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# Moving on

**Your next steps after redundancy**

August 2020



# Introduction

At Keep Britain Working, we understand that you've likely received some bad news recently and are concerned about what this means for you, your family and your career. Several of us within the Keep Britain Working team have also been in the same position as you in the past, and realise that this transition period can be challenging during the best of times, let alone during a global pandemic and likely recession. However, whilst the road ahead may be bumpy, and there will be obstacles to overcome, we want to encourage you to focus on the light at the end of the tunnel and that although it may not feel like it right now, you are in control of your career destiny.

This booklet has been designed to help guide you through the coming weeks and months as you make decisions about what you want next for yourself and your career. You may have immediate financial concerns and we want to help you to get back into the job market as soon as possible and be successful in your job search. Nevertheless, whether you already know what you're looking for in your next job, want to take a short pause to reflect and focus on your self-development or want to get straight back into temporary work whilst you reflect on your longer term ambitions, we have collated resources to help you in your journey.

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# 1. Getting things in order

## Losing your job is never easy...

However, when approached with the right attitude (hint: don't panic), and a clear head, there are some simple steps along the way that can help you back on your feet.

The Money Advice Service has a [checklist of the things you should do if you lose your job](#), including claiming benefits and entitlements and keeping track of your money if you don't have an income coming in.

## Work out your redundancy pay

If you've been made redundant, you may be entitled to redundancy pay.

The Money Advice Service has a [redundancy pay calculator](#), which you can use to get a personalised plan of what you're likely to receive in statutory redundancy pay. Depending on the contract you signed with your company, you may even be able to get a little more.

## Talk to your landlord or mortgage provider


One of the most important things to be sure of if you experience job loss is that your home is safe. For this reason, you should always talk to your landlord or mortgage provider as soon as possible. Your mortgage lender may also be able to make arrangements to extend your mortgage term, or reduce your monthly payments. You never know until you ask, and it's always better to take action quickly if you can.

## Claim all benefits and entitlements

Losing your job may leave gaps in your National Insurance record, however you could be credited with contributions provided you are in receipt of certain benefits. This will help maximise your [basic state pension](#), if you're out of or unable to work.

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If you have recently been made redundant, you are likely to be a new claimant to the benefit system, even if you have been claiming some sort of benefit before, because your circumstances will have changed due to redundancy. You should be able to apply for Universal Credit, which is a single monthly payment that includes a standard allowance plus other elements – such as payments for housing or children.

Have a look at these videos that explain what Universal Credit is and how to claim:

- [DWP: What is Universal Credit?](#) (1:38mins)
- [Universal Credit full service overview - June 2017](#) (12:40mins)

You can also find out more with the [Money Advice Service's guide to Universal Credit](#).

### **Talk to a debt advisor**

If you feel your debts are spiralling out of control, you don't have to face it alone. Talking to a debt advisor is free and confidential. Find local help using the [Money Advice Service debt advice locator tool](#).

### **Review your budget**

If your income has dropped, it is likely that you will have to review your budget and spending to keep costs down. Some people are put off by the idea of budgeting, but it is simpler than it sounds – it's just a list of your incomings and outgoings, to help you work out where you can cut back.

[The Money Advice Service budget planner](#) will assist you in estimating your outgoings, and let you know how much is left over after all your major bills come out.

### **Start applying for jobs and get advice about your CV**

Once you know where you're at with your money, start thinking about what you're going to do next. If it's been a while since you were looking for a job, you may also need to take the time to brush up on your CV and interview skills.



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## 2. A pause for self-reflection

Whilst it can be tempting to get straight into the job search, now is a good time to reflect on what you want from your next job. We've collated some resources to help you...

- [Personal Development Plan template | reed.co.uk](#)
- [How to deal with losing your job](#)

An excerpt from James Reed's latest book, [Life's work - 12 Proven Ways to Fast Track your Career](#) (published Jan 2020)

### Chapter 2: Look in the Mirror

Working in the recruitment business, I talk to people about their careers almost daily. It's rare that I come across someone who says that they knew exactly what they wanted to do when they left school, and is on the same trajectory decades later. Life isn't like that, and it would probably be boring if it was. As one of the top professors at Harvard Business School, Lynda Applegate, once said to me, 'Straight roads aren't as interesting as winding ones.'

The people I do more commonly meet, though, are those who started off on the wrong career footing for one simple reason: they didn't think about what would fulfil them in their work. This led them to make the wrong decisions, such as taking a job their parents wanted them to do, or a role that was well paid but that they didn't enjoy. I don't want you to make the same mistake, which is why we're starting off with a process of self-reflection. A little self-knowledge and awareness will take you a long way, so carrying out a personal audit is an excellent place to begin. After all, when you decide upon your life's work you first need to know what fires you up.

This applies wherever you are in life. A friend's son came to see me recently because he was at a crossroads in his career and unsure what to do next.

I could see his confidence was at a low ebb, as is often the case in these circumstances. If you've been in his shoes you'll know what I mean. You might have lost your job, felt disappointed that your previous role wasn't what you expected, or maybe your

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organisation changed in a way that didn't suit you.

I suggested to this young man that he was at a 'look in the mirror' moment, and that doing what I'm about to describe to you might help him decide on his next steps.

