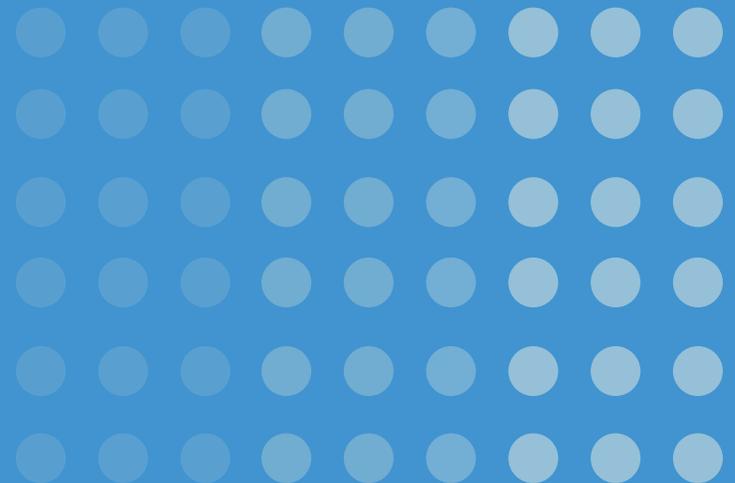


HAVE YOU THOUGHT
ABOUT **YOUR NEXT
CAREER MOVE?** DO
YOU NEED TO BROADEN
OR **UPDATE YOUR
WORK EXPERIENCE?**
ARE YOU CONSIDERING
ADDITIONAL TRAINING?
ARE YOU THINKING
ABOUT **CHANGING JOBS?**
HAVE YOU BEEN IN
YOUR POSITION FOR
A LONG TIME?
HAVE **CIRCUMSTANCES
CHANGED?** IF SO, PLEASE
REVIEW THE NEW...



CAREER GUIDE

for UNFPA Staff Members



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Much of this is original and reflects specific information useful to UNFPA staff members, but the outline and some of the content has been adapted from work done by our agency colleagues. Thus, UNFPA would like to thank UNESCO, in particular, along with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operation's (DPKO) Department of Field Support (DFS) and the United Nations Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) for sharing so generously their career materials.

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FOREWORD

Dear Colleagues,

I invite you to explore the new UNFPA Career Guide, created specifically for UNFPA staff and managers. This Guide contains information, tips, and resources to help you think through a wide range of career management and career development topics. This publication is part of UNFPA's Human Resources Strategy to nurture and retain our talent.

The Career Guide also contains reflections from several UNFPA staff members, who generously provided their insights on career tools or strategies that proved useful for them, individually. I would like to express my appreciation for their candor, and time, as they shared their stories.

As you may be aware, I have devoted the majority of my career to helping several UN organizations better recruit, retain, develop and manage their talent, and put coherent systems in place to support a skilled global workforce. What some of you may not know is my longstanding passion for helping individuals think through their career options in these complex and often changing organizations. As such, I speak regularly with staff members at all levels about their choices, strategies, and what drives them to do the work that they do. Through my experience, I have developed a holistic career model, which is shared on page 4; it encompasses the factors that I believe are critical to consider when checking the health of one's career. I hope you will take a moment to study it, and I welcome any feedback that you might provide about its usefulness.

The UN system is unique in the way careers can unfold and progress. That said, it is still subject to many of the same pressures that other public and private organizations face – financial, political, and macroeconomic, while trying to be “leaner” and do more with less, and manage a very diverse workforce. As UNFPA looks toward the future, particularly taking into account the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) development paradigm, there are a number of trends that are affecting whom we recruit and select as leaders. Several of them are mentioned at the beginning of this Guide, but each new emergency, economic crisis, or political decision has the power to create the need for a different skill set; this provides both career challenges and career opportunities for those of us working in the multilateral sector and it is incumbent upon us to stay “ahead of the curve” when it comes to managing our own careers.

Finally, this Guide is a work in progress. It will be revisited in the future, and amended, to reflect some of the changes described above that are sure to continue to transform the work that we do – and, as a result, the talent that is needed. UNFPA would also like to hear from you, our staff, and gather additional stories about things that have helped you along the way. Feel free to contact me, or any member of the Talent Management Team, if you'd like to share yours.

Wishing you all the best,

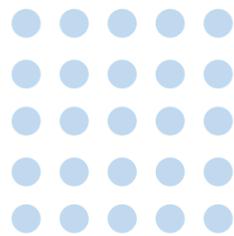
Michael Emery
Director, Human Resources

PART I: INTRODUCTION TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Staff members join UNFPA for a variety of reasons. Some have a lifelong ambition to serve the United Nations, and in particular, a specialized agency such as UNFPA that focuses on achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health, realizing productive rights, and reducing maternal mortality, and to accelerate progress on the International Conference on Population and Development (ICDP) agenda, and have prepared accordingly. Others have a specialized focus in an area like administration, communications, or IT, and are drawn more broadly to the mission that the UN and its agencies represent.

Employment, which used to be quite secure in the UN System – and still is, comparably, to many other sectors – is now vulnerable to change. Organizational or programme priorities – and even entire structures – have seen rapid change and/or re-alignment. Resources have been cut or allocated differently. Individuals and organizations are required to do more with less. It requires a great deal of energy to keep up with work in a changing environment, which can make it difficult to focus on your career and professional development.

Recent and ongoing internal changes at UNFPA reflect major changes in the world of work, where career models have evolved from a paternalistic system (spending your entire career with one company/organization) to a much more fluid – and somewhat harsher – reality. Member states are demanding better value for their money, more responsiveness, and more efficient, dynamic organizations. (See the [“Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals”](#) for more details). One of the effects of this change is often less stability and job security for (e.g., fixed-term and other) staff members,



“My most valuable lesson thus far has been to never stop learning. After working 20+ years in the organization, one would think that I have seen and heard it all. But each day that I spend at different functions and at different postings, I’ve learned more about myself as a professional and about new ways of tackling challenges in my daily work; I learn from colleagues who bring new ideas each day to address the core strategic priorities of the organization; and, I learn from the leadership at UNFPA how as an organization we can continue to stay relevant in a changing development environment with shifting global priorities. In managing one’s career, I would advise strongly against complacency and instead favor a continuous thirst for knowledge, self-growth and a willingness to push oneself beyond our comfort zones.”

–CARLOS VALENCIA, INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS MANAGER, MYANMAR

while certain changes may increase opportunities for other staff categories (such as service contract holders).

UNFPA hopes to support its staff members by selecting the best professional development opportunities to support the learning requirements of its changing occupations/professions. But, it is also your job to embrace a proactive approach to your own learning and development, and career management.

A number of factors, noted below, mean that UNFPA’s (and/or other UN agencies’) job requirements evolve over the years.

- **Reprofiling of certain jobs due to changing priorities or organizational and donor mandates**
- **The phasing out of certain mandated responsibilities and resulting job loss (e.g., outsourcing)**
- **UN Reform/Post – 2015 agenda**
- **Funding cuts**
- **The development of new funding streams that make older occupational areas obsolete**

However, at the same time, individuals who currently are not employed with UNFPA may obtain jobs in the future. Workforce trends show that UNFPA is experiencing its own internal demographic challenges and changes. For example, the recent emphasis on resource mobilization, partnership development, policy upstreaming, and strengthening of healthcare systems are now part of UNFPA’s organizational core mandate. Professionals with these skills are actively being sought. It is likely that in another 20 years, the staffing table will continue to evolve and will look very different than it does today.

Additionally, UNFPA, like many international organizations, anticipates some significant impact in turnover rate due to a larger number of impending retirements. In sum, the world of work continues to evolve and change rapidly due to a variety of pressures, and UNFPA is no exception.

DELIVERING AS ONE/UN REFORM

Current objectives are to “deliver as one” (DaO) and increase coherence among actors in the UN Common System (and even beyond). On the human resources front, changes that can be expected include:

- **Efforts to speed up and improve recruitment and selection in order to have the right staff in the right place at the right time;**
- **An emphasis on results-based management/budgeting and team-based approaches;**
- **Enhanced staff well-being; work/life initiatives;**
- **More cohesiveness and harmonization of HR policies and processes;**
- **More knowledge sharing, better networks and the promotion of communities of practice;**
- **Increased emphasis on humanitarian action; and**
- **More emphasis on rotation and time spent in the field.**

BOUNDARYLESS CAREER

The concept of a boundaryless career arose in start-up organizations and those in emerging technologies, which tend to be “weak” environments where the employment situation is ambiguous, of limited duration and under-resourced. It resembles the environment in many international organizations, NGOs (project-based work, elections and humanitarian, in particular), and peacekeeping, where contracts are often short-term, mandates are defined for a set period, which may – or may not – be extended, and where the financing of posts is subject to short-term funding committed by Member States or other donors. Similar trends have taken place in the private sector after years of outsourcing, reorganization, re-engineering and other types of organizational reforms.

The following characteristics describe boundary-less careers:

- **Reliance on skills, knowledge and reputation rather than formal position or years of service to provide reference points for the career.**
- **Self-generated career plans reinforced through professional and social networks.**
- **Continuous learning through on-the-job training, formal education and networked relationships.**
- **Future goals planned around the redefinition of career interests.**

With the emergence of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there is a need, for the UN, in general, and UNFPA, in particular, to accommodate and maximize the potential contributions of an increasingly diverse workforce, including large numbers of national staff and complementary personnel, with different needs and expectations by providing a more flexible workplace and innovative ways to deliver work.

Please click here for more information about the UN Development System’s fitness for purpose to respond to the Post-2015 Development Agenda: <http://sd.iisd.org/news/un-high-level-officials-discuss-un-fit-for-purpose/>

Organizations in most sectors – including the UN – now place the burden on individuals to define their own paths in the wider work environment. Traditional, onwards-and-upwards, seniority-based, secure careers have become nearly extinct. As such, individuals should learn the mechanics of the boundary-less career. As a result, the

- **Responsibility is on the individual to be the primary driver in managing his/her career; and the**
- **Organization should enable learning and develop structures and tools to match the individual’s experience and competencies with organizational strategy and goals.**

OVERVIEW OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT



QUALIFICATIONS

What are the qualifications that you bring to a job? Do you have the right academic background, mixture of work experiences, skills? Read vacancy announcements carefully and assess how your background matches the jobs you are most interested in, so that you might plan learning and stretch assignments to fill in any gaps.



DOCUMENTS

Beyond what you bring to a job or organization is how you communicate, or market, your credentials. Having your documents in order is critical; is your internal UNFPA application really reflective of what you do, the impact that you have had at each job, and what you achieved? It may make sense to spend time reviewing your documents if you have had difficulty securing interviews. Remember, while many in the organization may know you, each application is looked at and assessed for its professionalism, writing skills, and polish. It is also evident to a hiring manager how much time you have put into the preparation of an application; sending something generic or “flat” won’t help you get through the multi-step screening process that exists throughout the UN System.



NETWORKING

How strong are your professional relationships? Have you spent time nurturing relationships with individuals within and outside of UNFPA? Are you actively seeking career advice from others?



REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

It is important to explore how you are perceived by others, what your professional reputation looks like, both the good and what might need to be addressed. This is not easy to do, and will likely involve some candid conversations with trusted allies, mentors and managers.



COMPETENCIES

Competencies are a set of skills and attributes that define HOW you approach work; they can sometimes be defined as “soft skills,” as they primarily involve abilities like negotiation, influencing, teamwork, managing performance, leadership, communication, creativity/innovation and the like. Technical expertise may be considered a competency as well. Generally, each UN organization has its own competency framework that defines the most important skills and abilities that each organization values.



JOB SATISFIERS

Job satisfiers, sometimes called “motivators,” are aspects of work or the workplace, which provide a sense of fulfilment or satisfaction. The nature of the work is important and affects perceptions of how much one appreciates what one does. Things that satisfy people in the workplace and make them happy include: the opportunity for personal development, achievement, recognition, promotion and responsibility. Dissatisfiers, also known as hygiene factors, influence job satisfaction and often are outside the control of the individual. Organizational policy and bureaucracy, unsuitable working conditions, poor compensation, or a lack of inclusion are factors that may result in

staff who feel undervalued or excluded. Managers who attend to job satisfiers and personal development aspects, and who manage hygiene factors often improve employee performance and improve workplace satisfaction.



VALUES

Values can generally be defined as those things that are important to you when you go to work; what helps you get out of bed in the morning and be satisfied. Work values include things like work/life balance, creativity, autonomy, teamwork, being seen as an expert – all things that add meaning to your personal definition of gratification at work. Some values may remain constant throughout your life – some individuals consistently value teamwork, for example. Some values, on the other hand, will change; you may have an appetite for risk and adventure earlier in your career, while later in your career, you may value security and stability more than you did previously.



OPPORTUNITY SCANS

Opportunity scans involve a constant awareness of the changing work landscape, within UNFPA and beyond. If you are engaged in opportunity scans, you might ask yourself how your organization is growing and changing, where opportunities are growing and/or reducing, how the broader UN system is changing, and what skills and experiences might be required for the future.



EQ

EQ refers to self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and your ability to self-regulate. It is a very important predictor of workplace success, often at least as

much – if not more – than IQ. Consider how you deal with setbacks, conflict, and managing your performance, as well as the performance of others. Think about the empathy you exhibit, and the impact your words and actions have on the people around you. Many staff and managers are unknowingly derailed by a lack of self-awareness, or a distorted view of how others see you. This concept can be linked a bit with reputation, as it becomes obvious to others when someone exhibits a lot of EQ – or very little.



MOMENTUM

Momentum can be defined as the time, effort and energy you spend to build upon progress in career self-management. If you focus on networking, reputation management, investing in learning, you will get exponentially closer to your goals. If you are very passive, you won’t have much momentum. Momentum is within your control. It is the difference between a crawl, a walk, a jog or a sprint, metaphorically speaking.



LUCK

Luck, unlike momentum, is generally out of your control. Nobody can predict when the stars will align; the opportunity will present itself, or the job vacancy comes up at the time you are actually looking. However, individuals can create circumstances that maximize the chances of success when in a fortunate situation – if your paperwork is in order, your reputation stellar, your network strong, and you have built momentum – you are much likelier to be ‘lucky’ should an opportunity arise.

