



# Creating a Career Map

# Maps, ladders, lattices and pipelines: Staffing your business for future

We all know that business doesn't remain static. The type of skills that are needed in the workforce today may not be the same as we'll need to lead us through tomorrow. As our business models change to adapt to the altering business landscape, so too will the roles necessary to support those operations. The challenge for an organisation, then, is to develop internal talent who will still be productive and valued team members in that future business world.

But why should you invest in developing employees with transferrable skills? Won't they just take those skills and transfer them out of your organisation? Well, a small percentage might but aren't you better developing employees with the skills necessary to meet your organisation's future business goals and nurturing them to stay with you for as long as is mutually beneficial? The alternative would be to retain all your staff but with the wrong skill sets and for them to be a drain on your future development and that doesn't make much sense does it! This process of future skills is the idea behind talent planning - the topic of this Blue Paper. Let's dive right in.

Talent planning means evaluating the skills the company has today against what the organisation is going to need tomorrow. It means figuring out which roles will be critical to the organisation's success and how to foster that kind of dynamic talent from within. For some organisations, the way they do this is through a process called Career Mapping.

## Career maps

The term 'career mapping' means different things to different people. For many, it's how individuals plan their professional future. To HR people, however, the idea of career mapping is a much more formal system to develop company staff.

Career maps show employees how they might advance within the organisation. Generally speaking, they outline job 'families' and the ladders of advancement within and between those families. They provide a roadmap, so to speak, from entry through to managerial levels. There's a great example of a career map within the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industries on the UKSP site, a



ers  
e  
r  
e  
r  
B

one-stop shop for industry specific careers, jobs, training, qualifications, employers and training providers.<sup>1</sup>

What your organisation's career map looks like depends largely on how your organisation works. Imagine a structured retail environment like Starbucks, for example. Employees have clear-cut jobs such as barista, store manager or district manager. They know what they need to do to get from one level to the next.

In these organisations, the career mapping process outlines levels of advancement, along with the training, skills and accomplishments required to achieve each level. Let's imagine it in simple terms: Let's say that in order to move from waitress to hostess, you might need a minimum of one year of service plus five customer surveys at a certain rating. To move into an assistant manager role, you might also need bartending experience. And to become manager in our hypothetical restaurant, you might also need to have successfully attended two courses in hospitality management.

In other words, career maps can create clear-cut criteria for career development, shifting responsibility from the firm to the individual. No more complaints that someone didn't know how to succeed and no more of those slightly fuzzy, subjective promotion decisions!

"Each individual has a clear understanding of what it will take to get to the next level of opportunity," says Sharon O'Connor, founder and director of Independence Counseling. "By following these criteria, you'll know where you're going and you can develop a timetable for your career development."<sup>2</sup>

But even when the organisation isn't structured around clear hierarchal lines, career mapping can illustrate the more organic paths to growth within the organisation. In some companies career maps are simply a way to say, "This is how so-and-so got to the top, and you can too."

## Career mapping: Pie charts and ladders

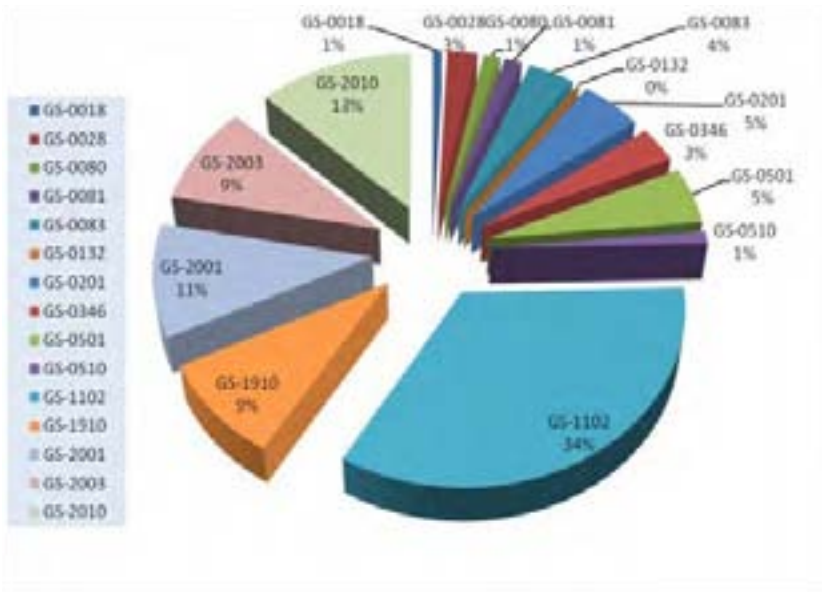
One way to start career mapping is to calculate the opportunities and the areas of highest need in the organisation. As Dr. Caela Farren, CEO of MasteryWorks, a career development company, explains it that begins with identifying the professions that operate within your organisation. Next, organise that list into

