



**Don't Wait for the Next
Opportunity — Create It**

The Challenge

- We are in a Low Fire - Slow to Hire market
- Government career mobility is often slow and structured
- Many employees feel stuck waiting for openings or approvals
- Current leaders and managers extending careers to support family members --- young adult children and aging parents
- Focus is on Technology Investment, not Employee Development
- Today's focus: shift from waiting to creating



Why Creating Opportunity Matters

- Mission driven environments often prioritize operations over promotions
- Constraints: budgets, hiring freezes, classification systems
- Growth is still possible—through initiative and targeted value creation
- Operating ahead of the Opportunity Cycle gives you Strategic Advantage



Mindset Shift

- Use your job description and resume as a foundation, not a ceiling
- Think
 - ‘Where can I add value?’ instead of ‘What roles are available?’
 - ‘What are the emerging market trends, and how does my skills bank translate to lead-in requirements
 - What Career Development framework has my organization set? Where does it add value? How can it be optimized
- Proactive vs. passive professional development
- Leverage Mentors to create Sponsors



Strategy One – Expand Your Skills

- Identify emerging organizational needs
- Access low barrier training options
- Build expertise that makes you indispensable
- Consider job swap or exchange programs



Strategy Two – Build Strategic Visibility



- Engage in cross functional projects
- Volunteer for task forces and pilot initiatives
- Share progress and wins with leaders and peers
- Bottom-Line: Your current function and role gets you paid, while the extra-curriculars position you for advancement

Strategy Three – Strengthen Relationships

- Connect beyond your immediate team
- Learn others' challenges and offer solutions
- Communicate your goals during check ins
- Serving as a Mentor can increase your knowledge foundation



Strategy Four – Spot and Solve Gaps



- Look for inefficiencies or unmet needs
- Draft simple proposals for improvements
- Start small: pilot, test, refine, and scale

Strategy Five – Practice Internal Entrepreneurship

- Pitch new ideas aligned with mission and priorities
- Prototype or demonstrate value quickly
- Lead with action, not permission



Common Barriers & How to Overcome Them



- Limited time → Micro improvements within current workload
- Lack of leadership position → Influence through reliability and initiative
- Rigid systems → Change through demonstrated value
- Fear of stepping on toes → Collaborate and communicate

Your First Step After this Session

- Identify one skill, project, or relationship to invest in now
- Set a small goal for this week
- Momentum begins with one clear action

Closing Message

- Opportunities rarely arrive fully formed
- You have the ability to shape your next step
- Create value, build visibility, and let your initiative open doors
- Don't wait—grow forward

Resources

- Office of Personnel Management Career Development
 - <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/training-and-development/career-development/>
- Go Government – Partnership for Public Service
 - <https://gogovernment.org/>
- Federal Career Info <https://fedcareerinfo.com/>
- U.S. Dept of Labor – Career One Stop (Find State & Local Resources)
 - <https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/StateAndLocal/find-state-resources-help.aspx>
- USA Gov – Job Training Insights <https://www.usa.gov/job-training>