HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT YOUR NEXT CAREER MOVE? DO YOU NEED TO BROADEN OR UPDATE YOUR WORK EXPERIENCE? ARE YOU CONSIDERING ADDITIONAL TRAINING? ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT CHANGING JOBS? HAVE YOU BEEN IN YOUR POSITION FOR A LONG TIME? HAVE CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGED? IF SO, PLEASE REVIEW THE NEW...
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2. Manager’s Role in Staff Career Development
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Dear Colleagues,

I invite you to explore the new UNFPA Career Guide, created specifically for UNFPA staff and managers. This Guide contains information, tips, and resources to help you think through a wide range of career management and career development topics. This publication is part of UNFPA’s Human Resources Strategy to nurture and retain our talent.

The Career Guide also contains reflections from several UNFPA staff members, who generously provided their insights on career tools or strategies that proved useful for them, individually. I would like to express my appreciation for our career and time, as they shared their stories.

As you may be aware, I have devoted the majority of my career to helping several UN organizations better recruit, retain, develop and manage their talent, and put coherent systems in place to support a skilled global workforce. What some of you may not know is my longstanding passion for helping individuals think through their career options in these complex and often changing organizations. As such, I speak regularly with staff members at all levels about their choices, strategies, and what drives them to do the work that they do. Through my experience, I have developed a holistic career model, which is shared on page 4; it encompasses the factors that I believe are critical to consider when checking the health of one’s career. I hope you will take a moment to study it, and I welcome any feedback that you might provide about its usefulness.

The UN system is unique in the way careers can unfold and progress. That said, it is still subject to many of the same pressures that other public and private organizations face – financial, political, and macroeconomic, while trying to be “leaner” and do more with less, and manage a very diverse workforce. As UNFPA looks toward the future, particularly taking into account the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) development paradigm, there are a number of trends that are affecting whom we recruit and select, as leaders. Several of them are mentioned at the beginning of this Guide, but each new emergency, economic crisis, or political decision has the power to create the need for a different skill set; this provides both career challenges and career opportunities for those of us working in the multilateral sector and it is incumbent upon us to stay “ahead of the curve” when it comes to managing our own careers.

Finally, this Guide is a work in progress. It will be revisited in the future, and amended, to reflect some of the changes described above that are sure to continue to transform the work that we do – and, as a result, the talent that is needed. UNFPA would also like to hear from you, our staff, and gather additional stories about things that have helped you along the way. Feel free to contact me, or any member of the Talent Management Team, if you’d like to share yours.

Wishing you all the best,

Michael Emery
Director, Human Resources
PART I: INTRODUCTION TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Staff members join UNFPA for a variety of reasons. Some have a lifelong ambition to serve the United Nations, and in particular, a specialized agency such as UNFPA that focuses on achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Many may be motivated by their personal values, by the mission of the organization, and to accelerate progress on the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) agenda, and have prepared accordingly. Others have a specialized focus in an area like administration, communications, or IT, and are drawn more broadly to the mission that the UN and its agencies represent.

Employment, which used to be quite secure in the UN System — and still is, comparatively, to many other sectors — is now subject to organizational or programme priorities — and even entire structures — have seen rapid change and/or re-alignment. Resources have been cut or allocated differently. Individuals and organizations are required to do more with less. It requires a great deal of energy to keep up with work in a changing environment, which can make it difficult to focus on your career and professional development.

Recent and ongoing internal changes at UNFPA reflect major changes in the world of work. People are moving from a rigid bureaucratic system (spending your entire career with one company/organization) to a more fluid — and somewhat harder — reality. Member States are demanding better value for their money, more responsiveness, and more efficient, dynamic organizations. (See the “Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals” for more details). One of the effects of this change is often less stability and job security for (e.g., fixed-term and other) staff members, while certain changes may increase opportunities for other staff categories (such as service contract holders).

UNFPA hopes to support its staff members by selecting the best professional development opportunities to support the learning requirements of its changing occupations/professions. But, it is also your job to embrace a proactive approach to your own learning and development, and career management.

A number of factors, noted below, mean that UNFPA (and/or other UN agencies) job requirements evolve over the years.

- Rephrasing of certain jobs due to changing priorities or organizational strategy and goals.
- The phasing out of certain mandated responsibilities and resulting job loss (e.g., outsourcing).
- UN Reform/Post - 2015 agenda
- Funding cuts
- The development of new funding streams that make older occupational areas obsolete.

However, at the same time, individuals who currently are not employed with UNFPA may obtain jobs in the future. Workforce trends show that UNFPA and similar organizations are actively being sought. It is likely that in another 20 years, the staffing table will continue to evolve and will look very different than it does today.

Additionally, UNFPA, like many international organizations, anticipates some significant impact in turnover rates due to a larger number of impending retirements. In sum, the world of work continues to evolve and change rapidly due to a variety of pressures, and UNFPA is no exception.

“My most valuable lesson thus far has been to never stop learning. After working 20+ years in the organization, one would think that I have seen and heard it all. But each day that I spend at different functions and at different postings, I’ve learned more about myself as a professional and about new ways of tackling challenges in my daily work; I learn from colleagues who bring new ideas each day to address the core strategic priorities of the organization; and I learn from the leadership at UNFPA how as an organization we can continue to stay relevant in an ever-changing global landscape. In many careers, I would advise strongly against complacency and instead favor a continuous thirst for knowledge, self-growth and a willingness to push oneself beyond our comfort zones.”

— CARLOS VALENZA, INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS MANAGER, MYANMAR

CURRENT TOPIC OF DISCUSSION: DELIVERING ONE UN REFORM

Current objectives are to “deliver as one” (DaO) and increase coherence among actors in the UN Common System (and even beyond). On the human resources front, changes that can be expected include:

- Efforts to speed up and improve recruitment and selection in order to have the right staff in the right place at the right time;
- An emphasis on results-based management/budgeting and team-based approaches;
- Enhanced staff well-being: work/life initiatives;
- More coherence and harmonization of HR policies and processes;
- More emphasis on the development of new funding streams that make older occupational areas obsolete;
- An emphasis on humanitarian aid;
- More emphasis on rotation and time spent in the field.

Organizations in most sectors - including the UN - now place the burden on individuals to define their own paths in the work environment. Traditional, onwards-and-upwards, seniority-based, meritocracy will be a thing of the past. Instead, individuals should learn the mechanics of the border-less career, a concept that has emerged in all fields.

- Responsibility is on the individual to be the primary driver in managing his/her career and life.
- Organizations should enable learning and development opportunities and tools to engage an individual’s experience and competencies with organizational strategy and goals.
OVERVIEW OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

QUALIFICATIONS
Where do the qualifications that you bring to a job? Do you have the right academic background, interpersonal skills, work experiences, skills? Read vacancy announcements carefully and ask how your background matches the jobs you are most interested in, so that you might plan learning and enrich assignments to fill in any gaps.

DOCUMENTS
What should you bring to a job or organization is how you communicate, or your confidence. Having your documents in order is critical. If your UNFPA application, leadership, reflective of what you do, the impact that you had at all. This is not what you achieved? It may make sense to spend time reviewing your documents if you have had difficulty securing interview, receiving, and networking throughout the UN System.

QUALIFICATIONS
Essential is it important to know how are perceived by others, what your professional reputation looks like, the good and what might need to be addressed. This understanding will likely involve some candid conversations with trusted allies, mentors and managers.

COMPETENCIES
Competencies are a set of skills and attributes that define how you approach work; they sometimes be defined as "soft skills," as they primarily involve team building, negotiation, influencing, teamwork, managing performance, communication, creativity/innovation and the like. What you may be considered a competency as well. Generally, each UN organization has its own competency framework that defines the most important skills and abilities that each organization values.

JOB SATISFYERS
Job satisfiers, sometimes called “motivators,” are aspects of work or the workplace, which provide a sense of fulfillment or satisfaction. The nature of the work is important and affects perceptions of how much one appreciates what one does. Things that happen in the workplace and make them happy include: the opportunity for professional development, personal recognition, promotion and responsibility. Dis satisfiers, are aspects of work or workplace factors, influence job satisfaction and often are outside the control of the individual. Organizational policy and the like. One of work conditions, poor compensation, or a lack of inclusion are factors that may result in much – if not more – than IQ. Consider how you deal with setbacks, conflict, and managing your performance, as well as the performance of others. Think about the empathy you exhibit, and the impact your words and actions have on the people around you. Many staff and managers are unknowingly derailed by a lack of self-awareness, or a distorted view of how others see you. This concept can be linked a lot with reputation as it becomes obvious to others when someone exhibits a lot of IQ – or very little.

LUCK
Luck, unlike momentum, is generally out of your control. Nobody can predict when the stars will align; the opportunity will present itself, or the job vacancy comes up at the time you are actually looking, more the broader UN system is changing, and what skills and experiences might be required for the future.

EQ refers to self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and your ability to self-regulate. It is a very important predictor of workplace success, often at least as much as:

MOMENTUM
Momentum can be defined as the time, effort and energy you spend to build upon progress in career self-management. If you focus on networking, reputation management, investing in learning, you will get exponentially closer to your goals. If you are very passive, you won’t have much momentum. Momentum is in your control. It is the difference between a crawl, a walk, a jog or a sprint, metaphorically speaking.

SUCCESSFUL CAREER APPROACH

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As a former JPO, I realized that a JPO assignment can be a roller coaster ride and a process of transitions. A mentor once told me that, when making a career change, you can change three things: your field of work, the country of your assignment, and the company/organization. I recommended not changing more than two of the three factors at one time. For a JPO, it is often all three, which is a challenge. To manage the transition, it’s important to draw on all support networks available and to reach out to fellow JPOs to learn from their experiences, as well as seek career counselling and coaching in times of doubt.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT AT UNFPA**

**JPOs at UNFPA**

JPOs at UNFPA will benefit from this guide to help them think through their career goals, and how to market their experience whether applying for openings at UNFPA or exploring opportunities with other international development employers. Additionally, JPOs, through a DHR initiative, are afforded career and staff wellbeing counseling during their assignment. These hours, at the discretion of each individual, can be used to consider career options, polish a resume or UN application, seek interview support, or create a job search plan.

