



## The Toronto Sun

### Is It Time for a Career Transition?

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By Ellen Goldhar



Janine David loves kids and always thought she wanted to be an early child education teacher. But after more than five years of working with kids, that changed – she no longer got the same satisfaction out of her job.

“The job just wasn’t fulfilling for me anymore. It just wasn’t a place where I could ever earn the income I wanted to. And although the kids were great, I didn’t feel challenged anymore. It was the same old same old,” David says, “I’d describe myself as having a very ambitious nature, even competitive, and those qualities just aren’t appreciated in that profession.”

After researching and speaking to many others, she decided the corporate arena was where she’d head – either human resources or sales. Since she’d probably need to go back to school for HR, she concluded sales might be a more practical route. But who would hire her – she’d barely stepped into a corporate office, let alone worked for one.

Applying for a corporate sales job right out of the starting gate would be a bit of a stretch, so she took a job doing administrative work within a sales organization. “This way I could get exposure to corporate culture, build my confidence, learn about the sales process, get to know the key hiring people, while demonstrating my abilities all at the same time,” she says.

Her strategy worked. After seven months in that role, Janine was promoted to her current sales position with one of the top staffing agencies in North America.

Janine’s story is a good example of a successful career transition. Each of us will likely have to answer the question “what do you want to be when you grow up?” more than once in our career.

In an era of downsizing, uncertainty and rapid change, career transitions are becoming common.

At a seminar conducted by the Ontario Society of Training and Development (OSTD), Lynne O’Connor, a senior consultant with Axmith – a national career development and transition consulting firm – and co-author of the book *It’s Your Move*, shared some career advice.

“Career renewal is having the courage to take charge of your own career and move it strategically with the view to aligning it with what you do and with you are,” O’Connor said.

**“Would you interview for the job you currently hold today? If ‘no’ is the answer, it’s time to leave it.”**

**Other indicators that it might be time to change occupations are:**

- Lack of enthusiasm or energy when doing the tasks required for the job
- Arriving late for work and leaving earlier
- More physical ailments than usual
- Procrastination
- Continuously using the phrase “that’s just the way it is around here – I’m used to it.”

The biggest hurdles can be, “being stuck in a rut, self-limiting beliefs, skill gaps, lack of contacts and lack of clarity around goals,” she added.

**O’Connor says to do three things:**

- Keep your resume updated
- Stay ahead on professional development, and
- Be alert to new opportunities.

Being out of work and in transition **“provides the opportunity for careful self-examination, a chance to talk to others and get feedback, and to consider new possibilities,” O’Connor said.**

Janine David’s work is now more fulfilling, but she says, “This probably isn’t the last stop on my career path and I am OK with that. I learned more about myself than I could have imagined, and I developed a tremendous sense of security and confidence in my abilities as a result.”