I'd suggest that, unlike this man, you don't leave looking in the mirror until you're forced into it, because it's much easier to carry out a self-evaluation when you're in a positive frame of mind. And you can do it as often as you like — most of the elements are relevant whatever your age or stage. When you're thinking about what you want to do with your time on earth, there's no rule that says you can only do this introspection in your twenties.

I appreciate that, if you're like a lot of people, you might run from the idea of carrying out a self-analysis. Apart from anything else it sounds self-obsessed, doesn't it? I understand, but the word 'self' has an undeservedly bad press in my opinion. What I'm talking about here is self-focused leadership, not in a 'look at me, aren't I amazing' way but in a constructively self-critical way. This is the best form of criticism, because when you do it to yourself it's a lot more palatable than when someone else does it for you. Whenever I talk about this in front of groups and ask people, 'Who likes to be criticised?' no-one ever raises their hand. But when you open yourself up to some gentle evaluation by *you*, it can be different.

### **Mirror, mirror on the wall . . .**


Let's take a look at what this 'look in the mirror' thing is all about. I'm going to lead you through a four-step process for gaining an understanding of who you are. I know that you might be tempted to skip this because it sounds strange and involves a deliberate effort to do something practical. But all this means is that, if you're one of the few who do go through it, you'll have an edge over all the other people who don't. At the least you'll begin to have an understanding of yourself that will stand you in good stead for the future, and at the most you'll find it life-changing. With this kind of upside, I'd say that it's worth half an hour of your time.

#### ***Step 1: find a mirror***

You're going to carry out this exercise looking in an actual mirror. Please find one and take a long look at yourself for 10 minutes — this is who you are, literally. In a world in which attention spans are increasingly short this may feel like a tough exercise, but the more you look the more you'll see. This isn't about judging the size of your nose or

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This isn't about judging the size of your nose or working out if you're attractive enough, although those thoughts may cross your mind. It's about seeing beyond that into your soul and appreciating who you really are. When you've done this write down what came to mind.

Many years ago I did this exercise as part of a group mindfulness session, in which we had to study ourselves in detail. I gazed at the lines in my face, my eyes, and everything about my appearance. Although I started off feeling as if it was almost impossible to do, I relaxed into it and found myself appreciating myself more and more because I realised that — just like you — I have something special. I'm the only one of me there is, which makes me unique. You're the only one of 'you' there is, which makes you unique. Distinctiveness is of great value.

### ***Step 2: identify your passions***

Now you'll start to work out what you love and hate in life, both in terms of what you do and who you do it with. This is important, because your emotions and enthusiasms create the energy that will drive your future success. To help you I've created a list of questions. Your answers to these questions will give you new ideas and inspiration. You can also ask others close to you to offer suggestions — it's always helpful to gain extra input.

- What are you good at? *You can think about what people tell you you're good at, as well as what you think yourself.*
- What fascinates you? *Think about the topics and ideas you feel compelled to spend time investigating.*
- What do you put off doing? *What tasks and chores do you dread?*
- What annoys you when you see it done badly? *It's obvious to you, but perhaps not to everyone else.*
- If you were given a day to do whatever you wanted, what would it be?
- What kinds of people do you enjoy spending time with?



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The most important thing is to be honest with yourself. If your ideal day consists of baking cakes and chatting with friends, that's fine — don't feel you have to come up with something that might sound worthy for the sake of it. No-one will see these answers apart from you, and if the responses are genuine they'll be starting to give you clues about what to do with your remaining time, which is the rest of your life.

Now you're going to come up with a list of five things you love to do and five you hate, using the insights you've gained from the exercise above (and anything else that comes to mind). They can be anything in your family, social, and work life. For instance, you might love country walks, reading books, filing paperwork, cooking, and researching holidays, and you might hate crowded shops, loud music, working for overbearing bosses, people who talk too much, and fiddling with numbers. List them here in a few words.

#### **Your loves**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Your hates**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

You're starting to build a picture of what makes you tick. Have you unearthed anything you wouldn't have expected?

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### Step 3: work out your values

Values are like invisible but indestructible threads, pulling us in specific directions but without us knowing. It's important to lift the veil on our values, because if we're not conscious of what those threads are we may find ourselves taking wrong turns in life. There's nothing worse than ending up in a job that conflicts with your values because it gives you an uneasy feeling from the word go. There's that nagging sensation that something's not right, and it can lead to internal conflict.

Given that values are invisible, how do we identify them? Luckily they have a habit of revealing themselves in what we choose to do and how we think. Try answering these questions to uncover yours.

- What's the main reason that you work, apart from the money?
- If you were king or queen for a day and could change one thing in the world, what would it be?
- What three qualities would you love everyone to benefit from? *For instance good health, fulfilment, and freedom.*

Hopefully this has sparked some thoughts about what's especially important to you, and the helpful thing is that our values rarely change as the years go by because they often have their roots in our childhood. The way we express them might fluctuate, but their nature is pretty constant. To round off this step, use the inspiration you've gained from the earlier exercises to list your top three values. Bear in mind that there are many you could consider to be important, but only a small number you would feel personally committed to putting into practice. As an example, when I did this exercise I realised that mine were honesty, kindness, and persistence.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

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#### **Step 4: pinpoint your purpose**


Your passions and values all come together to form your overarching purpose. This isn't just for your career, it's for your whole life, so it's worth spending some time reflecting on what it could be. For instance, if you've identified that you love sports and socialising, and feel that continuous self-improvement is one of your key values, your purpose might be 'bringing people together through sport' or 'harnessing sport for positive social change'. Or if you have a passion for books, hate loud people, and are committed to the idea of equality for all, your purpose might be 'everyone deserves the opportunity to enjoy reading.'

