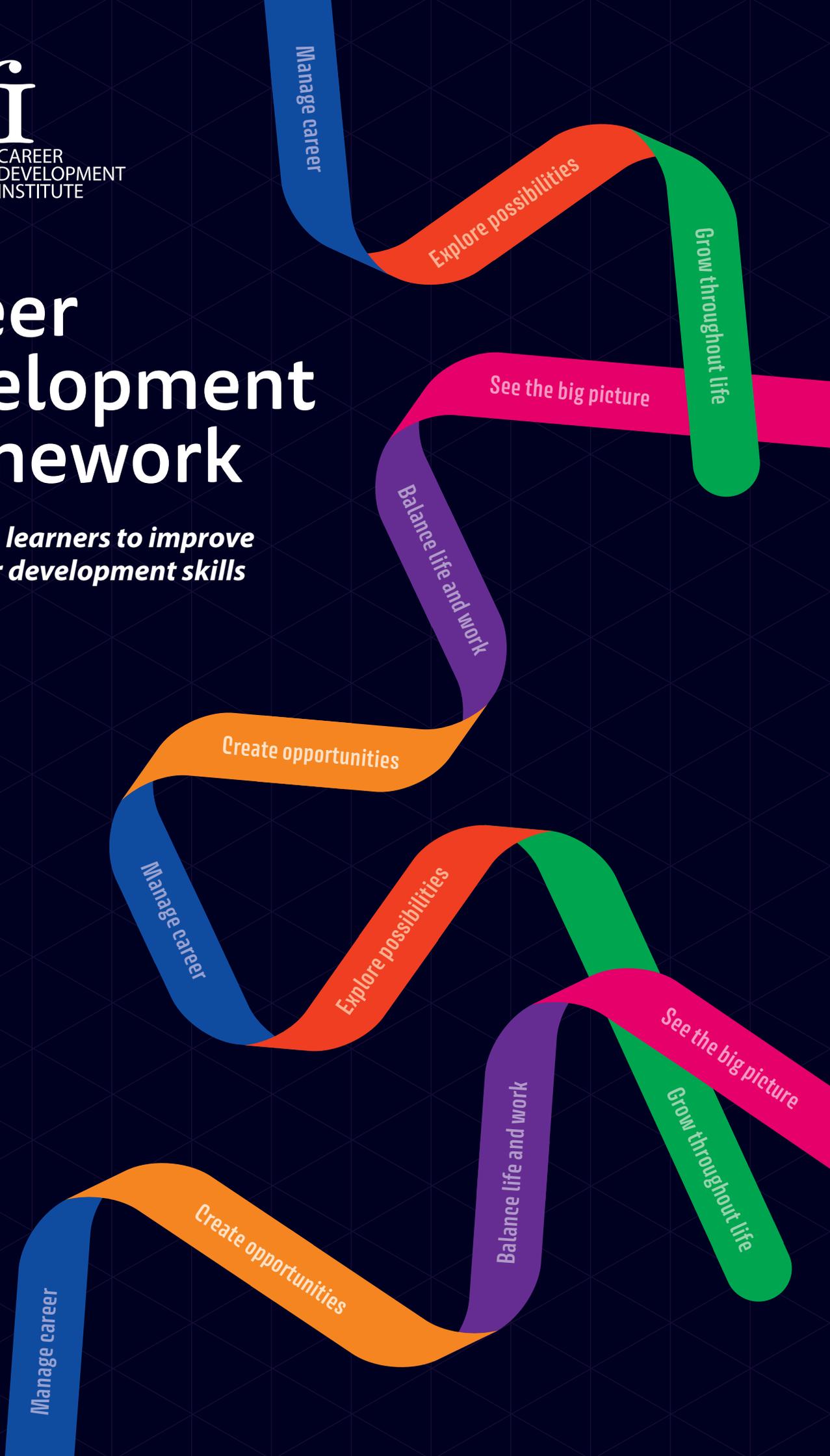


# Career Development Framework

*Supporting learners to improve  
their career development skills*



# Introduction

**Career describes our journey through life, learning and work. We need actively to develop our careers to make the best of them. This process of career development takes skill as well as knowledge and the right attitude. Individuals need to work on career development skills throughout their lives.**

The CDI Career Development Framework has been developed for use in England. Alternative documents and equivalent frameworks exist in the other UK nations. However, the new CDI framework is available as an additional source of reference for any practitioners to use throughout the UK and beyond.

This document introduces the *CDI's Career Development Framework* to careers professionals, educators and other professionals who work supporting people to develop their careers. Its main purpose is to clarify the skills, knowledge and attitudes that individuals need to have a positive career and to provide a framework for planning support for career development.

A 'positive career' will mean something different to different people, but it will typically include being happy with the way you spend your time, being able to make a contribution to your community and being able to have a decent standard of living.