**Discussion is kept confidential.**

JPOs also benefit from the resources of the JPO Service Center: www.jposc.org. A portion of this website is dedicated to “Career Management.” JPOs also benefit from the resources of the JPO Service Center: www.jposc.org. A portion of this website is dedicated to “Career Management.”

**STRETCH ASSIGNMENTS**

Stretch assignments are generally short-term projects or tasks that are given to staff members to build their current knowledge or skills level, to avoid career plateau, and to take on challenging projects in addition to their current responsibilities or as a new job. The purpose of stretch assignment is to “stretch” employees’ experience developmentally. A stretch assignment may or may not involve a change in duty station.

To find out more about stretch assignments, please talk to your manager or book a career counseling session. To research for available assignments, visit UNFPA’s (and other) employment websites and search for temporary job postings and announcements for details. Consider networking to share your interest with relevant parties (e.g., DHR, Strategic HR Partner, staff/managers in your target area of interest).

**UNFPA Leadership Pool**

The Leadership Pool, introduced in 2013, was created to strengthen UNFPA’s succession management and ability to attract a diverse, mobile and flexible workforce and to complement the annual rotation exercise. It focuses on the roles of Representative, Deputy Representative and International Operations Manager, and is open to internal and external applicants.

Candidates applying for one or more of these job types competes in a comprehensive assessment process (carried out by a special external provider), and, if successful, become a member of UNFPA’s Leadership Pool. A pre-assessed group of candidates used as the source for filling future international rotational post vacancies within UNFPA.

After being assessed for one or more Leadership Pool job types, candidates will benefit from individualized career advice and tailored development opportunities to enhance their readiness to assume leadership posts.

Members of the Leadership Pool are expected to serve in a variety of functions and locations, including crisis countries and non-family duty stations, so candidates who apply for the Pool should be ready to take up a post in any of these types of locations.

Once or twice a year, candidates will be invited to visit UNFPA’s employment page and follow the instructions provided for completing the application through e-recruit. In the overall selection of candidates, the aim is to strike a balance between addressing the current organizational needs as well as focusing on gender balance, geographical representation, internal vs external, national to international, technical to managerial and general services to programmatic perspectives.

Those who do not make it into the assessment process in one round have other opportunities in the future to apply again. UNFPA staff can email any questions related to the leadership pool to leadership.pool@unfpa.org.
Opportunities for learning and growth are sometimes presented when least expected. For me, it came in a nomination to serve on the Rebuttal Panel. Since I did not have an HR background, I had reservations, but I thought of the saying, “If you’re comfortable where you are, then you are not growing.” Serving on the Panel is challenging and can be tiring. It stretches you outside your comfort zone, since it calls for additional work, and because you realize that all parties are looking to this face to deliver these services. I gained a new appreciation for the issues DHR is faced with and encountered a tremendous respect for managers and supervisors, as well as the support staff they manage.

Everyone has someone to report to, and we are all valuable and have a place in the organization. The value of serving with colleagues from diverse areas and levels cannot be overstated; on the part of the UN system, while still being attached to UNFPA and working to advance its mandate. The learning curve has been steep and the professional growth has been accelerating.

I cannot over-emphasize how great an experience it is to discover another group to solve an issue that can have a significant impact on their careers. It’s an opportunity, which carries a great responsibility.

For the past two years, I have been seconded to the UN’s Peacebuilding Support Office, to work on youth and gender in peacebuilding policies and programmes. It is essential if one wants to move from a national to international professional position in UNFPA. I worked in a country office and missed this global level vision, which helped me appreciate even more the qualities and vision of the people who lead our organization. I worked in a country office and missed this global level vision, which helped me appreciate even more the qualities and vision of the people who lead our organization.

My experience on a three-month detail assignment at HQ has been very beneficial for the continuation of my career in UNFPA. It allowed me to better understand the needs and the realities of my organization, gave me a better understanding of the holistic and strategic priorities of UNFPA, and helped me appreciate even more the qualities and vision of the people who lead our organization. I worked in a country office and missed this global level vision, which is essential if one wants to move from a national to international professional position in UNFPA.

For more information about personnel policies and procedures of detail assignment, please visit here: http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/admin-resource/DHR_Detail%20Assignment_0.pdf
1. KNOW YOURSELF AND FIND YOUR DIRECTION

SELF ASSESSMENT

As noted earlier, the first step in initiating a job search or reviewing your professional development options, involves looking inward and a bit self-assessment. Through self-assessment will help you identify the skills, strengths and competencies that you offer. Once identified, they should be featured in your curriculum vitae (CV) and/or other work history to provide potential employers with an indication of your capabilities to perform the required functions. This section will walk you through briefly number of the elements of self-assessment. Appendix 1 – will allow you to derive a little deeper.

- CREATE YOUR OWN OPPORTUNITIES – put yourself in a position for good things to happen to you.
- BE POSITIVE AND FOCUS ON RESULTS – those who get results get ahead.
- EARN A REPUTATION for being dependable, committed and professional in everything you do.
- SEEK OUT NEW EXPERIENCES and SKILLS for continued learning and development.

PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Accomplishments are achievements that were valued by your previous employers that demonstrate your abilities. Although teamwork is a critical skill, it is important to highlight your individual contribution to the work performed. Doing ordinary, expected tasks exceptionally well or working under pressure to meet tight deadlines are accomplishments and should not be overlooked.

Appendix 1: Self Assessment: Professional Accomplishments is the first of a series of self assessments to help guide you through this somewhat challenging exercise. It involves listing professional accomplishments and analyzing why they were important.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES, WORKING STYLE

In Appendix 2, you will find a list of skills and abilities arranged by type and another by broad area. Select those skills that you have acquired over time. Please note that this list is not all-inclusive, so you may wish to include in additional skills and abilities in the blanks provided.

You may have skills that apply to other occupational groups and work situations, these are called transferable skills. Identifying these may help you envisage job opportunities in occupational groups that you had not previously considered. Another set of skills, which are developed through your personal traits, can also contribute to your career development. See Appendix 3.

WORK VALUES

Work values are vital to success and satisfaction in your job and during your career. They are the intrinsic or extrinsic rewards that come with every job. They may not be listed in the job description, but you should think about them as carefully as you would job responsibilities, hours and salary. Examples of work values include: helping others, working autonomously, working in teams, being viewed as an expert and having stability. Please refer to Appendix 4 for a more comprehensive list of work values, along with an exercise to help you clarify these as part of your self-assessment.

Rather than thinking about what you should want in a job, think about what you cannot live without in terms of your work values, and on what you may be willing to compromise. Be flexible and honest with yourself. Different jobs – and sectors – offer different rewards, so think about the best combination(s). The failure to acknowledge work values can result in lack of job satisfaction.

COMPETENCIES AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

UNFPA’s competency framework defines the key values, behaviors, skills and attitudes required for the delivery of our mission and because of our evolving organization, this new framework supports a better alignment with UNFPA’s mission and strategic direction.

The professional competencies define HOW we conduct ourselves in the organization. These competencies are required of all staff regardless of their level of responsibility. The core competencies are as follow:

- Achieving results
- Being accountable
- Developing and applying professional expertise/business acumen
- Thinking analytically and strategically
- Working in teams/managing ourselves and our relationships
- Communicating for impact

Since most organizations have developed their own competency frameworks – which all slightly vary – it is important to bear in mind that these competencies exist formally and impact, among other things, employment offers, interviews and performance management systems. You can find UNFPA’s revised competency framework in the DHR Microsite.

More information on competency-based interviewing can be found in the section on Interviewing.
Assuming you have done a skills assessment (see section above), you likely have identified “development (or skills) gaps” - areas for improvement. Examples include: new credentials you would like to pursue, such as a university degree or certification, skills/management training, practical experience in a new area, or language and computer skills.

As your prepare for your next move, you may wish to fill those gaps to become more competitive, either within UNFPA or with another employer. At UNFPA, as throughout the UN Common System, a commitment to learning and development is a highly valued competency that is important for staff at all levels. Demonstrating a willingness to learn, stay ahead of trends in your field and remain competitive in an ever-changing marketplace is often noted by hiring managers.

In performance reviews, it is an excellent idea to ask your manager’s opinion about areas that he/she believes you should concentrate on developing. Ideally, your manager, as one of your “career coaches,” will raise this with you, but if he/she doesn’t, it’s a valid topic for you to raise. You can do it in a formal review, or you can schedule a time to meet with your manager and describe how you could benefit from feedback about your performance. UNFPA Talent Management Branch can help to advise you on how to best broach this topic you can also do a web search on “soliciting feedback.”

Although “reputation management” is often discussed in the context of corporate communications or public relations, managing your reputation is an important - if often overlooked - aspect of your career that can have serious impact on your career path and job search. As part of the self-assessment process, it makes sense to do a bit of research and exploration into your professional reputation: how you are viewed by others in the workplace.

Reputation per se is somewhat intangible because it may vary, sometimes widely, for the same individual and it can change over time.

When I joined the Population Fund, I realized the importance of the analysis of demographic data to understand population dynamics in any society. I knew I needed to invest in myself. I was very fortunate that my supervisor at the time was a former Dean of the School of Demography. He was instrumental in supporting my studies while simultaneously working at UNFPA. I completed my Masters’ Degree in Population Studies, for which I thank UNFPA for supporting me to achieve what I never thought I could do in my working life.

-GRACIELA PUEBLA, SECURITY ASSOCIATE, OFFICE OF SECURITY COORDINATOR

Description of someone’s reputation can range from negative to superlative, and may be formed based on repeated contact or through a single incident. Other people’s assessment of your reputation may be accurate and fair - or not. Reputations can be damaged (by mistakes or accusations - false or otherwise), but they also can be repaired.

Your reputation is key to managing your personal career development. Whether it be how you interact with other people directly or your online persona – how others perceive you will have an impact on your career.

