

# DESTINATION: DREAM JOB!



Create a  
Career Roadmap  
to Success

**Raises, promotions, new jobs – they're all reasons to party for the person who receives them. If you find yourself standing on the curb one too many times while your colleagues zoom past in their shiny new accolades, it may be time to reconsider your own career route.**

In this eBook, you'll learn:

- Why a "career map" is the best tool you can have for success
- How to identify the strengths, passions and skills you bring to the table
- How to find options and choose the best course for you
- Ways to set short-term and long-term goals you can achieve
- Where to find allies who support your goals

# Why Draw the Map?

**Many people build entire careers around getting away from something: a bad boss, a dead-end job, their own boredom.**

**But the problem with walking away is you're not looking at what you're walking into – which means you may just walk into more of the same.**

**When you have a map, you're no longer just getting away. Now, you're going toward what you want. You're in control. And every choice you make gets you closer to your goal.**

# Choose Your Getaway: *Considering Passion*

What do you love about your work?

Passion is the difference between a dull commute and the best road trip ever. Start drawing your map by finding the elements of your work that make you feel inspired, alive or like you're really making a difference in the world.

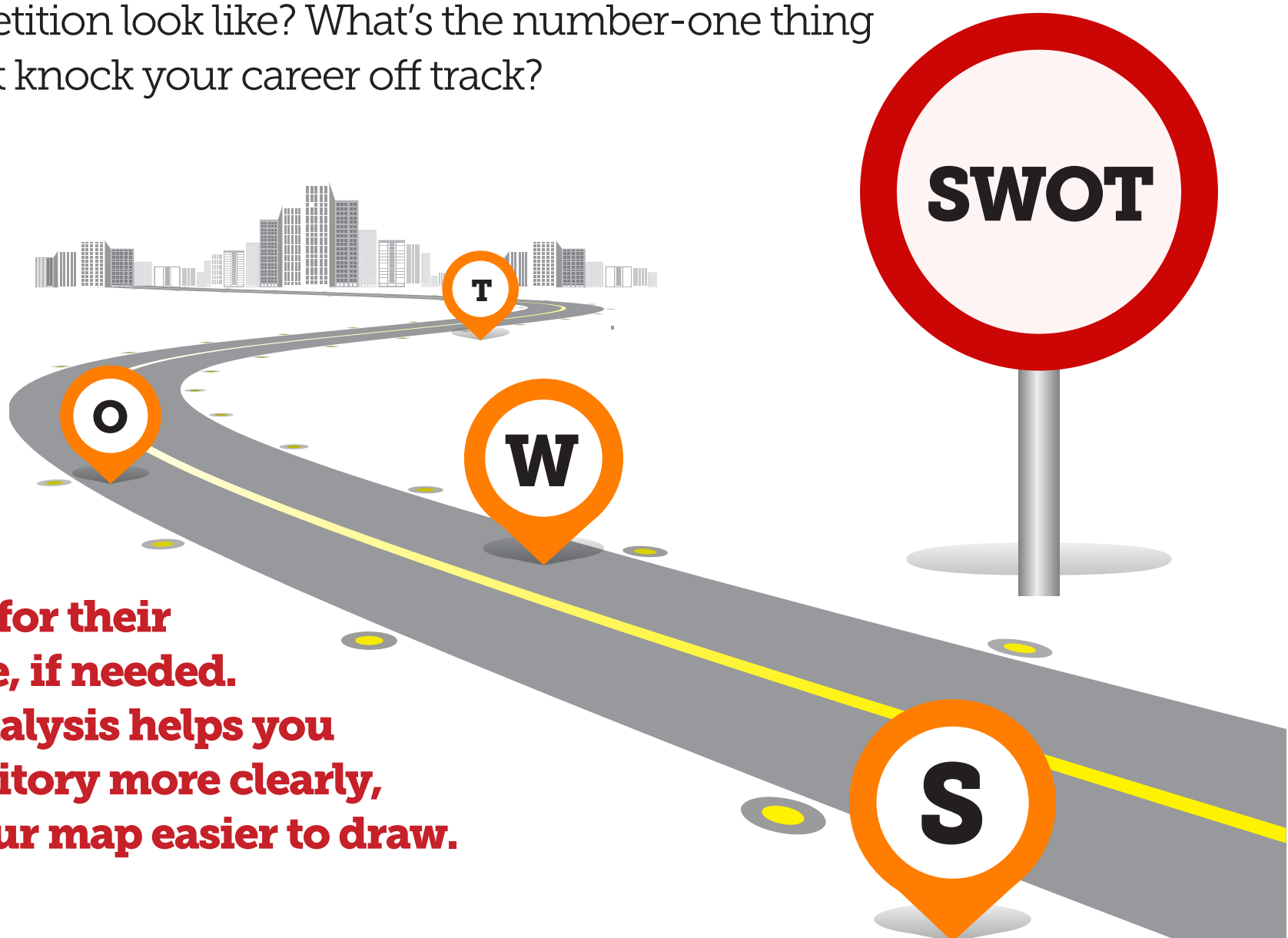
Feeling stuck? Start by asking what you don't want. Then, turn those negative statements into positives. For instance, "I don't want to work for a boss who doesn't listen to me" turns into "I will work for a boss who takes my contributions seriously."



