



It's Never Too Late -- Choosing Your Second (or even Third!) Career

There are lots of reasons why you might want to make a career change. Are you stuck in a job that just isn't you? Have you been downsized from a job that has limited employment prospects? Or are you just ready for a career change, but have no idea what else you could or would like to do, or where to start?

The days are long gone when your first career was almost always your last. In fact, many American workers are finding that the second—and sometimes even the third—act is often the most promising. A mature, focused employee can often deliver a greater sense of sincerity to a career than someone just starting out in the workforce.



But before you jump headfirst into the next chapter of your professional story, consider these helpful hints for a realistic look at your second go-round.

Look at Your Strengths

Take a careful and honest look at the skills that make you a perfect fit for a second career. Use these strengths to narrow the selection to jobs where you are most likely to succeed.

Embrace Your Weaknesses

By looking at the other side of the coin - your faults – it will help you become more prepared to choose that perfect second job specialty. Consider the worst and be honest when applying. Now is not the time to fool yourself into a job you won't be good at - or enjoy.

Consider Complementary Careers

You don't have to swing 180 degrees away from what you were doing before. Your new career could even be a more specialized version of what you were doing before. Network with other experts in your niche to see what you may already be qualified for - even if you have no experience in that actual job description.

Grab Some Extra Skills

What is the actual skill set you need to pursue a second great career? If you find you are lacking in some areas, a mentorship or certificate program might offer just what you need to fill the gap between formal education and actual, practical work experience.

Realize Any Risk

Some jobs require just a slight adjustment to your job search and some hours in a new industry, while others may involve a whole list of hoops to even be eligible for that desired career. Before you invest any money into a new job opportunity, figure out your earning potential to see if it's worth it in the long run.

Do What You Love

In the end, this chapter in your career may be the one that you retire from. If you can't see yourself as being satisfied in this career, then this may not be where you should focus your attention. Think long term, and go for that job that makes you smile when you think about it.

The Bottom Line

Whether you tackle a second career at age 25 or 55, there is always opportunity to "trade up" to something you can enjoy for the rest of your working life. Take things slow, spend time in research and consideration, and you'll find the right second act to your professional career.



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