Michael Messina

Founder, Forward Career Labs & Forward Security Labs

Cybersecurity career strategist. Combat veteran. Paramedic and EMS supervisor. Author.

BIO

Michael Messina is a U.S. Army combat veteran (Afghanistan deployment), paramedic and EMS supervisor with 20+ years in emergency healthcare, and the founder of Forward Career Labs and Forward Security Labs.

He built Forward Career Labs after watching qualified people get passed over because their resumes didn't reflect what they could actually do. His work focuses on cybersecurity career positioning, SOC resume strategy, and building practical tools for job seekers who are done guessing why they're not getting calls back.

On the security side, Forward Security Labs provides GRC consulting, HIPAA and SOC 2 readiness, tabletop exercise development, and emergency preparedness support. The business is SAM.gov registered and SDVOSB pending.

Michael's background spans military service, over two decades in emergency healthcare, and a B.S. in Cybersecurity earned while working full time. He is also a volunteer firefighter at Wolcott Fire Department in Connecticut.

LOCATION

Wolcott, Connecticut

CREDENTIALS

U.S. Army Veteran, Afghanistan

Paramedic, 13 years

EMS Supervisor, 3 years

B.S. Cybersecurity, Cum Laude

Wolcott Fire Dept (Volunteer)

BUSINESS

Forward Career Labs LLC

CAGE: 1AFL4 | SDVOSB Pending

CONTACT

michael@forwardcareerlabs.com

forwardcareerlabs.com

TOPICS & SPEAKING

What Michael talks about

Why Cybersecurity Resumes Fail	Most qualified candidates aren't losing to better candidates -- they're losing because their resume doesn't signal the right things. Michael breaks down exactly why SOC resumes get filtered out and what to fix.
From Combat to Career	How military and first responder experience translates to high-value roles in cybersecurity and GRC -- and why the translation matters more than the credential.

Preparedness as a Practice	What 20 years of emergency healthcare and a combat deployment teach you about operational resilience, documentation, and why most organizations aren't as prepared as they think.
Building Without a Playbook	Starting a veteran-owned consulting and career services business from scratch -- what worked, what didn't, and how operational experience translates to entrepreneurship.
The Resume Is a Signal Problem	A tactical breakdown of ATS screening, keyword alignment, and how hiring managers actually read a resume in under 10 seconds.

BOOKS

Published on Amazon

The Interview Success Notebook

amazon.com/dp/B0GSG1Y543

Structured interview prep system with real questions, answer frameworks, and space to practice.

100 Interview Questions and Winning Answers

amazon.com/dp/B0GSZTFQQR

100 real interview questions with proven answer frameworks. Walk in knowing what you'll say.

The Interview Success Playbook

amazon.com/dp/B0GSF9HN1N

For candidates who are qualified but struggling to communicate it. Stops the guessing and the rambling.

BOOK MICHAEL FOR YOUR PODCAST, PANEL, OR EVENT

michael@forwardcareerlabs.com

forwardcareerlabs.com | linkedin.com/in/forwardcareerlabs