



PART II



PART II

Exploring the market and confirming your plan

After you complete your personal assessment (in Part I), one or more possibilities for your choice of career will naturally begin to emerge.

The next step consists of exploring the job market and the kind of trends there are in your target sector, in order to make these possibilities a reality.

The goal of this section is to verify that your career plan is realistic and achievable.

Let's not forget that recruiters want to know your motivations, what you are looking for in the position and what you can bring to the table. It is thus essential that you know the issues faced by the company in its sector and that you show your understanding of the job and the

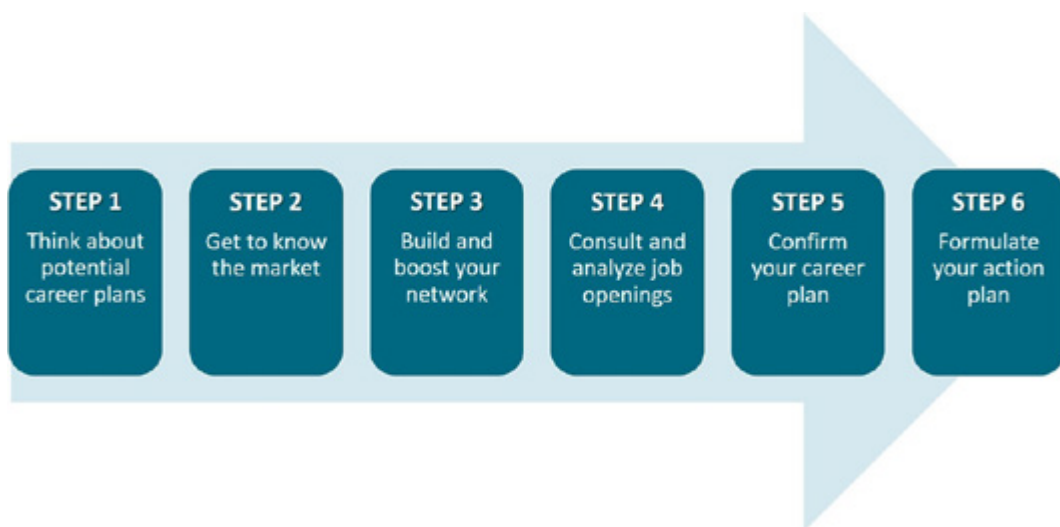
work environment. Gaining some general knowledge on what's currently going on in your target sector and immersing yourself in some sector-specific language will make you appear more persuasive when meeting with recruiters.

Validating your hypothetical career plan will also allow you to:

- ▶ Target your sector and the type of facility where you wish to work, so as not to lose focus, particularly during your job/internship search
- ▶ Evaluate your profile with reference to your desired job
- ▶ Define your offer of service, that is, what you can contribute to the company
- ▶ Build an action plan.

To guide you through this section, we have divided it into several steps and exercises.

- ▶ Think about potential career plans
- ▶ Get to know the market
- ▶ Build and boost your network
- ▶ Consult and analyze job openings
- ▶ Confirm your career plan
- ▶ Formulate your action plan.



STEP 1 Think about potential career plans

You might be inclined toward several different possible choices of career. However, it is important to prioritize your choices so that you can use your time efficiently during your job search.

Focus on the career choice that inspires you the most. When faced with a «dream» project and a «logical» one that does not guarantee job security right from the onset, it is better to choose the «dream» project.



Your hypothetical career

HYPOTHETICAL CAREER CHOICE No...

TASTES/ASPIRATIONS /VALUES: *from Part I*

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HOBBIES/INTERESTS: *from Part I*

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SKILLS: *from Part I*

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MY CONSTRAINTS: *from Part I*

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SECTOR: *e.g. R&D, energy, finance, etc.*

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JOB TYPE(S):

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HYPOTHETICAL CAREER CHOICE No...

TASTES/ASPIRATIONS /VALUES: *from Part I*

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HOBBIES/INTERESTS: *from Part I*

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SKILLS: *from Part I*

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MY CONSTRAINTS: *from Part I*

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SECTOR: e.g. *R&D, energy, finance, etc.*

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JOB TYPE(S):

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HYPOTHETICAL CAREER CHOICE No...

