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► **Get prepared for
career readiness**

**Recommendations for
Vietnamese high school
and tertiary students**

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Get prepared for career readiness: Recommendations for Vietnamese high school and tertiary students
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We also strongly appreciate recommendation contributors from diverse backgrounds who spend their valuable time and efforts to contribute their practical and multi-disciplinary viewpoints as well as provide valuable inputs for the report.

The recommendations are extracted from the original report that could be viewed on the websites of Song An and ILO.

► Executive summary

(1) The report of career readiness and career development for students at high schools and tertiary levels;

Chapter 1 - Background

Chapter 2 - Methodology


Chapter 3 - Overview provides a deep understanding of descriptive and analytical statistics from the data collection.

Chapter 4 - High school

Chapter 5 - Tertiary

(2) Recommendations for career readiness and career development for students in high schools and tertiary education

Chapter 6 - Recommendations presents key recommendations to the students, parents, teachers and career practitioners based on the grouping of the eight elements in the career education development framework.



In 2021, ILO cooperated with Song An Career Development Social Enterprise and Professor Col McCowan to conduct a survey with more than 1500 high school and tertiary students with the aim to evaluate the different stages of their career development mindset for the completion of the Career Education and Development Scales (CEDS) for Viet Nam.





SOME SIGNIFICANT RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

► Descriptive statistics for students

High school students

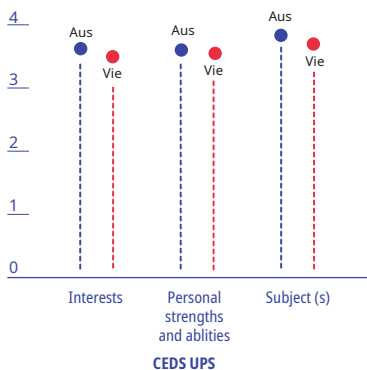
Age	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
	1435	15	19	16.84
Gender		Frequency	%	
	Female	925	64.5	
	Male	475	33.1	
	Unclear	35	0.4	
Class		Frequency	%	
	Class 10	503	35.1	
	Class 11	583	40.6	
	Class 12	349	24.3	
Region		Frequency	%	
	North	871	60.7	
	Central	517	36.1	
	South	47	3.2	
School system		Frequency	%	
	Public	1335	93	
	Private	100	7	

Tertiary students

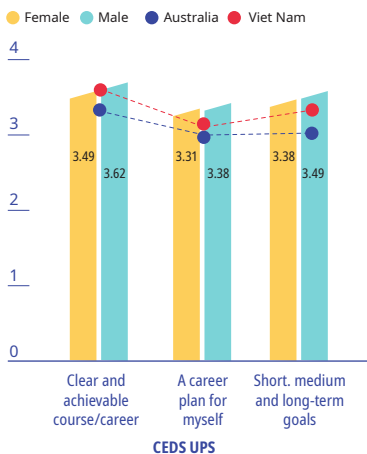
Age	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
	641	19	26	20.44
Gender		Frequency	%	
	Female	475	74.1	
	Male	154	24	
	Unclear	12	1.9	
Class		Frequency	%	
	Year 1, 2	448	69.9	
	Year 3, 4, 5	193	30.1	
Region		Frequency	%	
	North	241	37.6	
	Central	0	0	
	South	400	62.4	
School system		Frequency	%	
	Public	241	37.6	
	Private	400	62.4	

► High school students

Australia and Viet Nam comparison on Understanding Self



Australia and Viet Nam comparison on Setting Goals (by Gender)

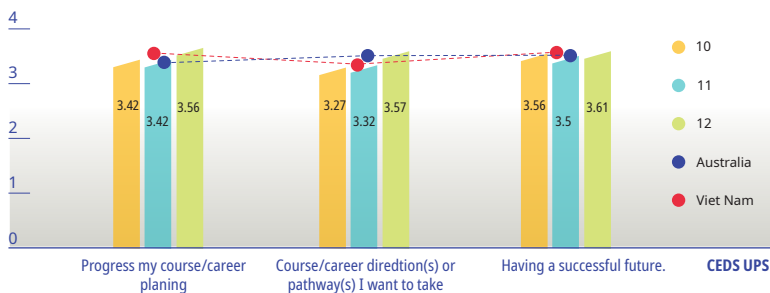


A slight mean difference when comparing the dimension of Understanding Self dimension with three items, and the difference is about 0.1 for these items. These results are very likely to say that the students in Viet Nam and Australia currently are the same in self-understanding about themselves, especially in interests, strengths/abilities, and class subjects awareness.

