The Career Management Cycle

Overview

ACHE career management offerings have been developed according to the following model of the career management cycle:

- Phase One: Self-Assessment
- Phase Two: Identify an Ideal Next Position
- Phase Three: Gap Analysis and Action Planning
- Phase Four: Personal Marketing
- Phase Five: Annual Personal Audit

When an individual approaches the task of career management by mastering the information or techniques associated with each phase, the likelihood of having a satisfying, successful career increases.

Phase One: Self-Assessment

Self-examination conducted during this phase of the career management cycle produces important self-knowledge valuable for identifying what types of jobs align with one’s personal attributes.

Career decisions made in the absence of this knowledge may result in establishing goals ill-suited to the individual. Experienced outplacement consultants report that it is not unusual for clients who have completed a revealing first ever self-assessment to state that they wish they had this information years earlier as they would have managed their careers far differently.

Equipped with this knowledge individuals are prepared to identify an ideal next position on their career paths. Being properly prepared with this authentic self-knowledge is equally important for members at every career stage.

The following table contains a summary of assessments offered through ACHE’s Healthcare Executive Career Resource Center. Certain of these assessments produce the greatest value when taken in combination. These include the MBTI and FIRO-B, which produce HECRC’s Comprehensive Leadership Report. The Extended DISC combines with the Career Anchors to produce HECRC’s Career Aligning Toolkit.
**ACHE Career Management Resources Available for Conducting a Self-Assessment**

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<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Type of Feedback</th>
<th>Formats</th>
<th>Availability</th>
<th>Uses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Personality Type using Myers Briggs</td>
<td>Written report with option of personal feedback</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Self-directed and at Congress on Healthcare Leadership Workshop</td>
<td>Career and Leadership Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personality Behavior using Extended Disc</td>
<td>Written report with option of personal feedback</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Self-directed</td>
<td>Career and Leadership Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workplace Relations using FIRO-B</td>
<td>Written report with option of personal feedback</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Self-directed and at Congress on Healthcare Leadership Workshop</td>
<td>Career and Leadership Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional Intelligence using EQ-i</td>
<td>Written report with option of personal feedback</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Self-directed and at Congress and at some Clusters</td>
<td>Career and Leadership Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preferred work setting using Career Anchors</td>
<td>Completion of paper and pencil score form with option of personal feedback</td>
<td>Paper and pencil</td>
<td>Self-directed and at Congress and at some Clusters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict mode using Thomas-Kilmann</td>
<td>Written report with option of personal feedback</td>
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<td>Change Management Effectiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACHE Competency Self-Assessment</td>
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Members also have access to a Career Self-Assessment that provides personal feedback from a licensed counseling psychologist. Participants first complete a battery of assessments for scoring and one-to-one interpretation by the psychologist.

HECRC maintains a directory of executive coaches found in the Career Services section of the Members Only area of ache.org. Many coaches will employ the feedback from assessments to aid clients in establishing career objectives and assisting them to succeed in reaching them.
**Phase Two: Identify an Ideal Next Position**

For those who have completed a comprehensive self-assessment, the next career management task is to identify an ideal next position. What makes a job ideal is how closely the performance expectations and rewards of the job fit with an individual’s validated interests, values and abilities.

For some members, particularly those new to the field, it can be a challenge to name a specific ideal position. Often, this is the result of not yet having developed sufficient familiarity with the field of healthcare management. Even when one can name an ideal next position, circumstances may dictate that he or she accepts a job that offers some, but not all the features that would make it a perfect fit.

During the identification phase, ACHE’s Healthcare Executive Career Resource Center maintains a number of resources to help members discover the diverse range of jobs and settings that exist in the healthcare management field.

For those at an early stage of their career, HealthManagementCareers.org may prove useful. For those further along in their career development, HECRC maintains a member-to-member resource, the Career Management Network. The Network, available through ache.org, is a member-to-member resource consisting of volunteers located throughout the country who have agreed to respond to inquiries from members considering a career transition. Although they are not expected to identify actual job opportunities, they can be a resource for learning about positions in different sectors of healthcare and to understand the conditions in a particular market area.

HECRC also maintains a directory of executive recruiters who specialize in serving clients seeking healthcare executives. The directory provides members access to the recruiting firms’ Web sites, which can be rich sources of information about opportunities in healthcare management and the expected qualifications.

Salary considerations also may be important in considering an ideal position. Current salary information for many executive and management positions in independent and system hospitals is available on the Members Only area of ache.org.

In addition, ACHE’s Division of Research maintains collections of job descriptions submitted by members when they seek membership and advancement. These are wide-ranging collections that include positions in organizations other than hospitals. For more information, Mike Broscio, director, ACHE Healthcare Executive Career Resource Center (HECRC), mbroscio@ache.org, 312-424-9444.
Phase Three: *Gap Analysis and Action Planning*

In addition to necessary qualifications expected of most candidates (e.g., an advanced degree), a potential employer wants to be confident a candidate possesses the professional competencies associated with the particular position and, if at all possible, that the candidate has successfully employed those competencies to deliver positive results.

