

Ready for the future

Level: Intermediate +

Time: 90 minutes +

Summary: This lesson is about career development and career planning. In this lesson, students:

1. read a text with advice about keeping themselves and their CVs up-to-date in order to achieve their career goals;
2. interview each other to assess what skills are required for their own jobs and create a job posting for their role;
3. discuss how they could improve their CVs and career development.

Materials: One copy of the worksheet per student; one copy of the vocabulary record per student

Group size: Any

4. *fine-tuning*
5. *crucial*
6. *hiring*
7. *current*
8. *job postings*
9. *field*
10. *environments*

Group B

11. *revisit*
12. *adjustments*
13. *attainable*
14. *concrete*
15. *desire*
16. *groomed*
17. *openings*
18. *ground*
19. *template*
20. *accomplishments*

Information from the article

Working in pairs or threes, the students complete the table with information from the article in note form. They then talk about the advice and, in a short class-feedback session, say whose they like best and why.

Key (with suggested answers):

| Name | Job | Advice |
|----------------|---------------------------|--|
| Kathy Robinson | career coach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't stop learning new skills. • Keep up with the advances in your profession. • List your learning goals once a year. • Look at the job advertisements that your company produces. What skills do they require? Ask yourself whether you have these skills. • If you don't have a particular required skill, try to develop it |
| Lynn Mattoon | career-development writer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask yourself whether you like the field you work in. If necessary, change careers. • Decide on a career goal and plan the steps you need to take to achieve it. • Ask yourself what education and qualifications you need, what kind of background people in your desired field have and how you can meet people who already work in this field. • Write out a career plan. • Make your goals and solutions very specific – but also attainable. • Revisit your plan and adjust it accordingly. |

Note: This lesson plan is for both pre-experience and in-work business students based on an original article first published in *Business Spotlight* issue 1/2016.

Warmer

This short task introduces the topic of career development and encourages students to think about keeping their CV up-to-date.

Key words

Divide the students into two groups, A and B. Group A should find key words 1 to 10 and group B should find key words 11 to 20. When they have done this, they should share their answers with students in the other group. After the students have checked the answers, they should read the article to see how the words are used in context. Note that the definitions for the words are given in the order the words appear in the article.

Key:

Group A

1. *spontaneous*
2. *department*
3. *circumstances*

Ready for the future

| Name | Job | Advice |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Dorothy Tammahill-Moran | careers advisor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at your plan in detail and produce a gap analysis. • See if there are any qualifications you need to reach the next step in your career plan. • Get information about the specific skills and experience that are required. • Compare your skills, education and experience to those listed in job ads. • Keep track. |
| Maureen McCann | career coach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking plays an important role. Ask yourself who can help you reach the next stage in your career; who is supporting your current career development; are you being mentored and groomed for openings? • A career plan helps you deal with the unexpected. • Having a plan, an up-to-date CV and profile on LinkedIn or Xing will help you make good decisions more rapidly. |
| Dr Randall S Hansen | works at Quintessential Careers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend a day or weekend every year reviewing your career plan, listing your accomplishments and thinking about your skills. • It's never too soon or too late to start your career planning. |

Summary

Students join the words to make phrasal verbs and phrases from the article, then use them to complete the paragraph about some of the article contents.

Key:

Phrasal verbs

1. figure out
2. keep up
3. left behind
4. seek out
5. showing up
6. tapped into
7. thought out

Paragraph

1. keep up
2. left behind
3. showing up
4. figure out
5. tapped into
6. seek out
7. thought out

Expressions

Students fill in the missing letters to complete the expressions from the article, then use them in sentences of their own. If possible, the sentences they write should be on topics unrelated to that of the article.

Key:

1. up to chance
2. keep track of
3. times were tough
4. emotionally charged situations

Discussion, writing and research task

In part a of this task, students work in pairs and interview their partner to find out what skills are required to do his/her job. An example question is given. Each student should make a note of their partner's answers.

In part b, working together in their pairs, students use their notes and any other information their partner can provide to write job postings for both of their jobs. They should include the job title, the skills required and any other important information.

In part c, students should search for similar job postings on the internet and discuss how similar or different the skills needed for the jobs are. If they do not have internet access, turn this into a group discussion in which the students talk about and compare the job postings they have written. Are there any of the same skills that seem to be required for many of their different jobs?