The increasing difference in three specific items in Setting Goals. Male student scores are higher than females in terms of setting clear goals, developing career plans, and identifying the short/medium and long-term goals in their own plan. When comparing the two countries, Viet Nam is slightly higher than Australia in this element (the overall mean difference in this element between the two countries is around 0.3 - 0.4).

An increment in career confidence followed by their grades in schools, which can be interpreted by the beliefs of progress in their career planning, career direction they are taking, and hope for success in the future.

Australia and Viet Nam comparison on Confidence (by Grade)

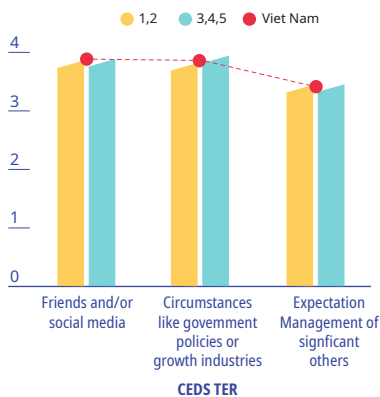


When comparing with Australian students, it can be seen that they are slightly higher than Vietnamese students, especially in the second item - course/ career direction(s) or pathway(s) they want to take.

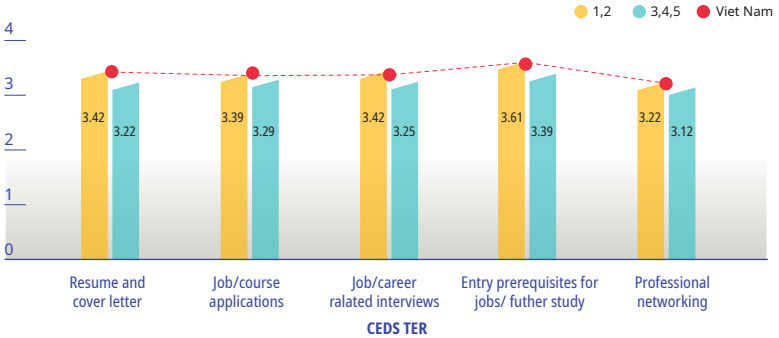
► Tertiary students

At this tertiary level, Influences play a strong mediating effect on the students' decisions, especially in Vietnamese cultures where the students should balance family influence and their own career choices. This element is well above average in every aspect of genders, grades, regions, and school systems, which included understanding (1) personal independence with their friends or social media's interactions and (2) situations like the growth of career industries and/or government policies, and (3) significant individuals' expectations. This result shows us a clear difference between the lowest item (expectation management) which mentions the role of family and other important persons in students' life to their

Viet Nam - Understanding Influences (by Year)



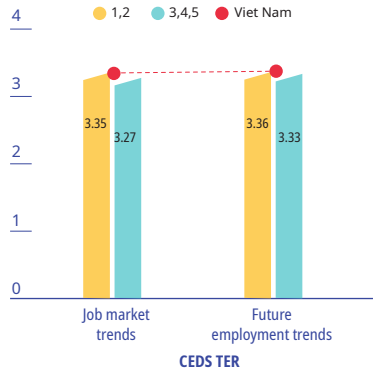
Viet Nam - Taking Actions (by Year)



Taking action skills are related to career success, and both lower grades are below average and upper grades are well below average, which means that the students disagree that they mastered these skills, especially when they are closer to last years. Taking action included the students' competence on (1) how to conduct a resume/cover letter, (2) how to submit a job/course application, or (3) how to locate the entry requirements and fit with their own experience.

The Perceived Knowledge areas were below average for each group. One significant difference between the groups was in terms of managing expectations. The students in the private universities rated themselves as much lower on doing this well than students from public universities. This is to be expected, as the cost of attending private universities would put different expectations on the students.

Viet Nam - Perceived Knowledge (by Year)





RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BETTER CAREER READINESS AND DEVELOPMENT

70:20:10 Learning Model¹ in Career Development Process

70: The core responsibility of career development is on each student themselves, not on their parents or teachers or friends or anyone else.

20: Self-directed career development is possible. Every single student can start a career development process for themselves with commitment as the only requirement.

10: Career development is a lifelong process, which should start as soon as possible.

