The “Sweet Spot” in one’s career is when passion and expertise align to fit with the right job opportunity. That is the point at which we are likely to derive the most satisfaction and success from our career. A good leader/mentor can help faculty/physicians find the sweet spot by building competence, leveraging passion and finding the right work experiences for the person. In some cases, there is not a good fit for an individual in a department or organization. Trying to fix glaring weaknesses or make the individual like tasks typically will not work.

1. As Is...Where are you now?

The first step is to analyze your current situation and determine your values, strengths and passion.

Using the list below, identify your top personal and professional values.

- Autonomy
- Achievement
- Friendships
- Physical challenge
- Growth
- Pleasure
- Adventure
- Family
- Power and authority
- Affection (love and caring)
- Helping other people
- Arts
- Meaningful work
- Recognition
- Helping society
- Challenging problem
- Honesty
- Change and variety
- Quality relationship
- Community development
- Inner harmony
- Competence
- Integrity
- Religion
- Competition
- Intellectual status
- Reputation
- Freedom
- Collegiality
- Professional development
- Country
- Job tranquility
- Security
- Creativity
- Knowledge
- Self-Respect
- Leadership
- Democracy
- Location
- Loyalty
- Stability
- Economic security
- Responsibility and accountability
- Advancement and promotion
- Status
- Time freedom
- Truth
- Excellence
- Nature
- Wealth
- Wisdom
- Fame
- Work under pressure
- Personal development

*Adapted from The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook by Senge, Peter M.; Kleiner, Art; Roberts, Charlotte; Ross, Richard B.; Smith, Bryan J., New York : Currency, Doubleday, ©1994
1. As Is…Where are you now? Continued…

- What are your top three professional strengths?

- What are your top three opportunities for professional development or improvement?

- What are you most passionate about in your professional life?
  - What work tasks energize you?
  - When do you feel like you are “in the zone” at work and lose track of time?

2. Should Be…Where are you going?

- A strong GAP plan includes a career vision and goals to achieve within a time period.
  - List some of the characteristics of your career vision.
  - What do you see yourself doing and what knowledge and skills do you have?
2. Should Be...Where are you going? (continued)

- Write down a career goal(s). You may write goals in the following areas:
  - Research (Clinical, Basic, Translational or Other Scholarship)
  - Administrative Service or Leadership Development
  - Teaching/Education
  - Career Development or Promotion Preparation
  - Clinical Practice
  - Personal Growth (Work-Life Balance, Time Management, or Self-Development)

**Goal 1:**

Current Strengths and Areas of Improvement as Related to Goal

Next Steps and Timeline for Goal

**Goal 2:**

Current Strengths and Areas of Improvement as Related to Goal

Next Steps and Timeline for Goal

**Goal 3:**

Current Strengths and Areas of Improvement as Related to Goal

Next Steps and Timeline for Goal

3. Bridge the Gap...What are your development needs?

- Mentoring is one professional development resource that can help you bridge the GAP. How can a mentor support your goals and professional development?
MENTOR’S ROLE IN CAREER PLANNING

Mentor’s Role
A mentor can provide the protégé with career planning support. Below are examples of career planning questions that a protégé may ask a mentor.

- I have many professional interests and am having difficulty narrowing down my focus. Would you mind helping me think through my career vision?
- I have been approached with a number of opportunities and am not sure which I should pursue. Can you help me prioritize? What is the best way to say “no”?
- Would you mind reviewing my career goals and helping me develop action plans?
- Can we discuss our roles and where you may be able to provide mentorship?

Mentoring Areas
Select areas in which you would like the support of the mentor. (Refer to Career Plan)

- Research (Clinical, Basic, Translational or Other Scholarship) – Explain:
- Administrative Service or Leadership Development – Explain:
- Teaching/Education – Explain:
- Clinical Practice – Explain:
- Career Development or Promotion Preparation – Explain:
- Personal Growth (Work-Life Balance, Time Management, or Self-Development) – Explain:
- Other – Explain:

What expectations do you have for the mentor and/or mentoring partnership?