

Key career development tips to help you keep ahead

1. Figure out what you stink at

While this isn't groundbreaking career advice, it is important. If you have a professional weak point, fix it. Take it upon yourself to identify your skill gaps and work to fill them day in and day out. Once you correct one issue, move on to the next. As a creative professional, if you're not willing to constantly improve your skill, you're in the wrong field. It takes passion to succeed in this industry and when you don't have it, your weaknesses become more apparent.

2. Learn something new every day

In addition to getting better at what you know, it's important to understand the things you don't. Get the inside scoop on what the client is looking for. Not only will it help you deliver more targeted work in the next round, but it also can help you better understand the needs of future clients.

3. Become indispensable

When you can do something that no one else on the team can, you have an undeniable advantage, which helps to keep your position. The more of these "added benefits" you can master, the more valuable you become as an employee. The bottom line is if you want to get ahead in your career, you have to be willing to continually learn, adapt and improve.

4. Read more

We can all benefit from reading more, don't limit yourself to a specific field or specialty or you'll miss out on a (literal) world full of information. You never know when a new piece of knowledge might click to help you create a successful campaign.

5. Maintain a good work-life balance

A healthy work-life balance can make all the difference between a good career and a great one. Sure, you could stay an extra hour at the office and churn out work that isn't due until tomorrow night. Or you could spend it with your family, get plenty of sleep and produce even better work the next morning.

6. Be yourself, always

No matter what field you work in or what job title you have, you should always be yourself. The minute you start pretending to be something you're not is when your career development begins to descend. In most cases, a company hires you because they like your work and enjoy your personality. So don't feel pressure to be someone you're not. A strong work ethic and a good personality and eagerness to learn will often transcend any shortcomings you may have.