

EMPOWERING YOUR COMEBACK

A Guide for Women Re-Entering the Workforce



The SOFEI Group

Overview

Empowering Your Comeback is an ebook that provides actionable steps, encouragement, and practical tools to navigate the journey back into professional life. It begins with addressing the emotional toll of life's upheavals and emphasizes the importance of self-care as a foundation for success. From there, it guides you through assessing your skills, interests, and career goals, equipping you with the knowledge needed to reimagine your professional path.

You will find strategies for updating your resume, leveraging LinkedIn, and building a robust professional network. Whether you're returning to a familiar industry, exploring flexible work options, or embarking on a new career path, this ebook offers advice to suit your needs.

To support your transition, *Empowering Your Comeback* includes tips on gaining relevant skills through online training, strategies for overcoming challenges during job interviews, and suggestions for managing work-life balance. You'll also discover the value of celebrating milestones and maintaining persistence as you work toward your goals.

By the end of this guide, you'll have the confidence, tools, and actionable steps to create a fulfilling professional life that aligns with your dreams and aspirations. *Empowering Your Comeback* is more than a guide - it's a roadmap to your next great success story.

Take the first step toward your brighter future today because your journey isn't just about finding a job; it's about reclaiming your power and purpose.

Contents

01

INTRODUCTION

02

EMBRACE YOUR EMOTIONS

03

ASSESS YOUR SKILLS AND
INTERESTS

04

UPDATE YOUR RESUME AND
LINKEDIN PROFILE

05

NETWORK & CONNECT

Contents

06

EDUCATION AND
TRAINING

07

EXPLORE FLEXIBLE
WORK OPTIONS

08

PRACTICE INTERVIEWING

09

LEVERAGE SUPPORT
SYSTEMS

10

SET REALISTIC GOALS

Contents

11

STAY POSITIVE AND
PERSISTENT

12

CONCLUSION

01



INTRODUCTION

01

INTRODUCTION

Life often unfolds in unpredictable ways, and the experience of spousal abandonment or divorce can be one of the most daunting detours on our journey. This period of upheaval is undeniably challenging, filled with emotional turmoil and uncertainty. However, it also offers a unique opportunity for personal growth and self-discovery, allowing you to redefine your identity and construct a new vision for your future.

Re-entering the workforce after a significant life change can seem overwhelming. The prospect of updating your skills, navigating job markets, and overcoming potential self-doubt can feel like an uphill battle. Yet, with the right mindset and practical strategies, you can embark on a fulfilling and successful career path.

This comprehensive guide aims to provide you with valuable insights and steps to confidently navigate this transformative journey, helping you emerge stronger and more empowered than before.

02

EMBRACE
YOUR
EMOTIONS

02

EMBRACE YOUR EMOTIONS

It is essential to recognize and acknowledge the feelings that arise after experiencing spousal abandonment or divorce. The emotional impact can be significant, making it vital to give yourself the necessary time to grieve and heal. Seeking support from a therapist or counselor can help you process your emotions and help you rebuild your self-confidence.

Maria's Story

When Maria's marriage ended abruptly, she struggled to find her footing. By joining a local support group for divorced women, she found a community of understanding and encouragement that helped her rebuild her confidence.

Emotional Wellness Checklist

- Have I taken time to grieve?
- Am I seeking support from trusted individuals or professionals?
- What self-care practices can I incorporate into my routine?

EMBRACE YOUR EMOTIONS

Emotional Wellness Checklist

- Have I taken time to grieve?

- Am I seeking support from trusted individuals or professionals?

- What self-care practices can I incorporate into my routine?

03

ASSESS
YOUR
SKILLS

03

ASSESS YOUR SKILLS

Reassess your professional and personal skills by creating a comprehensive inventory. Reflect on past roles, hobbies, and volunteer experiences to uncover transferable skills. Online tools like MAPP (Motivational Appraisal of Personal Potential) on www.assessment.com can provide valuable insights.

Linda's Story

After years as a stay-at-home mom, Linda discovered her talent for project management through her experience coordinating school events. This realization led her to pursue a certification in project management, opening doors to a rewarding career.

Ask yourself:

- What are my professional experiences and skills?
- What are my passions and interests?
- What new skills do I want to learn?

If you would like a complimentary MAPP assessment, please send an email to **Clara M. Ashford**, Virtual Support Lead at c.ashford@sofeigroup.org.

ASSESS YOUR SKILLS

Skill Assessment Worksheet

- List three skills you've used in past jobs.

- Identify two activities you've enjoyed and the skills they required.

- Write down a skill you'd like to learn and how it aligns with your career goals.

04

UPDATE
YOUR
RESUME

04

CREATE AND UPDATE YOUR RESUME AND LINKEDIN PROFILE

Tailor your resume and LinkedIn profile to highlight your most recent experiences and accomplishments. Use action verbs and quantify achievements whenever possible. Consider working with a professional resume writer (e.g., on **Indeed.com** or a career coach from your alma mater) if needed. If you need help with creating your resume, consider taking the *Ultimate Resume Building* course on **www.sofeionline.org**

Susan's Story

When Susan updated her LinkedIn profile to include volunteer work and certifications she'd recently earned, she was contacted by a recruiter who admired her proactive approach to skill-building.

Resume Checklist

- Have I included recent certifications or training?
- Are my accomplishments quantified with metrics?
- Is my contact information accurate and professional?

