



**Dietitians  
Australia**

The Leading Voice of Nutrition



# Career Planner

## For Emerging Dietitians

This Career Planning Tool is for emerging dietitians who are entering (or preparing to enter) the dietetic workforce.

As well as working out your skills and experience there are many other factors to consider when it comes to your career and happiness.

## **What are your core beliefs and values?**

## **How will these impact the direction of your career?**

## **What is your wish list when it comes to where you work and what you are doing?**

## **What are you passionate about?**

## **What do you love doing?**

## **What really makes you tick?**

Here are some other factors to consider when planning your career:

Money	We all have bills to pay and a lifestyle that we are used to, but is money your biggest motivator?
Work/life balance	What's important to you and what responsibilities do you have outside of work?
Company culture	Where have you enjoyed working and what management style do you work better under?
Colleagues	How will you get along with them?
Development	What support with your training and personal development will you be looking for in your career?
Commuting	How long and how far are you prepared to travel to and from work?
Fringe benefits	As well as salary, what other benefits do you value?

**By working through this resource, you will better understand where you are now, where you want to end up in your career, some of the ways to get there and what support you can access to get there.**

## SECTION 1 – Where am I now?

A key step in the career planning process is self-discovery.

Take some time to self-evaluate and work out your skills, interests, values, personal preferences and areas for improvement. To help answer these questions you may consider talking to those who know you best (close family or friends or work colleagues).

**What skills, knowledge and competencies do I have?** *(These are acquired through education and through all kinds of experiences such as employment, volunteer work, life experiences)*

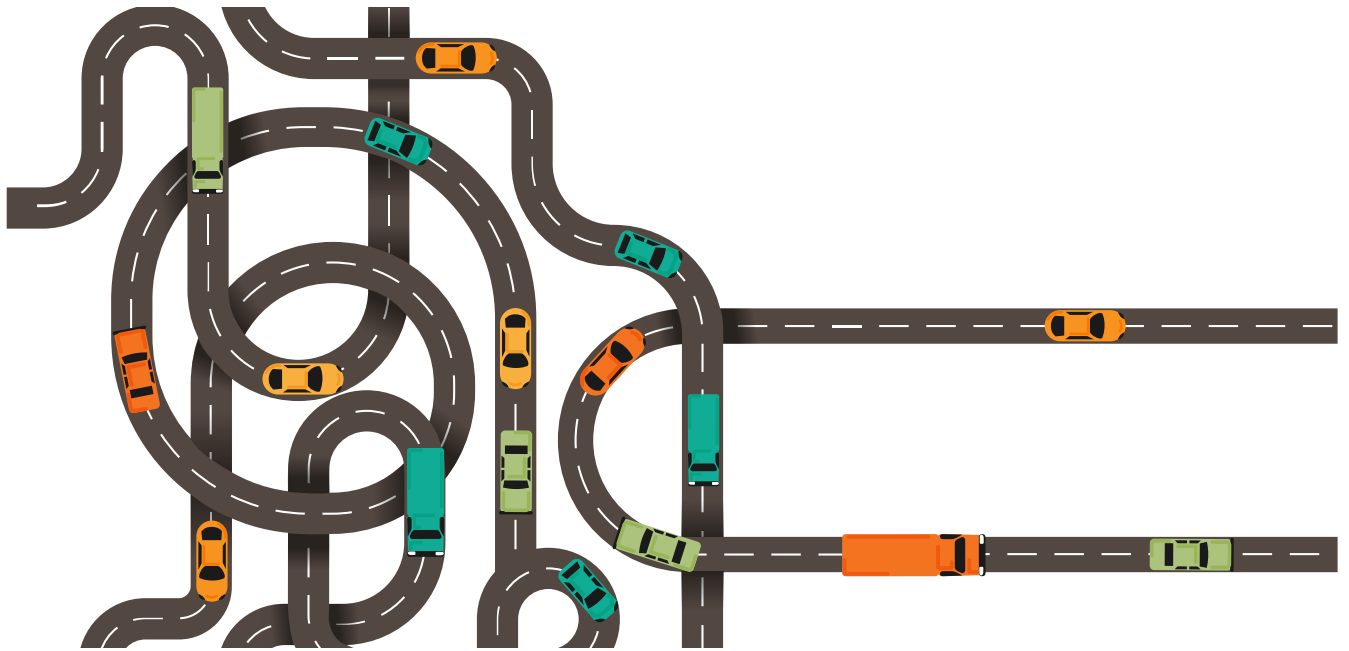
**What values are important to me?** *(Your values will be your core beliefs about what is most important in your life. They usually evolve slowly and may change depending on your circumstances or different life experiences)*

**What are my key strengths?** *(Think about your skills and competencies such as strong analytical skills, facilitation and counselling, listening and interviewing, problem solving)*

**What three aspects of myself could I improve?** *(Consider what skills you would like to develop such as client centred counselling, analysing and interpreting research and data)*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## SECTION 2 – Where do I want to go?



Now it's time to think about where you want to go in your dietetic career.

You might have multiple options in mind, or you may not have any. Either is ok.

Work through the following questions to help identify what interests you, and where you want to go.

Consider the practice areas and settings that interest you (select as many as you like).

