



THE 2013 CAREER GUIDE

Welcome to **GetSmarter's Career Guide for 2013**. This guide has been created to help you, the South African working professional, develop a better understanding of the current career landscape in order to advance your career. Use it to equip yourself with the practical tips and knowledge needed to stand out in an ever-changing and uncertain job market.



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1 TODAY'S WORKFORCE – PG 2

The dynamic new world of work is characterised by increased competition, automation and outsourcing, non-linear career paths, flatter organisational structures, rising unemployment and skills shortages. Developing an understanding of how this affects both organisations and individuals is imperative to feeling empowered in the modern career landscape.

2 SKILLS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY WORLD OF WORK – PG 4

The terms 'globalisation' and 'technological advancements' have come to define the 21st century world of work. This new era has seen significant changes to where and how individuals work. New and up-to-date skills are needed to stay relevant and progress in almost any career.

3 ENGAGING YOUR CAREER GOALS – PG 5

Industries have evolved; presenting career paths that didn't exist just two decades ago. Jobs like professional blogging, social media management and user experience analysis have only been formally established during the past five to ten years. This dynamic environment means that your career goals are likely to change over the course of your working life. Having clearly defined goals and determining how to pursue new opportunities is key to achieving modern day career satisfaction and fulfillment.



ORGANISATIONS WILL
HAVE ALMOST

1/5

LESS WORKSPACE BY
THE END OF 2020

TODAY'S WORKFORCE

The current workplace and workforce have changed significantly over the past 20 years. The pace of change has been nothing short of incredible, compelling organisations and employees to adapt, innovate and specialise. The most noteworthy factors of today's workforce for both organisations and individuals are detailed in the next two sections.

ORGANISATIONS 1

- **AUTOMATION & THE RISE OF THE KNOWLEDGE WORKER.** In many industries, computers and machines are replacing mundane jobs, a phenomenon referred to as the "de-routinisation" of work. Job roles that still require manpower are those that demand innovation, creativity and specialised skills. Knowledge is now your greatest asset. Employees who adopt the attitude of a life-long learner, and businesses that promote idea-sharing, collaboration and problem solving, are more likely to succeed.
- **WORKSHIFTING & VIRTUAL OFFICES.** A growing reliance on technology has made it possible for more people to work in online industries and perform their duties remotely. This style of working is becoming particularly popular, and businesses that offer this are considered attractive employers. For organisations, having a virtual office means lower employee-related and real estate costs. For employees, it means increased productivity, a better work-life balance and greater job satisfaction.





INDIVIDUALS 2

- **MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORKFORCE.** Organisations now need to cater for a workforce made up of a variety of generations, including Baby Boomers, Millennials, Gen X's and the Net Generation. All of these generations require different management styles. Organisations who are resilient and adaptable to cater for changing demographics will be successful.

- **SPECIALISED SKILLS DEMAND & NEW RECRUITMENT TECHNIQUES.** With the rise of technology and automation, jobs are becoming more specialised. Employees who focus on up-skilling, or who possess specialist skills in their line of work, are favoured. As a result, employers are relying more and more on specialist recruitment agencies to find suitable candidates to fill roles. Employers are also moving into the online space, which provides a readily accessible talent market. Recruiting and headhunting via social media (such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter) has become commonplace.

- **WORK SWARMING.** Replacing traditional internal teamwork, swarming involves people who have never worked together assembling and addressing a problem. It's an innovative approach that extends beyond the boundaries of one organisation to deal with non-routine problems that arise.

65 YEARS

THE CURRENT AVERAGE
RETIREMENT AGE
ACROSS DEVELOPED
ECONOMIES

SCIENTISTS
PREDICT THAT THE FIRST
PERSON TO LIVE TO
150 YEARS
OF AGE HAS ALREADY
BEEN BORN

- **LONGER LIVES WITH MORE CAREER CYCLES.** The current average retirement age is 65 across developed economies. People are retiring later, which means the average work cycle has increased in duration. Having multiple careers over one lifetime has become the norm. As such, learning new skills and disciplines to span careers has become imperative.

- **MOBILITY & MULTITASKING.** The last year alone has seen a noteworthy increase in the number of smart devices being used in the home and office, with over 20% of South Africans now being in possession of a smartphone. Dependence on physical location will continue to diminish as communication and work barriers are minimised through the use of mobile technology.

- **CHANGING DEFINITION OF CAREER SUCCESS.** The traditional definition of career success was to climb the corporate ladder, receiving promotions and monetary rewards along the way. Today, employees can choose to move horizontally into a new position within their workplace, work half-day, change industries, or even start a business. There are now multiple ways to define and achieve success through things like inner satisfaction, work-life balance, freedom, more responsibility, money, rank or status.

