



# **Job or Career Mindset? Building a Career**

By Dr. Linda Hancock

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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Many individuals who are employed in jobs wish deep down that they had careers. It might seem a little confusing to consider that there really are differences between the two. [Dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com) defines the term career as "an occupation or profession, especially one requiring special training, followed as one's lifework."

There are four specific things that will help you to move from a job to a career:

1. **Education and ongoing training** - Becoming a career professional usually begins with completing a college or university program in a specific area of study. Certificates can be achieved in a matter of weeks or months. Diplomas are usually awarded for two-year programs, degrees after four-years and doctorates after six years. Each level offers higher income and more opportunities. There are now many options available that allow students to study in full-time, part-time or through distance modalities. Scholarships, bursaries, and Student Loans are available to help you finance your goals.
2. **Experience** - The sooner you become involved in the professional world, the better. Summer jobs and part-time work, for example, should always be chosen not just for income but also to enhance your resume and future career opportunities. Volunteer work is usually recognized as having as much value as paid work and can provide you with good references. If your goal is to become a chartered accountant, for example, it would therefore be beneficial to supplement your studies with an administration job and/or volunteer as treasurer for a charity rather than just taking any job that is available. You need to gain knowledge, develop skills, and begin developing a network that will enhance your future.
3. **Specific skills** - People who have careers are usually paid for their knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as how society values what they have to offer. Unlike wholesale and retail businesses most of those with careers are therefore remunerated for expertise and services rather than for tangible products so they may not be limited by an employer salary grid. In fact, career incomes may be determined more by an individual's reputations or years in the field. Those who have specific skills that are backed up by education and experience are usually not easily replaced as they are part of a small and unique segment of the population. Scarcity increases demand!
4. **Mindset** - If you want to build a career that will last a lifetime, it is important to pursue excellence in one specific area of expertise. This means focusing your time and energy on building your professionalism. Take opportunities to meet and read about those who have gained success in the field where you desire mastery. Look for jobs and volunteer positions that are directly associated with your career goals. Identify the areas that you need to improve and develop a plan to help you develop competence. Think, learn, and do things that will build your value.

If you move from one job to another or are employed in a job and would love to move into a career, don't let anything stop you.

Some of you are worried that you are too old to begin. Well, you will age no matter what you do. Better to age while building a career that will be satisfying!

It took me thirteen years of part-time study to complete my first degree, but my income immediately increased almost fourfold. My next three degrees took two years each and I now have an extremely satisfying career and dream income.

Are you waiting for the right time to begin? You don't have to wait any longer because this is it! Today is the perfect time to start!