

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE CENTRE (CDSC)

FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY (FUT),
MINNA

HANDBOOK



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2024 CAREER SERVICE
CENTRE INTERVENTION



Foreword

My Career, My Joy!

Is it possible to find joy in your career? While some may disagree, the first step toward career fulfilment is understanding the full range of possibilities within your field of study.

This is precisely what the Career Development and Service Centre (CDSC) at the Federal University of Technology, Minna (FUT Minna) strives to offer.

From the moment you choose this esteemed institution as your place of learning, you set yourself on the right path to building a career that brings you joy and meets societal needs. FUT Minna, a specialised University established on February 1, 1983, was founded to advance Nigeria's self-reliance in Science, Engineering, and Technology. Today, it is recognised as the best and most preferred University of Technology in Nigeria. Our graduates rank as the fourth most sought-after by employers in the country.

This handbook provides essential information on the resources and services available at the CDSC, currently located at the Entrepreneurship Centre building on the main campus. Don't just pass through the University—let the Career Development and Service Centre be your guide, helping you transition seamlessly from the classroom to the industry. Explore career assessment tools, understand your strengths, weaknesses, interests, values, and skills, and take bold steps towards career fulfilment.

Let your career be your joy, just as mine is—I genuinely love what I do!

Prof. Caroline O. Alenoghena
Director, CDSC

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Introduction

The FUTMX CDSC handbook provides a comprehensive guide for our students, helping them effectively navigate their career development journey from education to employment.

A. Early Career Planning (by enlightening students on the importance of Early Career Planning so they can make informed decisions about their education and professional development, leading to greater satisfaction and success in their careers)

B. Self-Assessment (this will help the student understand their strengths, weaknesses, interests, values, and skills, which are essential in choosing career paths that align with their personal and professional goals)

C. Exploring Career Options (Understanding different career paths, industries, and job roles can help students make informed decisions that align with their skills, interests, and values)

About CDSC

VISION STATEMENT



"To become a world-class and Nigeria's leading Centre recognized for its excellence in providing Career development services."

MISSION STATEMENT



To provide comprehensive career counselling, professional development, and job placement services, that will equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary for successful career navigation and advancement using entrepreneurial engagement, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Artificial Intelligence

FUT MX CDSC PORTFOLIO

includes the following key components:



Career Counselling and Guidance

Trained career counsellors who will provide personalised guidance to students, helping them explore career options and make informed decisions.



Skill Development and Enhancement

Offering workshops and training programs by professionals to enhance students' employability skills, including resume writing, interview preparation, and soft skills, as well as organising career fairs.



Understanding the Job Market

Providing an overview of current job market trends and the skills in high demand.



Job Placement Services

Facilitating job placements and internships by partnering with companies, industries, and organisations.



Online Resources

Creating an online platform with resources such as job listings, articles, and LinkedIn, Utilizing University Career Services, Reading Books and Watching Videos, Experimenting with Different Courses, Building a Career Action Plan and other career assessments.

Mechanism to Achieve the Key Components



Dedicated Career Services Team

Establish a dedicated team of career counsellors, coordinators, and support staff to manage the day-to-day operations.



Workshops and Events

To conduct regular workshops, events such as Resume and Cover Letter Writing/Interview Preparation and career fairs within the university premises, and use online platforms for virtual engagement.



Alumni Network

Collaborate with the University's Alumni Association to facilitate mentorship programs and networking events



Partnerships

Forge partnerships with companies, organizations, government agencies, and relevant industry associations to enhance job placement or internship opportunities



Online and In-Person Services

We Offer both online and in-person services to accommodate the diverse needs and preferences of students.

Ways to Measure Success and Achievement of the Centre



Job Placement Rate

We Track the percentage of graduating students who secure employment or internships within a defined time frame.



Employer Feedback

We collect feedback from employers regarding the preparedness and skills of university graduates.



Alumni Engagement

Measure the involvement of alumni in mentoring and networking event



Students Satisfaction

We conduct regular surveys to gauge student satisfaction with the services and support received from the centre.



