

how changing
your career can

give you a new
lease on life.


randstad

human forward.

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give you a new lease on life.

Depending on when and where you went to school, you may remember being asked to choose your options. Your tutors and career advisors asked you what you wanted to study at college or university. Those were big decisions to make as a teenager, but in spite of the dramatic way it might have been put to you at the time, your choice of O' levels or GCSEs, and the grades you achieved didn't set your future in concrete.



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People change careers for many reasons. Some may be looking for more financial stability, others for a better work-life balance. As our lives and experiences change and flex, so do our professional choices and preferences. Someone might find their vocational calling in their 30s or 40s, in a field or sector they would never have considered, or even been aware of, in their teens or 20s. It's never too late.

you can have the job you love.

Most of us spend around 40 hours-a-week at work, and for those of us who travel to our place of work, there's the additional time spent commuting. When something takes up that much of your time, it makes sense to do the job you enjoy.

According to the [Learning and Work Institute](#), one-in-three adults say they would like to change their jobs but most feel they lack the skills to make the switch.

If you've been in the same industry for several years, you too might feel trapped or locked into a role and think you'll never be persuaded by a recruiter to find something different.

Fortunately, it's easier than you think to change careers and you are likely to have more versatile skills than you recognise. If you're a hardworking person who is willing to learn, you can apply the skills you've honed in your current job to other industries, or you can look for roles in organisations that are happy to help you develop and build your skillset.

Changing careers can offer many benefits:

- ✓ New challenges to face and skills to learn
- ✓ The chance to meet new people and explore fresh workplace cultures
- ✓ Opportunities to make a difference in a new sector
- ✓ Opportunities to travel or to work from home
- ✓ Improved work-life balance
- ✓ Career development pathways and progression




[Purvi's story](#) highlights how sometimes life's hurdles can help push you in the right direction. Her area of expertise was in aerospace engineering, however, unexpected personal challenges encouraged her to follow her heart and pursue a career in cyber security.



“Whilst I enjoyed working in the engineering space, after four years I actually felt that I wanted to do something different. I wanted to explore more of the Civil Service.”

Purvi
Senior leader, cyber security.



At Randstad, we understand how daunting a career change can potentially be. In this guide, we'll explore a number of different careers and how you can enter them later in life. We'll also provide advice on how to use the skills you currently have to get a job in your desired sector without having to take a pay cut.



you're never
too old

to consider a
career change.

Where you work and who you work with can have a huge impact on your mental wellbeing. A growing number of employees are waking up to the importance of job satisfaction, as shown by the results of our annual employer brand research survey of nearly 10,000 UK respondents. The [Randstad Employer Brand Research](#) report revealed that of those who responded:

50%

would consider changing employer to do the same job for a better salary

29%

would take a step back to have more flexibility



almost 7 in 10

people feel confident in their ability to find a new job, although the level of confidence varied significantly between sectors with those working in tech or engineering sectors being more confident than those in HR or call-centre positions.

44%

wouldn't consider taking a step back in their career

22%

intended to change jobs within the first six months of 2022

Changing jobs within your own sector is something people see as normal and a way of accessing new opportunities and increased pay. Career changes are often thought of as a bigger leap, and something only for those in the earlier stages of their working lives.

later-life career changes are becoming increasingly common.

A growing number of people are considering career changes in their 50s and upwards. According to Now Teach - an organisation focused on recruiting people with experience in other industries into teaching - 11% of those aged 50 or older are considering changing careers within the next five years. Of those interested in changing fields, 39% want to move into a career where they feel they are making a difference.

The thought of re-entering the job market in a new career can be intimidating, but people do it successfully every day.

Now Teach gives the example of Jane Gregory, who started teaching aged 50, and says: "Life is too short and our perspective changes as we get older; we spend far too long at work to do something that we don't value and don't enjoy. Just because you're in your 50s, does not mean that you can't make a change."

changing
career at 50:
everything you need
to know >



At Randstad, we've worked with people of all ages who have decided to try something new and revitalise their careers.



willingness to learn is what's important.

The most important thing in any career step is not how old you are, but what your mindset is.

Whether you're in your early 20s and wondering if the degree you studied for was the wrong one, or approaching 50 and seeking new challenges, there are opportunities for all. The most important thing in any career step is not how old you are, but what your mindset is and the experiences you can bring to the role. And, whatever stage of your work life you're currently in, if you're willing to take the time to learn new skills and improve yourself, doors will open to you. We're here to help you find those opportunities.



changing career without taking a pay cut.

