

Moving On Up

“How to Advance Your Career to the Next Level”

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#SOGF2026

Workforce 2040

How today's trends are shaping
tomorrow's workforce



Trends Impacting the Future

US population growth has flatlined. Fertility rates are at 1.7 BPW, below the 2.1 needed to maintain the population.

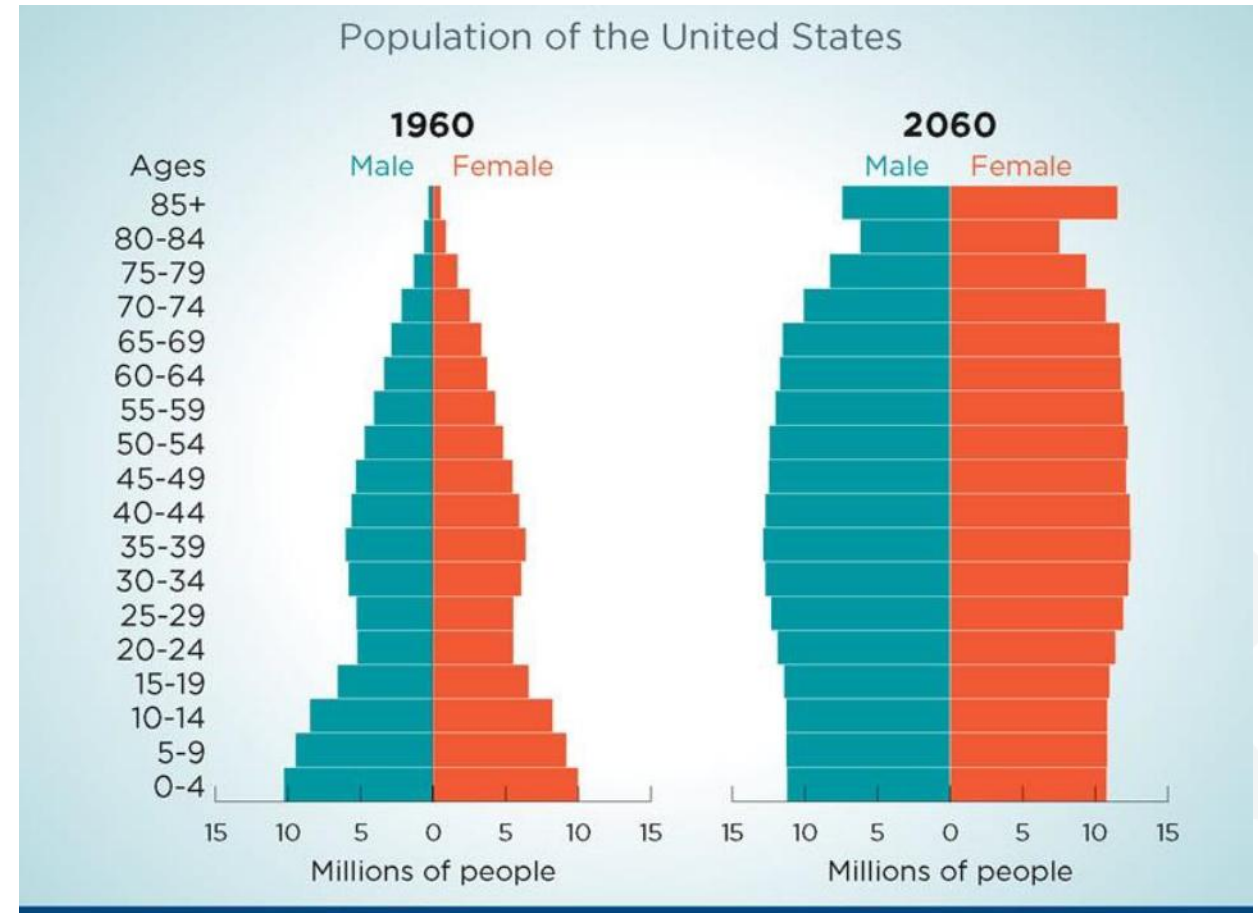


Image Credit: "From Pyramid to Pillar: A Century of Change, Population of the U.S." US Census Bureau

