CAREER ACTION PLAN



PREPARED BY
The Niles Group, LLC
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The Niles GROUP



Success in your career doesn’t happen by chance—it requires clarity, strategy, and intentional action. The Career Action Plan is designed to help you take control of your professional journey, whether you're seeking a promotion, transitioning to a new industry, or stepping into leadership. By outlining your goals, identifying key opportunities, and developing an actionable roadmap, you can confidently navigate career decisions while maximizing your strengths and expertise. This plan serves as your personal guide to career growth, ensuring that every step you take is aligned with your long-term vision.

At The Niles Group, LLC, we specialize in career coaching, leadership development, and strategic career planning. Our mission is to provide professionals with the tools and insights they need to make informed career choices and achieve sustainable success. If you need personalized guidance or support in executing your Career Action Plan, we’re here to help. Contact us at:

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Let’s take intentional steps toward your career success!

Sparkle Bright!
VJ Niles

Define your level of success. This is different for anyone; it may not be becoming CEO or making a lot of money. Decide what it means to you.

_____

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_____

What impact are you trying to make and on whom? (your family, community, the world)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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_____

What jobs and industry are you interested in?

Job Title	Industry

Identify companies you want to work for.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe your ideal opportunity for your career. i.e., global travel, type of work life balance,

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

SET C.A.R.E.E.R. GOALS

When setting goals for your career the SMART model isn't enough, you need to set goals that are C.A.R.E.E.R. focused.



Challenging: Set a goal(s) that will challenge you in your career to assist you in getting to the next level.

Accelerated: Set a goal that will increase your skills and push you to move with a sense of urgency

Realistic: Set a goal that is real to you. Set a goal to get a promotion in a timely manner not one that has you as CEO of your company when you aren't the current CEO.

Empowering: Set a goal that will make you feel good about what you are doing and uplift you, not one that brings you down or your quality of life

Evolving: Set goals that will allow you to evolve with new industry trends and technological advances

Reachable: Set a goal that can be reached within a timely manner. Don't put yourself in the C-suite in 6 months when you aren't a senior level manager yet.

Write down these goals on the following page. Share them with your mentor and accountability partner and adjust, as necessary.

MY CAREER GOALS

1. Challenging

2. Accelerated

3. Realistic

4. Empowering

5. Evolving

6. Reachable

Identify what steps need to be taken to reach these goals. i.e., meeting individuals in your industry, freeing up time, focusing, new resume, career coach, mentor, etc.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Identify who can help you reach these goals. This would be your support system and people not in your network that you have identified to contact.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

What research is required on your part to reach these goals? I.e., Looking up a class towards a certification or a programming/foreign language, joining Toastmasters.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

What organizations can you connect with or join in your industry? There are multiple industry organizations out there, identify the ones that can help you best.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

ADAPTING TO CHANGE: STRATEGIES FOR UNCERTAIN TIMES



In career planning, it's important to acknowledge that things don’t always go as planned—and that's perfectly okay. Life is full of unexpected twists and turns, many of which are outside of our control. A change in economy can throw your whole plan for a loop but it’s okay. The key to navigating these uncertainties is preparation. A good plan always has alternatives so you can pivot with ease.

This section is designed to help you build flexibility into your career strategy by considering alternative options and creating a safety net for when circumstances shift. By anticipating potential challenges and proactively developing solutions, you can ensure that even if your original plans don’t come to fruition, you have the tools, strategies, and mindset to pivot effectively and continue making progress toward your goals.

CAREER PIVOT PLANNING

Why Plan for a Career Pivot?

Industries evolve, companies restructure, AI, politics, and job roles shift. Having a plan ensures that if change happens unexpectedly, you have options and are not starting from scratch.

Step 1: Identify Potential Career Paths. Consider these questions to get you started.

- If your current industry declines, what other industries or roles interest you?
- What jobs align with your current skill set?
- Are there roles adjacent to your current job that require minimal upskilling?

List three to six alternative career paths you might consider:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Step 2: Assess Your Transferable Skills

Many skills are useful across industries, especially soft skills. Write down your skills and pick the top 5 you think are the most transferable. Try to pick a combination of your hard and soft skills. Here are a few examples:

- Communication
- Leadership
- Project Management
- Teaching
- Conflict Resolution
- Writing
- Sales Techniques
- Graphic Design
- Negotiation
- Programming or Software Skills

What are your skills?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

13. _____

14. _____

15. _____

Write down your top 5 transferable skills:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Step 3: Start Building a Pivot Strategy

- Connect with professionals in industries of interest (LinkedIn, networking events).
- Take online courses or certifications to expand your skill set.
- Volunteer, take on side projects, or freelance in your desired field for experience**.**

Action Steps (List at least three):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

CONSULTING & FREELANCING PLAN

Why Consider Consulting or Freelancing?

