



The Guides for Equitable Practice: Chapter 7





The Guides for Equitable Practice: Career Advancement

The cultures of offices, the profession, and society influence career paths. Leaders can recognize and remove current and historical impediments, especially for members of underrepresented groups.

This guide offers employers and organizations ways to support the development of all employees, with an eye toward equity and inclusiveness, and calls attention to critical junctures commonly found in architectural careers.



What is advancing careers about?

Career growth includes autonomy, recognition, leadership, and expertise.

External factors like race, gender, and culture impact progress.

Inclusive leaders help individuals navigate challenges and create more diverse career outcomes.



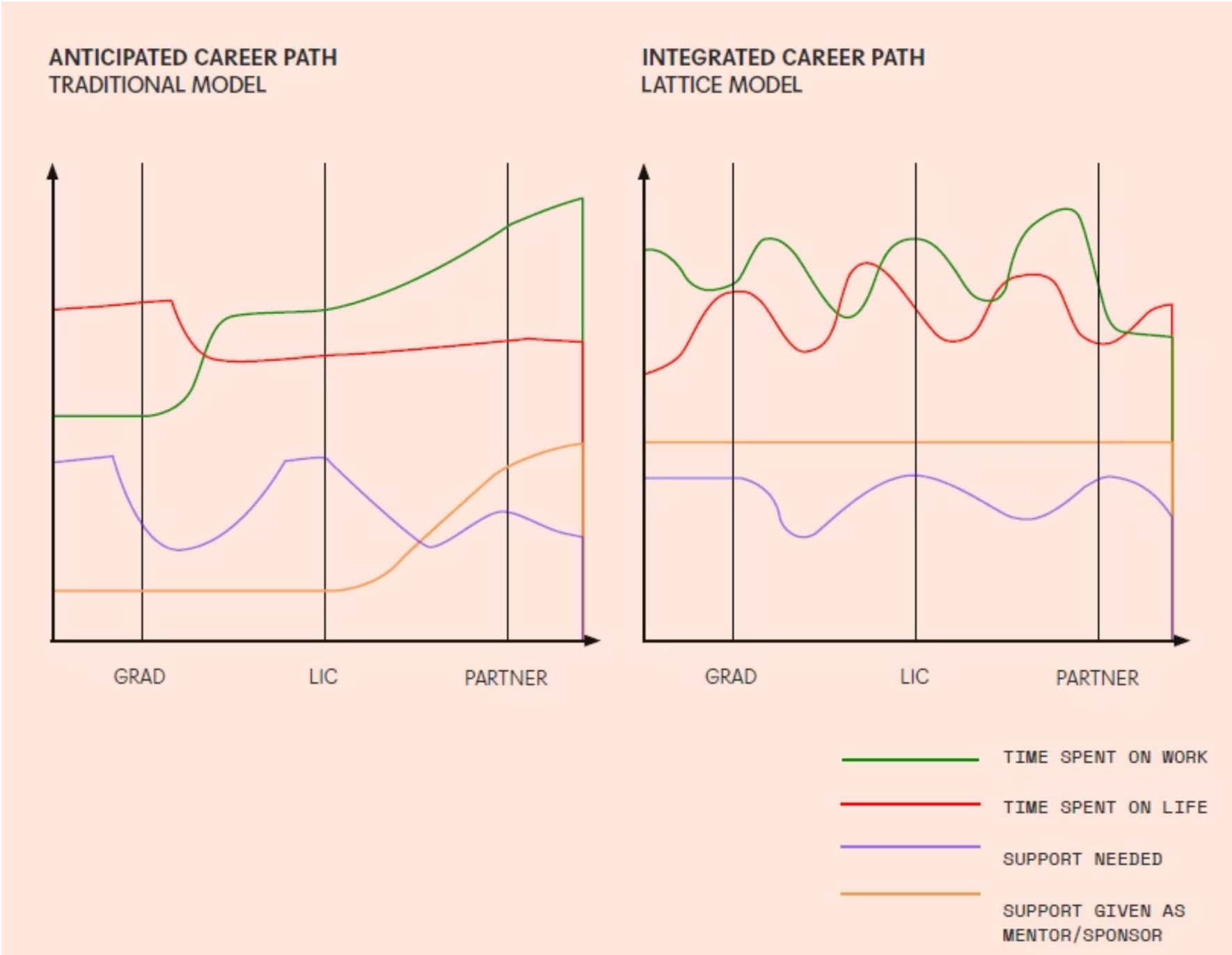
To support career paths equitably

- Provide clear promotion criteria, access to development, and inclusive support systems.
- Offer mentoring, coaching, and equitable access to training.
- Provide skill-specific training, coaching, job shadowing, and workshop or conference participation.
- Shift from rigid ladders to flexible, personalized lattice models.





Ladder vs. Lattice





Why career advancement matters

Equitable advancement increases job satisfaction, motivation, and retention.

Clear career paths reduce turnover and build inclusive leadership.

Barriers to progress can lead to disengagement and inequity.



What Good Looks Like

- Make a check mark next to practices that you can find in your firm or organization
- A question mark for those that you are not sure
- A minus for those that are missing.

GUIDE 7 • ADVANCING CAREERS

WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE?

We more easily advance architecture careers equitably when...

SUPPORT

employees perceive that the support and training they need is there when they need it

employees receive regular feedback on performance and goals, along with support in reviewing and revising their professional-development plans

criteria for pay and promotion are clear, broadly understood, and based on performance, not time in service

employees feel able to talk about how they are affected by outside events

what “meaningful work” means to different people is discussed and supported

EQUITY

evidence of implicit bias in response to requests for flexible schedules is recognized and corrected

regardless of identity or schedule, employees have substantive assignments, roles, and duties

flexibility is understood as variable pace, workload, location, and schedule

time away from the office is based on stated policy and is supported for everyone

policies take into account that work-life conflict varies by person and circumstance

LABYRINTH

the wide ranges of architectural career paths and areas of expertise are known and supported

there is agreement that each individual has different needs at different times

in formal programs, mentors and mentees are matched thoughtfully, based on skills/development needs

when an individual runs into obstacles, workplace leaders focus on fixing the system, not the person

demographics of the firm represent the population at every level, and there is room for employees to advance

project teams and work are structured to allow for the changing needs of the employee



Advancing careers (individual)

Design your career path using a lattice approach.

Map out 1, 5, 10, and 25-year goals.

Review roles and set annual goals to grow or shift responsibilities.

Build a support network that offers accountability and shared growth.



Advancing careers (firm-level)

Be aware of how bias affects advancement.

Build systems for team-based, transparent advancement discussions.

Conduct bias-aware, growth-oriented evaluations.

Expand networks for underrepresented employees.

Support safe, inclusive requests for accommodations.



Consider

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING AT THE TABLE

I think it's really important, first, to have representation from diverse groups within leadership in the business. For example, we did our round of evaluations and discussions of promotions a couple of weeks ago. As an associate, I was given a seat at that table, but when we were discussing a woman who was pregnant and who was up for a promotion, I was the only person there to say, "We're talking about giving her a promotion next year, but you're really talking about two years because you have to give her a year for maternity and then you're going to expect her to come back and perform for a year before you consider her for a promotion. If you don't give it to her this year, you're delaying her career by two years." So having anybody at that table who can speak up in that capacity is important.

—Associate at Large International Practice, Indo-American, Female, 31

Consider scenarios & reflections

Read, discuss in small groups, and share insights



Now what?

1

List what you hope to learn or achieve this year

2

**Choose one item and identify:
Support, time and resources you
needPotential obstacles or speed
bumps**