

**A C M A**

Associated Career  
Management Australia



## **23 HOT TIPS FOR YOUR CAREER**

HOW TO FIND YOUR IDEAL CAREER AND LAND A GREAT JOB

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ASSOCIATED CAREER MANAGEMENT AUSTRALIA  
provides expert Career Coaching  
and Outplacement services Australia-wide  
to help you find the right job, faster.

A green road sign with white text that reads "Careers Just Ahead". The sign is mounted on two wooden posts and is set against a background of a blue sky with white clouds. The sign is tilted slightly to the right.

Careers  
Just Ahead

**Dear career seeker**

Would you like to find the career you were born for and get a great job?

Surveys have show that over 70% of workers are unhappy in their existing jobs. And despite the low unemployment rate claimed many job seekers still have a difficult time finding **the right job with the right organisation.**

It doesn't have to be this way. You can find a satisfying, exciting career that is right for you and become an expert at successfully landing the job you want.

As a senior career consultant working across most industries I see a lot of people who are lost and unhappy in their careers or stalled in their job search. Many of my clients thought they had job security before their organisations made them redundant.

I noticed that some of my clients had become virtually obsolete because they weren't in jobs that suited their personalities and interests. They simply weren't motivated to keep learning. They were merely surviving rather than enjoying what they were doing.

Since 1991 ACMA has been developing expertise, innovative programs, resources and online technologies that directly assist people (throughout Australia) from all backgrounds and occupations to avoid career "death traps", and instead make a big step forward in their careers and lives.

You can immediately take control of your career. By investing some time and effort now you can avoid an unsatisfying job or long periods unemployed.

This report contains tips in two areas vital to your career success:

**1. FINDING YOUR CAREER DIRECTION****2. GETTING A GOOD JOB FAST** (if you already know what type of work you want you can go straight to this section)

Many people don't think enough about what they really want to do. Even if you are in a hurry to get a job, knowing clearly what you want is important for two reasons:

- **Search focus** – it helps you more tightly focus on your target employers which is essential for some job search strategies.
- **Self-marketing** – employers are more impressed by applicants who know what they want & why they want to work for their organisation.

I'm determined to give you some great tips in this report but I'd also recommend you seek assistance from the professional who provided this report to you.

Good luck with your career journey!



Tony Crosby FCDAA, CMF, CAHRI

Managing Director

ASSOCIATED CAREER MANAGEMENT AUSTRALIA

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# 1. FINDING YOUR CAREER DIRECTION – WHERE ARE YOU GOING?



## TIP 1 – Don't just settle for the first thing that comes along

Invest some time in identifying what you want, what you have to offer, and what is out there. If you rush into big decisions you may find you have missed a better opportunity or headed off in the wrong direction.

It can help you answer the big question of “what do I want to do with the rest of my life” if you approach it with a logical step-by-step process.

The ACMA career management program I have developed uses a seven module integrated structure designed to assist you to find the ideal position as quickly as possible:

THE 4 FOUNDATIONS	THE 7 STEPS
Self-awareness	1. Take responsibility
	2. Self assess
	3. Define success - your purpose and vision of the future
Opportunity aware	4. Expand, explore and evaluate your options
Decision making	5. Decide and set goals (job search, study and/or business targets)
Transition skills	6. Plan and act!
	7. Stay alert and enjoy the journey!

By learning to apply these seven steps you can become highly skilled at managing your own career.

This, however, is NOT to say that you should have it all worked out before you take any job. Sometimes you need to get a temporary job while you work on this. A lot of jobs can be a step in the right direction and lead to unexpected results.



## TIP 2 – Take full responsibility for your career and your life

This is the foundation for all success. Specifically you need to take responsibility for:

- Your career (others can help but no one, including a career counsellor, can make your decisions or do it for you – it's your life!)
- Your employability (the only real job security is the career security that comes from offering up-to-date skills that are still in demand)
- Your “programming” (parental influences and social conditioning)

Don't blame anyone for anything about your situation in life. The moment you do, you lose power. A few simple ideas, if understood and practiced deeply, can make a huge difference in your life. This is one of them.



