

Career A-Z

Navigate Your Way.
Build Expertise.
Succeed in Your Career

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Career A-Z

Navigate. Build Expertise. Succeed.

“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself in any direction you choose.
You're on your own. And you know what you know.
You are the one who'll decide where to go.”

— Dr. Seuss

Young Students/Professionals (i.e. **YOU**) are the future of our business, economy and our organizations.

Getting a “job” is not the destination. It is the beginning of a journey.

The journey of growth. The journey of becoming. The journey of expressing yourself fully in your area of work.

The goal of this presentation?

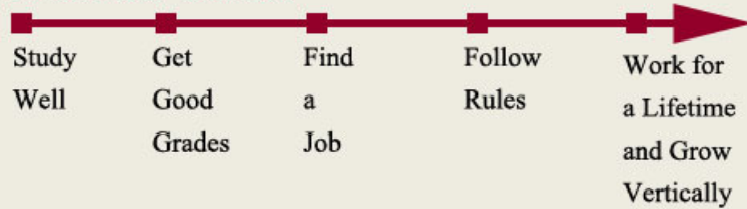
To help aspiring students and professionals in navigating through the complexities of this wonderful journey.

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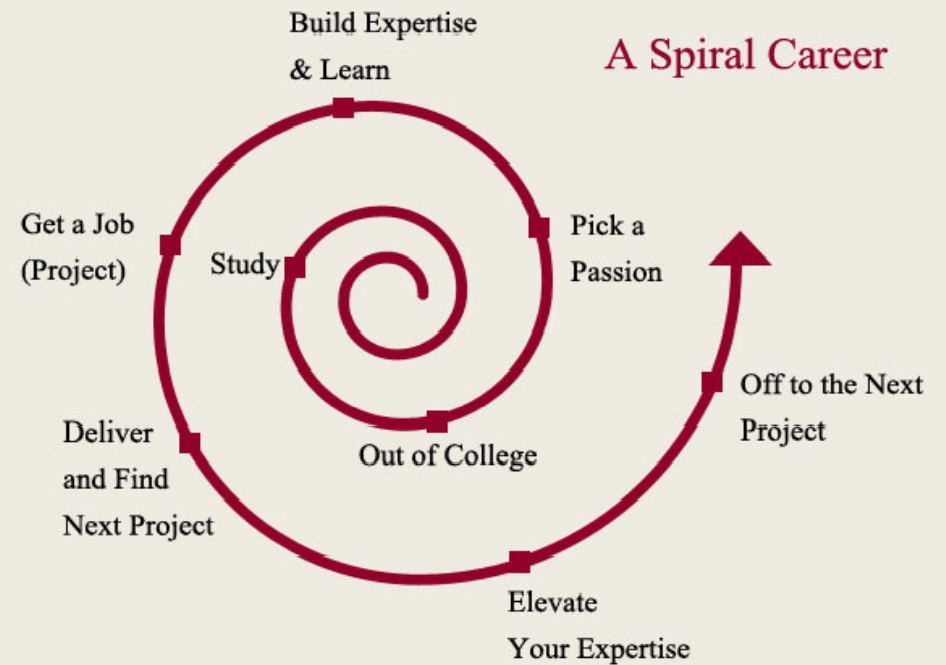
Career Path in 1970's

A Linear Career



Preference for Stability
Slow Changes in Career

Career Path Today



Preference for Excitement
Rapid Career Changes

Why Think About a Career Differently?

- We live in a “Knowledge-Oriented” world
- Businesses and economies are changing fast
- Competition is very heavy (and international too!)
- Demand/Supply Keeps Changing
- **Good Career = Satisfaction = Happiness!**

You are the “CEO” of your career!

“Your profession is not what brings home your pay cheque.
**Your profession is what you were put on earth to do with
such passion and such intensity that it becomes spiritual
in calling.”**

– Vincent Van Gogh

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26 Essential Strategies (Let's call them A-Z)

A. DO WHAT YOU LOVE DOING!

Life is too short to spend eight hours a day doing something you don't care about.

Passion breeds excellence!

Ask this often in your career: “Am I enjoying it?”

B. LEARN CONSTANTLY

Learning is not a one-time event. It is a lifelong process.

Remain *curious*.

Some sources of learning: Books, Friends, Blogs, Websites, Wikipedia, YouTube

Pursue Certifications. Participate in seminars.

If you “*want to*” learn, sources are many.

C. LEARN – BUT ACT ON IT. *EXECUTE*.

You learn the most, not by reading, but by *doing*. You cannot learn Swimming by reading a book. You have to *dive*.

Do something with what you learn.

See what works, and what doesn't.

Do more of what works.

That is how you build expertise, *isn't it?*

D. EXPERIMENT

Experimenting is critical for learning.

Try things out. See if it works. If it does, you learn. If it doesn't, you still learn.

You remember 100% of what you learn by experimenting.

E. FOCUS ON VALUE

Value is what you contribute against what you get.

The higher your work offers value, the faster you grow.

To find value:

Learn the work that offers higher value

OR

Find what you love doing and identify how it can add value.

F. LEARN TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

What you know is important. How well you can represent it is even more important.

Communication is what makes or breaks your career.

Learn how to speak.

Learn how to write well.

