HELP DESK TO CLOUD ARCHITECT

Your FREE IT Career Growth Blueprint



Assess your skills. Choose your next move. Build a practical 90-day action plan.

Based on a real career journey from Help Desk to Oracle DBA, enterprise consulting, and Cloud Architecture.

Personal compensation milestones shown in the cover are not typical salaries or earnings guarantees.

Welcome: Take Ownership of Your Career

My career began at the Help Desk of an oil and gas company during my senior year of college. I reset passwords, fixed printers, installed applications, and learned to troubleshoot Windows and basic Unix. I treated those tasks as a practical laboratory—not a dead end.

I asked my employer for operating-system and networking training that would make me more effective. Later, while installing Oracle database connectivity drivers in a consulting-company computer lab, I asked for Oracle training too. I introduced myself to the Oracle DBAs, built relationships, and eventually earned an opportunity to join their team.

My path continued through Oracle Applications DBA work, IBM enterprise consulting, ERP migrations, Enterprise Architecture, and Cloud Architecture. The common thread was not a single certification or a shortcut. It was making deliberate career moves, learning continuously, and taking on real problems.

What this guide helps you do

• Identify your current strengths and the next role you want.

• Recognize gaps in skills, experience, and professional relationships.

• Build a focused 90-day plan with measurable outcomes.

How to use it: Read pages 3–8, complete the worksheets on pages 9–11, and use pages 12–13 to refine your plan. Revisit your answers every 30 days.

1 | Skills Build on Skills



My Help Desk experience built operating-system, networking, and troubleshooting foundations. Oracle DBA work deepened my Unix, scripting, performance, backup, and recovery skills. Enterprise applications exposed me to SAP, PeopleSoft, JD Edwards, and Oracle E-Business Suite. Consulting then added client communication, architecture, and business understanding.

Key lesson: You do not need to master every technology at once. Build depth in your current role and add the next layer deliberately.

2 | Map Your Possible Career Path

My personal path ran through Oracle Database Administration, but it is not the only route toward Cloud Architecture. A networking, systems, security, or cloud engineering specialization can also build relevant experience.

Foundation	Specialize	Expand scope	Architecture
Help Desk / IT Support	Database / Systems / Networking / Security / Cloud	Enterprise projects, migrations, consulting	Cloud solution design and business outcomes

Choose a route based on your interests

- **Database route:** SQL, Linux, backup/recovery, performance, availability, data migration.
- **Infrastructure route:** Windows/Linux, virtualization, storage, networks, automation.
- **Security route:** identity, network security, risk, controls, compliance.
- **Cloud engineering route:** compute, storage, networking, IAM, automation, monitoring.

These are illustrative pathways, not a fixed sequence or a promise of promotion. Most roles require a mix of technical knowledge, project evidence, and communication skills.

3 | Build Your Technical Foundation

Strong architecture decisions depend on understanding how systems work together. Use this list to identify the fundamentals you should be able to explain, troubleshoot, or demonstrate.

Skill area	What to practice
Operating systems	Windows/Linux administration, permissions, services, logs
Networking	DNS, IP addressing, routing, firewalls, connectivity
Compute & storage	Virtual machines, capacity, backup, performance
Databases	SQL basics, availability, recovery, dependencies
Security	Identity, least privilege, encryption, governance
Cloud fundamentals	Compute, storage, networking, costs, monitoring
Communication	Documentation, requirements, trade-offs, presenting

Practice with evidence

For each area, ask: Can I explain it? Can I demonstrate it in a lab or real project? Can I describe a problem I solved and the result? Documenting outcomes is more useful than merely listing technology names.

4 | The Five Career Growth Lessons



From my transcript: network with professionals; speak up for training and opportunities; seek enterprise project experience; maintain one-, two-, and five-year career plans; and master the skills you enjoy. The foundation beneath all five is career ownership.

Reflection: Which of these five behaviors would create the biggest change for you over the next 90 days? Write it down before moving to the worksheets.

5 | Build Relationships and Ask

Networking is a career skill

I found the Oracle DBAs in my company, introduced myself, and maintained genuine relationships. When an opening emerged, the senior DBA already knew I was interested and learning.

Make a specific, respectful request

Example: “I am interested in developing toward database administration. I currently support application connectivity and would like to learn more about the database environment. Could I shadow the team or discuss training that would improve my current work?”

Actions for the next month

• Identify two people doing the work you hope to do.

• Ask one person for a short informational conversation.

• Find a training request that benefits your current role as well as your future goals.

• Follow up by sharing what you learned or contributed.

Focus on real relationships, not asking strangers for jobs. Career development is a long-term practice.

