



NAVIGATING THE TRANSITION: PREPARING FOR CAREER CHANGES IN THE FEDERAL & GOVERNMENT INDUSTRY





PREPARING FOR CHANGE

“The only thing constant is change” - Greek Philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus
Transitioning from federal service to the private sector presents both opportunities and challenges for government executives. If you’ve spent a large portion of your professional career in government service, there may be a period of adaptation or an unforeseen learning curve.

FedTec has partnered with key former executives to highlight essential skills, knowledge, and key insights that may help you to ease the transition and prepare for your next role effectively.

Table of Contents

- Introduction – Overview of the transition process
- Key Differences Between Federal and Private Sector – Workplace, benefits, and salary comparisons
- Transition Timeline for Federal Executives Moving to the Private Sector – Actionable steps at each stage
- Essential Skills for a Successful Transition – Key competencies needed for private-sector success
- Considering a Consulting Career? – Skills and strategies for entering consulting
- Strengthening Key Experience Areas Before Leaving – Critical areas to focus on before transitioning
- Lessons from Those Who Have Made the Transition – Insights and advice from former federal executives
- Practical Advice for Preparing for the Private Sector – Networking, job search strategies, and employer research
- Additional Resources, Certifications & Communities – Courses, certifications, and networking groups
- Conclusion – Final thoughts and next steps

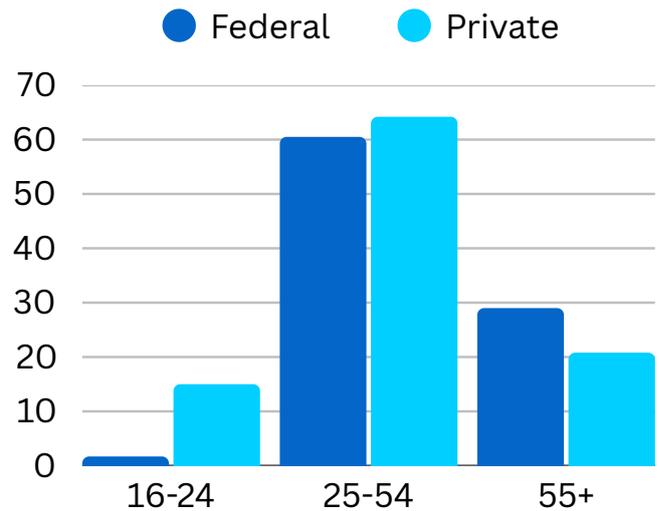
The Difference Between Private & Public Sectors

Moving from federal service to the private sector involves more than just a career change, it requires a shift in expectations, workplace culture, and compensation structures. Understanding these key differences will help you navigate the transition with confidence and make informed decisions about your next steps.

Understanding the Workplace Shift

Age Distribution & Work Culture

- As of 2021, approximately **7% of federal employees were under the age of 30, compared to 23% of private-sector employees**, highlighting the younger workforce in private industry, according to [USA Facts](#).
- **Learning:** Transitioning to the private sector means working in a more dynamic environment with younger colleagues, requiring adaptability to different perspectives, work styles, and fast-moving decision-making processes.



Employee Tenure & Career Mobility

- Federal employees have a median tenure of 6.2 years, nearly double that of private-sector employees, whose median tenure is 3.5 years, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- **Learning:** Private sector careers often involve shorter job cycles, increased mobility, and a greater emphasis on performance-driven promotions. Be prepared for a workplace where career progression may rely more on delivering measurable results than on tenure.



12 Jobs

held on average in the private sector from ages 18-52, with an average of 5.8 unemployment stints
([Zippia](#))

The Difference Between Private & Public Sectors (Cont.)

