

# GET UNSTUCK: 5 Secrets to Moving Up

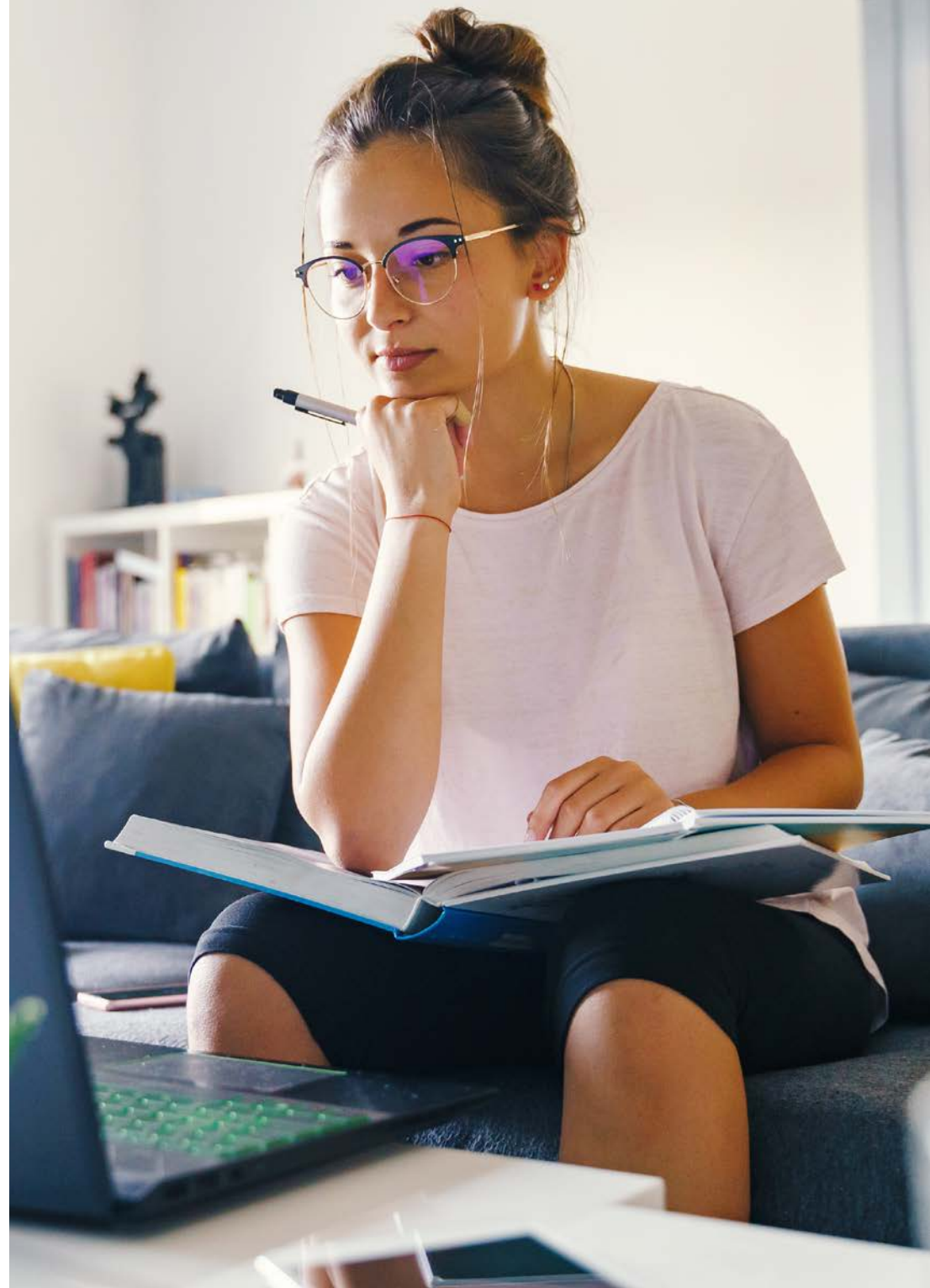


## ***Why do some people stay stuck in their careers – while others seem to advance effortlessly?***

This guide explains what you need to do, and what you need to STOP doing, to move up (even in tough times like these).

