UB Career Cycle
WORKBOOK

GAIN EXPERIENCE

CAREER MANAGEMENT
Discover Your Direction
• assess yourself
• celebrate accomplishments
• choose your path

PROFESSIONAL GOAL

Explore the World of Work
• research marketplace
• gain industry knowledge
• find an internship

GAIN EXPERIENCE

Create Your Opportunities
• practice interviews
• engage your network
• find a job

GAIN EXPERIENCE

Communicate Your Brand
• write resume
• build online presence
• develop your network

GAIN EXPERIENCE

ACTION PLAN
Learn how to manage your own career.

The award-winning UB Career Cycle is a tool you can use repeatedly throughout your lifetime. No matter where you are in your career—just starting out or switching gears—this cycle can help you get where you want to go.

How the UB Career Cycle works:
Each phase of the cycle has a set of outcomes related to your career success. After learning about each phase, you’ll be prepared to take an action step.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Action Step</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discover Your Direction</td>
<td>Define Your Professional Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explore the World of Work</td>
<td>Create Your Professional Pitch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate Your Brand</td>
<td>Design Your Action Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create Your Opportunities</td>
<td>Career Management Plan</td>
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Along the way, you should continually seek to gain experience; a checklist is provided at the end of this workbook.

You may travel around the UB Career Cycle multiple times as you gain knowledge, experience and insight.
Discover Your Direction

*Where do you want to go?*

It pays to learn more about yourself—your knowledge, skills, abilities, accomplishments and the values that drive you. When you know your strengths and what brings you joy, you can create your own route toward personal fulfillment.

As you discover your direction, you will:
- assess yourself
- celebrate your accomplishments
- choose your path.

When you're done, you'll be ready to define your professional goal (see page 5).

Explore the World of Work

*Where do you belong?*

Exploring the world of work means searching for your “sweet spot.” You’ll discover and confirm that your professional goal is a good fit. In this phase, you’re encouraged to learn about trends in your field, problems you want to solve and challenges you will face.

As you explore the world of work, you will:
- research the marketplace
- gain industry knowledge
- find an internship.

When you’re done, you’ll be ready to create your professional pitch (see page 6).

Communicate Your Brand

*How do you stand out?*

Your brand differentiates you from everyone else. It reveals what makes you unique and well-suited to the goal you have chosen.

As you communicate your brand, you will:
- write your resume
- build an online presence
- develop your network.

When you’re done, you’ll be ready to design your action plan (see page 8).

Create Your Opportunities

*Are you ready to make things happen?*

Opportunities don’t always knock on the door. Make sure you have a strategic plan to stay focused on your professional goal.

As you create your opportunities, you will:
- practice interviewing
- engage your network
- find a job.

When you’re done, you’ll be ready to develop a career management plan (see page 9).

Reminder: consider how you will gain experience each step of the way (see page 10 for the Gain Experience Checklist).

For resources to help you through each phase of the cycle, visit [www.ubalt.edu/careercycle](http://www.ubalt.edu/careercycle).
According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, students are career ready when they have built competence in the following areas:

- Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
- Oral/Written Communication
- Teamwork/Collaboration
- Information Technology Application
- Leadership
- Professionalism/Work Ethic
- Career Management

By taking this assessment, you will develop a better self-awareness of your own competencies as they relate to what employers consider critical for effectiveness and success in the workplace.

On a Scale of 1-5, please rate your comfort level with the following actions *(5-Very Comfortable 4-Comfortable 3-Indifferent 2-Not Comfortable 1-Actively Avoid)*. For example, if you feel very comfortable to perform the following activity, then rate a 5 for that item; if the activity is something you actively avoid, then rate a 1 for that item.

### Critical Thinking/Problem Solving

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<tr>
<td>1. Resolving a customer complaint or solving a problem for an organization, group or team</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Managing a personal or organizational budget</td>
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<td>3. Drafting a student organization’s constitution or mission statement</td>
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<td>4. Developing your own mission statement or professional/elevator pitch</td>
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### Oral/Written Communication

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<tr>
<td>5. Convincing team members that your idea will improve the team or work flow</td>
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<td>6. Drafting professional correspondence to students, professors and mentors expressing ideas or desires or concerns</td>
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<td>7. Presenting group findings in class or work</td>
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### Teamwork/Collaboration

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<tr>
<td>8. Resolving conflict amongst group or team members/viewing conflict from another perspective</td>
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<td>9. Volunteering to be of service to a struggling or overwhelmed team member</td>
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### Information Technology Application

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<tr>
<td>10. Utilizing MS Office tools at a basic level (Word, PPT)</td>
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<td>11. Utilizing advanced MS Office tools (Excel, Access)</td>
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<td>12. Learning new computer software to accomplish a particular task</td>
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### Leadership

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<tr>
<td>13. Taking on or serving on a student organizational board or group project lead</td>
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<td>14. Initiating and conducting team meetings/phone calls</td>
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### Professionalism/Work Ethic

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<td>15. Maintaining a strong (or competitive) GPA while working part time or full time</td>
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<td>16. Seeking feedback regarding work or classroom performance</td>
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### Career Management

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<tr>
<td>17. Researching and discovering information and/or professional organizations about the industry in which you would like to work</td>
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<td>18. Updating resume after each new experience (job, internship or project)</td>
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<td>19. Utilizing the web for research, staying up-to- date with current legislation and/or business specific trends in your industry</td>
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Career Competencies Assessment

Each section should be scored separately.

