

## HOW TO RECOVER FROM A POOR CAREER DECISION



**Question:** A year ago I took a position in a new area of an industry that has been my career path for 20 years and have found it is not what I care to continue doing. I also took some time prior to accepting this job to work for myself. How do I package myself to go in the following directions: back into my original career path and into another industry?

--Robin, Tampa, Fla.

Robin: Without knowing your original field or the new industry you are considering, I will offer some general strategies that apply to almost any area. First, going back into your original career path should not be particularly difficult, as you have only been away from that work for a year. In addition, it sounds as if the area you explored is related. Use this to your advantage, pointing out how this new related field actually complements the work you had been doing right along. It should strengthen your candidacy in that it allows you to differentiate yourself from the crowd and adds a new skill set to your existing repertoire. Read the latest trade journals, visit specialty web sites and reconnect with your old colleagues to make sure you won't be tripped up in an interview with [questions that might arise](#) around new developments. Your one year experiment should strengthen, not weaken, your candidacy if you cover your bases.

To attract employers from another industry, identify all of the overlapping areas in your old and new industries and be sure they take front and center on your resume. That way when the new industry employer reviews your work history and accomplishments, familiar phrases and relevant skills will jump out. Use a [strong cover letter](#) to express your interest in the new field, and fill in any gaps by highlighting how your unique background complements the position requirements. An introductory referral from a respected professional in the new field will enhance the credibility of your written documents and may open some doors that would otherwise remain closed to a newcomer.