

Work Wisdom**How to turn your hobby into your job****Work Wisdom**

How to turn your hobby into your job

By **Mitra Malek** | December 16, 2019

What do you love to do? Is it related to what you do for a living? Do you want it to be?

Making your hobby your job is doable and, dare I say, enjoyable, if only because work feels less like work when it's something you dig doing.

Here's how to make it happen:

Start.

Starting sounds simple, given it's logical. But often we freeze, overwhelmed by aspiration. The good news is: Any first step works. There will be no perfect time to go after what you want, and if you wait for it, you'll end up postponing your future-of-choice indefinitely.

Your version of starting might be broaching the hobby-job transformation with your spouse to get him or her on board. Or maybe you review your finances to feel secure. Perhaps you need affirmation, so you spend an afternoon looking over all those articles that inspired you to make this move. Whatever your first step, take it, so your hope is somewhere other than in your head.

Subtracts the “scareds.”

We're experts at being scared because it comes with being human. A mind-trick can help you get past it. It worked for me two decades ago, when I left

a cushy job working for an investment firm to live in the tropics and be a sweaty trapeze performer for Club Med. It's called: "What would I do if I were someone else?"

This doesn't mean you want to be someone else — it means you recognize your life experiences have imprinted you with certain fears and assumptions. So: What if you were someone, even a made-up person, who doesn't have the same "scareds" you do — the "scareds" holding you back from pursuing what you'd really love to do.

Investigate.

Maybe you're one of the fortunate who had someone recruit them for a venture featuring their dream. That wasn't how it went for me, and I'll go out on a limb to say it's not how it goes for most. Which means: You've got to put in some work.

Before I got the gig at Club Med, what I knew for sure was I loved adventure, being physically active and spending lots of time beachside. So I went to the library (back then the internet was snail's-pace slow and lacked columns like this one) and checked out books with titles like *Jobs for Outdoor Enthusiasts*. I also vacationed at a Club Med (admittedly, more fun than work), where I got the inside scoop on how the dynamic people from around the globe working there as sailing instructors, choreographers and more got their jobs (hint: they too pursued hobbies).

Seek out people in roles you covet and ask them for informational interviews. No one has ever turned me down. People love sharing how they got to where they are when someone takes interest. Your investigative work will illuminate your path, highlighting whether your circumstances make sense for you to take a leap now.

Go public.

Tell at least one person what you want to do. This creates an internal sense of commitment. I told lots of friends (and sorta friends) I planned to work for Club Med before I'd even applied. Most thought I was cuckoo to want to

live at a resort in a tiny room with a roommate I didn't get to choose. And that I'd constantly be surrounded by vacationers, eating every meal with them. That's when I knew I was on the right track (adventure: confirmed).

Get a coach.

After going public, pick one person who'll hold you accountable for periodic goals, and have that person check in on a schedule. For example, tell your bud Ben you want to contact three people for informational interviews by Jan. 24, your check-in date. On Jan. 24, report what transpired, and from there set your next goal for Jan. 31 (or whenever).

Continue with this support system as long as needed. If it falls from your priorities, you probably aren't as hungry for your hobby-job transition as you'd thought, or you're identifying legitimate roadblocks (you need more expertise, for example). That's okay. If there's something you need to cultivate, do it. Either way, give yourself a break, and when an internal nudge comes again, go after it.

Mitra Malek turned two other hobbies, writing and yoga, into jobs, as well. Learn more at www.mitramalek.com.

TAGS: **HOBBIES** | **HOBBY-JOB TRANSFORMATION**

ADDITIONAL CONTENT

