15 Minute Next Move Map

Turn one career question into two possible directions and a manageable step to learn more.

Save a working copy. Open it in a PDF app that supports forms, fill it in, save, then reopen to check your answers. Use short phrases that fit the visible boxes; shorten an entry if a box is full.

Narrow the decision

Use this when a career decision feels too broad. Have your calendar and any relevant notes nearby. Allow about 15 minutes for a first pass; you do not have to decide today. Short phrases are enough.

1 The decision in one sentence

What are you deciding, and by when does it matter?

2 Name two directions you could realistically explore. If all you know is 'I need to leave,' name what needs to change: hours, tasks, location or conditions. Staying for now with a specific change can be an option.

Option A

Option B

3 A minimum condition must be met for an option to be workable. A preference matters but allows a tradeoff. Make each concrete enough to check.

One minimum condition

One preference

Fictional example

Sam: 'Should I change roles before my course starts in September?' A: stay and request fixed hours. B: explore service operations roles. Minimum: finish by 5 p.m. Preference: hybrid work. Fixed hours in either option are not yet confirmed.

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Choose what to clarify next

4 Separate evidence from a guess. A job title, advertisement or one person's experience may leave important details unconfirmed. Add the source and date to what you know.

What I know and its source

One assumption or unknown

5 The question that matters most

Which answer could change whether A or B meets your minimum?

6 One small step and when I will take it

Name the source, question or brief trial, plus a date or time.

Fictional next step

Sam knows their current hours from their contract, checked Monday. They assume operations roles offer earlier finishes. Next: on Tuesday, ask someone in that role about actual hours; then compare the answer with the minimum. This is research, not a commitment to leave.

- [ ] I have two workable directions to investigate.
- [ ] My minimum is distinct from my preference.
- [ ] My next step addresses a specific unknown and has a time.

If information is still missing, that is a usable result. Take your clarification step, record what it changes, and revisit the map. Do not force a winner or treat a missed minimum as a minor drawback.

If you want to explore further

If this map has narrowed your question, keep it as a starting point. A larger decision may need a fuller comparison and more evidence. The Next Move Decision System is the related toolkit for developing your career decision beyond this first map. If useful, look for the toolkit by name at www.directionbychoice.com.