- **MULTIPLE COMMITMENTS.** The official South African work week is 45 hours, however, overtime and extra-curricular activities can consume additional time. With such fast-paced, busy lifestyles, workers are having to prioritise a work-life balance.

- **PERSONAL BRANDING.** Internet usage in South Africa is on the rise, with just over 8.5 million local internet users as of 2012. As such, individuals need to be aware of their online footprint and its impact on their professional reputation. Creating and managing a personal online brand and reputation is important for networking and job hunting, especially with a drive from companies to start recruiting through social networks.



IF EVERYONE IS **MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER**, THEN SUCCESS TAKES CARE OF **ITSELF** - Henry Ford

SKILLS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY WORLD OF WORK

Significant technological changes over the past two decades have drastically altered traditional job specifications and, with little chance to adjust, the average 21st century worker now has a noteworthy gap in their skill set. This section looks at some of the common denominators for modern workplace success and helps you identify the skills needed to gain a competitive advantage in today's dynamic work environment.

1 APPRECIATE DIVERSITY

The marketplace is interconnected and globalised. Be conscious of cultural differences and know how to adapt your communication style to the people you work with.

2 COLLABORATE

Being part of a team is an important characteristic of the modern workplace. Other important 21st century skills like innovation, networking, creativity and knowledge-sharing all rely on effective collaboration.

3 LEARN TO CONNECT

Communication is one area that has benefited greatly from technological advancements over the last decade. Today, being connected to people often involves online participation in virtual communities, via email, blogs and on social networks.

4 ENGAGE WITH NEW MEDIA

Previously, being a writer, designer, or photographer was an undervalued skill left to struggling creatives. Now, increased focus on user-generated content and calls for creativity mean New Media skills are highly valued. Expertise in areas such as online research, Photoshop, social media, design or blogging are now in demand.

5 EMBRACE UNCERTAINTY

The pace of change is only accelerating. To keep up you need to be comfortable with uncertainty and ready to adapt to evolving industries. Always keep an open mind and make it a habit to continuously absorb new knowledge to stay up-to-date.

“THE **ILLITERATE** OF THE 21ST CENTURY WILL NOT BE THOSE WHO CANNOT READ OR WRITE, BUT THOSE WHO **CANNOT LEARN, UNLEARN AND RELEARN** – Alvin Toffler”

TIP

ASK TO BE **INVOLVED** IN ONE DIFFERENT PROJECT AT WORK THAT **EXPOSES YOU TO A SKILL YOU MAY NOT ALREADY POSSESS**

TIP

SUBSCRIBE TO RELEVANT **EMAIL NEWSLETTERS**. COLLECT **USEFUL ARTICLES** AND SET ASIDE HALF AN HOUR A DAY FOR **READING**.

TIP

START YOUR OWN **BLOG** AND EXPERIMENT WITH THE PLATFORM. **COMMENT ON RELEVANT ARTICLES TO GAIN CONFIDENCE IN SHARING ONLINE**

DEVELOP A DIVERSE SKILL SET 6

The more diverse your skill set, the more you will be utilised in a company. Be comfortable with stepping outside the boundaries of your defined role. Developing multiple competencies will ensure you are adaptable and, therefore, more employable. You are not defined solely by your qualification.

BE CURIOUS 7

Actively research your industry and stay up to date with emerging trends. Explore every possibility and be open to opportunities. Be as informed as possible, because your knowledge is an asset to your employer. Staying current means staying relevant.

BE CREATIVE & INNOVATIVE 8

As the workplace becomes more automated, employees are required to work more creatively. This means being willing to do things differently. Learn from others, develop an idea and test the waters – either it will work or it won't, but don't be afraid of failure. Mistakes and subsequent problem solving can be seen as a valuable learning tool.

BECOME SELF-RELIANT 9

Many organisations are becoming less hierarchical. As such, employees are now required to possess the skills that previously only a manager would need to have. You are responsible for your own success and need to be able to equip yourself with the knowledge and skills required to achieve your goals.

VISUALISE 10

Research indicates that people respond better to bite-sized chunks of information and graphic representations. Adapt your communication style and learn to interpret and create visual messages to represent things in new and interesting ways.



ENGAGING YOUR CAREER GOALS

Unlike twenty years ago, the extended length of the modern career means that people are now faced with a variety of options when defining career goals. It is not uncommon for 21st century workers to reach crossroads in their careers and start to question their path. Whether you want to advance your current career or change careers entirely, this section will help you to examine and consider your options before making your next move.

