



# Holistic Career Management: THE ESSENTIALS

## INTRODUCTION

The holistic career approach, developed by UNFPA's Director of Human Resources Michael Emery, encompasses a set of critical factors for effectively building and managing one's career. Especially relevant in today's fast-changing, complex work environment, this comprehensive model provides individuals with the tools to analyze and better understand themselves and their careers, improve their career management skills, knowledge and tools – and stay ahead of the curve when planning on their next move.

Whether you are looking for a job in the multilateral, private or public sector, the holistic career approach will help you get a deeper understanding of where you are now, what you have to offer, what you are looking for, and how these factors translate into jobs, which build a long and rewarding career.

In the following section, each component of the holistic career model will be explained in detail. The document also includes a number of links to additional resources, which contain a wealth of information on careers with UNFPA, the UN common system, and international organizations, along with some short, fast self-assessment tools. It concludes with a small reflection and action-planning exercise, to help you translate your learning and thinking into meaningful career change.

Click below for more information on holistic career management:

- *UNFPA Career Guide:*  
[www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/UNFPA\\_Career\\_Guide\\_0.pdf](http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/UNFPA_Career_Guide_0.pdf)
- Holistic Career Approach, DHR, UNFPA:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7XmqJplfqA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7XmqJplfqA)





## QUALIFICATIONS

- A master's degree is strongly recommended for a professional career path; there are thousands of highly-qualified profiles in a global market!
- In applications, be sure to highlight the background, experience and skills you can bring to the job, and how they match the job requirements.
- Be proactive: Plan to learn/obtain credentials if any gaps are identified.



## DOCUMENTS

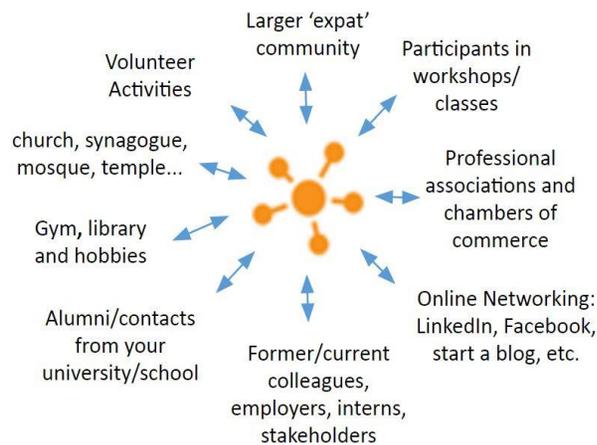
- Each organization seeks a specific type of application. Adapt your documents accordingly.
- Many readers only pay attention to page one; make sure it is captivating.
- Hiring managers notice how much time/effort you have put into preparing your application.
- Pay attention to details. Proofread!



## NETWORKING

- Building long-term, *reciprocal* relationships: sharing information, knowledge, opportunities and resources – even challenges. Many jobs applied for were referred by friends/colleagues – it's a smart way to work.
- Think about *why* you network. Take an active interest in people. Networking is something you should do all the time, not only when you need something. Think about *when* you network. Integrate networking into your career.
- Three Tiers of Networking:
  - Passive Networkers** (70%) do their jobs and go home.
  - Active Networkers** (28%) volunteer to "do stuff": set up parties, introduce others, and welcome/assist new colleagues. They put more in than they take out.
  - Creative Networkers** (2%) set up networking groups, forge relationships, change ways of working, and/or shape their professional domain.
- Be mindful of cross-cultural nuances and organizational norms.

**Activity:** Below is a mini-worksheet to get you thinking about your network:



### MAP YOUR NETWORK:

Use this form to identify colleagues in the various elements described at left. .



### THIS IS YOUR NETWORK:

### HOW ARE YOU AVAILING OF IT?

### WHAT CAN YOU DO TO EXPAND IT?

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
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## REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

- How people see you — often just a “one-liner” people think or say — is a powerful career driver.
- It is important for you to be aware of what people think regarding both the good and the “bad” (what needs to be addressed).
- Think very carefully of how you use social media. Recruiters routinely check social media.
- Never send an angry email. Be mindful of your electronic footprint. Avoid email fights at all costs (decelerate - talk instead).



## COMPETENCIES

- Competencies define *how* you approach work (soft skills and technical expertise).
- See and sell yourself as a competency-package rather than a series of jobs!
- Understand what yours are and how they fit into the interview, etc.



## JOB SATISFIERS

- Think about what makes you happy at work – where you are your best self: try to align your career choices with what makes you happy.
- Examples include: recognition, personal growth, promotion, achievement, responsibility.