At this point you may be wondering if this is all a bit pie in the sky. 'Come on,' you may be thinking. 'We can't all spend our careers saving lives and creating world peace. Be practical.' I understand that. Sometimes you'll be in a position where you have to go after a job because it's what you need right now, whether it serves your higher purpose or not. But you should always be looking to move your career in the direction you feel most strongly about. If you can't find some fulfilment in the ultimate purpose of what you do, you won't commit to it heart and soul. And when you're not fully dedicated, you won't do as well at it. We can all tell the difference between a person who's just treading water and someone who's up for swimming the English Channel because they're driven to succeed.

It's for this reason that most successful organisations have a clearly defined purpose. IKEA's is 'to create a better everyday life for the many people', BUPA's is 'longer, healthier, happier lives', and Nike's is 'to bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world. If you have a body, you are an athlete.' I don't know about you, but I feel uplifted just reading those.

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How about more examples, this time from successful individuals? Sir Richard Branson says his purpose is ‘to have fun in my journey through life and to learn from my mistakes.’ Oprah Winfrey’s is ‘to be a teacher, and to be known for inspiring my students to be more than they thought they could be.’ These people have achieved more than many of us will do in a lifetime, and how they’ve done it is to be clear on what they’re about. You can also see how their passions and values shine through, with Branson’s emphasis on fun and acceptance, and Oprah’s on teaching and encouragement. Inspiring stuff.

I was once asked, ‘What’s your family’s purpose?’ I have to admit that at the time this stumped me. ‘Good question, I’ll get back to you on that one,’ was my reply. But it got me thinking, and we discussed it as a family. We agreed that we felt strongly about wanting to build businesses that would be of benefit to society, and that we enjoyed connecting people to each other for good. You can see how this works well for an entrepreneurial family, and having this clarity about what we do is helpful when it comes to making business and career decisions. When you’re at a crossroads, or any decision point, you can ask yourself, ‘Is this option supportive of my overarching purpose?’ Many alternatives will drop away, which makes your path so much more clear.

Write down your purpose here. ‘My purpose is


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### What next?

I’d encourage you to spend quite a bit of time on this process before you turn the page. After you’ve done so, it’s possible you might have come to the conclusion that the career you’ve set your heart on isn’t the right one for you. Or it may have left you feeling unsure of what road to take now that you’ve had new insights about yourself. This can be unsettling, but it’s better to know this now than in five years’ time when you’re feeling inexplicably miserable in your job. Your passions, values, and purpose are your compass points in life, guiding you to the best decisions at the appropriate times, so your career choices must dovetail with them.



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When you look in the mirror you're saying, 'Who am I? Who do I want to be? And how am I going to become that person?' These are big questions and you won't know all the answers yet, but you've made a start. Learning what you're 'about' is a deep and open-ended exploration that you can engage in at any age or stage of life, and I suggest you re-visit it on a regular basis.

Once, when watching *Match of the Day*, I was inspired by ex-footballer Alan Shearer who said that the Manchester United players needed to take a long, hard look in the mirror every morning and ask themselves the following question: 'How am I going to give my best today?' And in the evening they should do the same, but with a different question: 'Did I deliver for the team?' It's worth noting that in the weeks following the match they changed coach and then went on to win an unprecedented eight games in a row. You may not be a million-pound striker, but you can still tap into your own spirit and your own life force by using this power of reflection.

### What we covered

- Self-reflection is the vital first step in planning your career, because it's only through self-knowledge that you'll be able to make the right decisions.
- First, look in a physical mirror and learn to appreciate yourself.
- Second, identify your loves and hates, which provide the power source for your progress.
- Third, work out your values, which give you fulfilment in your work.
- Fourth, pinpoint your purpose, which will steer you in the right direction.

### And just asking . . .

- What's the most surprising thing you've learned about yourself through doing this exercise?
- What changes might you make to your plans, now that you know more about yourself?



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### 3. Supporting your mental wellbeing

It's always important to look after your mental wellbeing, but losing a job as well as living with a global pandemic can be challenging. Here are some resources to support your mental health during this time

- [Lockdown Health](#)
- [Supporting Mental Health](#)
- [What is Mindfulness](#)
- [5 Ways to Wellbeing](#)
- [Building Personal Resilience](#)
- [Why it's Important to be Kind to Yourself](#)

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## 4. The current job market

Whilst many companies are having to make redundancies and pause recruitment, there are also plenty of sectors that are growing during this time. Whether you want to make a permanent move to a growing sector or prefer to temporarily seek work in other sectors while you wait for your preferred sector to pick up again, there are plenty of opportunities out there.

As of 26th May 2020, Health job postings are up, as well as Engineering, Construction and Real Estate jobs as lockdown restrictions are eased and some professions are encouraged to go back to work. There has also been a big increase in the number of jobs posted for Retail Security Guards and Warehouse Operatives, as retailers get ready for opening more shop fronts whilst continuing to enforce social distancing.

The industries with most job postings at the moment are as follows:


- Health
- IT- Telecomm
- Education
- Social and Civil Service
- Finance
- Engineering
- Construction - Real Estate
- Logistics - Distribution

Don't be put off if these aren't the industries you have experience in or aren't where you were planning on taking your career.