-MAIJA HADZIC, HR ANALYST, HQ

UNFPA PAD - AN OPPORTUNITY TO OBTAIN FEEDBACK FROM SUPERVISORS AND COLLEAGUES

One way to get a sense of what others think of you is simply to ask, but this requires an open and honest relationship as well as confidence, tact and an awareness of cultural nuances. A more formal way of giving or obtaining this feedback that is used in a number of international organizations - and in the private sector – is through an assessment called a “360° evaluation,” which is often part of management development programmes. Through such a process, opinions, usually through a confidential, on-line survey, are sought from superiors, peers, subordinates, and self to provide an all-around view of the individual concerned – and then shared with that individual. A 360° feedback exercise can be incredibly valuable, but sometimes it is difficult to hear. However, if you are committed to your own professional development, such information is invaluable.

People who are overly focused on keeping the boss happy at the expense of relationships with their peers or subordinates - may not exist in a 360° feedback exercise. Although it is criticism to keep the chain of command satisfied, staff members will always consider the impact of decisions and requests on their colleagues and team members.

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BUILDING A GREAT PROFESSIONAL REPUTATION


Making the UN “fit for purpose” for the new sustainable development agenda,

John Hendra, UNSSC, Dec. 2014

http://slideplayer.com/slide/3032696/

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Addressing Development Gaps

Additional Resources

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2. MANAGER'S ROLE IN STAFF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

THE CRITICAL ROLE OF THE MANAGER/SUPERVISOR

As a manager or supervisor, it is expected that you will support the career development of your staff members. In fact, most UN organizations have at least one competency that refers to a manager’s ability to empower others. One aspect of empowering others is to help nurture each team member’s career development.

On the next page, please find a questionnaire that will help you, as a manager, guide a career conversation with your staff. This can be an exercise to do, as well, for staff members taking time to answer these questions before an impending career conversation can help you to focus your thoughts.

SOME BEST PRACTICES INCLUDE:

- Providing corrective feedback and guidance
- Coaching and mentoring
- Providing opportunities for job enrichment or “stretch” assignments
- Completing all aspects of the performance appraisal cycle conscientiously and in a timely manner
- Analyzing the development needs of staff
- Encouraging staff to take advantage of learning and training opportunities

The critical role of the manager/supervisor

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On the next page, please find a questionnaire that will help you, as a manager, guide a career conversation with your staff. This can be an exercise to do, as well, for staff members taking time to answer these questions before an impending career conversation can help you to focus your thoughts.

SOME BEST PRACTICES INCLUDE:

- Providing corrective feedback and guidance
- Coaching and mentoring
- Providing opportunities for job enrichment or “stretch” assignments
- Completing all aspects of the performance appraisal cycle conscientiously and in a timely manner
- Analyzing the development needs of staff
- Encouraging staff to take advantage of learning and training opportunities

My time at headquarters gave me the chance to benefit from the coaching and highly effective mentoring of a senior manager, who really invested in giving advice for my career development. He helped me develop my network at HQ and enhance my technical expertise. I received tips on how to develop my professional network, on work requirements and quality standards, how to prepare for interviews, etc. My time in HQ, paired with mentoring and interaction with colleagues, gave me a new perspective on what to do next. My mentor, through brainstorming meetings, feedback, email and Skype exchanges with colleagues in other regions, and my participation in key intergovernmental meetings at the UN Secretariat showed how the coaching of field colleagues in HQ can help their career development.

-CHEIKHMBENGUE, ASSISTANT REPRESENTATIVE, SENEGAL

1. How do you feel about your career at UNFPA to date?
2. What career opportunities would you like to be considered for?
3. Why do you think this career aspiration is realistic?
4. Which areas for improvement do you believe should be developed to better qualify or prepare you for your desired career path?
5. What development experiences could be provided by the organization to prepare you for your desired career path?
6. What challenges/development opportunities could be provided to you in your current assignment to further your development?
7. What is your geographic mobility? Are you willing to relocate to realize your career ambitions? Are there any limitations or time limits?
3. CAREER PLATEAUS

Many people experience a situation at some point during their career of becoming “stuck” with little or no ability to move - laterally or up the career ladder. This can happen for a variety of factors – fewer senior positions, lack of training/qualifications, change of office structure, or being “siloed.”

Although this will vary according to individuals, job satisfaction tends to be higher when there is a learning curve and a sense of purpose. After a few years on a job, individuals know the work well and there may be a drop in job satisfaction. The information below aims to raise awareness and improve the understanding of career plateaus in order to assist staff and supervisors to better manage these professional challenges.

WHAT IS A CAREER PLATEAU?

Career plateaus occur when:

- The likelihood of additional hierarchical promotion is remote
- A situation exists where there are few internal opportunities for support and development for one of those individuals
- Mentors provide guidance, help interpret events, and give feedback and ideas to their mentee – i.e., the person being mentored - about professional next steps, challenging work situations and ideas for the future. They can be a great source of support.

You may find a mentor within UNFPA – or already have someone outside of the organization whom you consider a mentor. The advantage of having a mentor or mentors, within your organization is that they can offer advice on navigating its politics – the “unspoken rules,” as well as give useful career management. They can also introduce you to people and widen your network. Having a mentor outside of your place of work can introduce you to broader contacts and trends in your field of interest and to an objective perspective that is not coloured by the same organizational culture.

The mentor plays an important role in the mentee/mentor relationship. As a mentee, you must come to the process being open to receiving feedback, and take responsibility for your own growth and development. It is the mentor’s job to listen, offer advice and support – not to manage your career for you. You certainly should come to the relationship with an open mind and think on your feet. It is important to see your mentor as an important resource to help solve your problems. This may sound obvious, but mentors sometimes complain about poor (or no) follow-up from their mentees, so it is important to stay in touch. Let your mentor know when you did follow his/her advice and share your successes.

KINDS OF CAREER PLATEAUS

- Structural plateau - when you have progressed to a point where the organizational structure prevents you from moving up. Non-availability of positions happens in most organizations sooner or later.
- Life plateau - when you have mastered your job and there is little control over the forces that create a unique opportunity to take on studies (pursue coursework, certification, or a degree), external (e.g. family or personal) commitments or projects - the kind of things that one simply wouldn’t be able to take on during an intense work period, such as a first year on a new job.

- Contribution plateau - when you have mastered your job and have limited learning that develops competencies and add value; the inability to discharge responsibilities in higher grades; the inability to respond to changing situations or to keep up with technological changes. Individuals have specific contribution-based plateaus; if you let this happen, your value in the job market can decline rapidly.

- Managed reputation plateau - when you are perceived or actual professional stagnation.

- Career plateau when individuals are more profound and go well beyond personal preferences.

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PART II: CAREER MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT

1. PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING AND THE JOB SEARCH

HOW TO BEGIN

Whatever your reason for starting, a job search usually involves a series of actions. However, in the event of involuntary job change (e.g., post abolition or rotation exercise), you should probably begin by doing some assessment, both internal (section 1) and one of your financial and personal situation, to consider all factors. You may then begin preparing for the job search per se, which can be broken down into a series of steps.

After your self-assessment, you will need to begin to research potential opportunities outside of work. A plateau is okay – as long as it does not last for a very long time or does not “feel wrong” at the time. Too much time spent in a plateau can be both psychologically and professionally damaging.

These are the most common mechanisms to find a job:

- Social networks (family and friends)
- Professional networks (current/former colleagues, professional societies and associations, including alumni associations)
- Social Media
- Initiating contact with new potential employers
- Responding to vacancies (VAs)

HOW TO AVOID OR ESCAPE A CAREER PLATEAU

There is no magic solution to avoiding career plateaus – they are a part of life and work. And, as noted above, sometimes being in a plateau can be a positive thing. For example, if you are raising young children or taking care of an ailing or elderly relative, it may be necessary to take a break. Sometimes there will be extra energy from work to explore learning with some interest or passion. Sometimes there is no energy for during a challenging period at work.

Sometimes you can take advantage of a “flat” period in work to explore learning opportunities (training or credentials) or personal interests (hobbies, books, or projects, for example) – things for which you simply don’t have the time or energy for during a challenging period at work. Seek a career move: A change in the specialized work you do in your organization can make career development come alive.

HOW TO COPE

It may be helpful to:

Reaching a plateau can also be the result of certain behaviours that you may not be aware of. For example, you may not have “cheered up” your style, perhaps as a result of the fact that you have stopped learning, or are in a situation that is unsatisfying, or simply have not had a career move in a long time. It is important to be honest and ask yourself these admittedly difficult questions to see if you are struggling with any of the following:

- Has it been difficult to adapt to the changes currently occurring in your working environment?
- Has it been difficult to accept criticism?
- When did you last undertake a self-development activity?
- Has it been difficult to accept support or feedback?
- Does the idea of going to work leave you weary or have other negative connotations?
- Do you seem to experience conflicts regularly at work?

While these actions may not necessarily resolve plateau situations, they will normally increase overall levels of satisfaction.

USING YOUR TIME TO PURSUE OTHER INTERESTS

Sometimes you can take advantage of a plateau to pursue other interests.

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While these actions may not necessarily resolve plateau situations, they will normally increase overall levels of satisfaction.

Networking typically does get easier with practice. Like anything, some people are naturals and others will never enjoy it. Nonetheless, those who do well and incorporate it into their world of work often benefit by having better job performance, more opportunities, and, ultimately, more satisfying careers.
STAYING ON TRACK
WITH YOUR JOB SEARCH

It takes time, effort, creativity, networking, perseverance – and a bit of luck to be selected for the right position.

VIRTUAL NETWORKING

Many networking these days takes place over social media. While nothing replaces a face-to-face meeting, the reality of international work means that it is often impossible to connect in person with many of the individuals with whom you’d like to speak. The advent of social networks like communities of practice for career and professional groups, blogs, and sites like Yammer, Twitter and of course, LinkedIn, have, in important ways, changed the way people network.

That said, not everyone uses them wisely. There are many articles on-line – all you have to do is a Google search – “usingsocialnetworks to job hunt” or “effectively using LinkedIn/Twitter/etc.” to get advice on how to best make use of each tool.

Much of the etiquette discussed above also applies to online networking. You don’t want to be too pushy when posting comments or asking people to join your networks.