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.uksp.co.uk/Career-Map>

<sup>2</sup> "Career Mapping Gives Direction to CPA Firm." *Leader's Edge* (June 2002). *Allbusiness.com*. Web. 4 Nov. 2011.



core and secondary professions. Finally, determine what percentage of people comprise each of the professions in your organisation. When you've done all that, it should look a little like this pie chart:



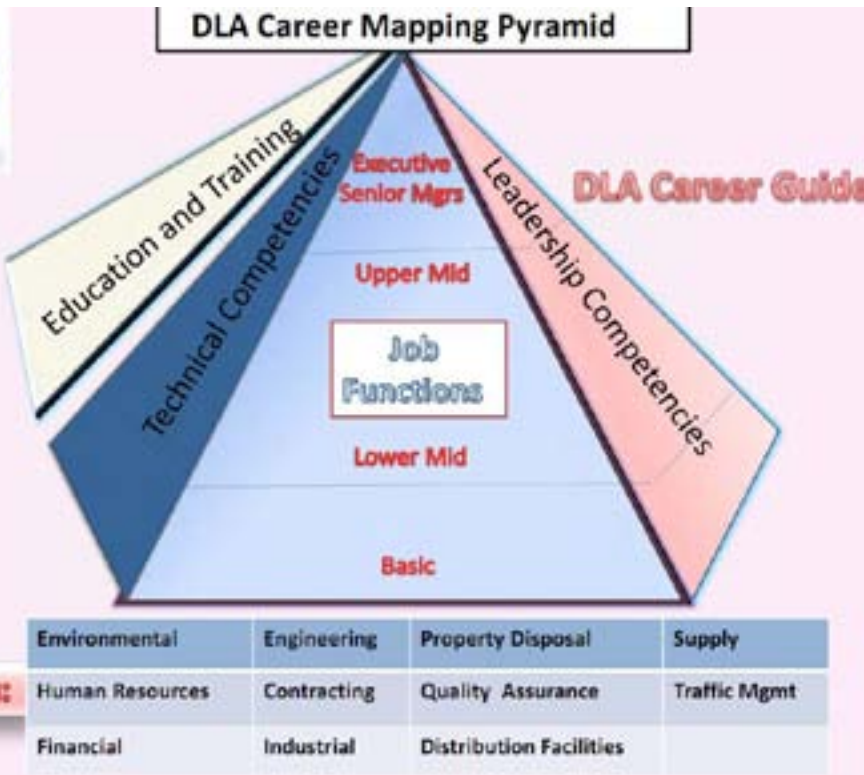
This is the approach, and the pie chart, that the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) in America took when developing its career mapping initiative which rolled out in early 2011. The DLA developed a list of 15 occupations critical to its organisation. These 15 occupations are represented in the chart by showing the relative size of each occupation. For example, 'contracting' is by far the largest piece of the pie at 34%, followed by 'inventory management' at 13%, 'general supply' at 11% and 'supply program management' at 9%.<sup>3</sup>

The next step is to identify what education and skill sets - or 'core competencies' - are required for each profession. This might include formal education, developmental experiences like on-the-job learning, and profession-specific skill sets or knowledge. These competencies might also include 'soft skills' such as being detail-oriented, conflict management or effective mentoring.<sup>4</sup>

At the DLA, the human resources team is developing a career mapping pyramid, seen below, for each of its 15 core occupations. Each pyramid provides a graphic representation of the skills employees will need to reach executive level in each profession. The pyramid contains development levels and four focus areas: job functions, technical competencies, leadership competencies and education and training.

