This pack has been designed to help you think about where you want to go with your career and to help you decide if the **OMA** will help get you there.

The following tools and exercises provide you with a framework for career management and it should help you decide if this is the right programme at the right time for you.

We recommend you work through the following exercises.

* **Your personal vision and where do you want to be (your career aspirations)?**
* **Your personal values**
* **Your Career Anchors**
* **Where are you now (your current strengths and development areas)?**
* **What actions do you need to take?**
* **How can you make it happen?**

As you go through the exercises, please keep in mind the information you have read within the programme information and key documents and the following:

The **OMA** is an 18 month (approx.) higher apprenticeship, this is a great opportunity to achieve a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership & Management while continuing your current job role and this is a perfect time to do it, as it is currently funded by the apprenticeship levy.

Before you sign up you do need to speak to your line manager and contract manager about the commitment involved. Your employer is required to allow you to spend a minimum of 20% of your normal working hours undertaking activities which will contribute to successful completion of the apprenticeship (including, for example, workshops, online learning, shadowing, cross-site visits and assignment writing).

Please note that this does not mean 1 day a week away from the day job, as meetings with line managers, discussions with colleagues about work activities etc. all contribute to this 20%.

At this stage in your life and in your career, are you ready, willing and able to take on this commitment and do you have the support of your line manager?

Once you have completed these exercises, look at the “**Reflect**” section at the end of this document to decide if you’d like to apply for the OMA.

If the answer is **yes**, please continue to complete the online application form as indicated when you complete the exercises, you will also need to complete a personal statement as part of the two-stage application process, but you can use some of the answers from the following exercises.

**Exercise 1: Personal Vision: Where do I want to be?**

This exercise is designed to help you develop a clear picture of where you want to be. This is about developing a clear personal vision of what you want your life to be like. Too often people plan their career without any regard to their families, other interests or personal values and then get de-railed. Use the prompts on the next page to help you think “whole life”.

To develop your personal vision, project yourself forward to this same month in five years’ time.

The date is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My age will be: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Answer the questions that follow on the next page about different aspects of your life at that time/age. You can write your answers in the boxes provided, or use an alternative format if this works better for you. Here are some top tips:**

* Respond intuitively to the questions.
* Don’t be distracted by any internal constraints (e.g. “I can’t have what I want?”, “It’s wrong or selfish to have wants”, “I want, never gets” etc.)
* Some of your answers may reflect your current reality – that’s OK.
* Do not edit or attempt to “tidy up” your answers at this stage.

***Element***

***Key question***

***Describe what each element will look like. Use the present tense - as if is happening now*.**

**Self-image**

If I will be the person I want to be, what words will people use to describe me?

**Tangibles**

What material things will I have? (E.g. type/location of house, car, antiques, etc.)

**Work**

What is my vocational or professional situation?

**Skills/**

**qualifications**

What additional expertise, skills or qualifications will I have?

**Personal pursuits**

What will I be doing around personal learning, travel, voluntary activities etc.?

**Relationships**

What types of relationships will I have with family, friends and others?

**Other**

What else, in any other area of my life, will I have created?

**Exercise 2: Personal Values**“It’s not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are”

*Roy Disney*

This exercise builds on the previous one. It is designed to help you think about what is important to you – your personal values. People differ widely in the things that act as ‘driving forces’ in what is most important to them in making the big decisions. Use the questionnaire on the next page to rate each of the driving forces/personal values for its importance to you (high, medium or low). Then pick the five values that are **most** important to you and the five that are **least** important. Add any that you feel are missing.

*(contd. over)*

**Personal Values Questionnaire**Rate each value in terms of its importance to you. Then select the 5 most important and the 5 least important.

Priority

H, M, L

Indicate the 5 most important (M) and 5 least important (L)

**Achievement** (sense of accomplishment, mastery)

**Advancement** (promotion)

**Adventure** (new and challenging experiences)

**Competitiveness** (winning, taking risks)

**Co-operation** (working well with others, teamwork)

**Economic security** (steady, adequate income)

**Fame** (being well known)

**Family happiness**

**Freedom** (independence, autonomy)

**Friendship** (close relationships with others)

**Health** (being physically and mentally well)

**Helpfulness (assisting others, improving society)**

**Helpfulness** (assisting others, improving society)

**Inner harmony** (being at peace with yourself)

**Integrity** (honesty, sincerity, standing up for beliefs)

**Involvement** (participating with others, belonging)

**Loyalty** (duty, respectfulness)

**Order** (tranquillity, stability, conformity)

**Personal development** (use of potential)

**Pleasure** (fun, leisurely life-style)

**Power** (control, authority, influence over others)

**Recognition** (respect from others, status)

**Religion** (strong religious beliefs)

**Self-respect** (a sense of pride and personal identity)

**Wealth** (making money getting rich)

**Wisdom** (understanding life, discovering knowledge)

Other (please specify)

**Exercise 3: Career Anchors**

This exercise builds on the previous one and is designed to give you a different way to think about what you want out of your career. Read the description of each “career anchor” and pick the two or three that are most important to you. Which are the top 3 in order of importance to you?

