

Prepare



Apply



Develop




Three Doors

A self-help tool

Introduction

With many careers there's more than one way in. There's the standard way and often an alternative. Sometimes, there's even a back door as well. For instance, if you want to become a doctor the standard way is to get accepted onto a 5-6 year-long medical degree. But if you don't, you could do a science related undergraduate degree then apply through the Graduate Entry Programme for a shortened 4 year course to become a doctor. But is there a back door route too? Yes there is! In fact, there're several. For instance, there are routes for those who have got an arts degree and routes designed to increase the diversity of the workforce for mature students or those with few qualifications. You might even consider paying to train as a doctor overseas!



This self help guide takes an idea from Alex Banayan who uses the picture of a nightclub to explain how there is nearly always more than one route to career success.

‘There’s the First Door: the main entrance, where 99 percent of people wait in line, hoping to get in. The Second Door: the VIP entrance, where the billionaires and celebrities slip through. But what no one tells you is that there is always, always... the Third Door. It’s the entrance where you have to jump out of line, run down the alley, bang on the door a hundred times, crack open the window, sneak through the kitchen — there’s always a way.’ (cited in Hardy, 2020).

While there won’t always be a Third Door, surprisingly often there is. This tool invites you to look at the different ways you might get into a career you’ve got in mind, to see if you’ve exhausted all the possibilities.

This tool is designed to...

- Help you review the different ways to get into a career.
- Help you think creatively about your situation.
- Challenge you to think honestly about your options.

Consider using this tool if you...

- Feel stuck because the way that you'd expected to take hasn't worked out.
- Need to review your career plan for realism.
- Want to push yourself to find new solutions.

How to use this tool

First, look at the Main Entrance

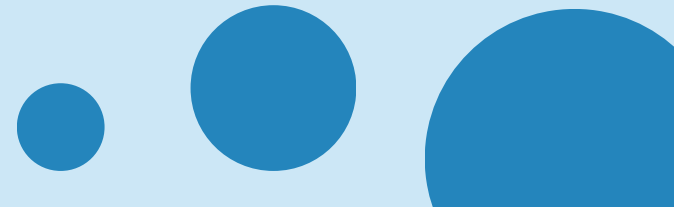
Use the table below to analyse the routes that might be possible to achieve your current career goal.

The Main Entrance	Describe the route(s) factually. If you're unsure check out the relevant Career Profile in Prospects.	What are the issues for you / potential challenges?	What are the possible solutions / things that could help you take this route?	How do you feel about this route? (What words capture your feelings?)	How do you rate your readiness to try this route, on a scale of 1 -10 where 10 is high.
The normal way in (e.g. a degree in a relevant subject, grad training scheme)					

Second, look at the Celebrity Entrance

Use the table below to analyse the routes that might be possible to achieve your current career goal.

The Celebrity Entrance	Describe the route(s) factually. If you're unsure check out the relevant Career Profile in Prospects.	What are the issues for you / potential challenges?	What are the possible solutions / things that could help you take this route?	How do you feel about this route? (What words capture your feelings?)	How do you rate your readiness to try this route, on a scale of 1 -10 where 10 is high.
A special 'hidden' way (e.g. a conversion masters) that may require extra effort (time / money).					



Third, look at the hidden Third Door

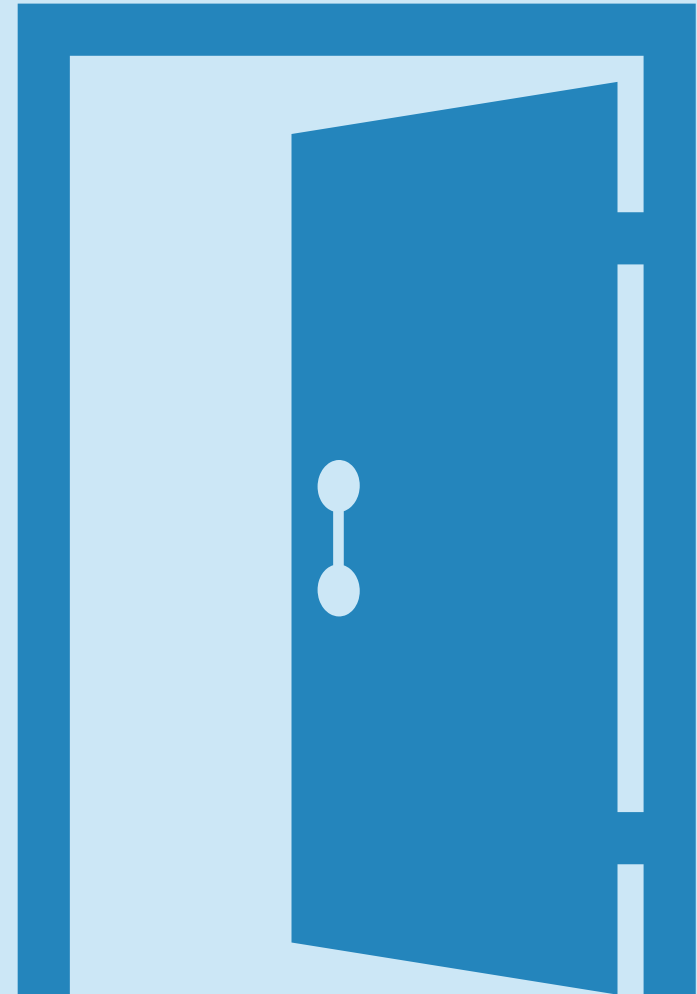
By its very nature the Third Door will be off the beaten path. There won't be one Third Door route either. Each person who finds their Third Door will have discovered (or created) their own unique solution. Because of this you are unlikely to be able to simply copy or follow someone else's way in. But you can learn from others. You can learn how they approached it, what sort of solutions they used and what factors affected their success.

