

PATHBUILDERS®
MANAGE
FALL 2025

CAREER PATHING

JANUARY 2026
SESSION FOUR



CAREER PATHING

JANUARY 2026 | SESSION FOUR

WHY YOU NEED TO BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT YOUR CAREER

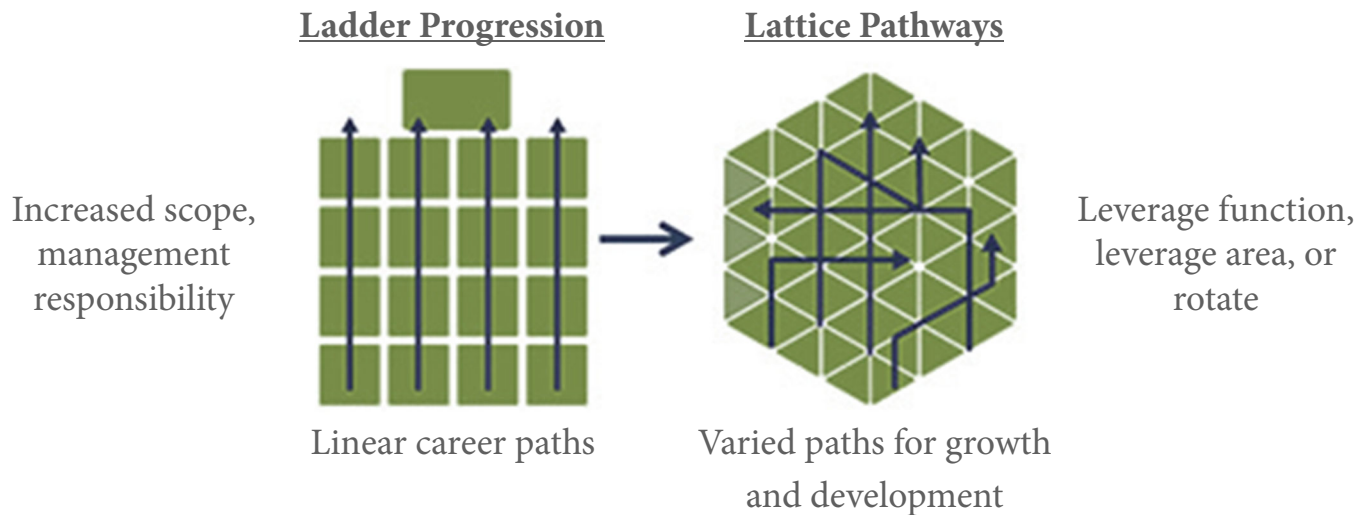
Decide where to go based on what matters to you

- Top value - meaningful work, sense of accomplishment, friendly/social workplace, financial success, flexibility/work-life balance
- Love/Loathe It list
- Key job attributes

CAREER PROGRESSION

- “Progression” has widely varying definitions
- Pathbuilders data highlights:
 - Developing new skills
 - Increasing in responsibility
 - Change in salary
 - Being seen as a subject matter expert
- Without your input and feedback, your organization makes assumptions about you

LADDERS VS LATTICES



Benko and Anderson, *The Corporate Lattice*, 2010

NOTES

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HOW BUSINESS WORKS

- People are busy; the organization's needs are immediate
- You are perceived as being good at certain things; those perceptions shape peoples' ideas about:
 - Your desired career path
 - What motivates you
 - Your development plan, etc.

HOW IT CAN WORK

- Be self-aware
 - Define your career goals, motivations, and interests
 - Consciously work on your development plan
- Communicate broadly in the organization
 - Your talents, interests, motivations
 - Align interests to directional needs of the organization

CAREER PLANNING

- Career planning is the integration of your goals, personal interests, personal development, organizational needs, and internal marketing
- Career planning is essential for:
 - Job enrichment
 - Positional progression
 - Personal fulfillment

Career Planning = conscious pathing and opportunistic reaction

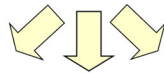
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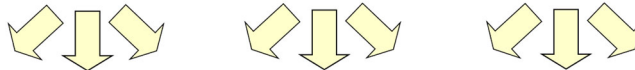
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YOUR CAREER MAP: FORWARD

What are three options for your next move?



What opportunities could these roles lead you to?



Map all the potential paths –

What positions are available on these paths?

Are there opportunities **not** available on these paths?

YOUR CAREER MAP: BACKWARD

What position do you aspire to?



