



## CAREER VISION

### **What Is Career Management?**

Career management is the lifelong process of investing resources to achieve your career goals. Career management is not a singular event but a continuing process that is a necessity for adapting to the changing demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century economy.

Whether we are in the early phase of our work life or are a workforce veteran, we have probably heard the term career management. We have also probably heard that in the future we need to be responsible for our careers. What we may not have been told is what career management is and how we do it! Career management uses concepts similar to good financial management. A good rule of thumb to keep in mind is that a disciplined investment, made on a regular basis, yields a greater return. Although the tactics will vary, career management focuses on two key investment assets to manage throughout our working years, our personal lifelong learning and our network of relationships.

#### **Lifelong learning**

It is often surprising to realize how much of our day-to-day work is now based around technology. Computers and other scientific advancements have radically altered the way in which we conduct work. Even more amazing is the realization that there are more scientists alive today than ever before and the projected rate of change will increase tenfold in our children's lifetime. The ramifications of these advancements and innovations will ripple swiftly through the economy, obsolescing many businesses and catapulting others into the limelight. How well we are able to adapt to these ongoing innovations will be directly related to how current we keep our knowledge and skills. Consider how to vary your investments in time, energy and resources. Examples might include: credentialed coursework (locally or through distance learning), topical courses for certificates, joining cutting edge projects, attending conferences, or staying current in professional reading.

#### **Network of Relationships**

As we have moved to an information and service economy, relationships have become an increasingly critical asset. Not only do our relationships help us accomplish our day-to-day tasks with colleagues, vendors, customers and competitors, these relationships will be the source of information about how fields and industries are evolving. We also have relationships outside of our work environments that may be affiliated with our hobbies, children, and spiritual or community networks. These personal and professional relationships will transcend specific companies, industries and communities. How we interact, respond and connect in all our relationships will impact our present performance and future opportunities. Very little is accomplished in isolation. Networking uncovers more than 70% of current job openings.

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Keeping connected and knowing how to build good relationships are more important than ever before. These skills can be developed in applied communication courses, mastering contact management software, effective listening and genuine desire to get to know people better.

Lifelong learning and relationship management form the backdrop of successful career management. Creating a vision and plan are also essential to guiding informed investment decisions and establishing annual goals. The career vision we establish should be broad enough to be flexible, but specific enough to be actionable. This career vision, built on a profile of our unique traits, directs our choices to develop what we need to be satisfied and be able to successfully contribute in different work environments over the years. To maintain our adaptability and employability, habitually establishing annual learning goals and nurturing our relationships are the keys to productive career management.

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