Firstly, every industry needs a variety of different workers, whether that be HR professionals for the construction industry or copywriters for technology firms - so you may find the jobs you're after in an industry you had previously discounted.

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Secondly, you only need one job, so whilst high volumes of job posts may increase your chances, you can still find jobs elsewhere. Another good trick to work out where there may be opportunities is to check the stock market. Companies like Zoom, Netflix and Facebook, that are currently seeing their share prices increase, are also the companies that happen to be recruiting at the moment.

You can also have a look at which job titles have the most postings across all UK job boards at the moment. Click on the link to find out more about what each job entails and how to get into it, as well as relevant courses and vacancies:

- [Nurse](#)
- [Support Worker/ Care Assistant/ Care Worker/ Live in Carer](#)
- [Healthcare Assistant](#)
- [Warehouse Operative](#)
- Cleaner
- [Teaching Assistant](#)
- [Teacher](#)
- [Business Development Manager, Sales](#)
- Security Officer
- [Kitchen Assistant](#)
- [Maintenance Engineer](#)
- [Occupational Therapist](#)
- [Quantity Surveyor, Construction - Real Estate](#)
- [Finance Manager/ Control](#)
- [Management Accountant](#)
- [Production Operative, Manufacturing](#)
- DevOps Engineer
- [Financial Controller](#)
- [Administrator](#)
- [Housekeeper](#)
- [Sales Executive](#)
- [Optometrist](#)
- [Java Developer](#)
- [Vehicle Technician](#)
- [Delivery Driver](#)
- [Customer Service Advisor](#)
- [Customer Assistant](#)
- [Labourer, Construction](#)
- [Store Manager](#)
- [Social Worker](#)



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There are also several campaigns at the moment to support industries with high demand for workers.

- [Pick for Britain](#) has good information on horticultural jobs across the country
- [Join social care](#) and [Proud to Care London](#) are encouraging people to consider a career in care. If this sounds interesting to you - here are two articles on the topic:
  - [10 essential qualities for a Care Worker](#)
  - [Interested in a career in care?](#)

Teaching is another strong industry that will continue to have strong demand - read this article on [Different ways to become a teacher](#)

Maybe you need some more time before you can decide on your long term career goals, or perhaps you want to wait for the market to pick up. Temporary work can be a good option during this time:

- [Five reasons to start temping](#)
- [Pay and benefits for temporary and agency workers | reed.co.uk](#)


An excerpt from James Reed's latest book, [Life's Work - 12 Proven Ways to Fast Track Your Career](#) (published Jan 2020)

### Chapter 3: Play Poohsticks

If you ever read the Winnie the Pooh books when you were a kid, the title of this chapter will mean something to you. In *The House at Pooh Corner*, Pooh accidentally invents a game with his friend Eeyore when he drops a fir cone over a bridge. He sees it floating down the river and has the idea of turning it into a competition to see which cone appears under the bridge first. This is how the game of Poohsticks is invented (he swaps cones for sticks when he realises that they're easier to identify). The logic is simple. The stick that lands and stays in the fastest-flowing part of the stream wins, and the one that bobs along on a slower current loses. In a worst-case scenario, it becomes jammed behind a rock or log and never makes it under the bridge at all.

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And here's the thing: it's not the sleekest or best-shaped twig that necessarily wins, it's the one that travels the furthest most quickly, using the energy of the stream to its advantage. In the same way, you need to find the fast-flowing water for your career — the sectors and types of job that are just starting to come into high demand. Because you don't have to be the best technologist or the brightest person in your year at college to succeed, as long as you locate your career in an area that will carry you further than others. Or, to look at it from the opposite angle, if you're a senior manager who's done extremely well for yourself but you're working in a declining industry, you're not going to go nearly as far as someone who's merely an okay manager in a rapidly growing field.

In my spare time I'm a Master Scuba Diver, a qualification that, as it happens, took me 17 years longer to achieve than my Master of Business Administration. A few years ago I was diving with my brother-in-law Peter in a balmy, tropical sea off the island of Lombok in Indonesia, scouting for giant clams and turtles, when we rounded a corner of the reef and were instantly surrounded by a huge shoal of fearsome-looking Barracuda. I don't know if you've ever seen these fish but they have pointed, fang-like teeth and large jaws, and these ones circled around us as if they didn't want us to escape.


At first it was unnerving, but after a while I became mesmerised by their fluid motion — it was one of the most beautiful and amazing things I'd ever experienced. What could be going on? My question was answered as we swam a little further around the corner of the reef, only to be instantly whisked away by a current of ice-cold water that whooshed us along the reef like a rapid. My mind was swimming faster than my body as I struggled to re-orientate myself — I had no idea what direction I was heading in or if my diving buddy was even with me. That shoal of Barracuda now seemed to have been a warning.

Then I remembered my drift-dive training. When you learn to scuba at an advanced level, one of the skills you master is how to cope with fast-flowing water. The trick is not to try to swim against the current because you'll only exhaust yourself. Instead you go along with it, letting it pull you as far as it wants until after a while it gradually evens out. Then you can come to the surface to reorientate. So I allowed the current to pull me along and even started to find it exhilarating. When it eventually weakened, I swam to the surface and saw that Peter wasn't far away. We signalled to the boat to pick us up. That's when I looked around and was amazed at how far we'd travelled and with so little effort.