Part d can be done in pairs or small groups. Here, students discuss what training courses or seminars they could do to improve their CV and career development.

Extra reading

This extra reading task can be done in class or set as homework. The students could read the interview and write three further questions that they would like to ask the interviewee.

Ready for the future

Vocabulary record

Here, students should be encouraged to record all of the new and useful vocabulary they have learnt during the lesson, not only in the form presented in the article but also in related forms.

Related topics on onestopenglish

The following onestopenglish lesson plan guides students through the process of writing a CV.

www.onestopenglish.com/skills/integrated-skills/life-skills/pdf/macmillan-life-skills-career/-work-cv-builder-lesson-plan/553647.article

The following set of business lessons teach vocabulary on various topics, some of which are related to this lesson, for example looking for and changing jobs, talking about work experience and describing abilities and skills.

www.onestopenglish.com/business/business-tasks/

Ready for the future

1 Warmer

- When did you last review your career plans?
- When did you last update your CV?

Read the last paragraph of the article to find out how often one career coach says everyone should do these things.

2 Key words

Read the definitions and find the key words in the article.

Group A

1. happening in a natural way without being planned or thought about (para 1) _____
2. ministry (para 2) _____
3. the conditions in which you live, especially how much money you have (para 2) _____
4. making small changes to something in order to make it as good or as effective as possible (two words, para 2) _____
5. extremely important because it has a major effect on the result of something (para 4) _____
6. employing (para 5) _____
7. up-to-date (para 5) _____
8. public notices advertising jobs (two words, para 5) _____
9. a type of work that you do (para 6) _____
10. the places in which people work (para 6) _____

Group B

11. consider or discuss something again (para 8) _____
12. changes in something that make it better, more accurate or more effective (para 8) _____
13. possible to achieve, reach or get (para 8) _____
14. practical; based on facts and information (para 8) _____
15. really want (para 8) _____
16. prepared for a particular job or activity through special training and attention (para 11) _____
17. jobs that are available (para 11) _____
18. base a decision or idea on a particular thing (para 12) _____
19. something that is used as an example for something else and that copies are made from because its basic form can be used again and again (para 13) _____
20. difficult things that you succeed in doing, especially after working hard over a period of time (para 14) _____

Ready for the future

Ready for the future

by Margaret Davis



Are you planning to change your job or profession? A good, well-thought out plan will enable you achieve this aim. Margaret Davis provides details and asks experts for advice.

- 1 Do you plan your future job moves or do you simply leave them up to chance? There's nothing wrong with being spontaneous, but there are some situations in which you really need a plan – and managing your career is one of them.
- 2 What is career planning? The government of Western Australia's Department of Training and Workforce Development defines career planning as "the continuous process of thinking about your interests, values, skills and preferences; exploring the life, work and learning options available to you; ensuring that your work fits with your personal circumstances; and continuously fine-tuning your work and learning plans to help you manage the changes in your life and the world of work".
- 3 The government website lists four steps in the process: knowing yourself, learning about potential career areas, making decisions and taking action. These steps can vary, depending on where you are in your career – just beginning, learning new skills, considering a career change or preparing for retirement.
- 4 It's important to check your career progress at regular intervals, Boston career coach Kathy Robinson told *AARP The Magazine* – and to be sure that you don't stop learning new skills. "It's crucial to keep up with advances in your profession if you don't want to be left behind," Robinson says. "Successful people know that making time for focused, uninterrupted learning builds confidence and future growth opportunities." Robinson suggests that, once a year, you should make a plan that lists your learning goals. These could include taking a course, going to conferences or workshops, or spending a certain proportion of your time reading books or articles about your profession.
- 5 Take a look at the people your company is hiring, Robinson advises. What do the job advertisements say? What skills are required – and do you have them? "One great way to know if your skills are current: learn from the people who want to work next to you," Robinson says. "I suggest regularly going through job postings and keeping track of the technical skills required for your role. If there's a skill that keeps showing up but

you don't have it, you can add it to your professional development plan or ask your company to help you develop that skill."

"Do I like the field I'm working in?" Career-development writer Lynn Mattoon says you should ask yourself this question. "Career development doesn't mean you have to develop the career you're currently in but can also mean changing careers, even changing environments."