RESOURCES:

Taking Networking to the Next Level: Getting Your Name Out There http://www.quintcareers.com/next-level_career_networking.html

How to Use Networking to Find a Job: Tips and Advice for Networking When You’re Job Hunting http://jobsearch.about.com/cs/networking/a/networking.htm

DON’Ts

● DON’T “bother” people you do not know, or even those you do. Being aggressive and insensitive in your networking may cause more damage than not networking at all.

● DON’T ignore nuances, such as local protocols for respect, gift giving (not permitted in the UN System), timeframe, etc.

● DON’T “oversell” yourself. There is a fine line between confidence and overt self-promotion or arrogance. (It can be helpful to do a “reality check” to make sure your sense of self aligns with others’ view of your skills and abilities.)

DOs

● DO ask for information and advice (not for a job!).

● DO dress professionally and be on time and prepared for your appointment/meeting.

● DO make sure you get name/spelling correct in all correspondence.

● DO remember that networking is reciprocal. If you can do something nice or useful for the interviewee, do so (e.g. send an article or recommend an event). Use tact and think strategically.

● DO promptly thank the individual for his/hers time and assistance.

DOs AND DON’ts

Follow these tips to be more appropriate and professional when contacting someone for a meeting to discuss your career.

DOs

1. When you reach out to someone on a site like LinkedIn, be sure to personalize your invitation, unless you know that person very well. In other words, avoid the, “I’d like to add you to my network on LinkedIn,” message that automatically pops up, and add a short individualized note.

2. Be careful with what you post on social media. Facebook, LinkedIn, and your name are likely to be “Googled” if you reach out to someone via these fora.

3. Stay active! It is not just enough to create a LinkedIn or Twitter account. Use it, posting periodically, commenting on others posts. But, don’t go overboard. Just like with personal networking, hearing from someone too frequently can be a “turn off” as well.

4. Take a professional headshot for your profile(s). You can do this for free, but stay away from photos that are too recreational.

5. Take time to create a holistic, thoughtful profile. Remember, this represents who you are to the outside, professional world. An incomplete, or sloppy, profile won’t leave a good impression.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Five Strategies for Leveraging Your Online Social Networks http://www.mentoringgroup.com/html/articles/mentee_41.htm

See page 16.

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See page 16.
INTRODUCTION
Preparing written applications for jobs within the UN System and other international organizations takes patience, a bit of research, and a lot of hard work, as each agency, fund, or programme has its own application rules.

The good news is that most guidelines for creating strong written applications within UN System organizations have been harmonized. Even then, each has separate e-recruitment systems and/or applications. While each country has a slightly different approach to CVs, cover notes and job applications, the system of international organizations has adopted a model that stresses clear presentation of your qualifications and achievements that is results-oriented and concise. This mirrors a trend in the larger international community, but it is not as easy to achieve in NGOs, foundations or other large public organizations.

CV OR RÉSUMÉ?
Utilization of the word CV and résumé varies regionally. In North America, a résumé is a brief (one to three pages) summary of your Abilities, Education, Experience and Skills. It is a critical tool in evaluating each candidate’s qualifications for the job. In Europe, Asia and Australia, CVs are longer (three to ten pages) and more detailed. In addition to education and academic qualifications, CVs also include a master’s or doctoral thesis/dissertation details, publications, professional associations, presentations, awards, honours and certificates.

In most of the rest of the world (Africa, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia), CV is used in lieu of “résumé.” In North America, however, CVs are used primarily by the scientific, think tank, and academic community, for example, by researchers, doctors and professors.

See Appendix 5: Curriculum Vitae for a sample of a CV in English.
EDUCATION AND TRAINING

INFORMATION REQUIRED ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING
Name of qualification received, with full name of institution, and its location (city, country) e.g. degree (BSc, M.A., PhD) or trade certificate (BEP/M) and field of study (e.g. public health, security, IT).
Honours received (e.g. Phi Beta Kappa, cum laude)
Month and year obtained (or expected)
Optional: Dissertation, thesis or concours académique (if any) and Important courses (only important for those with limited work experience).

WORK OR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
Include: full-time and part-time jobs, paid or unpaid, internships and volunteer work. Expand on those job experiences most relevant to the job for which you are applying.

Note: Which goes first, education or work experience? Those with a work history should place experience first. Students and recent graduates should highlight their studies by putting education first and include relevant courses.

For each entry, include the following:

**FULL NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION**
Division, Office or Branch
**POSITION OR TITLE**
**DATES OF EMPLOYMENT (MONTH AND YEAR)**
**LOCATION OF EMPLOYER**
City, state/province/region/district, country – as appropriate
**DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES OR MAIN TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
Results or outcomes at work (i.e. accomplishments)*

*If these two fields are blended, the description for each job should be approximately one paragraph long and describe both your responsibilities and accomplishments.

Note: Since the first person (I/my) is assumed, avoid using “I” and “my.” Avoid also redundant phrases such as, “was responsible for...” or “My duties included...” Enjoy it as an opportunity to communicate the details of your accomplishments. Repeat your job titles in the description of duties; “As Senior Administrative Assistant, I...”

TIPS FOR WRITTEN APPLICATIONS

- Carefully read the vacancy announcement (VA) before you apply for a job.
- Highlight your major achievements.
- Fill in all of the fields in e-recruit; don’t leave any blanks.
- The motivation letter should be concise and targeted.
- Carefully proofread your cover letter and work history documents (e-recruit profile, CV, P-11, etc.).

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Always begin with the highest level of formal education or training achieved, such as apprenticeships, trade certificates, college or university. Proceed in reverse chronological order, i.e. begin with the most recent learning experience and work backwards. List the:

- Active voice – often from the vacancy announcement to show you understand what is required (and numbers to make each description as specific and concise as possible. List your most substantial contributions first and work backwards to the more routine tasks. Include the purpose and outcome of each project. Wherever possible, use numbers, percentages, financial data (in easily understood currencies, e.g. € or $) to quantify your accomplishments.

Use active voice in simple present or past tense, as appropriate. Avoid mixing verb tenses and nouns to describe your duties. Note the table below, along with Appendix 7 for more information and guidance.
CAREER GUIDE FOR UNFPA STAFF MEMBERS

Name the award, issuing organization and date, e.g. UNFPA Award for 20 years of Service (2012); International Peacekeeper Award, United Nations Police Division, 2011.

List academic awards, scholarships, fellowships or honours in a similar fashion, e.g.:
- Erasmus Mundus Scholar, 1992; Harvard South Africa Fellowship Program (HSAFP), 2003;

COMMUNITY SERVICE
List your participation in community activities to demonstrate your volunteer spirit and caring for others, e.g.:
- Crossroads, Entebbe, Uganda (August 2014) or Steering Committee Member, NGO Gender Group, Yangon, Myanmar, 2013 – present.

ACADEMIC, PROFESSIONAL OR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
Indicate membership in any association in which you hold an office or are currently a member:
- Academic organizations, e.g. Phi Beta Kappa
- Professional organizations, e.g. UN Staff Counsellors Network, UNSSC, 2013 – present or Honorary Life Member, Brazilian Bar Association (Membre Honorário Vitalício, Ordem dos Advogados do Brasil – http://www.obar.org.br/), 2009 – present.
- Community organizations, e.g. Centre Régional d’Information et de Prévention du SIDA (CRIPS), Paris, 2008 – 11.

LANGUAGES AND/OR TRAVEL
List languages and indicate (accurately) your level of proficiency. Mention any certification, e.g. DELF (French language) or UN Language Proficiency Exam (LPE – and the year it was issued).

Note: Be prepared to demonstrate language or other skills (written, oral or spoken) at an interview.

Include travel if it is relevant to the employer. Although travel to a region is no substitute for work experience or language ability, it can be a useful addition.

REFERENCES
If references are specifically requested in the vacancy announcement, include the complete name, title, organization name, address, telephone number(s) and email address(es) for each. Otherwise, keep the same information (always updated) on a separate sheet entitled “References,” either to be attached or submitted upon request.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

SPECIFIC TIPS FOR UNFPA STAFF MEMBERS

It is recommended that UNFPA staff members update their personal history forms before a rotation exercise, a leadership pool application, or simply applying for a job internally. This is important because human resources staff and hiring managers are reviewing many job applications, and profiles that are out of date give the impression of a lazy or “sloppy” about your professional application. Staff members should have all papers in order to create the impression of a positive, motivated applicant.

The writing style for online profiles/work histories and Personal History Forms is very similar to what was described in the section on résumés and CVs above – i.e. concise, precise language, using an active voice and active verbs. In Appendix 7, the active verbs for creating a strong UNFPA application and CV are listed in detail.

COVERING (LETTERS)/ MOTIVATIONAL STATEMENTS

When staff members apply internally at UNFPA, they submit a letter explaining their motivation with their application. This letter is one of the first documents read by DHR and the hiring manager you are interested in the post. It be temporary, a full-time position, or a leadership pool application. This section will help you think about how to do this with a strategic mindset. It will also be useful if applying for jobs outside of UNFPA.

A cover letter is an essential companion to your CV when submitting applications to prospective employers. A well written cover letter or motivational statement allows you to express what you have to offer in a concise and targeted way and helps to secure an interview.

Targeted, well-crafted letters aimed at individuals, companies or organizations that you carefully have researched are effective.

When preparing customized letters, focus on your strengths and integrate them. Submitting a poorly-drafted letter and/or CV provides the Recruitment Officer/Hiring Manager with weak grounds to eliminate your candidate. Avoid this by following these tips:

1. Send the letter to the appropriate individual (i.e. a decision-maker for your particular job). Use the phone, website or your network to verify this in advance, wherever possible.

2. Verify mailing information. If not sending to a generic roster, verify that the person to whom you are sending the appropriate addresses. (Gender (Mr/Ms), name and correct spelling, title, address, internal/external mail code and post office box.

3. Highlight your accomplishments, relevant experience and skills that relate to their specific office/ department/programme/organization.

4. Limit your letter size to one, ideally, un-crowded page (11-12 point font) of no more than five paragraphs. (Although many organizations use online formats, these size guidelines still apply; UNFPA limits size of motivational statement to 500 characters.)