**Mostly 4/5**
You are comfortable to assume tasks and responsibilities that demonstrate career readiness and are most likely able to communicate them on a resume and in person.

**Mostly 2/3/4**
You are somewhat comfortable with demonstrating your career readiness. Be sure to continue growing and seek out experiences where you have opportunity for growth.

**Mostly 1/2**
You are not comfortable demonstrating your career readiness. Be sure to learn more about the career competencies that employers require of employees. Consider gaining experience to begin developing your skill sets.

Discover Your Direction Action Step:

Define Your Professional Goal

Simply state your professional plans or the direction you are heading in. It’s your best guess, not set in stone. It’s the launch point for this transition. If you are just getting started, you may refer to what you plan to major in. Or, if you are starting graduate school, you may be choosing a concentration. If you are more experienced, you may have Plans A, B, even C. Your statement will become more robust as you progress around the circle a few times.

Examples:

“I plan to major in graphic design because I am an artist at heart but I know I have to earn a living. I would love to eventually work for a fashion magazine in New York.”

“I have been working in the nonprofit world in development for 10 years and now I want to take my experience and become a consultant to nonprofit organizations. I am studying business management so that I understand all aspects of running my own business and have a credential that leaders will recognize. My Plan B is to direct a nonprofit myself.”

Write your professional goal below.
Create Your Professional Pitch

You are the solution to some need in the world. How do you tell someone in 30 seconds?

Success comes when you position your talents in relation to needs in the marketplace. Your professional pitch expresses where you fit in the marketplace and entices your listener to want to hear more. Your pitch ideally leads to more conversation with your listener so they can help you get where you want to go.

This 30-second pitch is your personal advertisement. Start with who you are, what you are studying and what type of job or work interests you. Emphasize what kinds of problems you want to solve in the world of work or what you help people or businesses do. Use classroom, internship or work examples to illustrate your strengths. Identify the value you would bring to the company/industry based on related past accomplishments.

Your pitch is a response to the request, “Tell me about yourself,” and should engage your listener.

Your pitch is not really a speech because it takes place in the context of a conversation. In one conversation, you may be looking for contacts; in another, seeking opinions; in another, telling a hiring manager about yourself. So, adapt your pitch to your audience and conversation accordingly.

Tips

1. **Practice your pitch until it becomes natural.** Practice everywhere, with everyone, anytime. Use it at networking events, when meeting new people, in interviews and any time you are asked, “What do you do?”

2. **Adapt it to your listener and the situation.** The point is to connect with your listener, so keep your pitch conversational rather than delivering a memorized speech.

3. **Always ask about opportunities and connections.** Remember to ask who you should talk to next and ask your listener to help you in specific ways that do not require too much effort on their part.

4. **Your pitch can and should evolve.** Keep working on it until you think it resonates with the majority of your listeners.
Explore the World of Work Action Step:
Create Your Professional Pitch

Sample Pitch Script

I’m a... [describe yourself using active wording]
Example: I am a junior at UB majoring in Marketing.

and have achieved success and experience in... [your specialty]
Example: In my recent internship at XYZ Company, I found that I am especially good at predicting market response to innovative technology products because I've been into techie toys ever since I was a kid.

I am interested in or skilled in... [list specific skills]
Example: I am interested in marketing technology products to young consumers like me.

which allows me to achieve... [list specific results]
Example: These skills allow me to help a company become more successful in its technology sales.

My most recent accomplishments have been...
Example: In my last marketing class, our team designed a marketing campaign for a local sports equipment company and we won first prize for innovation. I contributed to our success through thinking like the consumer, something I excel at.

I am looking for opportunities to...
Example: I would like to meet contacts in technology companies near Baltimore such as ABC and XYZ to learn more about how I can put my skills into practice. Can you suggest anyone I should meet?
Communicate Your Brand Action Step:
Design Your Action Plan

Your action plan is your guide to implementing your professional goal. Experienced career coaches know that working with a plan significantly increases your likelihood of success in accomplishing your goal. It keeps you focused and helps you stay organized, and it’s a document you can share with your career coach, networking contact or mentor.

Fill out your action plan below.

Professional Goal
What do you want to make happen?


Unique Brand
What makes you particularly qualified to accomplish this?


Professional Pitch
Use the responses above to compose your 30-second self-promotion.


Use this checklist to promote yourself:

[ ] update resume [ ] practice pitching [ ] create LinkedIn account
[ ] update UBworks profile [ ] practice interviewing [ ] identify and attend networking opportunities
[ ] other __________________________

Reminder: consider how you will gain experience each step of the way (see the final page in the UB Career Cycle workbook for a checklist).

