



THE CAREER DRIVERS SELF-ASSESSMENT

Discover the Career Factors that Drive You



WHAT'S DRIVING YOU?

The world of work is a vast, wild, and wonderful place!

Are you:

- Open to new opportunities?
- Taking a fresh look at your existing job situation?
- Actively looking for a big change?
- Negotiating a raise?

Now is a great time to explore what's out there. And, if you want to make a shift, you need to know what's driving you.

In this guide, we give you the tools you need to start thinking about your next step – and stay true to what's important to you. Here's what to expect:

REVIEW | Understand trends in the world of work today.

REFLECT | Define what's really important to you.

GO FOR IT | Own your professional journey.



LET'S REVIEW

Trends in the world of work today . . . and tomorrow

As a job seeker, you have a lot to consider when exploring new career opportunities. The days of looking at the compensation package and signing on the dotted line are over. If you're in the job market, the odds are pretty good that you're looking for more than compensation – although that's certainly a big consideration! Today's candidates are looking at the whole package: **flexibility; work-life balance; opportunities for growth; an organization's focus on diversity; inclusion and belonging; overall job satisfaction, and more.**

During the past couple of years, employers discovered that their formerly office-bound teams could be just as productive – and often even more productive – [working from home](#). Unsurprisingly, many employees discovered that they appreciate the flexibility and freedom that remote work affords them. Others found that what they do on a daily basis, and the impact they make at work and on society matters more and more. Sound familiar?

If you're thinking about making a big career move, then where you work, how you work, and the contributions you're making while you work may be just as important as your compensation. Whether you're motivated by a remote or hybrid work opportunity or your inner entrepreneur is calling, understanding your career drivers can help you make decisions that are right for you...for today and for tomorrow.

Embracing change

The world of work has changed for good. And job-seekers are embracing it. There's even a name for it: **employee experience (EX)**. The need to reimagine work is at the very core of EX. Thanks to job seekers who are willing to articulate and advocate for their priorities, companies are realizing that office yoga, team happy hours, great snacks, and killer rec rooms are no longer the primary drivers of employee satisfaction or the indicators of a positive company culture that they once were.

For many career changers, EX is what's tipping the scales from "it'll do" to "I can't wait to get started!" Professionals in all industries, and at all levels in the organization, are looking for companies that offer a great EX. And companies are paying attention to help ensure success during this hot job market.

In the year prior to the pandemic, Harvard Business Review shared "People want to feel inspired, find meaning, and see the impact their work has on others. And when they do, they're more engaged, innovative, and productive" ([Harvard Business Review](#)). And this feeling has grown exponentially since the pandemic. This sentiment is exactly what's driving the market and driving your professional trajectory to find a career that offers a sense of purpose.

Working with purpose

When people come to work with purpose, they're doing so because they feel as though their work has value, their voices are being heard, and that they're making an impact that matters. Given the new-found freedom of remote work and an increased focus on social change, jobseekers are looking for career opportunities that offer more than a paycheck; they want to feel like they are contributing to something bigger and more meaningful – that there's true purpose in their work.

This leads to another trend we're willing to bet takes on a life of its own: **Jobseekers will no longer be bound to linear career paths with professional detours that become commonplace.**

Non-linear career trajectories enable job seekers to move between roles, functional areas, industries, companies, and even careers. This freedom empowers people to do more of what they love and more of what they're good at.

The notion of what a “good” career path looks like is changing. Just as one-size-fits-all never truly fits anyone, today's professionals are making it clear that the linear corporate ladder may not be the most comfortable fit or the most effective way to the top. Sometimes, the corners are more fun than the straightaways.

As such, this guide is about finding the EX you crave, exploring the path that fits, and discovering the career drivers that matter most to you.

LET'S REFLECT

Dig Deep. What's important to you?

What drives people to change jobs? **A better EX.** A job that aligns with your values. The definition of a "better" employee experience is different for everyone. **Common EX attributes include:**



- A diverse, inclusive, & belonging culture
- Access to technology
- Benefits
- Flexibility
- Job satisfaction
- Meaningful work
- Opportunities for growth
- Salary
- Stability
- Training & development opportunities
- Wellness programs
- Working environment
- A focus on environmental sustainability

Before setting out on your next career search or writing your resignation letter, take some time to reflect. Who are you right now? Who do you want to be? What do you want to get out of your career and your life? And how can you achieve that vision?

These are lofty questions and we've found that many candidates benefit from one-on-one coaching to help identify their goals, articulate their ambitions, and clearly identify their motivations and priorities.

It's time to take a look in the mirror and start mapping out your path.

Take a strengths inventory

The temptation to focus exclusively on what you don't want in your career can be overwhelming. And it's tremendously limiting. Instead of focusing on the negative, flip your thinking around and focus on what you want and what you're good at.

