

DECIDING ON A CAREER PATH FOR ATHLETES



→ WHY?

Having a career path that is like an elite athlete performance path enables you to enjoy your future and reap the benefits and rewards of doing something that you love. It can provide financial security, bring satisfying relationships, meaning, purpose, and positive self-worth. Knowing you have options of a career path beyond sport gives you both peace of mind and energy to pursue and be your personal best during your time in sport.

→ WHAT?

Deciding on a career path can be overwhelming. Sport is, and will be, a big part of your life, but is a smaller part of the overall "YOU". As you head towards retirement, or if unforeseen circumstances do cut your sporting career short, you may want to look for something to replace all that sport has been for and to you. Even if you don't know what career you want to pursue, there are some steps you can take to help you decide. The most important thing is you are proactive and take self-responsibility on where you want to head in the future.

→ HOW?

Step 1 — Identify your skills and strengths

Reflect on the attributes and skills that have made you successful in your sport and that will enable you to have a successful and rewarding career. These could include:

- Teamwork
- Communication skills
- Leadership
- Time management
- Determination
- Stress management
- Goal setting
- Resilience

If this step is difficult, speak to your AW&E Manager who will take you through a Career Decision Making Card Sorts tool and chat about how they can refer you to an AIS Professional Career Practitioner.

Step 2 — Articulate your interests and passions

Consider your passions and what you enjoy the most. A simple way is write down what makes you happy and why. To help you with this, you may like to speak to your AW&E Manager, an AIS Career Practitioner or take a career aptitude test.

[Career Aptitude and Career Assessment Tests](#) provides a list of free career aptitude tests, career assessments and personality tests that can support you in choosing a career path that aligns with your skills, knowledge, experiences and interests. A [Career Quiz](#) will help you to understand your work style and to examine careers you might enjoy. Head to the [myfuture](#) web site to explore more.

Step 3 — Investigate and Research

1. Identify industries and occupations in which you would like to work and research these fields.
2. Find positions aligned with your field of interest that interest you and find out which skills are most important in them and why you are attracted and motivated. Consider how your skills, knowledge and experience match the required skills.
3. Research - Now dig deeper into the positions that you have identified. Consider the responsibilities of the role, what is required to attain the role, and career pathways for the role.
4. Determine and write down the pros and cons for each of the roles. What makes them attractive – such as "a lot of teamwork and collaboration" and what makes them less appealing, such as "lack of variety."

Step 4 — Seek out experts

If you are really struggling to make decisions about your career path, consider utilising or meeting someone in this field, or talk to a career expert. Career experts can assist to build your confidence, support your decision making, and guide you in pursuing a career that fuels your passions.

Have your AW&E Manager refer you to one of the AIS Career Practitioners.

DO'S AND DON'TS

- ✓ **Do** take time to consider the options that best suit and appeal to you.
- ✓ **Do** keep an open mind - there are a plethora of opportunities to explore.
- ✓ **Do** be kind to yourself. Deciding on a career path or changing career path takes planning, time and patience.
- ✓ **Do** talk to trusted family, friends, coaches and your AW&E manager – they know you well and may provide some valuable advice.
- ✓ **Do** speak to an expert – seek out professional career help through the AIS Career Practitioner Referral Network.
- ✗ **Don't** put too much pressure on yourself to know exactly what you want to do. You may not be sure until you gain some further experience. Even if you start broad and have 2-3 options, exploring all will help you identify your preferences.



ACTIVITY

1. Carry out Steps 1 to 3 above and discuss with your AW&E Manager.
2. Consider any advice and feedback given by your AW&E Manager and tap into the AIS CPRN which is available to support you in your quest to decide what's most important to you and your future needs.

**"A MIND TROUBLED
BY DOUBT CANNOT
FOCUS ON THE
COURSE TO VICTORY"**

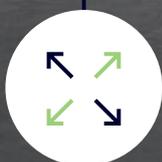
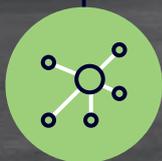




AIS

DECIDING ON A CAREER PATH

FOR AW&E MANAGERS





KNOWING WHAT CAREER PATH TO PURSUE CAN BE A CHALLENGE THROUGHOUT ONE'S LIFE, YET ULTIMATELY IT IS ABOUT KNOWING YOURSELF WELL AND KNOWING WHAT YOU WANT AND DON'T WANT IN A CAREER, JOB OR FIELD OF INTEREST



USEFUL LINKS

[Steps to choosing a career](#)

[Deciding on your career path](#)

[Steps to finding the right career](#)



ATHLETE ACTIVITY

- Support the athlete by ensuring that they have thought broadly about possible career pathways.
- Use the Career Decision Making Tools
- If the athlete has also taken a career aptitude test or career quiz, reflect on the outcome with the athlete and discuss what this means for potential career pathways.
- Make a booking for the athlete with an expert in the AIS Career Practitioner Referral Network (CPRN)
- Offer further advice based on the information provided by the athlete.

It can take time to figure it out, but encourage the athlete to learn to embrace the uncertainty and learning, as it will have open their mind to opportunities and growth as a person.

Balance and having something and to think about outside sport can give the athlete's mind a short break to unwind, relax and enjoy learning. Just like active rest and recovery for their body. Athletes can develop a refreshed mind and renewed sense of energy which helps their sport performance.

It can also help provide 'peace of mind' that if sport does not head down the pathway they hoped for, there is something else they can set goals and strive for achievement.

This experience supports their mental health and wellbeing, teaches them about future skills they might need, and builds important networks whilst they are returning to sport if injured or contemplating where to next.

To support the athlete in this endeavour, you will need to be a sounding board and a quasi-career counsellor. The key is to 'listen first speak last'. Don't try to solve the challenge for the athlete, but help them explore and consider what opportunities might exist to support their passions. The Career Decision Making tools are ideal to support athletes who simply do not know what to do and who need to explore and think outside the box.

The AIS Career Practitioner Referral Network provides a range of career services including career decision making and career planning.

References. <https://www.brightnetwork.co.uk/graduate-career-advice/key-career-skills/five-things-every-young-person-needs-know-about-getting-ahead-your-career/seven-key-career-skills-you-pick-playing-sport/>
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