### Practice Settings

- Aged care
- Corporate
- Disability/Rehab
- Food Production
- Government Department
- Hospital (private)
- Hospital (public)
- Mental Health Facility
- NGO
- Primary/Community Care
- Private Practice
- University
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Practice Areas

- Clinical Dietetics
- Community Nutrition
- Food Service
- Management
- Marketing and Communications
- Policy/Regulation
- Public Health
- Research and Development
- Teaching/Education
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION 3 – What do I need to do to have my dream career?

This section is about your career goals and identifying your dream career. Spend some time thinking about:

- What would I do every day and still love even if I wasn't getting paid?
- What can I talk about for hours passionately?
- If I had my dream career, what would it look like?

Now that you've considered your passions, answer the following questions by thinking about the skills and knowledge you might need for this role, some challenges you may face, and how you will overcome these.

### Option 1

**I would love to work in/with** *(For example: disability/rehab in community nutrition)*

**The key skills and knowledge for this role are** *(For example: facilitation/counselling skills)*

**Some challenges or barriers to getting there could be** *(For example: no previous experience in a disability/rehab setting)*

**To overcome these, I can** *(For example: volunteer at a disability centre in the community)*

**I would love to work in/with**

**The key skills and knowledge for this role are**

**Some challenges or barriers to getting there could be**

**To overcome these, I can**

**Option 3**

**I would love to work in/with**

**The key skills and knowledge for this role are**

**Some challenges or barriers to getting there could be**

**To overcome these, I can**

## Section 4 – What can I access to get to my dream career?

There are a range of resources and opportunities you can utilise to help you in getting to your dream career. Work through the boxes below to start identifying some of these.

Remember the power of networks, often a key resource that is underutilised. Think about all your contacts (friends, relatives, neighbours, co-workers, community, professional organisations, partner's network etc) and how they can support and assist you in accessing your dream career.

Thinking back to Section 3 and your previous options, consider the following questions.

### Option 1

<b>I would love to work in/with</b>	
<b>To improve my knowledge in this area, I will</b>	<b>To gain skills and experience in this area, some opportunities I have identified are....</b> <i>(think about volunteering, employment, networks etc.)</i>

### Option 2

<b>I would love to work in/with</b>	
<b>To improve my knowledge in this area, I will</b>	<b>To gain skills and experience in this area, some opportunities I have identified are....</b> <i>(think about volunteering, employment, networks etc.)</i>

### Option 3

<b>I would love to work in/with</b>	
<b>To improve my knowledge in this area, I will</b>	<b>To gain skills and experience in this area, some opportunities I have identified are....</b> <i>(think about volunteering, employment, networks etc.)</i>

## Section 5 – What goals do I need to achieve to get to my dream career?

Using the career ideas that you've generated, set some SMART goals to get you to your dream career. Use the table below to help write your goals – some examples have been listed.

Long term or short term?	Specific (specify goal)	Measurable (How can I measure it?)	Achievable (Is it achievable?)	Realistic (Is it realistic?)	Time frame (What time frame do I plan to achieve the goal in?)
S	<i>To start up my own private practice in 1-3 locations over 1 year.</i>	<i>In 1 year, am I running my practice out of 1-3 locations each week?</i>	<i>I have benchmarked other dietitians to see if this achievable – it is.</i>	<i>I have set a variable range to begin with and I will focus on quality over quantity, it can be changed as the year proceeds.</i>	<i>12 months is the time I feel it will take to truly establish my clinics and build good rapport with GPs.</i>
L	<i>To run my private practice specialising in Gastroenterology, allergies and Intolerances within 5 years of graduation.</i>	<i>I feel confident in my knowledge of these areas to set them as my niche, I am filling my clinics each week and have positive client feed-back.</i>	<i>I will commit CPD related to these areas of practice and network with specialists such as Gastroenterologists.</i>	<i>This is a practice area I am passionate about. I have developed a business plan with a timeline and this is possible within the 5 years.</i>	<i>5 years post-graduation, this is where I want to be.</i>

## SECTION 6: Selling myself

Now that you've identified your career goals, you can use this information to help sell yourself.

You may have identified some contacts that could help you in getting to your dream career. Or perhaps some opportunities for experience, such as volunteering or employment. Before contacting your network, it can be helpful to have a clear understanding of what and how you will communicate to people about yourself to help in accessing these resources and opportunities.

Now taking the information from Sections 1 – 5 complete the following:

### **What makes me unique?**

*(What do I do that no other person can do? Think about your knowledge, skills and experience including your personal characteristics)*

### **What do I want to tell people about myself?**

*(Consider what your dream career is and your career goals and how your knowledge, skills and experience can relate to this.)*

### **Who do I want to tell?**

*(Who have you identified in your network who could support you?)*

### **How can I reach them?**

*(What is the best method of contacting them?)*

## **SECTION 7 – How will I stay on track?**

Now that you have a career plan, remember to continually review your goals and your progress towards where you want to be. This will help you stay focused on your goals or to identify new opportunities for improvement.

**As you gain more knowledge, skills and experience, you might also find your career interests change.**

**You will find that your career plan will continue to evolve so it is important to evaluate and review your goals.**

**You can always update or re-complete sections of this planner again if your interests and plans change.**

**To stay on track, think about:**

How often you will review your progress

How you will measure your progress (consider timelines and dates)

Review your targets and achievements and consider how they are helping you to achieve your dream career

*Similar career planning resources are available online and inspiration has been drawn from many. This resource is for individual use only*