## VALUES

- Think about what is important to you, and what you passionate about. How do your values play out with your job choices? Examples include: teamwork, creativity, safety, contribution, work/life balance. The best fit is when your personal values align with organizational values and mission.

## ACTIVITY

**Values Self-Assessment Card Sort:**  
([assets.cce.umn.edu/cardsort/values/](https://assets.cce.umn.edu/cardsort/values/))

List your top values below:

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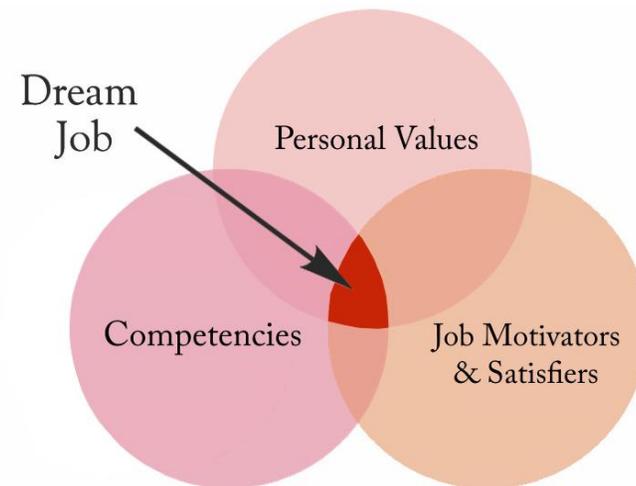


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The jobs that combine your competencies (what you know and can do – often things you’re naturally good at), satisfiers (what you *like* to do) and values (a match between individual and organizational priorities/mission) tend to be the best “fit” – and provide the most career satisfaction. We encourage you to think about these elements before engaging in job-search activities.





## □ OPPORTUNITY SCANS

- Understand the market – look at the jobs of the future. Where is the money flowing? What are larger trends in the UN system and in the global economy? What impact is this likely to have on your career? Skill up, as needed.



## □ EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EQ)

- Self-Awareness: How do you interact with others? Navigate conflicts? Influence action?
- Especially important when interviewing: Have a good example of how you have dealt with a conflict (and make sure it's appropriately complex/challenging).
- In a conflict, step back and think, "What am I doing to contribute to the reaction/ behavior?" Then, what can you do differently to move towards resolution?
- Good rule of thumb: Be polite and respectful of everyone you meet.



## □ MOMENTUM

- The amount of time, energy and effort you spend to build your career.
- Don't sit back and wait for things to happen: by focusing on your networking, reputation management and learning, you multiply your chances of success!



## □ LUCK

- "Where preparation meets opportunity." (Oprah Winfrey)
- Good luck is a product of good timing, effective networking, an up-to-date skill set – and the right attitude. If you're sure you're, "Never going to get it," you risk communicating that – and adversely affecting the outcome.
- "Successful careers are a combination of diligent planning and good luck. The diligent planning is essential, because it makes you eligible for the luck." (Brian Fetherstonhaugh, *The Long View*)

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## USEFUL LINKS:

- Competency-based Interviewing, UNFPA : [www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3-WKWpNI3I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3-WKWpNI3I)
- Lots of vacancy announcements and career resources: articles, news, podcasts plus career coaches (for a fee): [unjobfinder.org](http://unjobfinder.org) (sign up for job alerts!)
- International Civil Service Commission Jobs (searchable): [ICSC Jobnet](http://ICSC.Jobnet)
- Build Your International CV/Résumé (website): Resources for career growth and CV building in international development, justice and peace ([cvwritingcourse.blogspot.com](http://cvwritingcourse.blogspot.com)) UN Career Portal: [careers.un.org/lbw/Home.aspx](http://careers.un.org/lbw/Home.aspx)
- Humanitarian Jobs (NGO and IOs) – ReliefWeb (good search features): [reliefweb.int/jobs](http://reliefweb.int/jobs)
- LinkedIn UN & International Jobs: <https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/united-nations-jobs>





**3. Gaps Analysis:** Which areas require attention? What can be done to remove any obstacles between “here” and “there”?

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**4. Resources:** What resources are available to address any areas for improvement/other gaps? Consider all areas: people (colleagues, classmates, supervisors, ex-supervisors, mentors...), skills, financial resources, systems/groups (e.g. alumni associations, professional associations, etc.), emotional, physical.

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**5. Action Plan:** Below, please list three things – each with a deadline – to get closer to your career goal.

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