Job advertisements can often focus on technical skills or sector-specific qualifications. These are the skills you sometimes need to get your foot in the door. But what begins to break the pack for shortlisting and interview isn't necessarily industry-specific expertise. Those who progress to higher levels tend to have good soft skills and experiences - the skills that are transferable to any career.

 Soft skills can include:

- Leadership skills
- Written and verbal communication
- Time management
- Conflict resolution
- Problem solving
- Positive work ethic

If you've been in the workforce for a longer time you will have had ample opportunity to show and develop these skills. Time as a team leader in a call centre can demonstrate your leadership ability, for example. Your work within a HR department is evidence of good written and verbal communication skills. These are the skills that can help you enter your new profession without having to go to the bottom rung of a career ladder.



recruitment professionals value soft skills.

Recruitment professionals understand the value of soft skills. According to [LinkedIn's Global Talent Trends Report](#), 92% of HR professionals agree that soft skills matter as much as, or more than, technical skills. And 80% say that those skills are important to a company's success.

92%

of HR professionals agree that soft skills matter as much as, or more than, technical skills.

Knowing what your transferable skills are and how to highlight them within your CV is essential for career switchers. Many interviewers will overlook small gaps in technical knowledge if someone has the right transferable skills and can demonstrate a good attitude and a willingness to learn.

If you're unsure how to use your current job experience to describe your soft skills, take a look at our [guide to transferable skills](#) for career switchers. Once you've identified the skills you use on a daily basis, and can explain their value clearly and confidently, you'll find it much easier to demonstrate your value to interviewers.

Keep in mind that the skills listed in job advertisements are essentially a wishlist, and it's rare for an applicant to tick every box. It's easier to teach someone with a good work ethic, empathy and clear communication skills how to use some new software than it is to teach someone with the right technical skills how to work well as part of a team. Use that to your advantage, and you can move into a new industry without having to take a large financial hit.





popular
sectors for

career switchers
of all ages.

If you're looking for new challenges in the next chapter of your working life, take a moment to think about the sectors you'd like to work in. [If you're in accounting or finance now and want to get out of the office and make a difference](#), could health and [social care](#) be for you? If you're currently in healthcare but want to move out of a patient-facing role, a move into [education](#) could help you train the next generation of nurses.

If working around people isn't your thing, consider rapidly growing, in-demand sectors such as [construction](#) or [IT and tech](#). If you're someone who doesn't have a Level 3 qualification, there are [government-funded places for Level 3 courses](#) in a variety of sectors, giving you the opportunity to gain the skills you need to start a new career.

[find out more about
changing career
from accounting >](#)



Shaun is a prime example of how making a career switch can not only bring fulfilment, but improve mental wellbeing and quality of life.

Shaun moved from an unfulfilling corporate role where he experienced a toxic culture and workplace bullying, to landing a job with construction leader Vinci, who showed faith in him and provided him with his dream job.



“It was fabulous landing the job with Vinci because it gives me absolutely everything I need. It’s so much more meaningful doing the work that I’m doing.

Moving to Vinci changed my confidence, knowing full well that I could step into that role and that people believed I could do it.”

Shaun
Design Manager at Vinci



turn your passion into your career.

When you're working a job that you love, you'll find you have more energy, your mood is better and you look forward to going to work. If you're stuck in a job you don't like, or you're currently unemployed and want to use this career break to find something new, think about what would truly fulfil you.

If you're a DIY enthusiast, working in construction could be a great way to apply the skills you already have and to learn some new ones. If you spend your free time working on your own blog or building computers for friends and family, why not turn that into something you can make money from?

Tom tells his story about how he found it difficult to adjust to life after leaving the British Forces. By following his sporting passion he found a meaningful career with the Saracens rugby team.

