

## Vitae Career Choices Activity Booklet

This activity booklet has been developed by Vitae to accompany the webinar. Please pause the recording where prompted to work on the relevant activity.

### Activity 1: Watch the webinar

Watch the webinar and pause where prompted to complete the activities in this document.

### Activity 2: Uncover your career priorities

This exercise is an opportunity to reflect on the values that can influence your career satisfaction. Below is a list of some of the factors that motivate people at work. Work down the list, marking each factor on a scale of 1-5. Complete this at pace and trust your initial instinct.

<b>Potential Motivators</b>	<b>Scale</b> (1 – not important to you, to 5 – very important to you)
Control over my work	
Good income	
Job security	
Flexibility of working arrangements	
Managing other people	
Professional recognition	
Opportunity for promotion	
High level of responsibility	
Pursuing excellence	
Helping others or benefiting the wider community	

Managing major projects	
Opportunity to develop skills	
Status within an organisation	
Status outside an organisation	
Challenging work using my abilities and skills fully	
Specific geographic location	
Working in a team	
Using technical expertise	
Opportunity to be creative	
Variety	
Working alone	
Contact with people	
Feeling appreciated	
Add your own....	

**Reflect on:**

How many of your highest priorities are met by your current work?

Do any of your highest priorities conflict with the work you do now?

Which, if any, of your priorities are you prepared to compromise?

How could you increase your satisfaction by building more of your highest priorities into your current work?

What factors would you consciously seek in a new job or career opportunity?

Knowing what motivates you and gives you fulfilment can guide you to the right choices for the future. It can also help you to focus your time and effort on development activities and career avenues that bring the rewards that matter to you.

**Activity 3: Self-reflection on career values and anchors**

**Part1**

Discovering the unconscious work behaviours, skills and capabilities of researchers.

Use this approach:

Instead of using the words “**I am a researcher**” what words or phrases would you use to describe the behaviours, skills and capabilities you use at work?

Write at least three words or phrases that would describe “a researcher”

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Part 2 Career Anchors Questionnaire

Below are a series of statements that relate to individual career anchors. On a scale of 1 - 4 (1 low, 4 high) rate how the following statements apply to you.

	Rating (1 low, 4 high)
1. I want to be really good at my job, one of the best, an expert.	
2. I really feel most satisfied when I am able to manage the work of others to achieve a common goal.	
3. Ideally I want to do things my way and to my own timetable.	
4. I would much rather build my own business than be the boss in someone else's.	

5. I believe that security and stability are much more important than having the freedom to choose how I work.	
6. My ideal career will enable me to integrate all of my needs – whether work, personal or family.	
7. It is important to me that I use my talents to further the greater good.	
8. I get a kick out of solving the unsolvable or winning against the odds.	
9. I will only feel really successful when I have the freedom to define my work.	
10. I feel most satisfied and fulfilled when I am able to use my expertise, talents and skills.	
11. I would really like to start my own business one day.	
12. I would be very uncomfortable working in an organisation that took a lot of risks. I prefer to work for an organisation that offers stability and security.	
13. I would rather seek employment elsewhere than move to a role that seriously undermined my ability to serve the greater good/others.	
14. I prefer to work on projects that really challenge my problem solving skills and have a competitive element.	
15. I would rather find a new job than accept a role that puts constraints on how I do my work.	

<b>16.</b> Balancing my work with my family and personal commitments is more important to me than a senior position.	
<b>17.</b> One day I would like to be the boss, in charge of a whole organisation.	
<b>18.</b> Reaching a position of seniority in my area of expertise is far more important to me than becoming a more senior general manager.	
<b>19.</b> I want to make a difference in my career. I will only be truly satisfied if I feel I have made a real contribution to society.	
<b>20.</b> Working on difficult problems are more important to me than achieving a high-level position.	
<b>21.</b> My preference in choosing a role would be to seek out opportunities that minimise any interference with my personal life (family, friends etc).	
<b>22.</b> I would feel really fulfilled if I was able to create an enterprise that was primarily the result of my ingenuity, skills and efforts.	
<b>23.</b> Job security and financial independence are really important to me.	
<b>24.</b> I would rather become a general manager with broader responsibilities than become a senior functional manager in my area of expertise.	

### Career anchors score chart

Record your scores in the grid below.

<b>TF</b> TECHNICAL/ FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCE	<b>GMC</b> GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMPETENCE	<b>AI</b> AUTONOMY / INDEPENDENCE	<b>SS</b> SECURITY/ STABILITY	<b>EC</b> ENTRE- PRENEURIAL CREATIVITY	<b>S</b> SERVICE/ DEDICATION TO A CAUSE	<b>PC</b> PURE CHALLENGE	<b>LS</b> LIFESTYLE
Q1.....	Q2.....	Q3..... ...	Q5.....	Q4..... ...	Q7.....	Q8.....	Q6.....
Q10.....	Q17.....	Q9..... ....	Q23.....	Q11.....	Q13.....	Q14.....	Q16..... ...
Q18.....	Q24.....	Q15..... ....	Q12.....	Q22..... .	Q19.....	Q20.....	Q21..... ...
TOTAL.....	TOTAL.....	TOTAL..... ...	TOTAL.....	TOTAL.....	TOTAL.....	TOTAL.....	TOTAL.....