5. Relate your skills and competencies to the needs of the target organization/work unit as defined in the vacancy announcement (VA) and indicate how you can bring the most added value.

6. Use space wisely and bullets to make your points.

7. Omit salary information – past or desired (unless specifically requested).

8. Always state why you are interested in the position – try to delve a bit deeper, but do not use more than one or two sentences.

9. Conclude by thanking the reader for his or her consideration.

10. Proofread, proofread and proofread! Have a trusted friend or colleague or your job-search partner proofread as well. The value of fresh, critical reading eyes cannot be overemphasized.

Note: Bear in mind that these recommendations are generic in nature. It is best to research the targeted employment market to ensure that your application is tailored to the particular position in question (e.g. a brief written cover letter or a photograph on the CV are preferred in some countries but strongly discouraged in others).

10 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COVER LETTERS

1. Ensure that your letter is targeted and relevant to the vacancy.

2. Conclude by thanking the reader for his or her consideration.

3. Have a trusted friend or colleague or your job-search partner proofread as well. The value of fresh, critical reading eyes cannot be overemphasized.

4. Always state why you are interested in the position – try to delve a bit deeper, but do not use more than one or two sentences.

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8. Questions on salary history might come up in a (non-UN-System) interview: you should prepare accordingly.

9. All personal information and photographs are preferred in some countries but strongly discouraged in others.

10. The mandatory items in your application and verify your information with a number of individuals (any internet site) so you may answer with a relevant salary range.
REFERENCES

UNFPA MAY CARRY OUT A VALIDITY CHECK FOR:

CV DISTORTION

It is estimated that up to 50 percent of all CVs contain deliberate distortions! If you detect these in the case of an applicant, the next step is to ensure that you are not the one responsible. Details about the position(s)

1. Information regarding who might be contacting them (if available)
2. Information about the position in which you are interviewing
3. Requirements. Prospective employers will usually seek the following information:
   a. Work experience, including dates, duration, and description of responsibilities
   b. Education and training, including levels of education, institutions attended, and dates of graduation
   c. Professional certifications or licenses
   d. Honors, awards, and professional affiliations
   e. Any relevant personal or family connections, if applicable

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Be able to produce certificates, diplomas or other certification for all degrees or studies. It is also essential that the institution issuing the certificate, diploma or certificate, be legitimate. As a UNFPA staff member, you probably already have experienced an interview within the Organization. If you have recently been through an interview, you are aware that UN System interviews tend to be panel interviews, involving more than one assessor. UNFPA uses a competency-based interview format. If you have not been through an interview in a while, it is important not only to refresh your skills, but also to familiarize yourself with CBI, as this is the way most interviews are conducted throughout the UN System.

INTERVIEWING

INTERVIEWING TIPS

As a UNFPA staff member, you probably already have experienced an interview within the Organization. If you have recently been through an interview, you are aware that UN System interviews tend to be panel interviews, involving more than one assessor. UNFPA uses a competency-based interview format. If you have not been through an interview in a while, it is important not only to refresh your skills, but also to familiarize yourself with CBI, as this is the way most interviews are conducted throughout the UN System.

A final point:

Let your references know you appreciate their help and support. Thank them by keeping them informed of your progress; this will also help to maintain the relationship for the future.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

http://www.theladders.com/career-advice/how-to-write-cover-letter
COMPETENCY-BASED INTERVIEWS

As noted above, most UN organizations – including UNFPA – use competency-based interviews (CBIs) to assess potential candidates. In these interviews, employers use questions to probe for information about your past experience that is relevant to several competencies. A CBI requires candidates to demonstrate that they have a particular skill or “key competency” the organization/company seeks. Candidates will be asked to respond by using situation examples from their life, ideally from previous work experiences, to illustrate their personality, skill set and individual competencies to the interviewer. For example, the interviewer might probe your experience in teamwork by asking about past successes or challenges in this area. It is common for the panel to ask follow-up, probing questions to explore your answer in greater detail. This is called “drilling down.” Candidate responses typically are scored for each competency on a rating scale that assesses how specifically the candidate addressed the question, the relevancy of the example, etc.

“Competency”, as discussed in Chapter 1, refers to a combination of knowledge, skills, attributes and behaviours that are directly related to successful performance on the job. Depending upon the responsibilities of the job and the working environment, you might be asked to describe a time that required problem-solving skills, adaptability, leadership, conflict resolution, multi-tasking, initiative or working in a stressful environment.

Competency-based interviews yield excellent information for a potential employer, but they can be difficult for candidates who have not prepared. This video by Director of Human Resources Michael Emery is a great place to start when preparing for a competency-based interview. More tips follow below.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

You will have only one opportunity to make that all-important first impression. Thus, it is important to remember the following elements of a strong first impression.

TIPS FOR A STRONG FIRST IMPRESSION

Be polite and respectful of everyone you encounter upon arrival. You are making an impression on each person you meet, from the security guard to the receptionist to future colleagues – not just the interviewers and hiring manager.

Physical Presence. Dress appropriately for the organization where you are interviewing. When in doubt, dress conservatively. Be sure clothes are clean and pressed, and be extra aware of your personal hygiene (i.e. bath/shower/shave, have clean hair, polished shoes, use deodorant, and wear no, or only very light, perfume or cologne). Do not smoke or chew gum. Ensure your posture is neither too relaxed nor too tense – try to be confident, open and friendly.

Movements and Mannerisms. Use natural gestures; try not to fidget or fiddle with objects such as a pen, glasses or jewellery. Move naturally, avoiding looking stiff or awkward.

Manner of Speaking. Make sure you can be heard; be aware of the interviewer’s reaction to your voice. Avoid monotone, which makes you sound listless, and avoid slang, colloquial expressions, or other informal speech.

Behaviour/Demeanour. Convey an appropriate amount of enthusiasm, warmth and sincerity. Be culturally aware and adjust to local customs. Prior to the interview, be mindful of your behaviour in the waiting room. Do not, for example, use your mobile phone. (Turn it off or at least turn off the ringer).

Communication Skills. Listen carefully to the entire question and before you respond and think before you speak. Limit yourself to answering the question asked. Clarify any questions you do not fully understand before answering by asking the interviewer to restate the question or trying to restate the question. It is acceptable to take a few seconds in silence to formulate your response.

I found it useful to review my PADS when I was stumped for an example. Reading through supervisors’ comments and MRF reports helped me pinpoint when I had exemplified proficiency in the competency. Because I was switching careers streams, I also found it useful to consult with the staff member who was in the role, as well as with colleagues working closely with that person, in order to get a feel for the post, what was expected, and how I could fit in.

-SALINA MAURO, ADMIN/FINANCE ASSOCIATE, PROGRAMME DIVISION

TIPS FOR A STRONG FIRST IMPRESSION

Be polite and respectful of everyone you encounter upon arrival. You are making an impression on each person you meet, from the security guard to the receptionist to future colleagues – not just the interviewers and hiring manager.

Physical Presence. Dress appropriately for the organization where you are interviewing. When in doubt, dress conservatively. Be sure clothes are clean and pressed, and be extra aware of your personal hygiene (i.e. bath/shower/shave, have clean hair, polished shoes, use deodorant, and wear no, or only very light, perfume or cologne). Do not smoke or chew gum. Ensure your posture is neither too relaxed nor too tense – try to be confident, open and friendly.

Movements and Mannerisms. Use natural gestures; try not to fidget or fiddle with objects such as a pen, glasses or jewellery. Move naturally, avoiding looking stiff or awkward.

Manner of Speaking. Make sure you can be heard; be aware of the interviewer’s reaction to your voice. Avoid monotone, which makes you sound listless, and avoid slang, colloquial expressions, or other informal speech.

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Keep your answers brief (two to three minutes), specific, work-related and to the point.

- Maintain reasonable eye contact when answering and try to stay calm and cool.
- Do not, under any circumstances, make up an example — interviewers can usually tell if you are fabricating, and the follow-up questions (“drilling down”) are likely to give you away.
- Be sure to provide context for your example – describe the situation or challenge, then what you did about it (the action). Conclude your story with the outcome, or result, of your action. This is known as a “C.A.R.” or “S.A.R.” story. Practice your CAR/SAR stories in advance by writing them out on index cards.
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- If you look a text during screening, they might ask similar questions to see if your responses are consistent.

Tips for Success

- Be confident. Accentuate what you have to offer.
- Plan for possibly negotiating a salary or benefits (where relevant).
- Probe tactfully to discover information about salary or benefits (where relevant).
- If you can, find out in advance what the employer or to address the company’s possible reservations about you.
- An employer or to address the company’s possible reservations about you.
- Be prepared for anything: to relax with a serious advantage – for both interviewers and interviewees – global, around-the-clock access. This allows interviewers to meet and interview candidates from anywhere in the world.
- Interviews using Skype, BlueJeans or other video collaboration software have largely replaced video interviews available online.

Your responses require reflection and organization. To maximize your responses:

- Anticipate the transferrable skills and personal qualities that are required for the job. Competencies are often listed clearly on the vacancy announcement.
- Review your application, which should be filled with potential examples to share.
- Reflect on your own professional, volunteer, educational and personal experience to develop brief stories that highlight these skills and qualities in you.
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- Reflect on your own professional, volunteer, educational and personal experience to develop brief stories that highlight these skills and qualities in you. You should have a story for each of the competencies on your resume/CV.
- Prepare stories by identifying the context, logically highlighting your actions in the situation, and identifying the results of your actions.

In my last interview for my role as Programme Associate in Programme Division, I made sure to do my research and began preparing responses to potential interview questions well in advance of the interview. Essentially, the interview preparation should begin at (or before) the time of applying for the post. Don’t wait until you are short listed/contacted to interview to begin preparing. Assume you will be.

