GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES AND SKILLS-BASED PATHWAYS FOR MID-CAREER WORKERS

- Mid-career workers, aged 40 to 59, form half of Singapore's resident workforce

- They are well represented in five job families: (i) Operations and Administration; (ii) Sales, Marketing and Customer Service; (iii) Human Resource; (iv) Finance and Accounting; and (v) Engineering and Technology

- As these job families undergo transformation, it is important for mid-career workers to consider upskilling or reskilling to stay versatile within their job families, or to take on opportunities to move into growth roles

- Some transition options require a greater skills top-up than others, but they may lead to potentially greater longer-term returns

- Mid-career workers should assess the different options available and select those that best support their own aspirations for career growth

In the last four chapters, we highlighted the range of **priority skills** and how these skills can enable our workforce to tap growth opportunities in the **Digital**, **Green**, and **Care Economies**.
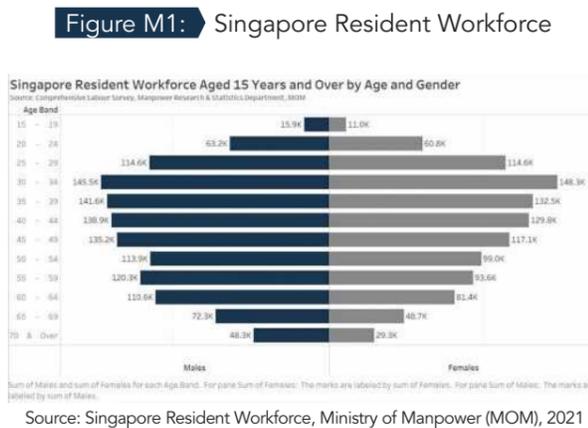
Many mid-career workers are in these five **job families**[1]: (i) Operations and Administration; (ii) Sales, Marketing and Customer Service; (iii) Human Resource; (iv) Finance and Accounting; And (v) Engineering and Technology.

This chapter takes the lens of **mid-career workers** to review the career options available if they want to tap on these growth opportunities. This chapter also suggests a simple framework to evaluate different skills-based training pathways to enable them to move into **growth roles** more confidently.

Majority of mid-career workers have 15-25 years of experience and are mainly in five job families

Today, based on official statistics from the Singapore Ministry of Manpower, mid-career workers, those aged between 40 and 59, form half of Singapore's working adult resident population (see Figure M1).

Figure M1:   Singapore Resident Workforce

Source: Singapore Resident Workforce, Ministry of Manpower (MOM), 2021

Provides administrative and organisational support to ensure smooth and efficient daily operations of an office or facility. Roles include freight inspector, transport executive/manager and warehouse assistant

OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

Jobs that entail customer engagement or interface to support entire value chain of customer service. Roles include sales and brand associate, customer service officer/assistant and business development manager

SALES, MARKETING AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

Manages employee lifecycle from recruitment, training and administering employee benefits. Roles include talent attraction associate, and performance rewards associate

HUMAN RESOURCE

Manage organisation's money efficiently, facilitates ethical and practical budgeting, and controls income and expenditure to ensure resource sufficiency for organisation's objectives. Roles include claims executive, audit associate and tax executive

FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING

Deals with design, manufacture and maintenance of infrastructure devices, tools, and information systems used by people on a daily basis. Roles include project manager, quality assurance engineer, and designer (engineering services)

ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

As these job families undergo transformation and job redesign, it is important for mid-career workers to consider **upskilling** or **reskilling**, to stay versatile within their job families, or to take on opportunities to move into **growth roles**.

With increasing technology adoption, changing business and operating models and rising focus on sustainable practices, the work content and skills needed by these roles are increasingly changing.

Figure M2:   Trends affecting changes in jobs and skills

TREND 1
Evolving operating models to meet new business needs and changing customer expectations

TREND 2
Accelerating adoption of digital and automation tools

TREND 3
Rising focus on sustainable practices

Source: Jobs Transformation Maps, Workforce Singapore, 2021

As the job content changes and demand for new skills increases, there is a need to help mid-career workers in these roles raise their career versatility, either to take on new tasks within the job family or to consider options to move out of the job family. It is also important that employers and training providers recognise the accumulated skills and experiences of these workers, when providing workplace and learning opportunities. In other words, it is best to 'stack' on the skills that mid-career workers already have, when considering their learning and professional growth (see Feature Story on the next page).

HR managerial roles increasingly require skills in applying tech-enabled service delivery solutions and data analytics to support more strategic functions and to anticipate workforce needs and the changing profiles of the talent pool.

Operations and Administration job roles require an understanding of the workflows augmented by Industry 4.0. Employees can expect that there will be a demand for them to take on more data-driven tasks, such as planning and forecasting. They might also expect to drive process improvements and optimisation activities using digital tools and automation technologies.

Finance job roles are increasingly about embedding sustainable practices. There is a strong and growing demand for sustainable finance talent as Singapore plays a larger role as a sustainable finance hub for the region.

Upskilling is the process of learning additional skills to move to other roles within the same job family. For example, a customer service officer upskills in *Digital Marketing* to move into a marketing executive job role within the same job family.

Reskilling is the process of learning new skills to move into a different job role in another job family. For example, a customer service officer from the Sales, Marketing and Customer Service job family reskills into a compliance analyst in the Finance and Accounting job family.

[1]   Job families are groupings of jobs related by common job roles. Job roles in a job family require similar knowledge, skills and abilities; have a continuum of knowledge, skills and abilities that represent a career path from the lowest to the highest level job

FEATURE STORY:

MR CLEMENT YEN, Customer Service Officer to Junior Technician
at Wah Son Engineering

and

MS LIM HEE JOO, Executive Director, Wah Son Engineering

Mr Clement Yen has more than 15 years of experience as a customer service officer at a call centre. After being in the service line, Clement decided to take a leap of faith to make a career switch into a more hands-on technical role to challenge himself. When he saw Wah Son Engineering's job posting for a Junior Technician position that required no prior experience, Clement was determined to take on the challenge.

Despite having no technical background, he had the following determining factors: his willingness to learn and relearn, very positive learning attitude, and good engagement and communication skills.

According to Ms Lim Hee Joo, Executive Director of local precision engineering firm Wah Son Engineering, mid-careerists bring with them an ocean of experience and cross-industry perspectives. These attributes allow them to offer fresh insights to current processes and be more innovative when executing tasks. In Clement's case, he was able to complement the skill sets of his colleagues with his strong customer orientation and stakeholder management skills that he has homed in his previous service role.