As a former JPO, I realized that a JPO assignment can be a roller coaster ride and a process of transitions. A mentor once told me that, when making a career change, you can change three things: your field of work, the country of your assignment, and the company/organization. He recommended not changing more than two of the three factors at one time. For a JPO, it is often all three, which is a challenge. To manage the transition, it's important to draw on all support networks and resources available and to reach out to fellow JPOs (current and former) to learn from their experiences, as well as seek career counselling and coaching in times of doubt.

-STEPHANIE NGO, HR SPECIALIST AND JPO COORDINATOR, DHR

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT AT UNFPA

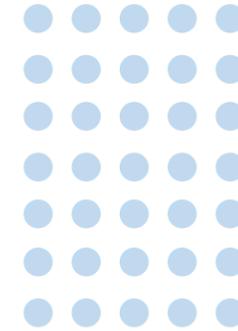
JPOs AT UNFPA

JPOs at UNFPA will benefit from this guide to help them think through their career goals, and how to market their experience whether applying for openings at UNFPA or exploring opportunities with other international development employers.

Additionally, JPOs, through a DHR initiative, are afforded career and staff wellbeing counseling during their assignment. These hours, at the discretion of each individual, can be used to consider career options, polish a resume or UN application, seek interview support, or create a job search plan. Discussion is kept confidential.

JPOs also benefit from the resources of the JPO Service Center: www.jposc.org. A portion of this website is dedicated to "Career Management."

For questions on how to best use this guide or any of the resources described above, contact UNFPA's JPO coordinator in DHR.



A stretch assignment is a great way to learn and grow on the job. I used to work in Civil Affairs in UN Peacekeeping – until I lost my job due to a Mission downsizing (which was very hard). Fortunately, I had done a couple of ad hoc learning and HR projects as well as committee work on the administrative side of the mission. (And those referrals were the result of volunteering on the Staff Recreation Committee). Projects and committee work were useful in working across boundaries (different pillars, sections and professions) and interacting with upper management. This led to a temporary assignment to fill in on a new HR project – the e-PAS (PAD) rollout, until the mission hired the new HR person. Then the Training Chief left. Ultimately, it led to a stretch across disciplines (substantive to administrative), within the discipline of human resources (performance management, training and career development), and to higher-level responsibilities (managing a diverse team of 11). I like the example because it shows how networking, working across silos, and challenging developmental assignments complemented each other – and resulted not only in continued employment at a critical juncture – but long-term career change.

-JENNY PILLING, PERFORMANCE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST, TALENT MANAGEMENT BRANCH, DHR

STRETCH ASSIGNMENTS

Stretch assignments are generally short-term projects or tasks that are given to staff members to build their current knowledge or skills level, to avoid career plateau, and to take on challenging projects in addition to their current responsibilities or as a new job. The purpose of stretch assignment is to "stretch" employees developmentally. A stretch assignment may or may not involve a change in duty station.

To find out more about stretch assignments, please talk to your manager or book a career counseling session. To research for available assignments, visit the UNFPA (and other) employment websites and search for temporary job postings and watch postings for detail assignments and consider networking to share your interest with relevant parties (e.g. DHR, Strategic HR Partner, staff/managers in your target area of interest).

UNFPA LEADERSHIP POOL

The Leadership Pool, introduced in 2013, was created to strengthen UNFPA's succession management and ability to attract a diverse, mobile and flexible workforce and to complement the annual rotation exercise. It focuses on the roles of Representative, Deputy Representative and International Operations Manager, and is open to internal and external applicants.

Candidates applying for one or more of these job types compete to participate in a comprehensive assessment process (carried out by a specialist external provider), and, if successful, become a member of UNFPA's Leadership Pool – a pre-assessed group of candidates used as the source for filling future international rotational post vacancies within UNFPA.

After being assessed for one or more Leadership Pool job types, candidates will benefit from individualized career advice and tailored development opportunities to enhance their readiness to assume leadership posts.

When rotational post vacancies arise in a particular job type, applicants who are accepted into the pool for a particular job type will be contacted and invited to express their interest.

Members of the Leadership Pool are expected to serve in a variety of functions and locations, including crisis countries and non-family duty stations, so candidates who apply for the Pool should be ready to take up a post in these types of locations.

Once or twice a year, candidates will be invited to visit UNFPA's employment page and follow the instructions provided for completing the application through e-recruit. In the overall selection of candidates, the aim is to strike a balance between addressing the current organizational needs as well as focusing on gender balance, geographical representation, internal vs external, national to international, technical to managerial and general services to professional.

Those who do not make it into the assessment process in one round have other opportunities in the future to apply again. UNFPA staff can email any questions related to the leadership pool to leadership.pool@unfpa.org.

Opportunities for learning and growth are sometimes presented when least expected. For me, it came in a nomination to serve on the Rebuttal Panel. Since I did not have an HR background, I had reservations, but I thought of the saying, “If you’re comfortable where you are, then you are not growing.” Serving on the Panel is challenging and can be tiring. It stretches you outside your comfort zone, since it calls for additional work, and because you realize that all parties are looking to this group to solve an issue that can have a significant impact on their careers. It’s an opportunity, which carries a great responsibility.

I gained a wealth of knowledge on the work of UNFPA in country offices and the odds our colleagues face to deliver these services. I gained a new appreciation for the issues DHR is faced with and a tremendous respect for managers and supervisors, as well as the support staff they manage. Everyone has someone to report to, and we are all valuable and have a place in the organization. The value of serving with colleagues from diverse areas and levels cannot be overstated; on the Rebuttal Panel, you are focused on assistance and service to all levels of staff and this lends to an environment of knowledge sharing, respect and growth.

So my recommendation is, the next time you get an email inviting you to serve on any area that is unfamiliar... say, “Yes.” Take a chance to stretch beyond your comfort zone and expect to learn, grow and be pleasantly surprised and make new friends in the process.

- DEIDRE CHARLES-LUCAS, BUDGET ASSOCIATE, RESOURCE PLANNING & BUDGETING BRANCH

TEMPORARY VACANCIES (TVAS)/TEMPORARY JOB OPENINGS

Temporary assignments exist in most, if not all, UN agencies, for a variety of reasons. Sometimes a staff member is on medical/maternity/paternity/personal leave, or special leave without pay, and his/her job needs to be temporarily filled. There may be a gap in hiring, and someone needed on a short-term basis to fill the position. And, sometimes there is a short-term, temporary project, which needs support for several months to one year.

Temporary vacancies (TVAs) or temporary job openings (TJOs) are generally advertised both internally via email and on UNFPA website (<http://www.unfpa.org/jobs>). They are an excellent way to gain new experience, develop a different skill, network with a different unit/division or country office, and thus grow your career.

SECONDMENT

Secondment is the movement of a staff member from one organization to another for a fixed period, normally not exceeding two years, during which the staff member may either (1) be paid by and subject to the staff regulations and rules of the receiving organization, but will retain his or her rights of employment in the releasing organization or (2) stay on UNFPA's payroll with a lien against a position at UNFPA. The period of secondment may be extended for a further fixed period by agreement among all the parties concerned.

For the past two years, I have been seconded to the UN's Peacebuilding Support Office, to work on youth and gender in peacebuilding policies and programmes. I cannot over-emphasize how great an experience it is to discover another part of the UN system, while still being attached to UNFPA and working to advance its mandate. The learning curve has been steep and the professional challenge exciting. This experience has opened new perspectives on how and why UNFPA's work matters and how to promote it with partners. I think I will have fresh viewpoints and ideas to offer to UNFPA when I return. If you have the opportunity to be seconded, jump on it!

CECILE MAZZACURATI, POLICY OFFICER, YOUTH & GENDER, PEACEBUILDING SUPPORT OFFICE (FORMERLY WITH THE HUMANITARIAN & FRAGILE CONTEXT BRANCH, PROGRAMME DIVISION)

Please read here for more information:

http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/admin-resource/DHR_Annex%20I.%20Inter-Organization%20Agreement.pdf

DETAIL ASSIGNMENT

Detail assignments are short-term, internal, usually ad hoc, assignments where a staff member temporarily relocates to another duty station, whether for a project, a “surge” (humanitarian, post-disaster or other emergency) or other temporary replacement (e.g. sick/maternity/paternity leave). In particular, cross fertilization among work units, e.g. between HQ and field-based offices, is encouraged. One staff member who recently completed a temporary assignment at HQ, noted:

My experience on a three-month detail assignment at HQ has been very beneficial for the continuation of my career in UNFPA. It allowed me to better understand the needs and the realities of my organization, gave me a better understanding of the holistic and strategic priorities of UNFPA, and helped me appreciate even more the qualities and vision of the people who lead our institution. I worked in a country office and missed this global level vision, which is essential if one wants to move from a national to international professional position in UNFPA.

My detail assignment strengthened my capacity today to develop my country program more strategically. Upon my return to the CO, I felt at ease to successfully conduct advocacy at high level with government partners on the ICPD after 2014 and its articulation with the MDGs and the post-2015 agenda.

-CHEIKH MBENGUE, ASSISTANT REPRESENTATIVE, SENEGAL

For more information about personnel policies and procedures of detail assignment, please read here: http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/admin-resource/DHR_Detail%20Assignment_0.pdf

EXAMPLES OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS
1. Conceived and/or created a new programme, system, service, procedure or policy.
2. Saw an opportunity for improvement, developed a plan and carried it through to successful completion.
3. Supported implementation of a major initiative or programme
4. Saved the organization time or money (or both).
5. Improved a work process.
6. Demonstrated capacity to work under pressure, handling heavy workloads with tight deadlines.
7. Successfully handled an emergency situation or crisis.
8. Took initiative to solve a(n overlooked) problem.
9. Assumed additional responsibility (i.e., the work of a colleague when he/she was on mission; saw your portfolio expand).
10. Developed a successful project in support of the Office/Branch work unit's mandate.
11. Initiated, devised and carried through a complex plan or process.

1. KNOW YOURSELF AND FIND YOUR DIRECTION

SELF ASSESSMENT

As noted earlier, the first step in initiating a job search or reviewing your professional development options, involves looking inward and a bit of self-discovery. A thorough self-assessment will help you identify the skills, strengths and competencies that you offer. Once identified, they should be featured in your curriculum vitae (CV) and/or other work history in order to provide potential employers with an indication of your capabilities to perform the required functions. This section will walk you through briefly a number of the elements of self assessment; Appendices 1 – 5 will allow you to dive a little deeper.

- **CREATE YOUR OWN OPPORTUNITIES – put yourself in a position for good things to happen to you.**
- **BE POSITIVE AND FOCUS ON RESULTS – those who get results get ahead.**
- **EARN A REPUTATION for being dependable, committed and professional in everything you do.**
- **SEEK OUT NEW EXPERIENCES AND SKILLS for continued learning and development.**

–MARK BRYAN SCHREINER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PACIFIC SRO

PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Accomplishments are **achievements that were valued by your previous employers** that **demonstrate your abilities**. Although teamwork is a critical skill, it is important to highlight your individual contribution to the work performed. Doing ordinary, expected tasks exceptionally well or working under pressure to meet tight deadlines are accomplishments and should not be overlooked.

Appendix 1, Self Assessment: Professional Accomplishments, is the first of a series of self assessments to help guide you through this somewhat challenging exercise. It involves listing professional accomplishments and analyzing why they were important.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES, WORKING STYLE

In Appendix 2, you will find a list of skills and abilities arranged by type and another by functional area. Select those skills that you have acquired over time. Please note that this list is not all-inclusive, so you may wish to write in additional skills and abilities in the blanks provided.

You may have skills that apply to other occupational groups and work situations; these are called **transferable skills**. Identifying these may help you envisage job opportunities in occupational groups that you had not previously considered. Another set of skills, which are developed through your personality traits can also contribute to your career development. See Appendix 3.

WORK VALUES

Work values are vital to success and satisfaction in your job and during your career. They are the intrinsic or extrinsic rewards that come with every job. They may not be listed in the job description, but you should think about them as carefully as you would job responsibilities, hours and salary.

Examples of work values include: helping others, working autonomously, working in teams, being viewed as an expert and having stability. Please refer to Appendix 4 for a much more comprehensive list of work values, along with an exercise to help you clarify these as part of your self-assessment.

Rather than thinking about what you should want in a job, think about what you cannot live without in terms of your work values, and on what you may be willing to compromise. Be flexible and honest with yourself. Different jobs – and sectors – offer different rewards, so think about the best combination(s). The failure to acknowledge work values can result in lack/loss of job satisfaction.

COMPETENCIES AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

UNFPA's competency framework identifies the key values, behaviors, skills and attitudes required for the delivery in our mission and because of our evolving organization, this new framework supports a better alignment with UNFPA's mission and strategic direction.

The professional competencies define HOW we conduct ourselves in the organization. These competencies are required of all staff regardless of their level of responsibility. The core competencies are as follow:

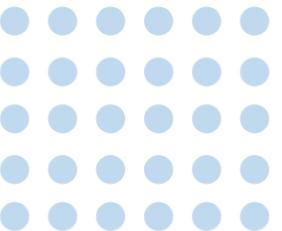
- **Achieving results**
- **Being accountable**
- **Developing and applying professional expertise/business acumen**
- **Thinking analytically and strategically**
- **Working in teams/managing ourselves and our relationships**
- **Communicating for impact**

Since most organizations have developed their own competency frameworks – which all vary slightly – it is important to bear in mind that these competencies exist formally and impact, among other things, employment offers, interviewing and performance management systems. You can find **UNFPA's revised competency framework** in the **DHR Microsite**.

More information on competency-based interviewing can be found in the section on Interviewing.

What organizations/employers are looking for is something that sets you apart from the “competition.” So instead of listing general themes and less-than-glowing accomplishments that don’t have “punch,” mention accomplishments that can be quantified; for example that you saved resources (time or money) or streamlined procedures. List promotions or awards received, special projects completed or certificates or licenses earned. From reading the accomplishments, the employer needs to be assured that, given the same conditions as all potential candidates, you can achieve great success.

–DENNIA GAYLE, DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE, ACCRA



ADDRESSING DEVELOPMENT GAPS

Assuming you have done a skills assessment (see section above), you likely have identified “development (or skills) gaps” – areas for improvement. Examples include: new credentials you would like to pursue, such as a university degree or certification, skills/management training, practical experience in a new area, or language and computer skills.

As you prepare for your next move, you may wish to fill those gaps to become more competitive, either within UNFPA or with another employer. At UNFPA, as throughout the UN Common System, a commitment to learning and development is a highly valued competency that is important for staff at all levels. Demonstrating a willingness to learn, stay abreast of trends in your field and remain competitive in an ever-changing marketplace is often noted by hiring managers.

