Successfully Translate Your Federal Experience to Non-Federal Careers

Worksheet

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This worksheet is a counterpart to the playbook by the same name and is designed to help you discover how your federal experience translates to exciting opportunities outside the federal government. Whether you've never used AI tools before or you're already familiar with them, we'll walk you through this process step by step.

What you'll get by using this worksheet:

* Discover which of your specific skills are most attractive to non-federal employers
* Translate those skills to a future employer in a compelling narrative
* Identify job titles and roles that match your experience and preferences
* Learn where you might want to upskill to become even more competitive

How to Use This Worksheet:

1. Using this worksheet, draft your responses to the prompts where you see [brackets]
2. Open an AI tool in your browser (like [ChatGPT](https://chatgpt.com/), [Claude](https://claude.ai/login?returnTo=%2F%3F), or another AI chatbot)
3. Copy and paste each prompt, moving through each of the steps
4. Click submit and review the AI's personalized response
5. Continue with the next prompt to dig deeper!

💡 PRO TIP: Don't be afraid to go back and try different prompts or add more information if you think of something later. This is an exploration, not a test—there are no wrong answers!

## Step 1: Translate Your Federal Experience into Non-Federal-Sector Roles

I have worked in the federal government and am seeking to transition into [CHOOSE ONE EMPLOYER TYPE: for-profit, non-profit, or academia] sector. Please help me translate my government experience into relevant private-sector job roles.

Here is my background:

1. Last Job Title & Agency: [Insert]
2. Current or Last Grade Level: [Insert]
3. Current or Last Core Job Duties: [Insert]
4. Key Achievements in that Role: [Insert your achievements - these can be bullets, sentences, or paragraphs - whatever best showcases your accomplishments]
5. Special Skills, Tools/Software Used, or Certifications: [Insert]
6. My Soft Skills: [Insert]
7. My Personality Traits: [Insert]
8. Particular Organizations or Roles of Interest (optional): [Insert]
9. Resume: [Upload, link to, or copy/paste if applicable]

Based on this, provide:

* A summary of my transferable skills in bullet form
* 3-5 private-sector job titles/roles that align with my experience, personality, and skills. Please provide a description of what each job title/role would do in an organization
* A short explanation of how my background connects to each job title/role
* Suggested specific companies and/or organizations that employ someone with this job title/role
* Recommended resume/LinkedIn keywords

Step 2: Refine Role Alignment Based on Your Specific Career Goals

Based on the roles you suggested, I want to further refine my options.

1. I'm most interested in jobs that are: [e.g., hybrid/remote, people-facing, tech-driven, etc.]
2. My long-term career goal is: [e.g., leadership, product management, cybersecurity, etc.]
3. I'd prefer to avoid roles that involve: [Insert]
4. [Optional: I would like my next role to be [e.g., mission-driven, have impact, be public service oriented, include social responsibility, etc.]

Can you:

* Narrow down the job titles to those best aligned with these preferences
* Re-rank or group them by how well they match my goals
* Add 1-2 stretch roles I might grow into with some training

## Step 3: Build a Resume That Highlights Your Strengths

Based on the roles identified for me, please help me build a general resume that positions my federal background competitively.

Here's what I've selected from what you suggested earlier:

1. Target Roles: [List selected job titles]
2. Target Industries (if applicable, e.g. health, finance, housing): [Insert]
3. Target Sectors (For-Profit, Non-Profit, Academia): [Insert]

Given my background summary (if not already shared): [Copy and paste from Prompt 1]

Please provide:

* A general resume outline or sample tailored to my selected roles
* Tips on how to rewrite my job duties using terminology appropriate for my target industries and sectors
* Suggestions on how to emphasize my unique strengths as a federal employee
* Sections or bullet points to add/remove/update
* Resume keywords or phrases relevant to the industry
* Optional: Suggested edits for my LinkedIn profile

Step 4: Highlight Your Unique Differentiators as a Former Federal Employee

I want to make my resume stand out by clearly showing the value of my federal experience in a way that resonates with [employer type].

Here's what I'd like to emphasize: [Insert 3-5 bullets]

Please:

* Suggest resume language that highlights these differentiators
* Compare typical [employer type] equivalents of my duties and explain how to reframe them
* Give me 2-3 example bullet points that show [employer type] how I deliver value
* Optional: Identify traits that make me valuable to modern [employer type] teams

Step 5: Narrow Down Your Target Job Roles

I've identified several potential [INSERT: for-profit, non-profit, academia] -sector job roles based on my background. I'd like help narrowing them down to those that best align with my career goals, preferences, and likelihood of success.

Here are my current top role options: [Insert from Prompts 1 or 2]

I'm most interested in jobs that offer: [e.g., remote work, fast-paced culture, structured environment, etc.]

Personal/job fit criteria:

* I prefer companies/industries that are: [e.g., mission-driven, tech-focused, stable, etc.]
* I'd like to avoid roles involving: [e.g., heavy sales, 100% travel]

My short- and long-term career goals are: [Insert]

Based on this, please:

* Rank or group these job roles by overall fit
* Provide rationale for each ranking (e.g., skills match, ease of transition, market demand)
* Suggest one or two "stretch roles" I could grow into with minimal upskilling
* Identify roles that are better suited as short-term steppingstones

## Step 6: Identify Upskilling Options for Competitive Advantage

Based on the roles you suggested, I'm interested in what areas for upskilling I could pursue to either (1) make me more competitive to be selected for those roles and/or (2) position me for "stretch" roles beyond the roles you've identified.

Please provide:

* Any relevant upskilling or certification suggestions
* For each upskilling suggestion, please include specific recommendations on how I could acquire those skills, through formal educational programs, apprenticeships, volunteer activities, or otherwise. Include how long it would take to acquire those skills
* Add 1-2 stretch roles I might grow into with this upskilling. Please identify what upskilling would make me a better positioned candidate for each role you identify.

## One Last Thing Before You Go: You've Got This!

Remember, your federal experience is a tremendous asset. Private sector employers value the unique perspective, skills, and experience you bring to the table. This playbook is designed to help you communicate that value effectively.

Don't hesitate to revisit prompts, ask follow-up questions, or explore different career paths. The AI is there to help you throughout your journey!

**💡** FINAL TIP: As you go through this process, keep a document open to save promising ideas, job titles, and insights. This creates a personalized roadmap for your transition that you can refer back to and refine as you continue exploring options.