



Featured News

Career Planning Do's & Don'ts



Career planning is a vital process in one's career transition journey. Many may only start planning their career or have the misconception that career planning starts at the point of their career transition. On the contrary, developing a career plan requires months or even years of preparation.

Periodic review of your career plan is important in ensuring the achievement of your longer term career goal and to keep up with the dynamic job market and landscape in the 21st century.

Here is a list of career planning do's and don'ts to get you started with your career planning:

DO'S

Discovering Yourself

- ✓ Gather information about yourself - understand your needs, goals, interests, values, family commitments, and personal constraints.
- ✓ Acknowledge the challenges faced during the transition and take efforts to explore the unknown.
- ✓ Keep an open mind to unlearn and relearn one's habits and working patterns.
- ✓ Seek out support from family, friends, career mentor, and resource centres to assess your situation and to provide career/ financial advice.

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Exploring Career Options

- ✓ Conduct research on your choice of industries and job functions and take note of the similarity and differences of these job functions/ industries, in comparison to your current job. You have to identify your transferrable skills, strengths, and interest level for the position. - To quote Confucius, "Choose a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life."
- ✓ Consider whether the industry/ job function you are interested in is flourishing, and if there is a real demand for people. You should also talk to someone from the industry.
- ✓ Get more specific information (through free lance projects, part-time assignments, attachments, volunteer opportunities, and career resources) after you have narrowed down your options.

Discovering Yourself

- ✓ Formulate a career strategy and action plan (with contingencies).
- ✓ Review your action plan to ensure that they are practical and implementable.
- ✓ Develop your personal brand.
- ✓ Be open to both short term (a half-step approach) and long term options for your career.

Taking Action

- ✓ Upgrade and equip yourself with skills and knowledge required to join your choice of industries and job functions.

- ✓ Develop a job search strategy to reach your goal.
- ✓ Equip yourself with job search skills i.e. to write resumes and to master your presentation and interview techniques, etc.
- ✓ Gather information on the companies that you are keen to join.
- ✓ Network to connect yourself with existing or potential contacts. You can also choose to join professional associations.
- ✓ Review your career plan and strategy along the way and make adjustments, if required.

DON'TS

Discovering Yourself

- ✓ Be discouraged by rejections and failures along the way as they are inevitable in all plans.

Exploring Career Options

- ✓ Limit yourself to only careers similar to that of your current job so that you can broaden your job search to explore other job functions or industry.

Making Decisions

- ✓ Take up a job based on the remuneration. Interests, values, family commitments, and personal constraints are equally important factors for your career considerations.

Taking Action

- ✓ Change career plan without proper considerations.

Career Transition Story

A Transition Story of an Entrepreneur

- Mr Azmi Samsuddin, Owner, Boxfit Gym

Owner of Boxfit Gym - Mr Azmi Samsuddin - a former SAF serviceman shared with us his insights of the health and fitness industry, his transition journey, and his vision for his business.

The Health & Fitness industry

The Health & Fitness industry in Singapore enjoys extensive government

support, with S\$300 million invested into the Sporting Singapore Fund to finance fitness and sports development.

Nestled in the lush urban retreat for SAF Officers, Boxfit Gym @ The Temasek Club is one of the four branches of Boxfit Gym that Azmi manages in providing Boxfit members with an array of gym amenities and state-of-the-art exercise equipments.

“One of the challenges of running a health and fitness business in Singapore is the pricing of the services,” he says. “The fitness consultation rate is very competitive. It can range anywhere from \$50 - \$300 per hour depending on whether you are charging the higher or lower end of the market.” As to whether one should tap on the mass market or to attract the high-end consumers, Azmi shared: “Both options have its pros and cons and that’s where your professional experience and qualifications; start-up capital; and management style will determine your final pricing.”

And how did he come to the decision to start his own business and to transit to this industry?

The Journey

Azmi’s passion for the Army was apparent as he spent 18 years of his life in SAF holding different appointments of which, for 6 years he was a Physical Training Instructor (PTI).

Beaming with pride, he related that the years spent in the SAF has shaped his personality and built his character. “It was the character building opportunities that ignited my entrepreneurship spirit,” he says.

The nature of military missions demands a high standard of discipline and, in particular self-discipline. “Discipline coupled with leadership is a winning combination when it comes to managing and running a business,” he adds with a wink.

As a PTI, Azmi had to motivate his colleagues into action within a military environment where he zealously designed his own fitness programmes, and part of that must have come from a projection of business decisiveness. Therefore, joining the Health and Fitness industry and starting up a fitness centre - Boxfit, is a natural progression for Azmi.

Career transition requires months or even years of planning and preparation. One should start preparing for transition at least 2-3 years prior to ORD according to Azmi.

He also said that there are two important aspects to take note of during the transition - networking with potential business contacts outside MINDEF/SAF and bridging any skill and competency gaps. Azmi’s network of support was built through the years. Ever since he decided to start his own business, he made it a point to connect himself with professionals in the Health and Fitness industry.



“Going for something we have passion in, is important, as then it does not require much effort on our part to be successful.”

Vision

A firm believer that health and fitness facilities should be accessible and affordable to the majority of the Singapore population, Azmi shared that most of the branches of Boxfit are located in the “heartlands”. He reiterated that he will continue to maintain this unique selling proposition as part of his business model.

When asked about his business directions, he mentioned that one has to put a face to the business and give it a presence beyond its physical location. Azmi mapped out his business strategies for growth and expansion and shared with us his plans to implement corporate memberships, conduct adventure courses, and organise team-building programmes for corporations and/ or schools.

Looks like there is no stopping of this go-getter who is obviously a mission-focused individual - the trait of a SAF soldier.

Past CT Events Highlights

Think Entrepreneurship!

- A WOSpecs Seminar (4th Nov 2010)

Ever wondered what is it like being an Entrepreneur? What drives them forward? Are they all successful? What obstacles do they face, and what are the common mistakes made?

All these questions were answered during our latest Think Entrepreneurship! Seminar which took place on 4th of November at the Suntec Convention Centre.

It was our privilege to have various guest speakers to cover the different aspects of being an entrepreneur - mindset, resources, and action!

Mindset - Sharing of Entrepreneurship Experience

Our first speaker was Mr Gary Loh, Director of PurpleClay Consulting. An entrepreneur himself, Mr Loh shared with the WOSpecs his experiences on how he started off as a young entrepreneur filled with drive and vibe; the mistakes he made along the way; and how he learnt from the mistakes to attain his current achievements.

As a professional grant application and franchising consultant, Mr Loh also touched on the various government grants available to our budding entrepreneurs that were present at the seminar.

Resources - Available Business Platforms

The next speaker, Ms Chen Yew Ju from DP Bureau, presented to our WOSpecs the various platforms in which new business start-ups can leverage on.

This includes both online and offline platforms that provide start-up entrepreneurs the means of outsourcing various business functions and acquiring business opportunities via the e-Commerce facility - SME MarketPlace.

Action - Getting Started!

Finally, we had Ms Donna Lee, Founder and CEO of KinderGolf - world's first and only pre-schooler golf specialist.

Not only did Ms Donna touch on the fundamentals and essentials of being an entrepreneur, she also shared with our participants the importance of a well-thought business plan; tips on overseas investments; and what to look out for when writing a business plan.

It was a well-received event and all our participants were able to take home with them practical information and insights on running a business - that will benefit them in their entrepreneur journey in the future.

