

GUIDE TO SWITCHING CAREERS

How to ensure you're effectively prepared for a career change



Evaluate your situation.

Making a career change is a big commitment. Take time to assess yourself and your situation honestly and thoroughly. Consider your reasons for wanting to make a change. Think about the things you like in your current or previous role and what you'd like to avoid in a new one. We recommend you make a list. Seeing your ideas in writing can help you clarify what you want and need..

Identify your skills, strenghts & weaknesses.

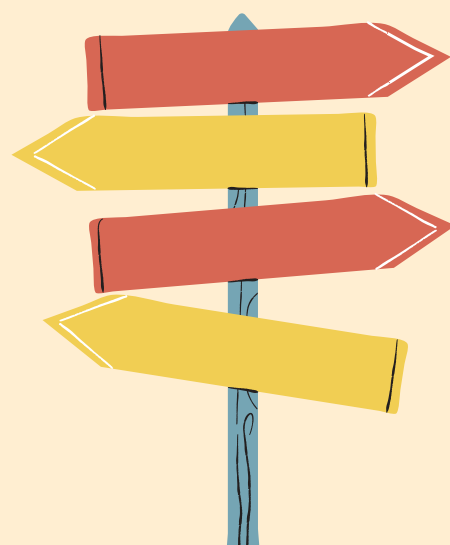
Once you determine that a career change is in your best interest, it's important to identify the skills you're most confident about and how you offer value to employers. Above all, focus on transferable skills that can be useful into a new career.

During these uncertain times, you might be rethinking your choice of career or you might be in a situation where you are forced to change industries to find stable work. Here a few ideas of steps to take you through this process.



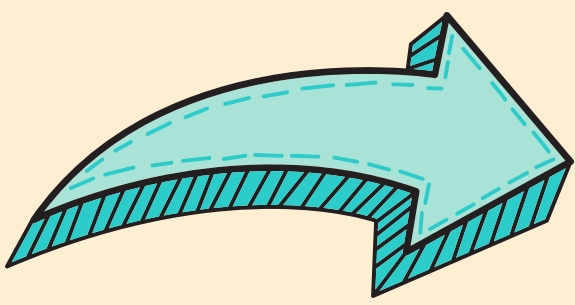
Consider the logistics.

Your personal motivations and needs are an important part of deciding whether a career change is right for you. You also might need to consider if this change will require you to return to school to obtain education in your field of choice. If yes, would you be able to study full-time for 6-month, a year or more? Can you take night classes or certifications to boost your employability while still making an income? Or maybe you need to work with what you have in terms of education and skills? Answering these questions may influence how you approach your decision to change careers.



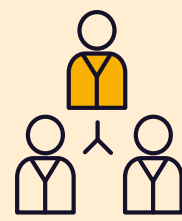
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Volunteer.

There's no better way to make solid contacts, gain experience and find out if the job's right for you than volunteering while you're still employed. Experience some of what it feels like to work in a new industry or environment – you'll know you made the right choice.



Build a network.

Reach out to people who work in the field you're interested in. Tell them you're interested in moving into their field and ask them to share any advice or tips from an insider's perspective. Ask them about their experience and qualifications. You can start with social networks such as LinkedIn and Facebook – there's plenty of networking resources and professionals to reach out to.

Stay focused.

If you've been in a career or industry for many years, you will have achieved a measure of success, competence and recognition. Remember why you decided to make a change and what it will mean for you long-term. It's not unusual for a working person to have several careers, let alone jobs, over the course of their working life.

Switching jobs is a big deal for most people. Before you jump into a long job search, take a moment to consider why you're ready to leave, what you're looking for, and create a plan for finding the right fit. Carefully planning a change is often the difference between jumping into another unsuitable role and finding the next stepping stone in your career.



SOURCES:

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