In performance reviews, it is an excellent idea to ask your manager’s opinion about areas that he/she believes you should concentrate on developing. Ideally, your manager, as one of your “career coaches,” will raise this with you, but if he/she doesn’t, it is a valid topic for you to raise. You can do it in a formal review, or you can schedule a time to meet with your manager and describe how you could benefit from feedback about your performance. UNFPA Talent Management Branch can help to advise you on how to best broach this topic; you can also do a web search on “soliciting feedback.”

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

Although “reputation management” is often discussed in the context of corporate communications or public relations, managing your reputation is an important – if often overlooked – aspect of your career that can have serious impact on your career path and job search. As part of the self-assessment process, it makes sense to do a bit of research and exploration into your professional reputation; how you are viewed by others in the workplace.

Reputation per se is somewhat intangible because it may vary, sometimes widely, for the same individual and it can change over time.

Descriptions of someone’s reputation can range from negative to superlative, and may be formed based on repeated contact or through a single incident. Other people’s assessment of your reputation may be accurate and fair – or not. Reputations can be damaged (by mistakes or accusations – false or otherwise), but they also can be repaired.

Your reputation is key to managing your personal career development. Whether it be how you interact with other people directly or your online persona – how others perceive you will have an impact on your career. –MARIA HADZIC, HR ANALYST, HQ

UNFPA PAD – AN OPPORTUNITY TO OBTAIN FEEDBACK FROM SUPERVISORS AND COLLEAGUES

One way to get a sense of what others think of you is simply to ask, but this requires an open and honest relationship as well as confidence, tact and an awareness of cultural nuances. A more formal way of giving or obtaining this feedback that is used in a number of international organizations – and in the private sector – is through an assessment called a “360° evaluation,” which is often part of management development programmes.

Through such a process, opinions, usually through a confidential, on-line survey, are sought from superiors, peers, subordinates, and self to provide an all-around view of the individual concerned – and then shared with that individual. A 360° feedback exercise can be incredibly valuable, but sometimes it is difficult to hear. However, if you are committed to your own professional development, such information is invaluable.

People who are overly focused on keeping the boss happy at the expense of relationships with their peers or subordinates – may not excel in a 360° feedback exercise. Although it is critical to keep the chain of command satisfied, good managers and staff members will always consider the impact of decisions and requests on their colleagues and team members.

When I joined the Population Fund, I realized the importance of the analysis of demographic data to understand population dynamics in any society. I knew I needed to invest in myself. I was very fortunate that my supervisor at the time was a former Dean of the School of Demography. He was instrumental in supporting my studies while simultaneously working at UNFPA. I completed my Masters’ Degree in Population Studies, for which I thank UNFPA for supporting me to achieve what I never thought I could do in my working life. I learned that managing your career requires personal commitment and how important it is to align your career goals to your workplace.

–GRACIELA PUEBLA, SECURITY ASSOCIATE, OFFICE OF SECURITY COORDINATOR

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Building a Great Professional Reputation
<http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/2013/09/11/how-to-build-a-great-professional-reputation>

Making the UN “fit for purpose” for the new sustainable development agenda, John Hendra, UNSSC, Dec. 2014
<http://slideplayer.com/slide/3032696/>

2. MANAGER'S ROLE IN STAFF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

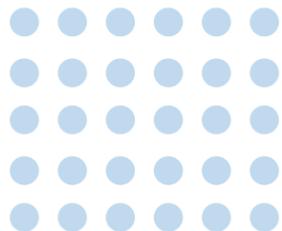
THE CRITICAL ROLE OF THE MANAGER/SUPERVISOR

As a manager or supervisor, it is expected that you will support the career development of your staff members. In fact, most UN organizations have at least one competency that refers to a manager's ability to empower others. One aspect of empowering others is to help nurture each team member's career development.

On the next page, please find a questionnaire that will help you, as a manager, guide a career conversation with your staff. This can be an exercise to do, as well, for staff members; taking time to answer these questions before an impending career conversation can help you to focus your thoughts.

SOME BEST PRACTICES INCLUDE:

MANAGERIAL AND SUPERVISORY BEST PRACTICES
Providing corrective feedback and guidance
Coaching and mentoring
Analyzing the development needs of staff
Providing opportunities for job enrichment or "stretch" assignments
Encouraging staff to take advantage of learning and training opportunities
Completing all aspects of the performance appraisal cycle conscientiously and in a timely manner



My time at headquarters gave me the chance to benefit from the coaching and highly effective mentoring of a senior manager, who really invested in giving advice for my career development. He helped me develop my network at HQ and enhance my technical expertise. I received tips on how to develop my professional network, on work requirements and quality standards, how to prepare for interviews, etc. My time in HQ, paired with mentoring and interaction with colleagues, gave me a new perspective on what to do next. My mentor, through brainstorming meetings, feedback, email and Skype exchanges with colleagues in other regions, and my participation in key intergovernmental meetings at the UN Secretariat showed how the coaching of field colleagues in HQ can help their career development.

-CHEIKH MBENGUE, ASSISTANT REPRESENTATIVE, SENEGAL



Staff Member:
Supervisor:
Date:

<p>1. How do you feel about your career at UNFPA to date?</p> <p>Have you had challenging assignments?</p> <p>What are some of the experiences you've had and how long have you been in each assignment?</p>	
<p>2. What career opportunities would you like to be considered for?</p> <p>What is the highest level position you are striving for?</p>	
<p>3. Why do you think this career aspiration is realistic?</p> <p>What are some of the core competencies that you possess?</p> <p>What are some of your achievements, experiences and work life needs/goals?</p>	
<p>4. Which areas for improvement do you believe should be developed to better qualify or prepare you for your desired career path?</p> <p>List the skills and competencies you desire to improve.</p>	
<p>5. What development experiences could be provided by the organization to prepare you for your desired career path?</p>	
<p>6. What challenges/development opportunities could be provided to you in your current assignment to further your development?</p>	
<p>7. What is your geographic mobility?</p> <p>Are you willing to relocate to realize your career ambitions?</p> <p>Are there any limitations or time limits?</p>	

MENTORING & BUDDIES

UNFPA has a Rafiki or Buddy Programme to help new staff get settled into their new jobs and duty stations. The Rafiki complements the role of the supervisor and DHR and often deals with more informal or social issues. This programme should be re-launched globally as part of the revised onboarding process in 2016.

Mentoring can be defined as a relationship between two individuals based on a mutual desire for support and development for one of those individuals. **Mentors** provide guidance, help interpret events, and give feedback and ideas to their **mentee** – i.e., the person being mentored – about professional next steps, challenging work situations and ideas for the future. They can be a great source of support.

You may find a mentor within UNFPA – or already have someone outside of the organization whom you consider a mentor. There are pros and cons to both. The advantage of having a mentor, or mentors, within your organization is that they can offer advice on navigating its politics – the “unspoken rules,” so to speak, for success and advancement. They can also introduce you to people and widen your network. Having a mentor outside of your place of work can introduce you to broader contacts and trends in your field of interest and to an objective perspective that is not coloured by the same organizational culture.

The mentee plays an important role in the mentor/mentee relationship. As a mentee, you must come to the process being open to being coached or receiving feedback, and take responsibility for your own growth and development. It is the mentor’s job to listen, offer advice and support – not to manage your career for you. You certainly should come to the relationship with an open mind and think of ways to thank or demonstrate appreciation for your mentor’s time. You will want to use your mentor’s time wisely. Think of topics on which you specifically would like advice or feedback, so that you can be clear with your mentor. It is important not to expect him or her to solve your problems. This may sound obvious, but mentors sometimes complain about poor (or no) follow-up from their mentees, so it is important to stay in touch, let your mentor know when you did follow his/her advice and share your successes.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Mentee’s Role http://www.mentoringgroup.com/html/articles/mentee_41.htm

See [page 21](#).

I would say that the most valuable lessons I have learned so far are two, and not just one: Having a sense of direction while keeping focused on striving for excellence and having a learning attitude on your day to day; and ensuring that whatever principles we stand for as an organization are consistently applied in my interaction with colleagues and partners.

I came to learn about these two “pillars” through two mentors I met early in my career, in both cases they were my supervisors and provided close guidance while being extremely demanding at the same time. Whenever I made a mistake, I received honest feedback and support to treat it as learning events that were cementing, progressively, my career progression.

-JAIME NADAL ROIG, REPRESENTATIVE FOR BRAZIL

3. CAREER PLATEAUS

Many people experience the situation at some point during their career of becoming “stuck” with little or no ability to move – laterally or up the career ladder. This can happen for a variety of factors – fewer senior positions, lack of training/qualifications, change of office structure, or being “siloeed.”

Although this will vary according to individuals, job satisfaction tends to be higher when there is a learning curve and a sense of purpose. After a few years on a job, individuals know the work well and there may be a drop in job satisfaction. The information below aims to raise awareness and improve the understanding of career plateaus in order to assist staff and supervisors to better manage these professional challenges.

WHAT IS A CAREER PLATEAU?

Career plateaus occur when:

- The likelihood of additional hierarchical promotion is remote
- A situation exists where there are few internal opportunities for advancement, including the lack of availability of posts/vacancies in higher grades (either a small office or division)
- A period in which an individual’s learning rate levels off; a time of perceived or actual professional stagnation

Although often identified by loss of enthusiasm, boredom, frustration, or lack of commitment, plateaus also can be a valuable interval of rest that provides an opportunity to regain perspective and digest new ideas. It also can provide a unique opportunity to take on studies (pursue coursework, certification, or a degree), external (e.g. family or personal) commitments or projects – the kind of things that one simply wouldn’t be able to take on during an intense work period, such as the first year on a new job.

KINDS OF CAREER PLATEAUS¹



STRUCTURAL PLATEAU – when you have progressed to a point where the organizational structure prevents you from moving up; non-availability of vacancies in higher grades. This happens in most organizations sooner or later. Individuals have little control over the forces that create structural plateaus.



CONTENT PLATEAU – when you have mastered your job and there is no longer a sense of challenge; lack of sufficient desire to take on higher-level responsibilities or to transfer to another division, branch or office; or the lack of availability of such opportunities.



CONTRIBUTION PLATEAU – when you have ceased growing and have limited learning that develops competencies and add value; the inability to discharge responsibilities in the higher grades; the inability to respond to changing situations or to keep up with technological changes. Individuals have significant control over the forces that create contribution-based plateau; if you let this happen, your value on the job market can decline rapidly.



DAMAGED REPUTATION PLATEAU – when critical behaviours or events put a temporary stall on your career progression. These may be self-inflicted or result from association with a particular office, programme, or organization, an individual or supervisor – or even false accusations – or possibly a combination thereof.



LIFE PLATEAU – when your life, not just your job, feels predictable and monotonous, but you yearn for more and are frustrated by this; in many ways this is the most serious plateau. Although some people prefer routine work and stability over variety and change, life plateaus are more profound and go well beyond personal preferences.

1. Content in this chapter adapted from the training, “Career Plateaus: A Possibility for Change,” Career Support Programme, Staff Development Services, Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM), United Nations.

HOW TO COPE

It may be helpful to:

Restructure your view of success: Explore ways to feel successful on the job apart from “moving up,” e.g. lateral, or even downward moves, taking on new and/or different assignment(s) in an existing job (e.g. committee work) – or, indeed, no moves.

Identify learning opportunities: e.g., sabbatical, paid or unpaid time from work to develop a skill or earn a credential.

Use your time to pursue other interests: Sometimes you can take advantage of a “flat” period in work to explore learning opportunities (training or credentials) or personal interests (family roles, hobbies or projects, for example) – things for which you simply do not have the time or energy for during a challenging period at work.

Seek a career move: A change within the organization or to a different organization (e.g. secondment); move sideways to find new excitement and challenge through new environments. (See the chapter on **Opportunities for Career Development at UNFPA** for more details).

STRATEGIES AND AVOIDANCE

Reaching a plateau can also be the result of certain behaviours that you may not be aware of, but have “crept up” into your style, perhaps as a result of the fact that you have stopped learning, are in a situation that is unsatisfying, or simply have not had a career move in a long time. It is important to be honest and ask yourself these admittedly difficult questions to see if you are struggling with any of the following:

- Has it been difficult to adapt to the changes currently occurring in your working environment?
- Has it been difficult to accept criticism?
- When did you last undertake a self-development activity?
- Does the idea of going to work leave you weary or have other negative connotations?
- Do you seem to experience conflicts regularly at work?

While these actions may not necessarily resolve plateau situations, they normally will increase overall levels of satisfaction.

HOW TO AVOID OR ESCAPE A CAREER PLATEAU

There is no magic solution to avoiding career plateaus – they are a part of life and work. And, as noted above, sometimes being in a plateau can be a positive thing.

For example, if you are raising young children or taking care of an ailing or elderly relative, it may be good to have extra energy to focus on things outside of work. A plateau is okay – as long as it does not last for a very long time or does not “feel wrong” at the time. Too much time spent in a plateau can be both psychologically and professionally damaging.

Resources at UNFPA to help address career plateaus:

- **UNFPA’s Learning Programme:** Offers a robust, wide range of opportunities to learn on the job. Consult a DHR colleague to explore what might be an appropriate next step for you.
- **Applying for the UNFPA Leadership Pool:** For mid- to senior-level staff, applying for, and being accepted into the leadership pool provides opportunities for movement and sometimes advancement.
- **Consider a stretch assignment, short-term assignment, or a secondment.**
- **Speak with someone in the UN Medical Service to make sure that your frustration is really focused on the professional level.**

PART II: CAREER MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT**1. PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING AND THE JOB SEARCH****HOW TO BEGIN**

Whatever your reason for starting, a job search usually involves a similar series of actions. However, in the event of involuntary job change (e.g. a post abolishment or rotation exercise), you should probably begin by doing some assessment, both internal (section 1) and one of your financial and personal situation, to consider all factors. You may then begin preparing for the job search *per se*, which can be broken down into a series of steps.

After your self-assessment, you will need to begin to research potential opportunities and polish your presentation, both written and oral.

