

Do I Have a Calling in Tech? If So, What Tech Role Fits My Passion?

The 4 proven steps to expose your passion in tech

Step 1 : Research ONE Tech Role Online - Part 1 (Solitude Research)

Time Needed : 3 Hours

- First and foremost, you need to have the expectation you will not be 100% knowledgeable about the role you choose after finishing the action item for step 1, 2, and 3.

- Choose ONE title among [15 tech roles](#) listed in Mashable

For example, Front-end web developer appeals to you

- Spot the [job nature] the job title holds.

5. Front-end web developers

There's a shortage in front-end web development talent but high demand for their skill set. We're almost looking for a "unicorn": someone who codes but also possesses an eye for design. Due to the digital and mobile shift, more clients require updated sites and apps. In order to meet this demand, we'll need to recruit an experienced front-end web developer.

Techie BABY

- Start the research broadly - [Google](#) search "Introduction to [job nature]"

The screenshot shows a Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "introduction to front-end web development". Below the search bar, there are tabs for "All", "Videos", "Images", "News", "More", and "Search tools". The "All" tab is selected. Below the tabs, it says "About 10,500,000 results (0.21 seconds)". The first search result is a YouTube video titled "Intro to Front End Web Development - YouTube" with a thumbnail showing two people. The URL is "https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJR-Tbljb2w". Below the video, it says "Aug 18, 2014 - Uploaded by CodeBabes" and "Let's talk front end, I don't have a bad front end either right? Front end is all the stuff that makes the web ...". The second search result is a website titled "Learn Web Development 101 -- Introduction to the Front End" with the URL "www.theodinproject.com/web-development.../introduction-to-the-front-e...". Below the URL, it says "Front end web development is NOT design (you won't be playing around in Photoshop or anything), but a front end developer does apply the work of designers ...".

- Start the research broadly again - [Wikipedia](#) search "[job nature]"

The screenshot shows a Wikipedia search interface. On the left, there is a sidebar with the Wikipedia logo and the text "WIKIPEDIA The Free Encyclopedia". Below the logo, there are links for "Main page", "Contents", "Featured content", and "Current events". On the right, there is a search bar with the text "Front End Web Development". Below the search bar, there are tabs for "Article" and "Talk". The "Article" tab is selected. Below the tabs, it says "From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia" and "Redirect page". Below this, there is a link with a right arrow icon and the text "Web development".

Action item : Prepare a notepad and a pen. Workout the worksheet [Here](#)

Are you interested in the job nature after finishing the action item?

If YES, that's great, move on to step 2.

If NO, that's great, you spent 3 hours to discard an "ambiguous calling".

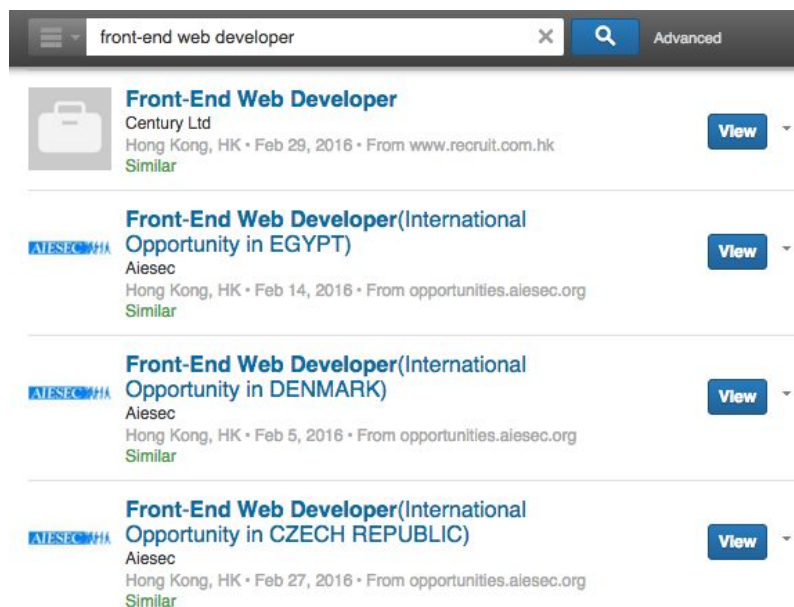
Step 2 : Research ONE Tech Role Online - Part 2 (Solitude Research)

Time Needed : 2 Hours

We're moving on with the Front-end web developer example.

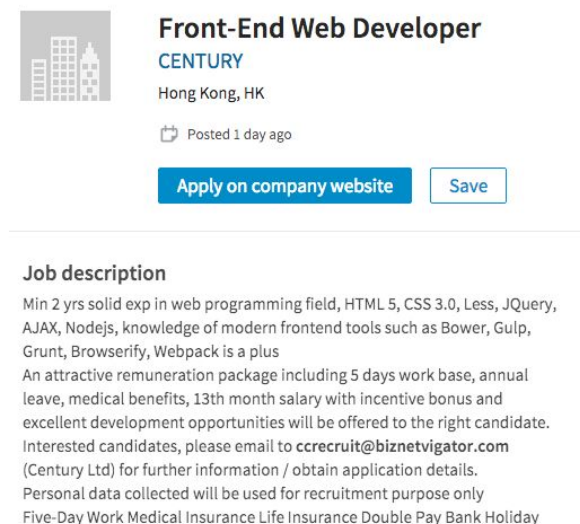
After part 1 research, you will have a lay of the land, but you will want to know how the job nature is actually described in the EXISTING market position.