What are your top two anchors (e.g. highest scoring)? Read through the descriptions of Schein's career anchors on the next two pages, then reflect and make notes on the questions below the descriptors.

## Overview of Career Anchors

<p><b>Technical / Functional Competence</b></p>	<p>This kind of person likes being good at something and will work to become a guru or expert. They will commit themselves to specialising in their field. They like to be challenged and then use their skills to meet the challenge, doing the job properly and better than almost anyone else. They may be willing to be 'functional managers' but will not value the concerns of general management. If the work does not test their abilities and skills, they will very quickly become bored.</p>
<p><b>General Managerial competence</b></p>	<p>Unlike technical/functional people, these individuals want to be managers; and not just to climb the ladder or earn more money. They find that it is management per se that interests them. They like problem-solving and dealing with other people. They thrive on responsibility and ideally will look to rise up through the organisational levels so they can be in a position to make major policy decisions. To be successful, they will need analytical, emotional. Interpersonal and intergroup competence.</p>
<p><b>Autonomy / Independence</b></p>	<p>Some people come to recognise that they find it really hard to be bound by other people's rules, procedures, working hours, or dress codes. In short, all of the things that come with working in any kind of organisation. Primarily, these people have a need to work under their own rules and steam. Regardless of the type of work, they want to do things in their own way and at their own pace. They like clearly delineated, time-bound work within their area of expertise. As such, they will often gravitate towards careers that afford them as much autonomy as possible.</p>
<p><b>Security / Stability</b></p>	<p>Security-focused people seek stability and continuity as a primary factor of their lives. We all need varying degrees of security at different points in our lives, however for some this is the predominant orientation throughout their lives and will certainly guide their career decisions. They will often seek out stable organisations that provide the greatest opportunity for job security. They also tend to prefer stable, predictable work tasks, they also need to believe that loyalty makes a real contribution to an organisation's performance.</p>

<b>Entrepreneurial Creativity</b>	People who have this anchor, have an overriding need to create new products or services. Whilst creativity exists in one form or another in all the groups, for the entrepreneur creating a new venture, product or service of some sort is essential to their sense of success and fulfilment. They are obsessed with their need to create, are restless and continually require new creative challenges. They like to run their own businesses but differ from those who seek autonomy in that they will share the workload. Ownership is more important than making money, although this is viewed as a key measure of success.
<b>Service / Dedication to a cause</b>	Some people will pursue a career because they want to embody their core values in their work and careers. As such, they have a keener orientation towards their values than any talents or competencies. Their choices will be based on a desire to improve they world in some way. They will want work that allows them to influence their employing organisations in the direction of their values. Service-orientated people are driven by how they can help other people more than using their talents (which may fall in other areas).
<b>Pure Challenge</b>	Some people are driven by challenge. They will define success as overcoming tremendous obstacles, solving the unsolvable or winning out against impossible odds. They will seek constant stimulation and difficult problems that they can tackle. Most people will want a degree of challenge in their work, but for this type of the challenge is the only thing that matters. Such people will change jobs when the current one gets boring, and their career histories can be very varied.
<b>Lifestyle</b>	Initially it appears that the notion that one's career anchor is organised around lifestyle is a contradiction in terms, However, many people who are highly motivated towards a meaningful career, find themselves in situations that mean their careers must be integrated in their total lifestyle. This is an evolving process, ergo people who find themselves in this situation want flexibility above all else. When seeking employment, they are more likely to be interested in an organisation's attitude towards personal / family concerns, than the sector or area of expertise. They may even take long periods off work in which to indulge in their passions.

### Questions for reflection

#### Priority Anchor 1:

- To what extent is your current role aligned with this anchor?

- What activities could you undertake to increase alignment between this anchor and your role, that will lead to a positive impact on you or your organisation?
- What insights does this activity provide in terms of career direction or professional development activities that you may want to undertake?

**Priority Anchor 2:**

- To what extent is your current role aligned with this anchor?
- What activities could you undertake to increase alignment between this anchor and your role, that will lead to a positive impact on you or your organisation?
- What insights does this activity provide in terms of career direction or professional development activities that you may want to undertake?

## Activity 4: Discovering more about your career self

Reflect on your own research experience – what skills, capabilities and achievements would you place in each of the grid quadrants?

