

Career Development Worksheet

Instead of thinking about where you are, think about where you want to be. It takes twenty years of hard work to become an overnight success. -- *Diana Rankin*

Developing a career plan requires you to have a sense of direction for the work you want to be doing in the future. Then, when opportunities present themselves, you can decide if you want to take advantage of them because they fit with your plan.

Where are you now?

- ? What is important to you?
- ? What are your strengths and values?
- ? What do you *like* in your current job? Which tasks? Projects? Parts of projects?
- ? What do you *dislike* in your current job? Which tasks? Projects? Parts of projects?

Where do you want to be?

- ? Where do you want to be in terms of your career five to ten years from now?
- ? Why are you interested in going in this direction?
- ? How does this interface with your other goals?
- ? Does this position exist at the Lab?
- ? What is the labor market demand -- either at the Lab or outside the Lab?
- ? Do you have the necessary skills to do it?

How will you get there? Use the SWOT approach (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) to help plan your career path.

Strengths:

- ? What skills, knowledge, and abilities do I possess?
- ? What am I good at?

Weaknesses:

- ? What skills, knowledge, and abilities do I lack?
- ? Where are the gaps?

To be able to reach my career goal what do I need? How do I expand?

- ? Knowledge
- ? Skills
- ? Education
- ? Money
- ? Connections

Opportunities to build on your strengths:

- ? What projects can I take on to expand my skills?
- ? What can I do that is slightly risky but will stretch me?
- ? Is there an unglamorous and difficult job I am willing to take on that will build a skill or knowledge base?
- ? What can I do that will help my group and the Lab?
- ? Who can help my work career?
- ? Is there a mentor with whom I can hook up?

Threats to your success:

- ? What skills or knowledge do I have that will soon be obsolete?
- ? Are my goals realistic?
- ? How strong is my desire to achieve these goals?
- ? Are my goals compatible with my strengths and weaknesses?
- ? Are my goals compatible with the parts of my job?