**How To Create A
Career Development Plan**

Go to: career-change-confidence.com

A career development plan is an orderly and purposeful method for reviewing where you are in your career, deciding where you want to be and using smart goal setting to get there.

To create a career development plan that meets your career objectives, begin with these 5 steps...

1. **Know Where You Are**
* Your starting point is the place where you're at now - your Point A.
* What drives you?
* What has influenced your career choices?
* How did you get to your current career track?
* Think about your educational and professional qualifications, your work skills, work experience, interests and hobbies.
1. **Know Where You Want To Be**
* I call this your Point B, your career destination.
* Where do you see yourself in one year, five years, 10 years?
* If you had the money, time and connections to find your dream career, what would you be?
* How have your qualifications, experience, skills and values served you at work?
* If you weren't hindered by [an inability to make good decisions](http://www.career-change-confidence.com/decision-making-process.html) or a lack of self-confidence, who would you be?
1. **Know What It Will Take To Get There**

This step involves reality testing. It is about narrowing the gap between A and B through research and informed and well-balanced decision making.

Suppose you want to make money working online. You come across an ad on the Internet claiming that you can make money online "fast", "free" or "now".

Before you get excited at the prospect of instant riches, you need to do some reality testing.

For example, one of the first things you would ask is: how do you know if it is a legitimate work from home opportunity or a scam?

Your criteria would be credible proof, either in the form of testimonials or statistics or real-life individuals whose success is beyond doubt.

You would not base your decision making on a mere marketing claim.

There are other considerations.

Think about how much time and money you are prepared to invest. Have you got sufficient resources to support your search or are your resources limited?

Are you prepared to make changes and sacrifices if you have to?

1. **Put It In Print**
* Once you’ve got 1, 2 and 3 in place, it's time to summarize your career development plan and put it in writing.
* Set out both the big picture and all the detailed in-between action steps that will take you to your ultimate career goal.
* There is power in the printed word. When your goals are in your face daily, you can see them and it's easier to commit to them.
* As author Tim LaHaye puts it: "By noting your objectives and writing them down, you **activate your subconscious mind** to remind you of those things needing to be done to fulfill your goals."
* Does your goal seem too big? Chunk it down into smaller steps. Take the first step, then the next, and the next, and keep going. Success comes from doing the right things consistently and doing them well.
* You will also want to monitor the outcome of your actions to make sure they are actually helping you to move towards your ultimate goal.
* This is called Smart Goal Setting.
1. **Remember Nike**
* Most of us are familiar with the sporting goods company's famous catch cry: ***Just Do It***.
* If you want your career development plan to be more than a piece of paper, you will have to Just Do It. Otherwise, it will be just another academic exercise, another good intention filed away in your Someday folder.
* From experience, the first step can seem especially hard. Expect the hump, but do not let it defeat you.
* I am reminded of some lines from the well-loved children's book *We're Going On A Bear Hunt*.
* How did the family respond each time they met an obstacle?

***We can't go over it***

***We can't go under it***

***Oh no! We've got to go through it!***

That's what they did. Consistently. Every time.

And that's what you and I need to do too.

Just Do it.

Keep working at your career development plan and making it work for you. When those small successes start to add up, they will confirm that you were right all along, and you will be motivated to keep going.

There is no substitute for doing. Neither is there any magic formula. You just have to...Do It.

If achieving goals on your own is a chronic challenge for you, consider working with a career coach.

You see, when you work by yourself, no one else knows what you are trying to achieve. No one is there to cheer you on or keep you accountable or offer a constructive opinion on how you can do better.

However, when you make your career development plan a shared project, when you dare to make your career goals transparent to others, a **positive pressure** kicks in. Just knowing that you have to 'report' your progress to someone can make you more diligent and responsible than if you were going solo.

Obviously, this will not be relevant if you are highly self-disciplined.

But if you are the sort of person who needs a nudge or reminder every now and then, teaming up with a career advisor to craft and implement a career development plan may be your best investment in your compelling future.