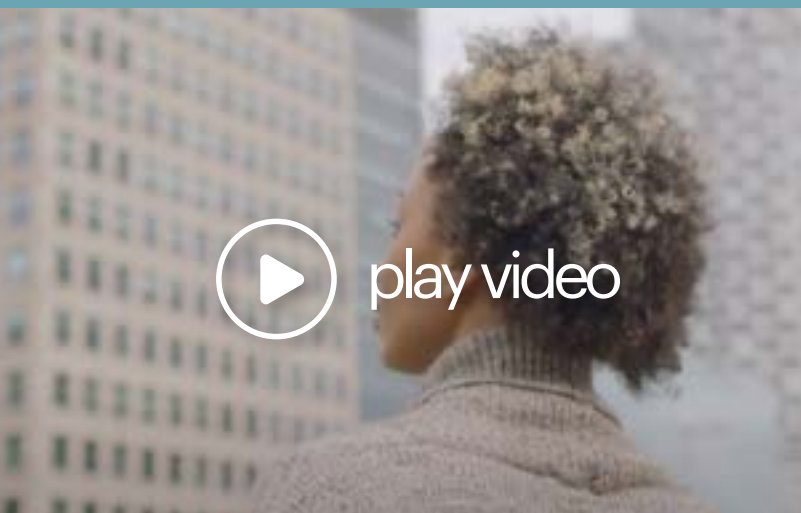
He combined his passion for sports with a job that helped young people improve their own career prospects.



talk to recruiters about your plans.

Recruiters are experts about the job markets they operate in, and can offer advice about the skills and qualifications needed to work in a specific sector. Some sectors are easy to get into at an entry level. Others welcome people who have transferable skills, and have pathways into employment that would allow people with non-traditional backgrounds to enter jobs that would typically require some experience.

Indiana moved from the financial sector to the tech industry. Her story highlights the importance of following your heart and finding the perfect career for you despite life's setbacks.



“I think it’s really important to find a recruiter that specialises in and understands the tech industry”

Indiana
Business Development Manager

Be open to the feedback the recruiter offers, and use it to tailor your CV to each job you apply for.



At Randstad, we’ve helped numerous job changers leave a job they no longer enjoy and find something far more fulfilling. Like Indiana, you could be next.



opportunities

in construction.

The construction sector is growing rapidly. According to the [Office for National Statistics](#), monthly construction output grew by 1.1% in January 2022, reaching its strongest levels since September 2019.

The strongest growth areas within the sector were private housing repair and maintenance, and non-housing repair and maintenance, which grew by 5.0% and 5.5%, respectively.



There are many jobs open to those interested in construction, including site-based work and office roles. Some of the key roles Randstad can help you transition into include:

[Site Manager](#)

[Project Manager](#)

[Quantity Surveyor](#)

[Labourer](#)

[Maintenance Engineer](#)

[Design Engineer](#)

[Site Engineer](#)



Whether you're interested in getting away from your desk and working in a more dynamic environment, or simply want a job where you'll be able to point to a building and say, "I was involved in making that" working within the construction industry may have a lot of appeal.

At Randstad, we've helped people from all walks of life switch career paths and enter fulfilling careers in the construction industry.

Some of the people we've worked with changed careers because the culture at their previous workplace was toxic.

For others, such as retired Opera singer Kate, the move came when ill health meant she could no longer perform. When Kate had to stop singing, rather than staying within the music industry, she looked for something completely different and found a new passion in construction.

[Watch her story below:](#)



a dynamic industry that is always in demand.

Working in construction can be incredibly rewarding. Whether you're working on a new-build for a large property developer, assisting with renovations of homes, or working on smaller projects with independent clients, you're producing something real that will last for many years.

There are opportunities for labourers, managers and those with administrative expertise in this industry, and once you're a part of it you can take advantage of opportunities to shadow or cross-train and further your career.

[Discover what it's like to work on key landmarks, tall buildings, sports stadiums and more here >](#)





working

in education.

If you want to be a part of shaping the minds of the next generation or have fond memories of a teacher who changed your life and want to do the same for others, a career in education could be the choice for you. While the traditional route into education tends to mean studying a subject, then taking a postgraduate teaching course, there's a lot of value in teachers who follow less traditional routes and gain experience in other industries before making the switch.

According to the [National Foundation for Educational Research \(NFER\)](#), schools nationwide are struggling to recruit enough teachers. As of 2022, 14 out of the 19 subjects the NFER tracks are estimated to be at risk of falling below target. This includes subjects that have historically been under-staffed, such as physics, modern foreign languages and computing, as well as subjects such as biology, English, geography and art.

share your life experiences with the next generation.

Teachers have the opportunity to work with groups of children and young people, giving them the skills they need to grow up to be good citizens and productive, happy members of society.