The Four Audience Groups

The Four Audience Groups that this recommendation is written for include the students (referring to both high school students and tertiary students unless there is a need to specifically distinguish between the two groups), their parents, their teachers, and the career practitioners at large.

¹ Instructional Design Australia (2021). The 70:20:10 Learning Model. Retrieved from <https://instructionaldesign.com.au/the-702010-learning-model/>



STUDENTS

▼ A - Understanding: Self, Influences, and Opportunities/the World of Work

The report also confirmed the biggest challenge, their understanding of the opportunities/world of work. Therefore, **5 action steps are recommended:**

- 1. Paradigm shift:** before you start anything, pause and take ownership of your own career development journey. You are the owner of this journey. Take full responsibility for the results of this journey. This paradigm shift is very important because once you take this task on, you no longer rely on your parents, teachers, mentors, or future employers to guide you in your career development. They are there to support you at moments that you request while you are the main traveler in this journey.
- 2. Story mining:** take every single opportunity to get to know about the world of work around you, starting with your own parents, expanding it to your relatives, and reaching out to all individuals whom you interact with on a daily basis. Ask about their work responsibilities, which parts match their interests, what skills are required, which major they studied in, etc. You can use the list of questions at this link² for reference. You can add your own questions to the list. Storytelling is the easiest and most interesting way to initiate one's learning about the world of work. Note that do not only ask about the work that you feel interested in. In this initial stage, the curious mind is very important - get to know as much as you can to expand your horizon.
- 3. Job market understanding:** Now that you have explored the world of work through stories, it is time for you to start researching about the job market. Surfing through the job search engines like Vietnamworks or 123Job provides you general information about the local job market,

2/ Song An Career Development (2021). Career Interview Questionnaires in Vietnamese. Retrieved from: <https://huongnghiepsongan.com/bang-cau-hoi-phong-van-nghe-nghiep/>

including what jobs are available in the market at the moment, what the employers require from their potential employees in each job, and many other information. You can find a number of job search engines and internship engines at this link³ for your reference.

4. Tertiary understanding: For the high school students, it is important that you explore the tertiary world as soon as you can. Do not be afraid to visit the college or university near your house on your own. Ask your older siblings or cousins to take you to their college or university. Borrow textbooks from them to have knowledge of what they study. Surf through the websites of the colleges or universities that you like. Visit their “students confession page” to have an idea of the students’ culture. Attend the free college/university tour as soon as you are invited.

5. Experiential learning: For tertiary students, gain as much workplace experiences as you can through internship and/or apprenticeship opportunities, company related projects, company’s sponsored competition, volunteering opportunities, student clubs experiences, and other activities. Note that you should select the opportunities where you grow most and focus on the quality rather than the quantity of the experience.

B - Action: Goals, Actions and Review

Students rate themselves either average or below average in the three action areas: setting goals and reviewing/ reflecting on those goals and taking actions in researching study/ job options and completing activities such as school/ job applications. Usually these three action areas would be provided and encouraged by the educational institutions, specifically by a career teacher in a high school setting or a career center in a tertiary setting. In a country like Viet Nam where such services are still rare, the responsibilities fall back into the students themselves. The following action steps are recommended:

3/ Song An Career Development (2021). Job search channels in Vietnamese. Retrieved from: <https://huongnghiepsongan.com/cac-kenh-thong-tin-de-tim-hieu-nghe/>

1. If there is a career teacher or a career center in your educational institution, use their service as much as you need to seek for help in setting goals and reviewing/ reflecting on your goals. If not, use the local resources instead. The link to setting goals and reviewing/reflecting on the goals for high school students is <http://bit.ly/BMcungHSlapkehoachNN>, and the link for tertiary students is <https://bit.ly/BMlapkehoachNN> (career planning template).
2. For high school students, follow this manual⁴, or sign up for this self-directed career development online course - <https://www.udemy.com/course/tu-huong-nghiep-hoc-sinh-cap-3/>, to prepare for your post-high school choices. Remember the paradigm shift I mentioned above - you must take ownership of your career development process. Trust me, the more time you invest in, the better results you receive from it.
3. For tertiary students, to prepare for the job market, it is best to focus on building your employability skills throughout your training time in the chosen educational institution as well as through extra-curricular activities. The ASK (Attitude, Skills, Knowledge) model that is widely used in competency assessment with an emphasis on Attitude can be a good starting point to self-assess and develop your competencies to meet the requirements of employers.

