

HOW CAN I CHANGE MY PROFESSION?

Many job opportunities today did not exist ten years ago. Technology has eliminated many positions, while at the same time creating many new opportunities.

Many job seekers consider a new profession when they are not able to find employment opportunities in their current field.

Tip One: Career Assessment Tools

If you are not sure of the new career you'd like to consider, an important step is to utilize our Career Assessment Tools. Our Career Assessment Tools are located under the Resource Tab within the Career Portal.

This might be the first time you actually think about what you enjoyed or disliked about the past positions you've held.

Most of these career assessment tools uncover what is most important to you in a new career.

- What is your passion?
- What excites you?

Most of them can also help identify the traits and talents that can be transferred into your new career.

Tip Two: Informational Interviews

You can obtain basic job information from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook on various careers.

There are other resources you can obtain, but one of the best methods to learn inside information is to set up informational interviews with individuals working in the profession you have targeted.

Often these individuals cannot only provide you with information, but they have contacts within the profession that they will often share with you. Many informational interviews also turn into job interviews.

Tip Three: Transferable Traits and Skills

There are many desirable skills and traits that are required by most professions.

These can include:

- Strong communication skills
- Leadership
- Organizational skills
- Positive attitude
- Tenacity

Often you have skills and experience that can qualify you for the career you have targeted.

Tip Four: Key Words on Your Resume and Cover Letter

Make sure the keywords needed for the profession you have targeted are included in a Career Summary on the top 1/3 of your resume so you are not screened out by automated screening systems.

Both your resume and cover letter should focus on the career change. Stress your transferable skills, education, experience and accomplishments that are appropriate for the position you are targeting.

Within our Career Portal we offer a resume review. If you would like additional assistance, we offer you professionals who can rewrite your resume at a minimal cost to you.

Tip Five: Additional Training | Education | Credential

If you are lacking a credential required by your targeted profession, enroll in a class and show a prospective employer that you are working toward attaining the needed education, training or credential. If you are interested in additional information on educational opportunities, we offer this in our Career Portal.

Tip Six: Network

When you are attempting to change your profession, it's more about **who** you know as opposed to **what** you know.

Over 50% of job seekers making a career change land their new opportunity through their networking efforts. Identify resources and social networks utilized by individuals in the profession you are targeting. The amount of information available on the internet and through these various social networks is incredible and very helpful in attaining new contacts.

Join the associations representing this profession, contact your Alumni Association and subscribe to the appropriate trade publications.

Tip Seven: Consider Consulting, Temp or Contract Work

One way to obtain experience in a new field is to accept a part-time, consulting, temp or contract position in your targeted profession. If financially feasible, you might offer your services free (as a volunteer) in the new field to gain experience. Often these opportunities lead to full-time career opportunities.

Tip Eight: A Career Change May Require Flexibility

When you are changing your career or profession, you need to be extremely flexible about almost everything including:

- Title
- Salary
- Location
- Size of company

You will need to take an initial step backward in order to get your foot in the door. Make sure you conduct research to know that there is a chance for advancement in responsibility level, title and income if you do take a step back. You could consider opening your own business or working as a consultant.

Tip Nine: Interview Extremely Well

You must practice your 30 second pitch, how you will answer, "Tell me about yourself."

Most importantly, provide sound reasons for your current job target. You cannot use the words "career change" or "profession change" because that will instantly set off red flags for the person interviewing you. They now know you will not give them a quick ROI (Return On Investment), because you will require training.

Know the requirements of their position and show which of your transferrable skills qualify you for their opportunity. It's important to remember it is not the most qualified person who lands the job; it is the person who interviews the best. Under these circumstances, that is in your favor.

Follow these tips and you're on your way to accepting a new opportunity in a new profession.