TASTES/ASPIRATIONS /VALUES: *from Part I*

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HOBBIES/INTERESTS: *from Part I*

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SKILLS: *from Part I*

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MY CONSTRAINTS: *from Part I*

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SECTOR: *e.g. R&D, energy, finance, etc.*

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JOB TYPE(S):

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STEP 2

Get to know the market

Once you have thought of your hypothetical career choice, define your job search and gather precise information on your desired **sector(s)**, **company(ies)**, **profession(s)** and **role(s)**.

Information can be obtained from:

- ▶ **Public or private organizations**, such as Pôle Emploi, l'ONISEP, l'Étudiant, Studyrama, etc., each of which includes comprehensive job lists on their website.
 - <http://www.goinglobal.com/>
 - <https://www.jobteaser.com/fr>
 - <http://www.onisep.fr/>
 - <http://www.studyrama.com/>
 - <https://www.ingenieurs.com/infos/metiers-ingenieurs-1587.php>
- ▶ **General or specialist press** (e.g. Usine, Nouvel Obs, les Echos, etc.): identification of major companies in the sector, their economic situation, trends in employment and the industry, etc.
 - <https://www.usinenouvelle.com/>
 - <https://www.nouvelobs.com/>
 - <https://www.lesechos.fr/>

- ▶ **Company websites and annual activity reports** where you can find a company's future prospects.

For example, if you want to do an internship in logistics at Danone, find out how this particular company adapts to changes in logistics: more traceability, more flexibility, necessity for more energy performance and more connected objects, etc.

- ▶ **LinkedIn**: indispensable source of information on companies and job openings.
- ▶ **Creating Google alerts** using keywords and putting together an information portfolio will allow you to strengthen your knowledge and your understanding of the target sector.





Analyzing the market and your target sector

Provide an overall summary of all the information you have collected on the target sector, e.g. energy, transport, automobile, etc.

SECTIONS

YOUR ANALYSIS

SECTOR

- Main issues?
- Evolutions?
- Leading companies?
- Main innovations?
- Etc.

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COMPANIES

- Company activity?
- Main products/services?
- Business models?
- Competition?
- Clients, purchase advisers?
- Size, turnover?
- Etc.

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ROLES & JOBS

- Opportunities?
- Roles (e.g. R&D, finance, production, marketing, etc.)?Type of jobs (e.g. data scientist, business analyst, etc.)?Desired skills?
- Recruitment trends?
Posts and potential developments?
- Salary?
- Etc.

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STEP 3 Build and boost your network

Interview employed professionals.
Three words: Boost. Your. Network.

Networking is essential, even when looking for internships.

Working on networking skills is not an activity reserved solely to company directors, nor to those raised in a worldly environment with an already full address book. Your first port of call for networking is your own inner circle: your family, friends and neighbors. Even if they do not specialize in your target sector, they will help you reflect on your plan and can recommend you to someone they know.

In this way, by tying one link to another, you will gradually move toward your target network, that is, employed professionals specializing in your desired field.

You may wish to start by connecting with École Polytechnique alumni, a solid network that will be happy to help you on your way. Networks available to you:

- <https://www.polytechnique.org/>
- <http://www.polytechnique.net/groups/groupesx>
- <https://www.myjobglasses.com/>

What is a network used for?

- Gathering information that is not available to the public, in order to understand the inner workings of a job, the specificities of a sector and the projects of a company
- Getting advice on the relevance of your current approach to your project

- Appropriating language used to describe a particular sector or business
- Sharing and cooperation
- Cultivating your curiosity and moving out of the academic phase of your life
- Fine-tuning your career plan and your offer of service.

How should I proceed?

When establishing your network, it is important to stick to a few golden rules:

- You are in a period of reflection and, therefore, you are not actively seeking employment. Potential members of your network may feel put off if you directly approach them for a job
- Do not circulate your résumé within your network, unless asked specifically
- Practice the skill of networking: choose an attitude and a mindset of benevolence and sharing.

Give to receive: today you have received; tomorrow you will give back

- Maintain your links, for example, by sharing an interesting newspaper article, sending a happy birthday text or through any other type of link.

