THE SIX STEPS TO

Regardless of your career field, current position or years of experience, goal setting and career navigation are invaluable to your career trajectory.

Career roadmaps deal with drawing a line between two points and outlining the specific jobs to get to that point. Career navigation takes more things into consideration, such as job mobility, life events, accomplishments and understanding where you can make the biggest difference.

The following steps will help guide you in filling out the blank Career Navigator at (http://www.seacnav.navy.mil/rda/workforce/Pages/CareerDevelopment.aspx)

Step 1 - Define your values and principles. As a government employee, you took the Oath of Office. These are the foundation of your purpose. Know your bedrock principles that you will not violate, even if pressured. As you plan your career, you must be honest – especially with yourself. Sometimes it is easy to look at others and say, “I could do that job.” Be honest with yourself and make sure you understand what is required of the job and if you have the experience. If you have never been a supervisor, it is unlikely that you are ready to take over a large organization.

Step 2 - Determine what your career education aspirations are. Many people came to their current job with a college degree. Was college a period in your life that was too theoretical and you just want to apply that knowledge or are you ready for a Master’s degree or PhD? Whether your formal education continues or not, you must always be learning.

Step 3 – Determine what training you need. Your first line supervisor is the first place to start to help you identify your training needs. The training will include technical, professional and personal training.

CAREER NAVIGATOR

In acquisition jobs, your position requires that you be certified in a career field and at a certain level.

Step 4 – Get a mentor or two. Most senior leaders want to help others succeed and will make time in their busy schedule for career counseling and mentoring. A mentor will facilitate your professional growth by listening and sharing the knowledge and insights he/she has learned over the years. You should always have at least one mentor. A great mentor will help hold a mirror up to you and question your perspective, help set your goals and hold you accountable.

Step 5 – Determine what certification you need. In an acquisition billet, that will typically be reflected as a DAWIA level certification. Certification is the combination of education, training, and experience. Get the experience you need and don’t try to short cut it! There are many people who are certified in numerous career fields that are also good students and test takers but also lack experience performing the work of the career field. Certifications and experience work hand in hand.

Step 6 – Determine if it is time to broaden your experience. At some point in your career, you will probably want to navigate outside of your original employer. If you think it is time, write down what you have accomplished in your job. If the list is not very long, it is probably not time. Understanding your strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities (SWOT Analysis) are also important. Talk with your supervisor and your mentors and see if it is time to change the trajectory of your career by entering a development program, doing a job rotation in government or industry, switching career fields or attending the Eisenhower School. As you take this step, be sure to look at your life events that may impact your decision. You should also ask yourself, “How does this next step fit into my career?”

Chart your course within your domain/SYSCOM

Both military and industry experience can play key roles in career development.

Outline your mentor/mentee experience and intentions

Plan and track certifications required to keep you on track to your career goals

Plan and track training that will keep you at the fore of your career field.

Manage training for technical aspects of your career

Plot training such as: management, team building, soft skills, communications.

Track training designed to improve personal development such as interpersonal skills, organizational skills, and motivational skills.

Track how degrees from DAU and other institutions of higher learning can augment your career success.

Document milestones in your career that built and attest to your character.

Career Navigator helps guide you in journaling your career path, envisioning positions you might want to hold in the future, developing actionable plans to become competitive for those positions, and tracking progress. It guides you through considering eight dimensions as shown here:

8 Dimensions to Consider

1. Life Events
2. Results & Awards
3. Experience/Roles
4. Mentoring
5. Certifications
6. Training
7. Education
8. Character

Chart the major changes in status or circumstances (e.g., marriage, divorce, death of a spouse) and understand how these changes may affect your career.

Document major professional accomplishments and honors to see if you are tracking toward your goals.

Visualize how you have grown professionally and if you have been/are/will be in the right roles at the right time.

Plan your long-term goals.

See how you can expand outside of your main skills domain.

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There are a few simple steps you can take to begin (or continue) proactively navigating your own career:

1. About your current technical expertise and how you plan to be a lifelong learner to remain relevant as technology and ways of doing business evolve.
2. Across the Navy at different career fields, geographies, and organizations and make notes on what seems appealing to you — as well as notes on things you are not interested in doing.
3. About whether you want to be a supervisor/manager/leader.
4. Your mentor(s) to tell you about (or even to document) their career navigation, especially critical decision points they remember.
5. The Career Navigators of several role models—for example, Ms. Emily Harman (http://www.secnav.navy.mil/rd/force/Documents/Worksheet-Version-of-Career-Path-Actual_EH_2017-08-22.pdf)—to look for choice points and actions they took that seem relevant to your situation.

### Career Navigator Framework

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<th>Expert</th>
<th>Senior Leader</th>
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**Level of Responsibility and Influence Increases**

**Results & Awards**
- (e.g. Valued Team Member, Successful Project Leader, LOAs, Performance Awards)
- (e.g. Cross Functional Team implemented new pay system, Team Leader for $20M Cost Reduction IPT, Successful Source Selection LOAs, AEA and Performance Awards, Meritorious Award)
- (e.g. Mentoring and Leading High Performance teams that earn recognition from Fleet and DON)

**Certification**
- DAWIA Level I
- DAWIA Level II
- DAWIA Level III
- KLP Requirements

**Mentoring**
- 1st Line Supervisor + 1
- 2 Mentors
- SES Mentor and Become Mentor for others
- Mentoring Others

**Experience**
- Industry
- RDA Level

**Broadening**
- Within Domain/SYSCOM

**Training**
- Industry
- RDA Level

**Technical**
- Broadening Within Domain/SYSCOM

**Professional Development**
- Technical
- Professional

**Education**
- Associate’s/Bachelor’s
- Master’s
- Master’s/Doctorate/Executive Education

- **Take Federal Employee Oath**;
- **Exemplify Standards of Conduct, Moral Character, Honor, Courage, Commitment, Integrity, ...**