



Say what you want from work, list your skills, pick a few options, then test each one with a small step before you decide.

01 Where I am now, and what I want from work

Start with how things feel today, then tick what matters to you in work. Your needs change over time, so go by this year, not what you wanted at 20.

In a few lines: why am I thinking about my career now?

A change at work, a feeling that something is off, a new stage of life, or plain curiosity are all fine.

How well does my work fit me right now?

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Not at all

Very well

What I want from work (tick all that matter to me):

- ☐ Enough money to live without constant worry
- ☐ A secure, steady income
- ☐ Flexible hours or working from home
- ☐ A short or easy commute
- ☐ Time for family or caring
- ☐ Using skills I am proud of
- ☐ Learning new things
- ☐ Variety in my days
- ☐ Calm, predictable routines
- ☐ Helping other people
- ☐ Creating or making things

- ☐ Solving problems
- ☐ Being outdoors or on my feet
- ☐ Working with a team I like
- ☐ Working mostly on my own
- ☐ Having a say in how I do my work
- ☐ A clear path to move up
- ☐ Being respected for what I know
- ☐ Feeling that my work matters
- ☐ Time and energy left over for the rest of life

My top five, and how they match my work today:

Rate how much each matters (1 to 10) and how much you have it now (1 to 10). Big gaps show where to look.

**What I want from
work**

**How much it
matters (1-10)**

**How much I have
it now (1-10)**

02 My skills inventory

List what you can do, not just what is on your CV. Include things you did unpaid, at home or years ago. Then ask where each could be used in a different job. Examples: explaining things clearly, handling upset customers, keeping a budget, organising an event, fixing things, writing, spotting errors.

Skill	Where I have used it	Do I enjoy it? (yes / sometimes / no)	Where it could transfer to
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Skills I have and enjoy, which I want to use more:

Skills I have but would be glad to stop using:

Being good at something does not mean you must do it forever.

Skills I would like to build:

03 What gives me energy, and what drains me

Think about the last few months. Look at tasks, people, places, pace and the kind of day, not just job titles. Patterns here are often more useful than any list of job ideas.

Moments at work (or outside it) when I felt energised or absorbed:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Moments that left me drained, bored or dreading the next day:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

What do the two lists have in common? What would I want more of, and less of?

04 My interests

Interests can point at work you have not considered. List what you read, watch, fix, talk about or lose time to. Then, if you want an outside prompt, two official tools can help. In England, the National Careers Service skills assessment (nationalcareers.service.gov.uk) asks 40 multiple-choice questions and suggests careers to compare. In the US, the O*NET Interest Profiler at mynextmove.org, from the US Department of Labor, is a free 30-question tool that sorts interests into six broad areas: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional. Treat any results as ideas to look into, not a verdict on who you are.

Things I am curious about or enjoy for their own sake:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

If I used one of these tools: which suggestions interested me, and which surprised me?

Skip this if you have not tried one. It is optional.

05 Options to explore

Pick two to four options. They can be a different role, the same job in a new place, a move up, going self-employed, or a small change to your current job. Include one that feels a bit unlikely. For each, note what draws you and what worries you.

Option	What draws me	What worries me	What I do not know yet
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

06 Small experiments to test each option

Test before you leap. Cheap tests tell you more than hours of thinking: talk to someone who does the work, shadow them for a day, try a short course, do a small project on the side, or volunteer. Pick tests that cost little and can be stopped. Set your own date for each.

Option	My small test	Who or what I need	Done by (my date)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

After a test: what did I learn? Did it give me more energy or less? What next?

07 My goal for the next year, and my first step

Choose one direction for the next twelve months. It can be small, like finding out, or big, like a new role. Make the first step something you can do this week. If you want help turning it into a proper goal, the SMART goals worksheet can help.

My career goal for the next year, in plain words:

My first step, and when I will take it:

What could get in the way, and what will I do about it?

Money, time, confidence, family and health all count.

How ready do I feel to take the first step?

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

Not ready

Ready

08 Who can help

You do not have to plan this alone. Think of people who know the work, people who know you, and advice services. In the UK, the National Careers Service (England) and the careers services for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland offer careers advice. In the US, CareerOneStop (careeronestop.org) and American Job Centers can help with training and job search. If work worry is affecting your sleep or mood, see your GP too.

Who	How they could help	When I will ask
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

One thing I want to say to myself about this plan:

When you're done, a moment to reflect

- Which section was easiest to fill in, and which was hardest? What does that tell you?
- What shows up on more than one page, such as a skill, a value or a kind of task?
- What do you want more of in your working week, and what would you happily drop?
- Which option would you regret not looking into?
- What is the smallest test you could run in the next two weeks?
- Who could you talk to this week, and what would you ask?

Free worksheet from selfgrowth.org. Free self-growth worksheets for real life. Fill it in online and it saves as you go: selfgrowth.org/worksheets/career-planning-worksheet



If things feel heavier than a worksheet can hold

These are self-reflection tools, not therapy. If you're struggling, especially if you have any thoughts of harming yourself, please reach out to someone now. In the US, call or text **988**. In the UK & Ireland, call **116 123** (Samaritans). Elsewhere, find a free helpline at findahelpline.com. If you're in immediate danger, call your local emergency number.