## TIP 3 – Begin by making your mind your friend - disarm your self-sabotages

Self-sabotages take the form of your inner dialogue with yourself. How you see things – the stories you create in your mind - determine your experience of life. External events or circumstances are only triggers for your feelings. If, for example, you go to a job interview but don't get the job you could say to yourself two very different things:

1. **Unhelpful thinking** – “I'm not skilled/educated/young/old enough. This is terrible that I failed.”

Result: you feel bad, stop job searching for a week or longer and miss a great opportunity.

2. **Helpful thinking** – “They thought someone else was more suited for the position. This may be a good thing... there is probably a better opportunity out there waiting for me.”

Result: you feel okay, continue job searching and get a position to which you are better suited.

*The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, and a hell of heaven.*

John Milton



You can see how the same external event or trigger can create two very different results. Whether you feel good or bad stems from how your mind interprets situations. Your mind is very powerful. It will either sabotage your career efforts or allow you to create the career and life path you most deeply desire.

**So what can you do about it?** Pay attention to your thinking. Get to know and recognise your patterns. Say to yourself “Oh, that’s just my ‘doubter’ working overtime” or “That’s just my inner critic giving me a hard time.” Don’t worry about it, just step back, observe yourself and then look for an alternative view which is more helpful. To be able to laugh at yourself and your self-sabotages is incredibly empowering... and a lot more enjoyable than getting stuck in them!

While we may not be fully responsible for the programming we received as children, we are, as adults, the only ones who can be responsible for correcting it.

For career success improve your mind as much as possible but don’t wait for perfection. Swing into action as soon as you can and learn from your mistakes and your victories along the way. EVERYONE makes mistakes as they try out different jobs – that is all part of the learning process.



#### TIP 4 – Develop powerful attitudes towards your work

Powerful career attitudes include:

- **Every job is a learning opportunity.** I don’t just work for the money... I work to learn new skills, develop my network of friends and contacts, open up new opportunities, and do something positive for others.
- **My work-life should benefit all concerned:** my employer, my customers, and myself.
- **While I accept this work position I’ll do the best I can.** If I can’t find a way to be satisfied in my job then it is up to me to find a better position rather than just complain about it.



#### TIP 5 – Self assess – work out what you want and what you have to offer

Who are you? What do you have to offer others? What do you want from life in return?

Make the effort to ask yourself questions and keep asking as your career unfolds. As you do this, pay particular attention to anything which hints of your purpose and passion. What interests you? What would you do even if money was not a factor?

What kind of person are you? Do you like to work alone or with lots of people, focus on ideas or the practical realities, solve problems with logic or provide empathetic support to help

others, run a tight ship with lots of structure and organisation or go with the flow and stay flexible?

These are all an expression of your personality. Your personality tends to support success and competencies in some fields more than others.

One way to identify aspects of your personality is to observe yourself and ask for others’ perceptions of you. Another valuable approach is to use ACMA’s personality assessment tests.

ACMA can assist your self-awareness and career targeting by providing computer-based psychometric assessments of your personality and interests.



#### TIP 6 – Identify your interest areas

Your interests can provide valuable clues as to where you will find work that you will become passionate about.

Imagine the below diagram is a party of seven very different groups of people standing around talking. If you were feeling confident that day, which group would you be MOST drawn to? Which group would you go talk with second... and third (if there was time)? Number these groups 1, 2, or 3.



Now get on the Internet and look for the online Job Guide:  
<https://www.gooduniversitiesguide.com.au/careers-guide>.

Experiment by entering different fields to develop an understanding of various jobs and sectors. Search by – Type of Work. Their categories have a lot of overlap but it can be a good place to expand your career ideas by checking out your favourite groups from above.