In a way, I was like a winning Poohstick that had been tossed from a bridge into a strong current and come out the other side in super-fast time. And this is exactly what can happen to you when you secure a role in an area that will be in high demand for



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the foreseeable future. You'll see so much more, and travel so much further, than if you choose still water. That's because fast-flowing sectors represent an abundance of opportunity, with more and more jobs becoming available as they expand. You can grow with them and have a good chance of picking and choosing where you work — there are few better ways of boosting your career than that.

### **Fast-flowing sectors**

So what kinds of industries and sectors are the best to explore? They change all the time. When I was a student many of my friends wanted to be management consultants, journalists, or investment bankers. Fast forward to today and I wouldn't call any of these options especially fast-flowing, would you? Even management consultancy, which is still a great career if you love it and are good at it, isn't in rapid growth. Instead, areas such as biotech, genetics, machine-learning, and robotics are in the ascendant. Which leaves me wishing that I'd paid more attention in my school technology and science classes.


Naturally, what's in growing demand will change from year to year, but as of today here are some of the areas in which I am seeing an increasing number of job opportunities:

- Artificial intelligence
- Biotechnology
- Cybersecurity
- Data management
- Financial technologies (FinTech)
- Green energy and technology
- Medical research
- Mental wellbeing
- Virtual reality

By the time you read this there will have been further changes, but broadly speaking the fastest growing employment sectors at the moment are to do with technology, medical research, and renewable energy. Now you may be thinking, 'Well that's all very



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well, but I'm hopeless at technology — I'm just not that kind of person. I can't see myself fitting into any of these areas.' This is an understandable concern and I'll address it in two ways.

First of all, there's no getting away from it, you do have to take into account your passions and preferences when it comes to choosing a career. You'll be unlikely to succeed in any job if you're not a good fit for it. For instance, I'm no good at sitting still — I couldn't do one of those jobs where you're chained to a screen all day. But I do love meeting people and travelling widely, and I'm curious by nature and keen on adventures. So by luck or judgement I've ended up in a career that I'm well suited for, as REED is a service business helping people in multiple locations with a continuous need to find better ways of doing things. A perfect psychological match.

However (and this is the next part), please don't despair if you can't see an obvious fit between you and some of these areas of employment, because there's always a way of working yourself in. You can take into account your passions, skills, and the things you're good and bad at, and still apply them to many fast-flowing sectors.

Just suppose you love working with people, so the last thing you can see yourself doing is tapping at your keyboard with headphones on while you create the next new virtual reality game. Gaming companies aren't only in need of programmers, though, they're also crying out for people with excellent interpersonal skills to help them to sell their technology and enable their teams to work more effectively. You could be one of them. Or how about financial services? You might not be a whiz with numbers, but FinTech is a rapidly expanding field that's helping banks and financial institutions to make it easier for their customers to access their money. If you have an adventurous spirit there are multiple start-ups (and larger companies) focused on this sector, and they all need people with diverse skills and outlooks. You could be a customer experience expert, a project manager, or an administrator, and still find a home in them.

If you look hard enough, there's fast-flowing water to suit almost anyone. As I sit in my office working on this book, I can look out over the floor and see technologists, customer specialists, data scientists, and my marketing team. They're all focused on one thing — making our business more effective — but they each have their own different skills, experiences, and drives. Taking myself as an example again, at school I wasn't particularly good at science but my interest in technology has never been due to the technology itself. What I am interested in is how technology can be used to give people a better experience. That's what matters to me. What I add to our own tech, therefore, is the human factor. When you match your strengths, talents, and interests to what's in demand, it's like adding a turbo boost to your personal Poohstick. This will propel you through the water into a winning position, with minimal effort on your part.



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### Fast-flowing jobs

This leads me onto the fact that even in sectors that aren't in growth, some of the roles within them may still be. I've recently hired a Customer Experience Officer, or CXO. A year ago I'd not heard of one, but in common with many businesses today our special focus is on putting the experience of our customers right at the centre of our operations.

The rise of digital has made it easier for organisations to interact quickly and accurately with their customers, which has led their expectations to rise as a result. Now companies have to put an increased emphasis on satisfying and retaining the people they serve. This means that customer management roles are becoming more important, and people like my new CXO are in hot demand.

I was talking to someone not long ago who told me that, in the last couple of years, jobs with the title of DevOp have also taken off. They're based on managing the development of technology within organisations in a way that links with how that technology will be used, often within the context of cloud-hosting services. The roles frequently pay six figure salaries. These jobs didn't exist even two years ago, but cloud computing has exploded, creating a growth in allied jobs in its wake. This just shows how having an awareness of emerging spaces when you're thinking about what to do next can be invaluable.

By the way, fast-flowing doesn't have to mean glamorous. In fact, careers in areas such as music or TV are so competitive that you'll find succeeding in them to be like pushing water uphill. Even if the river isn't sparkling, if it's moving along at pace that's all that matters.

### How to spot the fast-flowing water

Finding the fast-flowing water for your career is like water divining — easy to say and hard to do. After all, you're seeking out the sectors and job titles that not everyone else knows about, and when you look at the surface of the water you can't always see where the current is. You can't rely on copying your friends (unless you have some savvy ones — in which case, lucky you), or even scanning the internet, because the last thing you want is to follow the herd. The roles that appear repeatedly are the ones that pose the stiffest competition, and you want to target the less obvious opportunities that everyone else isn't going for. This isn't an easy thing to advise you on, but there are three main ways to find your fast-flowing water.