### **In this eBook, you'll learn:**

- » why moving up benefits you – in more ways than one;
- » how to chase and land a promotion even in tough economic times;
- » dos and don'ts for advancing your career; and
- » where to turn for help.





## Why It's Good (And Essential!) To Move Ahead

Your job is secure. You know the ropes. You don't feel overtasked, and you have time for a work-life balance.

### Why strive for more?

#### ***Easy: The benefits of moving ahead far outweigh the benefits of staying put.***

- » You'll learn new things. Job skills are becoming obsolete faster than ever, with an average turnover of only four years across all industries. By learning new skills, you stay relevant – and stay engaged.
- » You'll stave off boredom. Sure, you know your job inside and out. But how long will it be before the comfort of your routine turns into crushing boredom? Prevent yourself from burning out through boredom by looking ahead.
- » You'll futureproof your career. When companies have to make tough staffing decisions, those who aren't developing new skills are often the first to be cut.

By constantly learning and growing, you'll demonstrate that your employer can't afford to lose you.

## Landing a Promotion Even in Tough Economic Times

Many workers are concerned that now isn't the time to look for advancement. Yet with millions of open positions on the market and employers scrambling to find the skills they need, now is a great time to start looking at how to expand your career.

Investing in yourself pays off even if the economy experiences a downturn, too. Your skills and ability to learn don't disappear during a recession – and they position you for a faster recovery than your colleagues may experience if they don't create a proactive career plan.





