

What's Next – Climbing the Path to Career Success



[According to a national business survey conducted in 2021 by Envionics for CERIC](#), 78% of respondents think there is a skills gap and over one-third of executives find retaining employees to be more difficult compared to two years ago.

Job opportunities for qualified candidates will continue to grow as the perceived skills gap between prospective employees and employers continues to increase.

While the pandemic resulted in massive workplace shifts and dissatisfaction for many, a [report by ADP Canada](#) found nearly half of Canadian workers feel satisfied with their current working life. But what about the others who don't feel that what they're currently doing is working anymore?

Job seekers plan their careers for a variety of reasons. Some are strictly financial, but others are looking for a challenging opportunity with room for growth. Even if you're currently satisfied with your position, it's important to take the time to evaluate where you are now – and where you'd like to go. In today's economy, everything is shifting and it's important to stay informed should your position become redundant.

Planning your next career move will also set you up for success as having a deeper understanding of your strengths and needs will clarify to a future employer that you've done your research and are ready to go in your new position.

Here are 5 tips on how to plan the next phase of your career:

Establish a Personal Brand

In today's competitive marketplace, it's important to find a way to stand out. What values reflect you best? What skills represent you the most and what do you most enjoy doing? Look at your story. What contribution would you like to make to the world? Become an active voice on LinkedIn in your area of interest and expertise. Consider publishing a blog or build a website highlighting your interests. Social media is another great place to showcase your talent and might encourage others to start seeking you out.

Always Have a Plan

As with most things in life, getting to where you want to be requires a plan. Remember that quote by Yogi Berra? "If you don't know where you are going you might wind up someplace else?" Whether you're relatively new to the workforce or a seasoned professional, we all need a plan. Set some short (1-3 years) and long term goals (5-10 years). Use the SMART criteria when setting your goals. Set career milestones and regularly review them.

Upskilling and Professional Development

No matter where you are on the path to success, there's always something more to learn. Are there any courses you can take to add to your credentials? Most professional associations have certification programs to add to your roster. [The Canadian Securities Institute \(CSI\)](#) offers a variety of courses leading to certification in the financial field.

[CPA Canada](#) is a strong advocate for empowering members in the profession.

Find a recruiter that knows the industry and has your best interests in mind. Many of [IFG's](#) employees are certified financial professionals themselves and can act as resources as you continue along your career path.

Most Universities offer continuing education programs that offer up to date information on current and future industry trends.

Seek Guidance and Find a Mentor

Whether from within or outside of your organization, find a trusted source to help you navigate the inevitable ups and downs in your career. Perhaps you're looking at switching careers or industries. Is there anyone in a position you'd like to be in that you could reach out to? Try to set up an information interview with that person.

If you're looking for a promotion within your own organization, make yourself visible by offering to take on new projects or tasks. This might introduce you to potential mentors who would be happy to work alongside you on your journey. Again, many professional associations have mentorship programs or hire yourself a professional career coach outside of work.

Make Wise Choices and Plan Early

If starting your career, take the time to make intelligent and informed choices. The choices you make now will have a big impact on future career success. For the more experienced, take your time when interviewing for a position. If possible, talk to previous or current employees. Follow your gut and look for signs of a toxic work environment that can show up early in the interview process. Look for something with growth potential and opportunities that will fulfill you both professionally and personally.

In a rapidly changing industry, it's critical to remain flexible and open to new opportunities. Take a deep dive into your interests and skill sets. Reflect on your goals to determine what kind of life you would like to lead in 5 years...then 10. Be creative. Perhaps your best opportunity hasn't been created yet. Whatever your decision, you deserve to be happy. The world is waiting to see what you can share to help make it a better place!