<sup>3</sup> Moore, Sara. "DLA Strives to Develop Workforce through Career Mapping." Defense Logistics Agency. 16 Feb. 2011. Web. 4 Nov. 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Farren, Caela. "The Importance of Career Mapping." MasteryWorks, Inc. June 2009. Web. 4 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.masteryworks.com/newsite/clientimpact/impact\\_archives\\_june09.htm](http://www.masteryworks.com/newsite/clientimpact/impact_archives_june09.htm)>.



As the DLA moves through its career mapping process, the organisation will provide additional tools, such as knowledge and experience checklists, to help employees plan their own career advancement.

Mapping company jobs this way provides management with a clear picture of organisational needs and gives individual careerists a view of organisational opportunities. "Career mapping validates the agency's commitment to its employees' professional development and provides them with an opportunity to partner in their development" says Pam Latker, chief of career management at DLA Training.<sup>5</sup>

## Career mapping: Ladders or cul-de-sacs

Career mappings looks similar ... but different ... at KBR, a global engineering and construction firm. Like the DLA, KBR is also in the early stages of its career mapping strategy.

"Our goal is to show employees that they can climb the ladder of success," says Amber Lagow, HR specialist. "You can go from being a level 10 to a level 70 if you so choose."

But KBR is placing strong emphasis on the idea that employees don't have to

<sup>5</sup> Moore, Sara. "DLA Strives to Develop Workforce through Career Mapping." Defense Logistics Agency. 16 Feb. 2011. Web. 4 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.dla.mil/DLA\\_Media\\_Center/Pages/newsarticle0950.aspx](http://www.dla.mil/DLA_Media_Center/Pages/newsarticle0950.aspx)>.

Papers  
are  
B



go up a ladder to reach executive status. "If you wanted to get to know the organisation more fully, then you can go from HR to communication, to legal," Lagow says. "You can take the ladder up or you can take the cul-de-sac and get a well-rounded idea of the company and develop yourself that way."

KBR's CEO is a driving force behind the initiative and one of the strongest proponents for developing an organisation-wide experience. He's even reorganised group presidents - people who have led one specific department for years - and placed them in charge of different areas.

"It's really emphasising the idea that this is coming from the top-down," Lagow says.

Employees have the option of switching departments at any level or taking the technical track and working their way up. But is switching laterally really an option for employees once they've reached a certain career stage? Yes and no, says Lagow.

"Ideally we would get professionals at a level 20 or 30, not at a management stage, but it has happened," she says. "Our assistant vice president of legal jumped over to VP of business objectives. Everyone is trying to get a well-rounded experience."

KBR isn't using the pie charts and pyramid diagrams in place at the DLA, but they are creating visual maps nonetheless. They're using ARIS (an Oracle business process analysis product) to matrix and chart organisational opportunities. Their core professions include 16 groups such as HR, legal, engineering and physical sciences. From there, those groups are broken into job families. The career maps illustrate what a career might look like if you stay in one job family. Or, it can show related job families.

KBR has revamped its talent development website, so employees can get a better understanding of what talent development means at KBR, the company's workforce analysis, and what Lagow calls 'career navigation' or the potential ladders and circles to management.

"We allow employees to develop themselves and give them tools to speak with their managers on how they think they can develop," Lagow says. "That way, employees can more readily understand the options for growing up and growing laterally."



## Lattice not ladder

Generally speaking, the career mapping concept is based on the idea of career ladders - that is, employees move up within an organisation based on progressive levels of contribution. But in the late 1990s, financial advisory firm Deloitte decided to think about career progression in different terms - not a ladder, but a lattice.

When moving along a lattice, an employee can move in many directions but is not limited to upward or downward progress. Cathy Benko, vice chairman and chief talent officer for Deloitte described the career lattice this way: "While a so-called plateau or lateral move, or a move downward, was once viewed as the end of the line, today's employees are more apt to reach a comfortable level of responsibility and compensation and stay there for a while to balance work and life demands. Later, many resume their upward climb - or not, as they wish."<sup>6</sup>



Deloitte calls its talent programme 'mass career customisation'. (Benko even co-authored a book on the concept.) The company estimates approximately 10% of its employees are ramping up or down at any given time.<sup>7</sup>

Mass career customisation is based on Deloitte's view that the career path for today's knowledge workers is more like waves on a chart, with increasing and decreasing levels of engagement over time.

