

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



984 8 Steps to Traction in a New Career Choice

Maybe you or somebody you know will soon graduate from high school, or college, or there's a desire to switch career paths. What's the best way to get traction in the new career, and make an impact as fast as possible? I'm Jerry Roberts, and I've got the answer to that question, next, on The Extra Point.

Whether you or someone you know is graduating in 2022, or just want to engineer a career change, a little planning can help clear the way to making quicker progress. Here are the basics.

1. Choose the field you're interested in. If you've got a couple of fields you'd like to compare, that's okay. Not everybody gets this figured out right away.

Some people take years to identify what it is they really want to do. If that's where you are, don't beat yourself up over it. Continue doing your research.

2. Look up the job description for the position. If you can't find one, call a company engaged in the work you want to do, and ask the HR department for a job description.

3. List the primary skills that are required to do the job. If you don't know, find it on the Internet. Or, call a couple of people who are doing that type or work now, and ask them. You may have to call several before somebody answers you.

4. While you have this person's attention, ask them what the "money" skills are, those skills that get you advanced faster. Ask this: "Thanks for telling me the skills needed for the job. Now, please advise which of those skills are most important for me to master, in order to be promoted." This helps you prioritize your learning.

5. Estimate where you stand in terms of those specific skills. On a scale of one to five, five being best, are you:

Novice — You're just starting.

Advanced Beginner — You can do some things without much help, but you have a long way to go.

Competent — You can accomplish most tasks associated with your job (or future job).

Proficient — Your skill level is good to very good in most areas, and you can work on your own almost all of the time.

Expert — You've achieved mastery. You solve problems creatively, and you are able to teach others.

Maybe you'll start as a total novice, or you'll already be skilled in certain areas. However it works out, this list gives you an idea of where you are, and what the next step is.

6. Find out if there are groups where people who do this kind of work, hang out together. That could be in-person or online.

There's no law that says you can't be around people who do the work you're training for, until you actually have a job doing it. Meet them early on. You'll never know what doors that might open, and the insights you'll pick up.

7. Line up your educational options. Maybe that's a college program, or courses offered by a professional organization. If you're cross-training, see what your employer has to offer.

8. Make your plan, and stick to it. Action is the key. Celebrate milestones as you pass them. This is your career journey. Enjoy every bit of it.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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