

Job vs. Career

Jobs like flipping burgers and running cash registers are not bad jobs, but they aren't a career. When you have a career, you have much more control both over your hours and over your boss. A career allows you to do the work you love to do. The difference between a job and a career is in your trajectory. *Trajectory* is a fancy word for the direction you are going. If you know the direction a person is going in their life and how much work they are doing to get there, then you have a pretty good guess as to where they are going to end up.

A career has a trajectory that is taking you somewhere—and if you are choosing your career correctly, it is taking you somewhere that you actually want to go. Compared to a job that has no direction, no opportunity, no enjoyment, and no destination, careers can be a path you enjoy traveling for the rest of your life. You still have to add lots of force, that is, effort and work, but in a career, you are actually going somewhere – you have a trajectory.

What Is Your Trajectory?

Figuring out your trajectory depends on your destination. Where do you want to go in your career? An easy way to figure this out is to ask yourself, "What do I love doing now?" and then, "How can I make money doing that in my future?" The point is to ask yourself what you love doing and which jobs involve doing what you love. Unfortunately, many people make a mistake in assuming that the thing they love is having a lot of money. They think that being rich is a good target to aim for. Money is a nice thing to have, but if your job is torturous, then the money isn't going to help in the long run. Choose a destination for your trajectory that is something you love to do and that helps others.

Getting Started

Once you have an idea what you want your career to be, then you will need to figure out how to get there. The best place to start is to find others who already have the job you want. Most will be excited to share their career path with you. If it involves college, visit a community college and talk to an academic advisor. Academic advisors, in general, LOVE to help others reach their goals, and they will point you in the right direction. They will give you lots of information and lots of choices. This is GREAT because you now have the information you need. Unfortunately, this is where many people often are unable to get off the launch pad—because there just seems to be so much to do and no clear place to start. When you start thinking about all of the steps it is going to take, the process can start to look pretty scary and big. The thing is, you don't have to figure out every part of your path right now. What you do have to do is know where you are going and the big steps to get there. Then, just work on the next step in front of you.

Traveling the Path

While you are focusing on the next thing you need to get done, it is important to realize that traveling through your trajectory to your career destination is not going to be easy. In fact, it's likely you will have to put up with that job you hate while you work on getting into a career you'll love. It is really important to remember that getting to a job you love will take YOU putting in a lot of effort and work along the way. It isn't fun, but it is SO worth being able to wake up in the morning and be happy to go to work. That is a great feeling that you will be able to have for decades once you reach the career you love. Getting into a career you love is not impossible; it is just going to take work. There is one thing for sure—if you get into a career you love, you are not going to regret what it took to get there.