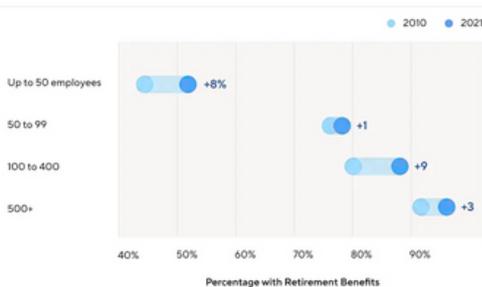


Health Insurance

- The federal government covers around 70% of health insurance costs, while some private-sector employers typically cover about 82%, as noted by [Attorney Mahoney](#). However, this varies greatly depending on size of the company. However, if you are retiring and choosing to retain your federal insurance, you may be able to negotiate additional compensation or benefits if the private company does not need to contribute to your healthcare.
- **Learning:** While private employers may cover more of the insurance premium, plan quality and stability can vary significantly. Federal employees should carefully compare coverage, out-of-pocket expenses, and dependent benefits when transitioning.

Employers offering retirement benefits, by size

All establishment sizes have increased retirement benefit offerings over the past decade, but larger employers still lead the way.



Data source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

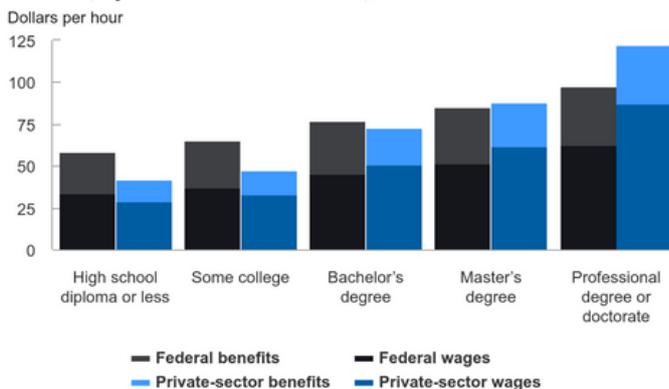
Retirement Pension

- On average, federal retirees receive an annual pension of \$27,687, whereas private-sector retirees typically receive \$10,788 annually, according to [Attorney Mahoney](#).
- **Learning:** The private sector relies more heavily on 401(k) plans and stock options rather than pensions. Consider how your financial planning and savings strategy may need to shift when moving to private industry.

Paid Time Off (PTO)

- Federal employees receive 10 paid holidays and 13 to 26 vacation days annually, based on tenure, while private-sector employees typically receive 7.6 holidays and around 10 vacation days, according to [Attorney Mahoney](#).
- **Learning:** Private companies may offer unlimited PTO policies or flexible time off, but these benefits can vary widely, and typically have different or no payout structures should you exit the company prior to using it. Ensure you understand company policies and cultural expectations around taking time off.

Average Compensation of Federal and Private-Sector Workers, by Educational Attainment, 2022



Compensation & Salary Growth

- Federal employees with a higher education level, on average, earn 29% less in wages than private-sector employees with comparable education levels, according to the [Congressional Budget Office](#). However, benefits typically have 43% more value in the Federal space due to pensions, etc.
- **Learning:** While base salaries may be higher in the private sector, bonuses, stock options, and sales/performance based incentives often play a more significant role in compensation growth in the private sector. Former federal executives should learn how to negotiate total compensation beyond just base salary.

Transition Timeline for Federal Executives Moving to the Private Sector

Whether you have six months, three months, one month, or are already in the job hunt, this guide outlines key steps to ensure a smooth and strategic transition into private industry. Each section stands alone, allowing you to jump in at any stage.