As part of the transition, the apprenticeship programme that Wah Son Engineering had put in place also enabled Clement to learn technical skills on the job. The coaching and buddy culture eased Clement's transition into the new role as support from his supervisors and peers addressed his many questions and hands-on guidance allowed him to acquire new skills while strengthening existing ones.

A piece of advice that Clement would like to give other fellow mid-careerist switchers, is that there is no age limit to learning! Anyone is capable of going beyond their psychological boundaries and work towards their goals. However, no achievement is possible without hard work. From the employer perspective, Hee Joo also encouraged other employers to be realistic when hiring mid-careerists and allow them time to navigate their way into the new job role. This will allow mid-careerists to appreciate the new role, work culture, and environment that they are in. From learning agility to resilience, mid-careerists have more to offer to any industry. To reap the benefits as an employer, having an open heart and mind is critical.

INDUSTRY VOICE

HRnetGroup Limited

ADELINE SIM

**Co-owner/Executive Director
and Chief Corporate Officer,
HRnetGroup**

In Singapore today, it is imperative that anyone interested in having a career is constantly growing, evolving, and undergoing training. It is much too late to wait till you are out of a job to work on the 'top-ups' you need in hard and soft skills to land another job. You have to move in tandem with the macro environment whilst you are still employed, and this applies across all levels of seniority.

Job titles may not have innovated much, but there has been a distinct change in job content over a very short span of time. Not so long ago, someone in talent acquisition might dismiss InstaLive and Telegram channels as being platforms 'for kids', but today, they are very effective tools of the trade. The same goes for job seekers in marketing who have not assiduously kept up with search engine optimisation and the platforms and media on which their desired demographics can be found. They may previously have held the title of 'marketing executive', but upon leaving employment, they struggle to find a job as they no longer have the skills for the role.

Employers have a critical role to play to ensure their employees do not 'work themselves out' of the workforce. If lifelong training is hard coded into KPIs, we reduce the likelihood of having managers who are ill-equipped to manage hybrid teams or have no knowledge of available tools and who, as a result, have become less employable.

In a very open economy like Singapore's, change increasingly comes in gusts and it is now rather uncommon to stay in one job for decades till retirement. So, the question is how to ensure that there are options available when the time comes to seek a new role. Moving into a completely new area is one possibility, but less dramatic options include continuing to play a similar role but for an adjacent industry. The critical thing to remember is that you must be able to value-add no matter where you go, so do make it a point to gain new skills as a way of life!

> " In Singapore today, it is imperative that anyone interested in having a career is constantly growing, evolving, and undergoing training. "

Opportunities for mid-career workers in Sales, Marketing and Customer Service job roles

There are various transition options for mid-career workers to either upskill and move to adjacent roles within the same job family or reskill to move into growth roles in other job families. Some options require a greater skills top-up than others, but they may lead to potentially greater longer-term returns.

For example, mid-career workers in Sales, Marketing and Customer Service job roles typically have *Customer Management*, *Service Excellence*, *Business Negotiation, Business Development*, and *Adaptability* skills that are required by other different job roles within the same job family or across job families.

Because of this, they can potentially leverage these skills to move to adjacent roles within the same job family, or to growth roles in other job families. In this analysis, growth roles refer to job roles that exhibit sustained moderate-to-strong hiring demand over a period of one year.

Figure M3 shows the different job families where mid-career workers in Sales, Marketing and Customer Service job roles can move into. The thickness of the lines denotes the number of potential job role transitions; the thicker the line, the more potential job role transitions there are, based on the similarities between work content and skills required. For example, the line between the two Sales, Marketing and Customer Service job families is the thickest, as many of the job roles are similar in terms of work content and skills required. Hence, the greatest number of job role transitions are within this same job family.

Figure M4 also shows examples of pathways for a customer service officer/bank teller upskilling into a marketing executive role within the same job family or reskilling into a compliance analyst role within the Finance and Accounting job family. The diagram includes programmes that can help them glide into these new roles by targeting the skills top-ups required.

Figure M3: Potential pathways for mid-career workers in Sales, Marketing and Customer Service job roles
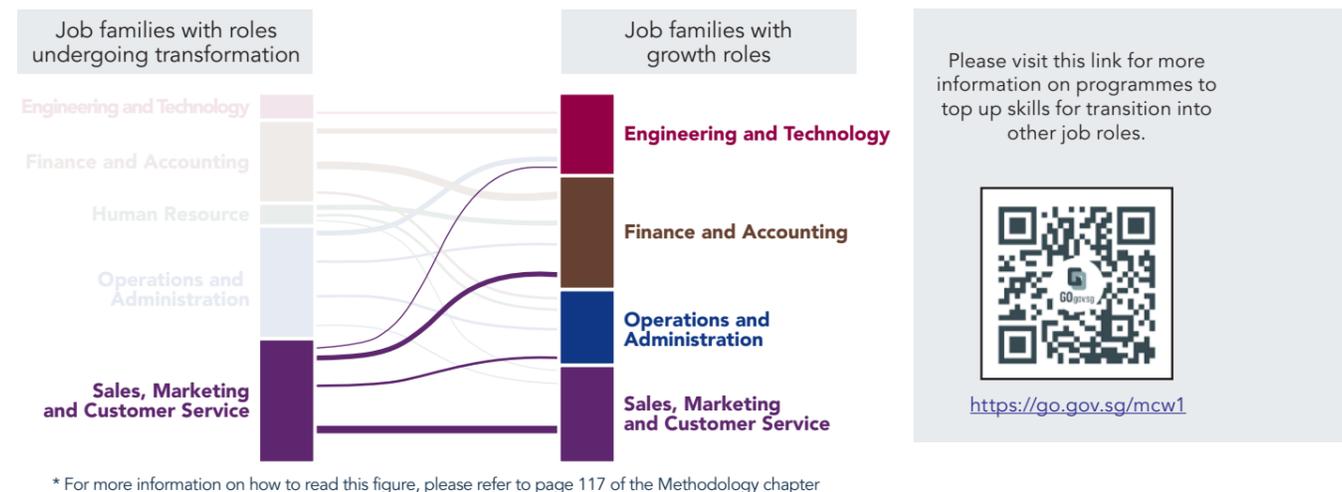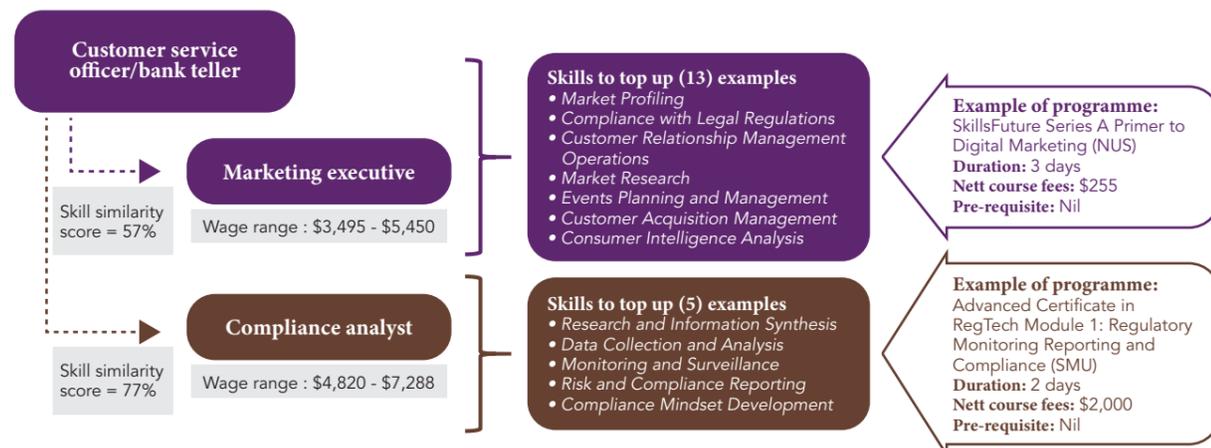