The above eight steps integrate and complement each other in a student's career development process.

▼ C - Attitude: Confidence and Perceived Knowledge (tertiary students)

Once the students complete the above eight action steps, they automatically gain confidence in their future study/ career direction and increase their perceived knowledge in understanding the future employment trends.

4/ Song An Career Development (2021). Career Development Planning in Vietnamese. Retrieved from: <https://huongnghiepsongan.com/cac-buoc-chon-nganh-va-chon-truong/>



PARENTS

▮▮ A - Understanding: Self, Influences, and Opportunities/the World of Work

1. **Paradigm shift:**

Before jumping into helping your child, please pause and acknowledge that your child is the owner of his/her own career development journey. No matter how much you love, care, and want to help your child, it is best that you let him/her practice traveling his/her own career development journey from now on so that one day when you are not by their side anymore, they are competent to stand on their own feet. This paradigm shift is very important because once you acknowledge that your child is the owner of his/her life, you will be able to hold space and not take over your child's career development process.

2. Storytelling: Your children learn the first lesson about the world of work through you. Having conversations with him/her from an early age about your past experiences in studying and working is a good idea. The best lessons you could provide your child, surprised it may seem, were those on how you failed and overcame your failure, what motivated you throughout your life, why you stayed in your current job, rather than the stories of your successes. Your child learned about grit when they saw how you persevered through difficult times, about responsibility when they saw how you committed to your promises.

3. Experiential learning opportunities: According to the 70:20:10 learning model mentioned above, a young person learns best when they are given a chance to expose and experience. Give your child the opportunity to try out their interests, to nurture their natural strengths. Make sure they do not scatter or try things out of FOMO (fear of missing out). Hold regular conversations with them to help them reflect on their learnings along the way.

▮▮ B - Action: Goals, Actions and Review

The best way to help your child set goals, take action and review/reflect on their career development process is to balance between supporting and keeping boundaries. Provide them opportunities and at the same time demand them to follow through with what they started. Give them the freedom of choice and hold them accountable for their actions.

▮▮ C - Attitude: Confidence and Perceived Knowledge (tertiary students)

Once the parents complete the above recommended steps, their children will have the needed confidence and perceived knowledge.



TEACHERS

▮▮ A - Understanding: Self, Influences, and Opportunities/the World of Work

1. **Paradigm shift:** Before jumping into helping your students, please pause and acknowledge that your students are the owners of their own career development journey. As a teacher, we tend to think we must provide our students answers to their questions, or solutions to their problems. In this case, it is best that you focus on helping them build their autonomy, one of the key requirements for future career success. Empower and encourage your students to practice traveling their own career development journeys from now on so that eventually they are competent to stand on their own feet, make their own decisions, and bear full responsibilities for their own actions. This paradigm shift is very important because once you acknowledge that your students are the owner of their lives, you will be able to hold space and play the supporter's role effectively.

2. Lifelong learning: Teachers have the most difficult job on earth. You receive new tasks every year, report to many urgent requests every week if not every day, being pulled from various directions on how to do your job well on a regular basis, and many more. Therefore, you are not being suggested to do anything extraordinary in this role of helping your students improve their career development competence. Instead, it's recommended to you to add a little bit or deepen what you have already done well in your daily work. The first action step is lifelong learning.

As your students' supporters in their career development journey, the best thing that you can do for them is to learn alongside. Read the recommendations for students above and implement them as if you are one of your students. Do not fear that you don't know more than your students. Teachers cannot know everything. With your life experience, your academic background, your understanding of your students, you can provide insight that benefits your students. That's one essential thing you can do for your students - learn alongside them and provide them your insight from a caring and neutral perspective.

3. Asking critical questions: Another useful support that you can provide your students is to raise career related critical questions in your daily interactions with them. Take opportunities every moment you interact with your students to force them to think about the world of work out there - in your class, during break/lunch time conversation, in the projects you assign them, in the extracurricular activities that you mentor them, etc. Ask questions that even you don't know the answers to, and learn alongside your students to discover the answers. Again, you don't have to know more than your students. A loved teachers' quote, "I don't think I am more intelligent or more knowledgeable than all of you. Some of you can beat me on that, I bet. I am sure I am wiser than you all due to my age and my life experience. That - you cannot beat me." With the current technology, it is so true that students have access to all kinds of information, and if they make up their mind, they can be an expert in the area they are interested in. The associated negativity is that they can easily be bombarded with too much information and find it difficult to make a decision. That is when a wise

teacher can step in to help.