## **Dos and Don'ts for Advancing Your Career**

*Ready to build a plan that will move your career forward?*

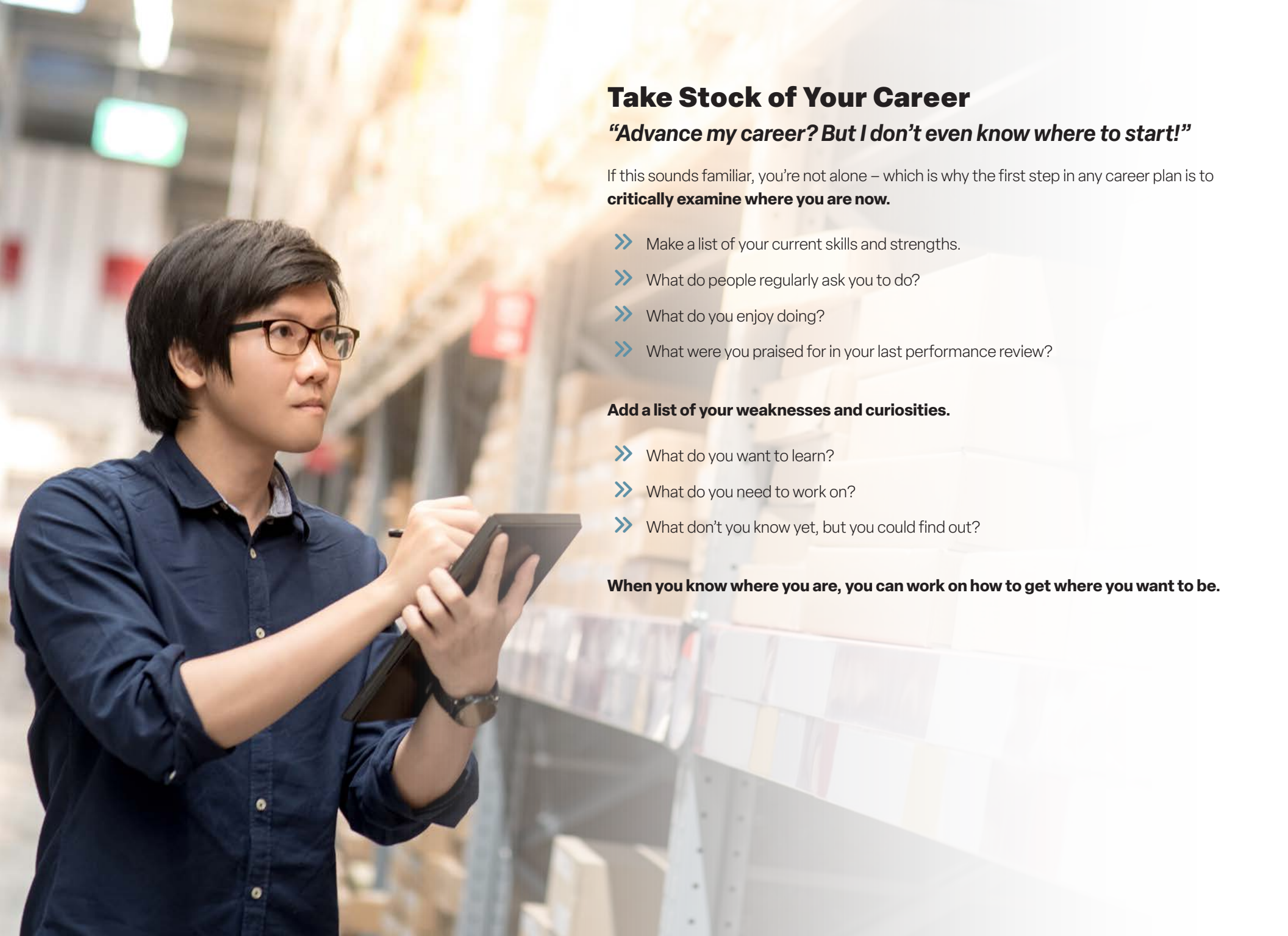
### **DO:**

- ✓ Get honest about where you are – and where you're headed.
- ✓ Make a plan.
- ✓ Become your own #1 supporter.
- ✓ Build great career habits.
- ✓ Get help from experienced sources.

### **DON'T:**

- ✗ Let your career happen to you.
- ✗ Assume everything will work out in your favor.
- ✗ Give in to self-sabotaging thoughts.
- ✗ Develop bad habits.
- ✗ Try to go it alone.

Here's how to advance your career – and avoid the most common pitfalls.



## Take Stock of Your Career

*“Advance my career? But I don’t even know where to start!”*

If this sounds familiar, you’re not alone – which is why the first step in any career plan is to **critically examine where you are now.**

- » Make a list of your current skills and strengths.
- » What do people regularly ask you to do?
- » What do you enjoy doing?
- » What were you praised for in your last performance review?

**Add a list of your weaknesses and curiosities.**

- » What do you want to learn?
- » What do you need to work on?
- » What don’t you know yet, but you could find out?

**When you know where you are, you can work on how to get where you want to be.**



## Do You Know Where You Are?

***“I don’t even know where to start!”*** derails many people from ever getting ahead in their careers. Without a clear starting point, many never even try to keep going. They simply assume that taking control of their career path is too large and baffling a project – so it’s better to let events around them decide for them.

### ***Take the reins.***

If you find yourself wondering where to start, come back to the present moment. Right now, today, what are you good at? What would you like to be better at? What tasks or jobs do you never want to do again?

**Start with where you are today – the only moment you control.**

## Create a Plan

Once you have a clear idea of your current skills, strengths, weaknesses, and wants, it's time to start planning.

### Ask yourself:

- » **What do I want out of my career?** Include quantitative measures like compensation and qualitative measures like “I love going to work” or “I see my work making a real difference to the people I serve.” List every dream, no matter how farfetched it may seem.
- » **What resources do I have right now that can get me closer to that dream?** Start with the list of your current skills and strengths. Add mentors, co-workers, and people to your professional network. Also add resources like classes, certifications, and other opportunities for growth.
- » **5-1-1-1.** Finally, make four goal lists for different periods: Five years from now, one year from now, one month from now, and this week. Start with the five-year goals, then work backward to set yourself mini tasks to complete this week. Over time, your weekly goals add up - and so do your monthly and yearly goals.