Please visit this link for more information on programmes to top up skills for transition into other job roles.

https://go.gov.sg/mcw1

* For more information on how to read this figure, please refer to page 117 of the Methodology chapter

Figure M4: Potential transition pathways of a customer service officer/bank teller moving into similar seniority roles within/across job families

Customer service officer/bank teller

Marketing executive
Skill similarity score = 57%
Wage range : $3,495 - $5,450

Skills to top up (13) examples
• Market Profiling
• Compliance with Legal Regulations
• Customer Relationship Management Operations
• Market Research
• Events Planning and Management
• Customer Acquisition Management
• Consumer Intelligence Analysis

Example of programme:
SkillsFuture Series A Primer to Digital Marketing (NUS)
Duration: 3 days
Nett course fees: $255
Pre-requisite: Nil

Compliance analyst
Skill similarity score = 77%
Wage range : $4,820 - $7,288

Skills to top up (5) examples
• Research and Information Synthesis
• Data Collection and Analysis
• Monitoring and Surveillance
• Risk and Compliance Reporting
• Compliance Mindset Development

Example of programme:
Advanced Certificate in RegTech Module 1: Regulatory Monitoring Reporting and Compliance (SMU)
Duration: 2 days
Nett course fees: $2,000
Pre-requisite: Nil

FEATURE STORY:

MS NELLY LEE, travel product planner to DevOps engineer

Ms Nelly Lee has 20 years of experience in the tourism industry as a travel product planner. Living through the global COVID-19 pandemic resulted in dramatic changes in her life and this was when she decided to make a career switch.

Based on her experience in using numerous travel technologies, such as virtual reality tours, robot technology in hotels, facial recognition check-in facilities and the Internet-of-Things (IoT), Nelly was determined to acquire new skills

and qualifications to launch a new career in technology. Hence, she enrolled in the SGUnited 'Mid-Careers Pathways Programme (Company Training) in Cloud Support and DevOps' under Microsoft and Generation Singapore's #GetReadySG initiative. During her apprenticeship, she got to apply her skills in cloud and automation and was able to get a job offer as a DevOps engineer with a tech company within three months.

Opportunities for mid-career workers in Operations and Administration job roles

Similarly, mid-career workers in Operations and Administration job roles typically have *Business Continuity Management*, *Project Management*, *Operations Risk Management*, *Innovation Management*, and *Human-Robot Collaboration* skills that are required by other different job roles within the same job family or across job families

into Engineering and Technology, Finance and Sales.

Because of this, they can potentially leverage these skills to move to adjacent roles within the same job family or move to growth roles in other job families.

Figure M5: Potential pathways for mid-career workers in Operations and Administration job roles

Please visit this link for more information on programmes to top up skills for transition into other job roles.

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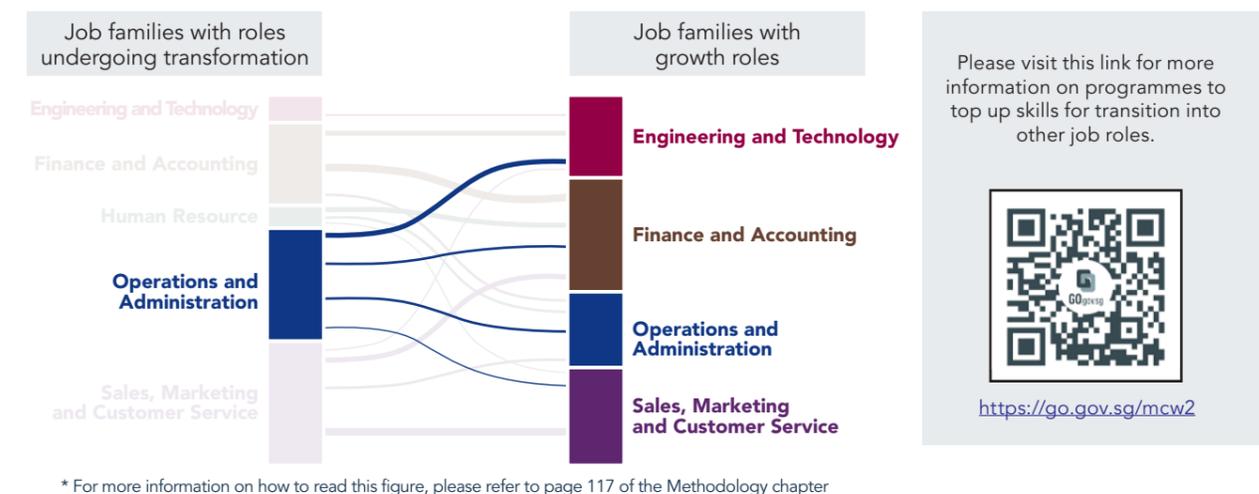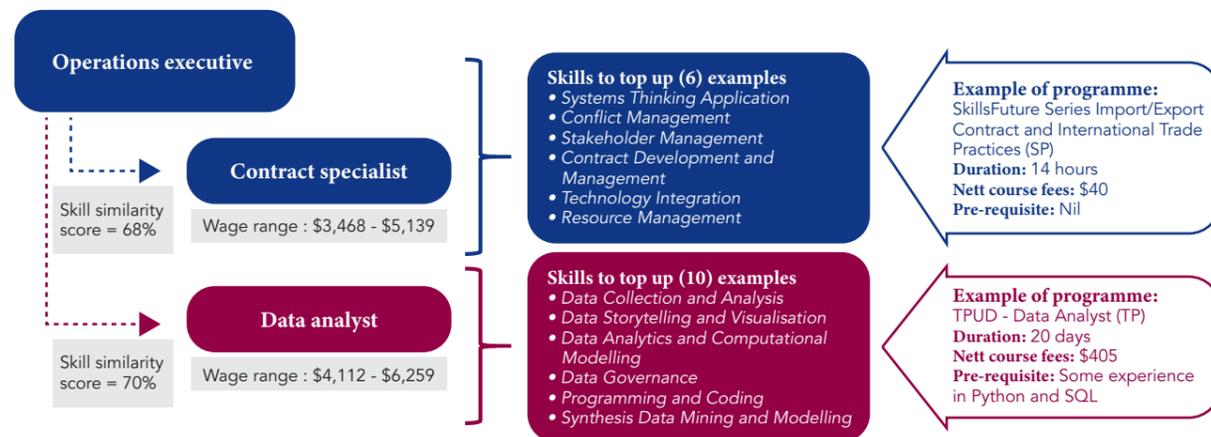* For more information on how to read this figure, please refer to page 117 of the Methodology chapter