4. Experiential learning providing: In your teaching, whenever you can, make room for experiential learning. That can be as simple as giving homework where students research about their dream job and use any creative way (video, blog, podcast, drama, poems, ...) to submit the homework to you. Another way is to continuously connect the subject you teach to the skills that workers currently need in the world of work. Avoid talking about future job titles and future study majors because they are unpredictable and change constantly. Instead, focus on the concrete and easy to grasp subject - the employability skills that workers need to possess in order to get/keep/promote in a job.

B - Action: Goals, Actions and Review

Professional companionship: The best role you can take to support your students in this area is to be your student's professional companion. Listen to their stories, ask critical and reflective questions, and at the same time challenge them to take actions, to grow beyond their comfort zone, to not take the easy way out. This is the phase where they need honest feedback and empathic confrontation like, "You set that goal for yourself, yet you have not taken any action as planned. What is going on?" or "Is this really the best option for you? Did you research other options enough? Is there another way to look at your choices? Have you shared with your parents your real interest?" A professional companion does not stop at only listening and supporting unconditionally, he/she also confronts and challenges the status quo with good intention. At the end, a professional companion still respects the students' decisions because after all it is their journeys that they are travelling.

C - Attitude: Confidence and Perceived Knowledge (tertiary students)

It's believed that once the teachers complete the above recommended steps, their children will have the needed confidence and perceived knowledge.



CAREER PRACTITIONERS

For the career practitioners who are reading this report, you are recommended to ask this question throughout, “How can I utilize this report’s results to best support my clients?” There are a number of highlights that I want to point out:

- 1.** Familiarize yourself with all items in the Career Education Development Scale (CEDS) in the Appendix. Read both scales for High School Students and Tertiary Students.
- 2.** Read through all the recommendations for students, parents, and teachers above. Revisit the CEDS items if needed.
- 3.** Focus on the elements that receive positive ratings from the students: Understanding Self and Influences, Making Decisions, Self Efficacy, Outcomes (High School Students), Adaptability (Tertiary Students), Optimism (Tertiary Students). Use these elements as the leverage when working with them.
- 4.** Work with students to develop the elements that receive lower ratings from the students: Understanding Opportunities/World of work, Setting Goals, Taking Action, Reflecting/Reviewing, Confidence, Perceived Knowledge (Tertiary Students)
- 5.** Emphasize the 70:20:10 learning model when working with your clients and empower them to take ownership of their career development process.

All in all, it is a multi-year effort to co-create impact on students’ career development. Once the students are in the drivers’ seat, every other stakeholder plays an indispensable role to accompany them along the journey. We have witnessed success stories from local schools, international educational institutions, national education TV channels such as VTV7 and countless individuals from all walks of life. Those stories have planted seeds of hope for us to sustain our collective effort in order to empower young people to thrive in life.



ANNEX 1

How to choose my future profession - a step-by-step guide for job seekers

(ILO publication:

https://www.ilo.org/emppolicy/pubs/WCMS_800646/lang--en/index.htm)



Social and transversal skills

A social skill is the ability to communicate and interact in a positive way with those around you (work relations, family ...)

A transversal skill can be used whatever the sector of activity or the profession. 14 skills are generally taken into consideration:

- ▶ Adaptability
- ▶ Stress management
- ▶ Teamwork
- ▶ Capacity to bring people together

- ▶ Communication skills
- ▶ Autonomy
- ▶ Decision-making capacity
- ▶ Organisational skills
- ▶ Thoroughness

- ▶ Making proposals
- ▶ Curiosity
- ▶ Determination
- ▶ Taking a step back
- ▶ Responsiveness

What is important to you?

Major characteristics of your professional preferences: Interests, Values and Work environment

Constraints

Four categories of constraints to decide on the choice of a professional: mobility, health, family, working hours and working days

▶ Discovering professions

The professional world is not limited to few professions that surround you: in the family, with neighbours, friends, in the media or on social networks ...

Open up horizons!
There are over 530 types of professions and over 10,000 job titles. Discover them!