**Career Anchor**

**Priority**

**(1=most important)**

**Technical/Functional competence**

This kind of person likes being good at something and will work to become a guru or expert. They like to be challenged and then use their skill to meet the challenge, doing the job properly and better than almost anyone else.

**General Managerial competence**

Unlike technical/functional people, these folks want to be managers (and not just to get more money, although this may be used as a metric of success). They like problem-solving and dealing with other people. They thrive on responsibility. To be successful they also need emotional competence.

**Autonomy/Independence**

These people have a primary need to work under their own rules and steam. They prefer to work alone.

**Security/Stability**

Security-focused people seek stability and continuity as a primary factor in their lives. They avoid risks and are often 'lifers' in their job.

**Entrepreneurial/Creativity**

These people like to invent things, be creative and, most of all, to run their own businesses. They differ from those who seek autonomy in that they will share the workload. They find ownership very important. They easily get bored. Wealth, for them, is a sign of success.

**Service/Dedication to a cause**

Service-oriented people are driven by how they can help other people or society as whole, or serve a cause.

**Pure Challenge**

People driven by challenge seek constant stimulation and difficult problems that they can tackle. Such people will change jobs when the current one gets boring and their career can be very varied.

**Lifestyle**

Those who are focused first on lifestyle look at their whole pattern of living. They not so much balance work and life, but integrate it. They may even take long periods off work in which to indulge in passions such as sport or travelling.

**Exercise 4: Skills and Behaviours Self-Assessment**

This exercise is designed to help you think about what you are already good at and what you might want to work on. You might also want to think about your experience and skills that you have already acquired. What are your strengths and what are the areas that you would like to develop further to realise your career aspirations?

**Strengths**

List below the different types of experiences and skills you already have. Be specific and quantify where possible (e.g. 8 years line management experience in solution delivery, finance and budgeting etc.)

**Further development**

List here skills and behaviours you would like to develop further or areas where you would like to gain further experience

**Exercise 5: Career and Personal Development Action Plan**

This exercise is designed to consolidate the thinking from your previous exercises and can feed into your personal development plan (PDP) discussions with your line manager.

Remember, your action plan is the journey, not the destination. Your personal vision is, by definition, your chosen destination and should act as your guiding principle for career choices. You may have to choose paths that take you away from your personal vision (because of business imperatives or because of personal considerations for example) but do this consciously and plan how you will get back on track. This does not mean that your personal vision is not set in stone but it is not a real vision if it changes to accommodate vicarious circumstances.

It is down to you to make the action plan happen. The following tips should help:

* Ask for opportunities; don’t wait for them to present themselves.
* Expect obstacles and periods of frustration. Learn from them.
* Develop your network of contacts. Do not just rely on email contact.
* Keep a learning journal that contains your personal vision, your self-analysis and your action plan. Record your learning and development activities, particularly focusing on how you have applied the learning in delivering results. This portfolio can serve as useful evidence when you are applying for other experiences.

**Reflect**

**Career Development**

**Priority**

What do I want/need to develop further to reach my aspirations?

**Actions**

What specific development actions do I need to undertake to address the development need?

**Time-frame**

**/dates for actions**

**Support/**

**Resources required**

Summary of career aspirations:

Short-term (next two years):

Longer term:

Let’s now take a step back and reflect on the conclusions you have drawn, specifically in the context of the OMA.



* Do I understand what my career goals are?
* Am I clear on my strengths and development areas?
* Do I have the support of my line manager and contract manager?
* Will this support my overall career goals?
* Am I ready, willing and able to commit to 18 months of study to achieve this higher apprenticeship?

If you feel the OMA is the right programme for you and would like to move to the next step then please click here to enter the application form area (or visit www.serco-education.com).

**If the OMA doesn’t fit your career development at this time, have you considered other development options which might be better suited to you?**

For other options available from Serco Education please visit: www.serco-education.com