- Start the research with a laser focus - [Linkedin](#) "[job title]"



The screenshot shows a LinkedIn search bar with the text 'front-end web developer'. Below the search bar, there are four job listings. Each listing includes a company logo, the job title, the company name, the location, the date, and a 'View' button. The first listing is for 'Front-End Web Developer' at 'Century Ltd' in 'Hong Kong, HK' from 'Feb 29, 2016'. The other three listings are for 'Front-End Web Developer(International Opportunity in EGYPT)', 'Front-End Web Developer(International Opportunity in DENMARK)', and 'Front-End Web Developer(International Opportunity in CZECH REPUBLIC)' at 'Aiesec' in 'Hong Kong, HK' from 'Feb 14, 2016', 'Feb 5, 2016', and 'Feb 27, 2016' respectively. Each listing also has a 'Similar' link.

- Click through the job title



The screenshot shows the LinkedIn job page for 'Front-End Web Developer' at 'CENTURY' in 'Hong Kong, HK'. The page includes a 'Posted 1 day ago' timestamp, an 'Apply on company website' button, and a 'Save' button. Below the job title, there is a 'Job description' section. The description states: 'Min 2 yrs solid exp in web programming field, HTML 5, CSS 3.0, Less, JQuery, AJAX, Nodejs, knowledge of modern frontend tools such as Bower, Gulp, Grunt, Browserify, Webpack is a plus. An attractive remuneration package including 5 days work base, annual leave, medical benefits, 13th month salary with incentive bonus and excellent development opportunities will be offered to the right candidate. Interested candidates, please email to ccrecruit@biznetvigator.com (Century Ltd) for further information / obtain application details. Personal data collected will be used for recruitment purpose only. Five-Day Work Medical Insurance Life Insurance Double Pay Bank Holiday'.

- Note down the job nature

Techie BABY

- Repeat the same process 9 more times with different companies (10 is the ideal number to spot a pattern)

Action item : Research one level deeper for the tech role in LinkedIn. Workout the worksheet [Here](#)

Many people will stop at this step. They're scared away by many unknown job nature.

Remember: that's OK.

You're actively discarding the "ambiguous calling". Not everyone should become a techie-baby. You should be grateful you have the ability to kill the techie-wannabe in an early stage.

But, if you're a weirdo enough to find the excitement in the unknown terms...

You should take the step 3.

Step 3 : Research MULTIPLE Job Roles Online - Part 3 (Solitude Research)

Time Needed: 2 Hours

Do you find anything you don't know about the job nature?

If you do, congrats! You're onto something great. The tech job chosen 5 hours ago appeals to you, but you're not sure if you can truly call it a "calling".

Don't panic. It's normal.

A laymen shouldn't understand an industry through only online research. You're like a little nerdy student who thinks tech job is cool. You try to study the subject on your own and hit a plateau. And notice certain job natures come up again and again in multiple tech roles.

You read tons of resources online and found out many unknowns with a perplexed stare.



When I was a kid, my teachers always left me with a parting advice: ask a question only if you have already tried. So when it comes to the moment you've already tried everything on your own to tackle a question, but still have no answer, it's time to seek for help.

Go to the teachers who have the answers you need.

For example, Front-end web developer still appeals to you. But you find some other roles hold a very similar job nature. For example: Back-end web developer, software engineer, analyst programmer, etc. No matter what the job title is, you always see certain terms come up so often. Hence, you might have questions like :

- How does agile web development look like?
- How does front-end web developing different from back-end web developing?
- How does a company choose which programming language to work with?
- Why do Ruby, Node.js and PHP come up so often in a web developer job requirement?
- How does your work look like on a daily basis?

Techie BABY

If you are anew in the web developing field, I am sure you don't have the ability to ask the first four questions without the solitude research. I call them quality questions which season practitioners are willing to answer. Veterans know at the first moment if you haven't done your homework. People are generous to help out only if you are serious on what you are asking.

You're not a kid. Don't do what I did - ask a question without never trying on your own.

Action item : create a list of quality questions. Workout the worksheet [Here](#)

Ready to the fun part?

Ready to explore the unknowns in tech to calm down the butterflies in your stomach?

Let's head over to....

Step 4 : Research MULTIPLE Tech Roles with Techies (Dynamic Research)

Time Needed : 2 Months

When I was at high school, eating hot dog at cafeteria with a bunch of guys, I was involved in a conversation.

“What the hell did I do wrong?” One of my friends had just broken up with his girlfriend “I’m a perfect boyfriend.”

“I don’t know. You should ask someone who had dating experience.” My another friend reluctantly admitted, “I haven’t even dated any girl so far.”