05

NETWORK
AND
CONNECT

05

NETWORK AND RECONNECT

Networking is crucial in today's job market. Reach out to former colleagues, friends, and acquaintances. Let them know you are re-entering the workforce and are open to career opportunities. Attend industry events, join professional groups on social media, and consider joining local networking groups for women. These connections can provide valuable job leads, advice, and support. Don't hesitate to reconnect with former colleagues or mentors.

Carla's Story

Carla, a former teacher, reached out to a past colleague who introduced her to an educational technology company looking for trainers. That single connection led to a fulfilling new role.

Networking Action Plan

- List three people you can reconnect with professionally.
- Research local or virtual networking events to attend.
- Draft an introductory message to send on LinkedIn and other virtual meet-up sites.

06



EDUCATION
AND
TRAINING

06

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

If you find gaps in your skills or desire a career change, consider getting additional education or training. Online courses, certifications, and workshops are excellent ways to gain new skills and boost your resume. Platforms like LinkedIn Learning, YouTube, and **SOFEI Online** offer a variety of courses.

Jane's Story

After a decade away from the workforce, Jane completed an *online digital marketing certification*. This helped her secure a role with a small business that valued her fresh expertise.

Education Planning Prompts

- List three skills or certifications that interest you.
- Research online platforms offering relevant courses.
- Identify ways to invest in education and training.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Education Planning Worksheet

- List three skills or certifications that interest you.

- Identify two activities you've enjoyed and the skills they required.

- Write down a skill you'd like to learn and how it aligns with your career goals.

07

EXPLORE
FLEXIBLE
WORK

07

FLEXIBLE WORK

Many women re-entering the workforce find that flexible work options, such as part-time roles, freelancing, or remote work, can be a great way to transition back. These options can provide the work-life balance needed during this adjustment period.

Emily's Story

Emily began freelancing as a graphic designer through UpWork. The flexibility allowed her to manage her household while building a steady income and client base.

Flexible Work Exploration

- Preferred industries for flexible work
- Time availability (hours per week)
- Online platforms to explore

FLEXIBLE WORK EXPLORATION

Flexible Work Exploration

- Preferred industries for flexible work:

- Time availability (hours per week):

- Online platforms to explore:

08

PRACTICE
INTERVIEWING

08

PRACTICE INTERVIEWING

Prepare for interviews by practicing common questions and answers. Consider enlisting help from a friend or career coach to conduct mock interviews. The more you practice, the more confident you will feel during your interviews.

Monica's Story

Through mock interviews with a career coach, Monica refined her responses and landed her dream job as an HR coordinator.

Mock Interview Suggestions

- Write down answers to three common interview questions.
- Practice with a friend or record yourself answering.
- Note areas for improvement and refine your responses.

09

LEVERAGE
SUPPORT
SYSTEMS

09

LEVERAGE SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Lean on your community for encouragement and practical support. Seek out local organizations or online groups (e.g., LeanIn) dedicated to empowering women in transition.

Patricia's Story

Patricia joined a nonprofit that offered career coaching and childcare services. This support enabled her to focus on her job search and eventually secure a role as a paralegal.

Support Network Map

- Identify three people or organizations that can support you.
- Secure resources for childcare or transportation.
- Create a plan to utilize your support effectively.

10



SET
REALISTIC
GOALS

10

SET REALISTIC GOALS

Break down your goals into manageable steps. Use the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) framework to ensure clarity and focus.

Denise's Story

Denise set a six-month goal to find a job in customer service. She broke it into weekly tasks, such as applying for five jobs and attending one networking event. Her persistence paid off when she landed a role with a top retailer.

Create and Track Your Goals

- Write one long-term career goal.
- Break it into smaller weekly or monthly tasks.
- Track your progress and celebrate milestones.

11



PERSISTENCE
AND
POSITIVITY



11

STAY POSITIVE AND PERSISTENT

Re-entering the workforce can be challenging, but maintaining a positive mindset is crucial. Focus on progress, not perfection, and learn from setbacks.

Angela's Story

Even after multiple rejections, Angela kept refining her applications and interview techniques. Her perseverance ultimately led to a role that exceeded her expectations.

Positivity Journal Prompt

- List three things you're grateful for each day.
- Reflect on one challenge you overcame this week.
- Write down one motivational quote that inspires you.

12



CONCLUSION

12

CONCLUSION

You've taken bold steps to embrace change, rediscover your strengths, and build a path toward economic independence. By engaging with this guide, you've equipped yourself with the tools, strategies, and mindset to overcome challenges and reclaim your power.

Your journey doesn't end here - it's only just beginning. Celebrate how far you've come, and remember that every step forward, no matter how small, is progress worth honoring. As you continue to grow and achieve your goals, know you are not alone. **The SOFEI Group** is here to support you every step of the way.

Let this be your moment of transformation. You've got what it takes to create a future filled with purpose, stability, and success. Your comeback story is yours to write - make it extraordinary!

With pride and encouragement,

The SOFEI Group



The SOFEI Group is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering women facing or experiencing situational poverty by providing education, training, and development programs that foster economic independence and stability.

Through innovative partnerships, online courses, and personalized support, we equip women with the skills and resources needed to overcome financial challenges, build sustainable careers, and achieve lasting self-sufficiency.

Visit our site at **www.sofeigroup.org** to learn more.