There are many routes into education, depending on your interests and qualifications. Some of the roles we've helped people into include:



Teaching Assistant

Teaching assistants, or classroom assistants, help teachers cope with the challenges of a busy classroom. They're not responsible for delivering lessons. Rather, they'll help children with their work, and serve as an extra set of eyes (and hands) for the teacher. Assistants are most commonly found in primary schools.

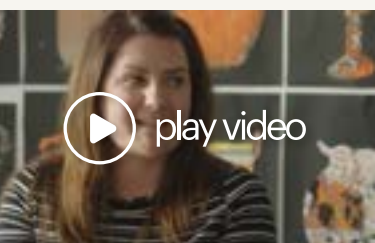
[Alex the teaching assistant explains more about the role, its responsibilities and reward.](#)



Primary Teacher

Primary teachers may work with children aged 4 to 11. They give children a basic understanding of all of the subjects in the national curriculum and prepare them for secondary school.

[Glen, experienced primary teacher and head of year three explains what he enjoys about his role and what inspires him.](#)



SEN Teacher

Special Educational Needs (SEN) teachers work with students who have a disability or additional learning needs, and who require additional support. These teachers may work with children of all ages, supporting those children and young adults in mainstream schools.

[Laura is a SEN teacher who loves her job. She explains the rewarding elements of the role and what characteristics you need to be a successful SEN teacher.](#)



Qualifying as a teacher is a significant commitment as it requires earning a PGCE. If you're not sure if that's the path you want to take, gaining experience as a teaching assistant could be beneficial as a first step.

If teaching isn't something that interests you, but you want to be involved in education in other ways, schools are often in need of administrators or support staff to cover jobs such as:

[Student support](#)

[IT support](#)

[Administration](#)

[Business support](#)

[Caretaking staff](#)



People working in any role that involves coming into contact with students will be required to undergo a DBS check, or the PVG equivalent in Scotland.

At Randstad, we've supported many jobseekers to enter the world of education. Whether teaching has always been your passion, or you're looking for something that feels more fulfilling, we're here to help you on the path to your new career.



rewarding
work

in care.

Social Care is another field where skilled and dedicated workers are highly sought after.

According to a report by Skills for Care, in August 2021, the adult social care sector had a vacancy rate of 8.2%, more than twice the national average. The social care sector is a rich and varied one, with opportunities for people of all levels of experience, and with a variety of interests.



If you're interested in working in a care home or with vulnerable individuals, and making a difference to their lives, you have the option of training as a care worker. Some common social care roles include:

[Social worker](#)

[Care assistant](#)

[Support worker](#)

[Child support worker](#)

These roles can be mobile, where the worker travels to the client's home, or based at a care home or in an office.

If you'd prefer a more behind-the-scenes role, there are many other opportunities in the field of social care, including:

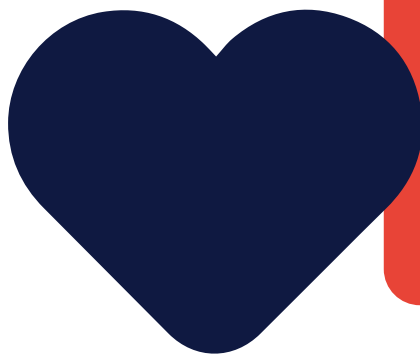
[Service Manager](#)

[Social work team manager](#)

Individuals in these roles need strong leadership and communication skills, but do more administrative work or spend their time communicating with other people working in the health and social care sectors, rather than working with the clients themselves.

[The average salary of a care assistant](#) is between £16,000 and £18,000. Those who work in managerial or administrative roles often command higher salaries. If you have transferable skills such as leadership, back office administrative skills or dispute resolution, these skills could serve you well in a social care career. You'll get to meet new people from all walks of life, and work on cases supporting people who genuinely need assistance. You'll have the chance to see cases through to the end, so you'll see the impact your work has.

In 2021 alone, [Randstad](#) placed more than [3,500](#) people in social care roles. If you're considering switching to this rewarding career, [contact us](#) today to discuss your options.





the world
of

IT & technology.

The Information Technology sector is a broad one, covering everything from website design and tech support to machine learning and artificial intelligence. It's possible to transition into an entry-level IT job with relatively basic qualifications. Some more specialist jobs, such as cyber security and DevOps are accessible to people who are self-taught, or who have studied for industry certifications.

Real-world experience can help, but a combination of theoretical skills, practice in labs or on your own server, and demonstrable transferable skills can get you in the door with many companies.

