



10 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL CAREER CHANGE

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As business confidence continues to rise along with higher starting salaries, you might be asking yourself what the best next step is. No matter your circumstances, there are strategies you can adopt to set yourself up for a successful career change. Many individuals are finding themselves contemplating a career change, and there is an opportunity right now to confidently take that leap and go for it.

From increased flexibility and remote work options to a growing emphasis on personal fulfilment and work-life balance, there are several compelling reasons why now is the right time to embark on a new professional path.

These are a few signs that may indicate it's time to take a chance on a new career:

- Ready for a new challenge? You may feel like you're not learning anymore and would like to take on different responsibilities.
- Interested in your friends' jobs? Your friends and family members have jobs that seem more interesting than your current position.
- Need a confidence boost? Your current manager and co-workers don't give you the recognition you deserve for your hard work and dedication.
- Is your current job impacting your health? If your work-life balance isn't what you want it to be, you may need to change careers.
- Craving a higher pay ceiling? You have reached the highest salary possible on your current career path and want to earn more.

Ticking more than a few of those points? Well, here's how you can make that career change happen!

1. Evaluate your skills and interests

Take some time to understand your qualities, qualifications and values to help focus your career transition and narrow down your career path, so you can understand how you might position yourself during the job search.

Start by asking yourself the following questions:

Which soft skills do I currently have?

Soft skills are related to your ability to work with others. Consider how well you communicate, empathize with people or solve problems. Soft skills are often the most transferable, so identifying them early can help you understand the ways you might bring value to a new role or industry.

Which hard skills do I currently have?

Hard skills are your technical abilities gained by education or training. These could include skills like a spoken language, knowledge of a specific software program or a certain method of project management. Taking inventory of your hard skills can help you identify if there are certain industries that might be easier to transition into.

Which skills am I interested in developing?

Once you have lists of the skills you already have, make another list of skills that you want to learn. They might be new skills you want to obtain or ones you already have some knowledge of but are interested in strengthening. Try not to limit yourself here. Instead, freely explore activities that bring you joy or spark your curiosity.

What are my biggest career "wins"?

Wins might be compliments from colleagues, recognition from managers, the measurable impact you've made at a company or a promotion. They could also be personal professional accomplishments, like winning certain awards or achieving specific goals.

Communicating the impact you've made throughout your career can help employers quickly understand the value you'll bring to their organisation, even if you come from another role or industry.

What are my core values and non-negotiables?

Your values and needs should provide direction for the role, company and industry you select. They might include the desire to work for a mission-driven company, in an inclusive culture or for an organisation that prioritises a work-life balance. Some examples of non-negotiables are long-term financial stability, job security or more flexible working hours.

2. Create a list of occupations

Create a list of 5 to 10 appealing occupations that you qualify for based on your skills and experience and that you think would be interesting to explore (try to focus on positions for which you meet at least 60% of the qualifications with your transferable skills.)

If you took any career self-assessments, make note of the recommended careers based on the results of those tests.

3. Research jobs from your list

Evaluate the job descriptions, skills and educational requirements for each of the roles on your list. You may also want to consider the job outlook and the earning potential for these positions. Select the top one or two roles you think you should pursue based on qualifiers such as your non-negotiables, career goals, transferable skills, available opportunity and barriers to entry

4. Determine what requirements you need

Determine what skills, education, training, certification or licensing you may need to qualify for the roles on your list. In some cases, you may be able to qualify by taking a course. In other cases, a career may require more extensive education,

such as earning a new bachelor's or master's degree.

Based on this information, evaluate the resources that you'll need to make the career change possible. Beyond educational expenses, you should also consider other costs and trade-offs, such as childcare expenses and potential commute time.

5. Create an action plan

Once you've identified the career that is most feasible based on your time, resources and current skills, you need to create an action plan for how you're going to get that position. Write down the end goal, the timeline in which you want to achieve it and milestones you need to accomplish as you pursue the goal. For example, if you want to be a registered nurse, determine how much time you need for school before this is possible.

Also, make note of any potential obstacles you could encounter so that you can have a plan for overcoming them. For example, if your target career could potentially involve relocation, make a plan for the best way to move. Being prepared for challenges helps you stay focused on your objective.

6. Track your progress

As you learn new skills and earn the right certifications, make sure you measure your progress. Set reminders on your calendar to finish certain tasks and celebrate each time you reach a new milestone. Tracking your progress helps you stay motivated as you make your career change.

7. Shift your online brand

In order to change careers you need to shift your brand online so that it's more appealing to potential employers. Review job descriptions for your desired profession and make a list of the keywords that employers use when they describe the ideal candidate. Identify all of the skills

skills you have from past roles and update your job-related social media profiles and website so that they highlight those skills.

8. Update your CV

Use the list of keywords you compiled to update your CV. You may also want to change the format you're using for your CV. While chronological resumes are the most common format, functional or combination resumes are often more ideal for career changes since they emphasise your skills and accomplishments.

9. Use your connections

As you're working on obtaining the qualifications you need for the role you want, start talking to people in your personal and professional network who might know someone in that role or industry. Chances are that a family member or friend will know someone who may be able to answer questions about the position you want or even recommend you when you're ready to start applying.

10. Send cold emails

When you know what company you want to work for and have obtained the necessary qualifications, consider reaching out to employees who work there. A well-researched cold email can be a great way to start a new relationship. You may even want to ask for an informational interview so you can learn more about the position you desire. The more people you connect with, the more likely it is that you'll gain a referral for any openings in the future.

Job searching can be tough and doing it during COVID-19 can be especially challenging. It can help to go into this process with an open mind and accept that rejection is a natural part of the process. Allow yourself to feel what may come with it such as frustration or sadness but shift toward positive thinking as soon as possible. Persistence is a powerful tool, so rise to the

difficulties associated with your search and keep moving forward.

Good luck on your journey, and please reach out if you would like any career advice or have questions about the current job market!

Information Sourced from uk.indeed.com