A person in a small blue boat is seen from a high angle, floating on a vast, deep blue sea. The person is wearing a red shirt and is using a long pole to navigate the boat. The water has a textured, wavy surface.

## Don't Set Yourself Adrift!

While determining what you want from your career, you may question your motivation – especially if you haven't felt motivated for a while.

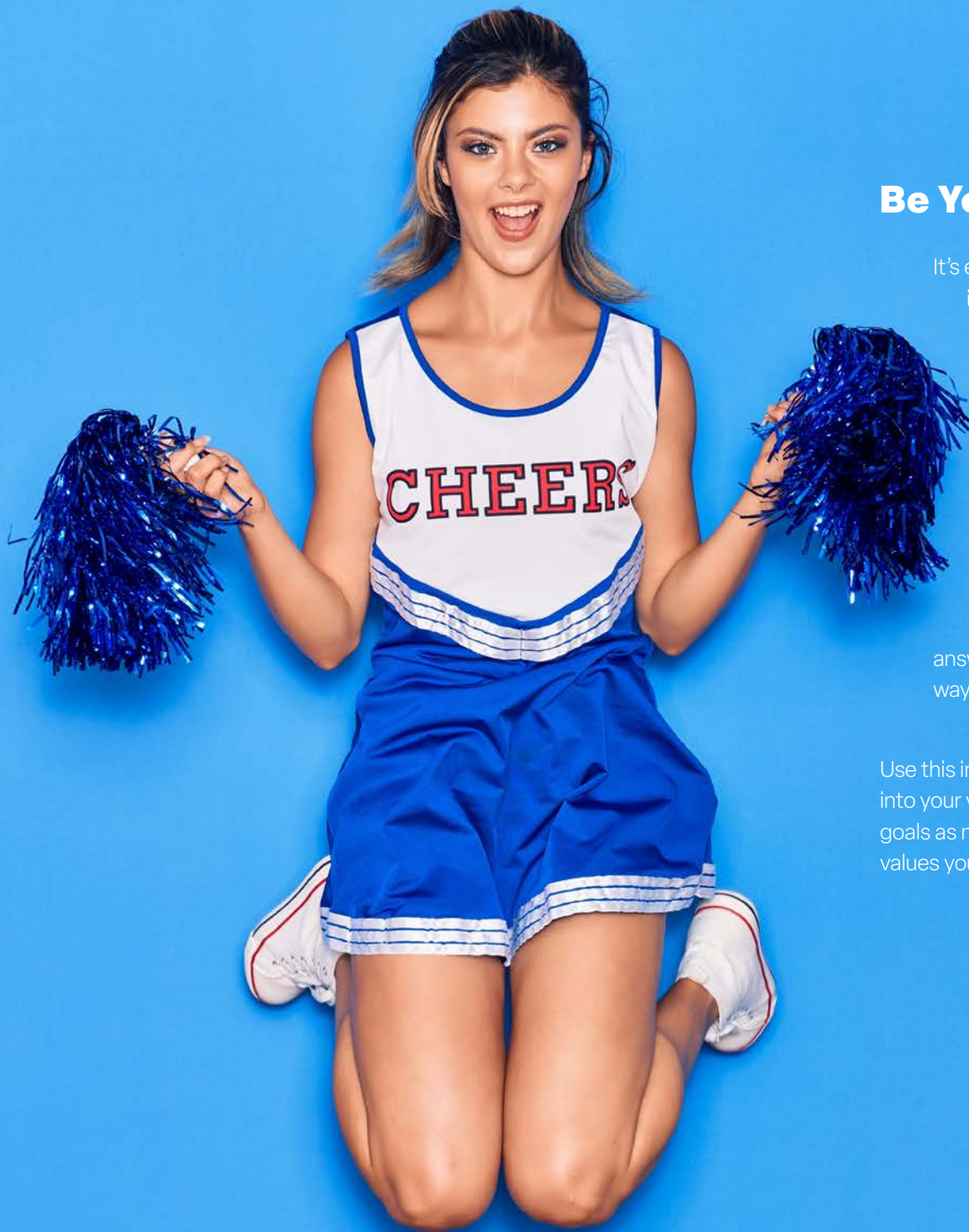
It's easy to “go with the flow” in a comfortable job. But when we do this, we set ourselves adrift. What may seem like a calm sea today may become a raging tempest tomorrow, stranding us far from the sight of our original destination.

