

## What DO I Want To Be When I Grow Up?

Well? What do you want to be when you grow up? If you know you want (and need) to make a career change but don't know where to begin, here are some suggestions to get you started.

{mosimage}- Consider your childhood. Childhood fun is often a good indication of strong interests and innate talents. Think about the games you played, both alone or with others. The hobbies that fascinated you. And don't forget to consider the activities that looked like a blast but you didn't get to participate in. Ask siblings and parents for added insight.

- Include your personal history. Write down every skill you have learned in every job you've ever had (paid and unpaid). Add everything you liked and disliked about each job and why. Be thorough. Ponder your answers and you'll discover much about the career direction/s that would work best for you.

- Ask for help. Interview your friends and family; what do they think are your strengths? Ask as many people as possible (make sure they are close enough to give you accurate answers) and add this information to your work history above.

- Watch others. Start observing people who are in career fields that look appealing to you. Why are you attracted to these careers? Match up this information with what you've already learned about yourself. Invite a few of these people to lunch and ask them to tell you about their careers. Listen carefully to what they enjoy and what it takes to be successful in that particular field.

- Still stuck? Take a professional career assessment. An objective perspective can be quite helpful. Coupled with the data you've already gathered, sometimes an assessment can be the reassurance you need to move forward in a specific direction.

- Move ahead. Take a night class or two in your new chosen field to test the waters for yourself. Being with other like-minded people will either pump you up or make you want to find the door.

- Current responsibilities. Consider how your potential career fits in with your family situation. Look at things like working hours (part time/full time, day or night), education requirements, etc. Will this career mesh with mutual goals with your spouse?

- Now what? Is something stopping you from doing what you really want, what you believe is best for you and your family? For example, are you nervous about going back to school? Sign up for just one class to get back in the groove. No money to move ahead? Examine your budget and give up one thing for your future. Put that money aside and use it to get started, whether it's paying for a sitter while you go to class or that career assessment we talked about above.

The bottom line? Just get started. Do it for YOU, as well as those you love. You are the best investment you can make in your own life. Take one step forward today and begin to discover the life waiting for you!

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