"In the real world, lattices are living platforms for growth, with upward momentum visible along many paths," writes Benko. "The corporate lattice model of career progression allows for multiple paths upward taking into account the changing needs of both the individual and the organisation across various intervals of time."<sup>8</sup>

At Deloitte, mass career customisation is not so much of a career map, but a corporate acknowledgement that employees should have the opportunity to pull back on their careers for a while without completely stepping out of the organisation or damaging future growth opportunities.

<sup>6</sup> Cufaude, Jeffrey. "How to Become a Promotable Professional- Associations Now Magazine - Resources - ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership." ASAE - The Center for Association Leadership. May 2010. Web. 4 Nov. 2011. <<http://www.asaecenter.org/Resources/ANowDetail.cfm?ItemNumber=49733>>.

<sup>7</sup> Fitzpatrick, Laura. "We're Getting Off the Ladder - The Future of Work - TIME." TIME.com. May 2009. Web. 4 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1898024\\_1898023\\_1898076,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1898024_1898023_1898076,00.html)>.

<sup>8</sup> Benko, Cathy, and Anne Weisberg. "Mass Career Customization." Deloitte. Web. 4 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.deloitte.com/view/en\\_US/us/Insights/Browse-by-Content-Type/deloitte-review/35912ee3fad33210VqnVCM100000ba42f00aRCRD.htm](http://www.deloitte.com/view/en_US/us/Insights/Browse-by-Content-Type/deloitte-review/35912ee3fad33210VqnVCM100000ba42f00aRCRD.htm)>.

## Why map, why now?

Even though the USA, like the UK, has been dealing with tough economic conditions, that hasn't stopped organisations like the DLA and KBR from focusing on talent development. This trend is borne out by the 2012 *Resourcing and Talent Planning* annual benchmarking survey conducted by the CIPD (The Chartered Institute of Personnel Development) and recruitment experts Hays. CIPD advisor Rebecca Clake says in her introduction to the report, which surveyed 522 organisations in the UK: "In spite of high unemployment, this year's survey finds growing skills shortages. Recruitment difficulties have increased, with 82% of organisations reporting having experienced difficulties in filling at least some vacancies."<sup>9</sup>

On the positive side however she concludes that: "Encouragingly, half of organisations report that the current economic situation has led to an increased focus on talent management. There is more emphasis on developing talent in-house and more time and effort being spent investing in the quality of candidates hired".

There's an interesting case study within the CIPD report which explains how RCT Homes, Wales' first housing community mutual, approached the issues they faced around engagement, recognition and retention which includes the introduction of 'career steps' to demonstrate opportunities for development.

## Getting started with talent planning

When your company is in growth mode, staffing issues can be a big stumbling block to progress. Whatever it is your company makes, sells, or services, you need people just to meet day-to-day production demands. But more importantly, you need innovators who can create new opportunities, develop new business and manage change.

High performing talent is still in top demand, and your company has two ways of securing these critical workers: Recruit them away from other organisations or develop them internally.

Whether you decide to engage in a formal career mapping initiative or some



<sup>9</sup> [http://www.hays.co.uk/press-releases/HAYS\\_589852](http://www.hays.co.uk/press-releases/HAYS_589852)



other talent development programme, the fundamental steps are the same:

### **Step one: Identify pivotal roles**

Which positions are critical to the company's success? Yes, of course, we know everyone is important, but for the purpose of this exercise, think about where your company wants to go in the future. Which departments will lead that charge? Where do you need the real dynamo people who will be out front making things happen?

### **Step two: Develop a strategy to get that talent**

Once you know what kind of talent you need, ask yourself, where are those people currently working? You might come up with a geographic answer or an industry answer, or something as specific as a shortlist of companies rich with exactly that kind of talent.

Now ask yourself what you'll need in order to be attractive to those in-demand professionals. Salary is important, but it's not always the top consideration. Consider whether the job could be done remotely, for example. If you're willing to hire someone who can work remotely, you'll have a wider talent pool from which to recruit.

Maybe you want to attract a workforce accustomed to modern office environments or one that expects flexible work hours. With enough time to plan, you can implement the types of benefits that appeal to your target employee group. Perhaps that means telecommuting infrastructure, a satellite office, or a redesign of corporate offices.