### TIP 7 – Follow your sense of purpose

A sense of your purpose in life is your deepest internal compass for navigating your way through whatever changes take place in the world of work. Being “on-purpose” with your career unlocks your passion – that spark and energy which drives your career development and learning and at the same time makes you someone employers want to hire and retain. It can also be the source of deep motivation which can power you through the challenges of creating your own business when the time is right.

You will need to write it in your own words but your unique purpose will probably fall into one of these eight broad categories of career purpose:

1. Help heal others
2. Teach, coach, enlighten, and entertain
3. Improve living conditions
4. Meet practical human needs
5. Safeguard and manage the environment
6. Express beauty
7. Support justice and fairness
8. Set an example of love and service

Which do you identify with most?

Circle yours in the above list or write your own category here:

.....



*When work is soulless, life stifles  
and dies.*

- Albert Camus



### TIP 8 – Expand and explore your options

People often choose careers based on knowing about only a small number of jobs they have been exposed to through friends and family members or perhaps seen on television. As a result it is often years later, if ever, that they discover by chance a career option they would have loved if they'd found it earlier. You need to cast your net wide at this time and expand your awareness of all your options that are out there.

Consider your self-knowledge and sense of purpose. What do they suggest? Look at a wide range of idea sources and develop your 'long list' of between 15 to 40 possibilities.

Idea sources include:

1. Job suggestions from career assessments conducted by your ACMA career management consultant
2. Products and services you like
3. Causes and groups you identify with
4. People – talk to as many people as possible, find out about that they do and ask for ideas
5. Yellow pages phone directory, situation vacant columns, tertiary study course catalogues
6. Internet sites

Be sure to consider lots of jobs you are not familiar with and don't limit your thinking to just traditional careers. There are new types of work being created every day and some of the more rewarding work doesn't even have job names yet. Consider a wide range of possibilities such as:

- Same career but in a new organisation or location
- Combination and hybrid careers (eg. a software programmer who develops an interest in real estate and develops a new computer program for the real estate industry.)
- Composite careers (2 or 3 part-time jobs)
- Contract, consulting or temp work
- Small business or home businesses
- Part time and/or voluntary work
- Tertiary study

For some people the best reason for them to get a traditional job is for them to gain skills, knowledge, and contacts that will enable them to start their own business later. This is how many business owners, independent contractors and consultants get started. So what type of business would you like to own? Ok... now, go get a job in a similar business, even if it's at the very bottom, as the first step.

Your ACMA career management consultant can refer you to numerous websites and other information sources to assist in researching your career options.



### TIP 9 – Talk before you leap – always do information meetings before your final decision

After having read as much as you can about a career option BUT before making a big commitment to a new career path it is vital that you first talk to some people who are actually working in that type of work.

These meetings, which are sometimes also called information interviews, are a crucial step in career decision-making. People will tell you things face-to-face that you will never find in writing. They may also help you in unexpected ways.

Career changers who spend years studying to enter an occupation without doing information meetings are often disappointed with the realities they find. Don't make the same

mistake – do your information meetings BEFORE you choose an option and invest years of your life and thousands of dollars pursuing it.

Information meetings are short, focused discussions which you should prepare specific questions for prior to the meeting. Questions are based on filling in the gaps, checking what you have already learnt about the option, and going deeper.

Your ACMA career management consultant can help you with a list of the types of questions you could ask at an information interview.



### TIP 10 – If you want to get lucky... take action!

It is widely recognised that successful people are people of action. They may make mistakes but they pick themselves back up, dust themselves off, and try again. The more you get out into the world, talk to people, and have a go, the more successful you will be in the long run.