6 | Choose Your Next Move

Use this quick decision framework before committing to a training course or a new role.

Question	Your response
What role am I targeting?	_____
Why does this role interest me?	_____
What work does it involve?	_____
What evidence do employers expect?	_____
What can I practice in my current job?	_____
Who can help me learn?	_____

Test your choice

Review several real job descriptions, speak with someone in the role, and try a small relevant project. A good career decision balances interest, capability, opportunity, and the realities of your life.

Remember: the goal is not to copy my career exactly. It is to learn from the strategy behind my decisions.

Worksheet 1 | IT Skills Self-Assessment

Rate each area from 1 (new to me) to 5 (can apply independently and explain to others). Mark the evidence you have: a lab, project, job task, or documented result.

Competency	Score 1–5	Evidence / example
Windows / Linux	_____	_____
Networking / DNS	_____	_____
Servers / storage	_____	_____
Databases / SQL	_____	_____
Security / IAM	_____	_____
Cloud fundamentals	_____	_____
Scripting / automation	_____	_____
Troubleshooting	_____	_____
Documentation	_____	_____
Business communication	_____	_____

My three strongest skills

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____

Worksheet 2 | Career Gap Analysis

Choose one target role and compare the requirements with what you can demonstrate today. Do not mark a skill as complete based only on having watched a tutorial.

Required skill or experience	My current evidence	Next action
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

My highest-priority gap

_____

A practical way to close it

Project / training / shadowing opportunity: _____

Person or resource that could help: _____

What proof will show progress? _____

Worksheet 3 | Your 90-Day Action Plan

Choose a small number of actions you can finish. Your plan should create demonstrable experience, not just a list of videos to watch.

Time	Career action	Evidence of completion
Days 1–30	Identify target role and review 5 job descriptions	Skills-gap list and one mentor conversation
Days 31–60	Complete one focused lab or project	Architecture sketch, notes, screenshots, results
Days 61–90	Refine portfolio, resume, and professional network	Project summary and readiness review

Customize your commitments

My target role: _____

My priority skill: _____

My project: _____

My networking action: _____

My review date: _____

7 | Think Beyond the Technology



As I moved into enterprise and cloud architecture, my work expanded from technical execution to assessing workloads, dependencies, migration risks, costs, vendors, and business outcomes. I learned to connect technical decisions with the problems clients needed to solve.

Try this: For your next project, write one sentence about the technical solution and one sentence about the business result it supports.

Career Readiness Checklist

Use this as a self-check, not as a certification or hiring guarantee.

• I can describe my next target role and why I want it.

• I reviewed current role requirements and identified my main gaps.

• I can explain core operating-system and networking concepts.

• I have at least one documented, relevant project or work example.

• I can explain the business reason for a technical decision.

• I have contacted at least one professional or mentor in my target area.

• I have a realistic training plan and a way to measure progress.

• I have reviewed my resume or professional profile for clarity.

• I have set a 30-day check-in and a 90-day milestone.

Your 30-day review

What did I complete? _____

What blocked me? _____

What will I change next month? _____

Your Next Step

This free blueprint is designed to help you evaluate your current position, select a next move, and begin building evidence of your capabilities. You can use it without purchasing anything.

Want a more detailed execution system?

The planned **Help Desk to Cloud Architect Career Roadmap & Toolkit** expands on these ideas with deeper specialization guidance, project portfolio planning, professional networking templates, training request examples, and multi-year career roadmaps.

The paid toolkit is an optional next step, not a prerequisite to completing this free plan.

Keep learning with Modernize Without Compromise

Explore the Career Journey video, cloud assessment and migration content, and additional resources through the Modernize Without Compromise website.

Website: www.modernizewithoutcompromise.com

Add the direct download and paid product links here once their final pages are published.

About the Author & Final Message

This blueprint is grounded in my personal IT journey: Help Desk support at an oil and gas company, hands-on server work, an Oracle DBA transition built through training and relationships, Oracle Applications DBA and enterprise consulting work at IBM, and later Enterprise Architecture and Cloud Architecture responsibilities.

My experience includes enterprise systems, migrations, client-facing solution design, and cloud assessment work across AWS, Azure, Google Cloud, and OCI. The lesson I want to pass on is simple: take ownership of your career, keep learning, build relationships, and seek meaningful project experience.

Your commitment

Over the next 90 days, I will take ownership of my career by:

_____

_____

_____

Your skills. Your journey. Your next opportunity.

MODERNIZE WITHOUT COMPROMISE

Educational career-planning resource. It is not a promise of employment, promotion, or compensation.