3 steps for interviewing members of your network

- **Before the meeting:**
 - Contact the person by email or telephone;
 - Identify yourself (specify: your full name, your background, the person who recommended you to contact this person, etc.);
 - Give your reasons for wishing to meet with this person and the goal of the meeting:



E.g. *You are specialized in... You are renowned for... As I am currently reflecting on my career, I would like to discuss the specificities of your job;*

- Propose meeting dates;
- Choose to meet in the workplace of the contact person;
- Do not hesitate to try to contact them again if you do not receive an initial response.

► **During the meeting:**

- Give a brief personal summary and remind the contact person of how much of their time you will take up;
- Present your career plan or express your request;
- Give the person the chance to present themselves;
- Exchange with each other and ask questions (*see “Guide for interviews with a professional”*);
- Recall what you have learned and talk about how you will continue your research;
- Ask at the end of the interview if the person knows anyone else who would be likely to meet with you;
- Take notes;
- Thank the person sincerely.

► **After the meeting**

- Send a thank-you email to the people you contacted;
- Make a connection, on LinkedIn, for example;
- Use what you learned during your meetings to make progress in your career plan (getting to know yourself and your market...);
- Create a summary of your meetings (*see “Meeting follow-up table”*).

For your help, see the networking questions below (attention: the list of questions is non-exhaustive).

Guide for interviews with a professional
Reminder of the purpose of the interview and quick presentation of your background.

1st theme: job and environment

- Issues of the sector and the company
- Definition of the position the person holds
- Presentation of main duties
- Work environment.

Example questions:

- *What main current issues might influence the economic development of your line of business?*
- *What challenges does your company face in terms of its development?*
- *What is your job title?*
- *Could you please describe your job, duties, activities and responsibilities?*
- *What is your job like in real terms? What main duties/activities are you in charge of?*
- *What is your role in the company?*
- *Could you talk me through a typical day or week of work?*
- *Who do you work with on a daily basis (what kind of positions, services etc.)?*
- *How do you divide up your time at work?*
- *Who are your internal and external contacts? Could you talk about the nature of your work relationships (clients, providers, partners, hierarchical relationships, etc.)?*
- *What kind of problems do you solve?*
- *How do you see yourself and the company evolving?*

2nd theme: knowledge/qualities/skills

- Knowledge required to work in this position
- Qualities required to hold this position
- Main skills expected

- Background required to get into this position, in terms of training, experience, etc.

Example questions:

- *What skills are expected of someone who does your job?*
- *Do you know of other types of career paths or academic backgrounds that could lead to this position?*
- *In your opinion, what are the necessary qualities for your profession?*
- *What do you think are the best types of training and the best channels to get into this line of work?*
- *Is it possible to continue training and learning while doing your job?*
- *Are there any internships that would facilitate integration into this sector?*
- *Are there any specific skill requirements? If so, for which roles? For which services? What kind of issues do these skills deal with?*

3rd theme: personal opinions

- Job interests and constraints.

Example questions:

- *What are your working conditions like? (hours, pace, wage bracket)*
- *What are the main sources of satisfaction in your job?*
- *What motivates you in this job?*
- *What are the strengths of doing this job? Are there any constraints?*
- *What do you like most and least about this line of work?*
- *Do you know anyone else doing the same job as you?*
- *Could you give me any names of people doing similar work?*
- *What advice would you give someone looking to do this job?*

4th theme: organization

- Presentation of the organization (activities, values, operations, etc.)

Example questions:

- *How is your organization structured?*
- *Could you show me the company's organization chart?*
- *What are the key values of the company?*

5th theme: your respective career paths

- Path of the contact person
- Advice on your profile/your path/your professional project.

Example questions

- *What was your background before getting into this line of work?*
- *What kind of training did you do?*
- *Could you give me your opinion on my profile and my background?*
- *What advice would you give me for the next step in my professional career?*

6th theme: opening up

- Possible changes in the role in relation to the current job market, in terms of recruitment, required knowledge, new skills, technological evolutions, etc.
- Advice/contact details and expressing thanks.

Example questions:

- *What is the current socioeconomic situation of the sector?*
- *How do you think your job will evolve over the next ten years? Is it possible to move from this position to other lines of work? Which ones?*
- *What advice would you give me to get into this line of work (taking into account my current background)?*



Follow-up of actions taken and meetings attended

For every action you have completed, specify:

- The date or the period of time;
- The goal - e.g. find out about a sector, read up on jobs, prepare applications, etc.;
- The nature of the activity - e.g. networking meeting, research of relevant literature, job fair visit, etc.;
- Actions to be taken next - e.g. analyze job vacancies, draw up a list of skills required for a job, get in contact with a particular person, etc.

