







Create an effective resume and job search strategy

Interview for IT support jobs

Career development

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# Create a Career Development Plan

## Creating a Career Development Plan

There are several components and aspects of your potential career to consider while you are job searching. Before embarking on your journey, it is important to outline your career path. Doing so will help you find opportunities that align with your values, interests, and aspirations. As an IT support professional, you have a myriad of options available to you. Every industry is hiring IT professionals to assist with troubleshooting issues, recommending solutions, providing quality customer service, and to serve sometimes as the subject matter expert for the company's technological resources.

### Identifying career goals

What do you want to accomplish as an IT professional? There are multiple specialist fields in the industry that will give you the opportunity to further develop and hone your skills in specific areas. However, you can just as easily take the generalist route and cross-apply your knowledge of technology and tech support to various roles. What type of work environment do you want to work in? Some companies provide lots of in-office perks such as a comprehensive kitchen with free snacks, unlimited PTO, and team-building community events. Other workplaces include flexible work schedules and options that allow you to work from home, in the office, or a hybrid. Having a general idea of what you're looking for in a work environment will help you narrow down your job search and land opportunities that are a better fit for you. Additionally, do you aspire to eventually work in management in any capacity? If so, it's important during your job hunt to ask about opportunities for advancement or transition throughout the company. Some companies are limited in opportunities due to long-term employee retention or other factors.

What are your unique strengths and skills that you bring with you to a company? Identifying your strengths, both soft and hard skills, will help you stand out from other applicants. There are a plethora of transferable skills that you can use to leverage your application. If you're not sure where to start on identifying your unique strengths and identifying your transferable skills, there are lots of online resources and platforms to help you get an idea. Skill stacking is becoming more appealing to hiring managers and companies within the field of technology. Skill stacking is when employees combine skills from different fields or industries to produce novel ideas, approaches, and systems. Soft skills are the most important skills to have if you're considering any position in management or if you want to work in a team-based work environment. Having the skills to hold conversations, navigate conflict, and collaborate with others will highly benefit your career.

### Creating a timeline

A common question that is asked in interviews is the "where do you see yourself in x amount of years?" Creating a timeline for you and your career is helpful in gaining insight into what career opportunities will work best for you moving forward. One helpful way to gain clarity into this is to break down your bigger career goals into smaller goals.

Approach your job search and career in IT with an open mind. Be flexible with deadlines, milestones, and your own personal timeline. Be receptive to potential job opportunities that you might not traditionally apply to or pursue. Adaptability and flexibility are two of the most coveted soft skills employers look for in their employees. Lastly, hold yourself accountable for your own progress. Technology is always changing and staying informed of all the changes that pertain to your job or specialty will give you an advantage over other employees. Look at taking other certifications, take online courses, read books on the subject, attend conferences, continuously network with other professionals in your field, and/or complete passion projects in your free time. Taking extra measures to inform yourself about your field and attending events with other professionals will greatly increase your chances of success and career satisfaction.

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