*Nothing will be attempted if all possible objections must first be overcome.*

Samuel Johnson

Now is a good time to remember some of the words that call us to action:

*“Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it! For boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now!”*

Johann Goethe

*“Our doubts are our traitors and make us lose the good we oft might gain by fearing to attempt.”*

William Shakespeare

*“Just do it!”* (As declared by the well-known footwear advertisement)

The reflection, research and planning recommended above will strengthen the effectiveness of your actions. However there are some things that need to be learnt by trial and error. Goethe went so far as to say, “Self-knowledge is best learned, not by contemplation, but by action.”

You will also maximise your chances for ‘getting lucky’ with your career by being active and engaged with the world.

You can improve your career by five action-oriented skills that will make you more “lucky” with your career:

1. **Curiosity** – exploring new learning opportunities
2. **Persistence** – continuing to exert effort despite setbacks

3. **Flexibility** – being open to changing your beliefs, ideas and attitudes when called for
4. **Optimism** – viewing even challenging situations as offering possible opportunities
5. **Risk taking** – willingness to take action in the face of uncertain outcomes

If you stay open and alert for unexpected opportunities and new possibilities your career will reap the rewards!



*Failure is not the worst thing in the world. The worst is not to try.*

- Unknown



### TIP 11 – Think about the big picture – not just a job!

The gap between the winners and losers on many levels in this game we call the “global economy” is increasing. There are increasing changes to the job market. We may not often like them but there is good news also. There are greater than ever opportunities for career success, wealth and making a positive difference if you play the game smart.

If you want to be one of the winners and perhaps even be in a position to assist others in the game you need to consciously develop your game plan for your career-life.

There are three broad potential strategies for your career-life game plan in the 21st century: 1) wealth creation, 2) rewarding work, and 3) voluntary simplicity.

#### Game plan 1 – Wealth creation

Wealth creation is about increasing your power on the physical level by developing intellectual, physical, and financial assets which eventually give you the time freedom and the resources to live your purpose independent (if you choose) from a paid job.

Many of my older outplacement clients would have been in a much better situation if they had educated and applied themselves in the wealth creation area 10 years before they were made redundant. An effective exit strategy can be empowering to your career.

#### Game plan 2 – Rewarding work

Identifying the types of work most likely to be personally rewarding is the focus of the tips in the first section and what career consultants normally help their clients with. The basic idea is that to be successful at your work you need to enjoy it, or even better, have a passionate love for it.

The strength of this game plan is that if you, at least, like what you do, you'll probably be good at it and engage in the necessary life-long learning to stay in demand in the job marketplace.



But be warned – rewarding work often doesn't come easy. You may need to work hard, make some sacrifices and some smart choices to find or create your rewarding work.

**Game plan 3 – Voluntary simplicity**

In the voluntary simplicity game the emphasis shifts from consuming to relationships, family, well being and creativity. To have self-directed power over your career-life you need to recognize and separate from advertising and social conditioning which pushes you to over-consume and become controlled by your debt.

This is not about living in poverty. It's about being a conscious consumer rather than just a conditioned consumer. Do a Google search on the words "voluntary simplicity" for a heap of ideas and resources on this game plan.

Most people are best served by combining these three strategies or individual game plans. How it will best suit you to integrate the three game plans will become clearer as you self assess and define your purpose and vision.

Your purpose and vision for your career-life are what integrates and guides your game plans. To be successful in applying them you will need to educate yourself over the long-term in each of these three areas.

If you like, your ACMA career management consultant can help you get started on this important process.

