



SPARKPATH



# Your Challenges, Your Path

HOW TO USE YOUR CHALLENGE PROFILE  
TO CREATE YOUR PATH

## Your Unique Challenge Profile

On the next three pages, you will see the top challenges you chose from the Challenge Cards exercise. Together, they represent your unique challenge profile. In this guide, you'll learn how to use your challenge profile to create a unique path to an inspiring career.



# REDESIGN THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

## Redesign the Health Care System

The health care system includes the people, institutions and resources that keep us in good health. In addition to doctors and nurses, there are hundreds of roles required to make this system work. There are opportunities to improve health care by: reducing wait times, cutting costs, using new technology and investing in innovation, etc.

### Sample Careers

There are many roles that can contribute, such as:

- Doctor
- Cytotechnologist
- Nurse
- Health Researcher
- Medical Science Liaison
- Health Care Manager
- Epidemiologist
- Data Analyst
- Policy Officer
- Medical Illustrator
- Entrepreneur
- + *Add your own idea*

The health care system is an essential part of society, yet it is very costly to run. We need to find new and innovative ways to offer better services to more people, but at lower costs. We also need to prevent health problems instead of just fixing them, by promoting healthy behaviors, for example. As the population ages and technology improves, big changes are needed to offer more services outside of hospitals and online.



# IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH

## Improve Mental Health

Mental health problems affect one in four people at some point in their lives. Depression, anxiety, and other disorders impact people's relationships, well-being, and productivity at work. Outside help is often needed, especially for some at-risk groups.

### Sample Careers

There are many roles that can contribute, such as:

- Psychologist
- Psychiatrist
- Counselor
- Therapist
- Social Worker
- Outreach Worker
- Peer Support Worker
- Nurse
- Researcher
- Public Health or Policy Officer
- + *Add your own idea*

There are opportunities to educate, de-stigmatize, prevent, heal and rehabilitate those affected by mental issues. Many factors contribute to the prevalence of mental health problems, and some are projected to increase in the future: aging of the population, increased isolation, and loneliness, pressure to perform, etc. There are also opportunities to educate the public on the science of happiness.

## Reverse Engineer the Brain

An improved understanding of the brain could help us enhance our true mental potential. In the future, imagine the possibility of sending downloadable emotions, sensations, and memories. New scans and tests will allow us to follow and map thoughts traveling in the brain.

### Sample Careers

There are many roles that can contribute, such as:

- Electrical Engineer
- Neuroscientist
- Neuropsychologist
- Neurologist
- Manufacturing Technician
- Researcher
- Professor
- Scientist
- Psychiatrist
- + *Add your own idea*

Scientists have begun to design computer chips that mimic the brain's own communication skills. Tools such as ear implants, artificial retinas, and limbs are improving people's lives. One day, perhaps we'll be able to upload knowledge directly into a brain. The brain researchers of the future will have the power to radically change the medical, scientific, and social landscape for the benefit of humanity.

## REVERSE ENGINEER THE BRAIN

# Your Challenges, Your Career

When you sorted through the Challenge Cards, you discovered some of the tremendous opportunities that the world has to offer.

The choices you made revealed important information about you. They revealed your interests, your values, and the unique contribution you can make to the world.

## **What happens next?**

It's interesting to discover your challenge profile, but what is even more important is how you use it to guide your career exploration!

## **This guide will show you how.**

Follow the step-by-step instructions in this guide in order to connect your challenge profile to a path forward.

Are you ready? Let's get started!

## "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

Have you ever been asked this question? How does it make you feel?

Frustrated, confused, and maybe a bit scared?

If so, don't worry. It's perfectly normal not to know. And even if you knew what job title you wanted, your preference might change by the time you enter the workforce.

Nobody has one job title for their entire career. That's why "what do you want to be?" isn't a helpful question.

This is where your challenge profile can help you flip the way you think about your career, because it helps you **ask yourself different questions**, like:

- What challenges do I want to work on?
- Who is working on these challenges now?
- What do I need to learn to be able to do that?

You have already discovered the challenges that inspire you. Now you're ready to discover the careers that fit your Challenge Profile.

