Tech Support & IT Career Pack

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Build evidence of safe troubleshooting, clear communication and documented follow-through. A certification can support a career plan, but it does not prove every technical skill or guarantee employment. Included materials: skills bank, achievement worksheet, KSA workbook, resume template/example, cover letter and application tracker.

Start with a realistic target

Compare help desk, desktop support, application support and junior systems roles. Record the technologies actually requested, experience level, schedule, location and access responsibilities. Distinguish “required” from “preferred.” Choose one or two skills to demonstrate through authorized practice rather than buying a long list of courses.

Skills bank with evidence

Skill	A useful demonstration
Troubleshooting	Document the symptom, questions, tests, result and escalation
Operating systems	Complete an authorized lab and explain settings you changed
Networking basics	Explain a connectivity check and what the result does/does not prove
Account support	Follow identity verification and escalation; never bypass access controls
Documentation	Write steps another person can repeat safely
Customer communication	Explain next steps in plain language and verify understanding

Label home labs, coursework and volunteer work accurately. Use systems you own or have explicit permission to test. Never scan an employer network, change access or use customer data for a portfolio without authorization.

A repeatable support method

1. Confirm the user's identity and scope under the employer's policy.

2. Ask what happened, when it began and what changed. Record the exact error without collecting passwords.

3. Check impact and urgency. Escalate suspected security incidents through the prescribed process.

4. Perform approved low-risk tests, one change at a time. Record results and a rollback plan when needed.

5. Escalate outside your authority with useful notes.

6. Verify the outcome with the user, document the resolution and close according to policy.

Fictional practice example

A user cannot access a training portal. I confirm identity through the approved procedure, record the error and compare it with the known-issue instructions. Because account changes require administrator approval, I send the authorized team the diagnostic notes. After their correction, I verify the user can sign in and document the resolution. This is a fictional practice story, not experience to copy into your resume.

Portfolio and resume exercise

Create a one-page lab report: goal, environment, permission, steps, evidence, outcome and limits. Remove credentials, private IP details when inappropriate, customer records and proprietary material. Resume statement: “Documented an authorized practice-lab troubleshooting sequence and verified the corrected configuration against the original test.” Replace it with your real project and do not present it as paid employment.

Federal and defense branch

Federal IT applicants must match the specific announcement's specialized experience and grade requirements. Use the two-page federal resume template; do not assume a particular degree automatically qualifies you for a grade. Promotions and career ladders depend on agency requirements and decisions.

For DoD cyber positions, consult the current work-role qualification information and employer requirements. A single certification is not a universal requirement or universal substitute. Do not claim a clearance as “eligible” merely because you believe you could obtain one.

Interview practice

Explain your response to a password request, an unfamiliar error, a frustrated user, a suspected phishing report and a problem you cannot solve. A strong answer explains method, permission, communication and escalation. Saying what you would verify is better than inventing a command or claiming expertise.

My 30-day skill plan

Target role: _____

Repeated requirement: _____

Authorized lab or learning activity: _____

Evidence I will produce: _____

Review date / person who can give feedback: _____

Application / follow-up date: _____

Weekly check-in

Week 1: What did I learn and what evidence did I save? _____

Week 2: Which error did I investigate and how did I test the result? _____

Week 3: What feedback did I receive, and what did I improve? _____

Week 4: Which requirements can I now demonstrate honestly? _____

Next learning goal and reason: _____

References

- Official DoD 8140 workforce guidance
- BLS Computer Support Specialists
- OPM two-page resume guidance

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