These are the most common mechanisms to find a job:

- **Social networks (family and friends)**
- **Professional networks (current/former colleagues, professional societies and associations, including alumni associations)**
- **Social Media**
- **Initiating contact with new potential employers**
- **Responding to vacancies (VAs)**

CREATE A FOCUS

Once you have identified what you can offer a prospective employer or hiring manager, the next step is to define your **work objective** – or, what do you want to do and where? You can have more than one work objective, but if you do, treat each one separately if you are targeting different types of jobs.

For example, you may have international public health experience and human rights experience and be qualified to apply for positions in both areas, or in rights-based approaches to health systems development/delivery. Target your documents and tailor the language in them appropriately, depending on what you wish to apply for; this process also will enable you to update your CV or work history (e.g. e-recruit profile) with more focused, nuanced language.

Mass e-mailings are a waste of time and effort. Every day, UNFPA receives hundreds of applications, and while they are reviewed by DHR, managers will ignore those which are not a good fit or seem repetitive and generic. Since the odds are extremely low that you will find employment through any sort of mass application campaign, it is best to apply only to vacancy announcements for which you are truly interested and qualified.

THE ART OF NETWORKING

More people find work – or at least learn about opportunities – through networking than all other methods combined. It is important to bear in mind that networking is an ongoing, two-way process, which should be sustained throughout your career – not just when searching for a job. Think about the network you have developed within UNFPA – how you use it to do your job, and who – you trust for advice, information, and partnership. This will help you conceptualize who is in your network.

Professional contacts could also include former managers and supervisors, partners, vendors, suppliers, course facilitators or people you met in training or meetings. You can also think about your personal network; who – you know socially, through family, friends and community affiliations.

Networking to get career advice or information can be difficult – particularly for introverts – and it is not without cultural implications. It helps to remember that your good work can only speak for itself if it is “heard” by someone. Let people you meet know on which projects you are working, especially if they are successful, so they can associate the work you have done with your name. This will help you develop a professional reputation for getting things done efficiently and effectively. Consult with someone in DHR if you’d like to talk more about how to network appropriately in the organization; there is also a lot written online about professional networking, and many YouTube videos on the topic.

Networking typically does get easier with practice. Like anything, some people are naturals and others will never enjoy it. Nonetheless, those who do it well and incorporate it into their world of work often benefit by having better job performance, more opportunities, and, ultimately, more satisfying careers.

NETWORKING DOS AND DON'TS

Follow these tips to be more appropriate and professional when contacting someone for a meeting to discuss your career.

DOS

- ✓ **DO** ask for information and advice (not for a job!).
- ✓ **DO** dress professionally and be on time and prepared for your appointment/meeting.
- ✓ **DO** make sure you get name/spelling/gender correct in all correspondence.
- ✓ **DO** remember that networking is reciprocal. If you can do something nice or useful for the interviewee, do so (e.g. send an article or recommend an event). Use tact and think strategically.
- ✓ **DO** promptly thank the individual for his/her time and assistance.

DO BE MINDFUL OF TIME.

Have a short narrative on why you are contacting them:

- ✓ **IN ADVANCE - BY PHONE:** Use your 90-Second Introduction² to set the context: How did you get their name/number? Enquire if this is a good time to call (if not, may you call back later?) Explain the reason for your call (spell out what type of information or advice you are seeking).
- ✓ **IN ADVANCE - BY LETTER:** set the context: How did you get their name/number? Explain the reason for your letter; spell out what type of information or advice you are seeking.
- ✓ **AT/DURING THE SESSION:** Ask previously-prepared questions.

DON'TS

- ⊘ **DON'T** “bother” people you do not know, or even those you do. Being aggressive and insensitive in your networking may cause more damage than not networking at all.
- ⊘ **DON'T** ignore nuances, such as local protocols for respect, gift giving (not permitted in the UN System), timeframe, etc.
- ⊘ **DON'T** “oversell” yourself. There is a fine line between confidence and overt self-promotion or even arrogance. [It can be helpful to do a “reality check” to make sure your sense of self aligns with others’ view of your skills and abilities].

RESOURCES:

Taking Networking to the Next Level: Getting Your Name Out There
http://www.quintcareers.com/next-level_career_networking.html

How to Use Networking to Find a Job: Tips and Advice for Networking When You're Job Hunting
<http://jobsearch.about.com/cs/networking/a/networking.htm>

VIRTUAL NETWORKING

Much networking these days takes place over social media. While nothing replaces a face-to-face meeting, the reality of international work means that it is often impossible to connect in person with many of the individuals with whom you'd like to speak. The advent of social networks like communities of practice for career and professional groups, blogs, and sites like Yammer, Twitter and, of course, LinkedIn, have, in important ways, changed the way people network.

That said, not everyone uses them wisely. There are many articles now – all one has to do is an Internet search – “using social networks to job hunt” or “effectively using LinkedIn/Twitter/etc.” to get advice on how to best make use of each tool.

Much of the etiquette discussed above also applies to online networking. You don't want to be too pushy when posting comments or asking people to join your networks.

STAYING ON TRACK WITH YOUR JOB SEARCH

It takes time, effort, creativity, networking, perseverance – and a bit of luck to be selected for the right position.

Remember these few things, in particular:

1. When you reach out to someone on a site like LinkedIn, be sure to personalize your invitation, unless you know that person very well. In other words, avoid the, “I'd like to add you to my network on LinkedIn,” message that automatically pops up, and add a short individualized note.
2. Be careful with what you post on social media. Facebook, LinkedIn, and your name are likely to be “Googled” if you reach out to someone via these fora.
3. Stay active! It is not just enough to create a LinkedIn or Twitter account. Use it, posting periodically, commenting on others posts. But, don't go overboard. Just like with personal networking, hearing from someone too frequently can be a “turn off” as well.
4. Take a professional headshot for your profile(s). You can do this for free, but stay away from photos that are too recreational.
5. Take time to create a holistic, thoughtful profile. Remember, this represents who you are to the outside, professional world. An incomplete, or sloppy, profile won't leave a good impression.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Five Strategies for Leveraging Your Online Social Networks
http://www.quintcareers.com/leveraging_social_networks.html

The Mentee's Role http://www.mentoringgroup.com/html/articles/mentee_41.htm

See [page 16](#).

During the job search process, one may experience one of several challenges:

- A poor match between your interests and the availability of suitable positions.
- You may not be short-listed for your targeted positions.
- Timeframes, i.e. the lack of positive results in spite of sustained efforts.
- Financial or other requirements may override your preferences/interests (e.g., you may wish to leave a highly-stressful job but are unable to quit due to family obligations).

2. This will be addressed in greater detail in the following chapter on [Interviewing](#).

Sticking to your action plan will be critical. Here are signs that you may be getting side tracked:

SIDE TRACK INDICATORS

⚠️ Procrastination. If you find yourself doing things not related to your job search, like surfing the web, meeting friends for coffee or adding pictures to your Facebook profile, you might be procrastinating. This may be the symptom of larger issues (such as the lack of confidence or motivation), so be aware of the risks of avoiding the hard work of the job search. If necessary, seek assistance from a career counsellor or coach or trusted colleague to help you work on – and stay with – your action plan.

⚠️ Lack of energy. “I can’t look for work. I have a headache.” “...I’m exhausted.” Symptoms of malaise and sleeplessness may be indicative of anxiety or depression – which can certainly accompany a prolonged job search. Again, it may be helpful to talk to a counsellor.

⚠️ First meeting limit. You are consistently successful at securing a first meeting or interview, but never get past this stage. This may indicate that you are not presenting yourself in the best light. Refer to your debrief³. Practice your interviewing skills. Increase your level of preparedness for informational interviews.

⚠️ “I am still working on my CV.” Basically, the CV is never “done;” it is, by definition, always a work in progress. However, if it is well formatted, if it has been adapted for each job application, edited thoroughly for style and substance – and it has been carefully proofread, it is “done enough” to serve your purpose.

⚠️ You don’t believe you are being taken seriously. You may be unfocused, your job research may be insufficient or your presentation skills may be lacking. Debrief. Seek advice. It may be time to get some honest feedback and coaching.

⚠️ Negative state of mind. Work transitions are generally difficult. Whether you are angry, fearful or frustrated, it is important to acknowledge and work through these complex emotions. Also, try to make sure they do not prevent you from taking constructive action.

These are all legitimate explanations for a stalled job search. It is essential to: (1) be aware of why they may be happening; (2) deal with any issues; and (3) get back to your plan – quickly.

3. More in the next section on Interviewing.

TIP: FIND A JOB SEARCH PARTNER OR HIRE A CAREER COACH

It can be helpful to have a job search partner or coach with whom you meet regularly to check progress, make plans and stay in touch, whether in person, by phone/Skype, and/or by email. Having the moral support of this person, constructive “peer pressure,” and objective guidance can be very valuable.

In practical terms, he/she also can critique and proofread your job search documents, brainstorm with you and help you stay on track.

WHERE TO LOOK

While networking can often uncover “hidden opportunities” (i.e., jobs or consultancies not yet advertised, or brainstorming about a new role), there are also a number of places that individuals interested in working for the UN system and/or the international development community look.

PLACES TO SEARCH

🔍 UN organization websites: As most people are aware, most UN agencies have a website and electronic recruitment system. The positions that are generally posted on the main site are for international professional (IP)/international hires. Local hires are often posted on the country office website or in local venues. The jobs listing of the ICSC is a great place to get started: <https://jobs.unicsc.org/>

🔍 Organisation homepage/employment websites: Again, most NGOs, foundations, think tanks, consulting firms, post their job openings on their homepage, along with other information about careers and benefits with that particular organization.

🔍 Other websites: Websites like www.devex.com, www.reliefweb.int, and [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com) are terrific to use because they list jobs from a wide range of sources, globally. In addition to VAs, [UNjobfinder](http://www.unjobfinder.org) (an NGO) has excellent international career resources. Many such sites can be customized to send/forward jobs in your particular area of interest.

🔍 Other: In a particular country, there are often job banks in Chambers of Commerce. A good place to research the private sector in a particular location. Embassies/government offices (e.g., development agencies) often have good job boards in Country Offices. Headhunting/executive search firms are another way to get your CV on the market.

2. WRITING YOUR CV AND YOUR COVER LETTER

INTRODUCTION

Preparing written applications for jobs within the UN System and other international organizations takes patience, a bit of research, and a lot of hard work, as each agency, fund, or programme has its own application rules.

The good news is that most guidelines for creating strong written applications within UNFPA may be applied to most UN organizations, even though they each have separate e-recruit systems and/or applications. While each country has a slightly different approach to CVs, cover notes and job applications, the system of international organizations has adopted a model that stresses clear language, with a description of duties and achievements that is results-oriented and concise. This mirrors a trend in the larger international community, be it in NGOs, foundations or other large public organizations.

CV OR RÉSUMÉ?

Utilization of the word CV and résumé varies regionally. In North America, a **résumé** is a brief (one to three pages) **summary of your Abilities, Education, Experience and Skills**. It is a critical tool in evaluating each candidate’s qualifications. As such, it is important that it be **concise, logically structured, complete, coherent, attractive, up-to-date** and **adapted** to the job for which you are applying.

In North America, **curriculum vitae**, or **CV**, serves a similar purpose, but it is longer (three to eight pages) and more detailed. In addition to education

and academic qualifications, CVs also include master’s/doctoral thesis/dissertation details, publications, professional associations, presentations, awards, honours and accreditations.

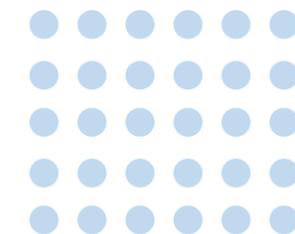
In most of the rest of the world (Africa, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia), **CV** is used in lieu of “résumé.” In North America, however, CVs are used primarily by the scientific, think tank, and academic community, for example, by researchers, doctors and professors.

See Appendix 5: Curriculum Vitae for a sample of a CV in English.

MAKING A FIRST IMPRESSION

Regardless of which form it takes, your written application is your opportunity to make a strong first impression. The assumption is that if you make a mistake on your own documents, you will probably also be careless on the job. Since your CV should be flawless, review it several times and also ask someone you trust, with strong writing and language skills, to review it for you as well.

Effectively, until you retire or withdraw from the workforce, your CV is never “complete.” It should be a document that – in addition to being adapted to each job sought – evolves as your experiences change and as you learn and grow. It should describe you as a potential worker as concisely as possible.



Remember to make your CV applicable and relevant to the position, because we review them based on the requirements. Your motivation letter is very important in your application. It spells out why you want to work at UNFPA and your understanding of the position for which you are applying. It’s the first thing we look at in the application. Also, make sure that you do your research on the organization to which you’re applying. It shows that you know something about the organization and its mission and mandate.

-OPAL HENRY-SMALL, HUMAN RESOURCES ASSOCIATE, HR SERVICES BRANCH, DIVISION FOR HUMAN RESOURCES

TIPS FOR WRITTEN APPLICATIONS

LENGTH

CV length depends on your experience and credentials. Recent graduates should keep to two pages, those with more experience, three to four pages. (note: in the private sector, one to two is common even for mid to senior professionals; consult with a career counselor with a private sector focus if you are considering a switch in sectors).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Begin with your contact information: full name; address(es); phone number(s), including country code, area code, and extension(s); UNFPA and private e-mail address(es); and website URL (if applicable). You want to be reachable, so be sure update as necessary. If you are keeping your job search confidential, it may be a good idea to use only your personal email address and phone. Sometimes people will also include a Skype or other professional social media (e.g. LinkedIn)addresses.

- **Carefully read the vacancy announcement (VA) before you apply for a job.**
- **Highlight your major achievements.**
- **Fill in all of the fields in e-recruit; don't leave any blanks.**
- **The motivation letter should be concise and targeted.**
- **Carefully proofread your cover letter and work history documents (e-recruit profile, CV, P-11, etc.).**

-EMMY ERICSON, HUMAN RESOURCES ASSOCIATE, HR SERVICES BRANCH, DIVISION FOR HUMAN RESOURCES

WORK OR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Include: full-time and part-time jobs, paid or unpaid, internships and volunteer work. Expand on those job experiences most relevant to the job for which you are applying.

Note: Which goes first, education or work experience? Those with a work history should place experience first. Students and recent graduates should highlight their studies by putting education first and include relevant courses.