6 Months+

- **Assess Your Career Goals:** Identify roles and industries that align with your skills, experience, and interests. Think beyond your last title—focus on the value you bring to an organization, and the work you enjoy doing. For example, are you more interested in leading people vs. Leading a process or a program?
- **Research:** Start looking at job postings on LinkedIn, Indeed, etc. Read up on different companies. Look at their employee reviews on GlassDoor, or if you feel comfortable, reach out to other employees for their opinions on their workplace.
- **Expand Your Network:** Reconnect with former colleagues who have transitioned and attend industry events (ACT-IAC, NVTC, AFCEA). Networking may not be everyone’s favorite, but relationships open doors that résumés can’t. Create a relationship call list if you haven’t already or a rolodex, to ensure that you remain connected in a timely fashion.
- **Update Your Résumé:** If it’s been a while, don’t worry—the format hasn’t changed much. However, government jargon doesn’t always translate well to the private sector. Focus on impact and measurable results.
- **Enhance Your LinkedIn Profile:** A strong LinkedIn presence is key in private industry. Ensure your headline, summary, and experience sections highlight leadership, business acumen, and strategic impact.
- **Explore Certifications & Courses:** Certifications like PMP, CISSP, AWS Solutions Architect, or CGFM can help strengthen your credibility. If you’ve been considering a business or financial literacy refresher, now’s the time.
- **Get Comfortable with Private-Sector Tools:** Familiarize yourself with Microsoft Suite, LinkedIn, Salesforce, HubSpot, and other industry-relevant platforms. You may not need to be an expert, but being tech-savvy is an asset.

3 Months

- **Begin Informational Interviews:** Reach out to professionals in your target industry. These conversations provide insider insights and can lead to job opportunities.
- **Join Professional Organizations:** Groups like GovLoop, Senior Executives Association, or industry-specific associations offer valuable connections and resources.
- **Practice Interviewing:** Private-sector interviews are different from federal hiring panels. Be ready to discuss business impact, leadership, and adaptability rather than agency processes.
- **Start Applying for Roles:** Research companies, tailor applications, and begin submitting. Private-sector hiring moves faster than federal processes, so be prepared for multiple rounds of interviews. Be sure to do your research on individuals prior to your interview. You may be able to find a connection or at the very least, tailor your questions to their experience.
- **Develop a Personal Brand:** Share industry insights, thought leadership, and expertise on LinkedIn to establish credibility. You don’t have to post daily, but visibility matters.

1 Month

- **Follow Up on Applications & Interviews:** Stay engaged with recruiters, refine your pitch, and continue networking.
- **Prepare for Compensation Negotiation:** Unlike the GS pay scale, private-sector salaries vary widely. Be ready for the classic “What are your salary expectations?” vs. “What is your budget?” conversation. Research industry benchmarks and be prepared to negotiate.
- **Understand Private-Sector Culture:** Expect a faster-paced environment with fewer procedural layers. Decisions are often made quickly, and flexibility is key.
- **Consider Consulting or Contract Roles:** If full-time opportunities aren’t immediately available, consulting can be a great bridge into the private sector while expanding your network. This is typically where you offer your services directly in a part-time or fractional basis, usually as a 1099 contractor or as your own LLC.

Currently Job Hunting?

- **Refine & Tailor Your Résumé:** Focus on measurable results, strategic initiatives, and leadership impact. Keep it clear and relevant.
- **Leverage Your Network:** Reach out to former colleagues, mentors, and industry connections. Many private-sector roles are filled through referrals.
- **Stay Active on LinkedIn:** Engage with industry discussions, share insights, and connect with hiring managers. Being visible increases opportunities.
- **Target Companies with Government Ties:** Consider government contractors and consulting firms that value public-sector experience.
- **Understand Your Value:** Think through how your government experience translates to commercial. For example, if you were part of the team that brought a new tool live that improved public experience; that could translate to product experience in the private sector.
- **Upskill as Needed:** Take targeted online courses in business, finance, or technology to fill skill gaps and strengthen your marketability.

This transition is an opportunity to bring your expertise into new environments, whether in consulting, leadership, or industry. With a strong strategy and the right mindset, you can navigate the shift successfully.