Career development skills are the learning outcomes that career development programmes and interventions should be aiming to bring about. They need to be developed alongside academic and vocational skills and knowledge and employability skills (the skills that you need for work and employment).

***"We welcome the CDI's Career Development Framework. The Framework recognises the importance of high-quality, structured careers programmes and also acknowledges the value of the skills, knowledge and attitudes that individuals need to have a positive career. The Framework sets out what knowledge, skills and capabilities career learning is seeking to foster and provides a useful resource that schools and colleges can use in the design and delivery of their career development programmes."***

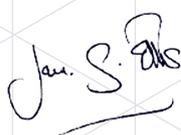
**Department for Education**

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## Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Professor Tristram Hooley for his time and insights in leading this project. The CDI would also like to thank and acknowledge the time given by a wide range of individuals and organisations as part of our research and development of the refreshed framework. Key organisations that we consulted with include Academies Enterprise Trust, Adviza, Association of School and College Leaders, Careers England, C&K Careers, CSW Group, Complete Careers, Department for Education, Education Development Trust, Education & Employers, Gatsby Charitable Foundation, Institute of Student Employers, National Institute for Career Education and Counselling, North East LEP, North East Uni Connect Programme, Nottingham Trent University, Ofsted, Prospects, Quality in Careers Standard, Suffolk County Council, Teach First, The Career Innovation Company, Talentino, The Careers & Enterprise Company; The PSHE Association, The Skills Builder Partnership, University of Bath, University of Derby, University of Warwick, Youth Employment UK.



Jan Ellis, Chief Executive, Career Development Institute (CDI)

# 1 The Career Development Framework

The Career Development Institute has undertaken extensive research and consulted with career development experts and practitioners to identify the six career development skills that people need to have positive careers. (Figure 1)

These six skills are the learning areas that career development programmes and interventions should focus on. When you are supporting someone with their career you should ask yourself, how can I help them to grow throughout life, explore possibilities, manage career, create opportunities, balance life and work and see the big picture. Each career development activity might develop a different skill, but ultimately individuals need to engage with all of the career development learning areas.

A full description of the research that underpins the CDI Career Development Framework, along with other resources to support the Framework is available on the CDI website at <https://www.thecdi.net/Careers-Framework>.



**“The Skills Builder Partnership welcomes the new CDI Framework as a clear, tangible way to ensure that students are building the career management skills that they need as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.”**

**Tom Ravenscroft (CEO),  
Skills Builder Partnership**

# For a positive career you need to...

(Figure 1)

## Grow throughout life

Grow throughout life by learning and reflecting on yourself, your background, and your strengths.



## Explore possibilities

Explore the full range of possibilities open to you and learn about recruitment processes and the culture of different workplaces.



## Manage career

Manage your career actively, make the most of opportunities and learn from setbacks.



## Create opportunities

Create opportunities by being proactive and building positive relationships with others.



## Balance life and work

Balance your life as a worker and/or entrepreneur with your wellbeing, other interests and your involvement with your family and community.



## See the big picture

See the big picture by paying attention to how the economy, politics and society connect with your own life and career.



## 2 The purpose of the Framework

**When we work with people to develop their career, we are helping them to take control of their lives. Sometimes we can achieve this by supporting them to overcome a barrier and make a transition, but ideally, we are trying to do more than help them to manage a crisis.**

Career development interventions should support people to learn about how careers work, what strategies are most effective and how to deal with challenges. This process of career development learning results in learners acquiring the collection of skills, knowledge and attitudes that are described in the CDI Career Development Framework. The ultimate aim is to equip people to progress successfully through learning and work, and to have a rewarding career.



## 3 Learning career development skills

**The process of learning about career and acquiring career development skills is about more than presenting people with a list of skills. Career development skills have to be actively learnt, rather than just being ticked off a list. The framework can be helpful in supporting learners to understand that career is multifaceted and complex and to recognise what they need to know and be able to do to. Career is not just a process of choosing a job early in life, rather it is a process of ongoing learning and development that takes place throughout life.**

