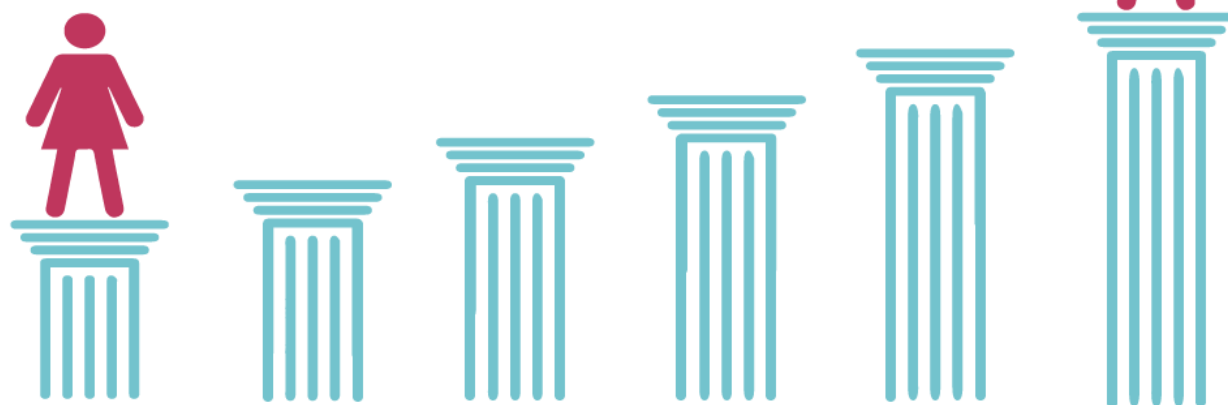


Boosting Your Career: Sourced's 6 Top Tips



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Here at Sourced we interview a large number of technology professionals every year. Many of these are in full control of their career and looking to make their next strategic move in line with their goals. We also meet a number of people who aren't so satisfied, and worry that they aren't achieving their potential, are stuck in a rut or in the wrong job altogether.

We have noticed that those in the in-control category share a lot of similar traits and attributes. If you're one of those who isn't currently career satisfied, here are the top six influencing factors that are regularly mentioned to us as positively affecting people's careers.

1. Give Your Career a Warrant of Fitness

The feedback we've received has shown that making sure you regularly check how your career is tracking against your goals is one of the most important things to consider when looking at giving your career a boost.

As we're coming to the end of the year, this is a great time to do just that. To give yourself an effective review, our advice is to use some of the holiday period to review the following for your job, team and employer:



Once you have reviewed this information you will have some indication of the changes you need to make in order to achieve your career goals. This could result in the decision not to change anything, to look for somewhere new to work, to seek a new type of job, to stay where you currently are but transfer into a different department or to try something completely different altogether.

2. Seek Out Additional Skills

With technology changing so quickly these days, it's always good to keep up to date with the latest trends and technologies. After your review, if you've decided you need to expand your skillset, a good idea is to pursue additional certifications or training.

Tertiary studies, whilst expensive and time-consuming are the obvious option. We've noticed that advanced degrees are becoming more and more desirable, especially when it comes to applying for management positions. Postgraduate education will not only develop your skillset, it will often also expand your business network.

However, learning new skills doesn't have to take a lot of time or money. It's easy to take a little time out of your evenings or weekends to learn something new. Free video tutorials on YouTube, like [TastyTuts](#), can help you get up to speed with Adobe products, which can be very useful if you're looking to diversify your skillset. There are lots of other online courses available such as [Seek Learning](#) or [Udemy](#), and Google also provides [official certifications in AdWords and Analytics](#). These all provide tangible qualifications that you can use to take on new roles and responsibilities, and to propel your career forward.

Gaining new skills isn't just something you can do outside of work. Put yourself forward at work and volunteer in different departments to find out more about what you enjoy and what you're good at.

3. Improve Your Soft Skills

Your degrees and certifications might have made you skilled in coding languages, but if you can't speak the same language as your colleagues or clients, you're going to run into trouble at some point. We're not saying that you need to learn German, Chinese and French, but being able to translate highly technical concepts into ideas that every day, non-specialist people can understand, is an immensely valuable skill.

Joining [Toastmasters](#) or [Pecha Kucha](#) groups can significantly improve your public speaking and presentation skills. Going to and presenting at [Meetup](#) events, though these often have more specialist audiences, can also help to improve these skills. You can also start writing blogs, which not only

builds your personal brand and credibility, but will also develop your ability to turn your ideas into something everyone can read and understand. Taking these actions will improve your confidence when speaking to other people whom you may not know, presenting ideas that others may not be entirely familiar with, or managing people in your workplace; all of which can open up new career opportunities.

4. Find a Mentor

Having someone who is available to bounce ideas past and also to give you advice/tricks of the trade is hugely valuable when shaping your career. By sharing their experience, achievements and failures, a mentor can help you emulate their successes and avoid making the same mistakes as they have.

Seeking out a mentor is something that many people find challenging, but it doesn't have to be.

To find a mentor, identify someone you respect in your industry or region who is realistically attainable (i.e. don't try to approach Richard Branson). Then see if you can identify a mutual connection that can put you in touch with them.



Sourced's Guide to Finding a Mentor

- Identify people you respect in your industry or network.
- Make sure these people are attainable as a mentor.
- Find a mutual connection
- Approach them. Just ask!
- Identify which mentor can best help you.
- Prepare for meetings to ensure you get the most out of them.

Sourced
We get people.

Whilst if asked, many experienced professionals are happy to share their knowledge and expertise, be careful to be very clear about what you are looking for in a mentor. You may even want to consider informally interviewing a number of prospects to find the person best suited to helping you. Also, remember that their time is a limited resource, so make the most of the time you spend with them.

5. Network and Brand Yourself

In today's constantly connected environment, it's not just your LinkedIn network that you should be trying to maintain. Your personal brand exists outside of social media too, and networking in person builds trust and credibility, along with putting you in touch with people who can have an impact on your career. In the past we've written some great blogs about [personal branding](#) and [local industry events](#), so give those a read if you need help with your branding and networking strategies.

6. Follow Your Passion

The key feedback from people who are in-control of their career is that they have all followed their passion. Very few of them were working in roles that they weren't passionate about or would at least help them progress towards a role that they are passionate about. The good news is that experience with technology is currently a high-demand skill-set, this means that it is possible to be more selective in the type of roles you undertake.

Summary

Being in control of your career is crucial. Hopefully these tips will help you to start to regain control, however if you're looking for more tips or if you've realised your not currently following your passion, give the team here at Sourced a [call](#), we might be able to help!