Negotiating Your Benefits

Here's a quick bullet list of things to negotiate beyond base salary when transitioning to the private sector:

- *Signing bonus*
- *Annual bonus structure (performance-based, profit sharing, etc.)*
- *Equity or stock options*
- *Remote/hybrid work flexibility*
- *Additional PTO or vacation days*
- *Professional development budget (certifications, conferences, training)*
- *Health insurance coverage (premium share, deductible, dependents)*
- *Retirement plan matching (401(k) or other options)*
- *Technology stipend or home office setup*
- *Relocation assistance*
- *Severance terms*
- *Title/role clarity and growth path*
- *Non-compete or IP ownership terms*
- *Performance review frequency and raise opportunities*

**"If opportunity doesn't knock,
build a door."**

Milton Berle

Essential Skills for a Smoother Transition

Stepping into the private sector requires more than just a title change—it demands a shift in mindset, adaptability to new environments, and a refined set of skills. While federal executives bring deep expertise in policy, operations, and leadership, the private sector places greater emphasis on agility, business impact, and cross-sector collaboration. Developing competencies such as strategic thinking, relationship management, and technological fluency will help ease the transition and position you for long-term success. This section outlines the most critical skills that will not only help you land a role but also thrive in a competitive, fast-moving business landscape.

Top Skills

-  **Programmatic Integration**
 - Develop the ability to connect the dots across programs and identify interdependencies.
 - Understand how programs fit into broader strategic initiatives.
-  **Relationship Development & Management**
 - Cultivate strong professional relationships to resolve complex issues and conflicts.
 - Build a network that spans both public and private sectors.
-  **Leadership Development**
 - Invest in personal leadership growth while mentoring others.
 - Adapt leadership styles to fit the dynamics of the private sector.
-  **Partnership Development & Management**
 - Learn how to navigate complex team relationships.
 - Understand the dynamics of vendor and partner relationships in the private sector.
-  **Technology Aptitude & Willingness to Learn**
 - Enhance proficiency in commonly used business tools like Microsoft Suite, LinkedIn, Salesforce, or HubSpot to improve workflow efficiency.
 - Develop a proactive approach to learning new technologies, as private-sector roles often require adaptability to evolving digital tools and platforms.
 - Embrace a self-sufficient mindset when adopting new systems, leveraging online resources and training to stay ahead.

Considering a Consulting Career?

Consulting is often a logical transition for former government leadership. Additional skills are needed to become an asset to private companies looking for your knowledge, expertise, and connections.

To excel in consulting, professionals must develop a diverse skill set that spans business strategy, client engagement, and technical expertise. The following core competencies are essential for driving impact, delivering value, and sustaining long-term success.

Definition: Consulting involves leveraging your government expertise to advise organizations whether in the public or private sector, on strategy, operations, compliance, or policy. Consultants help bridge the gap between government requirements and industry capabilities, guiding agencies or companies on how to navigate regulations, improve processes, or implement solutions effectively with a focus on their personal government experience.

Business Acumen & Financial Literacy

- Understand profit and loss (P&L), revenue models, and financial drivers in the private sector.
- Learn how businesses generate revenue, structure costs, and align financial goals with strategic priorities.
- Gain insights into budgeting, forecasting, and cost analysis to ensure sustainability and profitability.
- Develop a commercial mindset to assess market conditions, identify growth opportunities, and drive business alignment.

Sales & Business Development

In government contracting, business development (BD) is the process that happens long before a contract is awarded. Unlike in government roles—where an executive might only interact with an account representative after an award—BD professionals work behind the scenes to position their company for success before an opportunity is even released.

Key BD Activities:

1. Identifying Opportunities: BD teams monitor upcoming procurements, build relationships with agencies, and track contract expirations to determine which projects align with their company's capabilities.
2. Shaping Requirements: Through early engagement with government stakeholders, industry events, and market research, BD professionals help influence contract requirements so their company is well-positioned when a solicitation is released.
3. Capture Strategy: Once a potential contract is identified, BD leads develop a strategy to position their company as the best fit—this might include teaming with partners, recruiting key personnel, or gathering intel on past incumbents.
4. Proposal Development: BD professionals work closely with proposal teams to craft compelling responses, ensuring their company stands out in competitive bids.
5. Competitive Positioning & Pricing Strategy: BD involves analyzing competitors, understanding pricing structures, and ensuring their company's offering is both cost-effective and uniquely valuable.
6. Relationship Building: BD professionals establish and maintain relationships with government stakeholders, industry partners, and key decision-makers—often before an opportunity becomes public knowledge.