Partnership Success

Assess the number and quality of partnerships established with external organisations for internships and job placements.



Result Utilisation

Evaluate the efficient use of resources to deliver services and the ability to do so within budget constraints.

Available RESOURCES

University Staff



By Utilizing existing university staff who may have the relevant experience or expertise to assist with career services

Library and Its Infrastructure



Using the existing university infrastructure (space allotted and books relevant to CDSC at the main library) and the development of online resources and platforms

Volunteer Alumni



By engaging alumni willing to volunteer their time and expertise to mentor current students

Students Involvement



Encouraging student participation in organising events and workshops, and discovering their talents in areas such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and leadership. Employers across all industries highly value these skills and are crucial for workplace success

Digital Marketing



Promoting the Career Services and Development Centre using the university FM radio station, low-cost digital marketing techniques and social media.

How to Build a Professional Network

Building a professional network is a crucial aspect of career development for university students. A strong network can provide valuable opportunities, advice, mentorship, and support throughout one's career. Here are several strategies to help university students build and maintain a robust professional network:



Engage in Campus Activities and Organisation

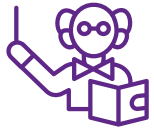
- **Join Student Organizations:** Participating in clubs, societies, or professional associations related to your field of interest can help you connect with like-minded peers and faculty members. These organisations often host events, workshops, and networking opportunities that can expand your connections and learn about your career paths.
- **Take Leadership Roles:** Assuming leadership roles in student organisations can enhance your visibility and credibility. It also allows you to develop skills and build relationships with other leaders and professionals involved in these groups.



Utilize University Career Services

- **Attend Career Fairs:** Career fairs are a great way to meet potential employers, learn about companies, and discover job and internship opportunities. Engage with company representatives, ask insightful questions, and follow up with those you connect with.
- **Participate in Networking Events:** Many career centres organize networking events, panels, and workshops where you can interact with alumni, industry professionals, and recruiters. Attend these events to expand your network and learn about various career paths.

How to Build a Professional Network



Connect with Professors and Faculty

- **Join Student Organizations:** Participating in clubs, societies, or professional associations related to your field of interest can help you connect with like-minded peers and faculty members. These organisations often host events, workshops, and networking opportunities that can expand your connections and learn about your career paths.
- **Take Leadership Roles:** Assuming leadership roles in student organisations can enhance your visibility and credibility. It also allows you to develop skills and build relationships with other leaders and professionals involved in these groups.



Leverage Alumni Network

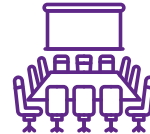
- **Join Alumni Associations:** FUT Minna has an Alumni association that organises events, mentorship programs, and networking opportunities for current students. These associations are valuable resources for building connections with alumni already established in their careers.
- **Connect on LinkedIn:** Use LinkedIn to find and connect with alumni from your university who are working in your field of interest. Reach out with a personalized message, mentioning your shared alma mater and expressing your interest in learning about their career path.

How to Build a Professional Network



Participate in Internship and Part-Time Jobs

- **Gain Professional Experience:** Internships and part-time jobs offer hands-on experience in a field of interest and provide opportunities to meet and learn from colleagues, supervisors, and clients. These connections can become valuable parts of your professional network.
- **Stay in Touch Post-Internship:** After completing an internship or job, maintain contact with the people you worked with. Connect on LinkedIn, send occasional updates, or reach out to share relevant articles or congratulate them on their professional achievements.



Attend Conferences and Industry Events

- **Join Professional Conferences:** Attending conferences, workshops, and seminars related to your field can help you meet professionals, learn about the latest trends, and discover potential job opportunities. Be proactive in introducing yourself and engaging in conversations.
- **Participate in Industry Meetups:** Many cities have industry-specific meetups or events on platforms like Meetup.com. These events provide informal networking opportunities to connect with professionals in a relaxed setting.

