

UPSKILLING: A POWERFUL COMPONENT TO BUILDING YOUR CAREER

Five steps to consider when learning new career skills.

Over the past year, I have been using an online platform called Dunder Data to learn Python for data analytics. As an Advisor, I have found that there is an ever-increasing demand for data analytics across all industries and functions – it has become a necessity rather than a luxury. My data analytics journey ultimately speaks to the broader necessity of upskilling and how critical it has become for professionals who want to grow in their careers.

What is upskilling? As an individual, it involves learning new skills or advancing existing skills in one's career. On a macro level, it represents a shift in how organizations invest in their people. The workforce is rapidly changing. A report from the World Economic Forum states that automation will displace 85 million jobs in the next five years, and yet 97 million new jobs will be created. Companies are catching on – according to the LinkedIn 2023 learning report, 83% of organizations seek a people-centric future with most looking to employee learning and development programs for help. It is now more important than ever to prioritize and create a strategy for upskilling your career. Outlined below are five steps to position you for upskilling success.

1. Identify your objectives

Understanding your goals is a key step in identifying where you want to upskill. Take time to reflect upon your career, interests, strengths, and values. Consider the current state of your profession and the skills that are in high demand. Use this information to identify your goals and the steps necessary to achieve them.

2. Consider your schedule and flexibility

Once you know your goals and the skills needed to reach them, think about how much effort you can devote to learning. One of the challenges to gaining new skills is finding the time that fits into your current schedule. Identify opportunities in your daily routine and think about how you can leverage that time for learning. This may involve reading a blog during your train commute or spending your lunch break watching instructional videos. If you can, consider setting aside time each week to devote all your focus to pursuing the skills.

3. Determine the best resources for achieving your goals

The internet has endless learning resources which, although beneficial, can be overwhelming. For example, a Google search for “learn Python” generates over 1.2 billion results. To navigate the glut of information, it is important to think about your learning needs. Do you want a certification? If so, research your options and create an action plan. Do you like hands-on experience? Find in-person classes or networking events. Knowing your learning style will help set you up for success in your upskilling journey.

4. Apply your newfound knowledge

With new skills at your disposal, look for ways to apply them in your career. Reference your goals to identify opportunities – this can come in the form of taking on a new project, expanding your responsibilities, or simply integrating it into your current work. Oftentimes skills are learned but not effectively applied – finding ways to utilize newfound skills will reinforce your knowledge and guide your long-term goals.

5. Document your progress

Learning new skills can be challenging. To stay motivated, it is important to keep your goals in mind and document the achievements that get you closer to those goals. This can be as simple as attending a conference and meeting a potential mentor or taking on a new task at work. Not only will this help keep your upskilling journey in perspective, but it will also demonstrate to others your commitment to building your career.

In today's ever-evolving labor force, upskilling will continue to be a crucial element for working professionals. Assessing your current career, creating an action plan, and documenting your progress can go a long way in achieving your short- and long-term goals.

References:

[LinkedIn 2023 Workplace Learning Report](#)

[World Economic Forum Report](#)



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