

# FINDING YOUR PATH

A HIGH SCHOOLER'S GUIDE TO  
CAREER DISCOVERY AND PLANNING



LIERTE SOARES



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lierte Soares is a career development mentor, college professor, and ESL educator with over two decades of experience supporting learners from around the world. Since 1998, Lierte has worked with ESL students from more than 40 different nations, many of whom are rebuilding their dreams and careers after relocating to new countries.

Lierte has served as a college professor at Pioneer Baptist College in Brazil and as an ESL teacher at Framingham Adult ESL in Massachusetts, USA, guiding students through language development, academic growth, and career transitions. This extensive cross cultural teaching experience has shaped a deep understanding of the challenges faced by immigrants, international students, and professionals navigating new educational and workplace environments.

Lierte holds academic degrees in Education, English Language, Business, Law, and Theology, as well as two master's degrees, bringing an interdisciplinary perspective to career development that bridges communication skills, professional practice, ethical leadership, and lifelong learning.

As a third culture kid, Lierte brings a unique global perspective to career development, blending cultural sensitivity, adaptability, and practical strategies. Through this eBook, Lierte Soares aims to empower readers to rediscover purpose, build confidence, and take intentional steps toward meaningful career paths, no matter where their journey begins or continues.

Lierte Soares is a career development mentor and ESL educator with over 25 years of experience teaching students from more than 40 countries in Brazil, Europe and the United States. A third culture kid, Lierte specializes in helping individuals rebuild careers across cultures.





# FINDING YOUR PATH A HIGH SCHOOLER'S GUIDE TO CAREER DISCOVERY AND PLANNING

by Lierte Soares  
Student Guide and Workbook

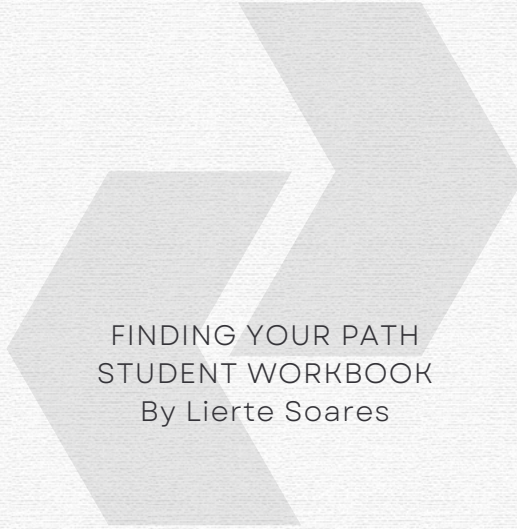
Massachusetts  
2025

## REVERSE MISSION

BRINGING THE GOSPEL FULL CIRCLE

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FINDING YOUR PATH  
STUDENT WORKBOOK  
By Lierete Soares

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This workbook is designed to help you actively explore your career interests, develop skills, plan your high school years, and prepare for life after graduation. Each chapter includes exercises and reflection prompts. Complete them at your own pace, small, consistent steps create big results.

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Author, Liete Soares

Cover and design, Pastor Luiz Silva

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## PREFACE

Choosing a future can feel overwhelming. In high school, you are expected to make decisions about classes, activities, and goals, sometimes before you fully understand what you enjoy or what you are capable of becoming. Many students feel pressure to pick the perfect path early, and they fear making the wrong choice.

This eBook was created to make that process clearer and more practical. It is not a test that tells you who you are. It is a guide that helps you discover your interests, recognize your strengths, and build a plan you can actually follow. The goal is not to give you a single answer, but to help you ask better questions, take small steps, and learn through real action.

Over the years, I have worked with learners from many different countries and backgrounds. I have seen students restart their education in a new language, rebuild confidence after setbacks, and discover unexpected talents once they had a simple structure to follow. I have also seen that success is rarely about having a perfect plan, it is about learning, adjusting, and moving forward with consistency.

As you work through these pages, you will explore possible careers, map out your high school years, and practice the skills that matter most, communication, responsibility, problem solving, and resilience. You will also create your own roadmap, with goals, milestones, and a way to track progress over time.

My hope is that this guide becomes a tool you return to often. Use it with a teacher, mentor, or family member. Write in it, revisit it, update it, and make it your own. Your future is not a single decision, it is a series of choices, and every small step you take can open new doors.

*Liete Soares*  
2025





# CHAPTERS 1 TO 3

SELF DISCOVERY AND CAREER EXPLORATION

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### Activity 1: Interests Inventory

- List 10 things you enjoy doing (school subjects, hobbies, activities).
- Circle the top 3 you enjoy most.

### Activity 2: Strengths Assessment

- List 5 things you're good at.
- Ask 3 friends or family members what they think your strengths are. Compare.