How to Build a Professional Network



Social Media and Online Communities

- **Optimize Your LinkedIn Profile:** A well-crafted LinkedIn profile is crucial for building a professional online presence. Include a professional photo, a compelling headline, a detailed summary of your experiences and skills, and connect with peers, professors, alumni, and industry professionals.
- **Join Online Groups and Forums:** Participate in LinkedIn groups, Reddit forums, or other online communities related to your field. Engaging in discussions, sharing knowledge, and asking questions can help you build relationships and establish yourself as an active member of your professional community.



Look Out for Mentors

- **Identify Potential Mentors:** Look for mentors who can provide guidance, support, and advice based on their experiences. This could be a professor, an alumnus, a supervisor from an internship, or a professional you admire.
- **Build a Mentorship Relationship:** Approach potential mentors respectfully and express your interest in learning from them. Be prepared to share your career goals and ask for advice or feedback on specific issues that you may be facing. Remember that mentorship is a two-way relationship—be willing to offer value and show appreciation for their time and support.

How to Build a Professional Network



Engage in Volunteering and Community Service

- **Volunteer in Your Field of Interest:** Volunteering can provide valuable experience, enhance your skills, and expand your network. Please be sure to look for volunteer opportunities that align with your career goals or where you can meet professionals in your desired industry.
- **Participate in Community Events:** Community service projects or local events can also help you build relationships and connect with people outside your immediate academic or professional circles.



Develop a Positive Mindset

- **Stay Resilient and Adaptable:** The job search process can be challenging and may involve setbacks. Stay positive, be open to feedback, and adapt your strategies. Persistence and a proactive approach will increase your chances of success.
- **Celebrate Small Wins:** Acknowledge and celebrate small achievements throughout your job search journey, such as getting an interview or receiving positive feedback on your resume. Recognizing your progress can boost your motivation and confidence.

Career Advancement

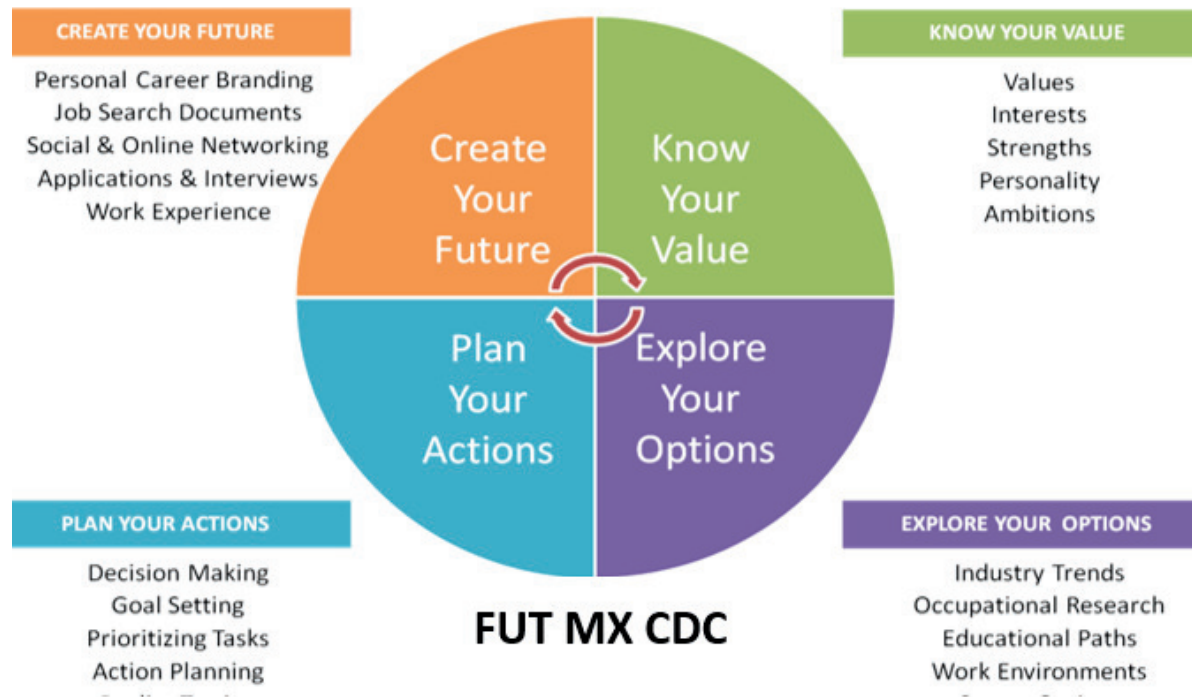
Career advancement is a continuous process that involves actively managing your career path, developing new skills, and seizing opportunities for growth. When you graduate, understanding how to advance in your career is essential for long-term success and fulfilment. Here are several strategies to help with career advancement:



Define Your Career Vision: Identify what success looks like for you in the short and long term. Consider the roles, industries, and companies you aspire to work for and the impact you want to make.