Figure M5 shows the different job families where mid-career workers in Operations and Administration job roles can move into. Again, the thickness of the lines denotes the number of potential job role transitions; the thicker the line, the higher the number of job role transitions

between the two job families based on the similarities between the work content and skills required. Due to the high level of similarity, there are many possible transitions to Finance and Accounting and/or Engineering and Technology job families.

Figure M6 shows examples of pathways to upskill an operations executive into a contract specialist role within the same job family, or take on a bolder career move to pivot into other growth roles like a data analyst within the Engineering and Technology job family. The diagram includes programmes that can help them glide into these new roles by targeting the skills top-ups required.

Potential transition pathways of an operations executive moving into similar seniority roles within/across job families

Operations executive

Contract specialist
Skill similarity score = 68%
Wage range : $3,468 - $5,139

Skills to top up (6) examples
• Systems Thinking Application
• Conflict Management
• Stakeholder Management
• Contract Development and Management
• Technology Integration
• Resource Management

Example of programme:
SkillsFuture Series Import/Export Contract and International Trade Practices (SP)
Duration: 14 hours
Nett course fees: $40
Pre-requisite: Nil

Data analyst
Skill similarity score = 70%
Wage range : $4,112 - $6,259

Skills to top up (10) examples
• Data Collection and Analysis
• Data Storytelling and Visualisation
• Data Analytics and Computational Modelling
• Data Governance
• Programming and Coding
• Synthesis Data Mining and Modelling

Example of programme:
TPUD - Data Analyst (TP)
Duration: 20 days
Nett course fees: $405
Pre-requisite: Some experience in Python and SQL

FEATURE STORY:

MR GAZALI AHMAD, taxi driver to junior full stack developer

Mr Gazali Ahmad, 53, has taken up several jobs, such as civil engineer, insurance agent, trainer, and taxi driver. Even though he had been driving for seven years, he was hungry for growth and wanted a career change.

Although he was initially worried about his age, he made a bold move to enrol in the SGUnited 'Mid-Careers Pathways Programme (Company Training) in Junior Full Stack Developer' under Microsoft and Generation Singapore's #GetReadySG initiative. Five months into his apprenticeship, he got a job as a junior MuleSoft developer.

Gazali was able to transfer the skills he had gained over his years of experience to his new work environment, such as time management skills, data analytics skills, and communication and interpersonal skills. The project ended after seven months, and he was able to secure a new role as Java developer in another technology company within three weeks.

Opportunities for mid-career workers in Human Resource job roles

Likewise, mid-career workers in Human Resource job roles typically have *Employee Communication Management*, *Human Resource Analytics and Insights*, *Learning Needs Analysis*, *Talent Capability Assessment* and *Human Resource Practices Implementation* skills that are required by other different job roles within the same job family or across job families into Finance, Operations and Administration, and Sales.
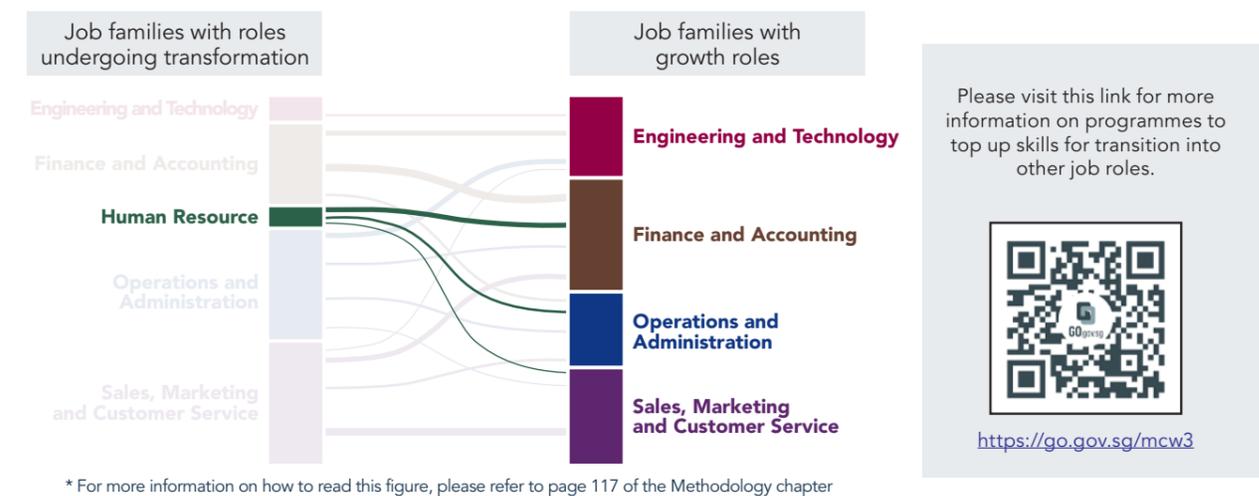
Because of this, they can potentially leverage these skills to move to adjacent roles within the same Human Resource job family or move to growth roles in other job families.

Figure M7 shows the different job families where mid-career workers in Human Resource job roles can move into. Due to the adjacencies of the work content and skills similarities of the impacted Human Resource roles, there are more job role transitions to adjacent growth roles in the Finance and Accounting job family compared to other job families. Hence, the line linking the Human Resource and Finance and Accounting job families is relatively thicker than the rest.

Figure M8 shows examples of pathways to upskill a talent management associate into a talent management executive role within the same job family or reskill into a learning facilitator role within the Sales, Marketing and Customer Service job family. The diagram includes programmes that can help them glide into these new roles by targeting the skills top-ups required.