By the time a contract is awarded, the BD team's work is largely done, and the account executive or delivery team takes over. However, without these pre-award efforts, a company wouldn't be in a competitive position to win work in the first place.

Key Actions:

- Research what business development means in the private sector; usually involving a combination of contract procurement and concentrated efforts in building relationships, whether that's through organic networking, paid efforts or other means.
- Master business development (BD), capture strategy, proposal writing, and competitive positioning.
- Build and nurture client relationships to grow revenue streams and ensure long-term partnerships.
- Learn how to differentiate service offerings, create compelling value propositions, and pitch solutions effectively.

Competitive Intelligence & Market Awareness

- Stay ahead by monitoring emerging technologies, regulatory changes, and industry trends.
- Conduct market research to assess competitors, identify gaps, and refine strategic approaches.
- Learn how to position your firm’s capabilities effectively against competitors.
- Develop expertise in trend analysis, benchmarking, and strategic positioning in both government and commercial consulting.



Proposal Writing, Strategic Communication & Contract Negotiation

- Gain expertise in writing and reviewing proposals to ensure they are compelling, compliant, and persuasive.
- Learn how to translate complex government and commercial challenges into actionable, solution-driven narratives.
- Master persuasive communication techniques to articulate business value, innovation, and impact.
- Understand how to structure contracts, define pricing models, and negotiate terms & conditions for success.
- Become proficient in contract vehicles such as GWACs, IDIQs, and BPAs to navigate the contracting landscape.



Client & Stakeholder Management

- Master the art of consultative selling and executive stakeholder engagement.
- Navigate high-level conversations and manage expectations effectively.
- Develop tailored solutions that align with client business objectives and drive measurable outcomes.
- Understand the importance of service delivery excellence and building trust with clients.



Risk Management, Digital Awareness & Data-Driven Decision Making

- Understand enterprise risk management, including financial, operational, and reputational risks.
- Develop contingency planning skills to mitigate uncertainties in consulting engagements.
- Gain familiarity with AI, cloud computing, cybersecurity, and automation trends to support digital transformation.
- Learn how to leverage data analytics, KPIs, and ROI measurement to drive strategic decision-making.

By mastering these essential skills, consultants can position themselves for success in both government and commercial sectors, delivering innovative solutions and driving sustainable growth.

Key Experience Areas to Strengthen Before Entering Federal Services

A successful transition to the private sector starts long before you submit your first job application. Federal executives who proactively refine key skills and gain exposure to private-sector dynamics while still in government service will be better positioned for new opportunities. Strengthening areas such as program management, financial acumen, and technical adaptability can make the shift smoother and help bridge the gap between public and private expectations. Let's dive into key experience areas to strengthen prior to leaving federal service.

Portfolio Management

- Know the size, scope, and budget of your portfolio.
- Understand the key touchpoints that drive decision-making.

Understanding the Color of Money

- Learn the different types of appropriated funding and their implications.
- Understand how funding fluctuations impact programs and require strategic replanning.

Technical Aptitude

- Gain a deeper understanding of key agency priorities and technical dependencies.
- Understand the role of data, enterprise architecture, and emerging technologies.

Program Management Principles

- Develop expertise in risk management, decision tracking, and milestone assessment.

Advice for Federal Executives Preparing for the Private Sector

A successful transition doesn't happen by chance—it results from preparation, networking, and a willingness to step outside your comfort zone. Private-sector hiring isn't as structured as federal employment, and opportunities often come through relationships rather than job postings. Understanding how to position yourself, communicate your value, and identify the right roles will make all the difference. Whether planning or making a sudden move, these strategies will help you take control of your next career step.

