SPH Skill based career pathing –Storyboard for Digital Solution

Have you ever felt like you're playing a board game, but without a clear understanding of the board? You're not alone! Based on your feedback from the Engagement Survey and a few candid coffee chats, we've realized that many of you are deeply dedicated to your work, but it seems the visibility of career options is a bit like finding a needle in a haystack.

Background regarding career moves:

What are typical lines of professional development? In the classic corporate organizational chart, there are typical career movements or dimensions:

- 1. Vertical: (moving from one hierarchical level to another, usually to the next higher level, often associated with seniority or promotions)

- 2 Horizontal: the switch from one career type to another (Expert, Manager, Project Manager))

- 3 Horizontal: What is often not visible is another horizontal dimension: the cross-functional career options!

(There is also a centripetal path: when we move closer to the power center of the organization. -> as we understand at Merck all functions and locations equal (even so contributing with a different portfolio to company success) we don't digest further this path)
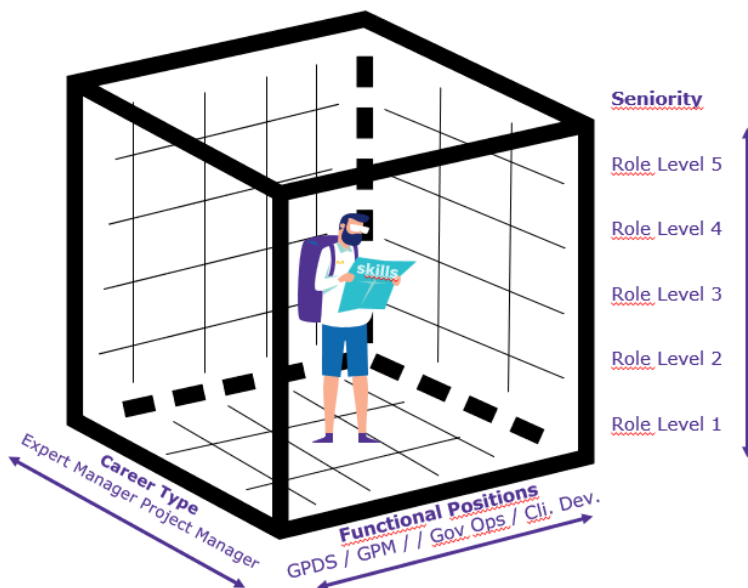

In response to this, we're thrilled to announce an exciting initiative aimed at creating a skill-based career path tailored specifically for Strategy, Portfolio, and Hubs. Think of it as a treasure map guiding you to hidden career gems!

To kick things off, we're working on defining position clusters or functional role clusters with core positions and the skills needed for each core position. By inventorying these skills, we can help you

identify your target positions more easily. Imagine having a chessboard / playboard laid out before you, illustrating all the possible moves you can make within our organization. Sounds beneficial, right?

Background regarding Positions and Skills

In our company, the Global Role Framework (GRF) is a standardized library of all roles that might exist at Merck. All positions at Merck – independent from their location or sector – are mapped to one role within this framework. The GRF takes **functional areas**, **type of contribution** and the **level of your position** into account. Our Global Job Architecture looks like this:
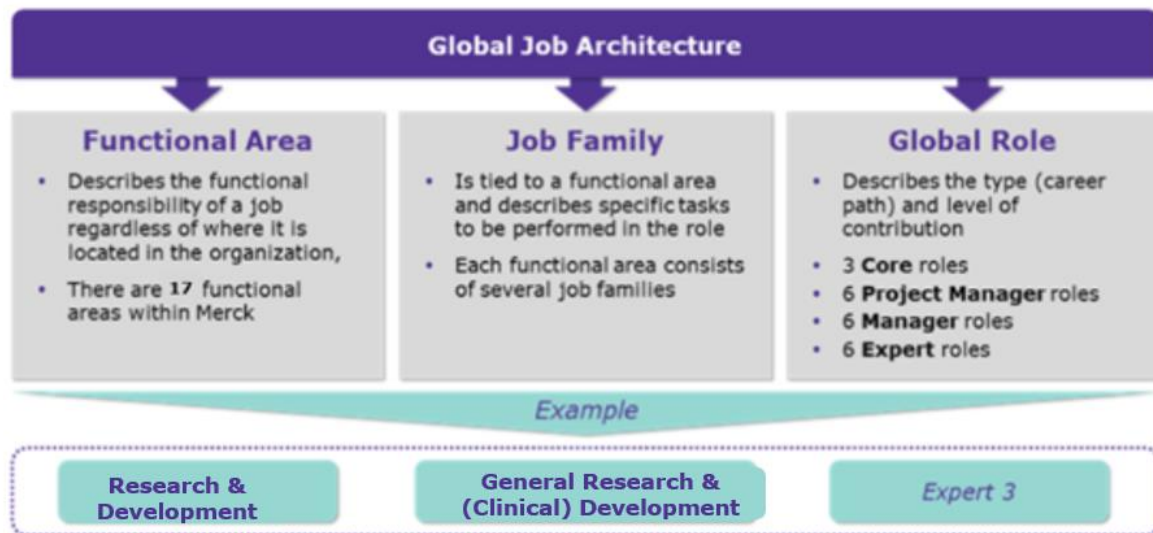
We have no further differentiator for positions below the Job Family. (besides Job or Position Titles) and not yet a standardized set of position based skills required for the role.