Create an Action Plan: Break down your career vision into specific, actionable goals. Set timelines and milestones to help you stay on track and measure your progress. This plan will serve as a roadmap for your career advancement.

Career Development Model





Seek Out Professional Development Opportunities

Pursue Additional Education: Consider further education, such as graduate degrees, certifications, or specialized training that can enhance your qualifications and open doors to new opportunities. Look for programs that align with your career goals and industry requirements.

Attend Workshops and Seminars: Participate in workshops, webinars, and seminars to stay updated on industry trends and gain new skills. Continuous learning is vital for career advancement and demonstrates your commitment to personal growth.



Take on New Challenges and Responsibilities

Seek Out Challenging Projects: Volunteer for projects or tasks that stretch your abilities and allow you to develop new skills. Taking on challenging assignments demonstrates your ambition and willingness to learn.



Excel in Your Current Role

Demonstrate Excellence: Consistently perform at a high level in your current job by meeting or exceeding expectations. Take initiative, be proactive, and go beyond your job description to showcase your commitment and capabilities.

Build a Reputation for Reliability: Develop a reputation as someone who is dependable, accountable, and a team player. Being known as a reliable employee can open doors to new responsibilities and promotions.

Show Initiative: Look for opportunities to contribute beyond your regular duties. Propose new ideas, identify problems and suggest solutions, and take the lead on initiatives that can add value to your team or organization.



Cultivate Leadership Skills

Develop Leadership Qualities: Focus on developing key leadership qualities such as emotional intelligence, decision-making, conflict resolution, and strategic thinking. These skills are essential for advancing to managerial or leadership roles.

Seek Leadership Opportunities: Take on leadership roles in projects, committees, or organizations to build your experience. Leading a team or initiative can enhance your leadership capabilities and make you a strong candidate for promotion.



Stay Informed About Industry Trend

Keep Up with Industry News: Stay informed about the latest trends, technologies, and changes in your industry. This knowledge can help you anticipate shifts in the job market and adapt your career strategy accordingly.



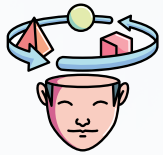
Regularly Evaluate Your Career Progress

Reflect on Your Achievements: Periodically assess your career progress and achievements. Reflect on what you have accomplished, the skills you have developed, and the areas where you can improve.

Adjust Your Goals as Needed: Your career goals may evolve as you gain experience and insights. Be open to adjusting your goals and action plan to align with your changing interests, strengths, and the job market.

Explore Different Roles Within Your Organization: Sometimes, advancing your career involves making lateral moves to different departments or roles. These moves can provide new experiences, skills, and perspectives that enhance your overall career growth.

Leverage Internal Opportunities: Take advantage of your organisation's internal job postings and opportunities. Moving to a different role within the same company can broaden your experience and open up new career paths.



Be Open to Change and Adaptation

Embrace New Opportunities: Be open to new opportunities outside your comfort zone or current career path. Diversifying your experiences can lead to unexpected career growth and development.

Adapt to Change: The job market and industries are constantly evolving. Being adaptable and willing to learn new skills or take on different roles can help you stay relevant and advance in your career.



Understanding Work-Life Balance

Understanding work-life balance is crucial for maintaining both professional productivity and personal well-being. A healthy work-life balance allows individuals to manage their work responsibilities while fulfilling personal needs and enjoying leisure time. For university students and recent graduates entering the workforce, grasping the concept of work-life balance early can set the stage for a more sustainable and fulfilling career. Here are the strategies to achieve work-life balance:



Communicate Your Career Aspirations

Discuss Your Goals with Your Supervisor: Have regular career development discussions with your supervisor or manager. Share your career aspirations and seek feedback on how you can achieve your goals within the organization.

