

THINKING ABOUT A CAREER PIVOT?

Some Strategies to Consider

Step 1. Assess the hiring landscape.

- **Think about supply and demand.** When it's a job-seeker's market, employers may be more receptive to applicants new to the industry. When the job market is tight, employers may be more specific, may modify their timeline, or may be more strategic about their applicant pool. Take a bird's eye view of industries so you can spot an educated pivot that will position you well.
- **Skills and outcomes stand out.** Inventory your skills to decide if a new context could support a pivot. Identify the specific skills appearing in employers' online job postings along with targeted outcomes being sought by industries. State workforce agencies and state-specific job boards could provide you with helpful labor market information. Perhaps a skills realignment is in order.
- **Entrepreneurial mindsets are key.** Think more about what you can offer and market yourself accordingly. Options could include freelance work, a consultancy, or navigating your network to source a start-up opportunity. Remember that it's about your skills, aptitudes, and outcomes.
- **Compile a portfolio.** Start with 3-5 "highlight reel" projects and achievements that illustrate your skills with quantifiable results. This will get the ball rolling for you to accumulate a spectrum of portfolio samples for greater marketability.

Step 2. Conduct an opportunity exploration experiment.

- **Prototype a possible pivot path.** Sign up for online newsletters promoted via LinkedIn and other sources to give you pivot and job search ideas. Seek guidance on a pivot path if you're stuck. Opt for opportunities such as contract or freelance work, gig work, informational interviews, volunteering, or short-term commitments. Perhaps a temporary project or grant-related work could allow you to explore something new.
- **Seek free or sponsored training opportunities.** Some states offer free training for skill enhancement, depending upon the industry.
- **Build for agility.** Use short-term courses to stay current with technology and other skills that demonstrate your resilience while also remaining fluid. Remember that this is an experiment for you. It's an ideal time to learn!

Step 3. Pivot in small chunks.

- If you want to stay in the same industry but change location, identify places where your skills are needed. If you want to change industries but stay in the same location, leverage your existing network—and even identify new ones. You never know what insights you may discover. **Stay open to ideas.**
- Expand your network to reflect your pivot. **Network with a purpose.** Identify potential employers that align with your skillset, experiences, and preferences, then shape your networking efforts with your employer list in mind.
- **Align search efforts with your pivot.** Prepare for any career fairs and other job search opportunities that may be offered and that align with your pivot.

Step 4. Announce your pivot.

- **Make the case for your pivot.** Identify the rationale associated with your skills, your outcomes, and any recent learning.
- **Update your profile.** Infuse your LinkedIn profile, your resume and cover letter, and your interviews with your pivot rationale. Think of it as a new elevator pitch.
- **Inform your networks about your pivot.** Make sure the members of your networks are aware of your career pivot. Don't forget to update any mentors and sponsors, too. This will prepare them to spot opportunities for you, including introducing you to individuals who could join your network.