Build and Strengthen Your Network

- Actively engage in industry events and professional organizations (e.g., ACT-IAC, NVTC, CERCA, AFCEA, NDIA).
- Reconnect with former government colleagues who have transitioned to the private sector for guidance and support.

Enhance Contracting and Acquisition Knowledge

- Understand the various contracting vehicles and how to structure competitive proposals.
- Familiarize yourself with procurement timelines and the decision-making process in private-sector bidding.

Develop Business Development Skills

- Learn how to identify and position solutions that align with client needs.
- Gain insights into pipeline development, capture planning, and competitive market analysis.

Research and Evaluate Potential Employers

- Align your next role with your skills, interests, and long-term career goals.
- Assess company culture, growth potential, and leadership opportunities.

Be Open to Learning and Adapting

- The private sector operates differently, be flexible and willing to learn.
- Stay current with industry trends, emerging technologies, and regulatory updates.

Lessons Learned from the Transition

Stepping into the private sector comes with a learning curve, but you don't have to figure it all out alone. Many former federal executives have already made this transition, and their experiences reveal common challenges, unexpected surprises, and key strategies for success. From adapting to a faster-paced environment to navigating new compensation structures, their insights can help you avoid missteps and confidently move forward in your own career shift.



Customer Satisfaction Matters

- Build strong client relationships and ensure clear communication of expectations.
- Adapt to the fast-paced nature of the private sector, where customer retention is crucial for business growth.



Be a Connector of Dots

- Use your government experience to identify synergies between different stakeholders.
- Leverage institutional knowledge to help private-sector organizations better navigate government requirements.



Be Courageous

- Embrace change and new ways of doing business.
- Understand that private-sector projects operate on tighter deadlines and higher accountability metrics.



Focus on People—The Mission Will Follow

- Develop trust and credibility with teams, clients, and leadership.
- Invest time in coaching and mentorship to build a strong corporate culture.



Advocate and Build Trust

- Your reputation is built on execution, follow-through, and consistent communication.
- Establish yourself as a problem-solver and trusted advisor within your organization.



Have Fun

- The transition is an opportunity to explore new ways of working, learning, and innovating.
- Find ways to engage and enjoy the work while making an impact.

Additional Resources, Certifications & Communities

The right skills, credentials and communities can make your transition smoother and expand your career opportunities. Whether you need to sharpen business acumen, build technical expertise, or gain industry-recognized certifications, these resources will help you stay competitive in the private sector.

Finance & Accounting

Recommended Certifications

- **Certified Public Accountant (CPA)**
 - **Benefit:** Recognized as the gold standard in accounting; opens doors in finance, auditing, and consulting.
 - **Prerequisites:** 150 semester hours of college education, pass CPA exam, 1-2 years of experience (varies by state).
- **Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM)**
 - **Benefit:** Demonstrates expertise in government accounting, budgeting, and financial management.
 - **Prerequisites:** Bachelor's degree, 2 years of government financial experience, pass three exams.
- **Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE)**
 - **Benefit:** Specialized skills in fraud detection, forensic accounting, and compliance.
 - **Prerequisites:** Bachelor's degree (or equivalent experience), 2+ years in fraud-related work, pass CFE exam.
- **Enrolled Agent (EA)**
 - **Benefit:** Highest IRS-recognized tax credential, allowing professionals to represent clients before the IRS.
 - **Prerequisites:** No degree required; pass the IRS Special Enrollment Examination (SEE) or meet experience waiver.

Free or Low-Cost Courses & Resources

- Coursera – Free and paid courses on accounting, financial management, and taxation.
- edX – Finance and business courses from top universities (some free, certificates extra).
- MIT Open Courseware – Free courses on accounting and finance.
- FutureLearn – Free business and finance courses.



Additional Resources, Certifications & Communities (Cont.)