Seek Advancement Opportunities: Be proactive in seeking advancement opportunities. Express your interest in taking on more responsibilities or being considered for promotions when they arise.





Strategies for Achieving Work-Life Balance Set Clear Boundaries

Define Work Hours: Establish clear start and end times for your workday. Avoid checking work emails or engaging in work-related tasks outside of these hours. Communicate your availability to colleagues and supervisors to set expectations.

Create a Dedicated Workspace: If you work from home, set up a designated workspace to physically separate work from personal life. This helps signal the start and end of the workday and reduces distractions.



Prioritise Tasks and Manage Time

Use Time Management Tools: Utilize calendars, to-do lists, and productivity apps to organize tasks and manage time effectively. Prioritize tasks based on urgency and importance and break them down into manageable steps.

Avoid Multitasking: Focus on completing one task at a time to improve efficiency and reduce errors. Multitasking can lead to decreased productivity and increased stress.



Learn to say "NO"

Set Limits: It's important to recognize your limits and not overcommit. Learn to say no to additional work or social obligations when your plate is full. This helps prevent burnout and maintains balance.

Communicate Assertively: Please be clear and polite when you decline a request. Explain your reasons and, if possible, suggest an alternative solution or timeline.



Task Regular Breaks

Incorporate Short Breaks: Take short breaks throughout the day to rest and recharge. Use these breaks to stretch, take a walk, or do a quick mindfulness exercise to reduce stress and improve focus.

Schedule Longer Breaks: Plan for longer breaks, such as lunch or time off for vacations. These breaks are essential for mental rejuvenation and maintaining overall well-being.



Engage in Self-Care

Practice Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques: Engage in meditation, yoga, deep breathing, or mindfulness to reduce stress and enhance mental clarity.

Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle: Prioritize physical health by eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, and getting enough sleep. These habits contribute to better overall health and increased energy levels.



Set Realistic Expectations

Manage Your Expectations: Understand that it's not always possible to achieve perfect balance every day. Some days may be more work-focused, while others may prioritize personal time. Aim for overall balance over time rather than perfection.

Communicate Expectations: If you feel overwhelmed by work or personal responsibilities, please reach out to your supervisor, team, or family members. Clear communication can help manage expectations and provide support.



Seek Flexibility

Explore Flexible Work Options: Discuss flexible work arrangements with your employer, such as remote work, flexible hours, or compressed work weeks. Flexibility can help accommodate personal commitments and reduce commute stress.

Leverage Technology: Use technology to your advantage by organizing virtual meetings and managing tasks efficiently. This can save time and provide more control over your schedule.



Foster Supportive Relationships

Build a Support Network: Surround yourself with supportive friends, family, and colleagues who understand and respect your boundaries and priorities. Having a strong support network can provide encouragement and assistance when needed.

Seek Professional Support if Needed: If you find it challenging to manage stress or balance your work and personal life, consider seeking support from a counsellor, coach, or mentor.



Engage in Activities You Enjoy

Pursue Hobbies and Interests: Make time for activities that bring you joy and fulfilment outside work. Hobbies, sports, or creative pursuits can provide a sense of purpose and satisfaction, contributing to overall well-being.

Spend Quality Time with Loved Ones: Prioritize spending time with family and friends to strengthen relationships and enjoy social support. Quality time with loved ones can enhance your sense of belonging and happiness.



