

Turning Your Career Break into a Comeback

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This seminar marks the first instalment in our series Turning Your Career Break into a Comeback.

In this session, we'll focus on a powerful theme: How to turn your Career Break into a Career Boost.

Whether your break was for travel, parenting, study, health, or just time to reset – it holds value. We'll explore how to frame your story with confidence, highlight the skills you've gained, and re-enter the job market stronger than ever.

I want to start by asking you a simple question:

Do you know someone who has taken a career break? Or maybe you're considering one yourself?

If so, you're in good company. Every day, more professionals are pressing pause on their careers—for reasons that are important, valid, and deeply personal.

Maybe it's to raise children, care for aging parents, focus on your health, pursue education, travel, volunteer, or reassess your next steps. Whatever your reason, here's the truth:

A career break is not a step backward.

It's a step forward into something that matters to you.

You Are Not Alone

Let's look at the numbers. In Europe, about 1 in 4 working people are taking a break to care for children—and that's just one reason.

Even more importantly, 75% of those on a career break plan to return to the workforce. These professionals are known as returners, and they represent a powerful, growing community.

Your Break Is Full of Value

A career break doesn't erase your professional value—it adds to it.

Let me tell you about Josefin. She took 5 years off to care for her family. When she was ready to return, she started teaching online language courses to rebuild her confidence and skills. That experience led her to a job at a major European institution.

Or Lourdes, who moved from Venezuela to Stockholm to support her partner's career. She had a successful legal background, but she used her break to retrain in compliance and network like a pro. Today? She's working at a financial institution and already up for promotion.

What do these women prove? That your time away can be your biggest strength.

Think of the skills you've gained:

- Organization
- Empathy
- Adaptability
- Problem-solving
- Conflict resolution

These aren't just life skills—they're leadership skills. Employers are starting to realize that too.

The Workplace Is Changing — And So Are Career Paths



Today's job market isn't what it used to be. People are living and working longer. Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z are all shaping the modern workforce—and many of them will take multiple career breaks and make multiple career changes over their lifetimes.

So here's the truth:

Taking a break is no longer the exception—it's becoming the norm.

But Let's Be Real: Coming Back Isn't Always Easy

If you're planning to return to work, you may be facing two big challenges:

- The external challenge — how others view your career break. Some employers still see gaps as a negative.
- The internal challenge — how you talk about your break. You may feel unsure about how to explain it or where to begin again.

But here's the good news: You can absolutely turn this around.

Here's How to Start Your Comeback

Let me share three key steps for jobseekers coming back from a break:

1. Own Your Story

Putting a career break proudly on your resume gives you the opportunity to take control of the narrative. You can frame a career break as a positive, explain whether it was intentional, and in any case show how you made the most of the time and what you gained from it. Highlighting a break with those kinds of details could tell an employer more about your character, values, and skill set—i.e., everything they're trying to find out in the interview process.

Some recruiters and employers specifically target professionals returning after career breaks and even offer re-entry programs. When people cut or try to camouflage a career break from their resumes, screening programs and recruiters may not recognize they qualify, and both sides miss out.

Don't apologize for your break. Instead, explain what you learned, how you grew, and how it made you stronger.

For example: "During my time away, I developed critical skills in conflict resolution and organization while managing care responsibilities at home. These are directly relevant to team leadership and client management."

2. Network Intentionally

Talk to people. Tell them you're re-entering the job market and what kind of work you're looking for.

A friend, a neighbour, or someone in a networking group might be the one to connect you with your next role.

3. Keep Learning

Assess your skills.

- What do you already have?
- What do you need to refresh?
- What do you want to learn next?

Take a short course. Join a workshop. Update your LinkedIn profile. Every small step matters.

And don't hesitate to ask for help—whether from a mentor, a coach, or a return-to-work program.

And yes, those programs exist. In Europe, companies have already recognized the value of returners. Many offer career re-entry programs with upskilling, reskilling, and coaching.

These programs aren't just about filling jobs. They help close gender gaps, bring in fresh perspectives, and boost innovation.

One Last Message to all the returners out there:

- You have what it takes.
- Own your journey. Tell your story. Keep learning. And most of all—don't give up.
- Your next opportunity is out there, and it might be closer than you think.

In our next seminar, we will talk about How to include a career break on your resume.

Your Comeback Starts Today



If you're thinking about returning to work—or already trying—remember:

- Your break was not wasted time.
- You are not starting from scratch.
- You are bringing new skills, new motivation, and new perspective.
- The job market is evolving—and there's space for people like you.

So let's change the story. Let's stop seeing career breaks as setbacks and start seeing them as launchpads.

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