Potential pathways for mid-career workers in Human Resource job roles

Job families with roles undergoing transformation

Engineering and Technology
Finance and Accounting
Human Resource
Operations and Administration
Sales, Marketing and Customer Service

Job families with growth roles

Engineering and Technology
Finance and Accounting
Operations and Administration
Sales, Marketing and Customer Service

Please visit this link for more information on programmes to top up skills for transition into other job roles.

https://go.gov.sg/mcw3

* For more information on how to read this figure, please refer to page 117 of the Methodology chapter

Potential transition pathways of a talent management associate/executive moving into similar seniority roles within/across job family

Associate talent management and learning and organisational devt

Executive talent management and learning and organisational devt
Skill similarity score = 68%
Wage range : $3,059 - $4,567

Skills to top up (10) examples
• HR Systems Management
• Learning and Development Programme Management
• Performance Management
• Employee Mobility Management
• Voluntary Exit Management
• Data Management

Example of programme:
Post-Diploma Certificate in HR and Talent Management (NYP)
Duration: 15 days
Nett course fees: $290
Pre-requisite: Nil

Learning facilitator
Skill similarity score = 57%
Wage range : $4,820 - $7,288

Skills to top up (15) examples
• Learning Needs Analysis
• Talent Capability Assessment
• Data Management
• Research Data Analysis
• Organisational Impact Analysis
• Skills Framework Adoption

Example of programme:
WSQ Advanced Certificate in Learning and Performance
Nett course fees: $590
Pre-requisite: Nil

FEATURE STORY:

MS FARIDAH BEGUM, corporate support officer to enrolled nurse, obstetrics and gynaecology (O&G)

Being a corporate support officer (HR administration) for more than 10 years, Ms Faridah Begum was providing support for human resource functions, including leave matters, medical records, performance management and training and development. This required her to possess project and time management skills, good communication and interpersonal skills, meticulous attention to details, and the ability to form working relationships with people at all levels.

With limited opportunities for career advancement, Faridah wanted to make a transition to a skilled career with good learning and progression opportunities. With encouragement from her family and friends,

she enrolled in the Nitec in Nursing, 18-month programme, at ITE. The classroom training was coupled with attachments to hospitals for on-the-job-training.

Having met turbulent waters in the beginning, it was not an easy feat for her to switch to a new industry. Often, she questioned her decision to switch careers. Nonetheless, thanks to her experience in paying meticulous attention to detail and good interpersonal skills, Faridah learned on the job fast and was determined to excel in her new role as an enrolled nurse at an O&G specialist clinic. Her advice to other mid-careerists is, "Perseverance, hard work and determination will help you to cross all hurdles and help you reach your pinnacle."
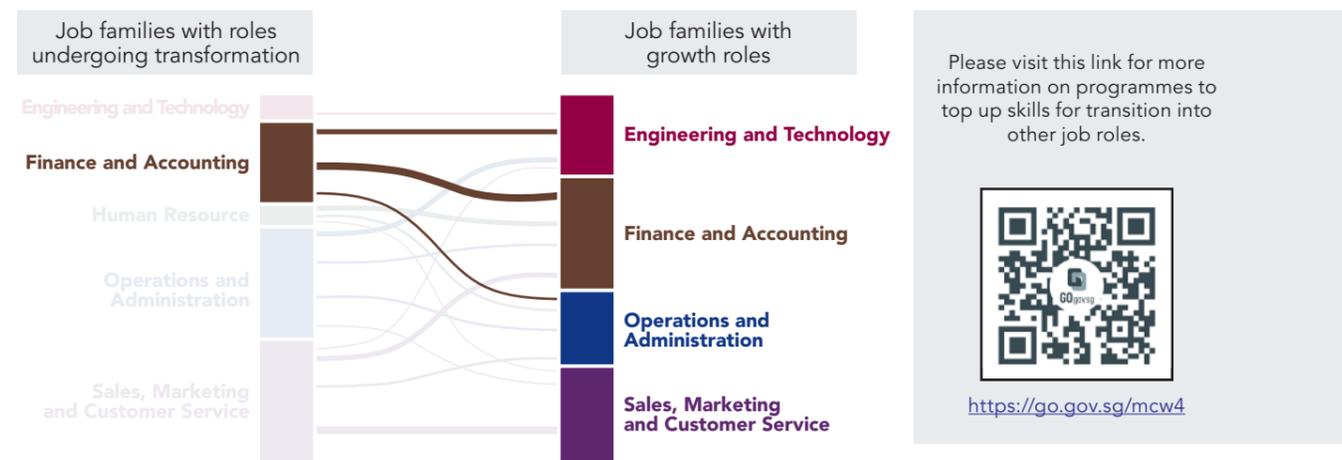
Opportunities for mid-career workers in Finance and Accounting job roles

Mid-career workers in Finance and Accounting job roles typically have *Accounting Standards*, *Financial Statements Analysis*, *Stakeholder Management*, *Project Execution and Control*, and *Risk Assessment* skills that are required by other different job roles within the same job family, or

across job families into Engineering and Technology, and Operations and Administration.

Because of this, they can potentially leverage these skills to move to adjacent roles within the same Finance and Accounting job family or move to adjacent growth roles in other job families.

Figure M9: Potential pathways for mid-career workers in Finance and Accounting job roles

* For more information on how to read this figure, please refer to page 117 of the Methodology chapter

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Figure M9 shows the different job families where mid-career workers in Finance and Accounting job roles can move into. Due to the specialised nature of the work tasks in this area, the greatest growth opportunities lie within the same family. Bolder moves entail transiting to the Engineering and Technology job family.

Figure M10 shows examples of pathways to upskill an audit associate into a financial forensic associate role within the same job family, or reskill into a monitoring, surveillance or testing executive role within the Operations and Administration job family. The programmes shown can help them glide into these new roles by targeting the skills top-ups required.