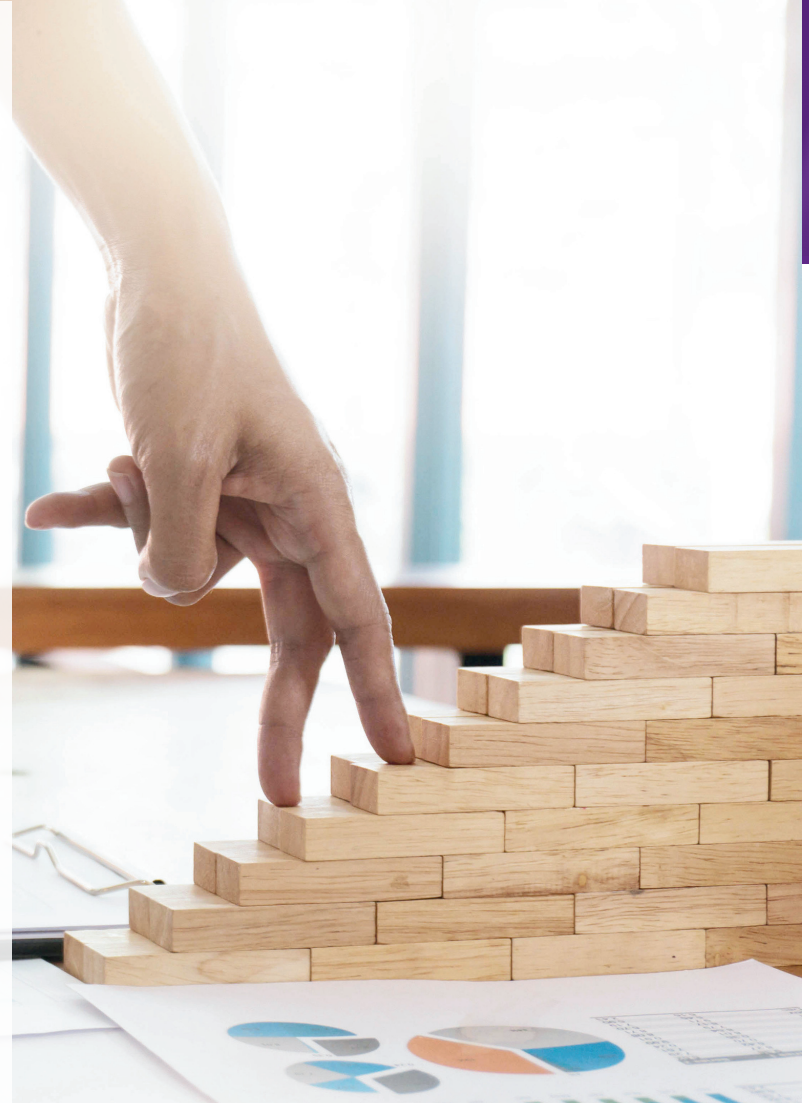
Reflect and Adjust Regularly

Evaluate Your Balance Regularly: Periodically assess your work-life balance and identify areas for improvement. Reflect on what works well and needs adjustment to achieve a sustainable balance.

Be Open to Change. Life circumstances and work demands can change over time. Be flexible and open to adjusting your strategies and routines as needed to maintain a healthy balance.

CONCLUSION

The basic process of getting a dream job in competitive companies, government agencies and organisations is critically analysed at CSDC at FUT MX. This process enables students to develop skills such as leadership, teamwork, and project management while also positively impacting their communities. They can also help students identify skill gaps and recommend specific actions or resources to improve those skills. Visiting the centre will surely make a difference and give you an edge in your career.



National Anthem

Nigeria we hail thee,
Our own dear native land,
Though tribe and tongue may differ,
In brotherhood we stand,
Nigerians all, are proud to serve
Our sovereign Motherland.

Our flag shall be a symbol
That truth and justice reign,
In peace or battle honour'd,
And this we count as gain,
To hand on to our children
A banner without stain.

O God of all creation,
Grant this our one request,
Help us to build a nation
Where no man is oppressed,
And so with peace and plenty
Nigeria may be blessed.

University Anthem

Futech minna 2x
We lift your name on high
Yours it is to set, the pace for others
Excellence is your goal
Federal Unitech. Minna, Niger State
A citadel of learning
Technological advancement of our
land
Is your primary goal
To build a self reliant force
Of sound mind and moral
Who will make our nation relevant
In global development
Futech Minna 2x
We lift your flag up high
The pride of Nigeria you are
And you will ever be
Our love-for-you-won't cease