



Roadmap to Success in the Energy and Utilities Industry Project

Project Overview: In this project you will create a plan or roadmap to achieve a self-established goal related to a profession in the energy and utilities industry. You will:

- 1.) Demonstrate critical thinking by defining a personalized capstone project based on a pathway you choose;
- 2.) Perform an assessment of self and the utility discipline to understand and describe the current situation and identify a future goal;
- 3.) Define and acquire resources (i.e. information, mentor(s), hardware/software, networking opportunities, etc.) to help achieve a future goal; and
- 4.) Create a realistic roadmap to transition from a current state to a desired future state by leveraging opportunities presented by the Energy Industry: Production, Distribution & Safety specialization.

The projects were presented in three phases:

Phase 1: Project Definition

Keep in mind that your project needs to be relevant to your current situation and your future goals. Think about what you want to achieve – let's say 3-5 years from now; and start creating a list of ideas for your project.

While there are several models to guide you toward selecting a specific project, generally, project selection follows these five steps:

1. List possible ideas
2. Identify risks
3. Consider how each one is relevant
4. Consider the significance (or importance) of each
5. Project selection

After you have a list of possible ideas, write down what could go wrong with each one of them. Then, write down how relevant each activity is related to reaching your goals. And finally, write down the impact each idea could have on your future.

Next, you'll want to rank each of the three categories for each idea on a scale of 1-10 with 1 being not-so-good and 10 being great. This will help you find the best project fit for you!

Once you've given each item a 1-10 rating, multiply the 3 ratings for each idea and based on the ratings, **select the ideas that best suits your path.**

After you have selected your project, create a one-page document to help you keep track of your progress and stay focused on your objectives. You may use the project charter template as your document to keep track of all your work. Once you have finalized your project ideas, **add a project title to your Project Charter.**

Any task, if you want it to be complete on time and be successful, needs a well thought out objective established upfront. This is true no matter what we do. You want to increase your golf scores, set an objective first and then you can work towards it! An objective is like a milestone – it provides an indication of what you want to achieve; and helps you know when you have achieved it. Although there are several models to establish objectives, we suggest using the SMART method. SMART is the acronym for:

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Relevant

Time-Oriented

Your objective should be Specific:

- Should help understand the end product of the work that needs to be done.
- Should answer the questions "what is to be done?" & "how will you know it is done?"
- Anyone reading the objective should interpret it the same way you would!

Your objective should be Measurable:

- Should be defined in measurable/assessable terms (quantity, deadlines, quality, etc.).
- It answers the question "how will you know it meets expectations?"
- Measurable refers to the extent to which something can be evaluated against some standard.

Your objective should be Achievable:

- Objectives we established need to be realistically achievable under the constraints we have.
- Cannot be "pie in the sky"; Don't overcommit and under deliver
- Achievable answers the questions "Can it be done giving the time frame, opportunity and resources?"

Your objective should be Relevant:

- Objective should be relevant and usable for your current life's needs/wishes
- It answers the questions like "should this project be done?" and "why?" and "what is in it for me?"

Your objective should be Time-oriented:

- Project may have several milestones to help you to assess how well project is going. Time-oriented helps to define it.
- It answers questions like "when will it be done?"

What are some examples of things that you would like to do or achieve, in the Energy and Utilities Industry? Take a moment to brainstorm ideas for your objectives. Once objectives are developed, SMART can be used as a checklist to ensure that the objectives meet each of its criteria. **Develop at least one primary and three secondary objectives** for your career in Energy and Utilities Industry and update your Project Charter.

Phase 2: Self-Assessment

Self-Assessments, also known as self-evaluations, are exercises that may influence how you execute tasks and projects. They provide insight into your strengths and weaknesses. Once recognized, you may choose to implement a strategy to transform weaker qualities into stronger ones. Self-assessments can also help you identify gaps that, unless closed, may hinder your ability to perform a particular task.

We suggest you **use the SWOT technique to conduct your self-assessment**. SWOT is the acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A SWOT analysis often contains four blocks, where the “Strengths” and “Weaknesses” blocks include internal factors- those unique to you - and the blocks of “Opportunities” and “Threats” include external factors such as a job posting, a new software release, regulations and procedures.

After reflecting on your SWOT analysis, create a list of action items to focus on as you transition to a future career in the field of Energy. **Update your Project Charter with 1-3 action items** for you to complete –within an established time period - that leverages your strengths to attain a prospective opportunity.

Additionally, in your Project Charter, **list at least one action item to mitigate, or reduce, the risk of a threat** adversely impacting you as a result of a one or more of your weaknesses.

Revisit your goal or goals, and if you haven’t done so already, narrow yours to a particular field within the enterprise and locate national job descriptions that coincide with your goal. The U.S. Department of Labor has national O*NET codes related to job titles. They provide demographic information, future projections, and education levels that relate to job titles. Use the information provided in the resource section to become more familiar with this workforce tool.

Find some job codes related to the jobs you want to pursue and then analyze them against your SWOT self-assessment. Does your background provide the foundation for the job or business plan you want to pursue? Are there gaps you have to fill or obstacles you have to overcome in order to be successful?

