



SWITCH CAREERS

A How-to Guide Worksheet

Follow these 6 steps to choose a new career based on solid information and your own priorities.

In these steps you will:

- ✓ Generate new career ideas
- ✓ Research the job market
- ✓ Get feedback & choose a career
- ✓ Explore education & training options
- ✓ Rebrand your resume
- ✓ Target your networking

STEP 1. GENERATE NEW CAREER IDEAS

Visit [mySkills myFuture](https://mySkillsmyFuture.org) to find career ideas related to your previous work experience.

- A.** Follow directions at [mySkills myFuture](https://mySkillsmyFuture.org) (*mySkillsmyFuture.org*) to create a list of career matches for your previous job titles.
- B.** Explore the career matches in your results.
- Click on any **Occupation Title** to learn more and watch a career video about the career.
 - Look at **Typical Wages** for each career—do they meet your income needs?
 - Look at **Typical Education**—are you already qualified, or would you need to get more schooling or training?
- C.** As you find careers of interest on your lists, **write down the Occupation Title, Typical Wages, & Typical Education** in the table below.

My Career Match List

Occupation titles	Typical annual wage	Typical education
1 _____	_____	_____
2 _____	_____	_____
3 _____	_____	_____
4 _____	_____	_____
5 _____	_____	_____



STEP 2. RESEARCH THE JOB MARKET

Visit [Occupation Profile](#) to research the local job market. What is the demand for the careers on your list?

A. Follow directions on the [Occupation Profile](#) (CareerOneStop.org/OccupationProfile) to learn about demand for the occupations on your Career Match List.

- What is the **Outlook** for each occupation?

Note that careers can be **Bright, Average, or Below Average**. Jobs will be more available for careers that are considered Bright or Average—but you don't need to rule out careers considered Below Average. If everything else about a career with a Below Average outlook looks good to you, you can move on to the next steps to see if it might still be a good match for you.

- What is the **Projected Employment**?

This can give you more detailed information about demand. You'll see:

- The total number people employed in the career in your state (and the country) over a ten-year period
- The percent change over that ten-year period (bigger positive changes mean more jobs will be open, negative changes mean fewer jobs)
- The total number of job openings in that career expected each year in your state and in the country

B. Now you're ready to narrow the Career Match List you made in Step 1. At this point you may choose to drop careers if the Outlook or Projected Employment information is too negative. As you complete the table below, put careers in order starting with those you're most interested in.

My Narrowed Career Match List

Occupation title	Job demand: Outlook & Projected employment	Why this may be a good match
<i>Enter titles from Step 1 - My Career Match list</i>	<i>Enter Bright, Average, or Below Average here (from 'Outlook' on Occupation Profile)</i> <i>Also note any highlights/ concerns learned from 'Projected employment'</i>	<i>Make notes on why you may pursue this career. This can include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>details from the career video</i>• <i>do interests & skills match yours?</i>• <i>does the salary match your needs?</i>
1 _____	_____	_____
2 _____	_____	_____
3 _____	_____	_____
4 _____	_____	_____
5 _____	_____	_____



STEP 3. GET FEEDBACK & CHOOSE A CAREER

In this step you'll use informational interviews to explore your top career matches.

A. Visit [Informational interviews](https://www.careeronestop.org/InfoInterviews) ([CareerOneStop.org/InfoInterviews](https://www.careeronestop.org/InfoInterviews)) to learn how to schedule and conduct these exploration interviews.

- Reach out to people working in your careers of interest and ask for an in-person or online meeting or phone call to talk about their work and the company they work for.
- Aim to speak with at least two people in each career of interest to get well-rounded information.
- Review the sample questions on the informational interviews page and choose up to 5 you're most interested to know.

My Informational Interviews

Contact name	Email/phone number	Meeting focus <i>learn about their career or the company</i>	Interview schedule <i>date & time</i>
1 _____	_____	_____	_____
2 _____	_____	_____	_____
3 _____	_____	_____	_____
4 _____	_____	_____	_____
5 _____	_____	_____	_____

Once you've talked to people in your careers of interest, you may have enough information to select a new career. Or you may need to learn more about yourself or your career options to feel sure. Either way, continue with the next steps to either move forward with the new career you've identified, or to learn the process you'll need to do once you choose a field.

If you know you already qualify for the career and don't need additional education, skip to Step 5 to rebrand your resume.



STEP 4. EXPLORE EDUCATION OR TRAINING OPTIONS

Return to the [Occupation Profiles](#) you viewed in Step 2 to explore credential options.