Moreover, learn to listen. (*Listening is also a part of communication*)

G. READ. READ. READ.

A person who does not read good books has no advantage over the person who cannot read.

Reading expands your brain cells.

Reading makes you more open to ideas.

Read at-least one book outside your area of work.

H. EXPERIENCE

Experience is the greatest teacher.

Your degree is just a foot in the door. Real learning begins when you are “thrown into the fire”

Experience does not mean number of years spent in industry. Experience is how much you know about the job, and how well you do it.

I. ENJOY THE PROCESS

One of the best gifts we can give ourselves is to enjoy the work while we are doing it (being in the moment).

Don't be too Anxious about the results. If you enjoy the process, results will follow.

Your career is not a race – so don't just rush.

Goals are important to achieve. What you become in process of achieving your goals is even more important.

J. **HARDWORK IS MANDATORY**

Depending on your Luck is a lame strategy.

Luck is not in your control, but hard work is.

Don't count hours of work, but count what you do in those hours.

K. **START PERSONAL PROJECTS. VOLUNTEER.**

Start something that you love. It could be a blog, writing a book, writing a software or a magazine in your college.

Alternative pursuits keep you creative and sharp-minded.

Volunteer for great projects that you believe in.

Contribute. Get into it. See how it works. Learn.

L. DON'T BE AFRAID OF MISTAKES

Every mistake is a stepping stone to some learning.

Making mistakes is fine as long as you learn from them.

But, don't repeat the same one again.

Make new mistakes. That's the only what I know to learn fast.

M • FIND A MENTOR

Mentor is the one who accelerates your growth.

Your mentor could be your parents. Your teachers. Your seniors or your colleagues.

A mentor is someone who is more experienced to help us grow.

A mentor is the one who stands behind you with a torchlight when the road is dark.

N. PRIORITIZE & SAY “NO”

Every “No” is a “Yes” to something else.

“No” to an average job offer could be a “Yes” to a great one.

Learn how to say “No” firmly and politely.

Say no to unproductive tasks. Simplify your life so that you can spend more time doing things you love.

Know what is important for you, and say a ***BIG Yes*** to it.

O. BE DISCIPLINED

**When you are working, be “with” the work.
Concentrate and eliminate all distractions.**

Stop wasting excessive time on social media platforms like Facebook.

Be tough on yourself. Track your progress against goals.

“Successful people have a habit of doing things that failures don’t like to do.”

P. “DIFFICULTIES” ARE “OPPORTUNITIES”

Why would we work so hard if everything in life was easy?

Difficulties shape us in life.

Take every difficulty in your career as an opportunity.

Q. COLLABORATE

We learn most when we are with others.

Form a Group of likeminded people. Discuss. Debate.
Explore. Dig Deeper. Research.

Find out ways to learn more about your subject.

Be a good team player.

R. **MANAGE YOUR TIME**

We all have just 24 hours in a day. Use them well.

Set up a schedule (e.g. read book for one hour early in the morning).

Stick to that schedule.

Routines are powerful way to commit to ourselves.

“Time is our most precious commodity”

S. NETWORK IS THE “NET WORTH”

You become more like those who you surround yourself with.

Choose a good company of people who can amplify your capacity.

Meet new people and talk to them.

Find common acquaintances who are working in your area. Seek guidance.

Do not hesitate to ask for help.

T. EXCHANGE HELP

Help others in reaching their career goals.

When you keep offering more help, you also keep getting more help.

Teach a little. Write a Little. Offer encouragement to others. You help yourself the most when you help others.

U. IT IS OKAY TO BE DIFFERENT

If you want to do anything worthwhile in your life, stop worrying about what others think of you.

Avoid “Herd Mentality”

Tom Peters says, “***DISTINCT or EXTINCT***”

Ask yourself, “What differentiates me from thousands of other students/professionals out there?”

Look for concrete answers.

V. STAY INSPIRED

When things don't go as planned, get some inspiration.

Talk to your parents. Read inspiring quotes. Watch a good movie. Travel. Just Walk. Do whatever inspires you!

Stay away from negativity.

W • TRUST YOUR INTUITION

“It is always with excitement that I wake up in the morning wondering what my intuition will toss up to me, like gifts from the sea. I work with it and rely on it. It’s my partner.” -Jonas Salk

Learn to trust yourself. Pay respect to how you “feel” about something.

Be open to your inner voice.

Some of the most successful people have defied all the logic to pursue what their hearts told them to.

X. FOCUS ON YOUR STRENGTHS

Our strengths make us, not our weaknesses.

While you work on eliminating your weaknesses, don't focus too much on that.

Develop your strengths.

Y. BUILD AN ATTITUDE

Remember: ATTITUDE > ABILITY

Abilities can be taught. Knowledge can be given.

But attitude is difficult to give. A person either has it or not.

Industry needs people with “can do” positive attitude.

Z. BUILD A GREAT RESUME

Not just a word document with standard sections.

But a different one. Make it meaningful. Make it different.

Use LinkedIn to build your profile.

Your blog, your twitter, your projects are all your resume. Leverage them.

About

Tanmay Vora is a blogger, author and quality improvement consultant who is passionate about excellence, leadership and people. He speaks/consults on quality, improvement and leadership and hosts [QAspire Blog](#). He tweets as [@tnvora](#).