1 FINDING NEW WORK

The recession of 2008 coupled with the changing work landscape has left many South Africans searching for work. The talent market has become especially cutthroat and competitive as more people start to compete for fewer and more specialised positions. In order to find the right candidates and positions, employers and employees are turning to new recruitment methods. Being aware of these and learning how to use them effectively can give you a much-needed advantage. Here are some new ways to get noticed and navigate a 21st century job hunt.

84.4%

OF COMPANIES STILL
USE RECRUITMENT
AGENCIES

APPROXIMATELY
4.5 MILLION
PEOPLE WERE LOOKING
FOR WORK IN THE
SECOND QUARTER
OF 2012 IN
SOUTH AFRICA

“ IF YOU DON'T LIKE SOMETHING, **CHANGE IT**. IF YOU CAN'T CHANGE IT, **CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE** - Maya Angelou ”

- **RESEARCH.** Identify companies you would like to work for and ask to meet with them to learn more about the company. This lets you build a relationship while discovering if they could really provide you with the career you're looking for. It also offers you the chance to explore different employers in the industry.

- **CUSTOMISE YOUR CV.** Every job calls for different things, and this means that you should frame your skills in a different light each time you apply for a position. There is no longer a one-size-fits-all CV. Tailor your CV every time you apply for a different job.

- **JOIN A RECRUITMENT AGENCY.** The rising demand for specialised skills means employers are turning to recruitment agencies to source their ideal candidates. Research agencies and meet with recruiters in your industry. Sign up with those best positioned to offer you the career you want.

- **SEARCH ONLINE.** Companies are focusing more on using their own websites to advertise their vacancies. Don't discount online job websites either.

- **CREATE AN ONLINE NETWORK.** Not only has technology changed the work landscape but it has also changed the job hunt. Use new media channels such as LinkedIn and Twitter to network and find ways to interact with companies or industries online.

- **BE ACTIVE ONLINE.** It's not enough to just set up a LinkedIn profile or a Twitter account. You need to actively participate online to be noticed. Market yourself and demonstrate your expertise by commenting on articles, responding to tweets, and getting involved in online debates. Your online reputation often speaks more than your traditional CV.



- **CHANGE YOUR MINDSET.** Unemployment can easily become a mindset. A job search can take time. Don't be disheartened, try to be patient.

- **GET FEEDBACK.** If you are unsuccessful after an interview process, don't be afraid to ask the employer if they would mind giving you a quick telephonic feedback session. This can help you identify areas that may be consistently affecting your employability, which you can then address.



2 PREPARING FOR ADVANCEMENT OR PROMOTION

The modern work landscape has also seen a change in the definition of the term career growth, mainly because organisations are less hierarchical than in the past. It's no longer common for employees to join one organisation and progress steadily up the career ladder. Instead, many now choose to move laterally within organisations, collecting a "portfolio of experiences" to grow their career. Here are some of the ways that you can advance your career or get a promotion in your current workplace:

- **HAVE THE RIGHT ATTITUDE.** Demonstrating a positive, 'can-do' attitude, avoiding office politics



WHEN WE ARE NO LONGER
ABLE TO **CHANGE A
SITUATION** - WE ARE
CHALLENGED TO **CHANGE
OURSELVES** - Viktor E. Frankl

I HAVE NOT **FAILED.** I'VE
JUST FOUND 10,000 WAYS
THAT **WON'T WORK** -
Thomas A. Edison



and gossip, and being supportive of your coworkers will increase your chances of being promoted. If you are well liked, people will want to see you succeed.

- **BECOME INDISPENSIBLE.** Get involved in as many opportunities as you can. Take ownership of projects and ensure that the company simply cannot cope without your help. This will not only increase your value, but will also demonstrate your ability to take initiative and your reliability.

- **BE RESULTS DRIVEN.** Record and promote anything you've done that has added value and delivered benefits to your employer. A promotion is not about your duration of employment; it's about the value you add to the organisation and your drive to help it succeed.

- **BE A TEAM PLAYER.** You will only go as far as the strength of your professional relationships allows you to. Also remember that your team members can be your biggest advocates when it comes to getting a promotion.

- **BUILD A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR BOSS.** Your boss is the one person who holds the power to accelerate your career. Focus on developing this relationship.

CHANGING CAREERS 3

In the present job market, it is not uncommon for people to frequently change occupations. This desire for change not only applies to people in the early stages of career formation, but also to those in their mid-30s, 40s and even 50s. Knowing when and how to make this change can be the biggest hurdle. Here are some things to consider before deciding to make a change:





STARTING A BUSINESS 4

Starting a business can be one of the most exciting and challenging career decisions you could ever make. Here are five things to consider before you decide to start a business:

- **EXPLORE INTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES.** One of the biggest reasons people seek a career change is because they feel they have stopped learning. Don't jump ship without chatting to your employer. Be honest and transparent about your feelings and request to explore further opportunities.