To put yourself back on track, ask yourself what motivates you.

*What matters to you in life?*

*What do you want to have, do, or experience?*

Include both career and non-career goals.



## Be Your Own Best Cheerleader

It's essential to look toward the future when career planning. It's also important to consider your worth and achievements in the current moment.

### To become your own best cheerleader:

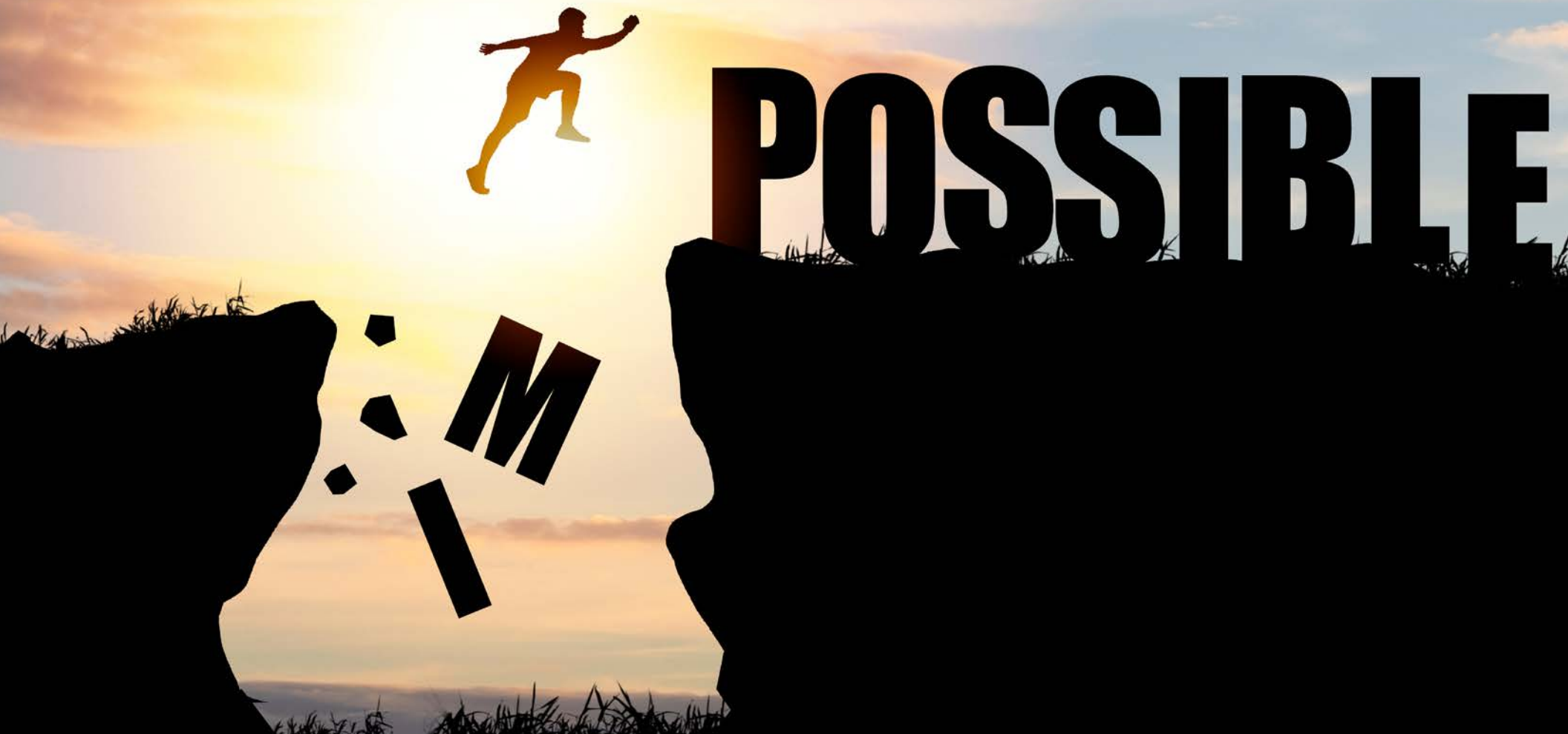
- » Look back five years. Where were you five years ago? If you've made significant strides in your work, congratulate yourself. If not, use this slow period as motivation to make the next five years better.
- » Examine your values. What matters to you? Traits like honesty, loyalty, hard work, and compassion are common answers to this question. Identify your core values, and then spot ways you're living up to them in your work.

