

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 101 A Simple Way to Start Career Planning

Have you ever thought about doing a little career planning? Most people do think about it, but that's as far as many ever get. I'm Jerry Roberts and today we're going to talk about a relatively simple way to get it done so you're comfortable with your choices, even if your first choice doesn't come through. That's next up, on The Extra Point.

The kind of plan you make will largely depend on where you are in life. The plan of a 25 year-old without any obligations, may be very different from the one drawn up by someone who is 35, married, and school-age children. That's still different from the 45 year-old who has two kids in college, or the 55 year-old who is looking to work 10-15 more years to build additional retirement assets.

Start practicing on a three- to five-year plan. It's great to think about lifetime planning but life changes, we change, and what we want today isn't necessarily what we'll want a few years from now.

The initial step is to decide your present life circumstances and what your goals are. If you're young and free, looking for adventure, salary may be less important than challenges of something new and exciting. If you're older and with dependents, compensation and stability may be a bigger issue.

Next, create a shortlist of your career options. Can you come up with three to five choices that you would happily perform, or must it be one thing only?

Side note: If you can't put together a serious shortlist of potential career moves, then you're not ready for planning — you're still dreaming.

Plan A is your first choice. You've researched this field and you love everything about it. You

know people doing it now. This is what you really want.

Plan B is the selection if your first option doesn't come together for you. This would be acceptable as a long-term alternative. Ideally, you'd like Plan B only slightly less than Plan A. Therefore, if you went with it you wouldn't feel like you lost out.

Finally, Plan C. This is your backup choice if the other two plans fall through. It's still a decent option, even if it's not what you'd really prefer. Or, perhaps it's just temporary while you pursue plans A and B.

Find and join online forums or groups that focus on your choices. Ask people about the positives and negatives. One question I like a lot... "If you were to start over in this field today, what would you do differently?"

Forums are anonymous, so feel free to spill your dreams and what great things you'd like to accomplish. See how people now in the field respond. Maybe you'll learn some things that will adjust your thinking.

Next, figure what education or training you'll need and make a plan to get it. Then, create a timetable for you to achieve the goal. When finished, go back and follow the same guidelines for Plans B and C.

There's some work involved but it's well worth the effort to build a solid plan.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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