- Generally, it pays to know in advance of an interview how it will be structured so that you may prepare accordingly. It is also worth bearing in mind that the level of preparedness and quality standards on interviewing can vary widely.
- Organizations may bring candidates back for second interviews. Sometimes they want to confirm their initial impression – that you are the top candidate. Other times, they are having difficulty deciding between a short-list of candidates. Often, the interviewer’s supervisor or other decision-makers may wish to gain a sense of you before signing a hiring decision.
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- TIPS FOR MANAGING THE FIRST INTERVIEW:
  - Be clear and specific in your answers.
  - Maintain a serious professional demeanor.
  - Be sure to look into the camera – which does
  - Always speak slowly and clearly.
  - Make sure any notes you have are not visible from the waist up.
  - Dress professionally, as you will be visible head-to-toe.
  - Be aware of what is in your background.
  - Be prepared for limited eye contact from panel member.

Tips for Managing Second Interviews

- Be confident. Accentuate what you have to offer in the interest of the position.
- If you can, find out in advance what the interviewers want to know about you. Doubts about your first interview, things that need confirmation, for example, so you can be prepared.
- Probe tactfully to discover information about internal company dynamics and culture.
- Plan for possibly negotiating a salary or benefits (where relevant).
- Be prepared for anything: to relax with a serious advantage – for both interviewers and interviewees – global, around-the-clock access. This allows interviewers to meet and interview candidates from anywhere in the world.
- TIPS FOR MANAGING VIDEOCONFERENCE INTERVIEWS:
  - Be sure to check the volume and camera quality/level, and ensure your body/face is in clear view.
  - Be aware of what is in your background. While it is fine to do an interview at home, be sure that there is a relatively clean looking professional space behind you.
  - Try to minimize potential background noise or interruptions.
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OTHER INTERVIEW TYPES AND FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW

There are many types of job interviews beyond competency-based interviewing. You may find yourself interviewing outside of the UN Common System, or with interviewers who have not yet trained in behavioral interviewing techniques. Thus, it is a good idea to be aware of the other types of interviews that exist. It is also helpful to be aware of an interview to be structured so that you may prepare accordingly. It is also worth bearing in mind that the level of preparedness and quality standards on interviewing can vary widely.

Organizations may bring candidates back for second interviews. Sometimes they want to confirm their initial impression – that you are the top candidate. Other times, they are having difficulty deciding between a short-list of candidates. Often, the interviewer’s supervisor or other decision-makers may wish to gain a sense of you before signing a hiring decision.

When meeting with the same person again, you can focus on cementing rapport, understanding where the organization or company is going and how your skills mesh with their vision and culture. The interviewer should view you as the answer to their needs.

Tips for Managing Skype Interviews:

- Be sure to check the volume and camera quality/level, and ensure your body/face is in clear view.
- Be aware of what is in your background. While it is fine to do an interview at home, be sure that there is a relatively clean looking professional space behind you.
- Try to minimize potential background noise or interruptions.
- Be aware of what is in your background. While it is fine to do an interview at home, be sure that there is a relatively clean looking professional space behind you.
SCREENING AND TECHNOLOGY

Technology is also used for another typical element of the screening process, skills or knowledge testing. While a common approach is to determine who gets interviewed, others approaches may be employed, such as testing two or three closely-ranked candidates post-interview to determine who gets the offer.

From the candidate perspective, testing is a way to distinguish yourself by demonstrating what you know, and what you can do and/or produce under stressful circumstances (a timed test). It also is a writing sample and demonstrates how you analyze and approach problems, manage time, etc.

Tests typically would last between one to three hours. They may be task or case based, short answer (one or two paragraphs), short essays, multiple choice or some combination thereof. They may be “closed book” (no notes, Internet or documents) or “open book,” which means you can access documents, whether in print or online. In all cases for open-booked tests, it is not permitted to copy-and-quotes answers or contents from a website, which constitutes plagiarism, a breach of ethics – and would, minimally, result in elimination from the selection process.

While tests may be administered by a person or online, some organizations, including UNFPA, now use technology for video interviewing or testing, such as asynchronous video job interview.

ANSWERING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This guide includes some sample open ended interview questions to help you prepare, along with recommended ways to approach each question. You will certainly want to personalize your response. As you review the sample questions, write down next to each what you would ask the interviewer in return.

Before you begin practicing a range of questions, however, it is recommended that you find prepare your…

THE 90-SECOND INTRODUCTION WILL:

- ALERT THE LISTENER to your employment background and aspirations;
- STIMULATE THEIR INTEREST in learning more about you;
- PROVIDE SOME BACKGROUND with quantified accomplishments; and
- DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT SITUATION – what you are looking for.

90-SECOND INTRODUCTION

In any interview, you should be prepared to talk about yourself. To this purpose, you would be advised to develop a 90-second introduction, outlining your education, background, experience, current situation and career aspirations.

Your 90-second introduction should be flexible, customized and responsive. It is important to be able to expand your story, or to hold back, as appropriate. In either case, once you are comfortable with your basic story, you will find calling, networking and interviewing easier and, ideally, more successful. Keep the 90-second timeframe as a guide. Some books recommend 60 seconds, others two minutes. The point is to be prepared, brief and not to ramble on, and, as always, to practice.

FREQUENTLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTED RESPONSES

The following tables indicate frequently-asked interview questions, suggest responses, and allow a work space in which to practice your own answers. Note that these are, by and large, “traditional” interview questions.

GENERAL: Generic questions that may be asked in any type of interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVIEW QUESTION</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED RESPONSE</th>
<th>MY QUESTIONS/NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about yourself.</td>
<td>90-Second Introduction (see above)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What can you offer us (that other candidates cannot)?</td>
<td>Emphasize your unique qualities and capabilities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you know about our organization?</td>
<td>Relate them to the position and the organization – which you will have learned through your research.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What other types of work are you considering?</td>
<td>Do not feel obliged to reveal details of other interviews or negotiations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are your strengths?</td>
<td>Provide three or four key strengths with relevant examples.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SCREENING: Open-ended questions that may be asked in a screening.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVIEW QUESTION</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your experience has given you the skills to handle the following professional situations:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please provide three examples of situations where you had to take initiative.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The candidate must be able to handle a range of situations during the interview.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: The answers to these questions must be prepared in advance.
**FIT: Determine if you are a good match for the organization**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>INTERVIEW QUESTION</th>
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</table>
| Describe a situation in which your work was criticized. What were the circumstances? How did you respond? | - Provide an example where you received constructive criticism.  
  - Discuss one mistake (not a major one).  
  - Emphasize what you learned from it and how your behaviour changed.  
  - Do not pass blame. | |
| Why are you leaving your present job?/Why did you leave your last job? | - Keep it brief. Keep it positive.  
  - Do not get defensive or explain excessively; simply state the circumstances in a constructive manner.  
  - If your post was discontinued or the result of an office closure, explain how your separation was part of an organizational restructuring. | |
| How would you evaluate your previous organization? | - This question tests tact and discretion.  
  - Be constructive. Focus on strengths.  
  - Refer to the benefits you have derived.  
  - Avoid negative feedback. | |
| How would your co-workers describe you? | - Briefly refer to your skills, strengths and personality. (See Appendices 2–4) | |

**YOUR ABILITIES: Self-assessment questions**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>INTERVIEW QUESTION</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| What are your weaknesses? | - Offer only one unless asked for more.  
  - The key is to recognize an area of professional development and describe how you are working to improve in this area.  
  - Everyone has something they can improve upon. | |
| What do you consider to be your most significant accomplishment(s) to date? | - From your preparations, select accomplishment(s) most relevant to the position.  
  - Be sure to have practiced several.  
  - Take your cue from the interviewer regarding when to conclude. | |
| Describe a difficult problem you faced and how you solved it. | - Do not choose a “worst ever” scenario.  
  - Link it to a lesson learned.  
  - Link it to the level and complexity of the requirements of the post. | |
| Describe a situation in which you worked under pressure or met deadlines. | - Refer to your accomplishments.  
  - Discuss one or two in which you were especially effective in meeting deadlines or dealing with high-pressure situations. | |
| How many people have you managed? | - Refer to direct/indirect reports, teams, contractors, clients or co-workers.  
  - Briefly mention any notable characteristics of the team. | |
| What might your previous manager/supervisor say are your greatest strengths or weaknesses? | - Use on-the-job examples of strengths.  
  - Present weaknesses in a positive light.  
  - Performance appraisals (PAD, ePAS, etc.) are requested of finalists, so these should be aligned. | |
DECISIONS

It is important to remember that no job is perfect; each offer will have both positive and negative aspects. Certainly, it is advisable to follow up all of your job leads that seem promising. If a job offer does not meet all of your requirements, you can, circumstances permitting, choose not to accept it and continue your search until you find a better match. Alternatively, you can accept the offer, bearing in mind that it may not have been your first choice, but it will provide you an opportunity to earn a salary, gain new skills, and eventually, resume a more relaxed search from a position of employment.

The standard rule of etiquette is to accept or reject an offer promptly. There is no need to dally over the decision. The purpose of an interview is to further determine your compatibility with the organization and to outline the terms of your engagement. It is also important to remember that some interviews are going to be more successful than others. Learn from each experience and use your cumulative knowledge to continue to improve your interviewing skills.

DEBRIEFING

After an interview is a good idea, as it allows you to candidly assess your interviewing strengths and weaknesses. It is also important to remember that some interviews are going to be more successful than others. Learn from each experience and use your cumulative knowledge to continue to improve your interviewing skills.

Use the following questions as a Debrief Checklist:

What went well? Why?

What did not go well? Why not?

What key facts did I learn about the organization/unit/job?

How well did I listen to interviewer's questions? How were my questions received?

What interview skills should I develop further?

What would I do differently if I were to repeat the interview?

What went well? Why?

What did not go well? Why not?

DECLINING A JOB OFFER

As soon as you decide to accept a job offer, it is polite to call or write/email to all the other organizations that have expressed interest in you or have made offers to inform them that you have accepted another job offer and have withdrawn your application. Always try to leave a good impression, even if you are declining an offer, as you may wish to pursue employment with them at a later date.

Be positive when declining an offer. If appropriate, advise the employer where you will be working for work, or if you are continuing in higher education, where you have enrolled. You need not indicate why you have accepted the other position or what the salary is. Always express your appreciation for any offers extended and the interest and confidence the employer has shown.