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### ***Be curious and keep an open mind***

Talk to people. Ask questions. Subscribe to blogs about random topics. Notice things, like what's going on in your local area. What's changing? What's new? What's exciting? For instance, at REED we're always on the look-out for new clients for our recruitment business, and we like to find ones that are in fast-growing sectors because they'll be looking to hire more people. We carry out research to find them, some of which is desk-based but much of which involves conversations and local knowledge, such as noticing if a firm moves into a new office development. Why are they expanding? In the same way, keeping alive to what's changing and happening around you can unlock a host of interesting career opportunities.

### ***Consider your strengths***

Here's where looking in the mirror pays off. What are you good at? What do you enjoy? And how could this combination of factors lead you to your own fast-flowing river? As an example, if finance is something that excites you, you're not limited to jobs in traditional financial institutions (which aren't in growth). Instead, ask yourself what are the fastest-moving segments of finance and apply your talents to them. In London, for instance, you'll find one of the world's central bases for innovation in FinTech, with many new companies starting up and hiring in that space. Even if you work for a large investment bank rather than a new technology start-up, it will have some business streams that are moving more rapidly than others. Which areas are busy at the moment? What departments might be hiring because they're growing? Finance doesn't become a bad area to go into because of the global financial crisis — money still makes the world go round and if you're in the thick of it you will have a great career.

### ***Be lucky***

When I found myself making my drift-dive it wasn't planned, but I made the most of it when it happened. In the same way, it's interesting how randomly you can find your fast-flowing water. Taking the time to talk to diverse people on a regular basis will make you luckier than your neighbour who stays at home with Deliveroo every night, because you'll receive lots of information that they miss out on. The key thing with luck is to recognise it when you see it. Don't ignore that passing comment from someone about an interesting role or a new industry that's taking off, follow it up and find out more. You never know if it could be the tip-off that makes the difference.

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## Steady sectors

There are many roles within what I call calmer waters, that will always be needed — at least for the foreseeable future. They're not fast-flowing, but they're still valuable because they're not here today and gone tomorrow. If you base your career in one of these you'll always be in demand, just in a different way than if you were riding the rapids. Instead of having the potential to flow with your industry you'll be a 'steady eddy', always needed and always useful. Given that a job is a problem to be solved, it's no bad thing to focus on what issues will always need dealing with no matter what.

Think of teaching, for example. If you're a teacher you'll always be busy and (if you enjoy it) have a very fulfilling job. While the nature of teaching might change over the years, it will be forever required in some form or other. Recently at REED we worked with schools, employers, and career guidance teams to discover what organisations most want from the next generation of school leavers. They said that mindset and personal skills, such as willingness to learn, motivation, team spirit, confidence, and having something to say, were more important to them than task-related skills. These are the qualities a good teacher can encourage, and they can't be learned from a computer, only from a living, breathing person who has their students' best interests at heart. So if you're keen on teaching, just do it and don't worry about whether it's fast-flowing or not. It will always be a promising career one way or another.


What kinds of jobs and sectors are steady eddies? I can't list them all, but here are some to start you thinking. As you can see they tend to be based in the physical rather than the technological world, because even though our lives are increasingly being played out online we still have bodies and material needs that need catering for. They're not necessarily the most glamorous fields, but they can still provide a rewarding array of job opportunities that withstand the test of time.

- Caring and medical professions such as physiotherapy, nursing and home-care (think of our ageing population)
- Catering and hospitality
- Education
- Medicine
- Sales (we still like to buy from people)
- Skilled trades such as plumbing and building houses
- Waste disposal

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There's an interesting thing that careers and comedy have in common: they both require excellent timing. Not only that, but like a comedian, your challenge is to put together unexpected combinations of thoughts and ideas, because originality can be your strongest card. It might seem a little daunting to jump into fast-flowing water, but don't be afraid to do it. When I was whisked away by that current on my scuba-diving trip it was strange at first, but it turned out to be a lot of fun and something I'd love to experience again. I learned that the only currents that are really dangerous are the ones that go deep down into the sea, so if you find your sector or role to be one that's in rapid decline, it may be time to shoot to the side and come up for some air. Because finding the fast-flowing water should be your number one responsibility if you want to win at Poohsticks.

### **What we covered**

- When you locate your career in fast-growing industries or sectors, you'll be more likely to progress quickly, and with less effort, than if you choose a declining industry.
- The same goes for job roles that are in growth, even if they're in mature sectors.
- You can always find a way of matching your talents and skills to fast-flowing industries, even if it's not the most obvious option.
- Finding sectors and job roles that are in the early stages of growth isn't easy, and if it were, everyone would be doing it. Keep your eyes and ears open and talk to people.
- Certain areas will always be in demand, even if they're not in growth.

### **And just asking . . .**

- Have you identified a fast-flowing sector that appeals to you?



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## 5. Developing yourself

Perhaps you're interested in using this time to learn a new skill in order to move into a different industry or to move up the payscale. We've collated a range of courses to help you.

- [Free courses](#)
- [The top courses to help you get hired May 2020](#)
- [Seven of the best home learning courses](#)

You can use this promo code (ONLINE10) to get 10% off.

## 6. What next for your career?

Sometimes we know exactly what we want from our next job and have a good idea how to get there, but a lot of the time this can be unclear. If you are considering which jobs would suit you next, why not check out our career guides covering roles across 34 different sectors? Here you can find out what that job is, if it's right for you, what career progression could look like as well as estimated salaries, relevant courses and links to relevant jobs to apply to.

