharing your achievements; practice these conversations and be mindful about how you show up for them – be prepared!

Think ahead – what assumptions might your manager have about you and the path you want to take in the organisation?

Ask for feedback to help you grow and develop

Annually or at review time: ask for 360° feedback (feedback from your peers and leaders) to help you develop, understand how your skills are perceived at work and what your blind spots are (the things we need to work on that we had no idea about).

Day to day: ask for feedback 'in the moment' whilst it's fresh and relevant – for instance, after you've just given a presentation. The more frequent the better!

Ask for specific feedback – it will be richer and more informative.

When receiving feedback, be aware of your emotional reactions – often feedback can be challenging to hear if we disagree with some of it, or it challenges a sense of who we are. Focus on the useful elements which you can address.

After receiving feedback, thank your colleague, share your insights, discuss options and possible improvements, seek advice and communicate next steps.

Ask for development opportunities and chances to shine!

Lean on your strengths to ask for the development opportunities you want:

- I really enjoy/am good at XXX. How can we create more opportunities for me?
- I would like to stretch myself to do XXX. How can you support me in this?

When asking for training or development opportunities, communicate the value it will have to the organisation as well as to yourself.



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When offered a development opportunity, ensure you know what it entails

Ensure you know fully what is involved and why you have been selected. Explore how this opportunity plays to your strengths and longer-term goals, as well as check who will be supporting you to make this a success:

- What additional skills am I going to gain from doing this role?
- What different career path might this take me on?
- Who can I rely on for support to make this role successful, from people (eg mentor, line manager) and resources (eg a training course, reading)?

Ensure you agree benchmarks for success in this role or opportunity:

- How will we both know if I have been successful in this opportunity? What are the key measures of success?

With thanks to Natalie Thwaites from Sunstone Leadership for her input to this page.

Natalie runs Sunstone Leadership, a company that supports businesses with executive coaching to fuel their growth. She works with individuals and teams on both business strategy and leadership development. Prior to this, Natalie worked in private equity, investing in consumer-branded businesses. More about Natalie can be found on her [website](#).

Other Work Life Tools resources



What makes you tick?
Finding your values
and purpose



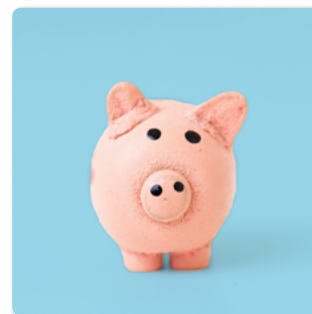
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