Postcard to Future Self

Dear Future Derek Karungani,

How is the view from the future? I pray that as you are reading this, you are doing so with a smile, knowing how far you have come. I imagine you now being a fluent data scientist, fearlessly coding in Python and working your way through VS Code. Those days when you were lost and intimidated seem so long ago, right? You work through challenging datasets, extract insightful analyses, and get involved with cool projects. Maybe even got your dream job as an analyst or engineer. More importantly, you mentor people who were once at the place where you are right now, guide them through the ropes, and inspire them with your journey. With that in mind, you proved it to yourself-determination and consistency can make even the novice become a great expert. Keep pushing boundaries, and remember that the best is yet to come.

Sincerely,

Present Derek Karungani

SMART Goals

1. Master Python Basics by June 2025

Learn the basics of Python, including data structures, loops, and libraries such as Pandas and NumPy.

Complete 5 beginner courses and 20 practice problems in platforms like Codecademy or LeetCode, and put in 8 hours of practice weekly, hopefully by June 30, 2025.

2. Build an Interactive Dashboard by November 2025

Create a data dashboard using Dash to visualize real-world data with at least 3 interactive visualizations.

Make full use of tutorials from YouTube and GitHub repository, project guides, and mentor feedback.

3. Secure an Internship as a Data Analyst by January 2026

Apply for at least 10 internships in the data science field with the aim of getting practical experience in the real professional world of data science.

EPIC Resources

1. Education: MIT Emerging Talent certificate program, YouTube tutorials on data visualization and coding, online platforms like Coursera and edX.

2. People: My cohort peers, mentors, career advisors, and online forums like Stack Overflow and various sub-communities on Reddit.

3. Information: Blogs, research papers, and online documentation for tools like Python, Dash, and VS Code; industry newsletters like KDnuggets and Towards Data Science.

4. Community: Attending meetups, joining LinkedIn groups, and participating in hackathons or data science competitions will help raise your network along with your skill.