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Is it Time to Change Careers?

Deciding to find a new job or career is a scary yet exciting move.

By Robert Hosking

A job that is intellectually stimulating, aligns with your professional goals and pays well is the gold standard, but it's also elusive. Moreover, sometimes you don't even know if you're in the right career, much less where you see yourself in five years. If you're a full-time employee, you're likely doing your job more than anything else during the workday, including sleeping. Spending 40-plus hours a week at something you dislike can lead to resentment. Should you change careers?

If you're not sure whether your present work situation is right for you, don't waste time by playing it safe. Evaluate your personal, financial and professional goals to see whether you should remain on your present path or change careers.

1. Personal Goals

Begin by comparing your current job or field with what you really want to do. For example, you may sit in front of a computer all day but have a passion for working directly with people. If you don't find your work fulfilling or wonder if there's something else that might better suit your personality, take a career aptitude test. Talk to a career counselor if you need help weighing your choices. Outside of your career path, personal goals may also include improving your [work/life balance](#).

2. Financial Goals

Money isn't everything, but your job or career will be more satisfying if you [make enough](#) to pay your bills *and* can save for the future. Knowing where you want to be financially can give you some clarity as to whether you should change careers or jobs. Factor in how much you need for yourself and your dependents, car and mortgage payments, student loans, retirement accounts, rainy day funds and future plans.

3. Professional Goals

If you've decided that you should change careers, the next step is to find out whether you need to get additional [training](#), certification or another diploma. Many colleges and universities offer degree programs tailored to working professionals.

If you love working in your field but have lost enthusiasm for your present job, then it may be time to look for another. Update your resume and LinkedIn profile, search job sites, and discreetly inform acquaintances and professional contacts. Consider working with a job recruiter and registering with an agency like OfficeTeam, which offers both temporary and full-time positions.

As with your vocation, these goals may change over the years. Make a point to reevaluate your career every so often to ensure that you are — or end up — where you want to be.



Robert Hosking is executive director of OfficeTeam, the world's leading staffing service specializing in the placement of highly skilled administrative and office support professionals. The company has more than 300 locations worldwide, and offers online job search services at www.officeteam.com. For more information, contact Naz Araghian at naz.araghian@roberthalf.com.