

6 steps for turning your passion into your paycheque

Do you find yourself filled with dread on Sunday nights, and relate a little too much to those “I hate Mondays” memes? If so, it may be time for a change. It doesn’t even have to be a big change – even the smallest of changes can make all the difference.

The most important thing is for you to work out what it is that you really want. From there, it’s just a matter putting a plan in place for how you’re going to get there. It might sound daunting, but remember the first step is always the hardest. Here’s our step-by-step guide to pursuing your passion:

1. **Step 1: Self-evaluation.** What do you enjoy most about your current job? Write a list of the things you do inside and outside of work that make you happy. They could be small everyday tasks or more irregular responsibilities that you wished were a bigger part of your job. Now take a look at your list. Do you see any trends or patterns? It could be that your favourite activities point to a particular industry or role that you would thrive in. Or there might be one thing you listed that, once you see it written down, you realise it’s what you want to focus on.
2. **Step 2: Explore the possibilities.** Now that you know what you’re really passionate about, it’s time to find out how you could make a career out of it. For example, if you’re currently working as an accountant at a corporate firm and you wrote that your passion is “helping others”, you might want to try working or volunteering at a not-for-profit organisation that focuses on this. That doesn’t mean you have to become a social worker or community organiser: you could simply take your accounting skills to an organisation with a social focus.
3. **Step 3: Bounce your ideas with your friends and family.** Once you have an idea of how to channel your passion into a job that makes you happy, and you’ve done a bit of research on what’s required, tell your loved ones. It’s important to involve family in career decisions, not only because they are likely to be impacted by them in some way, but because they can provide advice and support. They may raise some points you hadn’t considered, or they may even be able to offer a valuable contact that would help you get your foot in the door.

to the job or industry you're interested in.

4. **Step 4: Write your plan.** Now that you've got all of this knowledge and a vision, it's time to put pen to paper and start developing a concrete plan. Weigh up all of the considerations such as how much money will you need to finance your career transition? If study is involved, when do courses start, and when are applications due? From here you will be able to start mapping out your journey. Using this career planner to guide you, think about what you need to do, how you're going to do it and when.
5. **Step 5: Trial.** You've done the thinking and the strategising; now it's time to put your plan to the test. A good way to try out your new dream job is to give it a trial run. That could take the shape of an internship, a volunteer role, or a casual job. There are many options that don't require a long-term commitment, and it doesn't matter which route you take, as long as you take one. Ask your friends and family, scout around online and check social media for opportunities.
6. **Step 6: Do it!** The time has come: you're ready to follow your passion. Are you excited? You should be. You've worked hard to get here. Making the right change for you takes time, so don't rush it. Your passion for doing something you love and the support of your family and friends is sure to sustain you through the transition period and beyond.