

How to tell your family that you want to change careers

Often we fall into and stay in careers out of necessity then find ourselves, years later, wondering what other options are out there. It can feel like a huge challenge to tell our loved ones that we want to do something different.

As well-meaning as they may be, they can object because they're trying to protect us from possible failure. On the flip side, it is often our families and friends who identify our true passion and interests well before we've even realised it.

To help you in your quest for career fulfilment, we've listed five typical objections loved ones may raise when you tell them that you want to change careers, and how to respond.

1. **You're too old to change careers.** It can be hard to change careers at any age, so it's understandable that your family members may think your age is a barrier. There are societal expectations about how stable we should be in our careers at that age, and your family is simply echoing that.

But you're never too old to change careers – it's a matter of whether you have the drive and enthusiasm to do it. Your family will already be well aware of your passion, so it's just a matter of talking openly with them about any concerns they have and working together to address them.

2. **You don't know anything about being a ...** If you're now telling your family about your intention to start a new career, then you've no doubt spent some time researching it. And that doesn't mean watching *My Kitchen Rules* and deciding you want to become a food critic. It means reading books, watching documentaries and, ideally, talking to someone who works in the field. If you haven't, ask around within your networks or find someone online and ask them a few questions about how they got to where they are.

If your family is questioning your new career in this way it's because they don't know that it's more than just an interest and that you've considered how to turn

your passion into a career. So now's the time to tell them all the wonderful, exciting things about the industry that make you want to be a part of it!

Have open conversations about how you're feeling and how you can make the leap to a career you love.

3. **It's too big of a risk. Nothing worth doing is without risk.** Starting your own business is a hugely complicated endeavour but people say it's one of the most rewarding things you can do. Switching to a job you love is no different.

Take some time to identify the risks by yourself, and then talk to your family about the support you'll need from them to overcome these risks. After all, a problem shared is a problem halved. You should also be open about how your happiness impacts your family - it's often better to change jobs than risk remaining unhappy.

4. **Maybe next year, when the kids are older.** If you have children or other dependants, your family may express concern about your ability to care for them if you enter into a new career. It's important to reassure your family that you're not going anywhere, and that caring for them is still part of your plan.

In fact, you'll need their support in your decisions, but sometimes you just have to take the plunge. As long as you budget your time and money carefully and responsibly, your kids and loved ones won't be negatively impacted by you following your dream – they will benefit from your enthusiasm and happiness in your career.

5. **We can't afford it right now.** Families come with responsibilities, and if you don't have savings to see you through any uncertainty while you pursue your new career, then you may need to put your plans on hold while you secure your finances.

On the other hand, if you have a financial plan in place, are aware of the salary to expect and are generally prepared, there's no reason why they should continue to object. You could even show them ads for roles that you could apply for. Make it easy for them to feel good about it and say yes! Enthusiasm is contagious, but cold facts are even more persuasive.

Finally, it's important to remember that family and friends will also be our biggest champions and advocates to change, so make sure you involve them in your decision. Have open conversations about how you're feeling and how you can make the leap to a career you love.