E.g. ACTION TAKEN No 0

DATE/PERIOD: 10/30/2018

NATURE: Meeting with an engineer from Renault

GOAL(S): Get to know the internal and external workings of the company and discover what an engineering job consists of at this company

CONTACT: Mr Zeitouni

ANY RESOURCES USED: +33 (0)2 00 00 00 00 - m.a@mail.fr - linkedin

WHAT NEXT: Meeting proposed with Mr. B, DRH, to continue my search

ACTION TAKEN No1

DATE/PERIOD:

NATURE:

GOAL(S):

CONTACT:

ANY RESOURCES USED:

WHAT NEXT:

ACTION TAKEN No2

DATE/PERIOD:

NATURE:

GOAL(S):

CONTACT:

ANY RESOURCES USED:

WHAT NEXT:

ACTION TAKEN No3

DATE/PERIOD:

NATURE:

GOAL(S):

CONTACT:

ANY RESOURCES USED:

WHAT NEXT:

STEP 4 Consult and analyze job openings

Now that your career plan is taking shape, it is time to get informed on job offers.

In order to:

- Get of an idea of what companies are currently recruiting
- Strengthen the links between your plan, the market and your offer of service.



Analysis of job openings

Find two openings for positions that fit your career plan.

Think about the skills (learning, learning to do and learning to be) required for these offers and reflect on what you can bring to the table.

Identify what you like most and least about these openings.

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STEP 5

Confirm your career plan

My career goal(s)



Using the information you have gathered and the template below, draw up a summary and structure your career plan (and your offer of service).

CAREER GOAL No...
(My offer of service)

DESIRED JOB (role, duties, pay, etc.):

E.g. *business engineer, optical and laser metrology engineer, teacher-researcher, etc.*

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TYPE OF ORGANIZATION (nature: company/industry/start-up/consulting firm/laboratory, etc.; commercial activity; size; private/public; company culture, turnover, etc.):

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SECTORS (technological challenges, trends, R&D, etc.):

E.g. *industry, research, energy, finance, etc.*

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REQUIRED SKILLS:

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MATCH BETWEEN MY PLAN AND MY PROFILE (experience, training, skills, etc.):

Do I have the necessary skills? Do I need training? In what?

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MATCH WITH MY DESIRES: Would I like this job? What are its advantages? What are its potential disadvantages (workload, management style, location, salary, etc.)?

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MY ADDED VALUE:

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CAREER GOAL No...

(My offer of service)

DESIRED JOB (role, duties, pay, etc.):

E.g. *business engineer, optical and laser metrology engineer, teacher-researcher, etc.*

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TYPE OF ORGANIZATION (nature: company/industry/start-up/consulting firm/laboratory, etc.; commercial activity; size; private/public; company culture, turnover, etc.):

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SECTORS (technological challenges, trends, R&D, etc.):

E.g. *industry, research, energy, finance, etc.*

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REQUIRED SKILLS:

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MATCH BETWEEN MY PLAN AND MY PROFILE (experience, training, skills, etc.):

Do I have the necessary skills? Do I need training? In what?

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MATCH WITH MY DESIRES: Would I like this job? What are its advantages? What are its potential disadvantages (workload, management style, location, salary, etc.)?

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MY ADDED VALUE:

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STEP 6

Formulate your action plan

Global action plan



Plan the actions you should take, making sure that they are consistent with each other and identify which ones are relevant to your career plan (e.g. build a document containing my target companies, consult job openings, create an email alert system, respond to job offers, send off spontaneous applications, write your résumé, visit job fairs, etc.).

Identify your target (potential organizations, contacts in HR and people directly responsible for job offers).

Do not hesitate to assess these different steps on a regular basis.

In this way, you can measure systematically the usefulness of each action taken in order to make improvements or corrections on the way.

What?/Why?	When?	Assessment/Follow-up
ACTION No1:		
ACTION No2:		
ACTION No3:		

PERSONAL notes

PERSONAL

notes

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