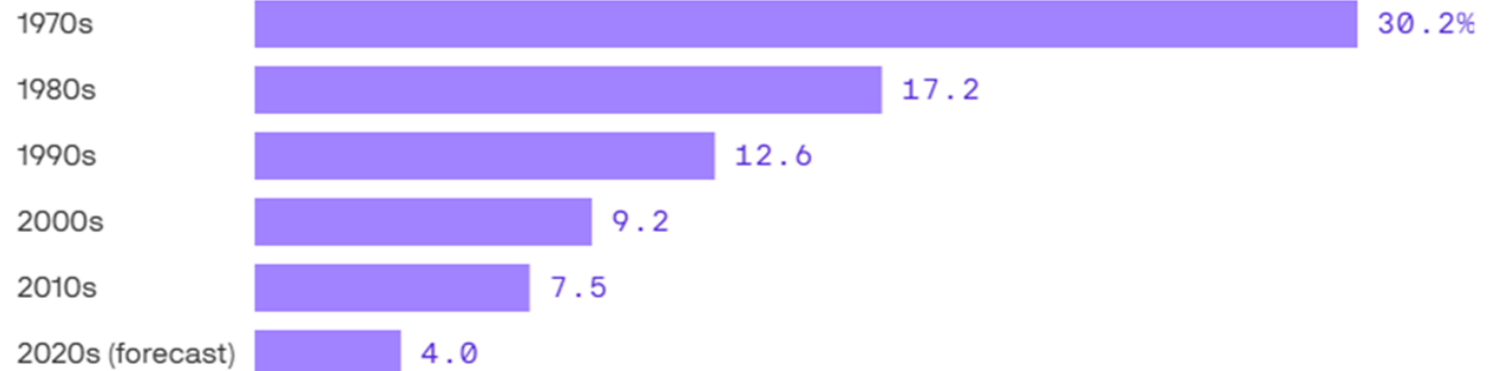
Trends Impacting the Future

➤ *From now until 2030 - 10,000 Baby Boomers will hit retirement age every day.*

➤ Baby Boomers are retiring, Gen Xers are approaching middle age, and the Millennials & Gen Zs that follow them are comparatively small

Labor force growth by decade

1970s to 2020s



Data: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Congressional Budget Office; Chart: Axios Visuals

Trends Impacting the Future

Recent projections estimate future workers will have 8 -10 jobs before they turn 40... and 20 over their careers.



Trends impacting the future

50% of all employees will need reskilling by 2025

2/3rds of all occupations to be based on soft skills by 2040



AFI's Workforce 2040 - Trends to Consider.....

- ✓ Technology will feature ever more prominently in every aspect of work
- ✓ 87% of executives are either experiencing current skills gaps or anticipate skills gaps occurring within the next 5 years
- ✓ The need isn't just to hire experienced candidates, but ones who have the right potential to learn and reskill
- ✓ Soft skills and non-automatable skills will be very important
- ✓ We'll all need to learn how to work alongside robots and be fluent in the use of Artificial Intelligence

Specific Local Government Recruitment Challenges

A Sweet Spot for
Finance Professionals
& CPAs!



