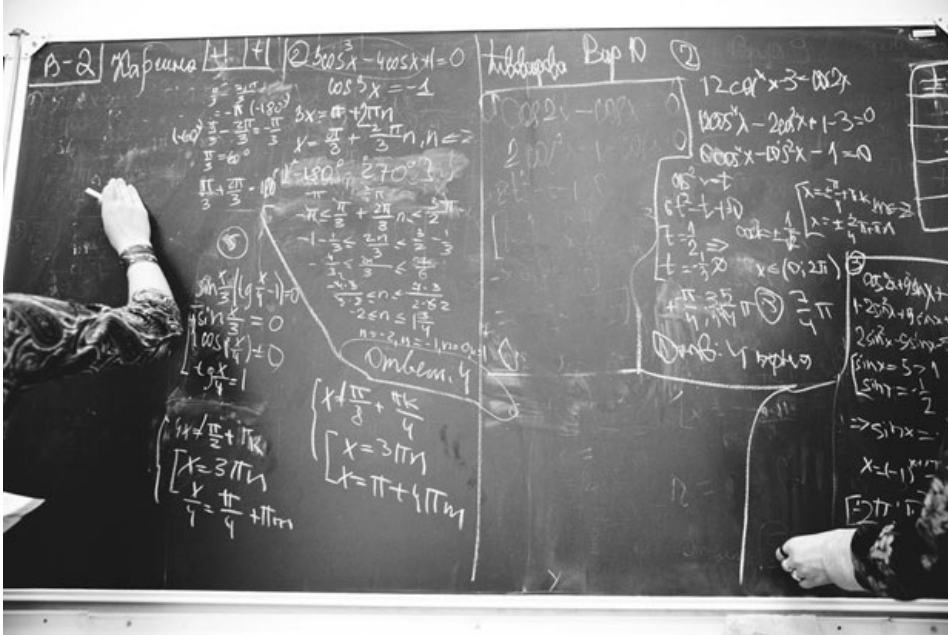


## HOW TO MOVE FROM TEACHING INTO A MORE LUCRATIVE CAREER

**Summary:** You're a distinguished teacher and you believe it's time to use your knowledge for greater financial reward. What do you do?



**Question:** In searching through your archives, I have yet to see a question similar to mine. I'm a white male in my early 50s and have been a high-school teacher and adjunct professor for 28 years. I'm at the peak of my career, doing what I love and earning the most money I can as a non-administrator — \$71,000. My problem is that with a wife recovering from illness and a daughter entering college, my salary isn't enough for this part of the country. I teach Japanese, a program I started 20 years ago, but I think I'd like to discard the textbook, put on wing-tips, and start earning some real money. I've done some part-time language and culture consulting, and worked in three departments of a small university teaching Japanese-related courses. I've lived in Japan for about five years, graduated from school there and have spent time in other Asian countries. I have three master's degrees (Japanese, political economics and international politics) and I also speak Korean and Hindi. I've won many awards for teaching, so clearly my efforts have been recognized. I'm not disgruntled, nor am I rushing into this. It will be a year (probably two) before I make my move, so this is more a fact-finding and advice-seeking letter.

**Answer:** You have two clear options: enter the corporate or consulting world, or start a business of your own. Your greatest roadblock for the former approach is convincing employers that you understand their business. The issue isn't whether you can handle the workload or not, but whether you can communicate your abilities effectively. You'll face more stereotypes than you can probably imagine, such as: high-school teachers work short hours, have dictatorial control of their work days, cannot function as part of a team and expect lots of vacation days. Be ready to refute these misconceptions in your cover letters and in interviews. If you can sell your talents and willingness to work long hours for customers, you'll likely earn an offer from a small manufacturer, high-tech or consulting firm that targets the Japanese market. If you decide to start a business, such as a translation firm or consulting service, your challenge will be selling yourself and doing the work simultaneously. That's rarely easy, even for skilled small-business owners.

See the following article for more information:

[7 Tips to Starting a Successful Small Business](#)