Effective career management during this phase first involves learning what experiences and competencies will be expected and undertaking a realistic assessment of whether the content of one’s career will be viewed as satisfying those expectations. At that point, the job seeker needs to take action to remedy any gaps in experience that would undermine the ability to compete for a desired position.

The [ACHE Healthcare Competencies Assessment](ache.org) is a very valuable tool, helping members identify areas of strength, as well as areas to include in a personal development plan. The tool also contains an extensive listing of resources to address gaps and further professional development.

Additionally, ACHE’s Healthcare Executive Career Resource Center makes career counseling available to members in three ways:

- A free career counseling service staffed by volunteer senior executives is offered during ACHE’s annual Congress on Healthcare Leadership.
- Access to mentors and coaches who help provide personalized career counseling. ACHE’s [Leadership Mentoring Network](ache.org) exists to create mentoring partnerships that help members prepare themselves for greater leadership responsibilities. Mentors volunteer their services and there is no charge to ACHE members. Additionally, ACHE maintains a [directory of executive coaches](ache.org) that includes information on the coach’s qualifications, modes of practice, scope or services and depth of experiences. Services by executive coaches are on a fee-for-service basis.
- The staff of HECRC is available to respond to personal career questions by email or by phone. Contact Mike Broscio, director, HECRC at mbroscio@ache.org or 312-424-9444. Often, such career counseling follows as a consequence of using one of the career management tools HECRC offers, such as an assessment or the resume review service. Generalized career information also is available by addressing questions through the message board in the [Members Only](ache.org) areas of ache.org. A member may join an existing career management discussion thread or start a new one.
Phase Four: Personal Marketing

The skills and activities associated with personal marketing comprise the job seeker’s toolkit. However, too often individuals equate the tools used during Phase Four with the totality of the Career Management Cycle. By completing the activities of the three preceding phases, a job seeker can be more accurate, authentic and effective in using all the items in the Phase Four toolkit.

There are four aspects to the personal marketing phase of the career management cycle:

- Writing and using effective cover letters
- Developing resumes that attractively project one’s desired image
- Maximizing their use of social media tools such as Linkedin
- Continuously constructing, maintaining and using a professional network
- Preparing for interviews and interacting effectively during them

HECRC supports members undertaking the personal marketing phase with a range of resources. They can learn about and access these resources by signing into the Members Only area of ache.org and then selecting the Career Resource Center. Examples include:

- The Resume Review/Critique Service is available all year on a fee-for-service basis. There also is a free resume review service at the Congress on Healthcare Leadership for Congress registrants only.

- The ACHE Online Employment Service includes a Resume Bank that allows members to post their resumes in a searchable database available for review by interested executive recruiters and human resource executives. Also included is a Job Bank in which employers post healthcare management positions. Members can sign up for job alerts to be automatically notified when positions meeting their requirements are posted.

- The Employment Referral Service at the Congress on Healthcare Leadership creates opportunities for attendees to register for possible interviews by onsite employers who have listed available opportunities.

- The Career Management Network assists members considering a career change by linking them to other ACHE members who have volunteered to share information about their fields of expertise and conditions in the local market areas described on ache.org.
The ACHE Linkedin Group brings together more than 10,000 members and provides opportunities to connect, share information and ask questions of colleagues in the field.

Career Management 101 is a free online course developed with early careerists in mind, but applicable to members at all career stages. It consists of modules that deal with career management in general, cover letters and resumes, networking and interviewing.

There is a directory of executive recruiters specializing in serving clients seeking healthcare executives, as well as links to Web sites of interim placement firms.

ACHE’s Health Administration Press offers a number of publications that will inform and empower members preparing to be effective career managers. These include:

- Tyler's Guide: The Healthcare Executive's Job Search
- Executive Compensation: Guidelines for Healthcare Leaders and Trustees
- Employment Contracts for Healthcare Executives: Rationale, Trends, and Samples, Fifth Edition

**Phase Five: Annual Personal Audit**

During this phase effective career managers review their current career status and employment situation. The purpose of this examination is to discover any differences on the strategic or personal levels that suggest the time is ripe for making a career change. Sometimes career changes may be made defensively as in the case of an impending organizational merger involving threats to continued employment. Changes also may be prompted by recognizing that there is an opportunity to realize a personal goal that has been simmering on hold.

For those considering a defensively-driven change in employment, the ACHE Online Employment Service, links to executive recruiters and the Career Management Network can be useful sources of information. For those contemplating a life and career changing move, the directory of executive coaches may be an important resource.

The annual personal audit should also include an assessment of career growth, paying particular attention to whether you are engaged in ongoing professional education and continually evolving your knowledge base. The ACHE Healthcare Competencies Assessment on ache.org can be a very valuable tool for this purpose.