So the existing positions in SPH (and beyond) are not systematically structured and visible.

Therefore we want to define for SPH position clusters or functional role clusters with core positions and required skills and also to highlight some few typical career pathes – to infuse development conversations.

If we were to represent these various career paths as a game board for a dice game, it could be illustrated as follows:

1. **Game Board Layout**: The board could be designed like a traditional board game, with a winding path that represents the different career trajectories.

2. **Vertical Paths**: These could be represented as upward-moving arrows or ladders, indicating progression through different hierarchical levels. Each step up could represent a promotion or increase in seniority.

3. **Horizontal Paths**: These could be shown as branches or paths that diverge from the main route, symbolizing the transition from one career type to another (e.g., from Expert to Manager to Project Manager).

4. **Centripetal Movement**: This could be illustrated with paths that curve inward towards a central point on the board, representing the power center of the organization. Players could move along these paths to signify their approach to leadership roles.

5. **Cross-Functional Options**: These could be depicted as side paths or shortcuts that connect different areas of the board, indicating opportunities for lateral movement across functions within the organization.

6. **Dice Mechanic**: Players could roll dice to determine their movement along the board, with different outcomes leading to promotions, lateral moves, or opportunities for skill development.

7. **Visual Elements**: Icons or symbols could be used to represent different roles, achievements, or challenges faced along the career paths, adding an engaging visual aspect to the game board.

Perhaps the player can collect items at each position they occupy (similar to what is often used in fantasy/role-playing video games), for example, experience points.

And to be able to roll again, the player must complete certain tasks, for example, 'Stay for 1 year and gain experience,' or 'Complete a Growth Assignment,' or 'Attend a training session.'" By considering the 70:20:10 approach on Learning. 70% Learning by doing 20% Learning through others 10% Learning Formal Training

Another illustration what was printed in an SPH Newsletter (and was part of a campaign with Electronics Sector) is this "hinking and climbing":
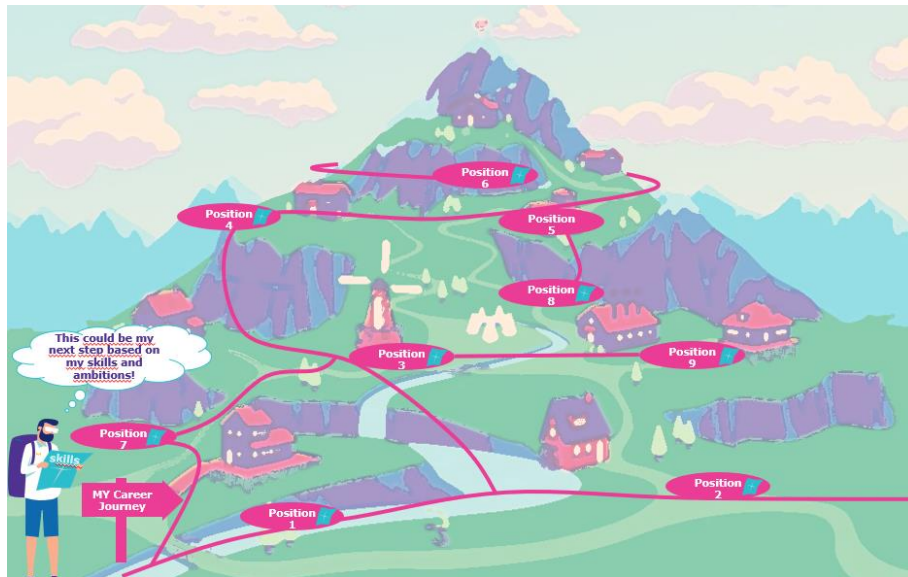
You also can give the **pathes** on the gameboard different **headlines or names**

SPH sub-function path / SPH path/ R&D path / Healthcare path / Merck path

Or find more differentiating names like:

SPH Function exploration, SPH trail, R&D Adventure, Healthcare journey, Merck Expedition

Another idea:

This career framework should infuse development conversations and career decisions. The player of the game can have a game piece to move. The game piece is the employee, the player. Maybe they can shoos or create an avatar? And the game piece / avatar start with a question or you asks questions before they can roll the dice. Such questions like

1. Which **Career Path** is the most suitable for you? To Grow in a very similar context in depth vs. in a very diffent context in breadth?

2. Which **Merck Career Type** attracts you most: expertised Individual Contributor, Projekt Manager or People Leader?

Depending on the answer they will be directed to a path that fits the most.