Use this information to understand where you are now. Then, incorporate it into your view of yourself and your career five years from now. Adapt your goals as needed so they reflect the growth you want to achieve and the values you want to express.

## How Self-Sabotage Costs You a Future

When we don't have a clear plan for moving forward or feel unmotivated, it's easy to let negative, self-defeating thoughts slowly undermine our ability to move forward. Tasks like examining our strengths and weaknesses may cause us to over-focus on weaknesses, making advancement feel even more futile.

It's important to understand your weaknesses - but it's essential to do so in a way that allows you to take control of them and use them for your career growth. Rather than saying to yourself, "oh, I can't do that" or "I'm terrible at that," frame your weaknesses as opportunities: "What if I learned to do this?" or "Who is really good at this and could give me some tips?"



# Build Great Career Habits

Becoming the professional you want to be tomorrow starts by cultivating great career habits today.

## Work on traits like:

- » **Relishing a challenge.** Have a tough project in front of you? Dive in! Look for chances to learn new things and grow as a result. Not only will you produce better results, you'll also become a more valued member of the team.
- » **See opportunity, not failure.** Every failure conceals a hidden opportunity or a way forward. This didn't work – but that implies something else might work. Look for opportunities rather than focusing on failures.
- » **Trust yourself.** When you have confidence in yourself, others are more likely to have confidence in you. After all, they know you have the most information about your skills and abilities – you're the person who lives with them daily. If you believe you can do something, they will too.



## And Kick Bad Habits to the Curb

Unless you enjoy being stuck in your career, avoid these five habits of people who never get ahead:

- 1 Shirk responsibility.** Dodge projects, delegate, drop the ball - whatever it takes to avoid accountability.
- 2 Let failure win.** Failed at a task or project? Shrug and give up. Oh well.
- 3 See all glasses as half empty.** If you don't feel like working, be quick to spot the reasons nothing else will work, either.
- 4 Ignore feedback.** Criticism is just out to get you - or it's evidence that you shouldn't strive for more because you're already failing at this. Better to just ignore it.
- 5 Go it alone.** Mentors and colleagues distract you from pushing ahead. They certainly won't help you get promoted - right?



## Get the Right Help

Finally, the hidden secret of those who advance in their careers: They don't try to go it alone. With a clear sense of what they can do, what they need to learn, and where they want to go, they reach out to others who can help them along the way.

This list typically includes co-workers, supervisors, mentors, and colleagues. To complete it, add one more name to the list: Your recruiter.

### **A staffing recruiter can help you:**

- » Clarify your strengths and weaknesses and how they relate to the work you do – and the work you want,
- » Identify unexpected yet fulfilling ways to advance your career, and
- » Connect you with job opportunities and employers that offer the growth you need while supporting the values that matter most to you.