# Find Your Map: Conducting a SWOT Analysis

“SWOT” stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A clear and accurate map of your career road trip needs to be honest about all four. For each category, list your career skills and attributes – even if you haven’t used them in a while:

- **Strengths:** What are you naturally good at? What skills have you worked hard to develop? What do others ask for your help doing when they struggle?
- **Weaknesses:** What are your negative habits? Where are there gaps in your education or training? What work do you avoid or ask others for help doing?
- **Opportunities:** What is the state of jobs and careers like yours? What new methods or technology could change your career, and how?
- **Threats:** Is your industry changing directions? What does the competition look like? What’s the number-one thing that might knock your career off track?



**Ask others for their perspective, if needed. A SWOT analysis helps you see the territory more clearly, making your map easier to draw.**

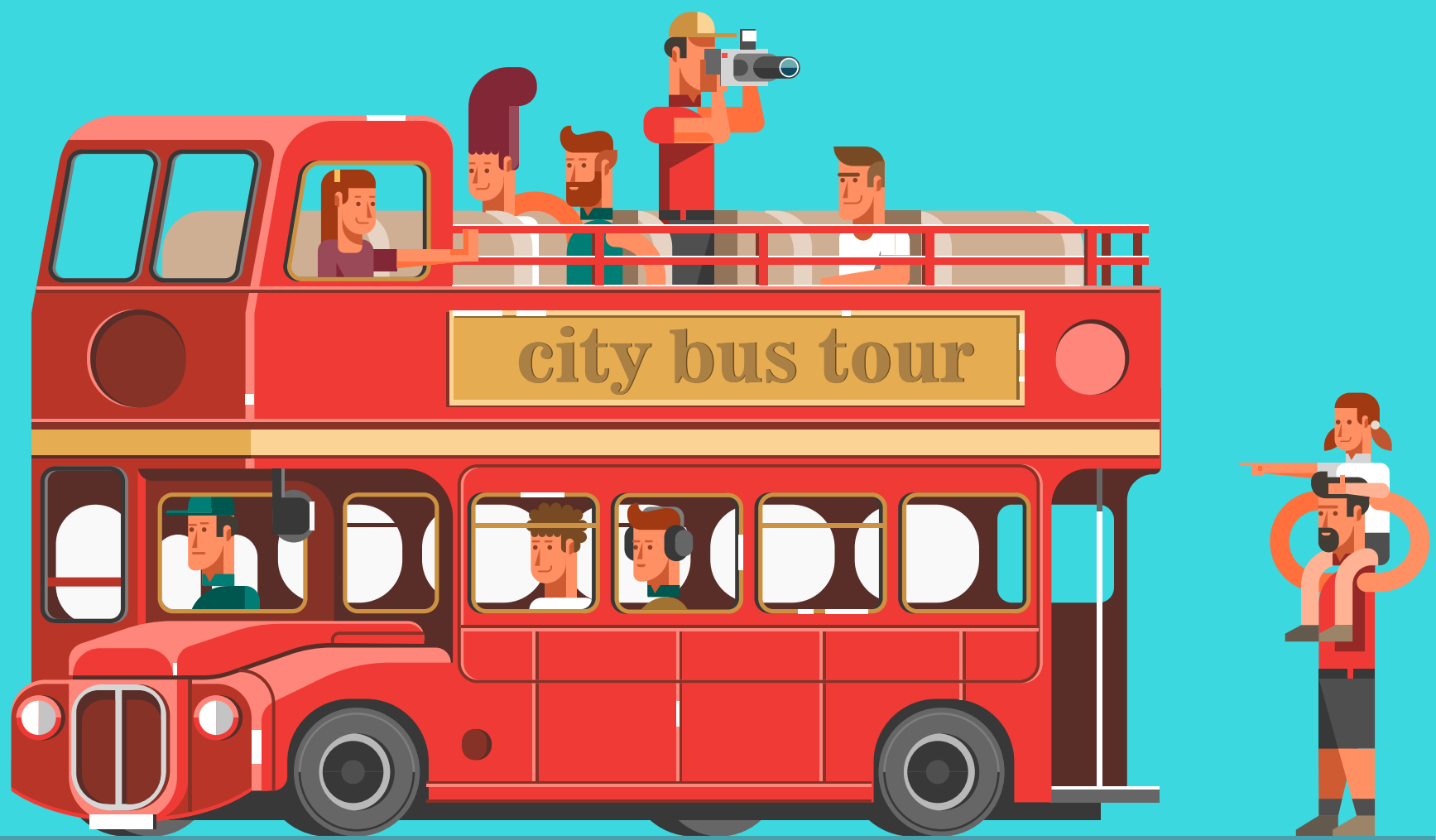
# Pack Your Bags: Spotting Transferable Skills