Next, **create a one-page marketing document** outlining your skills for the job or business plan you want to pursue. This one-page document will be used as a conversation starter with your contacts, mentors, family and co-workers. You want to choose headings that are relevant to you and your project, so they will inevitably vary based on the goal. Some headlines to consider include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Project summary

- Knowledge, skills, and abilities
- Profit
- Target companies
- Organizations
- Objectives
- Product
- Action plan
- Certifications
- Responsibilities
- Pros & Cons
- Professional experience

In previous roadmap lessons, we suggested tools and techniques to establish your own personal goal. Now that you have a clear goal, we are going to focus on how to pitch your goal in 30-45 seconds. Often referred to as an elevator pitch or elevator speech, a captivating few sentences spoken to invoke intrigue and leaves the audience with an appetite for more.

Whether you are interested in entering the Energy and Utilities Industry workforce or transitioning with the evolving industry, a convincing elevator pitch could help you achieve your goal.

Let's discuss five common characteristics of well-crafted elevator pitches. Although stated to sell yourself, the following characteristics can easily be adapted to sell an idea or product by replacing "you" and "yourself" with your idea, product or service:

- Concisely state your goal: Introduce yourself by stating your name and what delineates you. Address a problem right out of the gate.
- Articulate how you use your skills: Give a real solution by explaining the benefits you offer. Make others want to know more. State your value proposition.

- Tell a story: Tell a story that shows how you are outstanding. You want to whet the appetite of your audience.
- State what makes you unique: Say something authentic and exclusive to you that distinguishes you from others.
- Do not exceed 60 seconds: Pique interest in less than 60 seconds. End your pitch by re-stating your name.

Together, these characteristics communicate the following: Who you are. What you do. What you are looking for. And... what sets you apart. You want others to recognize what a remarkable person you are and what benefits you'll bring to them. Remember, the most important question on others' minds is "What am I going to get out of this?"

Develop a brief (30-45 second) elevator pitch tailored to an audience that will likely help you achieve your personalized goal. Practice it. Say it aloud over and over again. Time yourself. Refine it. And deliver it to your mentors, family and friends. You may submit a recorded or written elevator pitch as an artifact for your final project.

Phase 3: Gather Resources

Having the right resources is essential to your success in the Energy and Utilities Industry. Mentors and contacts are resources that can help you significantly during and after your project. Mentors can be defined as, "experienced and trusted advisers." They can spur motivation, provide guidance, establish focus, and identify resources. They're critical to have in any project for a variety of reasons. A mentor helps with:

- Learner motivation
- Guidance/directions
- Keep learner on-target and focused
- Help with identifying and securing other resources (training, information, etc.)

Features to consider when choosing a mentor(s) include: Trustworthiness, accessibility, non-judgmental, resourceful, capable of problem solving, and knowledgeable of your current situation and future plans.

Selecting a mentor is a very personal experience. The right mentor can help you significantly during and after your project. What should you look for in a mentor?

- Be a person you trust
- Understand your current situation and future plans/purpose/motivation
- Willing to commit about 30 minutes to an hour each week on your capstone
- Keep you on track and focused on task
- Encourage without being judging
- Resourceful (has a decent idea of where to go to find required resources, etc.)
- Be able to suggest ways of getting obstacles

Resources to establish a mentor connection could include:

- Your immediate circle of connections,
- Your banker (if you are a business owner)
- Your customers or suppliers (if you are a business owner)
- Your local chamber of commerce members
- Your local State Department of Labor representatives
- Other business owner and professionals in advanced manufacturing
- A major university or college in your region that has resources in advanced manufacturing or career placement
- A nationally-recognized professional employment recruiting agency in your area
- Online networking: LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.

Start looking around and **compiling a list of 3-5 sources** where you might be able to find your mentor or a team of mentors. Remember, sessions with your mentor may require an hour 2-3 times per month.

Finally, **select your mentor, update your Project Charter**, and write a brief summary of why the selected mentor(s) are suitable.

The next phase is to begin to expand your network to help you achieve your roadmap goals.

Create a list of 100 people you are willing to contact and request a 15 minute discussion, in person when possible. Be sure to include the mentor or mentors you identified in earlier lessons. Consider everyone. The individuals you list do not have to be in manufacturing or DMD. A few suggestions...write down your neighbors, classmates, bankers, grocers, family friends, and people in clubs or on sports teams with you. You will reach out to a handful of people at a time.

During the brief, 15-minute sessions, you will ask your contact to review your one-page marketing document and provide feedback on one or two areas. We want the brief encounters to be convenient for your contacts so you may suggest meeting for coffee or going to their office. We suggest you schedule to meet with 3-10 people per week.

When you meet with your contacts, some examples of questions to ask include:

- Can you suggest other job titles I should be considering, based on your knowledge of the trends in the industry?
- Are there skills, not listed, that I should look to acquire?
- Are you able to suggest any other companies I should consider?
- Do you know anyone who works at any of the companies I have targeted who you would be willing to reach out to and make an introduction for me?

Remember, you only asked for 15 minutes, so adhere to that time limit. Try to get your questions answered while you are together, but if your contacts need time to think about their responses, request to follow up by phone or e-mail the following week.

Your goal is to expand your network and establish additional 15 minute sessions with other individuals. By growing your network, you will increase the likelihood of finding others who are willing to help you along your journey. Generally, people like to help people. This exercise will multiply your network and consequently expand your professional network within DMD.

While the following are widely recognized business practices in the United States, some cultures value them differently and therefore, should be respected. Dress neatly and appropriately. Say thank you. Be genuine. Shake hands. Make eye contact. Be polite. Be sincere. Be respectful. And listen.