<p><b>Good at and like using</b></p> <p><i>Focus on what you are good at and enjoy – whether skills, behaviours, competencies; Is the career area/job you are considering going to need them?</i></p>	<p><b>Not good at but like using</b></p> <p><i>Aspirational carer/job - need to gain further experience, qualifications to get there?</i></p>
<p><b>Good at and dislike using</b></p> <p><i>A surprising number of people can be in this box during their career!</i></p>	<p><b>Not good at and dislike using</b></p> <p><i>Stress, anxiety, poor self-confidence can result</i></p>

An example to help you:

<p><b>Good at and like using</b></p> <p><i>Posters Presentations Outreach Working in a team Organising events</i></p>	<p><b>Not good at but like using</b></p> <p><i>Publishing articles/blogs Writing press releases Working with the media Podcasting</i></p>
<p><b>Good at and dislike using</b></p> <p><i>Working on one area of a specific topic Specialist research skills Isolation and working alone</i></p>	<p><b>Not good at and dislike using</b></p> <p><i>Writing research funding proposals</i></p>

Complete your own career grid:

<b>Good at and like using</b>	<b>Not good at but like using</b>
<b>Good at and dislike using</b>	<b>Not good at and dislike using</b>

## Activity 5: Creating an expertise profile

This activity has been extracted from module 2 of our Professional development planning for researchers online course (PDP ROC). Which you can access here: [Professional development planning for researchers online course \(PDP ROC\) — Vitae Website](#)

Use the table below to record and reflect on your research journey so far and start to collect useful information for CV building and preparing for job applications and interviews:

1. Using the first column, list your research activities to date, such as reports, papers, courses taught, funding bids, field trip plans, ethical approval applications, presentations to your supervisor or principal investigator. These are just examples, you may have many more.
2. Complete the second column. Start by reflecting on the research activity, which broader skills and expertise were developed or practiced? Then analyse these using the **Essex Transitions and Transformations Framework**- which areas did you demonstrate?
3. Look at your profile so far. There are likely to be a number of gaps in it, which is quite normal. Can you think of any experiences and expertise acquired outside the context of your research that could fill in any of these gaps? For example, you may be bringing a wealth of expertise and experience from other roles, whether they be in employment, education or as a volunteer. Add these achievements to your list.

Researcher profile: prior and current expertise, recognising your achievements so far.

<b>Achievements so far:</b> List all your research / professional achievements so far, big and small	<b>Areas of the TnT framework covered:</b> List areas of the framework which are covered by your achievements and evidence	<b>Evidence:</b> List the evidence you have generated from your achievements

## Your evidence

In research and academic contexts – and in many other areas of life, we are expected to be able to back up the claims we make with evidence. Governments and professions, certainly in the UK, also talk of evidence-based policy and practice, and we have all surely had the experience of being challenged ‘where’s the evidence for that?’ when we have made unexpected or implausible assertions.

Situations such as job interviews are to a great extent intended to test the relevance and quality of evidence you can present to support the claims you are making about yourself, and yet we can sometimes really struggle to produce credible and persuasive examples of the expertise and experience we are claiming to have.

Examples of evidence for your experiences and expertise may include:

- Written research reports or published papers
- Presentation slides
- Abstracts and summaries
- Audio recordings from interviews
- Photographs from field trips
- Data analyses you have conducted
- Video evidence of performance
- Conference programmes in which your talk is listed
- Funding applications you have written
- Blog posts or other articles you have written
- Materials you have created for any teaching you have done
- Certificates for courses you have taken

You can be as creative as you like here - these are just a few examples and the evidence that you collect will be as individual as you and as your research.

Reflecting on your achievements so far:

- For which areas are you able to identify plenty of supporting evidence?
- Which areas will require more evidence at some point in the future?
- Are there any areas that are not covered at all?

## Activity 6: Using the GROW model to apply your learning

What are my key learning points from this webinar? How will I apply my learning (using GROW model)?	
<b>GOAL</b>	What <i>exactly</i> do I want to achieve?
<b>REALITY</b>	What is my current reality? Where am I now?
<b>OPTIONS</b>	What options are open to me? What could I do?
<b>WILL</b>	What are my practical next steps? When will I take them?

### Useful Links for Future Reference

[Researcher professional development \(vitae.ac.uk\)](https://vitae.ac.uk)

[About the Vitae Researcher Development Framework — Vitae Website](#)

[Researcher profiles — Vitae Website](#)

[Researcher careers — Vitae Website](#)

[Career management for researchers](#)

[PDP ROC: Professional Development Planning for Researchers Online Course](#)

[Professional Development booklets for researchers](#)

[How to write an academic cv](#)

### **Career Podcasts**

[Podcasts Archive | Amazing If](#)

[Opportunities in Science with Dr Mhairi Towler on Apple Podcasts](#)

[Once a Scientist - Hosted by Nick Edwards](#)

[Podcast - Dr Hannah Roberts \(hannahnikeroberts.com\)](#)

[Inspiring Scientists on Apple Podcasts](#)

[Beyond Academia Podcast \(lse.ac.uk\)](#)

[Careers in Chemistry: Beyond Academia | University of Oxford Podcasts](#)