We've helped people earn a variety of positions in the IT sector, including:

Front-end developer

Full stack developer

Data scientist

Network administrator

Cyber security

Tech support

Project manager

it specialists never stop learning.

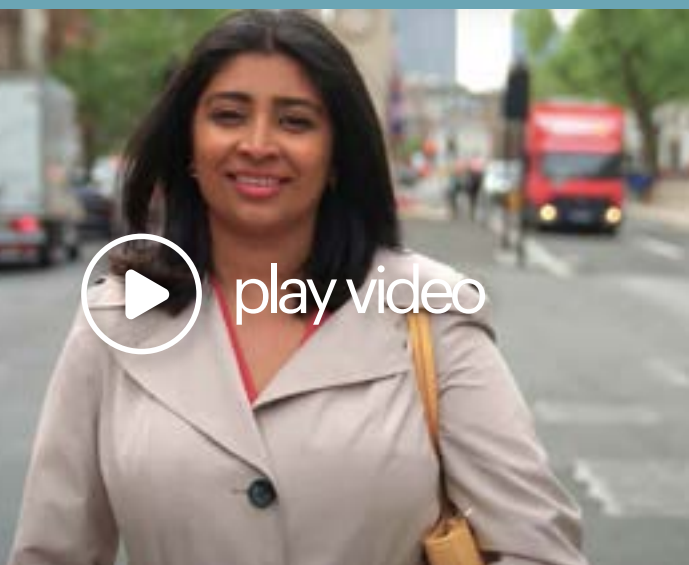
The world of IT is constantly changing. The toolsets, frameworks and languages that are popular today may be obsolete in as little as five years' time.

If you start working in IT you'll be entering a career where there are always new things to learn. Cybersecurity experts are always fighting new threats, while developers, network administrators and DevOps must always stay informed about the latest changes to the software they use.



Purvi, who is now ten years into her cyber security career, is passionate about helping others join.

"I'm not just a senior leader in cyber security, I have made my place in terms of championing other women to join cyber security, bringing diversity and inclusion into it, and that is quite rewarding to have, so I do feel quite accomplished and fulfilled in my career."



IT is used in every industry.

The beauty of computer science is that it can be applied to almost every industry. If there's something you're passionate about, you can use computer science skills to improve things in that industry. For example, a nurse could use their knowledge of the challenges faced in the healthcare sector to inform their work on making new tools for managing shifts or appointments.



If you're coming from a retail background, or you're a retired sports coach, you can use your IT skills to create solutions for some of the pain points you encountered in your previous job.



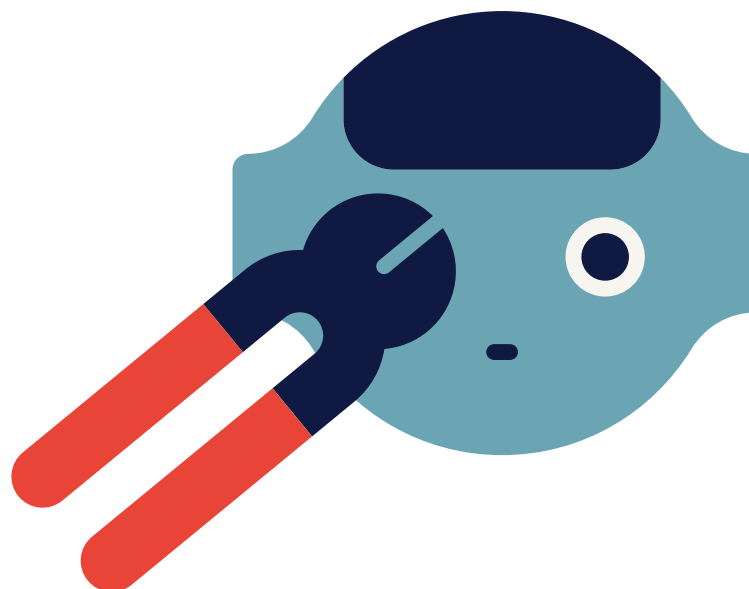
logical thinkers thrive in computer science.

People who are logical thinkers, and who enjoy solving problems, tend to thrive in computer science. [Many IT jobs](#) allow people to work from home all, or part of, the time. Some individuals may find this isn't the ideal work set-up for them, but others love the freedom of being judged by their results, rather than how much time they spend in an office.

