

The dos and don'ts of navigating a career change

If you're considering a career change, it's important to approach it with a solid plan. Here are the dos and don'ts that the Michael Page team has gathered through its experience of forging successful career matches for thousands of professionals globally.

DO

- **Think holistically.** Your career does not operate in isolation to the rest of your life and your professional decisions can have a huge impact on your work/life balance and standard of living. Be sure to consider how your new career path will affect your relationships, finances and daily life. For example, are you willing to relocate for a career opportunity? Are you willing to sacrifice financial benefits for professional satisfaction? Only you can make a call on those areas, so make sure you ask yourself the tough questions.
- **Have a plan.** Where do you want to be in five years or ten years from now? Making a realistic career plan will guide you as you enter a new phase of your professional life.

Look forward five to ten years. Ask yourself where do you want to be by then, and if the next step makes sense. Any career decision should be carefully considered, especially one with the potential to be as life-changing as shifting industries.”

- **Use your network.** The old adage ‘it’s not what you know but who you know’ is only half true: to get ahead, you need a solid network as well as strong skills and experience. Who do you know in the field you’d like to switch to? Before making any decision, it’s worth having a series of honest conversations with people already working in the area. What do they like and dislike about their job? How would you react if placed in the situations they deal with? If you still want to go for it, see if you can arrange a few days work experience to check that it’s what you really want to do.

- **Consider further education.** Are there any education gaps that will delay you making a career change? What skills do you need to develop to get ahead in your new career, and what transferable skills do you already have?
- **Consider other options.** Is it really a new career you're after or will a new job be enough to renew the spark you originally felt for your chosen path? People aren't staying in their roles as long anymore. We're seeing a lot of people hit the three-year mark and then starting to look for something new. Don't mistake restlessness in your current role for dissatisfaction with your chosen career.
- **Talk to a professional.** Sometimes a fresh perspective can do wonders for your satisfaction at work. Working with a professional recruitment consultant or a career coach will help you to get a clearer picture of how your skills and experience can apply to alternative career paths, and expose you to job types you may not have considered.

DON'T

- **Have unrealistic expectations.** A career change is not always going to be an easy road. Reduced salary or a more junior position are likely side-effects of a career change. And while that might not be forever, you need to be honest and realistic with yourself on how you will be able to manage that transition.
- **Rush it.** Career changes can come in all shapes and sizes and they don't need to happen overnight. Don't make a split-second decision that will have a huge impact on your life. You've got to have a plan and you've got to have some goals that you're striving towards.

Ready to get started? Visit [SEEK's career planner](#) and take the first step today.