IT & Cybersecurity

Recommended Certifications

- **CompTIA Security+**
 - **Benefit:** Entry-level cybersecurity certification for foundational security knowledge.
 - **Prerequisites:** No formal requirements; recommended 2 years of IT security experience.
- **Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)**
 - **Benefit:** Advanced cybersecurity certification, ideal for leadership roles in IT security.
 - **Prerequisites:** 5 years of work experience in cybersecurity (or 4 with a degree).
- **AWS Certified Solutions Architect – Associate**
 - **Benefit:** Validates expertise in cloud computing and Amazon Web Services (AWS).
 - **Prerequisites:** No formal requirements; recommended 1+ year hands-on AWS experience.
- **Certified Cloud Security Professional (CCSP)**
 - **Benefit:** Specialized cloud security knowledge for protecting cloud-based environments.
 - **Prerequisites:** 5 years of IT experience, with at least 1 year in cloud security.

Free or Low-Cost Courses & Resources

- [Udemy](#) – Affordable IT and cybersecurity courses, often on sale.
- [Pluralsight](#) – Free trial for IT and cybersecurity courses.
- [Google IT Support Professional Certificate](#) – Beginner-friendly IT skills program.
- [LinkedIn Learning](#) – IT, cloud computing, and security courses with free trials.



Project Management & Business Leadership

Recommended Certifications

- **Project Management Professional (PMP)**
 - **Benefit:** Globally recognized certification for managing projects in any industry.
 - **Prerequisites:** Bachelor's degree + 3 years of project management experience (or 5 years without a degree).
- **Lean Six Sigma (Green Belt / Black Belt)**
 - **Benefit:** Expertise in process improvement, efficiency, and operational management.
 - **Prerequisites:** No formal requirements; typically involves completing a project.
- **Certified Manager (CM)**
 - **Benefit:** Covers essential management skills in leadership, planning, and decision-making.
 - **Prerequisites:** Bachelor's degree and management experience, followed by certification exams.

Additional Resources, Certifications & Communities (Cont.)

Project Management & Business Leadership (Cont)

Free or Low-Cost Courses & Resources

- [PMI \(Project Management Institute\)](#) – Free webinars and PMP prep resources.
- [HubSpot Academy](#) – Free courses on leadership and business strategy.
- [FutureLearn](#) – Free project management courses.
- Harvard Business Online – Paid and some free business courses.

Security (Physical & Risk Management)

Recommended Certifications

- **Certified Protection Professional (CPP)**
 - **Benefit:** Global certification for security management and risk assessment.
 - **Prerequisites:** 7+ years of security experience (or 5 with a degree), pass CPP exam.
- **Physical Security Professional (PSP)**
 - **Benefit:** Focuses on physical security assessments, protective measures, and access control.
 - **Prerequisites:** 3-5 years of security experience, pass PSP exam.
- **Certified Information Privacy Professional (CIPP)**
 - **Benefit:** Validates expertise in data privacy laws, risk, and compliance.
 - **Prerequisites:** No formal experience required; ideal for privacy officers and compliance professionals.

Free or Low-Cost Courses & Resources

- [ASIS International](#) – Security certifications and training.
- [SANS Institute](#) – Some free security awareness training.
- [FEMA Emergency Management Institute](#) – Free security and emergency preparedness courses.
- [Udemy](#) – Low-cost courses on physical security and risk assessment.

General Digital Skills & IT Literacy

Recommended Certifications

- **Google IT Support Professional Certificate**
 - **Benefit:** Covers troubleshooting, networking, and cybersecurity.
 - **Prerequisites:** No prior experience required.
- **Microsoft Excel & Data Analysis Certifications**
 - **Benefit:** Enhances proficiency in Excel, data management, and business analytics.
 - **Prerequisites:** No prior experience required.
- **Python, SQL, AI & Data Analytics Courses**
 - **Benefit:** Learn coding and data skills for tech-related jobs.
 - **Prerequisites:** No experience required.

Free or Low-Cost Courses & Resources

- [Udemy](#) – Low-cost Excel, Python, and AI courses.
- [LinkedIn Learning](#) – Business and tech courses with free trials.
- [edX](#) – University-level IT and business courses.
- [Skillshare](#) – Flexible business, IT, and creative skills courses.