As the same time as you're investigating recruitment strategies, look for opportunities to develop talent internally. What are the ideal skills and experiences you'd want that talent to have? Is anyone close enough to that skill set that you could develop them in the time required for implementation?

### **Step three: Create an internal development plan**

Even if you'll need to recruit staff in the short-term, an employee development programme will create leadership potential for the future. If a technical career mapping process such as the ones used at KBR or the DLA seems like a poor fit for your organisation, consider more informal means of sharing career maps.



You might, for example, get senior leaders to chart their own career paths. Ask these leaders to share their career progression stories during a series of lunch meetings. Employees will learn that there are different ways to move up within an organisation. Plus, with first-hand access to leadership, they can find out what skills executives are looking for in tomorrow's company leaders.

Make leadership career maps accessible on the corporate intranet or in the company training library. These kinds of resources can help guide employees as they think about their own career and discuss progression with their managers.

And remember, any employee development process needs to remain fluid, so you can respond to changing business needs. A lot can happen in five years, so plan to revisit your career maps regularly.

#### **Step four: Provide resources for learning**

Of course, career maps are only part of an employee development initiative. Telling employees you want them to learn and grow within the organisation won't mean much unless you provide access to training and internal corporate networking opportunities.

At online retailer Zappos, employee development is part of the company's core values, one of which is 'Pursue Growth and Learning'. At Zappos, staff development is referred to as 'building the pipeline'. Not much for recruiting outside talent, the company hires most of its people at entry level positions. The ideal vision is that every employee will have an opportunity to grow with the company and become a senior leader in five to seven years.

To make that happen, the company's Pipeline Team is in charge of all things 'training'. Every new employee goes through an initial four-week programme that teaches them the Zappos culture. After that, employees have the option to take advantage of individual department training programmes or company-wide classes like merchandising, warehouse operations, communication and Zappos history. Employees are always encouraged to explore business functions outside their core area.

"At Zappos, we think it's important for employees to grow both personally and professionally," writes CEO Tony Hsieh in his book 'Delivering Happiness'. "It's important to constantly challenge and stretch yourself and not be stuck in a job where you don't feel like you are growing or learning."<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Hsieh, Tony. *Delivering Happiness: a Path to Profits, Passion, and Purpose*. New York: Business Plus, 2010. Print.



Delivering  
Happiness

The company is so committed to staff development that it's instituted an 80/20 rule. Employees spend 80% of their working time doing the actual work they were hired to do. The other 20% they use for education and rejuvenation - whether that's taking a Zappos class, working out or using a nap room!

## Resources

Think career mapping is right for your organisation? Plenty of resources exist to help your business or organisation to get started by exploring the concept further. You could contact career mapping consultants like Career Mapping Limited you could also start by looking for human resource consultants and ask if they have any experience in career mapping. You might even contact a local university. Some faculties take on consulting projects or they might be willing to make your career mapping initiative a class project.

If you want to start small and have a limited budget, look to LinkedIn for help. Make an organised push to get everyone in the organisation on LinkedIn, particularly top management. Employees will be able to browse through executive profiles and see how they got to where they are in the organisation.

## The employee supply chain

Talent planning means helping employees to develop skills that will be applicable to a broader body of work. For some employees that will mean focusing on a specific job title with applicability across the organisation. For others, it might mean a more holistic set of skills.

Either way it's about helping the company stay relevant in a dynamic economy. It's about developing talent that will, in turn, help the organisation's development.

Whether you do that through maps, ladders, lattices or pipelines is up to you ... as long as there's a clear vision and commitment to growth illuminating the way.



papers  
pa  
u  
B



# Paperie

4imprint Direct Limited is part of 4imprint Group plc that serves more than 100,000 businesses with its innovative promotional items and corporate gifts throughout the UK, Ireland, USA and Canada. Its promotional product offerings include personalised gifts, [promotional pens](#), [Post-it Notes](#), [personalised mugs](#), [printed Keyrings](#), [cotton bags](#), [mousemats](#), [printed drawstring bags](#), [sports bottles](#), [printed USBs](#), [diaries & calendars](#), [printed T-Shirts](#) and much more. 4imprint's 'no quibble' guarantees include the promise that if the personalised goods are not despatched on time they'll be free! For additional information, visit [www.4imprint.co.uk](http://www.4imprint.co.uk)