## 5 Steps to Your Career Discovery

Step 1: Research potential employers

Step 2: Research job

Step 3: Find interesting people

Step 4: Identify what you want to learn

Step 5: Reach out





## Step 1: Research potential employers

Research different organizations working on the challenges you are interested in. First, identify four organizations you would like to work. Then, write their names and draw their logos in the boxes below.


### Why does this help?

This exercise helps you learn about the types of workplaces that focus on your challenge areas.

## Step 2: Research jobs

Choose your top three organizations from the ones you just picked. Now, do further research to find out what types of jobs are available at those organizations.

Choose three different jobs and write down what interests you about each one (e.g. tasks or responsibilities, skills or knowledge, impact, etc.)

Jobs	What interests you
Job 1:	<hr/> <hr/>
Job 2:	<hr/> <hr/>
Job 3:	<hr/> <hr/>

*Example*

Product Manager	Being responsible for selling new software
	Helping organizations improve their processes
	Generating ideas for new software

### Why does this help?

This exercise helps you narrow down the types of work you would most like to do at an organization that is working to solve challenges you care about.

## Step 3: Find interesting people

Now that you know what types of jobs interest you, look for people who do this kind of work. You can look on the websites of the organizations to find employee profiles, or try using LinkedIn.com to search for people who do this type of work.

Write down the names of three people and add a sentence or two to describe what interests you about each one.

People	What interests you
1:	<hr/> <hr/>
2:	<hr/> <hr/>
3:	<hr/> <hr/>

*Example*

Meredith Awani	Presenting to large audiences
	Working for an important cause
	Collaborating with a team of experts

**Why does this help?**

This exercise helps you learn about the types of people who have successfully built a career in the type of job that interests you.

## Step 4: Identify what you want to learn

Now that you have a list of people whose careers look interesting, take a closer look at the skills, experiences and education they have (LinkedIn.com will help you collect this information.)

Once you do this, you will find out what you need to learn to be able to work on the challenges you care about.

**Skills:** (eg: Public Speaking)

- 1.
- 2.

**Experiences:** (eg: Managing a team)

- 1.
- 2.

**Education:** (eg: Mechanical Engineering Degree)

- 1.
- 2.

**What other education programs are you interested in?**

Identify 10 potential education programs that interest you. You can do this by reviewing a list of education programs on websites of trade schools, colleges or universities. By reading each program description, you can decide which programs are the best fit for you.


**Why does this help?**

This exercise helps you identify the learning path you will need to take in order to prepare for this type of career.

## Step 5: Reach out

You now have a list of people whose career choices interest you. These individuals can help you make choices about your own career.

While company websites and LinkedIn can teach you a lot, you can learn even more by reaching out to people who are doing work that interests you and asking them to speak with you.

People are often thrilled to share their stories and advice. You can email them and ask to meet for a coffee or to have a video call. Here are some questions to guide the conversation:

- What do you like the most about your job? What do you like the least?
- What problem is your organization trying to solve? What is the simplest way to describe it?
- How do you contribute to solving that problem?
- What career advice do you have for me? What education programs would you recommend?
- What did you do yesterday?
- What experiences best prepared you for your job?
- Is there something you wish you'd known or a skill you wish you'd had when starting out?
- What traits, skills, or experiences do employers in your field look for in candidates?
- Would you choose this field if you had to do over again? Is there anything you would do differently?

### Why does this help?

This exercise enables you to learn unique information about your challenges that you cannot learn through online research.

# Take Action

The world needs you to help solve its problems, meet its challenges and take advantage of the opportunities it has to offer.

The activities you have completed in this guide have helped you identify exciting work and learning options. There is no reason to delay your enthusiasm and excitement for your future.

At this time, you do not have to commit to one field, trade, specialization, job or career for the rest of your life. Instead, you can start small experiments to find how you can contribute to the challenges you care about.

For example, you can meet with someone, job shadow, volunteer, take an internship, apply for a job, etc.

To find out which step you need to take next, schedule some time to meet with someone who can help you. This could be:

- Someone at your school, like a counselor, an advisor or a coach
- A mentor
- A parent
- A friend

Start working on your action plan and continue your journey towards an extraordinary career!