Figure M10: Potential transition pathways of an audit associate/assistant associate moving into similar seniority roles within/across job families

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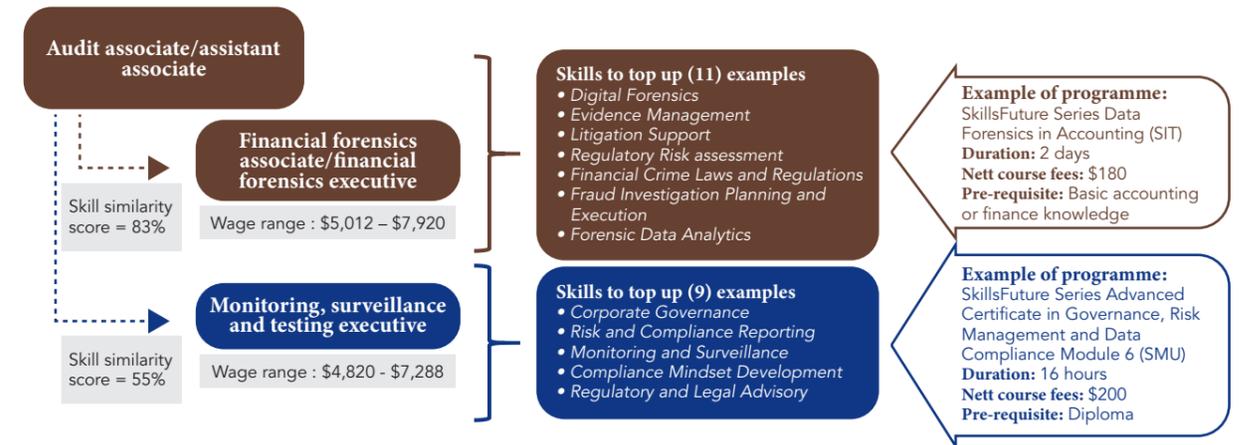
FEATURE STORY:

MS INDRIE TJAHJADI, auditor (finance and accounting) to consultant, sustainability and climate change, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)

Ms Indrie Tjahjadi has more than 20 years of experience in the finance and accounting sector as an auditor. During these years, Indrie has been primarily involved in financial statements auditing and capital market transactions for corporate clients.

However, four years ago, she wanted to do something different while keeping her passion alive for auditing, and she moved to the sustainability and climate change team within PwC. Her role involves sustainability assurance practice, managing green loans and green bond assurance and helping companies set up sustainability postures, strategies and policies.

Based on her experience in dealing with financial numbers, managing corporate clients, and compliance reporting, Indrie was determined to acquire new skills and make her career move into sustainability.

As this area is relatively new, she has been doing a lot of research on sustainability best practices overseas, which she can adapt and adopt locally. Her passion to learn and explore new things was one of the key drivers for her to make the switch. Although progression in this new role was slower than expected as she started from scratch, she is looking to learn vastly in this nascent, growing area.

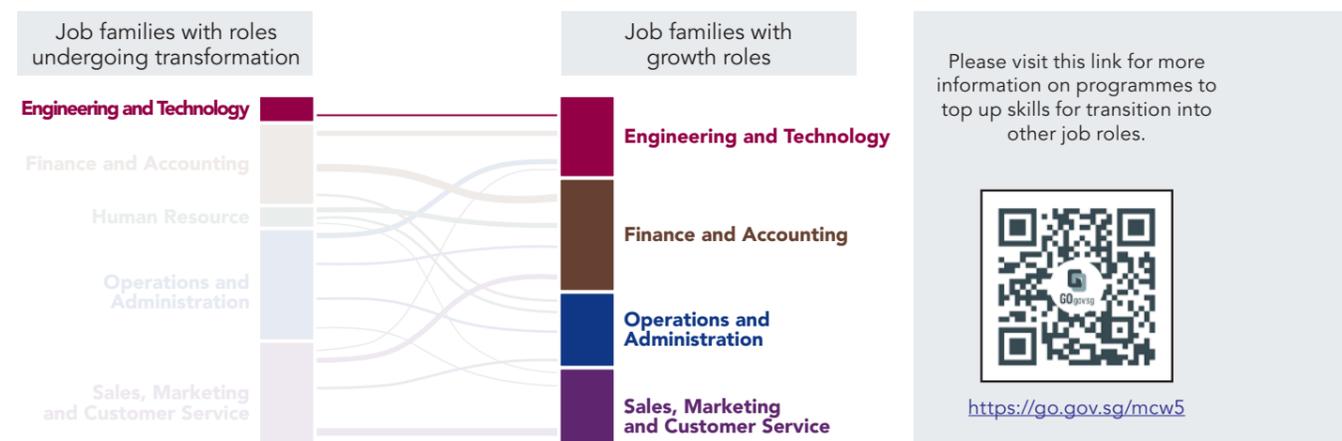## Opportunities for mid-career workers in Engineering and Technology job roles

Mid-career workers in Engineering and Technology job roles typically include *Quality System Management*, *Continuous Improvement Management*, *Data and Statistical Analytics*, *Business Needs Analysis*, *Stakeholder Management* and *Project Management* skills, which are required by other different job roles within the same job family.

They can potentially leverage these skills to move to other adjacent roles within engineering or technology related roles.

Figure M11 shows potential pathways for mid-career workers in Engineering and Technology job roles. The adjacent roles are generally found within the same job family due to the technical nature of these job roles.
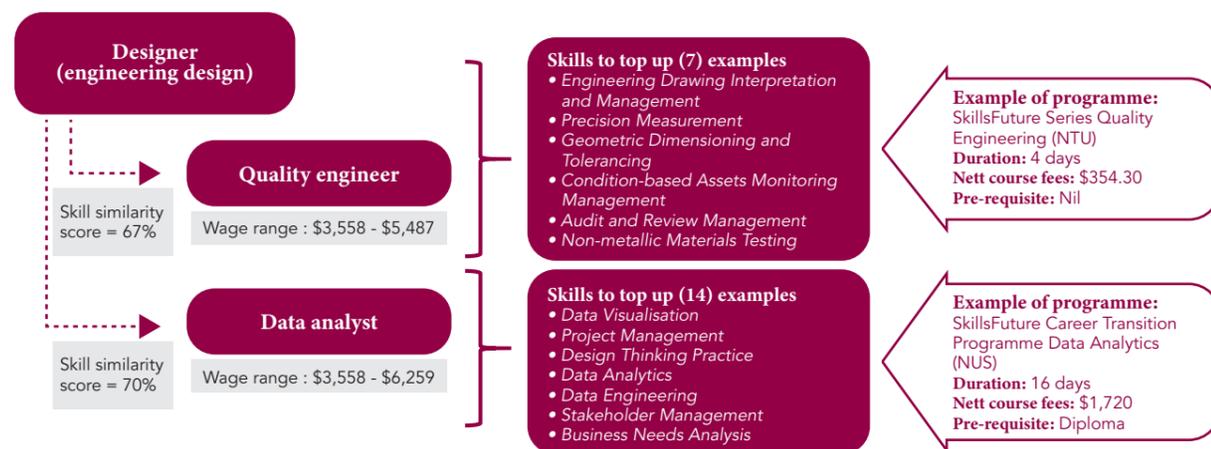
Figure M12 shows examples of pathways to upskill a designer role into a quality engineer role within the same job family, or into a data analyst role. The programmes shown can help them glide into these new roles by targeting the skills top-ups required.

