

A HOW-TO GUIDE

Career break के बाद

Top 10 skills for women resuming work after a break



We are back after a career break!



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How to take charge with confidence!

For many women, the joy of resuming work after a break often comes with a new set of challenges. The need to divide time and attention between personal and professional responsibilities demands a thoughtful reset of many aspects of their lives. And the empowering potential of technology has lots to be explored!

In most cases, women opt out of full-time, well-paying jobs while raising a family. Sometimes, for women, their marriage could mean a relocation or a new life that comes with new expectations, and they would like to take a break till they get used to it. Other reasons for a break in a career could be one's health or the health of a family member, the loss of a job due to layoff or trying something one is passionate about – like being an entrepreneur. A sabbatical or pursuit of higher education could also result in a short break.



Unlike in the past when women had to completely give up their careers to take care of their families, today there are many options to resume their work. Part-time jobs, gig work, and freelancing can be explored as favourable alternatives to a full-time job that may not provide a good balance. For those who wish to get back to their full-time jobs, it may be a good idea to carefully reflect on the job role and the expectation to strike a balance with domestic responsibilities.

The search for a job is not just about updating the resume with new skills or certifications acquired during the break. You need to approach the new world of work with confidence and clarity. This requires a determined effort to acquire skills that help you navigate the complexities of restarting and relaunching your career.

Get started with these top 10 skills

- Networking
- Adaptability
- Time Management
- Perseverance
- Negotiation
- Continuous Learning
- Growth Mindset
- Planning and Organizing
- Effective Communication
- Digital and Financial Skills



Networking



Learn to use networking platforms, be a part of professional groups and seek options to collaborate, and partner, especially for self-employment, freelancing, and gig jobs. You may also follow updates from companies in your field and check out their YouTube channels, websites and social media to learn about the latest developments.



You can join and make use of professional networking platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook groups, etc. to get to know and connect with like-minded people. Stay in touch and develop relationships with people that are mutually beneficial for both. You can also post updates occasionally even if you are on a break to share your learning or point of view to encourage people to interact and comment.

Adaptability

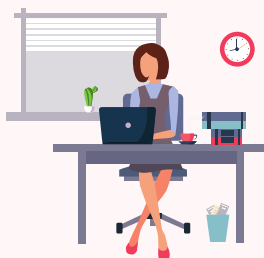
Be open to change by embracing change as a positive development. You may not be able to come back to the same or similar work environment and job role. Learning to accept and embrace this change will help you take more risks, accept the results of the projects you are taking up and also get along with your new teammates/ colleagues.



Often you will need to go out of your comfort zone to face the challenges of the dynamic nature of work. Do not let your career break stop you from taking initiative, sharing new ideas, and being more flexible to new ideas and projects. This could help you adapt better to the workplace.



Time Management



Work satisfaction depends a lot on how you manage your time. You need to plan well and set priorities after analyzing the options and the situation, what is the desired outcome? When you prioritize your family do you allocate your time between the family and your work? It may be a tough task initially to divide your time, but by listing your tasks and marking them as important or urgent, you can decide on what to focus on in order of priority. Using an online tool or app for time management could be the best way to get started.



It is crucial to avoid distractions to make efficient use of time and resources. If you're getting back to work and are working from home, for instance, it might be hard to concentrate on work due to several distractions. To avoid any distractions while working, try putting your phone aside or turning off the notifications, have a dedicated space for work, and do not hesitate to take help from family members to help you concentrate on your work without distractions, at least for a few hours a day.

Perseverance

When you take up a job after a break, especially a long one, you may face a few difficult situations that may lead to self-doubt and questioning your decisions. A bit of confusion about whether to continue or try something else could lower your confidence. Or taking up many tasks at once, both at home and office could be overwhelming!



Coping with stress arising out of the above situation demands clarity of thought, re-alignment of purpose and taking up one thing at a time. To avoid overthinking, you can try practicing mindfulness, meditation and physical exercise for overall well-being and consciously learning to be determined, persevere and not just give up.



Negotiation



Often, you will face situations when you need to negotiate and explore alternatives to a given situation. It could be related to work hours, salary or expected outcomes from your job. You need to prepare well to share your side of the story and express your concerns. Your absence from work during the break should not be exploited by the employer. Communicate effectively about your goal, scope of work, expected salary, work hours, etc. This helps in making a deal and arriving at an agreeable solution.



