

How to transition into a job you love

You probably got started in your current profession by majoring in certain subjects in college, following in the footsteps of a family member or, like many people, fell into a job that had nothing to do with your degree. For whatever reason, you want to change your direction now.

So, how do you change your profession? Here are a few suggestions,

Find someone who does what you want to do – Most people enjoy what they do and will enjoy telling you about it. Invite someone from your future profession to lunch or coffee, or make an appointment to visit their office.

Research your future profession on employment sites – Searching [local employment sites](#) narrows down the list of open positions to just your area. Once there, search for openings in your future profession. Review the job description and the education/skills requirements. Note how many of the qualification requirements you have and how many you need.

Get training to prepare you – After reviewing the job description on a few sites, do a search to find the training you will need. Short term, you may only need to attend a few classes or get a certification. Depending on your future profession, you might need a two or four year degree. If this is the case, contact one of the junior colleges or the universities to learn about the programs offered, financial aid, etc. Once enrolled, visit the department where you will attend classes and speak with the instructors. Ask them questions about your future profession.

See the list below for some options in training and education in Birmingham.

[University of Alabama at Birmingham](#)

[TechKnowledge Birmingham](#)

[Jefferson State Community College](#)

[New Horizons – Birmingham](#)

[Virginia College](#)

[Lawson State Community College](#)

Future profession networking groups – There seems to be a professional group for every profession. Look into joining the group that suits you, even while you are still in the transition stage. Attend meetings and, if you can, volunteer. This allows you to show the group, and its members, that you are serious about the profession and you are willing to work. It is also a great opportunity to expand your network.

Apply for future profession jobs – As you are going to school or getting your certification, apply for positions in your future profession. Use your connections. Be completely honest with the interviewer about your education and explain that you want to work in this new field. Depending on the company, you may land a position that will allow you to have on-the-job training and continue your education. Think “internship” or “co-op.”

Prepare for pay in your future profession – More than likely you will have to take a pay cut as you will be considered entry level. According to [Margaret Steen in her article at Yahoo! Hotjobs](#), “If you decide to move to a new industry or a new type of work, you will likely find that your years of experience in your current field don't count for much when it comes to pay. And if you're leaving an industry that typically pays well to go to one that doesn't -- for example, moving from a for-profit company to a nonprofit -- the shock can be even greater.” Avoid the shock by using your connections, networking and [reviewing local salary surveys](#). This will help you decide if the transition is worthwhile and allow you to prepare accordingly.

By doing the legwork and research first, you will be transitioning into your new position sooner than you think.