



Great jobs for bright people

Tools and techniques to
unleash your creativity



NEW YEAR - new job or new
perspective?

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Did you wake up on January 1st full of good intentions ... to lose a stone in weight, learn a language, get a new job but already your initial enthusiasm is on the wane? It's not your fault. You probably needed a structured plan.

In this eguide we are going to focus on career goals, but the approach is equally valid for other areas of your life. Lets get you rethinking your goal and get you on your way.

Step 1: Review your goal

Firstly what do you want? Is it a new job or is to change how you view your current job?

Some people want their career to be a key focus of their life, they live to work. For other people a job or a career is a means to an end, it gives them sufficient income for the lifestyle they choose.

Many people have never considered which focus suits them, for example Sophie realised that for her it was the latter whereas her father, partner and friends all wanted it to be the former. This one step provided clarity and helped her make the right decision and it will do the same for you. We need to know the answer to help drive our career decisions.



Step 2: Choose an approach

Decide if you want to move towards or away from something. You may want to choose something new - you know the job you want but may be unclear how to become successful. Or you may seek to move away from a job you hate, or a difficult boss.

If you want something new you need to work out what. You can try out different approaches:

- Look for jobs via online job sites like jobs.ac.uk, but if you don't know what you want you could be overwhelmed by choices.
- Ask for advice based on your CV but that's likely to be more of what you have already done (jobs.ac.uk are offering a **FREE CV review** via our recommended CV writing partners The Fuller CV- see the jobs.ac.uk Careers Advice section for details).
- Do creative exploring, see Step 4 on page 5.

- Take some time to think about your strengths, your talents, your interests and to identify some options you can research.

If you want to move away from something you hate be really clear what it is so you avoid getting into the same situation again. It can help to write down everything you dislike about your current work situation, see if you can address any of this right now and make sure your next choice won't put you back in a similar situation.

Step 3: Set a SMARTER Goal. A resolution is not enough

Peer pressure to create a resolution alone is not enough, you need to turn it into a well defined goal. Most of us know about SMART goals, but then forget to think about each element. Let's get you setting **SMARTER GOALS**.

- We need a goal which is **SPECIFIC**. It's clear on what we want to achieve. If we are you looking for a new job we need to be clear on what job.
- It needs to be **MEASURABLE**, we need to know where we start from so we can monitor progress. Getting the new job is a clear measure of success but we need to break it down into sub steps such as: revise our CV, gather information on the current challenges in the industry etc.

- The goal has to be **ACHIEVABLE** - Whilst stretch goals can be perfect, perhaps you need to set the smaller steps, firstly to get a job as a Marketing Assistant, then Marketing Executive as you work towards being a Marketing Director.
- It also has to be **REALISTIC** - most things are possible if we set our minds to them and focus, but if we find science confusing will we ever pass the exams to qualify as a nutritionist? Are there better alternatives?
- **TIME BOUND** means we have a time scale to achieve. Talk to people and get a sense of how long it will take to move from x to y. Get clear on all the sub steps and create a time line.
- The goals should also be **EXCITING**, it should have personal meaning for us. It has to be something that we want to do. Make sure it makes you want to get on and get there.
- Finally it should be **RECORDED** we need to write it down and monitor progress, get your goal, and all the sub goals written down and in your diary, on your phone, on the wall ...



Activity

A resolution is not enough - set SMARTER Goals

Write your goal down and then review:

Is it specific? In what way? Make a note.

How can you measure it? List the criteria you will use.

How is it achievable?

Is this a realistic goal? You may need to break a long term goal into sub goals.

What time scale will it take to achieve this? If you don't know find out and write it down.

Is it exciting for you? Is it something you want to do? you want to write a big YES! if not it's probably the wrong goal.

Now write your goal down taking all the above into account. Save it to your phone, make it your screen saver, put it on a post it note on your fridge, bathroom mirror and more.



Step 4: Creative exploring

Take time to relax, be in a calm and curious state, and close your eyes. Get thinking of all the things you would love to do. Pretend you've won the euro millions lottery and once you've bought the house and travelled the world you want to get back to work. What would it be? Don't worry about the practicalities, I want you to think as big as you can. Then open your eyes and start writing. You mustn't sanction your thoughts just write down as fast as you can and get **every** idea on paper. You might like to stay in this phase for a while. Keep adding to this list. Write everything down, you can edit later.

We're now going to narrow things down. Firstly look at what you have, can you group some together? Then think about why these dreams are important to you. Not all of them may be conventional careers so how could you find out more about turning these into a job? Some people find it easy to see how dreams can become real so if you are more likely to think of the reasons why something won't work you may need to get some support from friends or a career coach, choose someone who is creative and will inspire you.

We now need to add some realism, which are possible and which will remain as dreams? Now time to narrow things down, think of the reasons why not. You should now have some new ideas to explore.

Activity

Step 1

Make a note of all the things you would love to do. Don't worry about the practicalities, think as big as you can and start writing as fast as you can and get every idea on paper. Keep adding to this list. Write everything down, we'll edit later.

Step 2

Look at what you have, can you group some together?

