

Green jobs: Evaluating how to transition

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Thursday, 15 July 2010

I've been asked this question many, many times by job seekers. How do I move to a green career?

I'm not sure where you are in your career, and where to start is a wide ranging question, but I'll break it down with this: The BIG thing in quickly transitioning to a green career is your transferable skills

Here are four major sectors for green jobs hiring: waste management, energy, water, and green building.

So start by looking at where you are in your career today, volunteering, and your hobbies (yes, hobbies, because your hobbies can often shed light on your passions. Just be forewarned: sometimes leaving hobbies as strictly hobbies is best for some people because they need hobbies that provide a release from everyday activities and/or jobs).

Really drill down on the specifics of your current job.

Look at the responsibilities >> then in detail, break down the skill sets used. Those skill sets might be management in a union environment, leadership, negotiations, computer skills, organizing training workshops, etc.

There are two major categories to consider once you've broken down your skillsets:

- Similar job, similar industry > EASY, QUICK TRANSITION. Example: Electrician > solar energy technician > wind turbine technician

- Different job, different industry > DIFFICULT, LONGER TRANSITION. This transition means you'll likely have to consider post-secondary education and/or certificate programs to acquire the necessary skills.

Create a list of target employers:

- Research, research, research (past job postings, libraries, chambers of commerce, trade associations, magazines)

- Request a brief face-to-face meeting or phone chat with a worker or umbrella organization (example: Canada Green Building Council) as part of your "researching options" phase (if you are uncomfortable cold calling, this is where social media is so valuable)

- Education, workshops, continuing education courses, *CleanEnergyClassrooms.ca is a great resource for seeking education training in Canada

- Start interacting with your target employers on social media

I hope this provides you with some insight. Good luck!