Transferable skills, also known as “soft skills,” are skills that are useful in any job or industry. If your map points you toward a career change, you’ll need to leverage your soft skills to succeed while you learn the technical aspects of your new field.



Start by looking at your new goal. Which of your current skills will be helpful? For instance, does your new goal demand strong communication skills, excellent time management, outstanding problem-solving or high-quality listening abilities?

Make a list of these skills. When you apply for specific jobs on your roadmap, refer to the list. Find achievements that demonstrate your use of these skills, and work them into your application for your next job or promotion.



# Sightseeing: Identifying Your Options

You've surveyed the territory and examined your own toolkit. Now, it's time to find out where you can go from where you are today:

1. Dig in to some research about your current position and the paths others have taken from where you are – both the common ones and the not-so-common ones.
2. Use your list of transferable skills to find other jobs, careers, and industries that demand the same set of skills.
3. Find out what positions and industries align with your passions, even if they're very different from the job and industry you are in today.

# Speed Bumps: Performing a Gap Analysis

A gap analysis helps you spot “gaps” between the skills you have and the skills you need in order to make it to the next destination on your roadmap.

With your list of transferable skills and your list of options in front of you, take a look at each option. Which skills do you have? Which will you need? Make a list of any gaps you see.

Then, consider ways to address these gaps. Can you take on different projects in your current position, make a lateral move to another department, or take a class or certification that helps address those gaps? Put these on your options list as well.





# Scenic Route: *Mastering Flexibility*

Even the best maps don't always describe the actual route. Construction, washed-out roads or unexpected block parties can send you scrambling for a detour.

Help yourself deal with potential detours in your career by thinking about possible roadblocks now.

Make a list of everything you can think of that might send you spinning off course. Then, sort the list into two groups: events you can't do anything about (a company going bankrupt, a position being eliminated or merged, a sudden accident or illness) and events you can do something about (getting too comfortable, dealing with a bad boss).

Draw an X through the list of things you can't control. Don't give it another thought.

Read through the list of things you can control. Write down two or three options for dealing with each item on the list. If one of these "roadblocks" appears, check your list for a preplanned scenic route through the crisis.





# Choose a Destination: Planning Your Route

**Create a “career vision” by answering this question:  
At my retirement party, **what do I want people to  
say about my position and career?****

Once you know this, start plotting how you’ll get there. Make a list of positions you’ll need to hold to work your way up to the one everyone celebrates at your retirement. For each position, jot down the key skills and experience you need to succeed there.

# GPS Calibration: Establishing Short- and Long-Term Goals

Even when you know where you're going, it pays to know how you'll get there and where you'll stop for fuel and snacks along the way.

Once you have a list of positions you'll need to hold on your career path and their requirements, it's time to start setting goals. Create a timeline for your planned career advancement.

Then, take a look at the next "stop" on your list. In 1-2 sentences, frame it as a specific, measurable, realistic goal with a time limit: "By two years from today, I will be a purchasing manager with a minimum annual salary of \$65,000."

With this goal in mind, start breaking down the steps you need to get there. Every time you achieve a goal, frame the next one in these clear terms and repeat the process.



# Passenger Party: Enlisting Help

You're in the driver's seat of your career. Only you can navigate to your desired goals.

But that doesn't mean you can't bring friends. Mentors, teachers and other people can help you understand potential roadblocks, clear them from your path, and reach your goals.

One of the best people to choose when you're looking for road trip buddies? Your recruiter. Staffing firms specialize in building relationships that provide a comprehensive perspective of the professionals and industries they serve. Enlist their help, and you'll be cruising toward your goals in no time.