Self-Reflection Questions

- What are your greatest strengths?
- What brings you the most joy?
- Where have you seen the greatest results in your professional life?
- What achievements are you most proud of in your work life?
- Think of three instances where you received positive feedback from your peers, clients, or supervisors. What were they?
- What do they have in common?
- What types of projects can you complete quickly and with pleasure?
- What types of projects are more challenging for you?
- What environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) initiatives are important to you?



Identify areas for growth

Playing to your strengths and doing more of what you love is important, but it's not the only door you should open as you're exploring your career drivers. Life can become quite predictable if we never stray from our comfort zone.

Some ideas for exploration:

- What skills are you interested in acquiring?
- What talent would you like to hone?
- What certifications have you been interested in securing?
- Looking back at your strengths, can you identify any that could benefit from additional development?
- Are you staying connected and identifying areas for professional networking?
- Do you have a mentor who can help you transition your career?
- Are you being your own advocate and asking for more responsibility?

This is a time to reflect on your career, but it's not a place for negativity or career criticism. It's a place for re-framing."

Instead of "dislikes" and "I don't," here are a few ideas for reflection:

- My ideal days almost always start with _____.
- By the end of the average workday, I feel _____.
- My dream work environment is _____.
- I feel most competent and accomplished when _____.
- I struggle when _____.
- I get frustrated when _____.
- I'm exhausted and unproductive when _____.

TAKE THE CAREER DRIVERS QUIZ!

Now that you've considered your strengths, identified areas for potential growth, and reflected on your career, it's time to take the Vaco Career Drivers Quiz to continue narrowing in on the EX that's right for you.

Vaco recruiters identified nine key career drivers to help candidates prioritize their needs and make smart, informed decisions about their careers. Although this tool was designed by our recruiting experts to walk candidates through their priorities and to lay the foundation for an in-depth conversation, it can also be used as an initial self-assessment.

This quiz is an effective way to assess your current job satisfaction. And if you're considering a career change, it can help you identify important core values. It's also a great way to holistically evaluate a job opportunity.

On a scale of 1 to 9 (with 9 being most important to you) prioritize the following nine key career drivers. Remember, you can't have nine number one drivers! The goal of the quiz is to help you prioritize your top drivers.

Rank	Key Career Drivers
	Salary Show me the money! Compensation based on experience, education and effort is very important to me.
	Benefits Show me the extras, please! Non-salary compensation (e.g., health insurance, PTO, education reimbursements, retirement, wellness) is what makes my heart beat faster.
	Opportunities for growth The taller the ladder, the better. What's the next rung and how do I get there? Or, I'm a life-long learner and I need to work for a company that fosters my need for growth and discovery.
	Stability & predictability Surprises aren't my thing. I love my lane and I'm happy in it.
	Flexibility, work-life balance, remote &/or hybrid options I give my all at work and I hope my employer values my time outside of work. (And I don't need to be office-bound to do my best work).
	Culture, people, relationships I want to bring my whole self to work. Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is a big deal. I need to feel respected and valued for who I am and what I bring to the table.
	Location I love my car, but not my commute. The shorter, the better.
	Industry I am determined to work in the _____ industry.
	Job Satisfaction My accomplishments and contributions each day are far more important than the industry I do it in.



Reflecting on your strengths will help you identify the things you enjoy and will lend clarity to your job search. For an even deeper strengths dive, you can discuss your options with a career consultant and invest in strengths or personality assessments like the [StrengthsFinder 2.0](#) or the [Enneagram](#).

Understanding What Drives You

Now that the drivers are ranked according to importance, what do they tell you? Consider only the factors that are most important to you in your career and what you'd like to experience in your position. For example, if salary, benefits, and growth are your top three drivers, make sure your current position (or the one you're looking for) delivers on those factors. If culture and flexibility are among your top drivers, ensure that they are part of your current or future role. There is no right or wrong answer, but your top drivers are indicative of your career expectations. Focus on opportunities that meet those drivers and provide a rewarding and meaningful career path.



GO FOR IT

You got this, now go for it!

Review the results of Vaco's Career Drivers Quiz and see where it leads you. If your current role is meeting your top three or four drivers, you're in a great position, congratulations! If your top drivers don't reflect your reality, and you're not getting what you want from your career, then we invite you to schedule an appointment with one of our recruiting experts.

Because Vaco is **with you all the way**, we'll help you dig even deeper and gain a better understanding of your priorities. Don't be surprised if your top drivers change after a thoughtful conversation with one of our recruiters! Ahead of interviews for new roles, we will help you prepare to ensure you focus on securing the answers to your driver questions. It's time to find an opportunity that lines up with your competencies, drivers and aptitude.

To find a rewarding career that fits your values and vision, visit our [job seeker page](#) or [reach out to us](#). Get started on the right foot or keep climbing with Vaco. Supporting professional at every step of the career journey is what we do.

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