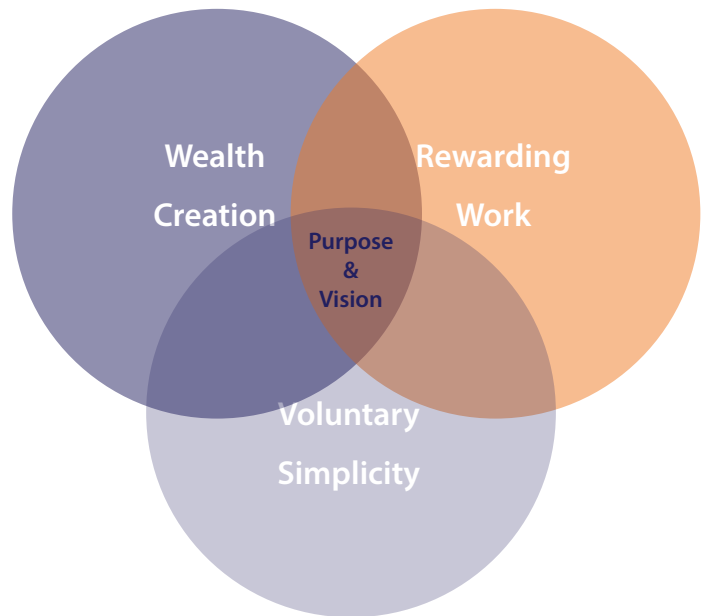


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**Dream Job**  
Just Ahead

## 2. GETTING A GOOD JOB FAST!



### TIP 1 – Know what you want & what you can offer

More than 70% of jobs are never advertised. Relying on the "Situations Vacant" column or the "Internet" is one of the least effective ways to get work. You need to know what you really want and are suited to so that you can then implement a creative multi-strategy job search plan.

In developing your job search plan you need to address four key questions:

1. What do you want?
2. What do you have to offer?
3. What are your options out there?
4. How can you make it happen?

Job search coaching can help you find your answers to these questions.

Becoming a great job searcher will give you improved confidence in your career and ensure that you don't stay in an unsuitable or poorly rewarded position just because you can't find a better job.



### TIP 2 – Don't just read the online job sites - use multiple job search strategies

We coach our clients to apply multi faceted major job search strategies:

Remember:

- 70% of jobs in Australia are never advertised
- 30% of jobs only appear in the newspapers and on the internet

Your ACMA career management consultant will coach you in accessing the "hidden job market" as part of the ACMA structured 7 module program.

The dynamics of positions sourced through the "hidden job market" are entirely different (with applications often competing with 2 – 3 other candidates only).

Statistically the best jobs are to be found in the hidden job market. Most job seekers focus on the internet & advertised job market which only has 30% of the total number of jobs filled in any one month. Hence it is common to have over 200 applicants responding to a good advertised position.

There are two implications:

- Only apply for advertised positions when you come close to matching what they are looking for.
- Your chances of success are often higher in the hidden job market - less people chasing more jobs.

Research into job searching has found that the most successful job searchers use multiple job search strategies at the same time. Anything less and you are reducing your chances since you are "fishing with fewer lines in the water."



### TIP 3 – Get face-to-face with as many people as possible

One rule of thumb is the more people you get face-to-face with the quicker you will get your next job. The slowest way for most people to get a job is the opposite – sit at home sending out resumes and hiding behind written applications. People give people jobs, so make as many people contacts as you can. Each person can lead to job search success in unexpected ways.



### TIP 4 – There is nothing wrong with you if you get a string of "no"s

Be prepared to persevere. The typical job searches go something like this:

No, no, YES!

Try not to take the no's personally. They are just part of the process in getting to the YES! That one yes at the end makes all the "no" along the way irrelevant.



### TIP 5 - Get organised and set up for the job search

To implement a successful job search you will need to prepare some resources. These include:

- Well lit desk
- Computer with internet access
- Mobile telephone
- Answering machine/voicemail
- Filing system
- Address book and files or database for keeping track of contacts
- Time management diary (1 week per 2 page spread is good for planning your week)



**TIP 6 – Always be prepared for the door**

You never know when you might find yourself unemployed... or come across a great opportunity to advance your career. Hence, be prepared. Keep a list of your work achievements with specific details and update it regularly. Keep your resume updated. Be thinking about what skills and experience you need to add to your portfolio and what would be a good next step in your career.

Don't expect your employer to do this for you. Remember, your employability is your responsibility.