Figure M11: Potential pathways for mid-career workers in Engineering and Technology job roles

Job families with roles undergoing transformation

Job families with growth roles

Please visit this link for more information on programmes to top up skills for transition into other job roles.

Engineering and Technology
Finance and Accounting
Human Resource
Operations and Administration
Sales, Marketing and Customer Service

Engineering and Technology
Finance and Accounting
Operations and Administration
Sales, Marketing and Customer Service

https://go.gov.sg/mcw5

* For more information on how to read this figure, please refer to page 117 of the Methodology chapter

Figure M12: Potential transition pathways of a designer (engineering services) moving into similar seniority roles within job family

Designer (engineering design)

Quality engineer
Skill similarity score = 67%
Wage range : $3,558 - $5,487

Data analyst
Skill similarity score = 70%
Wage range : $3,558 - $6,259

Skills to top up (7) examples
• *Engineering Drawing Interpretation and Management*
• *Precision Measurement*
• *Geometric Dimensioning and Tolerancing*
• *Condition-based Assets Monitoring Management*
• *Audit and Review Management*
• *Non-metallic Materials Testing*

Example of programme:
SkillsFuture Series Quality Engineering (NTU)
Duration: 4 days
Nett course fees: $354.30
Pre-requisite: Nil

Skills to top up (14) examples
• *Data Visualisation*
• *Project Management*
• *Design Thinking Practice*
• *Data Analytics*
• *Data Engineering*
• *Stakeholder Management*
• *Business Needs Analysis*

Example of programme:
SkillsFuture Career Transition Programme Data Analytics (NUS)
Duration: 16 days
Nett course fees: $1,720
Pre-requisite: Diploma

FEATURE STORY:

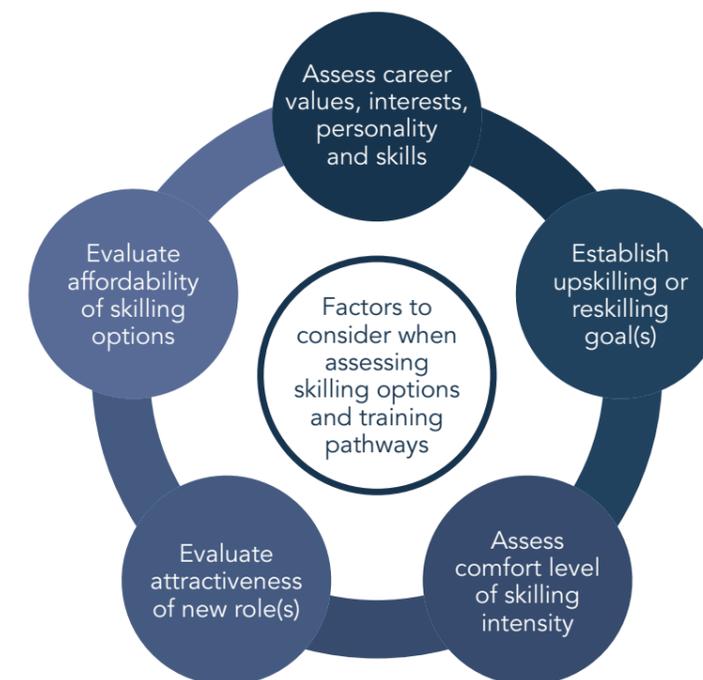## MDM AMINAH MOHAMED LAH, administrative manager to business analyst

Mdm Aminah is a mechanical engineer by training. She has been in finance, procurement, and general administration roles for the past 20 years. During the pandemic, the many SGUnited programmes in technology made her consider a career switch, as she is equipped with skills in *Data and Statistical Analytics, Business Needs Analysis, Stakeholder Management* and *Project Management*, due to her engineering background.

She enrolled in the SGUnited 'Mid-Career Pathways Programme (Company Training) in Business Intelligence and Data Analyst'. This training, together with the project-based internship at a bank, successfully landed her into a full-time business analyst role with that same bank. Mdm Aminah notes that "at this age, the experience of learning new knowledge and skills is amazing! I enjoy the breadth of learning and get a great sense of satisfaction upon the completion of every engagement".

Mid-career workers can use a simple five-step approach to assess the different options available based on the intensity, attractiveness, and affordability, and select those that best support their own aspirations for career growth

This section shows a simple five-step approach on what factors mid-career workers can consider when evaluating the different skills-based pathways available to find the ones better suited for them.

Figure M13: Recommended considerations when assessing skills-based pathways

Factors to consider when assessing skilling options and training pathways

Assess career values, interests, personality and skills

Establish upskilling or reskilling goal(s)

Assess comfort level of skilling intensity

Evaluate attractiveness of new role(s)

Evaluate affordability of skilling options

A. Assess career values, interests, personality and skills

Making a mid-career switch requires a holistic consideration of the individual's interests, strengths, skills, and career values. Here are some questions to guide mid-career workers:

> **What are my career values?**
> In other words, what represents the beliefs that I have about what is important in my work and what makes it meaningful for me?

> **How aligned are my career values to my skills?**

> **How willing am I to take up a skilling programme and learn new skills?**

B. Establish upskilling or reskilling goals

To assess which skilling options or pathways best meet their needs, mid-career workers need to be clear what their end goals are. This can vary, whether they are moving into adjacent industries or reskilling into completely new areas. Career coaches from Workforce Singapore (WSG) recommend that the best way is to split into long- and short-term goals[2]. Long-term goals provide mid-career workers with the big picture about where they eventually want to reach, while short-term ones chart the different steps to take to achieve a long-term goal.

With clarity on upskilling or reskilling goals, mid-career workers can be more focused in finding relevant courses to address their skills gaps, assessing the different modalities to balance work and training (if employed), researching available job openings for new the job roles and talking to friends, family or mentors on the career transition process. SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG) and WSG has a wide network of Skills Ambassadors and Career Coaches across the island who can help advise on any of these questions.
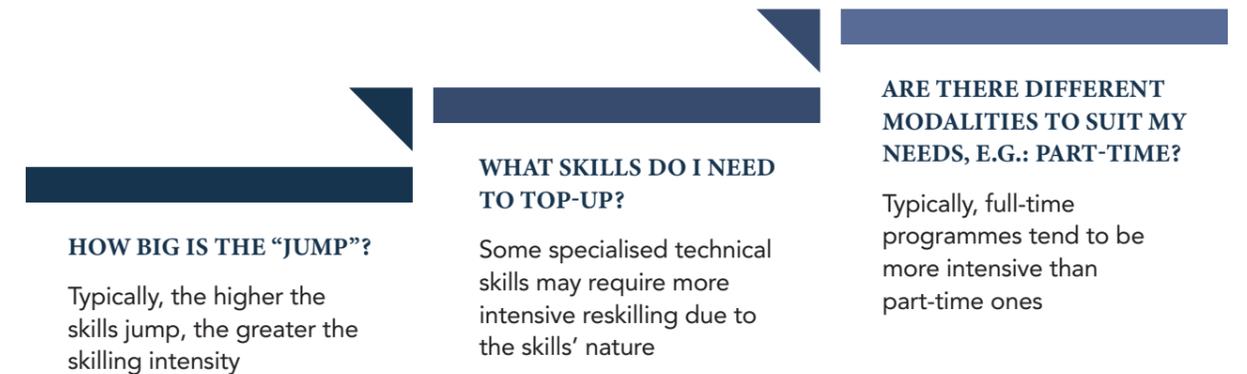
Short-term goals are goals that you want to achieve soon, usually within a year. Long-term goals are goals that you want to achieve further in the future, usually takes a year or more.