- A.** Look at **Education and experience** to confirm whether your education, training, and/or work experience match the typical job requirements.
- If a college degree or certificate is listed, do you have that degree—and is it in a related program?
 - If work experience or on-the-job-training is listed, do you have the suggested level?
- B.** If you would need more education or training:
- Are you willing and able to pursue the education or training listed?
 - If not, take this career off your list of Career Matches.
 - If yes, select the links under “Programs that can prepare you” to find programs in your local area.
 - See programs you want to learn more about? Enter the information in the table below. Use a different row for each program, even if it’s for the same career.
- C.** Look at **Certifications**. Whatever your current level of education, earning a **certification** may help you land a job. If the career you’re looking at has related certifications, you’ll see a button to select “Find Certifications.” Add the relevant certification names to the table below.
- D.** Some states require you to be licensed for certain jobs. This information is noted under **Licenses**. Enter license information in the table below.

My Education and Training Research

Occupation title	Education program title	School name & location	Program length & award level	Certifications	State license requirement
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					



STEP 5. REBRAND YOUR RESUME

Visit the [Resume Guide](#) to create or update your resume and target it to your new career focus. Searching for jobs in more than one field? Target a version of your resume for each job title.

- A. Use information from the [Resume Guide \(CareerOneStop.org/ResumeGuide\)](#) to write each section of your resume or update the parts of your current resume that need attention.
- B. Keywords are the abilities, skills, expertise, and values that an employer is looking for in a candidate. It's important to identify keywords for your new career that also reflect your past experience or qualities. List 3-5 keywords to include in your resume.
- C. Need ideas for keywords? Check your notes from informational interviews or choose some from job postings. On the Occupation Profile for your new career, under Outlook, select "Find job openings" to see current job postings. Strong keywords will be the skills, knowledge, and personal qualities mentioned in many job descriptions.

My Keyword List for *(career name)* _____

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

- D. Once you've finished editing your resume, request a resume review from at least two people with editing skills to ensure there are no errors. Make any needed corrections.
- E. For a professional opinion, visit [American Job Center Finder \(CareerOneStop.org/JobCenter\)](#) and contact your local office to ask for a resume review.



STEP 6. TARGET YOUR NETWORKING

Create a clear, focused networking message and start outreach for your new career.

A. Visit [Elevator speech](https://www.careeronestop.org/JobSearch/Network/elevator-speech.aspx) (*CareerOneStop.org/JobSearch/Network/elevator-speech.aspx*) and follow tips to write a short script or email template to use with your contacts. Your 2-minute script should include:

- Your job goal
- Top skills and experience
- How you will ask for contacts or company recommendations, such as:
 - Do you have suggestions for companies that may be hiring in this field?
 - Do you know of someone you would recommend I speak with about possible openings in this field?

B. Use tips and links from [Take your network online](https://www.careeronestop.org/JobSearch/Network/online-network.aspx) (*CareerOneStop.org/JobSearch/Network/online-network.aspx*) to ensure your social media promotes your qualifications for your new career.

- Create your social media profile on the platform of your choice.
- If you already use social media, check your privacy settings to make sure your public content does not contain objectionable material that could derail your job search.
- When ready, use your elevator speech points to reach out to contacts on social media to ask for company leads and job openings.

C. Visit [Professional Association Finder](https://www.careeronestop.org/FindProfessionalAssociations) (*CareerOneStop.org/FindProfessionalAssociations*) to find opportunities for professional development in any career on your list.

- Follow the directions to find and review association websites to learn about trends, training events, job openings, and more.
- Find 1-2 associations that look appropriate for your new career focus. List or copy/paste their websites below for reference.

1 _____

2 _____

- Look for job postings on the association websites, and, if appropriate, apply for openings.
- Contact the associations for information on membership and training events or other opportunities to meet members and learn about the field. Plan to attend events and talk with members there about their work. Ask for their recommendations on company leads and job openings.



Congratulations! You've completed the steps to switch careers. Now you're ready to start job hunting.

Next steps

For in-person help with resumes and searching for jobs in your new field, find your nearest [American Job Center](https://www.careeronestop.org/JobCenter) ([CareerOneStop.org/JobCenter](https://www.careeronestop.org/JobCenter)).

Check out the [Job Finder](https://www.careeronestop.org/FindAJobNow) ([CareerOneStop.org/FindAJobNow](https://www.careeronestop.org/FindAJobNow)) to search online job postings from your state.

Want more guidance for starting your job search? Check out the [How-to Guide: Find a job now](https://www.careeronestop.org/HowTo/FindAJobNow/find-a-job-now.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/HowTo/FindAJobNow/find-a-job-now.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/HowTo/FindAJobNow/find-a-job-now.aspx)).

Contact us

If you have any questions about CareerOneStop.org or would like further information, email us at: info@CareerOneStop.org

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