### Activity 3: Values and Motivation

- Write down 5 things that are most important to you in life (e.g., helping others, creativity, security).
- Rank them from most to least important.

### Activity 4: Career Research

- Choose 3 careers that interest you.
- For each career, list:
  - Education or training needed
  - Typical work tasks
  - Salary and benefits
  - Skills required
- Write down 1 question you want to explore further for each.





# CHAPTERS 4 TO 5

PLANNING HIGH SCHOOL AND EXPLORING OPTIONS

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### Activity 5: High School Roadmap

- List the courses, electives, and extracurricular activities you plan to take.
- Mark experiences that align with your career interests (clubs, volunteer work, competitions).

### Activity 6: Shadowing and Volunteering

- Identify 2 people you could shadow or volunteer with.
- Write a short plan: who, when, and what you want to learn.

### Activity 7: Gap Analysis

- Compare your current skills and experiences with the skills required for your chosen careers.
- List 3 skills you need to develop this year.





# CHAPTERS 6 TO 7

SKILLS AND MINDSET

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### Activity 8: Skills Inventory

Rate yourself 1 to 5 (1 = needs work, 5 = strong) for:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Problem solving
- Time management
- Responsibility
- Adaptability
- Digital literacy
- Leadership

Circle 2 to 3 skills to improve this month.

### Activity 9: Growth Mindset Reflection

- Write about a time you learned something new or overcame a challenge.
- What strategies helped you grow?

### Activity 10: Confidence Plan

- List 3 small challenges you will take on this month to build confidence.
- Track your progress.

### Activity 11: Networking Map

- Write names of people who can support your goals (mentors, teachers, family, friends).
- Add 1 new connection you will reach out to this month.

### Activity 12: Digital Presence Check

- Review social media accounts.
- Note anything that may affect your professional image.
- List 2 changes or improvements to make.





**CHAPTERS 8**

**ACTION PLANNING**

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### Activity 13: Major Goal Selection

- Pick 1 major career or academic goal to focus on.

### Activity 14: Break Goal Into Steps

- List 5 to 7 small, actionable steps to start this week.

### Activity 15: Weekly Routine

- Plan 2 to 3 actions you will do weekly to make progress toward your goal.

### Activity 16: Progress Tracker

- Create a simple chart to track actions completed each week.

### Activity 17: Reflection and Adjustment

- At the end of each month, write what worked, what didn't, and how you will adjust your plan.





# CHAPTERS 9

HANDLING DOUBTS AND CHANGES

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### Activity 18: Identify Doubts

- List current doubts about career, school, or life.
- For each, write one positive step to address it.

### Activity 19: Reframe “Failure”

- Choose one past failure.
- Write what you learned and how it moves you forward.

### Activity 20: Decision Making Practice

- Identify a decision you’ve been postponing.
- Break it into small steps using this template:

1.Options:

2.Pros/Cons:

3.Short term and long term effects:

4.Action:

### Activity 21: Support Network

- List 3 to 5 people you can reach out to for guidance when unsure.

### Activity 22: Flexibility Reflection

- Write about a time you adapted successfully.
- What did you learn?





# CHAPTER 10

**BUILDING YOUR ROADMAP**

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### Activity 23: Career Direction

- List top 2 to 3 career options. Include backup choices.

### Activity 24: High School Steps

- List classes, electives, extracurriculars, and experiences aligned with your goals.

### Activity 25: Skills and Mindset Plan

- Identify 3 to 5 skills to develop this year.
- Include mindset practices (growth, resilience, confidence).

### Activity 26: Post High School Plan

- Write your initial post high school path.
- List steps to prepare academically, financially, and socially.

### Activity 27: Action Steps and Timeline

- Break goals into small, achievable tasks.
- Assign deadlines and milestones.





## Activity 28: Reflection and Flexibility

- Write backup options and a plan for adjusting your roadmap if circumstances change.

### Final Reflection

- What is the first small step you will take this week toward your career goals?
- How will you track your progress?
- Who will you ask for support or guidance?

Remember: Your roadmap is a living document. Update it, adjust it, and use it to guide your journey, one step at a time.





# CHAPTER 10

**YOUR ROADMAP TO SUCCESS  
PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER**

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Congratulations! You've explored careers, planned your high school years, built skills, and learned how to handle doubts and change. Now it's time to create a complete roadmap for your future.

This chapter guides you to take everything you've learned and build a clear, actionable plan, your personal roadmap to success.

## 10.1 What Is a Career Roadmap?

A career roadmap is a visual or written guide that shows:

- where you are now
- your goals
- the steps to reach those goals
- skills you need to build
- timelines and milestones

Think of it as a GPS for your future, it can guide you, but you can also adjust the route along the way.