For each entry, include the following:

BASIC INFORMATION REQUIRED IN EACH ENTRY	
Full name of the organization	Division, Office or Branch
Position or title	Dates of employment (month and year)
Location of employer	City, state/province/region/district, country - as appropriate
Description of duties or main tasks and responsibilities*	Results or outcomes at work (i.e. accomplishments)*
<p>*If these two fields are blended, the description for each job should be approximately one paragraph long and describe both your responsibilities and achievements.</p> <p>If they are separate entries be sure to distinguish what you <i>did</i> from what you <i>achieved</i>. The former should indicate the things you <i>did</i> (activities) - the impact answers the question "and so what?" What changed? What improved? Why/How did what you do matter? [This is not always easy to do, but it can be easier for an external reader].</p>	

Note: Since the first person (I/my) is assumed, avoid using "I" and "my." Avoid also redundant phrases such as, "I was responsible for..." or "My duties included..." since it is assumed the work history discusses your work roles and achievements. Finally, do not repeat your job title in the description of duties, "As Senior Administrative Assistant, I..."

Use **action verbs** - often from the vacancy announcement to show you understand what is required (and numbers to make each description as specific and concise as possible. List your most substantial contributions first and work backwards to the more routine tasks. Include the purpose and outcome of each project. Wherever possible, use numbers, percentages, financial data (in easily understood currencies, e.g. € or \$) to **quantify your accomplishments**.

Use active voice in simple present or past tense, as appropriate. Avoid mixing verb tenses and nouns to describe your duties. Note the table below, along with Appendix 7 for more information and guidance.

CURRENT ASSIGNMENT		PREVIOUS POSITIONS	
Active Voice, Simple, Present Tense		Active Voice, Simple, Past Tense	
Mobilize...	Assemble...	Mobilized...	Assembled...
Ensure...	Schedule...	Ensured...	Scheduled...
Manage...	Procure...	Managed...	Procured...

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Always begin with the highest level of formal education or training achieved, such as apprenticeships, trade certificates, college or university. Proceed in **reverse chronological order**, i.e. begin with the most recent learning experience and work backwards. List the:

INFORMATION REQUIRED ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING
Name of qualification received, with full name of institution, and its location (city, country) e.g. degree (BSc, M.A., PhD) or trade certificate (BEP/M) and field of study (e.g. public health, security, IT).
Honours received (e.g. Phi Beta Kappa, cum laude)
Month and year obtained (or expected)
Optional: Dissertation, thesis or concours académique (if any) and Important courses (only important for those with limited work experience).

Following formal education, you should list seminars, e-learning and professional certification courses, again in reverse chronological order. Batch these where you have taken a number of courses in the same area, e.g. IT trainings.



AWARDS AND HONOURS

Name the award, issuing organization and date, e.g. UNFPA Award – 20 years of Service (2012); International Female Peacekeeper Award, United Nations Police Division, 2011.

List academic awards, scholarships, fellowships or honours in a similar fashion, e.g.:

- **Erasmus Mundus Scholar, 1992; Harvard South Africa Fellowship Program (HSAFP), 2003; or**
- **Hauora Maori Scholarship, National Maori Health Workforce Development Organisation, New Zealand, 2013.**



COMMUNITY SERVICE

List your participation in community activities to demonstrate your volunteer spirit and caring for others, e.g.:

- **HIV/AIDS Awareness Educator (Volunteer), Global Crossroads, Entebbe, Uganda (August 2014) or Steering Committee Member, NGO Gender Group, Yangon, Myanmar, 2012 – 2015.**



ACADEMIC, PROFESSIONAL OR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Indicate membership in any association in which you hold an office or are currently a member:

- **Academic organizations**, e.g., Phi Beta Kappa
- **Professional organizations**, e.g., UN Staff Counsellors Network, UNSSC, 2013 – present or Honorary Life Member, Brazilian Bar Association (Membro Honorário Vitalício, Ordem dos Advogados do Brasil – <http://www.oab.org.br/>, 2009 – present.
- **Community organizations**, e.g. Centre Régional d'Information et de Prévention du SIDA (CRIPS), Paris, 2008 – 11.



LANGUAGES AND/OR TRAVEL

List languages and indicate (accurately) your level of proficiency. Mention any certification, e.g. DELF (French language) or UN Language Proficiency Exam (LPE – and the year it was issued).

Note: Be prepared to demonstrate language or other skills (written, aural or spoken) at an interview.

Include travel if it is relevant to the employer. Although travel to a region is no substitute for work experience or language ability, it can be a useful addition.



REFERENCES

If references are specifically requested in the vacancy announcement, include the complete name, title, organization name, address, telephone number(s) and email address(es) for each. Otherwise, keep the same information (always updated!) on a separate sheet entitled “References,” either to be attached or submitted upon request.

SPECIFIC TIPS FOR UNFPA STAFF MEMBERS

It is recommended that UNFPA staff members update their personal history forms before a rotation exercise, a leadership pool application, or simply applying for a job internally. This is important because human resources staff and hiring managers are reviewing many job applications, and profiles that are out of date give the impression of seeming lazy or “sloppy” about your professional application. Staff members should have all papers in order to create the impression of a positive, motivated applicant.

The writing style for online profiles/work histories and Personal History Forms is very similar to what was described in the section on résumés and CVs above – i.e. clear, concise, precise language, using an active voice and action verbs. In Appendix 7, the action verbs for creating a strong UNFPA application and P-11 are listed in detail.

COVER(ING) LETTERS/ MOTIVATIONAL STATEMENTS

When staff members apply internally at UNFPA, they submit a letter explaining their motivation with their application. This letter is an important writing sample, and explains to DHR and the hiring manager why you are interested in the post, be it temporary, a full-time position, or a leadership pool application. This section will help you think about how to do this with a strategic mindset; it will also be useful if applying for jobs outside of UNFPA.

A cover letter is an essential companion to your CV when submitting applications to prospective employers. A well-written cover letter or motivational statement allows you to express what you have to offer in a concise and targeted way and helps to secure an interview.

Targeted, well-crafted letters aimed at individuals, companies or organizations that you carefully have researched are essential. When preparing customized letters, focus on your strengths and integrate them. Submitting a poorly-drafted letter and/or CV provides the Recruitment Officer/Hiring Manager with valid grounds to eliminate your candidacy. Avoid this by following these:

10 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COVER LETTERS

1. **Send the letter to the appropriate individual** (i.e. a decision-maker for your particular job). Use the phone, website or your network to verify this in advance, wherever possible.
2. **Verify mailing information.** If not sending to a generic roster, verify that the person to whom you are writing is the appropriate addressee. Gender (Mr or Ms?), name and correct spelling, title, address, internal/external mail code or post office box.
3. **Highlight your accomplishments**, relevant **experience and skills** that relate to their specific office/department/programme/organization.
4. **Limit your letter size** to one, ideally, un-crowded page (11–12 point font) of no more than five paragraphs. (Although many organizations use online formats, these size guidelines still apply; UNFPA limits size of motivational statement to 500 characters.)
5. **Relate your skills and competencies** to the needs of the target organization/work unit as defined in the vacancy announcement (VA) and indicate how you can bring the most added value.
6. Use **space** wisely and **bullets** to make your points.
7. **Omit salary information** – past or desired (unless specifically requested).⁴
8. **Always state why you are interested in the position** – try to delve a bit deeply here, but do not use more than one or two sentences.
9. **Conclude by thanking the reader for his or her consideration.**
10. **Proofread, proofread and proofread!** Have a trusted friend or colleague or your job-search partner proofread as well. The value of fresh, critical reading eyes cannot be overemphasized.

Note: Bear in mind that these recommendations are generic in nature. It is best to research the targeted employment market to ensure that your application is in line with local/organizational customs (e.g. a hand-written cover letter or a photograph on the CV are preferred in some countries but strongly discouraged in others).

4. Questions on salary history might come up in a (non-UN-System) interview: you should thus prepare accordingly. **Tip:** Ask individuals in your network and verify your information with a number of resources (e.g. the internet) so you may answer with a reasonable salary range.

REFERENCES

References outside of UNFPA also may be obtained from:

- Former supervisors
- Colleagues
- Clients/Suppliers/Vendors
- Individuals with whom you volunteer

Avoid using family members or partners as references. Whomever you choose, make sure the person can provide a comprehensive and solid reference. It goes without saying that it is important to choose the right references. Staff who have been fired or terminated, whose performance has been less than stellar, or colleagues with a questionable reputation, should, of course, be avoided. Make sure to **contact him/her for permission**. When you have his/her agreement, you also should provide him/her with:

- Details about the position(s)
- Information regarding who might be contacting them (if available)
- Information about the organization with which you are interviewing

If you brief someone who has agreed to serve as a referee for you, he/she can better speak to a potential employer about how you could meet the job requirements. Prospective employers will usually seek the following information:

- **Credibility:** How does this individual know you – and for how long? Referees should describe the reporting relationship and the length of time you worked together.
- **Strengths, Skills and Abilities:** A description of what you do well and examples to illustrate.
- **Accomplishments:** What were your major contributions? Impact?
- **Personal Traits:** Comment on your positive traits, interpersonal skills, work habits, client focus, and, if appropriate, management style, integrity and trust.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- <http://www.forbes.com/sites/naomishavin/2014/07/16/tips-for-the-perfect-resume-and-cover-letter/>
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2013/09/16/seven-ways-to-perfect-your-resume-3/>
<http://www.theladders.com/career-advice/how-to-write-cover-letter>
<http://careers.theguardian.com/covering-letter-examples>

UNFPA MAY CARRY OUT A VALIDITY CHECK FOR:

CV DISTORTION

It is estimated that up to 50 percent of all CVs contain deliberate distortions! If detected, as is the case increasingly, one misstatement can disqualify you, so **be honest** and do not stretch the truth. There is a clear line between effective marketing, or making the most of your experience, and misrepresentation.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Be able to produce certificates, diplomas or other certification for all degrees or studies. It also is essential that the institution issuing the certificate or diploma, and/or the credentialing organization, be legitimate.

HISTORY

You may be requested to reveal information related to a criminal history or an incident of insolvency. The PHP and P-11, for example, require that you declare if you have a criminal record. Although these incidents alone cannot justify a decision to refuse employment, do prepare a clear and concise explanation to reassure potential employers. They will certainly want to verify – through the interview process – that you do not represent any risk of harm for their organization, colleagues, clients or beneficiaries.

RESULTS

Since past performance is the best indicator of future performance, there is keen interest in verifying the accomplishments claimed.

MATCH

Whether you would fit in to the prospective place of employment depends on your: beliefs about work, personality, preferences, style, behaviour under pressure and adaptability.

A final point: Let your references know you appreciate their help and support. Thank them by keeping them informed of your progress; this will also help to maintain the relationship for the future.

3. INTERVIEWING

INTERVIEWING TIPS

As a UNFPA staff member, you probably already have experienced an interview within the Organization. If you recently have been through an interview, you are aware that UN System interviews tend to be panel interviews, involving more than one assessor. UNFPA uses a competency-based interview format. If you have not been through an interview in a while, it is important not only to refresh your skills, but to also familiarize yourself with CBI, as this is the way most interviews are conducted throughout the UN System.

It is usually the lack of preparation, not always a lack of experience or qualifications, which results in an unsuccessful interview. This means that, if you prepare well, you improve your chances of a positive outcome. Success is based on a range of factors, including:

- The research you have conducted about the organization/work unit to which you are applying.
- Your ability to match your skills, abilities and expertise to the vacancy and larger organizational requirements and demonstrate how you can add value.
- The way you have been able to differentiate yourself from other candidates.
- How you “fit” with regard to: job, organization, staff, and hiring manager.
- Your capacity to handle pressure and react with poise and confidence.
- The motivation you demonstrate.

PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW

Preparing and practicing for interviews will increase your confidence and likelihood of success. Prior to the interview, to the extent possible, research the organization to which you are applying, in order to better understand their mission, direction and status. Major organizations and companies have websites, which are the best way to access information. You may wish to research the following areas:

- Sector/Organization information
- Geographic area
- Job trends
- Information on your profession
- Your competitors for the position (if possible)
- Supply/demand for persons in your occupational category or profession

Most UN organizations these days will also include a written test as part of assessing your technical skills. This can come before or after an interview. They often are timed and provide useful information to the panel – including mastery of subject matter, technical skills, ability to work under tight deadlines and drafting ability (for essay or short-answer questions). This feedback can be especially helpful when considering similarly-qualified applicants.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

You will have only one opportunity to make that all-important first impression. Thus, it is important to remember the following elements of a strong first impression.

TIPS FOR A STRONG FIRST IMPRESSION



Be polite and respectful of everyone you encounter upon arrival.

You are making an impression on each person you meet, from the security guard to the receptionist to future colleagues – not just the interviewers or hiring manager.



Physical Presence. Dress appropriately for the organization where you are interviewing. When in doubt, dress conservatively. Be sure clothes are clean and pressed, and be extra aware of your personal hygiene (i.e. bathe/shower/shave, have clean hair, polished shoes, use deodorant, and wear no, or only very light, perfume or cologne). Do not smoke or chew gum. Ensure your posture is neither too relaxed nor too tense – try to be confident, open and friendly.



Movements and Mannerisms. Use natural gestures; try not to fidget or fiddle with objects such as a pen, glasses or jewellery. Move naturally; avoid looking stiff or awkward.



Manner of Speaking. Make sure you can be heard; be aware of the interviewer's reaction to your voice. Avoid monotone, which makes you sound listless, and avoid slang, colloquial expressions, or other informal speech.



Behaviour/Demeanour. Convey an appropriate amount of enthusiasm, warmth and sincerity. Be culturally aware and adjust to local customs. Prior to the interview, be mindful of your behaviour in the waiting room. Do not, for example, use your mobile phone. (Turn it off or at least turn off the ringer).



Communication Skills. Listen carefully to the entire question and before you respond and think before you speak. Limit yourself to answering the question asked. Clarify any questions you do not fully understand before answering by asking the interviewer to restate the question or trying to restate the question. It is acceptable to take a few seconds in silence to formulate your response.

I found it useful to review my PADs when I was stumped for an example. Reading through supervisors' comments and MRF reports helped me pinpoint when I had exemplified proficiency in the competency. Because I was switching careers streams, I also found it useful to consult with the staff member who was in the role, as well as with colleagues working closely with that person, in order to get a feel for the post, what was expected, and how I could fit in.

**-SALINA MAURO, ADMIN/FINANCE ASSOCIATE,
PROGRAMME DIVISION**

COMPETENCY-BASED INTERVIEWS

As noted above, most UN organizations – including UNFPA – use competency-based interviews (CBIs) to assess potential candidates.