Many professionals transition into consulting or freelancing as a way to increase income, gain flexibility, or prepare for career changes. If you have specialized expertise, you can monetize it. It is also a great way to keep earning an income if you want to semi-retire.

Step 1: Identify Your Consulting Niche

Here are a few questions to get you started.

- What expertise do you have in that others would pay for?
- Do people already seek your advice on specific topics? If so, which ones?
- Can your skills help businesses or individuals solve a problem?

Brainstorm your potential consulting areas:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Step 2: Define Your Target Audience

- **Who would benefit from your expertise? (Individuals, small businesses, corporations?)**
- **Where do these potential clients spend time? (LinkedIn, industry groups, networking events?)**
- **Who in your network could refer you to potential clients?**

Describe your ideal consulting client:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Step 3: Set Pricing & Marketing Strategy. Use these to guide your thought process and answer below.

- **Research market rates for consultants in your field.**
- **Decide how you will market yourself (LinkedIn posts, content creation, direct outreach).**
- **What can you offer for free (webinars, blog posts, social media insights) to attract clients.**

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_____

List three marketing actions to start your consulting business:

1. _____
2. _____

3. _____

FINANCIAL SECURITY & BACKUP PLAN

Why Have a Financial Backup Plan?

Unexpected job loss or career shifts can happen at any time. Having financial security allows you to make career decisions without panic. The old rule of a 3-month cushion no longer applies because the job market is tougher, and it takes longer to obtain a job than in years passed so try to save up more.

Step 1: Build a Safety Net

A 6–9-month emergency fund covers essentials if income stops. If you can get to a year even better but you still need to live so do the best you can.

Calculate your monthly expenses:

- Rent/Mortgage: $_____
- Utilities: $_____
- Groceries: $_____
- Cell Phone(s): $_____
- Insurance: $_____
- Loans (Student, Personal): $_____
- Self-Care: $_____
- Childcare: $_____
- Children Activities: $_____
- Subscriptions: $_____
- Transportation: $_____
- Miscellaneous: $_____

Total Monthly Expenses: $_____

Total savings goal (6–9 months of expenses): $_____

Step 2: Diversify Income Streams. Can you add additional income to help you meet your savings goals faster? Here are some options to help create multiple streams of income. If this is not a possibility, that is okay.

- Freelancing (writing, consulting, coaching, design, etc.)
- Gig work (DoorDash, Instacart, Amazon Flex)
- Online business (digital products, Etsy, courses)
- Real estate or investing

Which income streams fit your skills & interests?

_____

_____

_____

Step 3: Action Plan for Financial Stability

- Automate monthly savings into an emergency fund.
- Identify one side income stream to start within the next 3 months.
- Reduce unnecessary expenses to build financial flexibility.

Write three financial goals for the next 6 months:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



You did it! You created a career plan that is actionable and helps you navigate uncertain times. Here are your next steps to implement and be successful with your plan.

Accountability Steps

1. Get an accountability partner to discuss goals with
2. Take action on the steps.
3. Check in with your accountability partner for your status.
4. Take the next step!

Prepare for your interview and next career step (for early professionals)

1. Do your research.
2. Create a portfolio of your accomplishment.
3. Design an introduction, how are you telling your story?
4. Have a set of questions for your interviewer.
5. Identify someone in the company/department you can talk to about the company culture to ensure it's a fit for you.

Prepare for your review and meeting with your manager (for experienced professionals)

1. Create a portfolio of your accomplishments.
2. Research upcoming projects or initiatives you would like to work on
3. Identify key members of those teams and find a way to get them in your network.
4. Ask to be part of the new project.
5. If there are no new projects, ask for tasks that are out of your silo to expand your reach within the organizations.
6. Identify what you would like your next step to be and discuss with your manager how to get there then follow through on those steps and revisit the plan in 3-6 months with your manager.

Review your plan semi-annually to see if you are still on track or need to make adjustments. You can always adjust, rewind, or start over just don't give up.