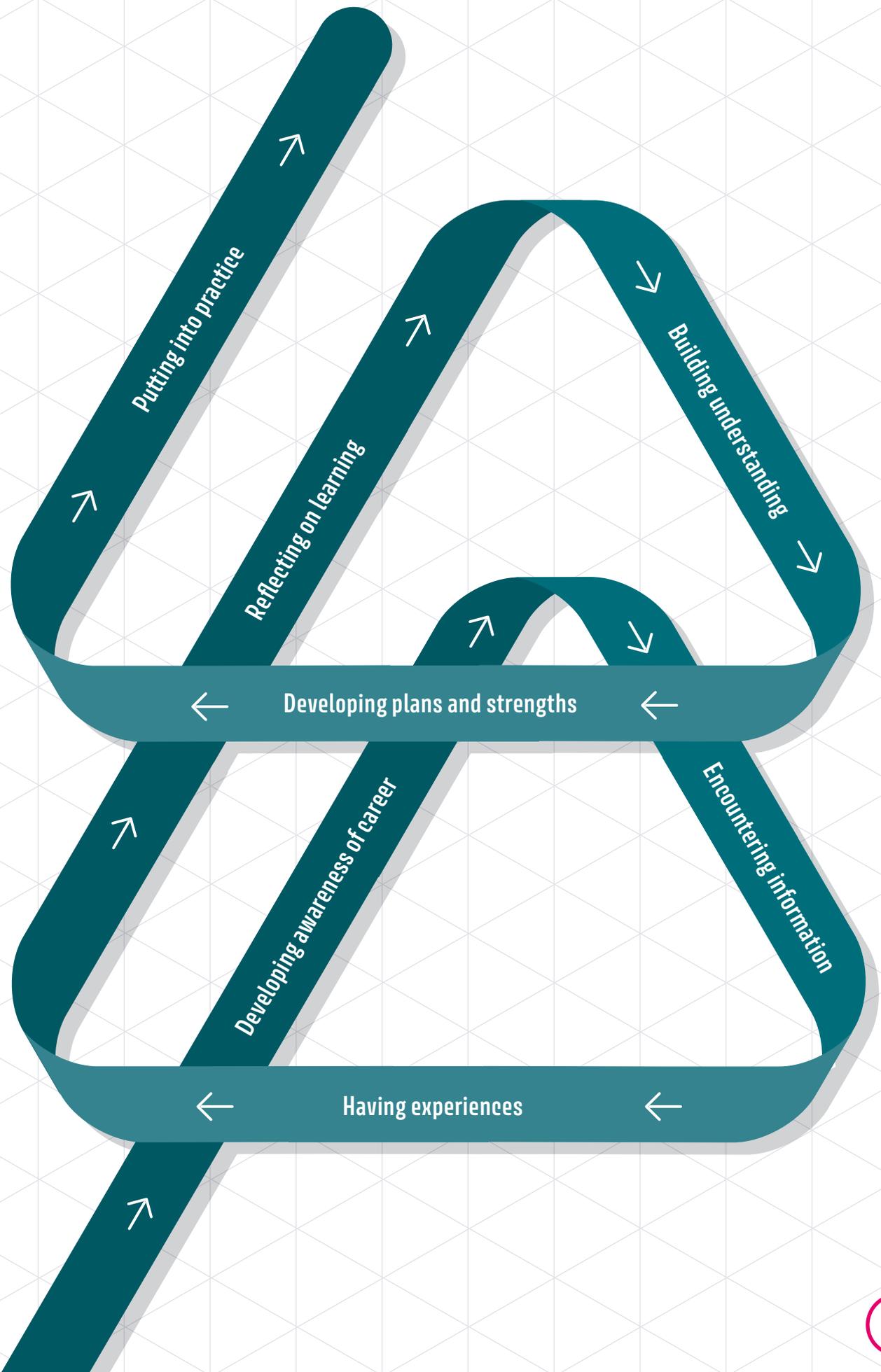
We can view career development learning as a spiral where learners begin by encountering the idea of career and recognising that they can influence how their career develops. We can support them to build their career development skills by providing them with information, knowledge and experiences, encouraging them to reflect on this and build a more profound understanding of their context and their career.

We then encourage them to develop new plans and strategies informed by their career learning and put these into practice.

The career development learning spiral continues throughout people's lives. As we learn more and move into new settings we need to keep working on our career development skills.

Learners will develop each of the six career development skills (grow throughout life, explore possibilities, manage career, create opportunities, balance life and work and see the big picture) at a different pace. Each skill will require its own spiral of career development learning. But, of course the six skills are also linked and so learning in one area will also support learning in another area.

# The career development learning spiral (Figure 2)



## 4 How can I use the Framework?

The CDI Career Development Framework can be used to support career development work in a variety of contexts.



### By individuals

The Framework is available to individuals to help them to develop their own careers. It provides a simple answer to the question 'what should I do to develop my career?'

Career development practitioners can help individuals by introducing them to the Framework and supporting them to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses in relation to it.

### In the education system

The Framework provides a basis for a career education curriculum as it describes the career development learning areas that such a curriculum should cover and the outcomes that should be observable at the end of the programme.

The components set out in Section 5 break the career development learning areas down into more detailed learning outcomes that can be used for developing lessons and activities. They can also be used to audit existing curricula (e.g. in academic subjects or vocational learning) to identify where career development skills are already being developed, or could be developed.

### In career counselling and personal guidance

Career counselling and personal guidance interviews are an important resource for individuals in their career development. They offer people an opportunity to discuss what is important to them, consider how they can overcome obstacles and create strategies for developing their career.