Step 3

Think about why these dreams are important to you. Not all of them may be conventional careers so how could you find out more about turning these into a job? Seek some inspiration from a creative friend if needed.

Step 4

Add some realism, which are possible and which will remain as dreams? Narrow things down, think of the reasons why a job may not be possible. Your list will reduce but you should now have some new ideas to explore.

Activity

Step 5: Start researching

You are now able to move forward to explore more about your options. You can look online using websites such as Next Step and Prospects. You will probably identify a number of interesting careers but then must take a reality check, what will be the likelihood of your success, particularly in the current economic climate?

Step 6: Review your CV

Jumping ahead, let's assume you now know what you want to do. Grab your CV, and give it an objective review. How well does it sell you for the job that you want? Ask people who work in HR or recruitment for advice, would they shortlist you? Look at the requirements for the jobs you seek, make sure you include evidence on all these areas. You may need to get yourself ready for this job through gaining extra experience or think of an interim job change step.

Don't forget jobs.ac.uk are offering a **FREE CV review** via our recommended CV writing partners The Fuller CV- see the jobs.ac.uk Careers Advice section for details.

Step 7: Love your job more

Possibly you are not going to be a perfect match, you may lack certain experience or need to get a qualification. That's when you may need a new perspective in your current job. If it's going to take time to be ready for the job you ideally seek, but you are not that happy at work for now there are things that can help:

- **Decide to like your job**, and identify 5-10 positive attributes such as a nice work location, close to home, you can finish early on a Friday. Get writing now.
- Each lunchtime **make a note of one positive event from the morning**, such as you stayed calm with an angry customer, and wrote a report 15 minutes quicker than last week, do the same before you leave work at the end of the day.
- Think about **how you can help your boss**, look for ways that you can improve your job, or save the company money or get more clients. These will be great examples for your CV and should make your job more interesting.



Love your job more

Decide to like your job, and identify 5-10 positive attributes such as a nice work location, close to home, you can finish early on a Friday:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Each lunchtime and before you leave work at the end of the day, make a note of something positive:

	Lunch Time	Evening
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		

Step 8: Prime yourself for the job you want

- What books will help you learn more about the challenges people face in this job?
- Start keeping up to date on this new career path or industry, setting up **Google alerts** will help.
- Start talking to people who work in the area you seek and gain advice on what you can do to improve your chances.

Step 9: Make use of Social Media

If you aren't using social media you are stuck in the 20th century and missing out on many ways to enhance your knowledge and increase your chance of success. What ever your career goals it will be enhanced through being on LinkedIn. It's a great way of networking and researching, companies and individuals. If you use Facebook and Twitter search for the companies you want to work for and like or follow them. You can make comments to demonstrate your interest and intelligence and it can help with your research too.



Step 10: Use different ways to search for a job

Once clear on what you want you must use a variety of methods to get there. Of course you will look at online job sites, and make sure you get the best out of job search sites. Take some time to understand how to get the best from each site. Check how many versions of your CV you can upload, the types of jobs they publicise, read the advice they share.

Don't spend all your time looking online, also get out there talking with people, getting yourself known, increasing your profile.



Step 11: Planned how to stay focused

Be realistic and recognise now that it may be challenging to get a new job and it will take time. There are many ways to keep yourself motivated.

Think of mini steps you can do to move you forward towards your goal. In the meantime stay focused on your job, get listing all your achievements, both to help improve your CV and to be ready to share at interview. Look for how you can help your boss. This will help improve your CV and can be used as examples at interview, but it should also increase your motivation. Who knows, your boss may see a new side to you and give you more responsibility which could lead to an internal job change.

- Split your goal into mini steps.
- List your achievements.
- Identify how to help your boss.

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Checklist



To Do

Have you:

- ☐ **Step 1:** Reviewed your goal?
- ☐ **Step 2:** Chosen your approach?
- ☐ **Step 3:** Set a SMARTER Goal?
- ☐ **Step 4:** Done some creative exploring?
- ☐ **Step 5:** Started researching?
- ☐ **Step 6:** Reviewed your CV?
- ☐ **Step 7:** Identified how you can love your job more?
- ☐ **Step 9:** Made use of Social Media?
- ☐ **Step 10:** Identified different ways to search for a job?
- ☐ **Step 11:** Planned how to stay focused;

*Split your goal into mini steps
List your achievements
Identify how to help your boss*

A new goal is not just for January. If, for example you want sustained weight loss new eating and exercise patterns need to become part of your life. Seeking a more fulfilling career, or sufficient income to pay for the lifestyle you seek is partly down to having a positive mindset where you set out to enjoy your time at work. It's also having the determination to do what it takes to achieve your goal.

All the very best for this month, 2013 and onwards.

Visit www.jobs.ac.uk/careers for:

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About the Author



This e-guide was brought to you by **Denise Taylor**, a double award-winning career psychologist and Director of Amazing People.

Her career books include 'How To Get A Job In A Recession' and 'Now You've Been Shortlisted', and her 11 eBooks include 'How To Use LinkedIn To Find A New Job'.



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