Finding your path and perfect role

As you begin your career, you'll have to navigate your way to find the perfect role for you. While there is no one way to find your ideal role, there are some things to consider to help you better understand what direction you want to take. This reading will focus on a few of the options to consider as you start to search for a job.

Digital marketing vs. e-commerce

Throughout this program, you learned concepts and practices related to digital marketing and e-commerce. By now, you have probably noticed that there isn't a distinct divide between the two fields. Digital marketing and e-commerce often work fluidly together to achieve some type of conversion goal. While lots of the concepts you've learned relate to both fields, some aspects are different between each field. The table below provides an overview of these differences

Digital marketing	E-commerce
• Focuses on marketing products and services, using digital platforms • Focuses on the development of emails, social media posts, and videos to garner the attention of potential buyers	• Focuses on buying and selling products or other online services using the internet • Focuses on customer loyalty through rewards programs, Google Ads campaigns, and website maintenance

Neither of the two fields is better than the other. Instead, it's about determining which field is a better fit for you and what you hope to achieve in your career. Keep in mind the aspects that you enjoyed learning about and those that you did not. Make a list to compare the two if you find it helpful.

As you apply to jobs, you shouldn't feel forced to choose one field over the other. As an entry- level employee, you'll more than likely work on tasks in both fields. Once you land a job, you can hone your skills and determine the field you like best.

Generalist vs. specialist

Another category to consider when attempting to find your right path is whether you want to work as a generalist or a specialist. A **generalist** is knowledgeable about many topics and has various interests, while a **specialist** is an expert in a specific field.

Generalists have broad, multifaceted roles that allow entry-level employees to gain experience in many different areas related to the field. Alternatively, specialists are focused on a singular aspect of either digital marketing (emails, social media, etc.), or e-commerce (campaigns, loyalty programs, etc.). The table below provides an overview of common generalist and specialist roles.

Common generalist roles	Common specialist roles
• Digital marketer • Content strategist • E-commerce digital strategist • Digital marketing strategist • Marketing assistant	• Social media strategist • PPC specialist • Email marketer • SEO specialist • Social video producer

Please note that the word "specialist" is often used in job titles, even for roles that include generalist-like tasks. When reviewing a job listing, be sure to read the duties and responsibilities assigned to that role so that you have a clear understanding of what you will be doing if hired.

Choose your work environment

Choosing what type of environment works best for you is just as important as the type of role you select. Different types of environments have their own cultures and practices. As an entry-level employee, you'll come across two types of workplaces: **agency** or **in-house**. You can also choose to work for yourself in a freelance role.

Agency vs. in-house teams

In the digital marketing and e-commerce fields, agencies help other businesses perform a specific function related to marketing, campaign development, or design. Agencies can support large or small companies and often work independently from the business they've been hired for outside of the determined needs.

As an entry-level employee, you can expect to work for several clients. This is because agencies often take on many different clients. It is common to work with a client for a short time. While doing agency work, it's unlikely that you will decide on the direction of assignments since those are determined by the company that hired your agency's services.

Alternatively, companies who create and distribute a product or a service may build an "in-house" team of internal employees to handle their marketing and e-commerce needs. There are many reasons companies choose this option, including reduced costs, full transparency between the team and the larger company, and concern for the privacy of their users and their personal information.

As an entry-level employee, you can expect to work on a team that is relatively smaller than the rest of the company. Unlike working at an agency, many employees on an in-house team have the opportunity to learn a great amount about the company they are performing digital marketing and e-commerce tasks for.

Freelancing

Freelancing is another option for people who want to leverage their experience in digital marketing and e-commerce skills. A freelancer is self-employed and not necessarily committed to a particular employer long-term.

Like working in an agency, freelancers can work with multiple clients. However, unlike working at an agency or on an in-house team, freelancers can choose which roles they'd like to accept.

Freelancers are typically generalists. Having multiple skills and knowledge areas allows them to work with many companies since they have expertise in many different areas.

Taking on freelance projects is a good way to develop your skills and take the lead in your work at any point in your career, particularly at the beginning. However, those who want to freelance later in their career should consider gaining company experience at some point to understand the industry better.

Key takeaways

As you navigate your job search, think about what you want in a career. Establish the types of roles you want early on and the type of company you want to work for. Over time, your experience will help you make better-informed decisions related to your career direction.

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