

Developing a Plan to Achieve Your Career Goals

There comes a time in your professional journey when you want to take stock of where you are and decide on where you want to be. If you have big goals for your career, you may be wondering what the shortest path is to reach them. So we've come up with a game plan to get you started:

Create a Timeline

When working on a professional development plan, it's a good idea to set a realistic timeline to achieve your goals. First, you should assess your skills and experience and see how they line up with your career objectives. Next, look for any skill gaps or missing certifications and credentials. Reach out to your employer to see if they offer [upskilling programs](#) or will cover some of the costs of classes, workshops, and seminars that will help you bridge those gaps. Online courses can help you reach those career goals in a few short months without having to take time off from work. Then, establish a schedule of [short-term and long-term objectives](#) that will take you to your main goal and track your progress as you go. And remember to keep an eye on the calendar if you need to apply for a position by a specific date, giving yourself plenty of time to prepare a solid pitch for an interview.

Write a Winning CV

Whether you're going after a promotion, you want to apply for a different position, or you're looking to wow a new employer, writing a powerful résumé will increase your chances of being considered for the job, and [a CV maker makes quick work of it](#). Many recruiters use an applicant tracking system, often referred to as ATS, when looking at potential candidates. In order to get through the ATS, make sure you [use keywords that are relevant](#) to the position you're after, and tailor your résumé to the job description. And if you're a veteran, list all the rewards and recognitions that highlight your military accomplishments. Showcasing your strategic, technical, and leadership skills will give you an edge over the competition.

Launch Your Own Business

Retired military members often make great entrepreneurs as they are problem solvers, adaptable, flexible, and highly skilled at teamwork. Customers like to patronize veteran-owned companies, seeing them as extremely trustworthy and reliable. Additionally, veteran-owned businesses that [register as a VOSB](#) can receive help and benefits from services from local, state, and federal agencies. So if you're ready to start your own venture, consider [forming an S Corp](#). It will help you save on employment taxes, give you better fringe benefits, and will offer you limited personal liability. Plus, it will give your newly-formed company increased credibility as you launch your marketing campaign to reach customers.

Find Helpful Resources

For veterans returning home, the transition can have its challenges. Fortunately, several [programs and initiatives](#) are designed to help those heroes reenter civilian life by offering mental, emotional, physical, and financial assistance. The [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#) has a website that aims to establish connections between ex-military members looking for work and companies looking to hire them, as their special skills make them great assets for big and small businesses alike. And many local, state, and federal programs can assist you as you get your bearings back.

Achieving career goals requires setting a plan in motion. So build a strong CV, bridge any skill gaps you may have, and go after your dream job. And if you have the heart of an entrepreneur, start your own business and take charge of your future.

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