Mattoon says that once you've decided on a career goal, you need to plan the steps necessary to reach it. Ask yourself questions like: what kind of education and qualifications will I need? What kind of background do people in this profession have? How can I meet others in this field?

"Your goals and solutions need to be very specific," Mattoon writes on the online careers platform *Job-Interview-Site.com*. "This isn't to say that you can't revisit your planning and development and make adjustments (after all, life isn't 100 per cent predictable and we are not, in fact, robots) but writing out your career plan will make your goals more attainable because they become concrete and will remind you of the steps necessary to achieve what you desire."

Once you have a plan, you need to look at it in more detail and produce a gap analysis, says careers adviser Dorothy Tannahill-Moran. "A gap analysis is where you figure out the differences in the qualifications between where you are right now and your two-year goal or next step," she writes. "Using a job posting or job description for the position you are aiming at is a good way to get specific information about the skills and experience that are expected. I think it is good to get more than one job description (perhaps one with your company and one with a competitor) in order to ensure you aren't missing any key items during your analysis."

Compare your skills, education and experience to what is listed in the job advertisements. Now is the time to get started, Tannahill-Moran says. "You can't predict how long or how much work you will have to do in order to develop the skill at the level you need but you do have control over the action you take to get started. Keep track."

Career coach Maureen McCann says that networking plays an important role in career planning. "Who can help you get closer to the next stage in your career? Who

6

7

8

9

10

11

Ready for the future

is supporting your current career development? Are you being mentored and groomed for anticipated openings? Who can you learn from? These are all questions that can be answered by the people in your networks," McCann explains. "One client of mine remarked that, when times were tough, 'It was my network that saved me.' He tapped into his network to seek out opportunities ahead of his competitors that allowed him to be ready to capture the opportunities when they arose."

12 Having a career plan helps you to deal with the unexpected, according to McCann. "Life changes occur and with them come emotions. Making decisions during emotionally charged situations can prove challenging. Having a plan ready before any crisis can help ground your choices and help you make decisions more rapidly, knowing that your decisions were well thought out ahead of any emotional influences."

13 Certain basic elements need to be part of everyone's career plan, McCann says. These include an up-to-date CV, a template for a covering letter and profile on LinkedIn or Xing. Having these items ready means that you will be able to react professionally to opportunities.

© Business Spotlight, 1/2016.
www.business-spotlight.de

14 Dr Randall S Hansen of Quintessential Careers suggests spending a day or a weekend every year reviewing your career plan, looking at what has happened in the past year, listing your accomplishments and thinking about your skills. "Career planning is not an activity that should be done once at school or university and then left behind as we move forward in our jobs and careers," Hansen comments. "Rather, career planning is an activity that is best done on a regular basis, especially given the data that the average worker will change careers (not jobs) multiple times over his or her lifetime. And it's never too soon or too late to start your career planning."

For more information

WEBSITES:

Government of Western Australia's Department of Training and Workforce Development: www.dtwd.wa.gov.au

Maureen McCann's company website, ProMotion Career Solutions: www.mypromotion.ca

Next Chapter New Life, Dorothy Tannahill-Moran's website: nextchapternewlife.com

Quintessential Careers, Dr Randall S Hansen's website: www.quintcareers.com

3 Information from the article

In pairs or groups of three, complete the table in note form using information from the article. Then, say whose advice you like best and why.

| Name | Job | Advice |
|-------------------------|-----|--------|
| Kathy Robinson | | |
| Lynn Mattoon | | |
| Dorothy Tannahill-Moran | | |
| Maureen McCann | | |
| Dr Randall S Hansen | | |

Ready for the future

4 Summary

Join the words to make phrasal verbs from the article and then use them to complete the paragraph about the article.

- | | |
|------------|--------|
| 1. figure | up |
| 2. keep | out |
| 3. left | into |
| 4. seek | behind |
| 5. showing | out |
| 6. tapped | out |
| 7. thought | up |

The article states that it is crucial to _____ (1) with advances in your profession if you don't want to be _____ (2). It says that you should regularly check job postings to see if certain skills keep _____ (3). You should _____ (4) what you need to learn or do to be able to achieve your next career step. One career coach writes about a client who _____ (5) his professional network in order to _____ (6) opportunities and to stay ahead of his competitors. He also advises that having a plan will enable you to know that the decisions you need to make are well _____ (7).

