

# A WEEK IN *Learning*

## TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR CAREER DEVELOPMENT Jackie Hallen, Executive Vice President and Chief Mission Officer

Hello Team!

When presented the chance to share my thoughts with you again, I decided to revisit my last article on opportunity and *expand on it*. I hope many of you have had the opportunity to take charge of **your career** and its **development**. If you have, that's great! If not, maybe today is your first step! I want to give you some proactive ways to drive your career development – whether that means continuing your efforts or just starting your development journey. Let's start off with what career development actually means.

### Defining Career Development

There are two viewpoints to career development: the employee and the employer. It can be looked at as a process or plan in place to aid someone's career. There are different types of career development programs, and employers implement these to help employees grow in their careers. Career development is so important because work plays a vital role in all of our lives. Your work should align with your values, uplift and fulfil you. Some people have trouble finding jobs that truly excite them, and part of career development is considering what kind of role and opportunities will make you happy. Now, I am going to share with you some helpful tips to support your development.

### #1 Think about a CAREER, not a JOB

First, begin by thinking about your career, not your job. It's important to think about the big picture, especially because people are changing jobs at unprecedented rates. You can't go into your first job thinking it will be your last. Even if you're happy in your current role, continue to look for ways to prepare yourself for future opportunities.

Today, we find that the focus is less on *jobs* and more on **careers**. That's why career development is so important. While career development has always been essential for growth, the meaning of work has changed significantly over time. Additionally, that comes with the need to find and nurture a career path and your identity.



*“It’s an exciting time to be part of our team! I’m looking forward to seeing you grow and take advantage of all we have to offer.”*

- *Jackie Hallen*

## **#2 Seek Out Mentors**

I can't express enough how critical mentorship is to your career development. I recommend selecting mentors based on the skills, qualities and experiences you want to emulate in your work and life. You can even have a group of mentors that you regularly consult with to give you advice and feedback. Consider them your board of directors! Goodwill has two great programs that would help you in this area: the Job Shadow Program and the Mentor Program. Due to COVID, we have put these on hold - but we plan to bring them back full force! Be sure to take advantage of these great resources when they return.

## **#3 Plan Out Your Career**

This one is imperative for your success. Taking the time to plan out what your ideal path looks like is so important. You should know what is ahead of you in order to achieve your desired career. This could involve working in the field of your choice by starting at a lower level, going to school or earning credentials in your chosen career. Make sure you understand the steps you will need to take and be prepared to work for it.

## **#4 Asking for What You Want**

While I would like to think that I do a good job of knowing what people want, the truth is I don't. Bosses aren't mind readers, so it is important that you ask for what you want. If you believe that you are ready for a promotion or want to know how to be promoted - have that discussion with your leader! First, be clear about what you want. Second, have the conversation with the right person. Lastly, if potential barriers come up, have a plan and work to remove them. With that said, be sure to ask for honest feedback throughout this process.

## **#5 Say Yes to Opportunities**

By saying "Yes" to opportunities, you are giving yourself a chance to not only grow, but challenge and enrich you. It will open doors to meet new people and create change for yourself and others. Don't let fear of something new or different dictate your life - GO FOR IT!! I also want to stress the importance of seeking out opportunities to learn new things, whether formal or informal. The smallest things can contribute to your career and add to your skillset.

As Goodwill continues to grow our Enrichment Program, we will focus on more ways to enhance your career with Career Navigators, career pathing, training, tuition reimbursement and promotion opportunities. It's an exciting time to be part of our team! I'm looking forward to seeing you grow and take advantage of all we have to offer. I know this seems like a long list, but taking the journey to truly do what you love takes time, commitment and energy. I can tell you from personal experience it is worth the journey. Have fun on yours!