- **UNDERSTAND YOUR PRIORITIES.** Sometimes an industry or role change will mean a lower salary as a trade-off for inexperience. If earning a higher salary is a priority, an industry change may not be for you. However, this is a small price to pay – remember to see the value in the acquisition of new skills as a chance at a new career.

- **IDENTIFY WHAT'S STOPPING YOU.** The most common fears people face when changing careers are a fear of being too old; a fear of having to start over at the bottom; and a fear of having to learn entirely new skills. Overcoming self-doubt can be difficult but it is imperative if you are to succeed in moving to a new career.

- **USE YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS.** Employees are no longer defined by qualifications or job titles. In some fields, these are merely a formality. Remember, you have valuable, transferable skills (skills that are relevant in any job) and professional wisdom – identify and market these skills in the transfer to your dream job.

- **ADVANCE YOUR SKILL SET.** Changing careers can mean a new professional challenge that may require a new skill. Learning comes in a variety of forms, both formal and informal – do what works for you.

TODAY ON
AVERAGE PEOPLE
CHANGE CAREERS
5 TO 7 TIMES
IN THEIR LIFETIME

35 TO 44
YEAR OLDS CONTRIBUTE
THE MOST TO
ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN
SOUTH AFRICA

- **QUESTION WHETHER YOU ARE ADDICTED TO YOUR SALARY.** As most start-ups do not see a profit in their first few years of business, you need to question whether or not you are able to survive without drawing a consistent income. The initial phase may involve financial sacrifice, which is something you should plan for.

- **BE SELF-MOTIVATED & ABLE TO WORK ALONE.** Starting your business and ensuring that it is successful is entirely up to you, and you alone.

- **BE COMMITTED & KNOW THE RISKS.** Starting a business does not necessarily mean you will be able to work fewer hours or earn more money. Commit to doing whatever it takes and work harder than ever to get your initiative off the ground.

- **BELIEVE IN YOUR CONCEPT.** Most entrepreneurs succeed because their business idea engages their highest interest. Passion is imperative to keep you motivated, especially through the tough times.

- **DO YOUR RESEARCH.** Do not start a business without researching the market and potential competitors. Be sure that there is adequate demand for what you want to offer before investing time and money into your idea.

“ A CAREER PATH IS A **LIFE-LONG LEARNING PROCESS** IN WHICH WE RENEW OURSELVES TO MEET THE **CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE** - Dr Peter Carey ”

CHECKLIST

To stay ahead and succeed in the modern world of work, do the following:

✓ CHANGE YOUR MINDSET

Acknowledge that the job market has changed, and consider the ways in which you can adapt in order to stay ahead of current trends.

✓ IDENTIFY & ACQUIRE NEW SKILLS

Separate your abilities into transferable skills and specialist skills. Identify areas for up skilling or specialisation based on the proficiencies that are now in demand. Know your areas of strength and weakness, and work on these accordingly.

✓ DEFINE WHAT CAREER SUCCESS MEANS TO YOU

Career success means different things to different people. Define what's important to you and strive to achieve these goals irrespective of what those around you are looking for.

✓ CREATE YOUR OWN CAREER PATH

Determine where you want to be and decide what you need to achieve along the way to reach your career milestones. If possible, discuss these with your employer.



THE BEST WAY TO PREDICT YOUR FUTURE IS TO CREATE IT - Stephen Covey

WE ARE CURRENTLY PREPARING STUDENTS FOR **JOBS THAT DON'T YET EXIST** USING TECHNOLOGIES THAT HAVEN'T BEEN DEVELOPED IN ORDER TO **SOLVE PROBLEMS WE DON'T EVEN KNOW ARE PROBLEMS YET** - Karl Fisch



EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY ✓

Technological advancements are inevitable. Choosing to ignore them will only serve to make you feel more out of touch than ever.

LEARN ✓

Staying current means staying relevant. Keep your skills up to date by building upon your existing knowledge base.

BE READY TO CHANGE ✓

Learn to embrace change, because it too is inevitable. The more adaptable you are, the more likely you are to advance.

PARTICIPATE ONLINE ✓

Being online is now a necessity. Online participation can increase your network of contacts and open up many doors.

While a lot has changed and will continue to change, we hope that this guide has helped you to feel more empowered in the new dynamic work environment. Knowledge is your greatest asset. Strive to stay informed and keep your skill set up to date through continuous education, both formally and informally. Your career is entirely in your hands – make it count.

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