



Career story

Lifelong learning can be described as a concept spanning an entire lifetime in a process of “transforming experience into knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs and the senses” (Jarvis, 2002, p. 60). This learning includes the knowledge, skills and attitudes that extend well beyond formal education.

In a world of rapid change, people come under the influence of circumstances that create new experiences and challenges from which they can continue to learn throughout their lives. The lifelong learning concept goes further than ‘permanent education’; its innovative dimension lies in a new approach to the process and context of learning.

Graduates need to be lifelong learners in order to adapt to continuous change. This encompasses more than just taking courses in the framework of continuing professional development. It is important to establish how new graduates can strengthen their identities as entrepreneurial and reflective professionals. One of the most powerful ways of illustrating this is with the narratives of professionals with diverse career paths.

When working with career stories, it is useful for students to refer to questions that will guide their reading. The questions can be developed from some of the other resources, particularly those focused on identity, preferences and goals; however, the questions on the next page will give students a head start. These questions are included on the final page of the student resource.

References

- Bennett, D. (Ed.). (2012). *Life in the real world: How to make music graduates employable*. Champaign, Illinois: Common Ground Publishing.
- Jarvis, P. (2002). Lifelong learning: Which way forward for higher education? In D. Colardyn (Ed.), *Lifelong learning: Which ways forward?* Utrecht: Lemma.

1. What do you expect you will have to learn during your career?

2. What might you need to do in order to keep learning?

3. What differences, common issues, and links can you make to your own career journey?

4. Identify and reflect on key decision points in your personal and professional development, and then consider:

- a. Who played a significant role at these times?
- b. To whom did you go to for advice?
- c. What can you put in place for the next time you face a major decision?

5. Biographical accounts raise a number of challenges and opportunities. These include innovative collaborations, work within other sectors, diverse locations, and different modes of work. Look for examples of these in your discipline and reflect on what might be of interest to you:

- a. What interests you, and what can you do to make this a reality?
- b. What challenges do you foresee, and how will you prepare for these?

6. Biographical accounts often tell us something about the interests, passions, and motivations of the people involved. Can you think of ways to combine your interests and your future work?

7. What would you like to achieve as a professional?

This resource was developed by Dawn Bennett.