Try to understand others' perspectives and ask yourself some basic questions. What is it that they want to achieve through this negotiation? What are their real interests? How can you add value? This will help you in achieving a win-win situation for both. Shying away from negotiation through an honest discussion could affect your commitment and performance in the long run.

Continuous Learning

Being curious is the first step to keep learning new skills.

However, getting certified with job-specific knowledge and skills is not enough in today's world of work. The challenge is to remain curious and be open to updating and reskilling to keep pace with new development. If you are trying to get back to work, understand the job market, new jobs that are coming up in the industry and strive to continuously acquire new skills and knowledge. This will help you meet the job expectations and makes your performance better at work.



You can do this by being proactive and voluntarily willing to participate in learning. There are several short-term and long-term courses available across various industry sectors. Research well and pursue the one that suits your interests well. Also, be open to learning from your colleagues who might be less experienced than you but have the knowledge on latest trends in the industry.



Growth Mindset



No matter what has been your past work experience or the job role, once you join back after a break, you need to focus on learning and acquiring new competencies. It's not like 'either you have it or you don't!' There will be many opportunities to learn new skills that help you become resilient. Develop a growth mindset by willing to learn from others and by taking criticism positively.



Do not feel offended by any suggestions or criticisms given by your manager or colleagues. Take that feedback positively and try to improve at your job. You can develop a growth mindset by being open to challenges at work. Do not panic or say no to a new task/ job just because you are not good at it. Take it up as a challenge and accept it as an opportunity to learn new skills and experiment.

Planning and Organizing

Planning your professional work along with work at home could be a daunting task. But this can be achieved by identifying critical tasks, prioritising, delegating, and maintaining schedules/ time tables. Creating a detailed schedule will help you to allocate your time for each task and ensure that you meet your deadlines.



You can make use of online tools for organising and planning your work well or maintain a notepad to jot down your to-do list with deadlines. Analyse the time taken for each task for any delays or dependencies and improve upon it over time. Reflecting on what has worked and what has not helps in assessing the effectiveness of planning and aiming for efficiency.



Effective Communication



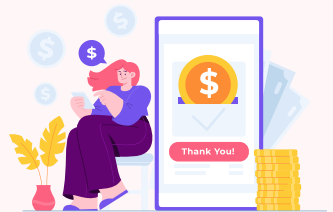
Communicating with confidence and clarity is absolutely essential in any job role. Whether you are writing an email, talking on the phone, or sending a text message to your colleagues, always aim for clarity. Clearly communicate your problem areas/ issues or any other thing you want to convey. Clarity is a sign of good communication and helps you in efficient problem-solving and collaboration.



Effective listening also contributes to you well you respond. Besides being a patient listener, do not hesitate to talk or put your point forward in the meetings. Be brief and to the point by always creating space for others to participate in conversations. Especially when working in teams, the way you communicate and respond has a direct impact on how you bond with the team.

Digital and Financial skills

Whether you are getting back to work as a freelancer or starting your own business, or joining an organisation for employment, it is important to be digitally and financially skilled. So, as all transactions are digital, it becomes inevitable to be comfortable with a smartphone, or laptop, using various apps/ tools like payment gateways, etc.



With Fintech skills, you gain increased access to knowledge about money and finances. This will help you understand the financial implications better and enable you to make empowered decisions. You can develop and improve upon these skills by doing short-term online courses in fintech or digital skills. Also, do not hesitate to take help from family members or colleagues in case of using a new app or tool.



Share your story of resuming your work after a break!



Returning to work after a significant career break remains a tough choice for a lot of women. Not every woman gets a second chance to reclaim her career. The fact that you are here shows your commitment to making a comeback. Regardless of the reason for your career break and the length of it, you'll need motivation, inspiration, courage, confidence and the skills we have discussed so far to successfully return to work.

If you are someone who's already rejoined the workforce, we request you to share your journey with us. You can write to us about the skills that helped you navigate through your journey, and some of the challenges you faced and overcame, among others.

If you are someone who's looking to resume work after a break, write to us about what keeps you motivated and how you are planning to make a comeback. What are some of the skills you are looking to acquire?

You can also write to us if you know a woman who's made a successful comeback or a woman who made her entrepreneurial debut after a career break. Share her story with us and help us inspire millions of other women who are waiting to reclaim their careers.

Write to us contact@nationalskillsnetwork.com

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