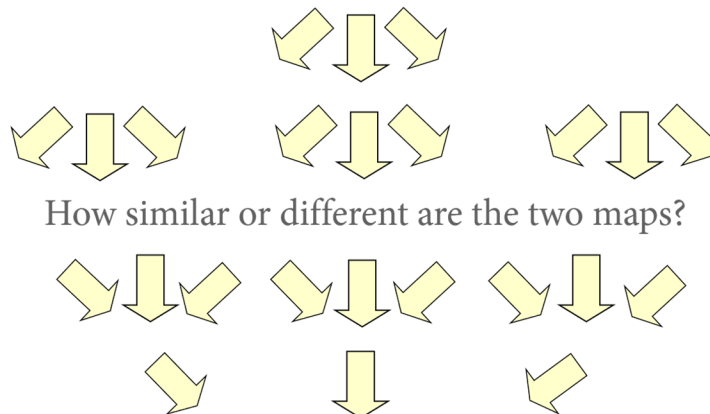
What jobs/assignments are necessary precursors?



Are you on path for any of these assignments?

If not, how can you prepare yourself?

COMPARING YOUR CAREER MAPS

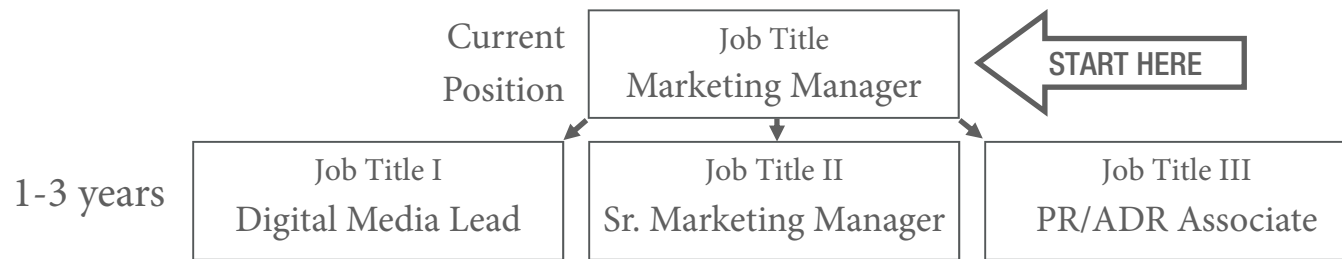


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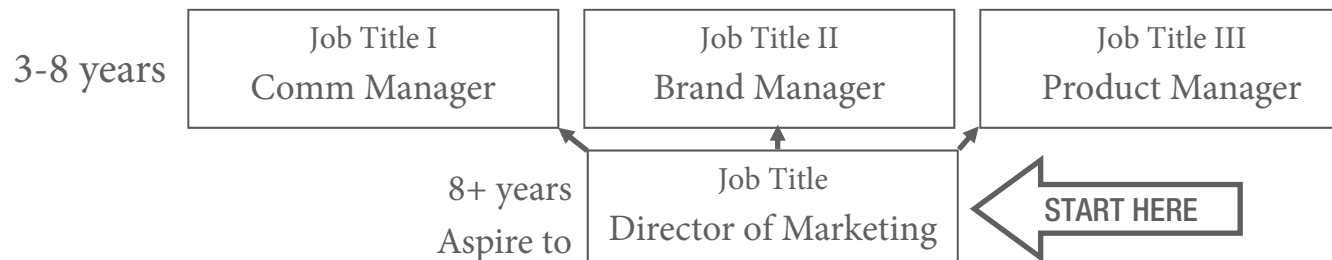
CAREER PATHING EXERCISE

When mapping your career, there are two approaches you can take: **forward mapping** and **backward mapping**.

- Forward Mapping - for your next potential move, consider **all** the potential roles, not just the next logical one.
 - By considering a wider range of positions for your next move, you create even more options for yourself later.



- Backward Mapping - envision the role you ultimately see yourself in. From the “ultimate role,” work backwards, and consider what roles or assignments are necessary precursors.
 - What roles did those in the “ultimate role” have?



Once you have created forward and backward maps, compare them: how similar or different are they? Where are there areas of overlap? Where are there gaps? What are the necessary skills and experiences you could be building now? Are there special projects you could ask for or teams you could be apart of to expose yourself to new areas and expose others to your work?

After reviewing an example, complete a career map for yourself using both forward and backward mapping.

CAREER PATHING EXERCISE

Forward Positions

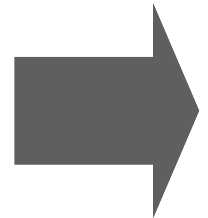


Identify the requirements for these various positions. Note areas of commonality.

<u>Education</u>	<u>Skills</u>	<u>Experiences</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ B.S. or B.A ▪ Digital Marketing Cert. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creative & Technical Writing ▪ Design Software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Market Analytics Work ▪ People Management

ACTION PLAN

1-3 years



Backward Positions



CAREER PATHING EXERCISE

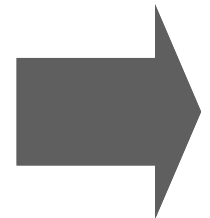
Forward Positions

	Current	Job Title			
1-3 years	Job Title	Job Title	Job Title	Job Title	
3-8 years	Job Title	Job Title	Job Title	Job Title	Job Title

Identify the requirements for these various positions. Note areas of commonality.