NOT GETTING AN OFFER

Unfortunately, if you are informed that you did not, in fact, get the job, you are likely to be disappointed. It certainly works in your favor to always be polite and relate your interest in the organization, the position and/or work unit for which you interviewed. This is because the outcome may still be unclear. For example, the first-choice candidate may be unable to accept the offer; if so, you might, ultimately, be given an opportunity to reconsider. Another possibility is, as noted above, you wish to apply to the same or a similar position in the future. And lastly, as a professional in the same field, you may cross paths and always want to remain appropriate and gracious.

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NEGOTIATIONS

If you have received an offer, and are still waiting to hear from other organization(s), you may find yourself in a position where you need to negotiate for time to give an answer. This is certainly not uncommon. However, unless all other aspects of the timing is critical, it is acceptable to ask for some time to make a decision, but usually, asking for more than one to two weeks is not appropriate. Some employers won’t give more than a few days – this is the norm, and you may have to make a decision without having all the information about other offers that you would like.

A start date may, or may not be, negotiable. However, you may have to negotiate with both your current job — and your new employer – about what is an appropriate amount of notice. This can be particularly true in an international organization where recruitment can be a lengthy process. Thus, your current boss may be hesitant to let you go and have a long “gap” with nobody in the job. It is wise to try and accommodate your current boss and your new job, with compromise on both sides.

If you wish to negotiate a start date, be clear about your reasons, and try to have this conversation in person, or via telephone, rather than in writing. If you are relocating overseas, and have affairs to wrap up before going, this is valid – try to estimate the time you need and request it. Obviously, this is the beginning of a partnership, and rather than be demanding, you want to start off positively and inquire about the new employer’s timeframe, consider your needs, especially if leaving, and try to find a compromise that works for everyone.
CAREER GUIDE FOR UNFPA STAFF MEMBERS

5. COPING WITH CHANGE

PRACTICAL TIPS:

Being notified of your separation or a post abolishment is almost invariably difficult. At such a time, it can be hard to fully comprehend and accept what is happening. For this reason, you should ensure that the notification of your separation is given to you in both verbal and written form.

All information communicated to you regarding your separation should come from an official source, such as the Director for Human Resources, Bureau or Division Director, (International) Operations Manager, or your supervisor. Make sure you get the facts and information from OHRI or your manager. Wherever possible, get as much as you can in writing.

It is natural to experience strong emotions, such as shock, anger or disappointment when learning of your separation, even if it does not come as a surprise. Although it might be difficult, it is important that you do not personalize the information or make judgmental statements towards the manager, your colleagues or the organization at large. Imposed job change is stressful, but remaining professional, in control and managing the situation will enable you to see a way forward.

It is important that you understand the impact of emotions, such as fear, resentment, denial, anger, sadness, insecurity, or doubt in your mind. They have the potential to detrimentally affect your behaviour, your health, and your well-being. Acknowledge frustrations and fears and talk to friends, family, colleagues, a member of your religious/spiritual community or, where possible, a health professional whom you trust. While they may not be able to change your situation, they might be able to shed different light on things, give you advice, or help you plan for your future. Ultimately, having someone “just listen” can provide some sense of comfort. Try to think positively and focus on practical solutions rather than dwelling on negative feelings, since this will not change your situation.

There are career counselors who specialize in career transition; ask a career development focal point within UNFPA for a referral if you think working with someone might be useful. This can be done both in person and/or via Skype, phone or email.

Remember: YOU are not the job. Your job is only one aspect of yourself, and there are many other important parts of yourself, and of life. You will need to acknowledge that this job has come to an end, let go, and begin to explore future opportunities.

JOBS LOSS/ABOLISHED POSTS/REPROFILING EXERCISES

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CREATE AN ACTION PLAN

How you go about your job search will affect your finding a new position. Having a focused and realistic plan of action will enable you effectively to manage your situation. Doing nothing, waiting for something to change or to come up, or taking frantic, unfocussed action will not be helpful. Taking constructive, well-considered action is the first step on the right path.

Job seekers who are focused and apply effective methods to the job search typically produce the best results in the shortest time frame. Designing – and following through – on your action plan will help you:

- Cover more of the right territory faster, thereby, in theory, decreasing your search time – and landing a better job;
- Optimize energy levels and increase focus;
- Keep disciplined work habits and staying in “work” mode;
- Maintain or improve self-confidence and self-esteem; and
- Take control of your work and your life.

Whether you are in a job or have left one, design a system based on your personal style and work habits. For example, surf the web for two hours every morning to check vacancies; network with mentors and colleagues at lunch, apply to jobs in the afternoon. Keep the process simple so that you are able to stick with it. Create a daily, prioritized To Do List and carry forward any pending items. Assess how your time was spent, what you accomplished and adjust as necessary. Having small goals that you complete is essential to staying motivated and on track. Avoid forcing any habits. If you are a morning person, work early in the day; if you are a night owl – at night.

Time-saving Tip: Sign up for job alerts on job websites such as UNJobfinder or inspira – so you don’t miss an opportunity!

FINANCIAL PLANNING

To help you through the transitional period, you should review and adjust your personal budget in order to organize and control your financial resources over the coming months. You can also ask DHR for advice on options concerning pension and other separation payments, if applicable. In addition, you may wish to contact the UN Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF).

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- Keep disciplined work habits and staying in “work” mode;
- Maintain or improve self-confidence and self-esteem; and
- Take control of your work and your life.

Whether you are in a job or have left one, design a system based on your personal style and work habits. For example, surf the web for two hours every morning to check vacancies; network with mentors and colleagues at lunch, apply to jobs in the afternoon. Keep the process simple so that you are able to stick with it. Create a daily, prioritized To Do List and carry forward any pending items. Assess how your time was spent, what you accomplished and adjust as necessary. Having small goals that you complete is essential to staying motivated and on track. Avoid forcing any habits. If you are a morning person, work early in the day; if you are a night owl – at night.

Time-saving Tip: Sign up for job alerts on job websites such as UNJobfinder or inspira – so you don’t miss an opportunity!
APPENDIX 1: SELF ASSESSMENT – PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Instructions: Below, take a moment and list five to ten professional accomplishments that you feel proud of; try to focus on things in the recent past (i.e. two to three years, but if appropriate, go back five or ten years for a few items). Jot down some key words to describe both this achievement AND why it signified a special professional accomplishment for you.

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<th>ACCOMPLISHMENT</th>
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PART III: APPENDICES
APPENDIX 2: SELF ASSESSMENT – SKILLS AND ABILITIES

The selection below is a summary to guide you in drafting your CV and cover letter for more details on the UNFPA revised competency framework, visit the DHR microsite (Resources): Revised Competency Framework Short Guide Revised Competency Framework Long Guide

Communications/Representation
Advising, Advocacy, Editing, Explaining, Informing, Interpreting, Language, Media, Networking, Presenting, Promoting, Public speaking, Questioning, Reporting, Representing, Rewriting, Translating, Writing

Analytical
Accounting, Analyzing, Appraising, Assessing, Budgeting, Calculating, Classifying, Computing, Conjecturing, Evaluating, Formulating, Instrumenting, Observing, Policy analysis, Researching, Reviewing

Interpersonal
Cultural sensitivity, Diplomacy, Empathy, Emotional intelligence, Tact, Relating to others, Team player

Management
Advisory, Best Practice, Collaborating, Deciding, Delegating, Effecting change, Evaluating, Grant managing, Implementing Policy, Initiating, Innovating, Leadership, Managing, Monitoring, Operating, Overseeing, Partnerships, Policies, Performance Management, Problem solving, Project management, Quality Assurance, RIM, Recommending, Reporting, Resource leveraging, Resource mobilization/fundraising, Supervising, Strategic planning, Trouble shooting, UN System(s) Coordination

Technical
Copp-editing, Databases, Desktop publishing, Drawing, Layout/Design, Medical Devices, Proofreading, Quality Control, Spreadsheets, Technical Instruments/Tools, Technical leadership, Technical Advisory Services

Organizational
Attending to detail, Coordinating, Executing, Keeping records, Planning, Scheduling, Systematizing, Time management

Administration & General Support
Administration and Executive Office
Archiving
Capacity Building
Coaching/Counselling
Contract/Other Negotiations
Communication/Verbal/Written
Conference/Events Planning
Decision Making
Directing Others
Drafting, Guidelines, Reports, etc.
Entreprise Resource Planning (ERP)
Goal Setting
Internal Oversight
Knowledge – UNI-Rules & Procedures
Leadership
Mentoring/Coaching/Motivating Others
Organizational Planning
Performance Appraisal and Reporting/MPA/ERPs
Problem Solving
Project Management
Procurement/Purchasing
Independent Research & Analysis
SIG/GPS (UNFPA work planning tools)
Scheduling
Strategic Planning
Supervision
Time and Attendance
Time Management
Travel Planning
UMOJA

Information and Communication Technology
Information and Communication Technology
Batch Processing/Planning
Coss Applications
Cloud Architecture
Communication Tower/�ﻒ watermark/Ilanisations
Database Technology
Data Centre Operation
Diagnosing
Distributing Processing
Distributed Systems
ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning)
Financial Systems
Hardware/Software Technology
Help Desk
Human Resources Systems (SAP, Oracle, Taleo, etc.)
Information Management
IT Security
Networking/IT
Performance Monitoring
Requirements Specification
System/Design & Programming
System Development
Voice/Data Communication
Wireless
Satellite Systems

Finance & Accounting
Finance & Accounting
Audit
Budget/Cost Control
Capital Budgeting
Cash Management
Credit
Debt Negotiations
Financial System (MIS, UMOJA, Sun Systems)
Financial Data Processing
Financial Policy
Foreign Exchange
General and Cost Accounting
Information Systems
Internal Controls
Investment Control Analysis
Investigation
IPSAS
Knowledge of UN Financial Rules
Management Reporting
New Business Development
Oversight
Performance Evaluation and Measurement
Pension
Planning/Analysis
RBB/RBM
Risk Management
Strategic Financial Planning
Treasury