What a valuable lesson learned outside of the classroom!

I admired my another friend so much. He shouldn’t be shameful he hadn’t dated any girl. On the other hand, the poor guy who had just broken up with his girlfriend should feel shame to ask a question with a guy who doesn’t have the experience and knowledge THAT - he needed.



Lesson learned: ask questions from a source who had achieved what you want

But you might say, “I don’t know any tech person. I come from a background completely different from the technology industry.”

“Where do I find them?” and a question follows.

Do you remember the [lawyer](#), [investment banker](#), [musician](#) and the [waiter](#) who successfully transition into tech without relevant degree and background, from the inconvertible truth?

We all started at the similar place: NO connection. NO background. NO tech skills. NO nothing.

Techie BABY

When I tested the techie-wannabe idea, started “natural networking”, I had only 3 techies in my network, but I expanded my list of techie to 20 through both online and offline, no matter what.

I tried every possible mean to reach out to them. I called these techies, emailed them, sent them LinkedIn or Facebook messages, and asked for referrals from friends.

17 out of 20 replied to my quest. 3 coffee meetings, 7 phone call meetings and 7 email replies with extreme details regard my inquiries. In other words, I have received over 80% response rate in the techie-wannabe validation test.

They were the reason I knew: I’m a techie-wannabe!

I had sent 100+ emails, Facebook, LinkedIn messages and had 20+ phone calls to techies during the period of transition.

The email template underneath is the version that was boiled down to the bare-bones which you can use :



Click to Download - [Here](#)

In whatever context you’re in, once you get to the King (the techie you wanna meet), pull the trigger and shoot the questions you prepared in the solitude research.

Each email, private message, phone call and coffee meeting will elevate your questions to a more advanced level.

In my case, after only 5 to 6 reaching-outs, the techies started to question if I was anew in the field. The questions I asked were so deep.

Feed your courage wolf and do this. Many people are shy and afraid of meeting new people. But the value in directly asking the techies is huge. The dynamic research with the “real” techies are 3X more important than the solitude research.

Techie BABY

After a month of dynamic research plus a day of solitude research, you will know for sure if you're a techie wannabe.

Action Item : Meet techies through natural networking. Workout the worksheet [Here](#)

Don't move on to the grandiose phase - How to Narrow Down the Learning Materials to Avoid Learning Everything - if you haven't yet validate your techie-wannabe idea.

Bear in mind, even though you haven't find your "calling" after the validation test, you'll have at least 3 months of net-profit.

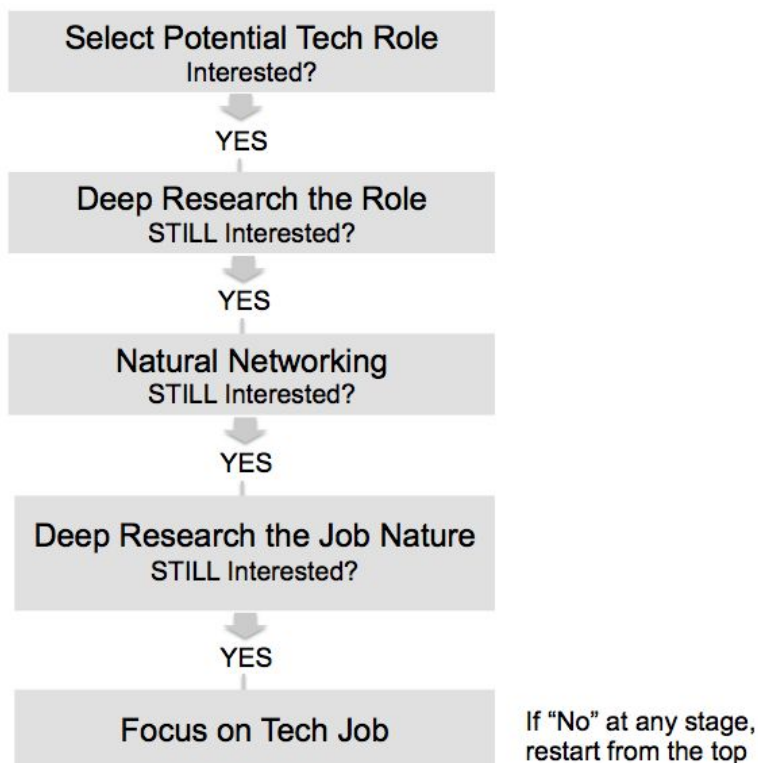
HUH?

On an important side note : armed with the proven method, the estimated time saved to discard an "ambiguous calling" is 3 months, at the very least.

The conventional way to test a job idea is to work on the job. But working on a new job includes 4 stages: learning the new skill, interviewing, negotiating, landing the job and working on the job.

So be grateful some techie-babies had invented the proven method. Back to the beginning and test another techie-wannabe idea.

Remember the roadmap?



Techie BABY

Embrace the hidden benefit of the proven method. Spend no time on a job which takes you months to learn a skill, go through the job application process, work on a job for few more months and finally realized you made a wrong choice for an “ambiguous calling”.