<u>Education</u>	<u>Skills</u>	<u>Experiences</u>
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ACTION PLAN
1-3 years



Backward Positions

1-3 years	Job Title	Job Title	Job Title	Job Title	Job Title
3-8 years	Job Title	Job Title	Job Title		
8+ years	Job Title				

MODEL - PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

Positioning Statement

Your Career Map

Organizational Needs

DEFINING THE OPPORTUNITIES

- What are the organization's big goals?
 - What is most important in 2026?
 - If the organization could only achieve **one** thing...
- What are the organization's big challenges?
 - What keeps your leaders up at night?
- What are the organization's "special needs"?
 - Task forces
 - Launches
 - Special projects



ALIGNING TO OPPORTUNITIES

What can you uniquely bring to a goal, challenge, or special need?

- Knowledge - product, customer, market, educational?
- Experience - functional, field, back office, outside
- Relationships - breadth inside, exposure outside
- Interest - personal research or desire to learn
- Other - what makes you unique?

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POSITIONING YOURSELF FOR CAREER SUCCESS

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ALIGNING TO OPPORTUNITIES—EXAMPLE

KEY ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

What is most important this year?
What is in the 5-year plan?
(revenue, product development, efficiency, etc.)

- Grow revenue by 25%
- Increase market share by 10%
- Launch new product offering
- Reorganize IT function

PRESSING CHALLENGES

What topics/concerns are frequently discussed?
(competition, market, quality, innovation, customer insights, cost control, etc.)

- Freeze on headcount
- Increasing focus on innovation

SPECIAL NEEDS

What processes are being examined?
What are you hiring consultants to do?
What long-term projects are there?

- Consultants bringing innovation expertise
- Re-aligning functions to interact with IT in new ways

ALIGNING TO OPPORTUNITIES

Roles, projects, contributions that you can make, task forces to join, etc.

- Be a resource to the innovation consulting team
- Leverage relationships to create connections for consultants with key IT subject matter experts

WHAT YOU UNIQUELY BRING TO THE TABLE

Knowledge (product, customer, educational, competitive, your research, etc.); Experiences (roles, functions, community work, past jobs, etc.); Relationships (internal, external, customers, community, etc.); Interests (learnings, research, etc.); Other??

- Diverse product knowledge
- Learnings and relationships from conference on innovation
- Understanding of current IT structure from past project management role
- Experience leading technical people from past role

NOTES

ALIGNING TO OPPORTUNITIES—QUESTIONS

KEY ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

What is most important this year?
What is in the 5-year plan? (revenue, product development, efficiency, etc.)

PRESSING CHALLENGES

What topics/concerns are frequently discussed?
(competition, market, quality, innovation, customer insights, cost control, etc.)

SPECIAL NEEDS

What processes are being examined?
What are you hiring consultants to do?
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ALIGNING TO OPPORTUNITIES

KEY ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

PRESSING CHALLENGES

SPECIAL NEEDS



ALIGNING TO OPPORTUNITIES



WHAT YOU UNIQUELY BRING TO THE TABLE

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POSITIONING STATEMENTS—EXAMPLE

Clearly describes your value and your direction

“Using my creativity and communication skills, I will help decrease our customer response time and achieve my personal goals by becoming a trainer for our new workflow project.”

“Using my proven abilities to organize information and communicate with individuals across the organization, I will help to increase employee engagement and achieve my personal goals by seeking a leadership role in our customer support environment.”

MY POSITIONING STATEMENT

“Using my

[key skills and qualities]

together with my desire to build/grow/lead

[what I need to demonstrate to achieve my goals]

I will achieve my personal goals and help the organization by

[what I want to accomplish / where I want to be]

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IT'S NOT A MANTRA...

- It's a conversation
 - "What's next for you?"
 - *"I'm really looking for a way to leverage X."*
 - *"I'm really excited about the new Y."*
 - "What interests you?"
 - *"I think this Z role/opportunity is a great fit...what do you think?"*
- If not positively received: get feedback!
 - *"What would I need to demonstrate for you to see me in that type of role?"*

BALANCING PRIORITIES

- We must define "balance" for ourselves
- Consider what your priorities are in the roles you play
- Dividing time, energy, and resources by focusing on what is valued helps keep our roles in balance
- Critical to factor priorities into your career plan

CAREER CONVERSATIONS TODAY

- Receiving feedback is more essential than ever
- Who needs to be aware of your career interests?
- Leverage your **MANAGE** experience for support!

NOTES