The Biggest Challenge in Public Finance May Not Be Money – *Governing* 2024

The public finance workforce is still below pre-pandemic numbers. **A third of the existing workforce is eyeing retirement. Recruitment is a challenge, with college students deterred by barriers to entry including lengthy licensing requirements and subpar pay.**

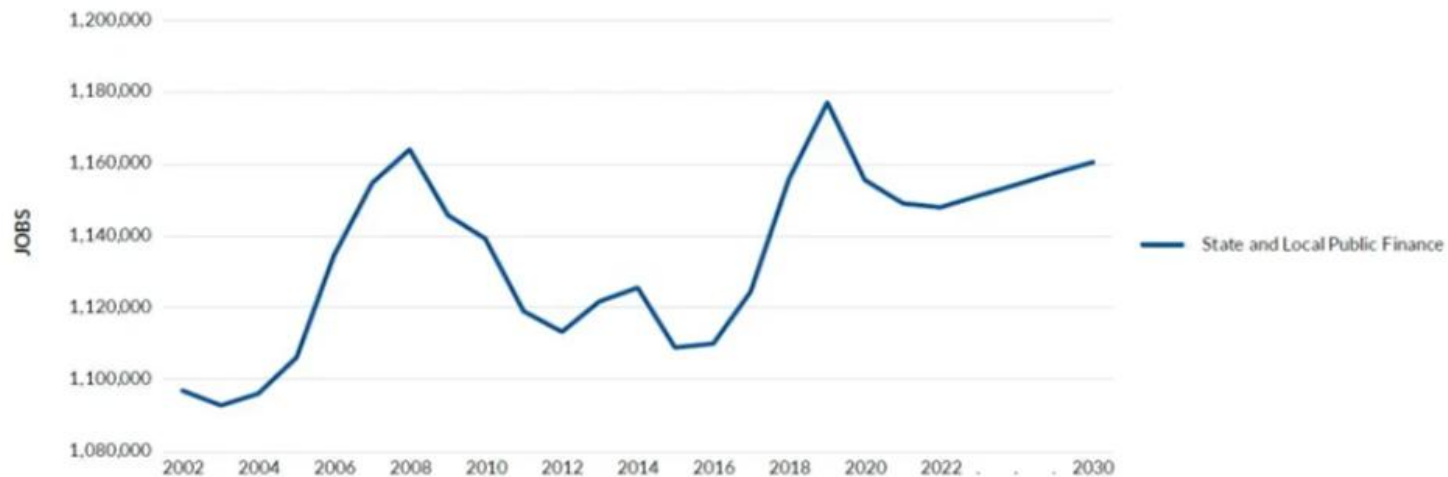
Right now, the United States is short 340,000 accountants. **Although many areas of the public sector workforce have finally gotten back to or surpassed pre-pandemic levels, public finance is one of the fields still having trouble matching supply and demand. In fact, there are fewer public finance workers on the job now than there were back in 2019.**

Departments are struggling to recruit and retain the next generation of workers, leading to lags in reporting, big backlogs for processing local taxes and licenses and a lack of auditors.

The Biggest Challenge in Public Finance May Not Be Money – *Governing* July 2024

“There are large numbers of retirements in public finance happening now, and more on the horizon,” says Kyle Wedberg, Senior Manager at GFOA’s research and consulting center. ***“So - there is a real need to focus on succession planning and leadership development.”***

Figure 1. State and Local Public Finance Sector Jobs, 2002 – 2022, and Projected Jobs, 2022 – 2030



In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, state and local public finance employment dipped by 28,000 jobs, according to GFOA.

An example in Public Finance Workforce Challenges: Governing Magazine

Unlike some government jobs, public finance positions often pay better than private-sector competitors. But an aging workforce and departures at senior levels present challenges.

Public finance needs workers, and it can pay them well. A new study commissioned by the National Association of State Treasurers (NAST) reveals the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead as it competes with the private sector to recruit and retain workers:

- “We are entering a potentially tumultuous era of employment and staffing in the public finance sector,” said NAST in issuing the report. **A significant factor in this concern is the study’s finding that 60% of public finance workers are over 45, and nearly a third are 55 or older.**
- **At the same time, fewer than 2 in 10 public finance workers are 34 years old or younger, less than half the representation of this demographic in the total U.S. workforce.** This is forcing a reconsideration of the best strategies moving forward.