To complete this section of the exercise you will find it helpful to listen to stories of people's career journeys. If you look at LinkedIn you may be surprised by how many twists and turns form part of people's career histories. Here are some narrative based sources:

- [This Student Can](#) - videos of current and past Huddersfield students talking about their student and career journeys.
- [iCould](#) – explore real life career videos by job type or subject.
- [BBC Bite sized A-Z careers videos](#) – insights from people about the jobs they do.

Another simple way is to talk to people you know. How did they get into their careers? Was it straight forward or did they have to ‘go round the houses’? Was it all planned or did chance and luck play a role? To really get a good idea of what the Third Door could look like for the career you’re interested in, you’ll need to target your research specifically at people who work in that careers / sector. To find out how to do this use our Informational Interview Self-help Guide which explains how to do this.

A third approach is to google your question to see if someone else has already written about this. You might be able to ask who blogs about particular career, or find that a professional association has an ‘ask a careers question’ service.





The Third Door	What does finding the Third Door look like? Note any examples you've come across. What might you do to find / create a Third Door for yourself?	What are the issues for you / potential challenges?	What are the possible solutions / things that could help you take this route?	How do you feel about this route? (What words capture your feelings?)	How do you rate your readiness to try this route, on a scale of 1 -10 where 10 is high.
A DIY route (e.g. starting in a 'springboard non-grad role' to gain experience and working up your way up, becoming an entrepreneur etc)					

Pause, Reflect, Act

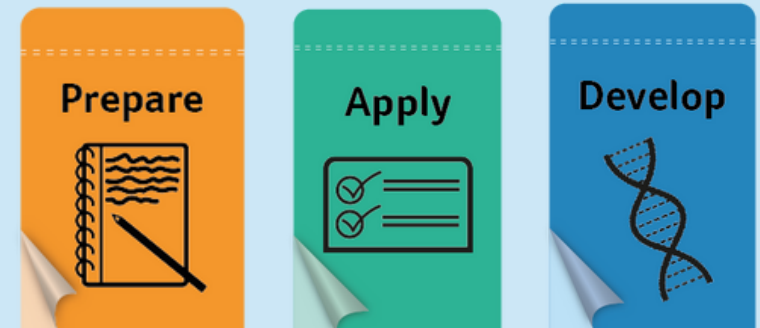
- What are the key insights you've taken from this self-help guide?
- What actions do you need to take now to build on this exercise?
- Who could help you with this?
- Are there other related self-help tools you'd like to use as well?

NB: Because everyone is different, and no one solution on its own is a magic bullet, please also look at our other self-help tools and use the ones that work best for you. Some other relevant self-help guides include:

- **Plan B** – Creative ways to fulfil your aspirations when your first career plan doesn't work.
- **SCALED-UP Plans** – looking at what things you can control and what you can influence on the road to success.
- **Bridge of Reasons** – maintaining your motivation by being clear on how you'll benefit from achieving your plans.
- **Eyes on the Prize** – how to achieve your goals by focusing your efforts on the most important ones.
- **Informational Interviewing** – a simple guide to contacting people and finding careers information.

References and Resources

- Hardy, B. (2020, July 27). *8 Science-Backed Ways to Increase Your Hope*. Forge. <https://forge.medium.com/10-science-based-ways-to-increase-your-hope-430892caacb2>



If you are a member of staff from another educational organisation and want to use a limited number of our self-help tools with your students, we'd love to hear from you and share good practice. We'd ask that you retain references to University of Huddersfield as a matter of courtesy and acknowledge the other sources we've used. Thank you.