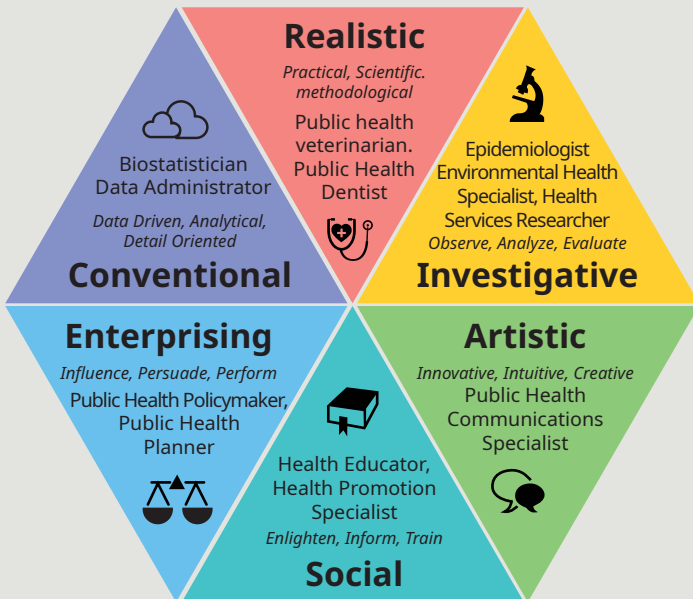
Job ideas from my professional portrait vs. Job ideas from professional fields

Inspired by this portrait, imagine and write down all the new craft ideas that cross your mind. Even if some ideas seem absurd or unrealistic to you, do not rule out any of them for now. Show your professional portrait to several trusted people, family or friends, and get their ideas come in mind.

Economic activities and professions can be classified into specific fields with different available jobs.

Job ideas from centres of interest

The famous psychologist John L. Holland identified 6 main types of professional interests that cover all existing professions.





Future of work

The world of employment is changing. Jobs are disappearing, others are being created to respond to changes in our planet:

- Demographic growth in southern countries
- Aging population in northern countries
- Global warming
- Depletion of natural resources
- Search for new non-polluting and sustainable energies
- Digitization of all aspects of the economy...

▶ Sort and prioritize ideas on professions

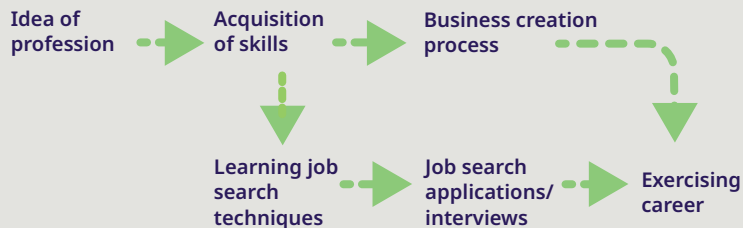
Gather in a single list of all the professions => For each profession, ask yourself the question of its compatibility with your professional portrait, in particular with regard to your personal constraints => establish a ranking of Top 5

▶ Choosing my future profession

All professions have positive and negative aspects. From the outside, we may tend to idealize them or, reversely, see their adverse aspects only. It is therefore essential to investigate into each job prospect in order to make informed choices.

▶ Building you own strategy with Action Plan

For a self-employed worker (the stages of setting up a business) or a salaried job



Check-list for the action plan

Actions	Deadline	With whom where, how?	Executed?	
			Y/N	Corrective action
Present my project to those around me				
Present my project to people and organizations who can advise or help me				
Identify the skills I am missing				
Develop my training project (* advice on next page)				
Find funding for my training				
Follow my training (s) and obtain the diploma (s)				
Prepare a CV adapted to my project				
Target companies and establish my job search strategy				
Lift any barriers				
Make spontaneous applications				
Use social media wisely				
Prepare for job interviews				
Prepare for my arrival in the company and my first days in my new position				

Identify training plan

- ▶ Any diploma or professional title needed to practice the future job?
- ▶ What skills do you lack to exercise your future profession?
- ▶ Find several training solutions (Alternately/ Face to face/ Remote)
- ▶ Identify the suitable training organizations

▶ Other materials for your references

ILO career guidance toolkit:

https://www.ilo.org/skills/projects/g20ts/viet-nam/WCMS_757288/lang--en/index.htm /

https://www.ilo.org/hanoi/Informationresources/Publicinformation/newsites/WCMS_757520/lang--en/index.htm

O*NET Career Exploration Tools from USA /

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/onet/Tools>

Career quizzes and tests on JOB BANK from Gvt of Canada

<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/career-planning/quizzes>

John L. Holland career theory: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holland_Codes

Song An Career Counselling: <https://huongnghiepsongan.com/>

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