List additional steps you plan to take (include due dates) for achieving your professional goal:


List people and/or organizations you can contact to help you reach your goal:


Create Your Opportunities Action Step:

Career Management Plan

Once you have successfully landed an internship or job, been accepted into graduate school or received a promotion, you’ll want to transition to your new step smoothly. Your transition plan will help you do that while working toward continuous progress. Practice making the case for yourself through identifying opportunities, interviewing effectively and networking with decision makers. Use the items below as a guide.

Communicate your transition to your network. Since many people helped you make it to this next step, take time to thank them all for contributing to your success. This lets them know what you will be doing and keeps them as part of your ongoing network. You can maintain and grow your professional network ongoing through use of social media, attendance at events, professional memberships, presentations, etc.

- Contact companies with whom you interviewed or schools to which you applied.
- Thank recruiters, faculty and people who wrote you letters of reference.
- Notify anyone else in your network of your new status.

Hit the ground running in your new role. Keys to success in your new role include learning the culture of the organization and its major mission, goals and objectives. As you align your contributions to the organization’s expectations, you will add value.

- Determine the organization’s mission.
- Assess the organization’s goals and objectives that resonate with you.
- Stay aware of issues, trends and needs that align with your interests and skills.
- Seek opportunities to address issues or trends to add value.
- Be clear about responsibilities, expectations, priorities and performance evaluation.
- Get to know your supervisor and their expectations.
- Learn about company culture, including how to dress and preferred communication methods.

Advance your career on the job. Build alliances and establish the ability to influence others. Consider seeking out mentors along the way and establishing your own internal board of advisers on whom to draw as you need information and support.

- Identify prospective mentors and maintain your network.
- Note key individuals who can help you grow in specific areas (create your very own board of advisers).
- Review your professional goals.
- Document your accomplishments and update your resume.
- Set performance goals for yourself and your areas of responsibility.
- Continue to grow and learn in your role and industry.
- Seek out opportunities to lead or work on special projects.
Gain Experience Checklist

No matter which phase of the UB Career Cycle you are in, gaining experience is crucial. While you are a student at UB, you should set a goal to gain experience through at least 2-3 of these methods.

☐ Attend professional association meetings and conferences.

See if the industry you’re interested in has a local, regional or national organization that hosts networking or social events where you can meet people already engaged in your chosen profession and connect to career services to help newcomers to the field. These organizations are great places to start building your networks, and many offer reduced membership rates for students.

☐ Schedule an informational interview.

Find someone who is doing what you would like to do and “pick their brain.” Invite them for coffee, saying you know they are experts in their field and you want to learn about trends, opportunities and ideas for transitioning into their industry or sector. Remember: You are not asking for a job; you are seeking information to better prepare yourself to make this transition. (By the way, if they know of a job and think you’ll be a good fit, they’ll tell you.)

☐ Look into experiential learning opportunities at UB.

Further develop your knowledge, skills and abilities by participating in research- and project-based learning; community and civic engagement activities; or internships, study abroad and work-study positions.

☐ Get involved on campus and in the community.

Grow your skills and develop relationships in whatever ways you can. Employers desire candidates who get involved outside of what is required academically and seek out candidates who can demonstrate they are leaders. Here are some ideas to get you started:

• Student Organizations: Develop and grow your skills that can be directly transferable to the workplace while meeting new people and developing long-lasting relationships—a key skill for networking. As you dedicate more time and effort, you may consider taking on leadership roles within the organization. Learn more: www.ubalt.edu/csi

• Volunteer: Give back to your community and put your passion for a specific cause to work. Turning your passion into a profession is a surefire way to find work that is meaningful—and to make a difference in Baltimore and beyond. Learn more: www.ubalt.edu/bemore

• Lectures and Seminars: Gain knowledge and perspective when you attend some of the many lectures, workshops and seminars that happen throughout the year on campus. Learn what’s happening on campus through UB Today, an email sent to the UB community each weekday, or by visiting www.ubalt.edu/calendar.

☐ Find a mentor.

Having someone more experienced than you to support you on your career path is invaluable. Most successful people, when asked how they made it, refer to people along the way who mentored them. Ask someone in your network if they’d mentor you, or try one of these avenues:

• Professional Development Institute: Connect with a mentor who will help you explore your interests, set career goals and grow professionally. Learn more: www.ubalt.edu/pdi

• Savor UB: Talk with a UB alumni who has a similar career path over a meal at a local Baltimore restaurant. From there, informal, one-on-one mentoring relationships can develop. Learn more: www.ubalt.edu/alumni

☐ Connect with faculty and alumni.

As a student at UB, you are part of a strong—and large—network. Our faculty and alumni work in their fields and already have industry knowledge and connections. They know firsthand the impact a UB education has, and they’ve made the transition from college to the workplace. Developing connections with them will afford you greater insight into possible careers and help you continue to network long after graduation.