In these interviews, employers use questions to probe for information about your past experience that is relevant to several competencies. A CBI requires candidates to demonstrate that they have a particular skill or “key competency” the organization/company seeks. Candidates will be asked to respond by using situational examples from their life, ideally from previous work experiences, to illustrate their personality, skill set and individual competencies to the interviewer. For example, the interviewer might probe your experience in teamwork by asking about past successes or challenges in this area. It is common for the panel to ask follow-up, probing questions to explore your answer in greater detail. This is called “drilling down.” Candidate responses typically are scored for each competency on a rating scale that assesses how specifically the candidate addressed the question, the relevancy of the example, etc.

“Competency”, as discussed in Chapter 1, refers to a combination of knowledge, skills, attributes and behaviours that are directly related to successful performance on the job. Depending upon the responsibilities of the job and the working environment, you might be asked to describe a time that required problem-solving skills, adaptability, leadership, conflict resolution, multi-tasking, initiative or working in a stressful environment.

Competency-based interviews yield excellent information for a potential employer, but they can be difficult for candidates who have not prepared. This [video](#) by Director of Human Resources Michael Emery is a great place to start when preparing for a competency-based interview. More tips follow below:

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Keep your answers brief (two to three minutes), specific, work-related and to the point.

Maintain reasonable eye contact when answering and try to stay calm and cool.

Do not, under any circumstances, make up an example – interviewers can usually tell if you are fabricating, and the follow-up questions (“drilling down”) are likely to give you away.

Be sure to provide context for your example – describe the situation or challenge, then what you did about it (the action). Conclude your story with the outcome, or result, of your action. This is known as a “C.A.R.” or “S.A.R.” story. Practice your CAR/SAR stories in advance by writing them out on index cards.

If you took a test during screening, they might ask similar questions to see if your responses are consistent.

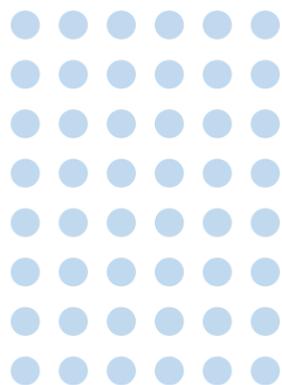
Your responses require reflection and organization. To maximize your responses:

Anticipate the transferable skills and personal qualities that are required for the job. Competencies are often listed clearly on the vacancy announcement.

Review your application, which should be filled with potential examples to share.

Reflect on your own professional, volunteer, educational and personal experience to develop brief stories that highlight these skills and qualities in you. You should have a story for each of the competencies on your résumé/CV.

Prepare stories by identifying the context, logically highlighting your actions in the situation, and identifying the results of your actions.



In my last interview for my role as Programme Associate in Programme Division, I made sure to do my research and began preparing responses to potential interview questions well in advance of the interview. Essentially, the interview preparation should begin at (or before) the time of applying for the post. Don't wait until you are short listed/contacted to interview to begin preparing. Assume you will be.

In particular what I did to prepare was:

- 1. reviewed the competency based interview process – for this I reviewed the Select CBI course available [in the UNFPA ELMS] to all staff/consultants;**
- 2. familiarized myself with the job description and, in particular, the competences specific to the post to which I was applying;**
- 3. drew on specific examples from my work history to construct responses which would demonstrate my ability to fulfill each competency required for the post.**

-SALINA MAURO, ADMIN/FINANCE ASSOCIATE, PROGRAMME DIVISION

OTHER INTERVIEW TYPES AND FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW

There are many types of job interviews beyond competency-based interviewing. You may find yourself interviewing outside of the UN Common System, or with interviewers that have not yet been trained in behavioural interviewing techniques. Thus, it is a good idea to be aware of the other types of interviews that exist. It is helpful to know in advance of an interview how it will be structured so that you may prepare accordingly. It is also worth bearing in mind that the level of preparedness and quality standards on interviewing can vary widely.

Organizations may bring candidates back for second interview. Sometimes they want to confirm their initial impression – that you are the top candidate. Other times, they are having difficulty deciding between a short-list of candidates. Often, the interviewer's supervisor or other decision-makers may wish to gain a sense of you before signing a hiring decision.

When meeting with the same person again, you can focus on cementing rapport, understanding where the organization or company is going and how your skills mesh with their vision and culture. The interviewer should view you as the answer to their needs.

PHONE, SKYPE AND VIDEOCONFERENCE INTERVIEWS

It is common to be invited for a phone, Skype, or a videoconference interview. Most international organizations do the bulk of their interviewing this way, so all candidates from HQ and the field can be considered equally.

Disadvantages of phone interviews are that the connection may be poor (or can even be cut), which can negatively affect the flow of the interview. Voice quality may be reduced in telephone or other online transmission, which can make the interview feel more “distant.” Additionally, there is no non-verbal communication or “body language,” an important source of information to both interviewer and interviewee. Thus, oral communications take on a critical role, so it is critical to be mindful of tone, clarity, etc. On the phone or online, sociability and rapport are more difficult to judge as well. Another disadvantage is that you lose out on important collateral information gleaned from visiting an office, organization, city, etc. and meeting the potential future team.

A serious advantage – for both interviewers and interviewees – is global, around-the-clock access. This might mean an early-morning or late-night interview, and you can keep your notes from interviewing preparations – such as your CV, notes for competency-based examples, your 90-second introduction – on hand for easy reference.

Interviews using Skype, BlueJeans or other video collaboration software have largely replaced video conferences because of cost considerations. A number of articles on how to manage Skype or phone interviews available on the internet; while a few are included here for your reference, it is also a good idea to do your own search.

TIPS FOR MANAGING SECOND INTERVIEWS

- Be confident. Accentuate what you have to offer and your interest in the position.
- If you can, find out in advance what the interviewers want to know about you, doubts about your first interview, things that need confirmation, for example, so you can best prepare.
- Probe tactfully to discover information about internal company dynamics and culture.
- Plan for possibly negotiating a salary or benefits (where relevant).
- Be prepared for anything: to relax with an employer or to address the company's possible reservations about you.

TIPS FOR MANAGING SKYPE INTERVIEWS:

1. Be sure to check the volume and camera quality/level, and ensure your body/face is in clear view.
2. Be aware of what is in your background. While it is fine to do an interview at home, be sure that there is a relatively clean looking professional space behind you.
3. Try to minimize potential background noise or interruptions.
4. Be sure to look into the camera – which does not mean looking at your screen. Interviewers are likely to be looking at their monitor or screen – not at you – so be prepared for limited eye contact from panel member.
5. Dress professionally, as you will be visible from the waist up.
6. Make sure any notes you have are not visible to the people who are interviewing you.
7. Always speak slowly and clearly.

SCREENING AND TECHNOLOGY

Technology is also used for another typical element of the screening process, skills or knowledge testing. While a common approach is to determine who gets interviewed, others approaches may be employed, such as testing two or three closely-ranked candidates post-interview to determine who gets the offer.

From the candidate perspective, testing is a way to distinguish yourself by demonstrating what you know, and what you can do and/or produce under stressful circumstances (a timed test). It also is a writing sample and demonstrates how you analyze and approach problems, manage time, etc.

Tests typically would last between one to three hours. They may be task or case based, short answer (one or two paragraphs), short essays, multiple choice or some combination thereof. They may be “closed book” (no notes, Internet or documents) or “open book,” which means you can access documents, whether in print or online. In all cases for open-booked tests, it is not permitted to copy-and-paste answers or contents from a website, which constitutes plagiarism, a breach of ethics – and would, minimally, result in elimination from the selection process.

While tests may be administered by a person or online, some organizations, including UNFPA, now use technology for video interviewing or testing, such as asynchronous video job interview.

ANSWERING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This guide includes some sample open ended interview questions to help you prepare, along with recommended ways to approach each question. You will certainly want to personalize your response. As you review the sample questions, write down next to each what you would ask the interviewer in return.

Before you begin practicing a range of questions, however, it is recommended that you first prepare your...

90-SECOND INTRODUCTION

In any interview, you should be prepared to talk about yourself. To this purpose, you would be advised to develop a 90-second introduction, outlining your education, background, experience, current situation and career aspirations.

THE 90-SECOND INTRODUCTION WILL:



- **ALERT THE LISTENER** to your employment background and aspirations;
- **STIMULATE THEIR INTEREST** in learning more about you;
- **PROVIDE SOME BACKGROUND** with quantified accomplishments; and
- **DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT SITUATION** – what you are looking for

Your 90-second introduction should be flexible, customized and responsive. It is important to be able to expand your story, or to hold back, as appropriate. In either case, once you are comfortable with your basic story, you will find calling, networking and interviewing easier and, ideally, more successful. Keep the 90-second timeframe as a guide. Some books recommend 60 seconds, others two minutes. The point is to be prepared, brief and not to ramble on, and, as always, to practice.

FREQUENTLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTED RESPONSES

The following tables indicate frequently-asked interview questions, suggest responses, and allow a work space in which to practice your own answers. Note that these are, by and large, “traditional” interview questions.

GENERAL: Generic questions that may be asked in any type of interview		
INTERVIEW QUESTION	RECOMMENDED RESPONSE	MY QUESTIONS/NOTES
Tell me about yourself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90-Second Introduction (see above) 	
What can you offer us (that other candidates cannot)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize your unique qualities and capabilities. • Relate them to the position and the organization – which you will have learned through your research. 	
What do you know about our organization?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate your knowledge on their mission, services, products or mandate. • You may use this opportunity to clarify any questions that arose from your research. • This is a question meant to probe focus and commitment to the field. 	
What other types of work are you considering?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not feel obliged to reveal details of other interviews or negotiations. • If you are interviewing elsewhere, refer to them in a general way. 	
What are your strengths?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide three or four key strengths with relevant examples. 	

YOUR ABILITIES: Self-assessment questions		
INTERVIEW QUESTION	RECOMMENDED RESPONSE	MY QUESTIONS/NOTES
What are your weaknesses?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer only one unless asked for more. • The key is to recognize an area of professional development and describe how you are working to improve in this area. • Everyone has something they can improve upon. 	
What do you consider to be your most significant accomplishment(s) to date?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From your preparations, select accomplishment(s) most relevant to the position. • Be sure to have practiced several. • Take your cue from the interviewer regarding when to conclude. 	
Describe a difficult problem you faced and how you solved it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not choose a “worst ever” scenario. • Link it to a lesson learned. • Link it to the level and complexity of the requirements of the post. 	
Describe a situation in which you worked under pressure or met deadlines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to your accomplishments. • Discuss one or two in which you were especially effective in meeting deadlines or dealing with high-pressure situations. 	
How many people have you managed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to direct/indirect reports, teams, contractors, clients or co-workers. • Briefly mention any notable characteristics of the team. 	
What might your previous manager/supervisor say are your greatest strengths or weaknesses?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use on-the-job examples of strengths. • Present weaknesses in a positive light. • Performance appraisals (PAD, ePAS, etc.) are requested of finalists, so these should be aligned. 	

FIT: Determine if you are a good match for the organization		
INTERVIEW QUESTION	RECOMMENDED RESPONSE	MY QUESTIONS/NOTES
Describe a situation in which your work was criticized. What were the circumstances? How did you respond?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an example where you received constructive criticism. • Discuss one mistake (not a major one). • Emphasize what you learned from it and how your behaviour changed. • Do not pass blame. 	
Why are you leaving your present job?/Why did you leave your last job?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep it brief. Keep it positive. • Do not get defensive or explain excessively; simply state the circumstances in a constructive manner. • If your post was discontinued or the result of an office closure, explain how your separation was part of an organizational restructuring. 	
How would you evaluate your previous organization?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This question tests tact and discretion. • Be constructive. Focus on strengths. • Refer to the benefits you have derived. • Avoid negative feedback. 	
How would your co-workers describe you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefly refer to your skills, strengths and personality. 	(See Appendices 2-4)

ENDING THE INTERVIEW AND DEBRIEFING

Usually, the panel – or the interviewer – will end by asking you if you have any questions. The only incorrect answer is, “No.” You should always have prepared a few questions. Appendix 8 includes sample questions that demonstrate an interest in the organization and the job.

It is good etiquette to conclude by thanking the interviewer(s) for their time and for the opportunity to learn more about the organization. It is also appropriate, at this time, to inquire about the next steps in the process, as well as the timeframe for notification of successful candidates.

Debriefing after an interview is a good idea, as it allows you to candidly assess your interviewing strengths and weakness. It also is important to remember that some interviews are going to be more successful than others. Learn from each experience and use your cumulative knowledge to continue to improve your interviewing skills.

Use the following questions as a Debrief Checklist:

DEBRIEF CHECKLIST
What went well? Why?
What did not go well? Why not?
What would I do differently if I were to repeat the interview?
What key facts did I learn about the organization/unit/job?
What interview skills should I develop further?
How well did I listen to interviewer’s questions? How were my questions received?

4. JOB OFFERS

DECISIONS

It is important to remember that no job is perfect; each offer will have both positive and negative aspects. Certainly, it is advisable to follow up all of your job leads that seem promising. If a job offer does not meet all of your requirements, you can, circumstances permitting, choose not to accept it and continue your search until you find a better match.

Alternatively, you can accept the offer, bearing in mind that it may not have been your first choice, but it will provide you an opportunity to earn a salary, gain new skills, and eventually, resume a more relaxed search from a position of employment.

The standard rule of etiquette is to attempt to give a job approximately two years; certainly, it is unwise to accept an offer if you do not see yourself staying in the job for at least twelve months. Of course, if you are exploring consultancies, these guidelines do not apply, and you are bound more by the nature of the project or consultancy contract. Length or duration of such contracts may be beyond your control.

Once you have decided to accept a job offer, it is advised that you immediately confirm your acceptance *in writing*. Note your pleasure in accepting, confirm the start date and salary offer and outline the terms of your employment. This is also an opportunity to raise any other questions you may have. Close the note with an expression of your appreciation and pleasure at joining the organization.

DECLINING A JOB OFFER

As soon as you decide to accept a job offer, it is polite to call or write/email to all the other organizations that have expressed interest in you or have made offers to inform them that you have accepted another job offer and that you must withdraw your application. Always try to leave a good impression, even if you are declining an offer, as you may wish to pursue employment with them at a later date.