In career counselling interviews clients are likely to discuss the six career development skills described in the Framework. Career counsellors can use the Framework to help to identify areas for development and help clients to reflect on what they could do to move forwards.

### In employment

Many companies provide planned programmes of learning and development for their employees. The frameworks for these programmes often describe the skills that individuals need to progress within the organisation. The ability of employees to develop their own careers should be recognised as an important part of what makes for a high performing employee.

Organisations can use the CDI Career Development Framework to recognise the importance of career development skills as part of their approach to training and development.

### In employability and career transition programmes

Adults who are unemployed, or in the process of making a career transition, need to revisit and develop their career development skills. The Framework can be used to help design employability and career transition programmes using the detailed career development learning outcomes set out in Section 5.

## 5 Detailed career development learning outcomes

In order to work on the six career development skills it is important to break them down further. This section sets out a series of components for each of the skills that can be used to develop more detailed career development learning outcomes.



### Grow throughout life

 People need to *grow throughout life by learning and reflecting on themselves, their background, and their strengths*. Careers practitioners should address this by engaging learners in:

- Making use of help, support and feedback
- Recognising how learning, skills and experience contribute to career
- Reflecting on and recording achievements, experiences and learning
- Committing to lifelong learning and development
- Challenging themselves and trying new things
- Considering the impact of heritage, identity and values

### Explore possibilities

 People need to *explore the full range of possibilities open to them and learn about recruitment processes and the culture of different workplaces*. Careers practitioners should address this by engaging learners in:

- Thinking about what jobs and roles to pursue
- Finding and making use of labour market information and information about the education system
- Understanding learning pathways and how to access and succeed in them
- Recognising the relationship between learning, qualifications and work
- Building awareness about workplaces, workplace culture and expectations
- Analysing and preparing for recruitment and selection processes

“

***The CDI framework will provide a useful toolkit to connect all elements of career learning together.”***

**Siobhan Neary (Head of the International Centre for Guidance Studies), University of Derby**



### Manage career



People need to *manage their career actively, make the most of opportunities and learn from setbacks*. Careers practitioners should address this by engaging learners in:

- Understanding the concept of career
- Being confident and optimistic
- Planning, prioritising and setting targets
- Assessing risk and reward and making decisions
- Managing opportunities, changes and transitions
- Being resilient and learning from setbacks

### Create opportunities



People need to *create opportunities by being proactive and building positive relationships with others*. Careers practitioners should address this by engaging learners in:

- Building and maintaining relationships and networks
- Being proactive
- Being creative and agile
- Representing themselves and others
- Acting as a leader, role model or example to others
- Considering entrepreneurialism

### Balance life and work



People need to *balance their life as a worker and/or entrepreneur with their wellbeing, other interests and their involvement with their family and community*. Careers practitioners should address this by engaging learners in:

- Considering work-life balance
- Attending to physical and mental wellbeing
- Planning and managing personal finances
- Considering how to be involved in family and community
- Understanding different life stages and life roles
- Being aware of rights and responsibilities in the workplace and in society
- Dealing with prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination

### See the big picture



People need to *see the big picture by paying attention to how the economy, politics and society connect with their own life and career*. Careers practitioners should address this by engaging learners in:

- Evaluating different media, information sources and viewpoints
- Exploring and responding to local and national labour market trends
- Exploring and responding to trends in technology and science
- Exploring and responding to the relationship between career and the environment
- Exploring and responding to the relationship between career, community and society
- Exploring and responding to the relationship between career, politics and the economy

**“ More than ever, it’s important people manage their careers through their working life. The CDI framework gives a clear, structured approach to help you develop your career.”**

**Stephen Isherwood (CEO), Institute of Student Employers**

## 6 Assessing and evaluating career development learning

**Clarifying the learning outcomes of career development programmes helps us to be more certain about the impact of these programmes. If we know what outcomes we want to result from a career development programme it is easier to see whether these outcomes have been achieved.**

This can be useful in developing forms of assessment as part of the delivery of career development interventions and programmes. You can use the detailed career development learning outcomes set out in section 5 to develop an assessment framework for your programme. You will need to decide what you want a learner to be able to demonstrate that they know or can do at the end of the programme and think about how you are going to measure this. Building assessment into your career development programme can clarify the aims of your programme, motivate your learners, help individuals to judge their progress and provide insights on how effective your programme is.

The identification of clearly acknowledged learning outcomes can also provide a basis for evaluating your career development programme. By adopting the CDI Career Development Framework you are clarifying what you are trying to achieve through your programme. These outcomes can then be used as the basis for an evaluation of the programme's effectiveness.



***“ I am impressed by the new CDI framework as it better reflects the complexities of the modern world and the role that career plays within it.”***

**Matt Joyce (Regional Lead: North East Ambition), North East LEP**