Talent Gap & The Need for Employee Development

- It is estimated that more than 1 billion people worldwide will need new skills by 2030. The next generation of employees has grown up with computers and is comfortable with technology - but needs additional skills to succeed in the new workplace environment...
- The **“talent gap”** (i.e., the shortage of skilled & talented employees) has and will continue to be one of the most pressing concerns for local government.

Figure 6: Looking broadly at your workforce, what general skill sets are needed? n=248



Source: Center for State and Local Government Excellence (SLGE), SURVEY FINDINGS: STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE 2021

Talent Development - *LinkedIn*

LinkedIn believes that learning opportunities are seen as a top retention strategy.

The networking platform's 2024 Workplace Learning Report showed that globally, companies with strong learning cultures enjoy higher retention rates, with more internal mobility and people moving into management roles.

Plus, with AI threatening to displace workers, workers are placing more importance on learning than ever before - and if they aren't getting help on fine-tuning their AI skills with their current employer, they may start looking elsewhere. LinkedIn research shows that people want to learn how to use AI in their work, with 2/3rds insisting it'll help with their career progression.

Suggested Leadership Skill Development Areas

2026



ICMA's Practices for Effective Local Government Management and Leadership

1. Personal & Professional Integrity	8. Policy Facilitation & Implementation
2. Community Engagement	9. Community & Resident Service
3. Equity & Inclusion	10. Service Delivery
4. Staff Effectiveness	11. Technology Literacy
5. Personal Resiliency & Develop.	12. Financial Management & Budgeting
6. Strategic Leadership	13. HR Mgmt. & Workforce Engagement
7. Strategic Planning	14. Communication & Info. Sharing



Image Credit - ICMA

Common Leadership Skills Desired by Public Employers

Inspiration,
Vision, &
Leadership
Enthusiasm

Comfort with the
Public Nature of
the Position

Financial Acumen
Finance &
Budgeting Skills

Growth
Management

Servant
Leadership &
Emotional
Intelligence

Public/Community
Engagement

Coach, Mentor &
Team Builder

Inspiration, Vision, & Leadership Enthusiasm

The selected individual should have a demonstrated ability to convey the future direction of a community, align municipal services and capital projects, and develop strategic partnerships to achieve the community's vision.

We seek an outgoing, experienced, and visionary servant leader who will guide our City through its future growth in a manner that is prudent and sustainable. A seasoned manager and strategic thinker, the next City Administrator will work with the Commission and area stakeholders to help ensure future generations experience the unique character and high quality of life current residents enjoy and cherish.

The next City Manager will be a strategic planner who can work closely with Council to help craft and implement the City's vision and utilize best practices in all areas of governance to help the community achieve its goals. The successful candidate will be confident and pragmatic, energetic and approachable, and will work as an advocate to protect and highlight quality of life issues in the City.

The selected individual will be a capable Manager who understands the details associated with municipal operations, can help set the vision for the organization, establish obtainable goals, and be a visible champion for exceptional customer service that our residents expect from the organization.

Comfort with the Public Nature of the Position

The chosen candidate will be a highly visible member of the community and must be comfortable with the public nature of this position.

This is a public and very visible position. An excellent communicator with individuals at all educational levels, who supports highly engaged and participatory citizen and business involvement will be successful. The City Manager should be comfortable in becoming part of the fabric of the community.

Financial Acumen Finance & Budgeting Skills

The chosen candidate should possess strong financial acumen and experience in long-term capital planning and budgeting skills and have extensive experience with project management.

The selected individual will have a broad knowledge of municipal finance, advanced budget skills, and sound business acumen. It will be important for the incoming Manager to have experience with long-term capital planning/budgeting.

