**Developing a Plan of Action**



**Introduction**

Having taken the time to research and build contacts in areas that intersect with your skills, interests, and values, you are now ready to begin developing strategies for gaining relevant experience.

In this assignment you will identify existing opportunities for gaining experience as well as how to create your own opportunities by developing a preliminary action plan to pursue them.

**Step 1: Compile a List of Existing Opportunities**

Research and compile a list of 10 relevant internships, co-ops, placement courses, extra-curricular activities and/or volunteer positions that are relevant to your field of interest. List the opportunities you have found, contact information and application deadlines in the space below:

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You may want to consider opportunities within and beyond York University. Many organizations provide information about volunteer positions on their websites, so it’s worth looking for those related to your areas of interest. Here are a few links to get you started:

* [York U Experience Hub](https://www.yorku.ca/yuexperience/students/)
* [Career Centre](https://careers.yorku.ca/students-and-new-grads/need-to-build-skills-and-experience)
* [Conducting Occupational Research](https://careers.yorku.ca/student_topic/conduct-occupational-research)
* [Student Community & Leadership Development](https://www.yorku.ca/scld/student-leadership-program/)
* [York U Student Engagement](https://www.yorku.ca/scld/student-engagement/)
* [Work Integrated Learning at York (WIL)](https://www.yorku.ca/laps/get-experience/work-integrated-learning/)
* [Volunteer Placements](https://careers.yorku.ca/student_topic/find-a-volunteer-placement-that-meets-your-needs)

**Step 2: Select Opportunities of Interest**

Based on your interests, goals, and personal circumstances, explain which opportunities you are likely to pursue in the space below:

Type of Opportunity (Volunteer, Employment, Internship etc.)

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Organization

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Application Details (E.g., Contact email, deadline etc.)

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Application Requirements (Resume, cover letter, portfolio etc.)

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**Step 3: Set Short-Term and Long-term Goals**

Once you have identified employment or volunteer positions that you are interested in, you can begin to think about goals and plans for pursuing these opportunities.

Take a moment to review two models for goal setting - the ABCS model is useful for long-term, future-oriented goal setting and the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time) model is better for short-term goals. This tip sheet can guide you through this process.

Select whichever model seems most appropriate to your current situation and outline your ABCS or SMART goals for pursuing these opportunities in a brief paragraph.

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**ABCS of Goal Setting (Long-Term & Future Oriented)**

* **A**im High: Outline the long-term goal you want to strive towards.
* **B**elieve in Yourself:What qualifications, skills, experiences are relevant and will prepare you for this goal?
* **C**are and Commit:How will you stay motivated? What steps will you take to continue to work towards for this goal?
* **S**pecify and Self-Reflect**:**What have you achieved so far? What are some obstacles you still need to overcome? What are next steps to achieving your goal?

**SMART Goals (Short-Term & Achievable)**

* **S**pecific: Identify what you want to achieve. The narrower and more specific the better.
* **M**easurable:Recognize how you will identify your progress in achieving this goal.
* **A**ttainable: Set a goal that is realistically achievable in the timeline you have identified.
* **R**elevant: Make goals based on your current priorities and that align with your future aspirations.
* **T**ime-based:Motivate yourself by setting specific, achievable deadlines.

**Action Planning**

After outlining your short or long-term goals, develop an action plan to achieve these goals. To create this plan, you should think about the following considerations:

* Personal commitments *(E.g., Are you involved in the care for children or family members? Do you have a part-time or full-time jobs or volunteer commitment?)*
* Personal timelines *(E.g., What length of time will you give yourself to achieve these goals?)*
* Personal well-being (*E.g., Thinking about your mental, physical, emotional, and other types of wellbeing, what is achievable for you?)*
* Accessing Supports *(E.g., Will you need access to physical, emotional, monetary, or other supports to achieve your goals? How can you access them?)*

Based on these considerations, develop an action plan following the guidelines below incorporating whichever of the opportunities you list above that you are most serious about pursuing now or in the near future.

There are many creative and personalized ways to format your plan. For example, you may want to develop a written guide for yourself or design a schedule or creative calendar. You may want to create a list of reminders or a graphic of a timeline.

You can choose to create your action plan in whatever format that works best for you, however, your plan should include the following elements:

1. A brief overarching description of the opportunities you are interested in pursuing that answers the following questions:

* How does this plan consider your personal commitments, timelines, well-being, and any support you might need? Which of your short- or long-term goals does this plan address?

2. A plan that includes:

* Task or activities
* Description of each task/activity
  + Be sure to incorporate the details you collected in Step One
* A timeline to complete each task/activity
* Check-in points in the timeline to review your activities, ensure that you are on track and adjust as needed

**Step 4: Develop an Opportunity Plan**

You can use the following example of a personal opportunity plan for inspiration:

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Short-term Goals:

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Task

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Description

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Complete By

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Task

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**Step 5: Export Your Plan**

Compile the following elements into one document and submit your plan:

* List of Relevant Opportunities
* Short-term or Long-term Goals
* Personal Opportunity Plan