Be positive when declining an offer. If appropriate, advise the employer where you will be going for work, or, if you are continuing in higher education, where you have enrolled. You need not indicate why you have accepted the other position or what the salary is. Always express your appreciation for any offers extended and the interest and confidence the employer has shown.

NOT GETTING AN OFFER

Unfortunately, if you are informed that you did not, in fact, get the job, you are likely to be disappointed. It certainly works in your favor to always to be polite and reiterate your interest in the organization, the position and/or work unit for which you interviewed. This is because the outcome may still be unclear. For example, the first-choice candidate may be unable to accept the offer; if so, you might, ultimately, be given an opportunity to reconsider. Another possibility is, as noted above, you may wish to apply to the same or a similar position in the future. And lastly, as a professional in the same field, you may cross paths and always want to remain appropriate and gracious.

NEGOTIATIONS

If you have received an offer, and are still waiting to hear from other organization(s), you may find yourself in a position where you need to negotiate for time to give an answer. This is certainly not uncommon. However, as with other areas of life, timing is critical! It is acceptable to ask for some time to make a decision, but usually, asking for more than one to two weeks is not appropriate. Some employers won’t give more than a few days – this is their right, and you may have to make a decision without having all the information about other offers that you would like.

A start date may, or may not, be negotiable. However, you may have to negotiate with both your current job – and your new employer – about what is an appropriate amount of notice. This can be particularly true in an international organization, where recruitment can be a lengthy process. Thus, your current boss may be hesitant to let you go and have a long “gap” with nobody in the job. It is wise to try and accommodate your current boss and your new job, with compromise on both sides.

If you wish to negotiate a start date, be clear about your reasons, and try to have this conversation in person, or via telephone, rather than in writing. If you are relocating overseas, and have affairs to wrap up before going, this is valid – try to estimate the time you need and request it. Obviously, this is the beginning of a partnership, and rather than be demanding, you want to start off positively and inquire about the new employer’s timeframe, consider your needs, especially if leaving, and try to find a compromise that works for everyone.

5. COPING WITH CHANGE

PRACTICAL TIPS:

It is easier to find a job when you are employed. If you anticipate job cuts, make time for your job search. In an ideal world, you would start searching for a job the moment you become aware of a budget cut or impending restructuring.

You are going from a familiar situation, where you know the rules, to an unfamiliar one with many unknowns, which may trigger a range of emotions from resentment, anger or fear to relief or excitement. How you face the next steps will be linked to how you harness these emotions.

A major step in re-establishing or gaining control is planning for and implementing productive activities.

This may seem obvious, but it is critical that you look after yourself; exercise regularly, try to get enough sleep and eat well. If you find yourself avoiding the company of others, feeling isolated or depressed – this is not at all uncommon – you might want to seek professional assistance.

Remember, **YOU are not the job**. Your job is only one aspect of yourself, and there are many other important parts of yourself, and of life. You will need to acknowledge that this job has come to an end, let go, and begin to explore future opportunities.

JOB LOSS/ABOLISHED POSTS/REPROFILING EXERCISES

Being notified of your separation or a post abolishment is almost invariably difficult. At such a time, it can be hard to fully comprehend and accept what is happening. For this reason, you should ensure that the notification of your separation is given to you in both verbal and written form.

All information communicated to you regarding your separation should come from an official source, such as the Director for Human Resources, Bureau or Division Director, (International) Operations Manager, or your supervisor. Make sure you get the facts and information from DHR or your manager. Whenever possible, get as much as you can in writing.

It is natural to experience strong emotions, such as shock, anger or disappointment when learning of your separation, even if it does not come as a surprise. Although it might be difficult, it is important that you do not personalize the information or make judgmental statements towards the manager, your colleagues or the organization at large. Imposed job change is stressful, but remaining professional, in control and managing the situation will enable you to see a way forward.

It is important that you understand the impact of emotions, such as fear, resentment, denial, anger, sadness, insecurity, or doubt in your own abilities. They have the potential to detrimentally affect your behaviour, your health, and your well-being. Acknowledge frustrations and fears and talk to friends, family, colleagues, a member of your religious/spiritual community or, where possible, a health professional whom you trust. While they may not be able to change your situation, they may be able to shed different light on things, give you advice, or help you plan for your future. Ultimately, having someone “just listen” can provide some sense of comfort. Try to think positively and focus on practical solutions rather than dwelling on negative feelings, since this will not change your situation.

There are career counselors who specialize in career transition; ask a career development focal point within UNFPA for a referral if you think working with someone might be useful; this can be done both in person and/or via Skype, phone or email.

CREATE AN ACTION PLAN

How you go about your job search will affect your finding a new position. Having a focused and realistic **plan of action** will enable you effectively to manage your situation. Doing nothing, waiting for something to change or to come up, or taking frantic, unfocussed action will not be helpful. Taking constructive, well-considered action is the first step on the right path.

Job seekers who are focused and apply effective methods to the job search typically produce the best results in the shortest time frame. Designing – and following through – on your action plan will help you:

- **Cover more of the right territory faster, thereby, in theory, decreasing your search time – and landing a better job;**
- **Optimize energy levels and increase focus;**
- **Keep disciplined work habits and staying in “work” mode;**
- **Maintain or improve self-confidence and self-esteem; and**
- **Take control of your work and your life.**

Whether you are in a job or have left one, design a system based on your personal style and work habits. For example, surf the web for two hours every morning to check vacancies; network with mentors and colleagues at lunch, apply to jobs in the afternoon. Keep the process simple so that you are able to stick with it. Create a daily, prioritized To Do List and carry forward any pending items. Assess how your time was spent, what you accomplished and adjust as necessary. Having small goals that you complete is essential to staying motivated and on track. Avoid forcing any habits. If you are a morning person, work early in the day; if you are a night owl – at night.

Time-saving Tip: Sign up for job alerts on job websites such as UNjobfinder or inspira – so you don’t miss an opportunity!

FINANCIAL PLANNING

To help you through the transitional period, you should review and adjust your personal budget in order to organize and control your financial resources over the coming months. You can also ask DHR for advice on options concerning pension and other separation payments, if applicable. In addition, you may wish to contact the **UN Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF)**.

PART III: APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: SELF ASSESSMENT - PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Instructions: Below, take a moment and list five to ten professional accomplishments that you feel proud of; try to focus on things in the recent past (i.e. two to three years, but if appropriate, go back five or ten years for a few items). Jot down some key words to describe both the achievement AND why it signified a special professional accomplishment for you.

ACCOMPLISHMENT	WHY IMPORTANT/MEANINGFUL
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

APPENDIX 2: SELF ASSESSMENT – SKILLS AND ABILITIES

The selection below is a summary to guide you in drafting your CV and cover letter. For more details on the UNFPA revised competency framework, visit the [DHR microsite](#) (Resources):

Revised Competency Framework Short Guide
Revised Competency Framework Long Guide

Communications/Representation

Advising, Advocacy, Editing, Explaining, Influencing, Informing, Interpreting, Languages, Mediating, Motivating, Persuading, Presenting, Promoting, Public speaking, Questioning, Reporting, Representing, Revising, Translating, Writing

Analytical

Accounting, Analysing, Analytics, Appraising, Assessing, Budgeting, Calculating, Classifying, Comparing, Computing, Conceptualizing, Evaluating, Formulating, Investigating, Measuring, Observing, Policy analysis, Researching, Reasoning

Interpersonal

Cultural sensitivity, Diplomacy, Empathy, Emotional Intelligence, Tact, Relating to others, Team player

Management

Advocacy, Best Practice, Collaborating, Deciding, Delegating, Effecting change, Evaluation, Grant management, Implementing Policy, Imitating, Innovating, Leadership Pool, Leading, Managing, Monitoring, Motivating, Operating, Overseeing, Partnerships/Networks, Performance Management, Problem solving, Project management, Quality Assurance, RBM, Recommending, Reporting, Resource Leverage, Resource Mobilization/Fundraising, Supervising, Strategizing, Training, Trouble shooting, UN System(s) Coordination

Technical

Copy-editing, Databases, Desktop publishing, Drawing, Layout/Design, Medical Devices, Proofreading, Quality Control, Spreadsheets, Technical Instruments/Tools, Technical Leadership, Technical Advisory Services

Organizational

Attending to detail, Co-ordinating, Expediting, Keeping records, Planning, Scheduling, Systematizing, Time management

Administration & General Support

- Analytical and Evaluative Skills
- Archiving
- Capacity Building
- Coaching/Counselling
- Contract/Other Negotiations
- Communication: Verbal/Written
- Conference/Events Planning
- Decision Making
- Directing Others
- Drafting: Guidelines, Reports, etc.
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
- Goal Setting
- Internal Oversight
- Knowledge – UN Rules & Procedures
- Leadership
- Mentoring/Coaching/Motivating Others
- Organizational Planning
- Performance Appraisal and Reporting/PAD/ePAS
- Problem Solving
- Project Management
- Procurement/Purchasing
- Independent Research & Analysis
- SIS/GPS (UNFPA work programming tools)
- Scheduling
- Strategic Planning
- Supervision
- Time and Attendance
- Time Management
- Travel Planning
- UMOJA d

Information and Communication Technology

- Business Systems Planning
- Cisco Applications
- Cloud Architecture
- Communication Tower/Antennae Installations
- Database Technology
- Data Centre Operation
- Diagnostics
- Distributed Processing
- Distributed Systems
- ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning)
- Financial Systems
- Hardware/Software Technology
- Help Desk
- Human Resources Systems (SAP, Oracle, Taleo, etc.)
- Information Management
- IT Security
- Networking/Servers
- Performance Monitoring
- Requirements Specification
- System Design & Programming
- Systems Development
- Voice/Data Communication
- HF/VHF/UHF, Microwave & Satellite Requirements
- VSAT
- Web Design/Development/Support

Finance & Accounting

- Actuarial/Rating Analysis
- Audit
- Budget/Cost Control
- Capital Budgeting
- Cash Management
- Credit
- Debt Negotiations
- Financial System (Atlas, Umoja, Sun Systems)
- Financial Data Processing
- Financial Policy
- Foreign Exchange
- General and Cost Accounting
- Information Systems
- Internal Controls
- Inventory Control Analysis
- Investigation
- IPSAS
- Knowledge of UN Financial Rules
- Management Reporting
- New Business Development
- Oversight
- Planning & Analysis
- RBB/RBM
- Risk Management
- Strategic Financial Planning
- Treasury

Human Resources

- Analytics
- Career Counselling/Development
- Change Management
- Compensation/Benefits
- Competency Frameworks
- Diversity
- Employment Law
- Entitlements/Benefits
- ERPs (SAP, Oracle, Cornerstone, Taleo, etc.)
- Generic Job Profiles/Descriptions
- HR (Management Information) Systems
- Insurance
- Job Classification
- Organizational Development
- Outreach/Sourcing
- Pension
- Planning & Administration
- Policy & Procedures
- Performance Evaluation and Measurement
- Recruitment/Selection/Placement/Staffing
- Risk/Cost/Benefit Analysis
- Salary Administration
- Staff Member Relations
- Strategic HR Planning & Management
- Succession Planning
- Talent Management
- Training/Staff Development

Operations

- Administration
- Air Operations
- Budget Planning
- Customer Service
- Distribution
- Expense Control
- Information Systems
- Inventory & Production
- Management
- Process (Re-)Engineering
- Procurement
- Production
- Project Direction/Management
- Quality Assurance
- Research and Development
- Supply Chain
- Systems Development
- Total Quality Management (TQM)

Programming

- Advocacy
- Capacity Building
- Coordination of Key Networks
- Collaboration/Partnership
- Communication
- Conceptual Innovation
- Delivering Results Based Programmes
- Emergency Preparedness
- Environmental Scanning
- Facilitation
- GPS (Global Programming System)
- Knowledge Management
- Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)/Oversight
- Programme Leadership/Coordination/Representation
- Programme Management and Support
- Programming Support
- Strategic Information System (SIS)

Population Dynamics

- Adolescence/Adolescents/Youth/Girls
- Aging Population
- Census
- Civil Registration
- Data Analysis/Collection
- Demography
- Extreme Poverty
- Household Projection
- ICPD/Programme of Action
- Population and Development
- Population Studies
- Sustainable Development
- Statistics
- Trends Identification

Public Information/Communications

- Audio/Video Production
- Branding
- Broadcasting
- Communication Strategies
- Community Outreach
- Editing
- Film
- Information/Communications Products
- Journalism
- Knowledge Management
- Liaison work
- Library/Archives
- Media Relations
- Multi-media
- News Gathering/Reporting
- Portals
- Press Release
- Print/Electronic/Voice/Visual/Digital Media
- Public Information
- Public Relations
- Publications/e-Publications
- Radio
- Social Media/Traditional Media/Web
- Speech-writing
- Spokesperson
- TV
- Video
- Web Design/Development/Support

Regional

- Africa
- APRO (Asia and the Pacific)
- Asia/East Asia/South Asia/Southeast Asia
- Arab States (ASRO)
- Eastern Europe/Central Asia (EECARO)
- Baltics
- Balkans
- Caribbean
- ESARO (Eastern and Southern Africa Region)
- Europe
- Central America/Latin America
- LACRO (Latin America and the Caribbean)
- Mediterranean
- Middle East
- North America
- The Pacific
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- WCARO (Western and Central Africa Region)

Sexual and Reproductive Health

- Adolescent Girls/Adolescence
- Antenatal/Postnatal/Neonatal/Prenatal Care
- Child Marriage
- Contraception
- Contraceptive Devices
- Commodity Security
- Educating
- Family Planning
- Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)
- Fistula
- Gender-Based Violence (GBV)
- Health Systems
- HIV/AIDS
- Maternal Health
- Midwifery
- Mortality
- Needs Assessment
- Public Health
- Reproductive Health Commodities
- Social Reintegration

Substantive/Other

- Analytical/Evaluation
- Best Practice/Lessons Learned
- Bi-lateral/Multi-lateral Negotiations
- Capacity Building
- Civil Affairs
- Civil Society/Law
- Conflict Resolution
- Economic Affairs
- Ethics
- Gender/Gender Mainstreaming
- Facilitation
- Field Experience
- Fundraising/Donor Relations
- Humanitarian Affairs
- Humanitarian/Surge
- Legal Affairs
- Livelihoods
- Mediation/Arbitration
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Negotiation
- Ombudsman
- Policy
- Political Affairs/Analysis
- Public Administration
- Rule of Law/Justice
- Security
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Surge
- Translation
- UN Cares
- UNCT/One UN/Delivering as One

APPENDIX 3: SELF ASSESSMENT – WORKING STYLE AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Personality traits are often considered innate or socialized very early in life, while skills are learned. Personality traits and skills, however, are strongly connected. Often it is your innate characteristics that facilitate the development of a skill.

