

CDM TOOLKIT

YOUR FUTURE AWAITS YOU

Recipe for a Fulfilling Career

As you consider a career in dietary management, think about your future from many angles. There is a simple recipe for a fulfilling career: There must be a good match between your talents and the things you enjoy with the types of duties you will perform.

Not sure? Consider your life experiences so far — with work, organizations you belong to, family, and friends. Try asking yourself these questions:

Name three things that you have enjoyed most in your life:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Name three personal accomplishments that you are most proud of:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Name three areas where you feel you have been most useful to others:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Look over the list above. Name three of your skills:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Next, name three of your main interests:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Now, underline all of the items you've written that match a career in dietary management. These may include enjoyment, success, and skills in areas such as producing a great meal, making others feel comfortable, motivating and teaching others, leading groups of people, solving problems, organizing the elements of a task, listening and communicating well, and working hard to see tangible results. It may involve talents such as strong interpersonal skills, culinary expertise, ability to meet deadlines, and creative thinking. See if your lists include an interest in health, nutrition, and food, too.

By now, you probably have an idea whether there is a match! A great career places you in the kind of job you can work hard at, feel good about, and find satisfying day after day... the kind of job that makes you look forward to going to work!

Exploring First-Hand

Another way to learn more about a career as a Certified Dietary Manager is to network with others. Talk with friends or acquaintances who have jobs in dietary management or related fields. See if you can visit them at work, or even "shadow" someone for a day to get the flavor of a job and its routines. Ask them what their jobs are like, and what their routines are at work. Ask what is most challenging and most fulfilling about the work. Ask what skills and talents they feel make them successful.

There are many ways to make contact. You can check with a local college where a Dietary Management Training Program is offered. Or, take a part-time job in a foodservice setting. Perhaps you would like to volunteer in a hospital, nursing home, or Meals-on-Wheels program. Any of these can give you more exposure to the types of organizations where dietary managers may work. If you don't know anyone in these fields, you can also make contact with your state chapter of Dietary Managers Association. (Check the DMA website for information: www.dmaonline.org, click State-by-State Info.)

CDM *CFPP*

Roadmap to Certification

Have you decided a career in dietary management is for you? The next step is to prepare to become a Certified Dietary Manager, Certified Food Protection Professional (CDM, CFPP). More than a feather in your cap, this credential is recognized across the nation as proof of your competency in the skill-set required of dietary managers. It is your ticket to career opportunities.

Step 1: Qualify for the Certification Exam

To become certified, you will first want to complete one of the pathways to qualify for taking the certification exam. Take a look at the list below, and decide which one is for you.

- Pathway I:** This pathway is for candidates who have graduated from a DMA-approved dietary manager program.
- Pathway II:** This pathway is for candidates who hold a two-year or four-year college degree in foodservice management or nutrition, two-year culinary arts degree, or two-year hotel-restaurant management degree.
- Pathway III:** This pathway is for graduates of a state-approved or other approved 90-hour foodservice course, who also have two years of institutional foodservice management experience.
- Pathway IV:** This pathway is for current and former members of the U.S. military who have graduated from an approved military dietary manager training program and have attained the grade of E-5.

Step 2: Register for the Certification Exam

Offered twice per year, and in most states, the exam gives you a chance to prove your competency in the marketplace by earning the CDM, CFPP credential. You can check upcoming exam dates, review detailed instructions, and download an exam brochure and application on the website of the Dietary Managers Association, www.dmaonline.org. Or call Dietary Managers Association at 800.323.1908.

Step 3: Pass the exam and complete your certification process.

Once you have passed the exam, you can apply for certified status. (Certification will be automatic if you are already a current member of Dietary Managers Association. However membership in DMA is not required.) If you have not already joined Dietary Managers Association, you will receive an invitation to join and enjoy the many member benefits the association offers to you as a professional.



If you haven't checked any of the four pathways above, you may wish to enroll in a Dietary Managers Training Program, so that you can prepare through Pathway I. For a complete directory of programs — with options for in-class, online, and correspondence — visit www.cdmcareer.info, and click Training Programs. Note that some scholarships are available. Visit www.cdmcareer.info, and click Training Programs for current opportunities.

Not sure about whether you qualify or what your next step should be? Please call Dietary Managers Association at 800.323.1908. The Member Services team will help you evaluate whether you qualify, and what you need to do next to achieve certification.

After Certification, Then What?

Earning your CDM, CFPP credential is a great way to launch your career. But now what? You will need to maintain your credential, and one of the requirements is ongoing continuing education (45 hours every three years, including five hours in food safety and sanitation). The mark of a dedicated professional is continuous growth and learning. Throughout your career, you will discover new trends in the industry, new challenges, and new techniques for getting the job done well. Continuing education keeps you ahead of the curve!



CDM, CFPP Career Checklist

Review the Recipe for a Fulfilling Career (page 1 of the Toolkit).

Talk to Certified Dietary Managers about the career.

Get work experience in the field (optional).

Review the four ways to qualify for the Certification Exam. Talk with Dietary Managers Association Member Services Department if unsure.

If you have not already fulfilled a pathway to qualify for the exam, choose a Dietary Manager Training Program convenient for you and enroll.

Consider membership in DMA. Join online at www.dmaonline.org, or call Dietary Managers Association Member Services Department for an application.

Check scholarship opportunities.

Complete all required coursework.

Obtain the Certification exam brochure online or from DMA. Note the early bird deadline: _____

Complete required application and return to DMA.

Check the exam brochure for study materials to help you prepare for the exam. Make a study schedule and stick to it.

If you have joined DMA, login to the Member Community for support from other members during your exam preparation.

Sit for the exam.

Watch the mail for results (approximately 6 weeks).

Follow additional instructions from DMA to complete your certification.

Dietary Managers Association: Your Professional Network

Nearly all CDM, CFPPs choose to join the professional association representing dietary managers: Dietary Managers Association (DMA). As the national professional organization representing dietary managers, Dietary Managers Association is here to serve you in your career path! Even before you achieve your certification, we invite you to join DMA. You will be teaming up with more than 15,000 professionals dedicated to providing optimum nutritional care through foodservice management. Student membership is just \$35 for 18 months.

What does DMA deliver for you? Enjoy networking with like-minded professionals, a free subscription to DIETARY MANAGER magazine (one of the most respected publications in the industry), discounts on DMA publications (even the exam study guide!), access to the Member Community and Web-based employment services on the DMA website, connections with your local chapter, and many more benefits. You will be invited to DMA meetings both close to home and around the country. Jumpstart your professional advancement today!

Your Future is in Your Hands...

The CDM, CFPP is more than the letters after your name. It's a career path that demonstrates your commitment to excellence in dietary management, and defines you as a highly qualified professional in your field.

More Info:

www.cdmcareer.info

DIETARY MANAGERS ASSOCIATION: 800.323.1908