- [Career Guides](#)

The National Careers Service also has two different [skills assessments](#) that can help you figure out what career is right for you based on your skillset.

- [Skills health check](#): a set of quizzes and activities designed to help you explore your skills, interests and motivations.
- [Skills Assessment](#) asks you to think about the type of work you want to do. It takes 5 to 10 minutes. At the end, you'll get a summary of job groups that might interest you based on your answers, for example creative careers or working in healthcare.

Here are a couple of articles that may also help you in your career journey:

- [How to: Decide what job to look for](#)
- [Five fundamentals of career success](#)

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## 7. Time for a career change?

You may have really enjoyed your last role but are looking for more economic stability in a different industry or your life circumstances have changed and you find yourself after a different kind of challenge. Whatever your situation, it may be the right time to consider a career change.

- [Should I switch careers?](#)
- [Career crossroads: What to do next](#)
- [How do I find a new career at 50?](#)

## 8. Identify and repurpose your transferable skills

It can be daunting moving to an industry that you have never worked in before, but if you are transferring from a job in hospitality, travel or leisure then some of the skills you have learned and demonstrated will be likely to open up lots of other doors. It's important to remember that employers will be open to hiring candidates without direct experience and with the understanding that whatever skills they do have will be transferable into their industry.

### 1. Identify

The first step is to identify which key skills you have gained in previous roles from the three types of skillset:

**Hard skills:** Measurable knowledge often certified by a degree or training program.

**Soft skills:** Hard-to-measure qualities that suggest what you're like to work with.

**Technical skills:** Knowledge of specific software programs and tools.

**Common soft skills developed in hospitality and leisure jobs:**

- Communication and ability to listen
- Attention to detail
- Time management and organisation
- Customer Service and understanding what customers want
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Problem solving

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### **Common hard skills developed in hospitality and leisure jobs:**

- Food handling and hygiene certifications
- People management certifications

### **Common technical skills developed in hospitality and leisure jobs:**

- Microsoft office
- Bookkeeping software
- Salesforce or other client or customer management tools

## **2. Repurpose**

Once you have identified your transferable skills, the second step is to match these skills with other positions that also require the same sort of skills. Below are some examples of the types of jobs you could move into:

### **Previous experience in front of house roles and customer facing roles? How about...**

- Security Guard
- Courier/ delivery driver
- Sales executive or sales representative
- Customer service assistant

### **Previous experience in back of house and behind the scenes roles? How about...**

- Hospital or care home porter
- Cleaner or sanitation worker
- Data entry or administration

### **Previous experience in management roles? How about...**

- Operations manager
- Team leader
- Store manager



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## 9. Getting yourself CV ready

Writing your CV can be a challenge – especially if you’ve never written one before. So, to instantly improve your applications, try reading our expert CV help. Covering everything from [how to write a CV](#) and [what to include](#), right through to [free CV templates](#) and pointers for your personal statement, there’s something for everyone, no matter what stage of your career you’re in.

So whether you’re a school leaver creating your first CV from scratch, a recent graduate looking to find a full-time position, or you’ve been out of work for a while and want to refresh your CV – learn everything you need to know about CV writing now.

- [How to: Write a CV](#)
- [CV Templates](#)
- [CV Review Services](#)
- [Free CV builder | reed.co.uk](#)
- [Cover Letter Help & Advice | reed.co.uk](#)
- [How to explain gaps in your CV](#)
- [Lying on a CV?](#)

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## 10. How to look for work

Effective jobseeking is often a question of using the right tools for the job.. One of the most useful of these is undoubtedly the job search. However, whether you're an experienced jobseeker or you've never used a job search before, making sure you're using the search function as effectively as possible can be a challenge. Especially when you're not aware of what all the options are. Have a look at our guides below on searching for jobs online:

- [How to: Search for jobs online](#)
- [Boolean searching: How it could help your job search](#)

We've also collated some other resources below:

- [How To Find A Job](#)
- [How to: Find remote work](#)
- [How to: Find work as an older jobseeker](#)
- [How to use LinkedIn to find a job - Business Insider](#)
- [Job help – from Jobcentre Plus](#)

You may also want to register with a recruitment agency such as [Reed Specialist Recruitment](#). Some of the benefits of using a recruiter like Reed include:

- We have specialist consultants across 20 industries, each of them experts in their field, meaning they can offer you the best advice on how to reach your chosen career.
- Our network across the UK allows us to provide you with accurate market intelligence regarding salaries, the best jobs available locally in your chosen specialism, and expert advice on how to make you more attractive to your chosen company.
- We have access to jobs you would not find elsewhere.
- We manage the whole process and make sure it runs smoothly, including finding jobs that match your needs, advising you on your CV, co-ordinating interviews and providing with you with constructive feedback.

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- Our specialist market insight allows us to advise you on and negotiate job offers.
- Save time and stress – we have access to thousands of clients across the country and can act fast to find your next career opportunity.

Let our industry experts find you your next position, find your [nearest Reed Specialist Recruitment office](#)

## 11. Preparing for interview

With a whole host of advice on job interview techniques, you'll be able to get interview ready – fast. Whether you're trying to figure out what the most [common interview questions are](#), you want to know how to answer [second interview questions](#), or you've got a [competency-based interview](#) coming up – you'll find everything you need to nail your interview training.