The incoming Manager will be fiscally prudent and must possess a broad knowledge of municipal finance, proven budget skills, and strategic pursuit of long-term financial and operational sustainability to ensure that the Town meets its financial responsibilities, obligations, and service delivery standards. The person selected should have the knowledge, skills, and ability to help guide the Town Council in cost management strategies, financial policy alternatives, creative public financing strategies, and public-private partnerships.

Growth Management

The Mayor and Town Council seek a professional, visionary, transparent, and personable Manager who balances forward-thinking growth management with fiscal conservancy, communicates effectively with internal and external stakeholders, and is equipped to inspire staff to serve an increasingly diverse community.

The ideal candidate will have experience in high-growth communities that value a collaborative, inclusive, proactive, and quality-of-life sustainability approach to planning and development to allow future generations to experience the unique character and high quality of life current residents enjoy and cherish.

Our community seeks an ethical, decisive, strategic, transparent, and values-driven servant leader who balances growth and development with the preservation of open space to become its next Town Manager.

The next City Manager will lead the City's efforts to transition its focus from that of a high-growth suburb to that of an established city with stable growth and redevelopment opportunities. It will be important for the selected individual to understand the need for balance between growth and development and the need for open space.

Servant Leadership & Emotional Intelligence

The successful candidate will be a confident and dynamic City Manager with a high level of emotional intelligence who possesses highly advanced interpersonal skills and a proactive, transparent, and collaborative management style.

The organization seeks a candidate who possesses highly advanced interpersonal skills and can thrive in an environment involving a high level of citizen and business engagement in municipal matters.

The ideal candidate will be a person with a high level of emotional intelligence who possesses highly developed interpersonal skills, a proactive, transparent, collaborative, and “no surprises” management style. A demonstrated history of building consensus and coalitions to achieve goals is desired.

Public/Community Engagement

The candidate should thrive in an environment involving a high level of citizen and business engagement in municipal matters. The selected individual will be accessible to the public, promote public outreach, and have a desire to be highly visible both within the organization and externally throughout the community. The individual should be an effective communicator and public speaker and be comfortable when speaking with individuals at all levels.

The City Council is looking for a candidate who can work on the City's behalf and be a highly visible partner with business and community stakeholders and residents. The City Manager will be the City's representative on a variety of local boards, exhibiting strong leadership and continually promoting the City as a destination.

The City Manager should have a demonstrated track record of community involvement and will need to be an active participant in the community, encouraging community engagement and fostering a culture of volunteerism. The successor City Manager needs to be receptive to hearing input and concerns from citizens and committed to following through on solutions, while exercising the highest degree of tact, patience, and professional courtesy in contact with the public, staff, and all elected and appointed officials to maintain the highest possible standards of public service.

The City Manager is often the “face” of the organization, especially during community outreach for local levy elections.

Coach, Mentor & Team Builder

The ideal candidate will promote team building and model the highest level of integrity and ethics. A skilled delegator who is comfortable managing the big picture, the selected candidate will empower employees and have the ability to motivate staff to build high-performance, results-driven teams. He or she will be supportive of professional development for employees and serve as a coach and mentor to staff. The Manager will be committed to promoting interdepartmental communication and coordination and providing outstanding customer service, both internally and externally.

The chosen candidate will hold themselves and others accountable, understand differing perspectives, suggestions, and recommendations as part of their decision-making while building morale and reinforcing a team culture.

The City Manager should be a team leader who can hire the right people and develop a team that works effectively together, organizing projects and providing effective delegation and supervision to make sure budgets and timelines are met.

Common Leadership Skills Desired by Public Employers

Economic
Development &
Downtown
Development

Council-Manager
Relations &
“Boardmanship”

Intergovernmental
Relations

Innovation &
“Outside the Box”
Thinking

Utility & Capital
Project Financing
& Management

Negotiations &
Collective
Bargaining

Performance
Management &
BMPs

“Thick-Skinned”

Economic Development & Downtown Development

The incoming City Manager will have the knowledge, skills, and ability to promote economic growth. Ensuring that City policies are development- and business-friendly without compromising quality or public safety will be important. The ideal candidate will have experience in downtown development/redevelopment and understand the City's role in supporting economic development initiatives to successfully manage the development process throughout the City's internal review and permitting processes.

