7 Steps for Career Conversations

1. Understand Your Role
   Engage in career conversations to instill confidence and hope by introducing opportunities; recognize your own assumptions and biases.

2. Establish Trust & Introduce the Process
   Promote self-efficacy, define relationship parameters and explain the purpose and direction.

3. Focus on the Advisee
   Explore their vision, values, and goals; understand constraints that will influence their choices.

4. Explore Interests & Aptitudes
   Identify and utilize tools and discuss results; uncover skills, strengths, and interests; recognize personality, work style, and work ethic.

5. Envision the Future
   Explore the relevant labor market, work environments, and activities to better understand pathways of interest; select a pathway.

6. Encourage Action
   Define a course of action, help the advisee stay motivated; provide resources, support and accountability.

7. Celebrate Success!
   A career brings new opportunities; repeat steps as needed to support lifelong learning & career development.

EXPLORE
ENGAGE
ACT
### Understand Your Role

**Cues to a possible advising opportunity:**
- Confusion or frustration about what to do
- Excitement about a particular subject or field
- Desire to pick a path or a new path but unsure how

**Questions to determine readiness to move on to next step:**
- Do you understand the impact that career conversations can have on another person’s life?
- Do you understand your role in the conversation — what is and isn’t the role of an advisor?
- Are you bringing a positive mindset with the intention of opening doors to possibilities?
- Do you understand your own assumptions, biases, and cultural disconnects?

### Establish Trust & Introduce the Process

**Conversation Starters:**
- Tell me about a time you felt proud of something you accomplished.
- What else would you like to accomplish?
- What activities or places make you feel safe and valued? Why?

**Questions to determine readiness to move on to next step:**
- Have you built a relationship with the advisee?
- Have you earned the advisee’s trust?
- Does the advisee exhibit a sense of purpose and direction?

### Focus on the Advisee

**Conversation Starters:**
- What challenges do you want to solve? How does this relate to a career?
- What are your goals? What might get in the way of achieving your goals?
- If you could do anything, what would your life look like?

**Questions to determine readiness to move on to next step:**
- Has the advisee explored their personal vision, values, goals, and passions?
- Have you discussed and gotten clarity on the advisees needs, constraints, timing, and other relevant parameters that will influence the choices they make?
### Explore Interests & Aptitudes

#### Conversation Starters:
- What would other people say are your strengths? What would you say?
- When thinking of your future, are there any skills you would like to further develop?
- How would you like to think and feel about your work?

#### Have you utilized tools to help the advisee uncover skills, strengths, and interests?
- Have you discussed the results of the tools? What has the advisee learned?
- How has this information reinforced or changed assumptions?

### Envision the Future

#### Conversation Starters:
- Based on your exploration do you have ideas about careers to explore?
- What type of training will help you get the career you want? What qualifications are needed? Why will this be a good choice?
- How much does this pathway cost and what is the return on that investment?

#### Have research parameters been defined?
- Have you introduced the advisee to tools to research options that interest them?
- Has the advisee selected a pathway?

### Encourage Action

#### Conversation Starters:
- Do you need help with the admissions process, looking into financing options, etc.?
- Would you be interested in learning some strategies for sticking to goals?
- As you think about your future career, which support people might help you?
- How might you test out 2-3 possible careers to experience what they would be like?

#### What is the next step: Entrance into the workforce, additional education, or experience?
- Has a plan been developed to move toward the advisee’s goal?
- Has the advisee learned how to utilize tools to research and evaluate opportunities?
- Has the advisee engaged in a job shadow, internship, apprenticeship or other experience that provides him or her with a lived experience of the potential pathway?

### Celebrate Success!

**Celebrate successes along the way.**
Provide encouragement and accountability, while allowing the advisee to take the lead. Listen actively, engage with compassion, and recognize the importance and value of career conversations.