Networking & Professional Communities for Career Transition

Building relationships and engaging with professional communities can significantly ease your transition into the private sector. These groups offer opportunities to connect with industry professionals, gain insights, and explore job opportunities.

- **ACT-IAC (American Council for Technology – Industry Advisory Council):** A bridge between government and industry, ACT-IAC provides networking, leadership development, and working groups on technology, cybersecurity, and consulting. Participation in ACT-IAC events can increase your visibility to potential employers while helping you better understand private-sector priorities.
- **AFCEA (Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association):** Focused on defense, IT, and communications, AFCEA connects federal IT professionals with private-sector counterparts through events, job fairs, and mentorship programs. This is a great resource for those transitioning into defense contracting, cybersecurity, or government technology roles.
- **OrangeSlices:** A government contracting community offering industry news, job leads, and networking opportunities for federal professionals moving into the GovCon sector. It provides insights into industry trends and showcases businesses that prioritize ethical contracting and professional development.
- **LinkedIn “Former/Current Federal” Groups:** Search LinkedIn for “[Agency Name] Alumni” or “Former Federal Employees [Industry]” to find active communities of former federal executives now working in the private sector. These groups often share job postings, transition advice, and networking opportunities, making them a valuable resource for career exploration.
- **GovLoop:** Branded as “the knowledge network for government,” GovLoop has over 300,000 members, including federal, state, and local employees, along with industry partners. It offers forums, blogs, and career growth resources, including transition advice and private-sector networking opportunities.
- **National Contract Management Association (NCMA):** Ideal for acquisition, contracting, and procurement professionals, NCMA provides training, networking events, and mentorship opportunities. Many government contractors and procurement specialists actively participate in NCMA chapters, making it an excellent group for building industry connections.
- **Association of Government Accountants (AGA):** A community for government financial management professionals, AGA hosts training sessions, networking events, and an annual Professional Development Training conference attended by both public- and private-sector leaders. Engaging with AGA can help you explore consulting or finance roles outside of government.
- **Society of American Foresters (SAF):** A leading association for forestry and natural resource professionals, SAF connects federal foresters, park rangers, and environmental experts with private-sector counterparts in land management, consulting, and conservation organizations.
- **Senior Executives Association (SEA):** A professional association for SES members and equivalent high-level federal leaders. While primarily focused on federal executive advocacy, SEA events and leadership programs include industry leaders and corporate sponsors, offering networking opportunities with professionals who understand the value of government experience.
- **NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association):** While primarily focused on federal retiree benefits, NARFE has expanded to include career transition resources for those nearing retirement and considering private-sector consulting or part-time roles.
- **Military and Veteran Transition Programs:** If you have prior military service or work within the DoD, veteran-focused organizations such as Hiring Our Heroes and Corporate Gray offer career fairs, networking events, and mentorship programs that also benefit federal civilian employees transitioning to the private sector.
- **Industry-Specific Professional Associations:** Organizations like the Project Management Institute (PMI), American Bar Association (ABA), and Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) often have government-affiliated members and private-sector networking opportunities. Attending industry conferences or joining local chapters can help you connect with potential employers.

How FedTec Can Help

Transitioning from federal service to the private sector requires a strategic approach. By investing in key skills, understanding procurement and contracting intricacies, and expanding professional networks, executives can position themselves for success. The lessons shared by those who have made this journey serve as a roadmap for future leaders looking to navigate their own transition with confidence and clarity.

FedTec is a small woman-owned business focused on delivering real-world results to federal agencies that need **infrastructure services, digital solutions, and cybersecurity support**. Building on 20+ years of experience, FedTec ensures mission success and service delivery for the agencies and citizens of tomorrow.

We hope you found this guide to be a helpful resource for you. If you're looking for your next role, keep an eye out at [FedTec.com/careers](https://www.fedtec.com/careers) for open roles at FedTec.



Who We Work With



& MORE