## 10.2 Components of Your Roadmap

Your roadmap should include:

1. Career Direction
2. • What careers or industries interest you?
3. • Include backup options for flexibility.
4. High School Plan
5. • Courses aligned with your career interests
6. • Electives and extracurriculars
7. • Real world experiences (internships, volunteering, job shadowing)
8. Skills and Mindset
9. • Hard skills: technology, writing, research, or trade specific skills
10. • Soft skills: communication, teamwork, problem solving, adaptability
11. • Mindset: growth mindset, confidence, resilience
12. Post High School Plan
13. • College, trade school, apprenticeship, workforce, gap year, or entrepreneurship
14. • Steps to prepare for this path (applications, certifications, exams)
15. Action Steps and Timeline
16. • Break big goals into small, manageable steps
17. • Set deadlines and milestones
18. • Include monthly or quarterly check ins





## 10.3 Creating Your Roadmap: Step by Step

### Step 1, Reflect on Your Interests and Strengths

- Review career exploration activities from earlier chapters
- Ask: What excites me? What am I good at?

### Step 2, Define Your Goals

- Short term: this semester, this school year
- Medium term: next 1 to 2 years
- Long term: graduation and beyond

### Step 3, Map Out High School Steps

- Courses, clubs, electives, projects, experiences
- Timeline for key milestones (applications, certifications, competitions)

### Step 4, Identify Skills to Build

- Write down skills you want to develop each year
- Track progress and adjust as needed





### Step 5, Prepare for Post High School

- Choose your initial post high school path
- Research requirements, deadlines, and resources
- Identify steps to prepare academically, financially, and socially

### Step 6, Plan for Doubts and Flexibility

- Write backup options
- Include a plan to revisit your roadmap if circumstances change

## 10.4 Visualizing Your Roadmap

Some students prefer a written roadmap. Others prefer a visual one.

YEAR 1 (Freshman): Explore, join clubs, try electives, identify strengths

YEAR 2 (Sophomore): Focus on skills, shadow professionals, choose electives, track progress

YEAR 3 (Junior): Take advanced courses, internships, volunteer, update portfolio

YEAR 4 (Senior): Finalize career direction, complete major projects, apply to college, trade school, job

POST HS: Start career, training path, continue skill building, review and adapt





## 10.5 Staying Accountable

A roadmap only works if you follow it.

### Tips for Accountability

- Share your roadmap with a mentor, teacher, or family member
- Review it monthly
- Celebrate progress
- Adjust goals as needed
- Reflect on what's working and what's not

Accountability keeps you moving, even when motivation dips.

## 10.6 The Power of Momentum

Your roadmap is more than a plan, it's a tool to create momentum.

- Each small step adds up
- Momentum builds confidence
- Opportunities appear as you take action
- Even setbacks become lessons

Remember: success is rarely sudden. It's a result of consistent action over time.





## 10.7 Student Story, Zoe's Roadmap in Action

"I was overwhelmed in 9th grade, so many choices, so many interests.

I built a simple roadmap with my teacher: classes, clubs, summer experiences. I added milestones and checked progress monthly.

By senior year, I had a clear plan, a portfolio, and several internship experiences. I felt confident applying to college because I had a roadmap guiding me.

It didn't make life perfect, but it made progress possible."

Zoe's roadmap gave her direction, confidence, and flexibility.

## 10.8 Your Roadmap Workbook

### Activity 1: Career Direction

- List top 2 to 3 career options or industries.





### Activity 2: High School Steps

- List courses, electives, extracurriculars, and experiences aligned with your goals.

### Activity 3: Skills and Mindset

- Identify 3 to 5 skills to develop this year.
- Note mindset practices (growth, resilience, confidence).

### Activity 4: Post High School Plan

- Write your initial path and steps to prepare.

### Activity 5: Action Steps and Timeline

- Break goals into small, achievable tasks.
- Assign deadlines.

### Activity 6: Reflection and Flexibility

- Backup options
- Plan for adjusting roadmap if interests or circumstances change





## 10.9 Chapter Summary

In this final chapter, you learned how to:

- combine career exploration, high school planning, skills, and mindset into one roadmap
- set short term, medium term, and long term goals
- break goals into small, actionable steps
- track progress and maintain accountability
- build momentum toward your career and life goals
- plan for flexibility and change

Your roadmap is not a guarantee, it's a tool to guide you.

It turns ideas into action, confusion into clarity, and dreams into achievable goals.

Remember: your career journey is yours alone, and the roadmap is the bridge between who you are now and who you want to become.





 @liertesoares

Lierte Soares Junior is a Brazilian-American educator serving in New England. As a "reverse missionary," he was sent from Brazil to New England to help revitalize churches. He serves as the president of the Baptist Churches of New England.

