# Professional IT
## CP50061R

## Element 2:
## Career Path Planning Report

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# Abstract

This report states the career aspirations of Manuel Munoz (21076464), student at the University of West London (UWL), within five years of obtaining his graduation for the degree in the IT field that he is studying at the moment. To analyse the possible career paths after his graduation, Manuel Munoz has selected two distinctive jobs, which are evaluated and described on this report, concluding the end of the document with a solid conclusion where Manuel Munoz selects one of the job that has been mentioned on the report, and argument his choice of selection. The conclusion also includes a realistic choice based on his academic aspirations after the graduation.

# Background

Before presenting the two distinctive jobs, which inevitable will result in two different carer paths, it is necessary to have a brief overview of Manuel Munoz background. He is a mature student at UWL, coursing a part time three years degree course at weekends. He has been working in the IT industry for the last 10 years. Due to the fact that Manuel Munoz has been working for such a long time in the IT industry, he has already chosen a career, and his ambitions for his current studies is in the short run to mainly strength his present career status. The rationale of Manuel Munoz for this Element 2 should therefore be the benefits that he will obtain of achieving a degree on the IT field, and the two possible career diversions that this achievement could lead to.

# Career Path 1: Network Administrator

Network computers are at the core of every business[2] and they provide the basics to share information and files, enabling communication like email and videoconferencing, together with the facility to print out resources. Every network needs maintenance and regular health checks to ensure all the devices are performing at an optimum. One possible career path of Manuel Munoz after his graduation will be to work as a Network Administrator[3] on a business, providing support and most importantly ensuring the data and communications are kept secure and shield form intruders.

This career path is very technical and will require a fair amount of team work and interpersonal skills, as normally Network Administrators do no work isolated as other IT related post may do, like programmers and developers who by the nature of their tasks spend most of their working hours in front of a workstation doing their duties. From the technical point of view, there are some requirements that are needed by de facto for the Network Administrator post, like a Microsoft Certification[4] to ensure the candidate can provide support for workstations and servers, and a Cisco Certification[5] that will give the candidate a solid knowledge of the interconnecting

devices that provide and enable the internal communication and normal operation of the devices on a network.

The duties of a Network Administrator[6] are far and wide, and depend mostly of the kind of network the candidate is intended to support to; Apple network, Voice network, Linux network and Microsoft network will all required different levels of specialise initiatives that will be needed for the candidate, though the minimum requirements mentioned before (Microsoft and Cisco Certification) are always needed and represent the basic qualifications that every Network Administrator should have.

The graduation that Manuel Munoz is coursing at UWL includes a certification for the Cisco company mentioned before, an asset that Manuel Munoz does not have at present and that, together with his degree on the IT field, will boost his career prospectus and prepare him for the changes involved in the IT industry.

## Career Path 2: Network System Analyst

Another possible career prospectus of Manuel Munoz after his graduation will be to seek a position within the IT industry as a System Analyst[7] in the spectrum of a network environment point of view, which also requires technical knowledge about the inner working components of a network and a good understanding of the layers of communication taken place on a network. Unlike the Network Administrator position where a great deal of troubleshooting and problem solving are needed, the Network System Analyst position requires a substantial amount of planning and design, with a strong analytic intellect needed and great communication skills, able to pass technical and complex concepts to non-technical educated people, like for example explaining the network changed configuration to a CEO (Chief Executive Officer) on a board room.

The requirements of a System Analyst[8] are therefore different form the ones needed for a Network Administrator. There is an expectation[9] for the candidate of this position to hold a set of certifications that could acknowledge the understanding of a network. Among these certification, again, the Microsoft MCSE[10] (Microsoft Certificate System Engineer) is present, a certification that Manuel Munoz achieved four years ago.

For the candidate, the holding of a degree in the IT field is very relevant for both positions, but it is for the career path of the Network System Analyst where a degree is more needed and significant, as it will strength the report writing skills of the achiever and prove to a future employer that the candidate could technically analyse a system and evaluate the different projections that a change or development on the network analysed could create.

## Conclusion

Both career paths presented are related to IT, but while Career Path 1 is more technical and problem solving orientated, Career Path 2 is more academically oriented, with an expected fair amount of report writing focus. For the purpose of this Element (and for the sake of obtaining valuable marks towards his degree), where the student is asked to choose a career path, Manuel Munoz will choose the Career Path 2, Network System Analyst, as it is in this field where his technical and more recent achieved writing skills could be developed and reinforce.

However, considering the background of Manuel Munoz and to provide a fair realistic conclusion, the real objective of Manuel Munoz once he graduates at UWL at the end of the next academic year 2011-12, is to continue studying in the UK in the

ambit of higher education, further extending his career by enrolling in a Master Business Administration[11] (MBA) programme, which will surely add business skills to his profile and his already technical and analytic knowledge. An MBA would normally take two years on a part time mode to complete[12], meaning that in three years time Manuel Munoz will hold all the certifications (graduation in the IT field plus an MBA) that will facilitate him his goal of becoming an IT Business Analyst[13].

IT Business Analysts are in huge demand nowadays[14], as business realised that once a network is fully operational, stable and in working conditions, there is a need for taking the most of this healthy network and ensure *not* that the business work to maintain the network in operational conditions, but that the network instead act as a tool for the business to increase productivity and efficiency of all the employees. Needless to say that business will pay a premium[15] for a good, technical and analytic advice related to the network they live and function on, and it is this remuneration plus the challenging tasks that this future position hold that has moved Manuel Munoz's long term achievement goal to it.

The requirements of such post of IT Business Analyst could be described as a mixed of Network Administrator, where problem solving techniques are involved, and of a Network System Analyst, where systematic and analytic skills are involved. This position of IT Business Analyst is the dreamed post that Manuel Munoz hope to be working on five years after his graduation.

# References

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