[Rachel is a Robotic Process Automation \(RPA\) specialist.](#) To be an RPA specialist you aren't required to have formal qualifications but you do need great attention to detail and preferably some knowledge of programming languages. You need to have the drive to constantly re-test and make sure what you're working on performs as you expect. Discover what Rachel told us about the skills, qualifications and characteristics needed to become an RPA specialist and earn up to £45,000 a year, with career progression opportunities.

If the field of computer science appeals to you, look for online courses that cover the areas you're interested in. There are many providers offering government-funded, [free online learning](#). Once you've found an area of IT that appeals to you, build on it by contributing to open source projects, or taking vendor-specific courses.

We've helped many people just like you get their start in computer science-related jobs. If your passion involves networks or you're comfortable with the command line, we may well have a job for you.



A woman with long dark curly hair and glasses, wearing a red sweater, is smiling broadly and clapping her hands. She is in a modern office environment with blurred background lights and a laptop visible in the foreground.

tips for

a successful
career change.



the value of networking as you change your career

If you've been in the workforce for several years already, you've most likely made a lot of connections in your previous jobs. You'll also have friends and family with careers outside of your own. Don't be shy about using these connections.

If you know what sort of new job you're looking for, talk to people in your network and ask them for advice. If you're still considering your options, talk to people about their jobs and ask them what they enjoy about their work, as well as what the downsides are. Take advantage of open days, taster sessions and free courses at local colleges or universities too. You may feel like those things are aimed at much younger people, but they're open to all, and you never know what you'll learn.



use professional networking options

The Internet makes it easy for people to network. People from most industries could benefit from having a profile on LinkedIn. Those who are seeking a job in IT may wish to build a portfolio on GitHub, or show off their contributions to open source software projects.

Investing time in these areas helps get your name out there in front of people who may have job openings for you.

When you're using social media, keep in mind the possibility that things you post may be seen by potential employers. It's easy to forget this, especially if you've been employed full-time for a long time in a job that doesn't have social media policies. Those working in education or social care, in particular, may be expected to be careful about what they share publicly online because of the sensitive nature of their jobs. For more tips on how to rebrand yourself for a career change, [click here](#).






start talking to recruiters early.

At Randstad, we're always happy to help people find fulfilling new careers. Our recruitment experts understand the sectors they specialise in, and can advise you on the qualifications you should pursue, as well as what employers are looking for.

We take the task of finding the right jobs for the right candidates seriously, and we are here to build a long-term relationship with you and help you along in your journey towards **a job you truly love.**



“What I found from Randstad was that human factor. The person you're talking to at the end of the line is not out to make a buck, to get you into a role for the most money for them.”

Shaun

how to find the job you love.

The old saying ‘if you do something you love you’ll never work a day in your life’ has truth to it. With that said, turning a hobby into a profession can backfire if you burn out when you go from indulging in your hobby when it pleases you, to going to work every day because you need the income.



Enjoying the work is just one part of the equation, other things to consider include:

- ♥ **Work-life balance:** Is the role so demanding that you’re unable to spend invaluable time with family and friends?
- ♥ **Location:** Is the job remote/mobile/office based or a mix of those things?
- ♥ **Salary:** Is this enough for you to live comfortably? If a pay rise comes with a more expensive commute, are you really better off?
- ♥ **Benefits:** Be sure to factor health insurance, company vehicles, gym memberships, pensions and other perks into any compensation calculations
- ♥ **Progression:** Will you have opportunities to move up the career ladder?
- ♥ **Training:** Does the company offer training and chances for you to develop your skills?
- ♥ **Workplace culture:** Did you get on with the people you met at the interview? Were the people you spoke to happy with their jobs?

Don’t underestimate the impact workplace culture can have on your physical and mental health. If you’re stressed, burnt out or anxious about going to work, this will impact your life outside of work too. Finding an employer that offers a good atmosphere at work, and a good work life balance is essential if you want to find a job you’ll stay at for a long time.

Talk to friends and family and ask them if they’re happy at the companies they work for. Read reviews of various companies on Glassdoor, and look for ones that appear to have a positive culture. Consider talking to a careers counsellor too — they aren’t just for teenagers. If you’re planning a career change, they may be able to help you identify jobs that match your skill set and that you hadn’t previously considered.

Visit the Randstad career change resource hub for more information, advice on tips on how to make the transition you've been thinking about. When you're ready to make the move, we're happy to guide you through every step of the process.

[career changes](#)
[resource hub >](#)