**TIP 7 – Enquire as to permanent AND temporary work**

Many employers may not be ready to put on a full time permanent employee but will be interested in talking to someone who is available on a more flexible basis to meet their peak staffing needs. If the organisation is attractive to you this is a good way to get a foot in the door and often leads to full time work.

This is a particularly good strategy for "breaking into" attractive government jobs. Your ACMA career management consultant can give you more specific advice on how to do this.

**TIP 8 – Work closely with your referees**

Good referees are very valuable. Don't take them for granted. Be sure to ask their permission to have them as a referee. Keep the relationship strong by remembering to do little things such as send them birthday cards, Christmas cards, and copies of articles which you think might interest them.

Once you have their permission in general doesn't bother them every time you put down their name as a referee. However you should make it clear to the employer or recruiter that they should tell you if the selection process gets to the point where they will soon be contacting your referees. (This is normally only the top applicants after they have been interviewed.) When you know they will soon be contacted, call your referees and send them the position description or job advertisement, a copy of your application, and a concise list of your main achievements while working with them. The purpose of this list of achievements is to prompt their memories and prepare them to make you sound like a million dollars (or whatever your salary will be) when the employer contacts them.

**TIP 9 – Send thank you notes**

Always remember to send a thank you note to anyone who makes their time available to meet with you or helps you in your job search. This includes your networking contacts, job interviewers and employment agency consultants. This can be an email or a written letter. If you didn't get a business card their receptionist can give you their email address.

**TIP 10 – Four things you must NOT do**

**Don't just go through the motions of a job search.** Find something you can get yourself excited about going after. If you don't know what that is, seek career counselling and assessment.

**Don't do the same old things and say the same old things that everyone else does.** Be original in some way.

**Don't just go for jobs in large well known organisations.** These are the most competitive places to seek work. Smaller organisations (less than 150 staff) create most new jobs and are often better places to work.

**Don't lose touch with reality.** Think big, aim high, but be willing to start from where you are. Be realistic. Don't get stuck looking for the perfect job – where you save the world and make \$200,000 a year straight out of school or university. There are times when you may need to get a stop-gap job while you work on a longer term plan.

**TIP 11 – Take care of yourself**

Career transition, particularly when it is associated with forced unemployment, can be a very stressful experience. It is normal to go through some real down periods and to question your value and your abilities. To help you handle this period:

- **Share your feelings with people you trust** – family, friends, a counsellor or a career coach.
- **Reflect** – career transition is a time to re-evaluate your life direction and make some changes for the better. It is also an opportunity to deepen your perspectives on life.
- **Exercise** – not only does it keep you healthy it also improves your mood.
- **Maintain balance** – watch that you are sleeping, eating healthy, and connecting to people. Seek help if these or alcohol and drug use becomes an issue.
- **Learn and help others** – take short courses or read some helpful books. Making this a time of personal and professional development will improve your self-esteem and your interview performance. So will helping others in some way. Consider seeking some volunteer work if unemployed for more than about 12 weeks.

**TIP 12 – Get professional help – career assessment and/or job search counselling**

It is now normal to change jobs every 3 to 5 years. What this means to you is that you need to become an expert in managing your own career transitions.

Your ACMA career management consultant can help you develop the skills, techniques, attitudes, and knowledge that are vital to your career success but rarely taught at school or even university. These skills and techniques have both broad long-term rewards and immediate practical benefits.

But even great career consultants don't have crystal balls. Instead, they offer good ideas and resources that can help you find your own answers!

They would rather teach you to fish for yourself than just try to tell you what you should do.

The benefits of the ACMA career management program & assistance may include:

- Clearer career direction and improved career satisfaction
- Reduced periods of unemployment or underemployment
- Enhanced career management and job search skills you can use throughout your career
- Improved life balance with the associated health and relationship benefits
- Better short and long-term financial rewards
- Increased confidence and energy!



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*Image source: AdobeStock\_70293589*

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