



# Navigating Your IT Career at a National Laboratory

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## Be your own best career advocate!

Let your supervisor know about your lofty career goals, diversify your skillset, and try for positions that feel slightly out of reach.

### ADVICE FOR CAREER GROWTH

- Take risks
- Accept varied opportunities
- Cultivate relationships
- Volunteer to help
- Build a reputation for delivering
- Take on research projects
- Communicate lofty goals
- Diversify your skillset
- Set goals, create a plan
- Seek out a mentor
- Keep skills up to date
- Lean into harder problems
- Keep learning your profession and workplace
- Leave a position better than you found it



### COLLEGE DEGREES AND TECHNICAL CERTIFICATIONS

- Degrees are important but not necessarily required
- More flexibility with IT college degrees and schools than other fields
- Lab may pay for you to take courses and/or earn degrees and certifications
- Certifications reflect pursuit of expertise for particular technology or approach
- Diversify your skills beyond technical acumen
- Experience in business, research, operations, and customer service are also valued
- Technology changes quickly – staying current on industry trends can make you a subject matter expert

### NUANCES ABOUT HIRING PROCESSES

- Longer lead times than corporate world
- Drug testing and clearances delay start dates
- Security clearances may help offset skills deficiencies
- Working to streamline hiring and enrich onboarding process
- Align your resume and cover letter with desired position
- Opportunities to advance internally and train on-the-job



IT Professionals from the Weapons & Complex Integration (WCI) IT Team

### SAMPLING OF IT POSITIONS

- Automation engineer
- Business analyst
- Chief information officer
- Chief technology officer
- Communications specialist
- Computer technician
- Customer service agent
- Cyber security
- Data center operations
- Data scientist
- Database administrator
- Network engineer
- Project manager
- Quality assurance
- Service manager
- Software developer
- Solutions architect
- Storage engineer
- Systems administrator
- Technical lead
- Virtualization engineer
- Web designer

### DIFFERENTIATORS BETWEEN LABS AND CORPORATE WORLD

- Decentralized resume review means you can apply for multiple jobs on different teams concurrently
- National security and courageous innovation focus, not bottom line
- Heightened physical and cyber security focus
- Opportunity to work with advanced technology
- Job security (government jobs are usually more secure)
- Security and approval constraints can slow down Labs



IT Professionals volunteering at Expanding Your Horizons event