As you consider the various skills you currently have and are trying to develop, it is important to think about doing something well. It also is important to articulate this link to employers in cover letters and interviews.

You also may ask a family member and/or friend to create a list describing you according to the directions in this exercise. Are your lists similar? Where do they differ? Why might that be? You may find the following exercise helpful as part of your skills analysis.

TRAITS AND WORKING STYLE WORKSHEET	
Instructions: Write a list of ten traits that describe you, five for the way you perceive yourself, and five for the way you think others perceive you:	
SELF	OTHERS
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

Having troubles? Please refer to the list below:

- | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|
| accurate | charismatic | dedicated | enthusiastic | honest | motivated | practical |
| achievement-oriented | competent | deliberate | exhaustive | humorous | objective | professional |
| adaptable | conscientious | dependable | experienced | imaginative | observant | progressive |
| alert | conservative | detail-oriented | expressive | industrious | outgoing/extraverted | protective |
| ambitious | cool-headed | diligent | firm | innovative | organized | punctual |
| analytical | consistent | diplomatic | flexible | introspective | open-minded | quick |
| appreciative | contagious in my | discreet | forward thinking | inventive | patient | quick learner |
| assertive | enthusiasm | dynamic | friendly | knowledgeable | perceptive | rational |
| athletic | co-operative | economical | goal-directed | logical | persistent | prudent |
| calm | courageous | effective | good humoured | loyal | pioneering | resilient |
| capable | creative | efficient | good judgement | methodical | poised | strategic |
| cautious | decisive | energetic | hard working | | positive (attitude) | thorough |

APPENDIX 4: SELF ASSESSMENT – WORK VALUES

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a list of ten work values that will influence your choice of a career: five that are essential, and five that are desired. Can't think of ten? Refer to the list of values below:

ESSENTIAL	DESIRED
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

WORK VALUES

- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| Achieving results | Cooperation | Flexibility | Independence | Non-/hierarchical environment | Quality Management | Stress levels (manageable) |
| Adventure | Control/Freedom | Friendship with co-workers | Influence people | Opportunity for growth | Recognition for work | Team spirit |
| Advocacy | Corporate culture | Gain intellectual status | Innovation | Opportunity for learning and development | Responsibility | Trust |
| Aesthetics | Creativity | Gain knowledge | Intellectual stimulation | Physical challenge | Reputation | Vision |
| Autonomy | Client contact | Help society | Integrity | Precision work | Self-power (control over decisions and situations) | Volunteerism |
| Become an "expert" | Cutting edge | Help others | Make decisions (hands-on vs. hands-off) | Predictability | Service | Work under pressure |
| Benefits/entitlements | Diversity | Hold power and authority | Management style | Progressive environment | Social responsibility | Stability |
| Belonging (sense of) | Ethics | Ideologically sound | Mission/meaning | Purpose (sense of) | Stability | Working outdoors |
| Challenge | Excitement | Impressive (to others) | Moral fulfilment | | Strategy | Work-life balance |
| Change/variety | Fast pace | Inclusiveness | | | | |
| Collegiality | Financial independence | | | | | |
| Competition | | | | | | |

APPENDIX 5: SAMPLE CURRICULUM VITAE I

Vasanthi Fonseka

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PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

Technical Analyst, Gender & Human Rights, Technical Division, UNFPA, New York, USA, 11.2014 – present

- Provide technical and programmatic assistance on gender and human rights and its linkages with reproductive health, poverty eradication and sustainable development.
- Work on gender & human rights globally, focusing on countries in the Asia and the Pacific region in mainstreaming gender-responsive, rights-based and culturally-sensitive approaches so APRO region is updated on the Fund's policy and programme guidelines.
- Technical support for piloting and rolling out policies and programmes to prevent gender-based violence in APRO region.
- Responsible for knowledge management and sharing across divisions and regions.

UN Cares Regional Programme Coordinator, UNFPA, Panama City, Panama, 9.2013 – 9.2014

- Regional Coordinator for UN Cares (United Nations system-wide workplace programme on HIV) for Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office (LACRO).
- Supported 22 countries in LACRO UN Cares programmes technical guidance, capacity development, knowledge management, strategic partnerships development, programme management, and programme monitor and evaluation.
- Encouraged UN Country Teams, through UN Cares Country Focal Points and teams, to develop interventions for UN staff and families to increase awareness on gender issues, human rights, stigma and discrimination relating to HIV and key populations at higher risk of HIV infection.
- Coordinated UN Cares global initiatives, communication campaigns, reporting, publications and editing of a global e-newsletter, capturing of country stories and good practices in programme implementation from LACRO region and beyond.

Special Assistant to the Resident Coordinator Programme (SARC), JPO (Denmark), UNDP, Kathmandu, Nepal, 6.2011 – 6.2013

- Assisted with the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the Annual UN Country Team Work Plan in consultation with the UN Country Team.
- Supported the Head of the Resident Coordinator Office (RCO) in budget management, resource mobilization, and interpretation of UNDG/DOCO policies for RCs.
- Managed and scheduled the agenda of the RC (with the Executive Assistant), prepared background briefs for RC meetings, prepared drafts of RC correspondence and manage all incoming correspondence and reroute as necessary.
- Assisted in the drafting of Annual Reports for the Resident Coordinator to provide an overview over joint operational activities for development.
- Liaise with the Development Group Office and keep the Resident Coordinator and UNCT informed of new initiatives (Delivery as One, UN Reform etc.) and directions in the UN system.

Research Assistant, Gender Studies, Linköping University, Linköping, Sweden, 11.2009 – 4.2011

- Research Assistant to Professor Dalberg, Gender Studies.
- Conducted literature reviews, collected and analyzed data, prepared materials for submission to grating agencies and foundations, prepared materials for UW Human Subjects Committee review, and maintained accurate records of interviews, safeguarded the confidentiality of subjects, as necessary.
- Supervised undergraduate students working on the research project (maintained records on assignment completion, acted as liaison/mediator between the undergraduate students and the faculty researcher).

Fundraising Coordinator, European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), Brussels, Belgium, 7.2007 – 7.2009

- Created and implemented fundraising activities with 70 member organisations across 30 countries in Europe to execute individual business plan to exceed revenue goals.
- Developed relationships with NGOs and NGO networks; established and maintained contacts with UNHCR, government officials and inter-governmental partners at a high level.
- Assisted in identifying, recruiting, training and managing temporary coordinators and volunteers.
- Represented the organisation at international conferences and high-level meetings, including relevant UN Agencies, the European Commission, and Members of the European Parliament.

President, Charity and Volunteer Club, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark, 9.2005 – 5.2007

- Directed and supervised six club board members.
- Planned and implemented various charity events and volunteer opportunities through collaboration with NGOs in Copenhagen: UNICEF, WFP, GEF, OECD, and other UN agencies.
- Represented the Club in student council and school club board meetings.

EDUCATION

- Executive Education Program, John, F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 8.2014. Distance learning course, Using Evidence to Improve Policy and Programs
- MSc in Gender Studies: Intersectionality and Change, 8.2009 – 4.2011. Linköping University, Linköping, Sweden
- BA in International Studies, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, 5.2007

SKILLS

- Language: Danish (native), English (full professional proficiency), Spanish (minimum professional proficiency), Swedish (limited working proficiency)
- IT: Google Apps, Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Access, Web Publishing), MATLAB

APPENDIX 6: TIPS FOR WRITTEN APPLICATIONS (UN SYSTEM)

Acronyms: Be sure to spell out acronyms and abbreviations that are not universally recognized. UNICEF or UNFPA would be okay, but **others may be less clear.**

Address: Include complete – and current – mailing information: apartment numbers, postal codes, etc. and email addresses.

Awards, Honours or Recognition: Add to **Achievements** when incurred on the job. Name the awards, issuing organizations and dates, e.g.

- UN 21 Award, Team Productivity, UN Mine Action Coordination Centre (UNMEE), 2013.
- Recipient, Elie Wiesel Ethics Award for “Meritorious service in the face of grave personal danger in East Timor,” 2000.

Backup: Keep a PDF version of your application on your laptop, tablet, etc. (for emergencies). It’s also advisable to store a copy of your most recent CV and P-11 in your personal email files.

Empty Box? Use “NA” or “-.” Avoid leaving boxes blank. Also, double check to make sure what you typed was actually entered.

Formatting: Many online applications are challenging to format. Double check your layout and punctuation after transferring from Word. As a rule, avoid formatting features when drafting in Word, Google Docs or other software. Simple, tight paragraphs are required in all cases.

Qualifications/Certifications: Include this information either in Formal Training/Education or Description of Duties, e.g. MP5 weapons, IATA certification, CPR, Advanced First Aid Instructor, Staff Outreach Support (SOS) Trainer. Note the expiry date, if relevant.

Relations: Full disclosure of any family member is required.

Reason for Leaving: Keep it **short** and keep it **positive**, e.g. “end of project,” “temporary assignment,” “degree programme,” “family obligations.” “NA” if you still hold the job. Do not spell out your new assignment, e.g. “Transferred to Division X”, as that can data already is on the form.

Saving your Work: SAVE EARLY AND SAVE OFTEN to avoid the risk of losing your work. It is recommended that you draft, edit and spell check in Word or Google Docs, and then copy and paste the final text into the application.

Similar Jobs? Short Assignments? If you had different contracts, but did a similar job over or took on additional work for a short period, do not create separate entries. Reflect this in a blended entry.

Spelling: Proofread more than once, as there is no spell check tool in most online applications. It is thus a good idea to draft in Word or Google Docs, check your spelling there and only then copy and paste into the online form or system.

Supervisors: Add the email address, if possible, if the position was held within the past five years or so.

Training: Multiple courses? Batch them by subject area or where you took them.

Transmission of the PHP: If you want to send your e-recruit profile (or other online work history) as an attachment, select “Print” and then “Save As” a PDF. It is advisable always to keep a copy accessible in an email folder and/or a personal computer, smart phone, etc. (along with your cover letter) so that you have it handy around the clock and around the globe.

Verb Tense/Parallel structure: Avoid mixing verb tenses (scheduling, attendance, liaised). Use simple, present for current assignment (schedule, attend, liaise), simple past (scheduled, attended, liaised) for previous assignments.

APPENDIX 7: ACTION VERBS

accelerated	challenged	demonstrated	extended	invented	performed	selected	tabulated
accompanied	changed	described	facilitated	invested	persuaded	sent	tailored
accomplished	channelled	designated	fashioned	investigated	pioneered	served	targeted
achieved	chose [choose]	designed	financed	involved	planned	serviced	taught
acquired	circulated	determined	forecasted	issued	polled	set up	tested
adapted	clarified	developed	formed	joined	prepared	shaped	tightened
added	classified (re-)	devised	formulated	judged	presented	shortened	traced
adjusted	collaborated	devoted	found [find]	launched	printed	showed	tracked
administered	collected	diagnosed	founded	led [lead]	probed	simplified	traded
adopted	combined	directed	framed	lobbied	processed	sold [sell]	trained
advised	commissioned	discounted	fulfilled	located	procured	solved	transferred
advocated	compared	discovered	gained	logged	produced	spearheaded	transformed
aired	compiled	distributed	gathered	maintained	profiled	stabilized	translated
affected	completed	documented	gauged	managed	programmed	staffed	travelled
allocated	composed	doubled	gave [give]	mapped	projected	staged	trimmed
amended	conceived	drafted	generated	marketed	promoted	standardized	tripled
analyzed	concluded	earned	governed	maximized	proposed	started	utilized
answered	condensed	eased	granted	measured	proved	steered	updated
appraised	conducted	edited	guided	moderated	provided	stimulated	uncovered
approved	consolidated	eliminated	handled	modified	publicized	streamlined	undertook
arbitrated	constructed	employed	headed	monitored	published	strengthened	unified
arranged	consulted	enabled	identified	motivated	purchased	stressed	unravalled
articulated	contrasted	encouraged	implemented	multiplied	qualified	stretched	used
assembled	contributed	endorsed	improved	narrated	quantified	structured	vacated
assessed	controlled	enforced	improvised	negotiated	raised	studied	validated
assisted	convened	engineered	increased	nurtured	rated	submitted	verified
audited	converted	enhanced	influenced	observed	recommended	substantiated	weighted
augmented	conveyed	enlarged	informed	obtained	reconciled	succeeded	widened
attended	convinced	enriched	initiated	opened	recruited	suggested	withdrew
authorized	coordinated	ensured	innovated	operated	revised	summarized	witnessed
balanced	corresponded	established	inspected	orchestrated	redesigned	superseded	won [win]
bargained	counselled	estimated	inspired	ordered	reduced	supervised	worked (with)
broadened	created	evaluated	installed	organized	renovated	supplemented	wrote [write]
budgeted	cultivated	examined	instituted	originated	reorganized	supplied	
built	cut	exceeded	instructed	overhauled	reported	supported	
calculated	decided	executed	interpreted	oversaw	researched	surpassed	
carried out	decreased	expanded	insured	[oversee]	reviewed	surveyed	
catalogued	defined	expedited	interviewed	participated	scheduled	synthesized	
centralized	delegated	explained	introduced	partnered (with)	secured	systematized	

APPENDIX 8: QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

1. What are some of the objectives you would like to see accomplished in this job? Which is most pressing?
2. What would you like to have done in the next three months?
3. What are some of the long-term objectives you would like to see completed?
4. What would you like done differently by the next person who fills this position?
5. What are some of the more difficult challenges one would have to face in this position?
6. In what ways has this organization been most successful over the years?
7. What significant changes do you foresee in the near future?
8. What accounts for success within the organization/work unit?
9. Whom does this position report to? Will I have the opportunity to meet with him/her?
10. Whom will I supervise?
11. Could you please describe the work environment?
12. What do you like best/least about working for the work unit/organization?

These questions are presented only as interviewing guidelines. They are meant to help you prepare for the interview. Some questions may or may not be appropriate for your interviewing situation.

OTHER QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE

The key is to relax, go with the flow and do your best. Before you know it, you will be in your next job.



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