Goals should be:

(a) Specific – Are there specific roles/sectors to move into?

(b) Measurable - What are the tangible and trackable aspects?

(c) Achievable - What can you do to achieve them?

(d) Relevant - To your long-term career goals; and

(e) Time-based – What is the ideal timeline to achieve this goal?

C. Assess comfort level of skilling intensity

Skilling intensity can be determined by three key factors:

HOW BIG IS THE "JUMP"?

Typically, the higher the skills jump, the greater the skilling intensity

WHAT SKILLS DO I NEED TO TOP-UP?

Some specialised technical skills may require more intensive reskilling due to the skills' nature

ARE THERE DIFFERENT MODALITIES TO SUIT MY NEEDS, E.G.: PART-TIME?

Typically, full-time programmes tend to be more intensive than part-time ones

FEATURE STORY:

MR GABRIEL LAM, Chief Operating Officer, Shalom Movers Pte. Ltd.

Mr Gabriel Lam, chief operations officer at Shalom Movers shared that, at Shalom, several mid-career workers from non-logistics sectors like finance, banking and real estate are hired. "Qualifications are not all that matter. These mid-career workers bring with them an ocean of experience and cross-industry perspectives. These attributes allow them to offer fresh perspectives to current processes and be more innovative when executing tasks," he reiterated, when asked about what are some factors that Shalom considers when hiring mid-career workers.

Shalom has been recruiting mid-career workers from the job market as well as through Workforce Singapore's Career Conversion Programmes for Supply Chain Professionals. It places particular emphasis on the goals of these mid-career workers joining them. Prior to hiring, the organisation conducts a learning needs analysis and offer a structured career pathway for the mid-career workers after considering whether there is a good fit for both parties. With this system in place, Shalom can elevate the existing capabilities of mid-career workers and provide them better growth opportunities within the organisation.

Individual capabilities are also matched with a conducive workplace environment at Shalom. As an important first step to build the confidence of newly hired mid-career workers, Shalom adopts a buddy system to ease them into the organisation. Though these mid-career workers come with plenty of work experience, they are still new to the culture and operating systems at their new workplace. On-the-job training is followed by a career transition programme to ease newly hired mid-career workers into their new roles. This allows the workers ample time to orientate into their new roles and gives assurance that Shalom provides the necessary resources to support their learning in the organisation.

Gabriel's advice to other employers is to be realistic when hiring mid-career workers and allow them time to navigate their way in the new job roles. This will allow them to appreciate the new roles, work culture and environment. With their learning agility and resilience, mid-career workers have more to offer to any industry. To embrace the benefits as an employer, having an open mind is critical.

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2 Source: Goal-Setting Tips You Need for a Successful Mid-Career Switch, Workforce Singapore, retrieved 2022

D. Evaluate attractiveness of new roles

There are three factors mid-career workers can consider when evaluating the attractiveness of new job roles before deciding to make a switch:

ARE THERE ENOUGH JOB OPENINGS IN THE NEW ROLE?

The more job openings that are available for the new role, the higher the chances of accessing the role

WHAT IS THE EXPECTED GROWTH PATH FOR THE NEW ROLE?

This can be assessed based on how sustained the hiring demand for the new role is over time

WHAT WAGE GROWTH DO I WANT TO TARGET?

When reskilling into completely new industries or job families, there may be flat, or negative, wage growth, if we are starting at entry-level positions for the new role. For example, a junior full-stack developer

E. Evaluate affordability of skilling options

Apart from the above factors, another consideration is the affordability of reskilling programmes. Today, there are many courses that enjoy SkillsFuture funding, especially under the SkillsFuture Mid-Career Support Package[3]. These training programmes provided under the support package also include skills and training advisory to help trainees select suitable courses, with employment facilitation and career coaching activities integrated into the programme design.

SkillsFuture Career Transition Programme (SCTP)

A train-and-place programme that supports mid-career individuals to acquire industry-relevant skills to improve their employability and pivot to new sectors or job roles. Available in a part-time or full-time format and ranging from three to 12 months, SCTP courses are funded by SSG at up to 95% of course fees, covering emerging skills in Digital, Green, and Care Economies.

SCTP page:
https://go.gov.sg/sctp-home

SCTP course listings:
https://go.gov.sg/sctp-courses

SGUnited Mid-career Pathways Programme for Mid-career Individuals and Career Conversion Programmes

WSG also has a series of programmes that match jobseekers to growth roles and supports company-sponsored training to reskill mid-career workers with new capabilities for the new/redesigned jobs.

SGUnited Mid-career Pathways Programme for Mid-career Individuals:
https://go.gov.sg/sgu-mid

Career Conversion Programmes:
https://go.gov.sg/ccp-mid

Additional SkillsFuture Credit (Mid-Career Support)

To help mid-career workers manage remaining out-of-pocket costs, they can also pay using the additional SkillsFuture Credit (Mid-Career Support) given to individuals aged 40 to 60, under the SkillsFuture Mid-Career Support Package.

https://go.gov.sg/add-sfc

SkillsFuture Series

In addition, mid-career workers can also look to modular SkillsFuture Series courses to pick up emerging skills in the Digital, Green, and Care Economies as part of pre-emptive upskilling.

https://go.gov.sg/sf-series

Conclusion

This chapter highlights actual examples of skills-based pathways, as well as individuals who have embarked on these pathways, to demonstrate how both 'bite sized' upskilling and bolder moves might be realistically pursued. SSG is working with MOM and partners to make this information more accessible and available on a self-help basis to the public. In the meantime, we encourage mid-career workers to approach any of SSG's and WSG's networks of Skills Ambassadors or Career Coaches.

Employers also play a key role in recognising the skills that mid-career workers bring to their organisations and providing them with the right workplace environment to facilitate career growth and transition. In doing so, employers will be able to better tap the full potential of this important part of our workforce.