- [Researching a company before an interview](#)
- [Job Interview Techniques](#)
- [Common interview questions and answers](#)
- [How to ace your video interview](#)
- [The path to success in phone interviews](#)

An excerpt from James Reed's book, [WHY YOU: 101 Interview Questions You'll Never Fear Again](#) (published Jan 2015)

**The best person you can be at interview is yourself.**

This might not sound like new advice. It is often reported as clichéd advice. It's not clichéd – it's vital.

Interviewers are only human. They want to feel an emotional connection with a real person, not a politician. They love it when that connection happens in an interview room, but it happens less often than it might, because an interview room is an artificial set-up, one that can easily prompt artificial behaviour, stilted conversation and awkward pauses. It's usually not where you see people at their best, even though that's

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what everyone in the room wants to see.

After wading through countless canned answers, awkward pauses and half-truths, interviewers are often left craving a genuine encounter with a sincere human being. If you speak from the heart and don't exaggerate, bluff or waffle, you'll be giving interviewers what they crave. They'll remember you for it, even if you're not right for the job.

Oddly, being yourself in an interview situation is always harder than it sounds. It's risky too, certainly in terms of getting a job. It's not risky in terms of getting the right job

### **It's not about your CV. It's about who you are and what you can become**

Most people start their interview prep by dusting off their CV and thinking of a few things to say about the sentences on that fabled piece of A4 paper. But if you've been invited for interview, your CV will suddenly be far less important than it has always seemed to you, because, by interview stage, an interviewer has already got most of what they needed from your CV. They're now in interview mode, not CV mode. In interview mode, the primary assessment is of you and your personality, less so your work history. Also, your CV is all about the past, about a world of skills and technology and institutions that are either gone or perhaps soon to go. The future arrives relentlessly.

All that any business can do about the future is to employ people who can cope with change. If you can lead change – relish it, even – you *will* be in demand. Employers want people who will thrive in a workplace that might be unrecognisable three years from now.

That's why anyone who bases their interview technique entirely around the contents of their CV is looking in the wrong direction. The interviewer will be looking forward, into a future they can barely make out. No one knows what's going to happen next. The CEO doesn't know. You don't know. Your interviewer doesn't know either. You can expect job interviews to reflect that uncertainty – and to select on the basis of it too.

The good news for you is that future-proofing yourself is a learnable skill that you can demonstrate in interview. It's all a matter of adopting the right mindset.

### **To an employer, a job is a problem to be solved**

Jobs exist in two completely different universes at the same time.

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In one universe – let’s call it the “personal universe”, the one that we experience as interviewees and as people - jobs make life worth living.

In the personal universe, jobs provide us with a home, friends, stimulation, conversation, holidays, a new car and so on. This is the world of work that we recognise and that so many of us crave. Each year the global market research firm Gallup carries out a survey

asking thousands of adults in 200+ countries a very simple question: **"What do you want most?"** The most common answer, every year and all over the world, is **"a good job"**. There’s something in us that wants to work. Consequently, no one can be blamed for wanting a job and all the life-affirming things that come from it.

But jobs inhabit a second universe too – let’s call it the entrepreneur’s universe – and in this universe a **job does not exist to keep you happy.**

In this universe, jobs are a by-product of an entrepreneur’s desire to build their own business, a business the entrepreneur hopes will solve all of his or her problems via solving other people’s problems. For entrepreneurs, their business is often all that stands between them and financial ruin, so they fight hard to keep it going. It’s worth remembering that every company, be it Marks and Spencer or your local corner shop, is either run by one of these scrappy individuals or was started by one. Companies differ in the extent to which they retain their founder’s “survive-or-die” ethic, but it’s echoing off the walls in most companies, certainly in the companies that have and will survive.

In this universe, your interviewer is best thought of as someone with a stack of problems for which they will pay money to solve. Collectively, these problems are known as your job and, to be blunt, that’s all any job ever was. It’s a rather stark and unemotional way of looking at life, but it’s no less true for that.

Too bad, then, that many candidates can glimpse jobs in one universe only. They see a job primarily as a tool for their personal economic or psychological advancement, and forget that a job is primarily about solving problems on behalf of someone else. This personal bias surfaces in their answers.

It might be going too far to suggest that you should think of your interviewer as a motorist who’s broken down by the side of the road and in need of help, but it’s not a bad starting point. It’s certainly better than thinking of the interviewer as a food truck by the side of the road, as so many candidates do.

A bad interviewee, then, defines a job as something that will solve all their problems. Good interviewees know that a "job" is what happens when you can solve someone else's problem - so start pitching your answers that way.

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## A message from Keep Britain Working

We understand that this booklet may not have given you all the answers but we hope that it has provided you with some helpful information on what to do next and made you consider your options as you navigate the next stage of your job search and career.

For all of us, this is a learning experience as we move into a new employment landscape and we would welcome any feedback including other questions you still have or any useful information you think we could include in the future.

Please contact us at [keepbritainworking@reed.com](mailto:keepbritainworking@reed.com) to share your thoughts.

You can also find out more about Keep Britain Working on [our website](#), where you can [make your own pledge](#), [share ideas](#) and [sign-up](#) to hear about our latest news and webinars on businesses and employment.

You can also follow [@KeepBritWorking](#) on Twitter or [#KeepBritainWorking](#) on LinkedIn

We wish you the best of luck in your journey,

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