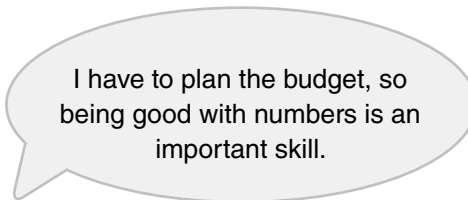
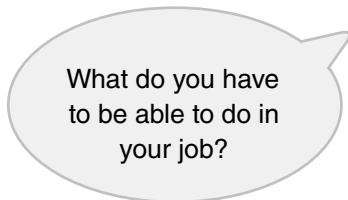
5 Expressions

Complete the expressions from the article. Then, use them in sentences of your own (that are not about the article).

- It's not a good idea to leave everything **up to c** _____ .
- Try to **keep t** _____ **of** the skills that are needed in your position.
- When **times were t** _____ , my network saved me.
- Making decisions during **e** _____ **charged situations** is not easy.

6 Discussion, writing and research task

a. Work in pairs. Interview your partner and find out what skills are required to do his/her job.



- Write a job posting for your partner's job. Include the job title, the skills required and any other important information.
- Compare your job postings to similar job postings on the internet. Discuss how similar or different the skills needed for the jobs are.
- In your pairs, discuss what training courses or seminars you could do to improve your CV and future career development.

Ready for the future

7 Extra reading



MAUREEN McCANN is an award-winning international career coach and author working in Canada and Europe. McCann spoke to *Business Spotlight* via email about the importance of career planning.

Does everyone need a career plan?

In a word — yes. In the same way that everyone needs a map to travel long distances, everyone needs a career plan. Of course, there are those who prefer to wander, yet even they need a plan to prevent them from getting lost or injured along the way. Careers can change quickly as a result of any number of factors — economic, health, family. Just as important, you yourself may change: what you once loved about your work may slowly become something you no longer enjoy.

Setting objectives to work towards as one changes over time can help feed self-worth and keep you focused. A career plan keeps you engaged in your long-term career development and helps you recognize opportunities and threats to your career happiness. Having a plan, checking it regularly and directing your own career path empowers you to make the necessary changes, rather than having to react to situations as they arise.

What should a good career plan include?

A good career plan may include a values assessment and an exit strategy, as well as short- and long-term goals. In assessing your values, you should ask yourself what motivates you to do what you do. Is it power, prestige, money, work-life balance, job security, enjoyment or something else? When you know what is motivating you, you can assess ideal scenarios. For example, if you know that you value job security, working for a risky start-up may not be a chance you're willing to take.

In a military context, an exit strategy minimizes potential losses; this is also true of your career. An exit strategy helps you plan to leave your current role in a managed and methodical way. You are always looking for opportunities, so when they present themselves, you need to be prepared to react. When you understand what it would take to leave your current role, it can be empowering.

As for goals, it takes time to create great things. When you establish small tasks that lead towards a large goal, the tasks seem more manageable and the results can have two-fold effects. For example, you could take a business course that helps you get a credential towards a long-term goal, while the course itself might also develop you as a leader and make you stronger in your current role.

How flexible should the plan be? For example, what should you do if you are offered a job that doesn't fit the plan?

Your plan should be flexible. You never know what opportunity may present itself that you had not considered. If you know what you want in your career, or at least have a solid foundation of understanding, you will find yourself on the right trajectory. You consider opportunities, weigh them against the plan, analyse them to see the pros and the cons as they relate to your plan and make the decision.

On the other hand, if you do not know what you want, you waste a lot of time and energy considering opportunities that are not right for you. This can be especially difficult when emotions are high. It is as important to recognize paths that do not align with your plan as it is to recognize those that do.

A good plan is important for career success. You can not only recognize opportunities and react to them, you also identify the value you have to offer and how you can contribute to an organization's business and economic goals. This gives you the confidence and ability to clarify your career decisions.

Ready for the future

Vocabulary record: Ready for the future

| verb | noun | adjective | adverb |
|--------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| ground | | | |
| | accomplishment | | |
| | | challenging | |
| | | | emotionally |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Vocabulary record

