

Asking the right questions

When it comes to exploring career options and gathering the information you need to make a sound decision, it helps if you are asking the right questions. Many people fixate on just one or two issues and fail to consider the wider implications of a particular career choice. This framework will help you to think about a range of different factors that contribute to career satisfaction and success. Not all areas of questioning will be equally relevant to you. Or, at least, you may not be aware of how important they are just yet.

Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will you get out of the role? • Why is that role particularly rewarding for you? • Why is that job worth doing? • Why does it meet your needs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which of your values does it satisfy most? • What does it not fulfil? • Why is that job more interesting than others? • What does that job give you that no other job could?
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will you put into the role? • What will be expected of you? • What does it take to be successful? • Which of your abilities will be most useful? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which of your abilities will you hardly use? • What aspects of the job will you find hardest? • What skills, knowledge or experience is required? • How much work is involved in maintaining it?
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will you work alongside? • How much of your time will you spend with them? • Can you identify with the people in this role? • Do you feel like you belong? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will your customers or clients be? • How much contact will you have? • Who will influence your success and satisfaction? • Who can help you to learn about this role?
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you have to behave in this role? • How do the demands of the job fit your personality? • How do you like to work? • How relaxed or formal is the atmosphere? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will it be different from what you are used to? • Can you do it your way or do you have to conform? • Do you have to develop a different work persona? • What will you find stressful about this role?
Where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where will you work? • What sort of working environment will it be? • What mix of in-the-office and out-and-about? • How will that affect you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you restricted to particular locations? • Will you have to relocate? • How much travel is there, and what sort? • How much commuting will there be?
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the balance between work and non-work ideal? • Are there flexible working options? • How easy is it to switch off at the end of the day? • How is this job likely to change over time? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any threats in the future? • How will you develop in the role? • Where do you go after this job? • How many options will this role open for you?