A successful track record of managing economic development projects and experience with redevelopment projects involving multi-use redevelopment, brownfield, and historic structures/districts is also desired.

The selected individual should be skilled in economic development with a successful history of marketing strategies and completion of new and expanding businesses and industries. Additional experience in evaluating project incentives and return on investment strategies to help position the City to attract projects that support community economic development objectives is also desired.

Council-Manager Relations & “Boardmanship”

Creating close, positive, productive, and lasting relationships with the City Council and community stakeholders will be paramount for the incoming City Manager. The City Council seeks someone who will communicate with them directly and frankly, but always positively and respectfully. An exceptional listener and consensus-builder, the City Manager will serve as a bridge between the Mayor, Council, and staff and will skillfully guide the City Council through the decision-making process. The person selected will be politically savvy, but never political, and can identify and articulate alternative paths to achieve desirable outcomes.

The successful candidate will be politically astute and have demonstrated experience in communicating effectively with the City Council and assisting the governing body in finding consensus on key issues and working effectively as a team. It will be important for the new City Manager to place a strong emphasis on promoting unity within the City Council, organization, and the community.

The Mayor and Council expect to have open, honest, and direct communication with the City Manager, with ongoing regular communication regarding the needs and affairs of the City and City department activities. The City Manager is expected to provide Council with complete information on policy options for matters requiring a decision in order to allow them to make informed decisions.

Council-Manager Relations & “Boardmanship”

The successful candidate should possess highly effective Board skills to help guide the Town Council and Department Heads through the decision-making process, being politically savvy but never political. Fully informing Town Council members in the most appropriate and timely manner and creating a close, positive, trusting, productive, and lasting relationship with all members of the Council and staff will be important.

Intergovernmental Relations

The selected candidate will be a highly effective negotiator and mediator who can build consensus and forge strategic partnerships within and beyond the community.

It will be important for the next City Manager to develop strategic partnerships with local, state, and federal intergovernmental agencies.

The successful candidate will be highly visible within the community and active in the region, continually building and maintaining a strong network of peers and colleagues and promoting our City at local, state, and federal levels.

Innovation & “Outside the Box” Thinking

They will be open-minded and willing to consider “outside the box” strategies to resolve community issues and challenges. The selected individual should also be an advocate for technology and understand the deployment of new systems.

The City Manager should be a forward thinker and have a demonstrated ability to change the organization’s direction to implement new entrepreneurial and innovative approaches in service delivery to organizational and community challenges.

The City Council is seeking a City Manager who can work effectively with them to facilitate and implement annual goal-setting, strategic planning, and related Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) to accomplish our goals.

Utility & Capital Project Financing & Management

The City Manager must possess sound financial acumen, have extensive experience with capital planning and project management, and help educate the community about the importance of asset management.

The City seeks a servant leader with exceptional skills in utility planning and water resources, with a strong understanding of utility operations under local, state, and federal utility laws/regulations, and possessing excellent judgment, discretion, customer relations, and authentic leadership.

This individual is a strategic thinker who can manage multiple complex, high-profile utility and other capital improvement projects while maintaining attention to operational details.

Negotiations & Collective Bargaining

The ideal candidate should have a demonstrated history of establishing productive union-management communications and relations and be a skilled negotiator and administrator of collective bargaining agreements.

Ideally, the candidate will also have a successful background in developing progressive strategies for collective bargaining negotiations and contract administration and will ensure effective, harmonious union/management communications and relations.

Performance Management & BMPs

Taking a talented and well-led city workforce to the next performance level by utilizing Best Management Practices and promoting continuous improvement at every level of the organization will be an ongoing priority for the City Manager.