Human Resources
Human Resources
Administration
Career Counselling/Development
Change Management
Compensation/Benefits
Compency Framework
Credit
Credit
Debt Negotiations
Financial System (MIS, UMOJA, Sun Systems)
Financial Data Processing
Financial Policy
Foreign Exchange
General and Cost Accounting
Information Systems
Internal Controls
Investment Control Analysis
Investigation
IPSAS
Knowledge of UN Financial Rules
Management Reporting
New Business Development
Oversight
Performance Evaluation and Measurement
Pension
Planning/Analysis
RBB/RBM
Risk Management
Strategic Financial Planning
Treasury

Operations
Operations
Air Operations
Budget Planning
Customer Service
Distribution
Environmental Information Systems
Information Management
Production
Procurement
Production
Project Direction/Management
Quality Assurance
Research and Development
Supply Chain
Systems Development
Total Quality Management (TQM)

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CAREER GUIDE FOR UNFPA STAFF MEMBERS

Sexual and Reproductive Health

- Adolescent Girls/Adolescence
- Abortion/Postabortion/Prenatal Care
- Child Marriage
- Contraception
- Contraceptive Devices
- Commodity Security
- Educating
- Family Planning
- Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)
- Fistula
- Gender-Based Violence (GBV)
- Health Systems
- HIV / AIDS
- Maternal Health
- Midwifery
- Mortality
- Needs Assessment
- Public Health
- Reproductive Health Commodities
- Social Reintegration

Substantive/Other

- Analytical/Evaluation
- Best Practice/Lessons Learned
- Bi-lateral/Multi-lateral Negotiations
- Capacity Building
- Civil Society
- Civilian/Military
- Conflict Resolution
- Economic Affairs
- Ethics
- Gender/Gender Mainstreaming
- Facilitation
- Field Experience
- Fundraising/Donor Relations
- Humanitarian Affairs
- Humanitarian/Surge
- Legal Affairs
- Mediation/ Arbitration
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Negotiation
- Ombudsman
- Policy
- Political Affairs/Analysis
- Public Administration
- Rule of Law/Judiciary
- Security
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Surge
- Translation
- UN Cares
- UNCT/One UN/Delivering as One
APPENDIX 3: SELF ASSESSMENT – WORKING STYLE AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Personality traits are often considered innate or socialized very early in life, while skills are learned. Personality traits and skills, however, are strongly connected. Often it is your innate characteristics that facilitate the development of a skill.

As you consider the various skills you currently have and are trying to develop, it is important to think about something well. It also is important to articulate this link to employers in cover letters and interviews.

You also may ask a family member and/or friend to create a list describing you according to the directions in this exercise. Are your lists similar? Where do they differ? Why might that be? You may find the following exercise helpful as part of your skills analysis.

Having troubles? Please refer to the list below:

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APPENDIX 4: SELF ASSESSMENT – WORK VALUES

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a list of ten work values that will influence your choice of a career: five that are essential, and five that are desired. Can’t think of ten? Refer to the list of values below:

ESSENTIAL

1. Achieving results
2. Adventure
3. Advocacy
4. Aesthetics
5. Autonomy

DESIRED

1. Become an “expert”
2. Benefits/entitlements
3. Belonging (sense of)
4. Challenge
5. Change/variety

TRAITS AND WORKING STYLE WORKSHEET

Instructions: Write a list of ten traits that describe you, five for the way you perceive yourself, and five for the way you think others perceive you:

S E L F

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Vasanthi Fonseka
1234 West 12 Street, Apt. 34, New York, NY, 10067, USA
Office:123-456-789 ext. 4213 | Cell: 646-339-0123
v.fonseka@gmail.com | fonseka@unfpa.org

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

Technical Analyst, Gender & Human Rights, Technical Division, UNFPA, New York, USA, 11.2014 – present
• Provided technical and programmatic assistance on gender and human rights and its linkages with reproductive health, poverty eradication and sustainable development.
• Work on gender & human rights globally, focusing on countries in the Asia and the Pacific region in mainstreaming gender-responsive, rights-based and culturally-sensitive approaches so APRO region is updated on the Paris policy and programme guidelines.
• Technical support for piloting and roll out policies and programmes to prevent gender-based violence in APRO region.
• Responsible for knowledge management and sharing across divisions and regions.

UN Cares Regional Programme Coordinator, UNFPA, Panama City, Panama, 9.2009 – 5.2012
Regional Coordinator for UN Cares (United Nations system-wide workplace programme on HIV) for Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office (LACARO).
• Supported 22 countries in LACARO UN Cares programmes technical guidance, capacity development, knowledge management, strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation.
• Encouraged UN Country Teams, through UN Cares Country Fiscal Points and teams, to develop interventions for UN staff and families to increase awareness on gender issues, human rights, stigma and discrimination related to HIV and key populations at higher risk of HIV infection.
• Coordinated UN Cares global initiatives, communication campaign, reporting, publications and editing of a global e-newsletter, capturing of country stories and good practices in programme implementation from LACARO region and beyond.

Special Assistant to the Resident Coordinator Programme (SARC), JPO (Denmark), UNDP, Kathmandu, Nepal, 6.2011 – 6.2013
• Assisted with the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the Annual UN Country Team Work Plan in consultation with the UN Country Team.
• Supported the Head of the Resident Coordinator Office (RCO) in budget management, resource mobilization, and interpretation of UNDG/UNDP policies for RCs.
• Managed and scheduled the agenda of the RC (with the Executive Assistant), prepared background briefs for RC meetings, prepared drafts of RC correspondence and manage all incoming correspondence and route as necessary.
• Assisted in the drafting of Annual Reports for the Resident Coordinator to provide an overview over joint operational activities for development.
• Liased with the Development Group Office and keep the Resident Coordinator and UNCT informed of new initiatives (Delivery as One, UN Reform etc.) and directions in the UN system.

Research Assistant, Gender Studies, Linköping University, Linköping, Sweden, 11.2009 – 4.2011
• Research Assistant to Professor Dalberg, Gender Studies.
• Conducted literature reviews, collected and analyzed data, prepared materials for submission to granting agencies and foundations, prepared materials for UN Human Subjects Committee review, and maintained accurate records of interviews, safeguarded the confidentiality of subjects, as necessary.
• Supervised undergraduate students working on the research project (maintained records on assignment completion, acted as liaison/mediator between the undergraduate students and the faculty researcher).

Fundraising Coordinator, European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), Brussels, Belgium, 7.2007 – 7.2009
• Created and implemented fundraising activities with 70 member organisations across 30 countries in Europe to execute individual business plan to exceed revenue goals.
• Developed relationships with NGOs and NGO networks; established and maintained contacts with UNHCR, government officials and intergovernmental partners at a high level.
• Assisted in identifying, recruiting, training and managing temporary coordinators and volunteers.
• Represented the organisation at international conferences and high level meetings, including relevant UN Agencies, the European Commission, and Members of the European Parliament.

President, Charity and Volunteer Club, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark, 9.2005 – 5.2007
• Directed and supervised six club board members.
• Planned and implemented various charity events and volunteer opportunities through collaboration with NGOs in Copenhagen: UNICEF, WFP, GEF, OECD, and other UN agencies.
• Represented the Club in student council and school club board meetings.

EDUCATION
• Executive Education Program, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 8.2014. Distance learning courses. Using Evidence to Improve Policy and Programs.
• BA in International Studies, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, 9.2005 – 5.2007.

SKILLS
• Language: Danish (native), English (full professional proficiency), Spanish (minimum professional proficiency), Swedish (limited working proficiency).
• IT: Google Apps, Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Access, Web Publishing), MATLAB.
APPENDIX 6: TIPS FOR WRITTEN APPLICATIONS (UN SYSTEM)

- Qualifications/Certifications: Include this information in a separate section. Following is a format:
  - Master’s degree in International Relations with a specialization in Development Studies from Columbia University, New York, 2010.

- Supervisors: Add the email address, if possible, of the supervisor or advisor who can verify the information.

- Awards, Honours or Recognition: Add details of any awards or recognition you have received. Include the award name, organization, and year.

- References: Include complete and current mailing information, e.g., apartment numbers, postalcodes, etc.

- Additional Information: Information that is not covered by the above sections, e.g., information relating to previous work experience, skills, or personal details.

- References:

- Attachments:
  - Certifications: Include copies of certificates, e.g., CPR, First Aid Instructor.
  - Publications: Include copies of publications, e.g., articles, reports.

- Formatting:
  - Double space your document to make it easier to read.
  - Use a standard font (e.g., Arial, Times New Roman).
  - Avoid using multiple fonts or excessive formatting.

- Spelling:
  - Correct any spelling errors to ensure professionalism.

- Sentences:
  - Ensure that each sentence is clear and complete.
  - Avoid using abbreviations or jargon.

- Questions:
  - Ask yourself if the information is necessary and relevant.

APPENDIX 7: ACTION VERBS

- Accomplished
- Approved
- Assisted
- Authored
- Coordinated
- Created
- Developed
- Evaluated
- Generated
- Invented
- Published
- Proposed
- Quarantined

- Acknowledged
- Achieved
- Allocated
- Adopted
- Aligned
- Analyzed
- Arranged
- Assessed
- Assisted
- Attended
- Authored
- Coordinated
- Created
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APPENDIX 8: QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

1. What are some of the objectives you would like to see accomplished in this job? Which is most pressing?
2. What would you like to have done in the next three months?
3. What are some of the long-term objectives you would like to see completed?
4. What would you like done differently by the next person who fills this position?
5. What are some of the more difficult challenges one would have to face in this position?
6. In what ways has this organization been most successful over the years?
7. What significant changes do you foresee in the near future?
8. What accounts for success within the organization/work unit?
9. Whom does this position report to? Will I have the opportunity to meet with him/her?
10. Whom will I supervise?
11. Could you please describe the work environment?
12. What do you like best/least about working for the work unit/organization?

These questions are presented only as interviewing guidelines. They are meant to help you prepare for the interview. Some questions may or may not be appropriate for your interviewing situation.

OTHER QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE

The key is to relax, go with the flow and do your best. Before you know it, you will be in your next job.