

YOUR TRANSITION CHECKLIST

Check off each item as you build your LinkedIn profile, resume and interview plan.



01 LINKEDIN PROFILE

- ☐ Professional headshot in business attire. No uniform, flags or family photos. A free AI headshot works.
- ☐ Contact info updated, and personal email hidden in your settings.
- ☐ Headline is searchable and uses keywords for the job you want, not the job you have.
- ☐ "About" section uses your target industry's keywords (2,600 characters max).
- ☐ Experience describes projects, metrics and people you impacted, not an entry-level cop job.
- ☐ No police or military acronyms, controversial topics or alcohol in photos.

02 RESUME

- ☐ One page, front and back. Bullets, not paragraphs.
- ☐ Highlights section with 5–6 bullets on the first page.
- ☐ All jargon and acronyms translated. No "tacticool."
- ☐ Metrics the reader understands: people trained, dollars managed, event size.
- ☐ Shows career progression and your highest accomplishments.
- ☐ No photo, home address or graduation years. No negative information.
- ☐ Simple format with no text boxes, so the ATS can read it.
- ☐ Scored against each job description before you apply.

EXPERIENCE THAT TRANSLATES

CJIS → information security • Ops plans → emergency planning • FTO → training and onboarding • Grants → budget and compliance • Audits → reducing liability • Dignitary details → executive protection • Drones, cameras, LPRs → security technology

03 INTERVIEW

- ☐ "Tell me about yourself" practiced out loud. Make it about solving their problem.
- ☐ **Greatest strength:** your network and knowing who to call.
- ☐ **Greatest weakness:** honest and self-aware. Never "perfectionist."
- ☐ **Why are you leaving?** "I've outgrown my position and I'm ready for the next step." Never speak negatively.
- ☐ **Why should we hire you?** Collaboration, their mission and how you'll solve their problem together.
- ☐ Five **S.T.A.R.** stories ready: Situation, Task, Action, Result.

04 SALARY & OFFER

"WHAT ARE YOUR SALARY EXPECTATIONS?"

"Every organization calculates compensation differently and I don't want to make assumptions. Do you have a range for the base salary, and are there other compensation opportunities available?"

- ☐ Total compensation reviewed: stock (RSUs), vacation, sign-on bonus, annual bonus, vehicle or phone stipend, insurance offsets.
- ☐ You asked. You can't get it if you don't ask.

05 PREPARE NOW

- ☐ Start a private-sector certification.
- ☐ Write a transition plan that can evolve.
- ☐ Network with private-sector groups before you need them.
- ☐ Focus on the next career, not the countdown calendar.