The ideal candidate brings relevant experience in local government budgeting, performance management, and strategic planning - preferably within a High-Performance Organization (HPO) environment. They are a forward-thinking leader who fosters innovation, promotes accountability, and empowers their team to grow. The successful candidate thrives in complex environments, navigates change with confidence, and is driven to align resources with measurable outcomes.

The ideal candidate will be a pragmatic person of high integrity with a history of adopting Best Management Practices and a track record of building strong, high-performing teams to achieve organizational goals. The CXO should be a skilled problem-solver with a history of implementing creative and innovative solutions to challenges and championing effective and efficient public service delivery with the highest level of customer service.

The CXO will be a champion of interdepartmental cooperation and promote both internal and external customer service, lead the organization's customer-driven, continuous improvement and related performance metric process, and other High-Performance Organization initiatives.

Last, But Not Least - Be “Thick-Skinned”



For More Information.....

➤ **To learn more or subscribe to SGR's 10-in-10 update on Servant Leadership:**

➤ <https://governmentresource.us11.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=246670eb71ec739a4301f451e&id=ea88f5edc2>

➤ Feel free to give me your business card or scan our QR Code

➤ **Email or call me at:**

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Moving On Up

Advancing Your Career and Navigating Change



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Not every career looks like a ladder

Maybe it's a path...maybe it's a portfolio.



Gather skills along the way

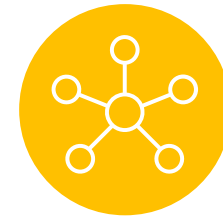
- Public Sector
- Parks & Recreation
- Public Works
- Utilities
- Now – City Managers Office



My career brings together different perspectives, responsibilities, and relationships.



Each experience added something I could carry into another role.



Different does not mean disconnected.



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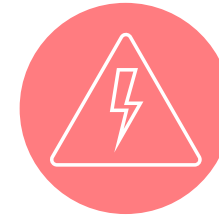
Get Comfortable Being Uncomfortable



If public speaking makes you uncomfortable, **speaking publicly more.**



If networking makes you uncomfortable, **network more.**



Your greatest power can be knowing your weaknesses and then **deliberately addressing them.**

Growth takes patience and practice



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New position. Familiar skills.



Every role asks us to solve problems.



Most positions draw on skills I have used before.



Listen, ask questions, build relationships, and work through problems.



The context changes, but I do not start from zero.



Doubt came along for the ride



- Every step brought **doubt**, followed by **reassurance**.
- Am I ready for this?
- What do **I know already**, and what do I **need to learn**?



Help others shake off their feathers

As I find reassurance, I can help others find theirs:



Name the strengths
you see.



Make room for
questions.



Remind people that
learning is part of
stepping up.



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What I wish I had prepared for

A promotion changes more than the work.



Reporting relationships change.



People may need to see you differently.



The context you need changes, too.



I'm now my boss's boss

The people may be familiar; the working relationship is new. So, how do I respect our past relationship while clarifying today's responsibilities?



Acknowledge the change and clarify expectations.



Familiarity does not make the transition automatic.



Same person. Different role.



I built many relationships through casual, lighthearted conversations.



Now I need people to see my role differently, without losing myself.



Social settings and conferences can feel awkward when my current role is unclear.



Be clear about the role; stay authentic in the relationship.



I'm not new here—but I am new here

Internal familiarity is not the same as orientation to a new role.



Promoted employees may still need the ropes and access to key conversations.



What context am I missing, and which conversations do I need?



What is different about success in this role?



Internal promotions still need a welcome into the new role.



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What I take into the next step



My route does not need to look like anyone else's



I can bring familiar skills to unfamiliar problems.



I can acknowledge doubt and reassure others.



I can be known here and still need help learning this role.



Moving up isn't starting over; it's bringing my portfolio with me.



What will you bring with you- and what will you need to learn?





Thankyou!



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Questions & Comments



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