

## **Checking Out the Hot Jobs** by Rose Jonas, Ph.D.

We hate looking for a job or deciding what we want to do when we grow up. It seems logical to find out what the hot jobs are and go for them. It's probably not the path to a happy, successful career. Read on.

### **What are the hot jobs I should go for?**

Please don't shape your career search looking for the hot jobs. If you do and you take to heart the advice of the parent or expert who tells you to do that, there's a good chance you'll end up miserable and in my office because it either wasn't the career you wanted, or the job you trained and hoped for wasn't there.

What happens? Name the profession. Chemical engineers. Nurses. Computer programmers. They've all had glory days. What made them hot was the scarcity of trained professionals and the high demand for them. Hotness causes people to rush there, but by the time they're trained, the market need changed, the demand is filled, the market glutted. No job.

The key question to ask is: What do I want to do/be? The closer you can get to that answer, the happier you'll be. You'll wind up doing something you like and which comes easily to you, and that will pull you ahead of your competition. You'll be more enthusiastic and dedicated than the person pushed into the field, and over the long term, you'll go farther.

### **But how do I assess what will be a good career field? I don't want to go into a dying field!**

People can tell you in a broad, general sense what fields will be solid for the next three to five years, and *you* should keep a canny eye on the future as well. Everyone knows it's "Technology, communications, international," but that means nothing to you as a career searcher. The problem for experts is that changes in career fields are happening in the blink of an eye, which makes their advice count for little.

Decide what kind of job interests you, intersect that with the industry that interests you, and start asking questions about it. But keep watching as you train yourself to be sure you're not going to be behind the market when you get there.

### **Okay, I happen to be interested in a dying field. Now what?**

To learn how much you want something, see how hard you're willing to work on it. I had a client who wanted to get a Ph.D. in philosophy and teach at the college level but backed away because hundreds compete for a handful of jobs after completing their degree. Another client also wanted the same thing, majored in both philosophy and business, went into business for a dozen years, then got his Ph.D. in philosophy and is now teaching at a major university.

The lessons here are (1) You never know till you try. If this is your love, stay with it. Why shouldn't *you* be among the chosen few? (2) You sometimes need to take a roundabout way to

achieve your goal. You often get a second pass at the brass ring. (3) Find where the jobs *are*. Blacksmiths still find work; so do designers of manufacturing plants. You just have to be creative at finding the opportunities, and willing to make the journey to get there.

### **The point**

First ask the question, “What do I want to do with my life?” When you get that answer, then “Where are the hot jobs in my chosen field?” would be a good second question.